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Sri Bhakti-sandarbha

An Essay on Devotional Service

Some Words of Acknowledgement

Srila Gopala Bhatta Gosvami, the great philosopher from the southern provinces who greatly pleased Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Sanatana Gosvami, left many valuable notes that defeat various philosophical misconceptions. Systematically arranging these notes, and considering their content, Jiva Gosvami writes this book.

Anuccheda 1

1 By the previous four sandarbhas the relationship (between Krsna and the living entities) was explained. There the form of the Supreme Truth was described as having the characteristics of perfection, eternity, and transcendental bliss, and the Supreme was also described as appearing in three features: Brahman, Paramatma, and Bhagavan. Of these Bhagavan was proved to be the highest. The incarnations headed by Lord Visnu and other incarnations headed by the four Kumaras were shown to be His avatars. Also, Sri Krsna was proved to be the original form of Bhagavan. Also, in the description of Paramatma, were described the sufferings in the material world of the individual living entities (jivas), who are the Lord's marginal potency, who are spiritual in nature, and who, because of ignorance of the beginningless Supreme Truth and because of the crime of being averse to Him had the knowledge of their original spiritual identity covered by illusion (maya) and were placed in the material world of the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance.

2 The Supreme Personality of Godhead explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.22.34):

"The speculative argument of philosophers - "This world is real," "No, it is not real" - is based upon incomplete knowledge of the Supreme Soul and is simply aimed at understanding material dualities. Although such argument is useless, persons who have turned their attention away from Me, their own true Self, are unable to give it up."***

3 For their benefit (the Lord) very mercifully teaches scriptures. Some individual spirit souls who in previous births performed religious ceremonies and became purified in order to directly see the Lord, and other individual spirit souls who attained the mercy of great souls by their glance or in another way, simply by hearing the description of the perfect qualities of the Supreme Truth, see Him face-to-face. This is described in Srimad Bhagavatam (1.1.2):

"This beautiful Bhagavatam, compiled by the great sage Vyasadeva (in his maturity), is sufficient in itself for God realisation. What is the need of any other

scripture? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of Bhagavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart."*

This does not happen with any other teaching. Many other teachings may be heard, but it is the hearing of narrations that begin with the Supreme Truth's pastimes that makes one yearn to taste the nectar of the Lord. Sri Prahlada and other devotees are examples here. Hearing about the Lord gives the seed (to see the Lord face-to-face), and it also destroys the seed of lust and a host of vices.

4 Sri Prahlada explains (Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.9.39)

"My dear Lord of the Vaikuntha planets, where there is no anxiety, my mind is extremely sinful and lusty, being sometimes so-called happy and sometimes so-called distressed. My mind is full of lamentation and fear, and it always seeks more and more money. Thus it has become most polluted and is never satisfied in topics concerning You. I am therefore most fallen and poor. In such a status of life, how shall I be able to discuss Your activities?"*

By following the example of these words of Sri Prahlada, who thinks Himself very fallen and lowly, many others have also attained the Lord.

5 This is explained in Brahma-vaivarta Purana

"As much as it is polluted with sins, to that extent the heart cannot place its faith in the Vedic scriptures or the bona-fide spiritual master.

6 "By hearing the Vedic scriptures in the association of saintly devotees love for the Lord is manifest. That is the great result of having performed many pious deeds in many previous births."

7 Now that the Supreme Truth has been clearly described according to the direct descriptions (of the Vedic literature), (one may ask:) "What may be said (abhidheya) about (the relationship between the Supreme Truth and the individual spirit souls) and what is the final goal (prayojana) of that (relationship)? These two may be explained according to the indirect descriptions (of the Vedic literature). Because it is the opposite of being averse to the Supreme, that relationship is one of turning one's face of the Lord and it is characterised by service to the Lord. From that service knowledge of the Lord becomes manifested. The final goal is that service is directly seeing the Lord and that is characterised by the Lord's making Himself visible within and without. When that happens one becomes free of all sufferings. Both are explained in an ancient story. Hearing "There is a treasure (hidden) in your house", a poverty stricken man searched for the treasure and eventually found it. These two things are like that. This story is told to dispel weakness (of heart in the devotees). Explaining that being unwilling to be aware of the perfect and beginningless Supreme Truth is the cause of suffering, (the scriptures) teach service to the Lord, which is the medicine to cure the disease (of material life).

8 (This is explained in Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.37):

"When the living entity is attracted by the material energy, which is separate from Krsna, he is overpowered by fear. Because he is separated from the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the material energy, his conception of life is reversed. In other words, instead of being the eternal service of Krsna, he becomes Krsna's competitor. This is called viparyayo smrtih. To nullify this mistake, one who is actually learned and advanced worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead as his spiritual master, worshipful Deity, and source of life. He thus

worships the Lord by the process of unalloyed devotional service."*

9 Sridhara Svami comments: "The fear here is created by the Lord's material energy. 'Budhah' means 'an intelligent person', and 'abhajet' means 'should worship'. Fear is created by absorption (abhinivesatah) in material things beginning with the material body. It is created by the false-ego of identifying with the material body and other material things. It is created because the original spiritual form of the living entity is not manifest. Why does the material energy (maya) do this? Because the living entity has turned away from the Supreme Lord (isad apetasya), the material energy makes him forget (asmrtih) and thus his own original spiritual form is no longer manifested. From this comes the misidentification (viparyayah) of thinking 'I am this body'. Thus, from being absorbed in something other than the Supreme Lord (dvitiyabhinivesatah) fear (bhayam) is created. In this way it is proved that fear is created by the material energy (maya). The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself explains (Bhagavad-gita 7.14):

10 "This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it."*

11 "Therefore with unalloyed (ekaya) devotion one should worship the Lord. In the word 'Guru-devatatma' the word 'devata' means 'master', and 'atma' means 'dear-most'. In this way the spiritual master should be seen. That is the meaning."

This verse is spoken by Sri Kavi to the king of Videha.

Anuccheda 2

1 Furthermore, Srimad-Bhagavatam (2.2.6) explains:

"Thus being fixed, one must render service unto the Supersoul situated in one's own heart by His omnipotency. Because He is the Almighty Personality of Godhead, eternal and unlimited, He is the ultimate goal of life, and by worshipping Him one can end the cause of the conditioned state of existence."*

2 Sridhara Svami comments: "What, then, should be done? Lord Hari should be served. Here with word 'evam' (thus) means 'being renounced'. In that way one should serve the Lord (tam bhajeta). The reasons why He should be worshipped follow: 1. He is situated in one's heart by His omnipotency (sva-citte svata eva siddhah). 2. He is the Supersoul (atma), 3. He is very dear (priyah), 4. Devotional service to Him, the dear one, is full of happiness, 5. He is the ultimate reality (arthah), 6. He is not false, as that which is not atma is, 7. He is the Lord, whose transcendental qualities are worshipable (bhagavan), and 8. He is eternal (anantah). Because He is like this, one should worship Him (tam bhajeta).

"'Niyatarthah' means 'the ultimate goal of life'. Because by seeing him one becomes full of bliss, He is called 'nirvrtah' (bliss). As a result of performing devotional service, His blissful form is revealed. Furthermore, when (yatra) there is devotional service, then the ignorance that is the cause of the conditioned state of existence (samsara-hetoh) is destroyed (uparamah)."

From the word "ca" here that attainment should be understood. Srila Sukadeva Gosvami speaks this verse.

Anuccheda 3

1 Although the spiritual activities of jnana-yoga, which begin with hearing

and meditation make one favourable towards the Supreme because they give one direct perception of His Brahman feature, and although sankhya-yoga, astanga-yoga, and karma-yoga also, each in its own way, make one also favourable towards the Supreme, and although they do instil, to a certain extent, some devotion for the Lord, karma-yoga by having one follow the Lord's orders and make offerings to the Lord, and jnana-yoga by having one, among other things, become detached from everything but the Lord, and although these kinds of yoga are therefore the friends of devotional service, still the previous verses quoted from Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.2.37 and 2.2.6) which explain "One should worship the Lord by engaging in devotional service", do not consider them very important. These verses say that one should worship the Lord by directly engaging in devotional service, which has many activities beginning with hearing and chanting of the Lord's glories. This, along with an explanation of the reasons why, is seen in the beginning of Sri Suta Gosvami teachings, found in Srimad-Bhagavatam beginning with 1.2.6 and ending with 1.2.22. There it is said (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.6):

2 "The supreme occupation (dharma) for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendental Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self."*

3 In the beginning of the great Srimad-Bhagavatam Purana (1.1.11) the question was asked: "What is the essence of all scriptures? Please explain it." That question is addressed in Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.6 (which was quoted in the previous text). There the word "yatah" means "by that occupation", and "adhoksaje bhaktih" means "attraction for the activities (of devotional service), which begin with hearing narrations about the Lord" because a little later the opposite (of that attraction) will be shown in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.8):

"The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labour if they do not provoke attraction for hearing the message of the Personality of Godhead."*

In Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.6. (quoted in the previous text) the words "sa vai" mean "certainly that". The "that" mentioned here means "the best of all occupational duties, which means that which is done of the satisfaction of the Lord." This is so because it will be said (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.13):

"It is therefore concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one's own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead."*

Because it is not averse to, or apart from the Personality of Godhead, devotional service is not merely renunciation. This is explained by Narada Muni in these words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.5.12):

"Knowledge of self-realisation, even though freed from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of the conception of the infallible (God). What, then, is the use of fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilised for the devotional service of the Lord?"*

This will be described in Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.13. The meaning is that unalloyed devotional service is the best of spiritual paths. By this verse, therefore, it is said that devotional service is better than the activities of varnasrama-dharma.

next he (Suta Gosvami) describes the nature of devotional service. He says that because devotional service is naturally and spontaneously blissful, it is unmotivated (ahaituki), which means it is devoid of the search for any result other than the service itself, and it is uninterrupted (apratihata), which means because it does not find either happiness or distress in anything other than devotional service, therefore it cannot be stopped by anything. When devotional service is characterised by attraction (ruci) to (the Lord), then devotional service in practice (sadhana-bhakti), which begins with hearing (about the Lord), has begun.

Anuccheda 4

1 Srimad-Bhagavatam (5.18.12) explains:

"All the demigods and their exalted qualities, such as religion, knowledge, and renunciation, become manifest in the body of one who has developed unalloyed devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva."*

Therefore knowledge of the Lord's form and qualities naturally brings renunciation of everything else. This is described (in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.7):

2 "By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world."*

3 This verse means that simply by briefly hearing about Krsna (asu) devotional service creates (janayati) the knowledge revealed in the Upanisads (jnanam), which is beyond the sphere of those methods that begin with dry logic (ahaitukam).

Anuccheda 5

1 The result of the absence of devotional service is described in these words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.8):

"The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labour if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead."*

2 If (yadi) one does not please Lord Vasudeva, then there will not be (na utpadayet) attraction (ratim) to the descriptions of the Lord's various transcendental pastimes. Then the only result will be useless labour (sramh). This is said because of the great superiority and supreme importance of attraction to hearing about the Lord. Here also is hinted a description of attraction to devotional service. The word "eva" here means that the fruits of material labour are temporary. The word "hi" here is explained in Chandogya Upanisad (81.16), "The residence in a heavenly material planet that is attained by materially pious work is temporary and will end." The word "kevalam" is defined in Amara-kosa, "Kevalam means conclusion". The conclusion here is that the eternal benefit cannot be attained by either mere pious renunciation or by speculative knowledge. Even when these are perfected they bring only a temporary benefit. This is hinted here by the word "hi" and it is also confirmed by Svetasvatara Upanisad (6.23):

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed."*

It is again confirmed in Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.5.12):

"Knowledge of self-realisation, even though free from all material affinity,

does not look well if devoid of a conception of the infallible (God). What, then is the use of fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilised for the devotional service of the Lord."*

It is again confirmed in Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.14.4):

"My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavours are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labour becomes fruitless."*

It is again confirmed in Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.2.32):

"O lotus-eyed Lord, although non-devotees who accept severe austerities and penances to achieve the highest position may think themselves liberated, their intelligence is impure. They fall down from their position of imagined superiority because they have no regard for Your lotus feet."*

3 These two verses show that devotional service does not depend on anything else. Indeed, speculative knowledge and dry renunciation depend on devotional service. Therefore it is the presence of devotional service that makes other spiritual practices successful.

Anuccheda 6

1 Some think the result of performing religious rituals or occupational duties is the attainment of economic development, and the result of economic development is sense gratification, and because one attains sense gratification in this way, one is inclined to perform religious rituals and occupational duties, in that way starting again the cycle of activities beginning with religious rituals and occupational duties. That (the truth) is other than this is explained in the following two verses (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.9-10):

2 "All occupational engagements are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain. Furthermore, according to sages, one who is engaged in the ultimate occupational service should never use material gain to cultivate sense gratification."*

3 "Life's desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's works."*

4 Liberation is described in Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.19.19-20:

"If one's position is ascertained by a bona-fide spiritual master and one is properly trained to engage in the service of Lord Visnu according to the four social divisions (brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, and sudra) and the four spiritual divisions (brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, and sannyasa), one's life becomes perfect. After many, many births, when the results of one's pious activities mature, one gets an opportunity to associate with pure devotees. Then one is able to cut the knot of bondage to ignorance, which bound him because of varied fruitive activities. As a result of associating with devotees, one gradually renders service to Lord Vasudeva, who is transcendental, free from attachment to the material world, beyond the mind and words, and independent of everything else. That bhakti-

yoga, devotional service to Lord Vasudeva, is the real path of liberation."*

According to this prose passage of the Fifth Canto devotional service is the real path of liberation. This is also explained in the following words of the Skanda Purana, Reva-khanda:

5 "O Lord Janardana, unwavering devotional service to You is the same as liberation. O Lord Visnu, O Lord Hari, Your devotees are already liberated."

6 These passages describe devotional service. Srila Sridhara Svami comments (on Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.9-10 in texts 2 and 3):

"The word 'artha' here means 'for material gain', and 'nopakalpate' means 'is not meant'. Therefore, the regular performance of occupational duties is not (na hi) meant for material gain (kamo labhaya). This is described (smrtah) by the sages who know the truth. The fruits of work are not meant for material pleasures (kamasya indriya-pritir labhah). Rather, as long as one lives (yavata jiveta) one should desire (kamasya labhah) only a healthy life, or self-preservation (jivasya). One should not use the performance of occupational duties (karmabhiih ya iha) in one's life (jivasya) as a means to attain material goals, such as attaining Svargaloka. Rather, they should be used for inquiry about the Absolute Truth (tattva-jijnasa)."

In this way (Srila Sridhara Svami) explains that knowledge of the Absolute Truth is only a by-product of devotional service. The main result of devotional service is devotional service itself.

What is the Absolute Truth? That is explained in the following verse (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.11):

7 "Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this non dual substance Brahman, Paramatma or Bhagavan."*

8 By using the word "advayam", which here means "not divided into parts", and by thus intending that (these three aspects of the Supreme) are not different from each other, the nature of the Lord as the master of potencies is accepted. The potency of the knowledge of oneness, which is beyond the nature of the other potencies, is related to the Brahman feature (brahma sabdyate). The material maya potency and the cit potency of transcendental knowledge are related to the Supersoul (paramatma). The best of all perfect potencies is related to the Supreme Personality of Godhead (bhagavan). This has been explained in the previous three sandarbhas.

Anuccheda 7

1 That the three-fold Absolute Truth is directly realised by devotional service is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.12):

2 "The seriously inquisitive student or sage, well equipped with knowledge and detachment, realises that Absolute Truth by rendering devotional service in terms of what he has heard from the Vedanta-sruti."*

3 This verse means, "With the great spiritual love (bhaktya) born from attraction to hearing about the Lord, they see (pasyanti) in their pure hearts (atmani) the Absolute Truth (tat), which was described in the previous (quote from Srimad-bhagavatam)." What is the importance of knowledge (in comparison to this?) They directly see (the Lord). That is the meaning. What is the Lord like? He is described with the word "atmanam", which means "the shelter of the potencies names svarupa (internal), jiva (individual living entities), and maya (material illusion)."

"jnana-vairagya-yuktaya' means 'by devotional service, which is served by the knowledge and renunciation it has itself created." The sages (munayah), according to their own individual desires, directly see (pasyanti) the Lord.

The words "sruta-grhitaya" (by hearing from the Vedanta-sruti), "munayah" (the sages), and "sraddadhanah" (seriously inquisitive) reveal that devotional service is rare and difficult to attain.

If one hears from a bona fide spiritual master the conclusions of the all Vedic scriptures, which begin with Vedanta sutra, he will understand that one absolutely must render devotional service to the Lord. This is described in the following words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.2.34):

4 "The great personality Brahma, with great attention and concentration of the mind, studied the Vedas three times, and after scrutinizingly examining them, he ascertained that attraction for Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna is the highest perfection of religion."*

5 If he renounces what is opposed to devotional service, and instead engages in meditation on the Lord and becomes attached to the Lord, then, by worshipping the Lord, a faithful person will attain devotional service. This is confirmed in the Sruti-sastra, which explains (Brhad-aranyaka Upanisad 4.5.6.):

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead should be seen, heard of, meditated on, and worshipped."

Here the word "nididhyasitavyah" means "worshipped". That the Lord should be seen means that He will directly appear before one's vision.

Anuccheda 8

1 By performing one's own occupational duties for the pleasure of Lord Hari, one attains this rare and difficult to attain devotional service. Therefore the ultimate result of performing one's occupational duties is being able to please Lord Hari. This is described in the following words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.13):

2 "O best among the twice-born, it is therefore concluded that the highest perfect one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one's own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead."*

3 The word "svanusthitasya" here means that great efforts to attain insignificant material goals, such as the attainment of Svargaloka, should not be done. That is the meaning.

Anuccheda 9

1 If in this way the performance of occupational duties to please Lord Hari brings as its result devotional service, where one is attracted to the devotional activities that begin with hearing about the Lord, then mere knowledge, renunciation and other similar activities are subordinate to devotional service, and it is devotional service, which begins with hearing about the Lord, that should be performed. What is the use of performing these other (non-devotional) activities? All this is described in the following words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.14):

2 "Therefore, with one-pointed attention, one should constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the Personality of Godhead, who is the protector of the devotees."*

3 Here "ekena" means "without those activities that begin with fruitive

work." Instead one should hear about the Lord's names, qualities, and other features, and one should also glorify them.

Anuccheda 10

1 To describe devotional service, which from its first to its last stage is easy to perform, and which even in its first stage creates attraction for hearing the topics of Lord Hari and is free of the many troubles inherent in fruitive pious work or other activities, Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.15) explains:

2 "With sword in hand, intelligent men cut through the binding knots of reactionary work (karma) by remembering the Personality of Godhead. Therefore, who will not pay attention to His message?"*

3 Here the word "kovidah" means "intelligent", "yuktah" means "with a controlled mind", "anudhya" means "remembering Lord Hari", and "asi" means "sword". With that sword one cuts (chindanti) the knots (granthim) of reactionary work (karma), which are the false ego that binds one in various material bodies. Who (kah) will (kuryat) not (na) pay attention (ratim) to the message (kathayam) of the Lord who thus frees one from great sufferings?

Anuccheda 11

1 "Is it not so that the unfortunate mass of people will not be attracted to hear the Lord's message?" Fearing that someone would raise this objection, in the next five verses (1.2.16-20) (the speaker of Srimad-Bhagavatam) says that devotional service, even up in its highest stage of unalloyed devotion, is easy to perform. The first of these verses (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.16) is given here:

2 "O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vasudeva."*

3 Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.87.35 explains:

"Sages free from pride live on this earth by frequenting the sacred pilgrimage sites and those places where the Supreme Lord displayed His pastimes. Because such devotees keep You lotus feet within their hearts, the water that washes their feet destroys all sins. Anyone who even once turns his mind toward You, the ever-blissful soul of all existence, no longer dedicates himself to serving family life at home, which simply robs a man of his good qualities."***

Srila Sridhara Svami comments on this verse:

"The most important feature of this verse is the description of association with great devotees."

Taking into consideration this verse and comment, the verse quoted in Text 2 (1.2.16) should be understood to mean: "By serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice (punya-tirtha-nisevanat), great service (mahat-seva) is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vasudeva (vasudeva-katha-rucih syat)."

This verse also means that by seeing, touching, conversing with, and in other ways serving the great souls who travel to or permanently reside in the holy places of pilgrimage, one develops faith in the great souls. One then thinks, "Why do they talk among themselves about the topics of the Supreme Personality of Godhead? I should also hear about those topics." In this way the desire to hear about the Lord is born, and by hearing about Him one becomes attracted to Him.

By hearing in this way from the great souls one at once attains the real goal of life. This is described by Lord Kapiladeva (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.25):

"In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin."*

Anuccheda 12

1 Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.17) explains:

"Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramatma (Supersoul) in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted."*

2 This verse means that when one hears about Him the Lord enters the heart (antah-sthah). He enters by walking there on the path of (the devotee's) meditation on Him. The inauspicious things (abhadrani) in the heart (hrdi) are material desires.

Anuccheda 13

1 Then Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.17) explains:

"By regular attendance in classes on the Bhagavatam and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact."*

2 The words "nasta-prayesu" mean "almost completely destroyed". They are not destroyed in this way by mere cultivation of impersonal knowledge. In this way the limitless power of devotional service is described. The word "Bhagavata" here means either "the devotees of the Lord" or "the scripture Srimad-Bhagavatam". By serving (sevaya) them one attains eternal (naisthiki) devotional service (bhaktih) where one meditates on the Lord.

Anuccheda 14

1 Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.53) explains:

"The lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are sought even by the greatest of demigods, such as Brahma and Siva, who have all accepted the Supreme Personality of Godhead as their life and soul. A pure devotee of the Lord can never forget those lotus feet in any circumstances. He will not give up his shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord for a single moment-indeed, not for half a moment-even in exchange for the benediction of ruling and enjoying the opulence of the entire universe. Such a devotee of the Lord is to be considered the best of the Vaisnavas."***

This verse explains that when all material desires are destroyed the heart becomes plunged into pure goodness. At that time the heart is qualified to receive the direct appearance of the Lord. This is described in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.19:

2 "As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart, the effects of nature's modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire and hankering,

disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes completely happy."*

3 The word "bhavah" here means that passion and ignorance are the causes of lust and the other vices. The word "etaih" refers to them. That is the meaning here.

Anuccheda 15

1 Then Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.20) explains:

Thus established in the mode of unalloyed goodness, the man whose mind has been enlivened by contact with devotional service to the Lord gains positive scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead in the stage of liberation from all material association."*

2 This verse means, "As was previously described (evam) by engaging in devotional service one becomes enlivened (prasanna-manasah) and liberated from association (mukta-sangasya) with lust and other vices. In that way is manifested (jayate) positive knowledge (jnanam), where the Lord appears in the heart, or, without the process of meditation, appears outside the heart."

Anuccheda 16

1 Then Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.21) describes the result obtained when the independent and supremely blissful Lord directly appears:

2 "Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the self as master."*

3 Here the phrase "knot in the heart" (hrdaya-granthi) refers to the material misidentification of false ego. The words "all misgivings are cut to pieces" (sarva-samsayah chidyante) mean that by engaging in the devotional activities that begin with hearing and chanting the Lord is directly seen. At that time all doubts are destroyed. By hearing about the Lord all theories that oppose devotional service are cut to pieces and by meditating on the Lord all meditations that oppose devotional service (are cut to pieces). When the Lord personally appears (the devotee's personal) disqualifications (are also cut to pieces). The word "ksiyante" means "completely destroyed". Simply by the Lord's wish not the slightest trace of these things remains.

Anuccheda 17

1 Revealing the devotees' activities, Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.22) concludes this topic in these words:

2 "Certainly therefore since time immemorial, all transcendentalists have been rendering devotional service to Lord Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, with great delight, because such devotional service is enlivening to the self."*

3 Here the word "atma-prasadanim" means "purification of the heart". That, however, is not the only feature of devotional service. This verse explains that devotional service is performed with great delight (paramaya muda). Materialistic activities bring only suffering. When they are performed they bring suffering and when one attains the results they offer again there is only suffering. Devotional service, on the contrary, brings only happiness. When one is aspiring for advancement in devotional service there is happiness and when one becomes perfect in devotional service there is only happiness.

These verses from Srimad-Bhagavatam were spoken by Sri Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 18

1 For these reasons one should abandon fruitive work, impersonal speculation, and dry renunciation and instead engage in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should not do any work other than devotional service to the Lord. This will be described in the next seven verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.23-29 quoted in Anucchedas 18-21).

What may be said of other works? Because they are not the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Visnu, who appears as a guna-avatara, because they are not in relationship with the mode of goodness, which alone can help spiritual progress, and because they expand the influence of the modes of passion and ignorance, Brahma and Siva are not worshipped by they who aspire for what is actually beneficial. This is explained in the following two verses (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.23-24) which were previously quoted in the Paramatma-sandarbhā:

2 "The transcendental Personality of Godhead is indirectly associated with the three modes of material nature, namely passion, goodness and ignorance, and just for the material world's creation, maintenance and destruction He accepts the three qualitative forms of Brahma, Visnu and Siva. Of these three, all human beings can derive ultimate benefit from Visnu, the form of the quality of goodness."*

3 "Firewood is a transformation of earth, but smoke is better than the raw wood. And fire is till better, for by fire we can derive the benefits of superior knowledge (through Vedic sacrifices). Similarly, passion (rajas) is better than ignorance (tamas) but goodness (tattva) is best because by goodness one can come to realise the Absolute Truth."*

4 Here "sattva-tanoh" means "the potency of goodness", and "trayimayah" means "the many activities described in the three Vedas". The "wood" is the mode of ignorance, the "smoke" is the mode of passion, and the "fire" is the mode of goodness. The "three things" where these are described are the Vedas. Smoke is better than raw wood, and fire is better than smoke. Raw wood is not like fire. In raw wood the activities of the three Vedas are manifested only very slightly. In the same way passion is better than ignorance and goodness is better than passion. Ignorance is not like fire. In ignorance the activities of the three Vedas are manifested only very slightly. However, in fire the activities of the three Vedas are manifest directly. Only in goodness, and not in the two other modes of nature, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly manifested. That is the meaning. That the great souls abandon other deities and engage in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.25):

5 "Previously all the great sages rendered service unto the Personality of Godhead due to His existence above the three modes of material nature. They worshipped Him to become free from material conditions and thus derive the ultimate benefit. Whoever follows such great authorities is also eligible for liberation from the material world."*

6 Here the word "atha" means "for this reason". "Sattvam visuddham bhagavantam" means "the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the form of the mode of pure goodness." That is the Supreme Personality of Godhead is beyond

material goodness has already been explained in Sri Bhagavat-sandarbha (Anuccheda 100). The words "ksemaya kalpante ye nu tan iha" mean "They worshipped Him to derive the ultimate benefit in this material world."

Anuccheda 19

1 Here someone may object: "Is it not seen that many others worship other deities headed by Lord Siva?"

I reply: That is true, but these are persons filled with material desires. They who desire liberation, what to speak of they whose only goal in life is devotional service to the Lord, do not worship anyone but the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.26):

2 "Those who are serious about liberation are certainly non envious, and they respect all. Yet they reject the horrible and ghastly forms of the demigods and worship only the all-blissful forms of Lord Visnu and His plenary portions."*

3 Here the word "bhuta-patin" refers to the pitas, prajapatis and the other demigods like them. "Anasuyavah" means that the saintly devotees do not offend these other deities.

Annucheda 20

1 Here someone may object: If by worshipping Lord Narayana one attains what is desirable, then why do these people worship other deities?"

The following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.27) explains:

2 "Those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance worship the forefathers, other living beings and the demigods who are incharge of cosmic activities, for they are urged by a desire to be materially benefitted with women, wealth, power and progeny."*

3 Here the word "sama-silah" means that these worshippers have the same nature as the pitas and other demigods, who are also under the influence of the modes of passion and ignorance. Because these worshippers have the same nature they worship these demigods.

Anuccheda 21

1 In this way it is said that Lord Visnu should be worshipped. That this is the conclusion of all Vedic scriptures is confirmed in the following two verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.28-29).

2 "In the revealed scriptures, the ultimate object of knowledge is Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead. The purpose of performing sacrifice is to please Him. Yoga is for realising Him. All fruitive activities are ultimately rewarded by Him only. He is supreme knowledge, and all severe austerities are performed to know Him. Religion (dharma) is rendering loving service unto Him. He is the supreme goal of life."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In this way Lord Vasudeva is the ultimate topic described by the Vedas. Fearing that someone may say, "Do not the Vedas describe various yajnas? this verse states that because all methods of worship are directed to Him, therefore the Vedic sacrifices are performed to please Him. Fearing that someone may say, "Do not the yoga-sastras describe only the yogic activities, beginning with sitting postures and breath-control?" this verse states that these activities are methods

employed to attain Lord Vasudeva. Fearing that someone may say, "Do not the jnana-sastras describe transcendental knowledge?" this verse states that Lord Vasudeva is the highest transcendental knowledge. What was said of knowledge may also be said of austerities. Fearing that someone may say, "Do not the dharma-sastras describe pious activities beginning with charity and vows, activities by which one attains Svargaloka and other heavenly realms?" this verse states that these results are ultimately dependent on Lord Vasudeva. The word "gatih" (goal), which comes from the verb "gam" (to go), refers to the attainment of Svargaloka and the other heavenly planets. That goal is dependent on Lord Vasudeva because it is manifested from a tiny portion of His transcendental bliss. This verse explains that because Lord Vasudeva is the root from which everything has grown, everything is meant for Him. fearing that someone may say, "Is it not so that the Vedas are about many different things, such as sacrifices, yoga, pious deeds, and they are not about one thing only?" this verse explains that these things beginning with Vedic sacrifices are dependent on and meant for Lord Vasudeva."

4 Devotional service is the friend and guide of the things, beginning with yoga, mentioned here. That is the primary meaning here. The Vedas certainly describe pious fruitive actions (karma-kanda), but in some parts of the Vedas the superiority of devotional service is also seen. This is described in Svetasvatara Upanisad (6.23):

5 "Only to those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed."*

Anuccheda 22

1 Now that he has shown that devotional service should be performed, (the author of Srimad-Bhagavatam) proves that it is the conclusion of all Vedic literatures. He begins his explanation with these words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.30):

2 "In the beginning of the material creation, that Absolute Personality of Godhead (Vasudeva), in His transcendental position, created the energies of cause and effect by His own internal energy."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Someone may object, Is it not so that all Vedic scriptures describe the activities that begin with nature's creation, entrance into, and control of the material universes? How can it be that the scriptures describe Lord Vasudeva? To answer this objection the author of Srimad Bhagavatam speaks these four (1.2.30-33) verses."

4 Here the word "idam" refers to the material world beginning with the mahat-tattva and reaching to the demigod Brahma. The activities that begin with (the Lord's) entrance into the material universe are seen in the verses following that quote (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.30). This verse was spoken by Sri Suta Gosvami to Sri Saunaka Rsi.

Anuccheda 23

1 This is also described in the following verse in a conversation, the conversation that was to give birth to Srimad-Bhagavatam, between Sri Narada and Sri Vyasa, (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.5.12):

2 "Knowledge of self-realisation, even though freed from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the infallible (God). What then, is the use of fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilised for the devotional service of the Lord?"*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments: "The word 'naiskarmyam' means 'Brahman-knowledge, which because of its oneness is free from fruitive actions'. 'Niranjanam', which is derived from the verb 'aj', means 'free from material designations'. This kind of knowledge, if devoid (varjitam) of love (bhava) for the infallible Lord (acyute) does not (alam na) look well (sobhate). In this way it is not possible to see the Lord. That is the meaning. Fruitive activities are always (sasvat), that is both when one is working to attain a goal and when the goal is attained, painful (abhadram). How can even non-fruitive actions, when not offered to the Lord, look well? This is so because such actions, due to being external and irrelevant, do not purify the self."

4 In this way transcendental knowledge and fruitive work, if devoid of devotional service, are both useless. (However, devotional service is not useless. Srila Narada Muni explains to Srila Vyasa, in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.15-17):

"The people in general are naturally inclined to enjoy, and you have encouraged them in that way in the name of religion. This is verily condemned and in quite unreasonable. Because they are guided under your instructions, they will accept such activities in the name of religion and will hardly care for prohibitions.*

"The Supreme Lord is unlimited. Only a very expert personality, retired from the activities of material happiness, deserves to understand this knowledge of spiritual values. Therefore those who are not so well situated, due to material attachment, should be shown the ways of transcendental realisation, by Your goodness, through descriptions of the transcendental activities of the Supreme Lord."*

5 "One who has forsaken his material occupations to engage in the devotional service of the Lord may sometimes fall down while in an immature stage, yet there is no danger of his being unsuccessful. On the other hand, a non devotee, though fully engaged in occupation duties, does not gain anything."*

6 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Considering what may happen when one, ignoring his regular and special material duties, engages only in devotional service to Lord Hari, (Narada) speaks this verse.

"Here someone may object: 'If, after abandoning his material occupational duties, one becomes perfect in devotional service, and thus attains the goal of life and becomes successful, then for him there is no anxiety. But if one dies before he attains devotional perfection, or if one falls down from devotional service, then his abandonment of occupation duties is a mistake."

"Fearing that someone might say this, (Narada Muni) says here that even if a devotee falls down from devotional service or dies (before he can attain perfection), still, because he has tasted the nectar of devotional service, there is no fear that he will be put into distress because he abandoned his material occupational duties. In this way (Narada) speaks this verse. The word 'va' (or) here is in the sense of a sceptical glance. He says, 'How can one who has tasted the

nectar of devotional service attain an inauspicious situation in a low birth?' The meaning here is that such a situation will never happen. This will not happen because of the desire for devotional service in his heart. That is the meaning. But what will they who do not engage in devotional service gain from their performance of material occupational duties? The word 'abhajatam' here is in the possessive case because it indicates the relationship to another word."

This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to Sri Vyasa.

Anuccheda 24

1 The statement "Devotional service should be performed" is discussed in the conversation of Srila Sukadeva Gosvami and Maharaja Pariksit. (Srila Sukadeva Gosvami said, in Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.2):

2 "Those persons who are materially engrossed, being blind to the knowledge of ultimate truth, have many subject matters for hearing in human society, O emperor."*

3 The phrase "grhesu grha-medhinam" hints that the people described here are materialists far from spiritual life. The word "atma-tattvam" here means "the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead". This is so because of what will be explained in the next verse.

Anuccheda 25

1 He explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.1.5):

"O descendent of King Bharata. one who desires to be free from all miseries must hear about, glorify, and also remember the Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul, the controller, and the saviour from all miseries."*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments: "By using the word 'sarvatma' here the speaker says that the Lord is most dear to everyone. By the word 'isvara' he says that the Lord's will cannot be thwarted. By the word 'harih' he says that the Lord removes the bondage (of repeated material existence). The phrase 'abhayam icchata' here means 'they who desire liberation'."

Liberation means attaining the Lord and thus becoming free of all miseries.

Anuccheda 26

1 After this he describes meditation on the universal form of the Lord, and then, speaking against that meditation, he describes devotional service (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.39):

2 "One should concentrate his mind upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who alone distributes Himself in so many manifestations just as ordinary persons create thousands of manifestations in dreams. One must concentrate the mind on Him, the only all-blissful Absolute Truth. Otherwise one will be misled and will cause his own degradation."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse means that one should concentrate his mind on the Lord (tam eva satyam bhajeta) who alone distributes Himself in so many manifestations (sa ekah sarva-dhi-vratty-anubhuta-sarvah). One should not be attached to anyone or anything else (na anyatra sajjat) because from that attachment (yatah) one falls (atma-patah) into the material world of repeated birth and death. The Lord alone experiences everything (anubhuta-sarvah) with His senses. The example is given

here of what is seen (iksita) by sleeping persons (svapna-jananam). Sometimes in a dream an ordinary living entity creates many different bodies and is able to see them all with his senses. In the same way the Supreme Lord sees everything with His senses. Because He is the master of the potencies of transcendental knowledge, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is never bound or limited (in His knowledge)."

4 Because with the activities of His mind the Lord sees everything, He is described with the words "sarva-dhi-vrtyi-anubhuta-sarvah". The Sruti-sastra (Bṛhad-aranyaka Upaniṣad 1.2.5) explains that before the creation of the material mind and senses "The Supreme Personality of Godhead could see." As a sleeping person can create anything he wishes in his dream, so the Supreme Lord, simply by His wish, can create anything. that is what is said here.

5 Because the Lord is thus aware of everything, He is called "Satyam" (the Supreme Truth), and because He is the creator of everything He should be worshipped (bhajeta). That is the meaning. A yogi perfect in meditation on the Lord's universal form, all his knowledge-acquiring senses fixed on the universal form, sees everything in the universal form. In this way he worships (bhajeta) Lord Narayana, who is the Supreme Truth (satyam), an ocean of bliss (ananda-nidhim), the universal form, and the Supersoul present in everyone's heart. One should not (na) become attached (sajjet) to any benefits (anyatra) obtained by meditating on the universal form, for that attachment (yatah) will make one fall (atma-patah) into the cycle of repeated birth and death.

An example is given here to show the Lord's being aware of everything. As an ordinary living entity may see everything in a dream so the Supreme Personality of Godhead sees everything.

This is described in the Vedic scriptures:

"(Before the creation) the Supreme Personality of Godhead saw (everything)."

-Bṛhad-aranyaka panisad 1.2.5

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead has all knowledge and power."

-Svetasvatara Upanisad 6.8

In this way the Sruti-sastra proves that the Supreme Lord has transcendental potencies, beginning with the potency of knowing everything.

Sri Vedanta-sutra explains:

"The scriptures say that the Lord created the material worlds as if in a dream."

3.2.1

"Because it is not manifested by the Lord's spiritual potency, the material world is manifested by His illusory potency (maya).

3.2.3

In these quotes from the Nyaya-sastra it is shown that the Lord's creation of everything in a dream is completely different from the wakefulness, dreaming and dreamless sleep experienced by conditioned souls in the material world.

By the two words "satyam" and "ananda-nidhim" it should be understood that the person described here is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

This verse was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 27

1 In the next chapter (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.14) he says:

"Unless the gross materialist develops a sense of loving service unto the Supreme Lord, the seer of both the transcendental and material worlds, he should remember or meditate upon the universal form of the Lord at the end of his prescribed duties."*

2 After the word "para" the word "avara" means "the places of the living entities headed by Brahma." Who is there? The Supreme Lord (visvesvare) who sees (drastari) everything, but who, because He is perfectly spiritual remains invisible to the conditioned souls. Devotional service (bhakti-yogah) is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.8):

"Others conceive of the Personality of Godhead residing within the body in the region of the heart and measuring only eight inches, with four hands carrying a lotus, a wheel of a chariot, a conchshell and a club respectively."*

In this way the way to make spiritual advancement is described. The word "kriyavasane" means "at the end of one's prescribed duties". One should do this until he develops a sense of loving devotional service to the Lord (bhakti-yogah).

Anuccheda 28

1 After describing in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.15-21 and 2.2.22-32 the method of knowledge and the method of yoga, by both of which one quickly or gradually attains liberation, and after explaining the superiority of the form of devotional service where one offers the fruits of his work to the Lord, (the speaker of Srimad Bhagavatam) declares, "How much greater is direct devotional service?" He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.33):

2 "For those who are wandering in the material universe, there is no more auspicious means of deliverance than what is aimed at in the direct devotional service of Lord Krsna."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments: "In the material world there are many persons seeking the path of liberation by performing austerities, yoga, and other spiritual activities, but they are not the right path. That is confirmed in this verse by the word "na hi" (certainly not). Than devotional service (yato bhakti-yogah) no (na) other (anyah) path is (bhavet) that is auspicious (sivah), that is to say happy and free from obstacles."

4 The activities that please the Lord are described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.6):

"The supreme occupation (dharma) for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service to the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self."*

Anuccheda 29

1 That devotional service is the conclusion of all the Vedas is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.34):

2 "The great personality Brahma, with great attention and concentration of the mind, studied the Vedas three times, and after scrutinizingly examining them, he ascertained that attraction for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna is the highest perfection of religion."*

3 Here the word "bhagavan" means "the demigod Brahma", and "kutasthah" means "with great attention and concentration of the mind". That is the meaning.

"trih" means "three times", "karstnyena" means "thoroughly", "brahma" means "the Vedas", and "anviksya" means "examining". In this way he ascertained (manisaya adhyavasyat) that attraction (ratih) for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna (atmani), an attraction that is also called devotional service, (is the highest perfection of religion).

The word "atmani" refers to Lord Hari. This is described in the Tantras:
"Because He is all-pervading (at) and because He is the supreme mother (ma), the Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, is called atma."

The word "bhagavan" here shows that the demigod Brahma, who is the master of the universe, has all-knowledge and a host of virtues. For this reason his studying the Vedas three times is only a pastime. He merely imitated the actions of other students of the Vedas. Seeing that they contained the limitless glories of Vaikuntha and were studied by numberless Brahmas, the demigod Brahma studied the Vedas. The word "kutasthah" means that while he was studying he manifested only one form.

The Lord Himself explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.21.42):

4 "What is the direction of all Vedic literatures? On whom do they set focus? Who is the purpose of all speculation? Outside of Me no one knows these things."*

5 Srila Sukadeva Gosvami also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.49):

"I offer my obeisances to Lord Krsna, the Supreme Person, who like a bumblebee collected the honey of the essence of Vedic knowledge and, to destroy their fear of repeated birth and death, made His servants drink it."

Anuccheda 30

1 How does attraction for the Supreme Personality of Godhead develop? That is explained in the following question and answer (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.19.38):

"Please let me know what a man should hear, chant, remember and worship, and also what he should not do. Please explain all this to me."*

The answer to this question is given in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.36):

2 "O King, it is therefore essential that every human being hear about, glorify and remember the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, always and everywhere."*

3 Here the word "ca" (and) hints at a host of devotional activities, beginning with serving the Lord's feet. The result obtained by engaging with devotional activities, beginning with hearing about the Lord, is described in these words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.2.37):

4 "Those who drink through aural reception, fully filled with the nectarean message of Lord Krsna, the beloved of the devotees, purify the polluted aim of life known as material enjoyment and thus go back to Godhead, to the lotus feet of Him (the Personality of Godhead)."

5 The word "punanti" (purify) here shows that the previously described path of meditating on the Lord's universal form should be rejected. Because devotional service itself brings great purification, one should engage only in devotional service. This verse was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 31

1 After, in the previous two chapters (Srimad Bhagavatam Canto One, Chapters One and Two), explaining that devotional service is better than fruitive work, yoga, and impersonal speculation, in the next chapter (Canto One, Chapter Three) he explains that devotional service to the Lord is better than the worship of the demigods. First he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.2.3-9):

"One who desires to be absorbed in the impersonal brahmajyoti effulgence should worship the master of the Vedas (Lord Brahma or Brhaspati, the learned priest), one who desires powerful sex should worship the heavenly king, Indra, and one who desires good progeny should worship the great progenitors called the prajapatis. One who desires good fortune should worship Durga-devi, the superintendent of the material world. One desiring to be very powerful should worship fire, and one who aspires only after money should worship the Vasus. One should worship the Rudra incarnations of Lord Siva if he want to be a great hero. One who wants a large stock of grains should worship Aditi. One who desires to attain the heavenly planets should worship the sons of Aditi. One who desires a worldly kingdom should worship Visvadeva, and one who wants to be popular with the general mass of population should worship the Sadhya demigod. One who desires a long span of life should worship the demigods known as the Asvini-kumaras, and a person desiring a strongly built body should worship the earth. One who desires stability in his post should worship the horizon and the earth combined. One who desires to become beautiful should worship the beautiful residents of the Gandharva planet, and one who desires a good wife should worship the apsaras and the urvasi society girls of the heavenly kingdom. One who desires domination over others should worship Lord Brahma, the head of the universe. One who desires tangible fame should worship the Personality of Godhead, and one who desires a good bank balance should worship the demigod Varuna. If one desires to be a greatly learned man he should worship Lord Siva, and if one desires a good marital relation he should worship the chaste goddess Uma, wife of Lord Siva."*

2 Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.2.10):

"A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word 'akamah' means 'pure devotee', 'sarva-kamah' means 'one who has all desires, whether those mentioned before or other desires', and 'purusam param' means 'the perfect and limitless Supreme Person'."

"Tivrena" means "firmly", "naturally" and "easily". The devotee's desires are automatically fulfilled. This is explained in Mahabharata:

4 "The devotees enjoy a great festival of service to Lord Visnu. They serve Him and meditate on Him, give charity to Him and offer the food in their homes to Him. In this way they attain a result even the demigods headed by Indra cannot attain."

5 The Supreme Lord Himself said to Sri Kardama Muni (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.21.24):

"My dear rsi, O leader of the living entities, for those who serve Me in

devotion by worshipping Me, especially persona like you who have given up everything unto Me, there is never any question of frustration."*

6 Therefore whatever desires one may have, one should earnestly (tivrena) worship (yajeta) the Lord. That worship will eventually lead to pure devotional service. That is elaborately taught here.

Who are higher: the pure devotees, or one who yearns for impersonal liberation? The answer is given in the words "A person full of all material desires (sarva-karma) should still worship the Personality of Godhead." That is the final conclusion.

Anuccheda 32

1 It is also said (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.3.11):

"All the different kinds of worshippers of multidemigods can attain the highest perfectional benediction, which is spontaneous attraction unflinchingly fixed upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, only by the association of the pure devotee of the Lord."*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here he explains how the previously described worshippers of the many demigods can attain devotional service. The worshippers (yajatam) of Indra and the other demigods, by, in the course of their demigod-worship (iha), associating with (sangatah) devotees of the Lord (bhagavata), attain unflinching (acalah) devotion (bhavah) for the Lord (bhagavati). In this way they attain (udayah) the supreme goal of life (nihsreyasa). All other things are insignificant in comparison to what they attain."

3 In Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.3.2-9 many results, beginning with expertise in enjoying the senses, were described. Later the devotion to the Lord that is attained by association with a devotee is also described. In this way the worshippers of the demigods attain a result much greater than what is attained by making offerings on a yupa of khadira wood.

Anuccheda 33

1 Later, Sri Saunaka Rsi confirmed the importance of devotional service. He said (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.17):

2 "Both by rising and by setting, the sun decreases the duration of life of everyone, except one who utilises the time by discussing topics of the all-good Personality of Godhead."*

3 In this verse "asau" means "the sun", "udyan" means rising, "astam" means "setting", and "harati" means "forcibly destroys, because it makes it useless." This happens to the life (ayuh) of all except (rte) one who utilises the time (ksano nitah) by discussing topics of the all-good Personality of Godhead (uttama-sloka-vartaya). This is so because (the latter persons, the devotees), attain all success. That is the meaning.

Anuccheda 34

1 Here someone may object: "Is it not so that this also happens to the life of the (devotees)? To answer this, he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.18):

2 "Do the trees not live? Do the bellows of the blacksmith not breathe? All around us, do the beasts not eat and discharge semen?"*

3 "Na mehanti" means "Do they not enjoy sex?" Thinking the materialistic human beings to be actually animals, he refers to them with the word "apare" (other animals).

Anuccheda 35

1 Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.19):

"Men who are like gods, hogs, camels and asses praise those men who never listen to the transcendental pastimes of Lord Sri Krsna, the deliverer from evils."*

2 Here he describes an animal like human being (purusah pausuh) who is praised by his followers, who are like dogs (sva) or other animals. If among these persons someone is very great or powerful he is still only a big animal. That is the meaning.

Anuccheda 36

1 In the next five verses he explains that the parts of such a person's body are all useless. He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.20):

2 "One who has not listened to the messages about the prowess and marvellous acts of the Personality of Godhead and has not sung or chanted loudly the worthy songs about the Lord is to be considered to possess earholes like the holes of snakes and a tongue like the tongue of a frog."*

3 "Na srnvatah" means "not hearing". Of such a person the ears are like useless holes. "Dusta" here means "wicked".

Anuccheda 37

1 Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.21):

"The upper portion of the body, though crowned with a silk turban, is only a heavy burden if not bowed down before the Personality of Godhead who can award mukti (freedom). And the hands, though decorated with glittering bangles, are like those of a dead man if not engaged in the service of the Personality of Godhead, Hari."*

2 Here "patta-kirita-justam" may mean either "wearing a silk turban" or "wearing a crown."

Anuccheda 38

1 The he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.22):

"The eyes which do not look at the symbolic representations of the Personality of Godhead Visnu (His forms, name, quality, etc.) are like those printed on the plumes of the peacock and the legs which do not move to the holy places (where the Lord is remembered) are considered to be like tree trunks."*

2 Their birth is like that of the trees. They are equal to trees. That is the meaning.

Anuccheda 39

1 Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.23):

"The person who has not at any time received the dust of the feet of the Lord's pure devotee upon his head is certainly a dead body. And the person who

has never experienced the aroma of the tulasi leaves from the lotus feet of the Lord is also a dead body, although breathing."*

2 Here "sri-visnu-padyah" means "clinging to His feet."

Anuccheda 40

1 Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.24):

"Certainly that heart is steel-framed which, in spite of one's chanting the holy name of the Lord with concentration, does not change when ecstasy takes place, tears fill the eyes and the hairs stand on end."*

2 Here the word "asma-saram" (steel-framed) means "very hard". The symptoms of ecstasy are described in the phrase beginning with the word "atha" (thus). The verse says that when (yada) ecstasy (vikarah) is not present then tears (jalam) do not fill the eyes (netre) and other ecstatic symptoms are not present in other parts of the body. That is the meaning. The king will confirm this when he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.80.3-4):

"The capacity for talking can be perfected only by describing the transcendental qualities of the Lord. The capacity for working with one's hands can be successful only when one engages himself in the service of the Lord with those hands. Similarly one's mind can be pacified only when he simply thinks of Krsna in full Krsna consciousness. He sees everywhere the presence of His worshipable Lord in His paramatma feature. The function of the ear can be perfected by simply by engagement in hearing the transcendental activities of the Lord.*

"The function of the head can be fully utilised when the head is engaged in bowing down before the Lord and His representative. If one is able to do nothing more, he can simply bow down before the Lord and His representative and drink the caranamrta, the water that has washed the lotus feet of the Lord or His devotee."*

In this way, in the first three chapters of Srimad-Bhagavatam (Canto One, Chapters One, Two and Three), it is explained that one should engage in devotional service to the Lord.

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments in his prefaces to the First, Second and Third Chapters of the Second Canto:

"In the first chapter meditation on the Lord's universal form by engaging in devotional activities beginning with hearing and chanting about the Lord is described."

4 "In the second chapter the mind's abandoning meditation on the Lord's universal form and accepting instead meditation on Lord Visnu, who is the witness of everything and the master of all, is described."

5 "In the third chapter the superiority of service to Lord Visnu, which is performed with great devotion, and which consists of many activities beginning with hearing about the Lord, is described as the sage listens."

This verse is spoken by Sri Saunaka Rsi to Sri Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 41

Also in the conversation of Brahma and Narada (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.5.9):

"Lord Brahma said: My dear boy Narada, being merciful to all (including me) you have asked all these questions because I have been inspired to see into the

proWess of the Almighty Personality of Godhead."*

Anuccheda 42

1 That devotional service is the conclusion of all Vedic scriptures is also confirmed by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.5.15-16):

"The Vedic literatures are made by and are meant for the Supreme Lord, the demigods are also meant for serving the Lord as parts of His body, the different planets are also meant for the sake of the Lord, and different sacrifices are performed just to please Him.*

"All different types of meditation or mysticism are means for realising Narayana. All austerities are aimed at achieving Narayana. Culture of transcendental knowledge is for getting a glimpse of Narayana and ultimately salvation is entering the kingdom of Narayana."*

2 This verse means that because Lord Narayana is the supreme object of worship therefore He is the subject matter described in the Vedas. Here someone may object: "Is it not so that the Vedas also describe other deities who are also worthy of worship?" That is true. Therefore this verse explains that the other deities, the demigods, are meant for serving the parts of Lord Narayana's body (naryanangajah). The different planets are also meant to attain His feet, and the different sacrifices are performed just to please Him. These things are done to give a little pleasure to Lord Narayana. That is the meaning. Yoga, that is astanga-yoga and sankhya-yoga, are means to attain Him. Austerity, which means concentration of the mind, is a means to attain Him, and the culture of transcendental knowledge is a means to attain Him. The culture of transcendental knowledge, yoga, and austerity are means to attain Him. What more need be said? He is the supreme goal (gatih) to be attained, the Supreme Brahman. This is so because all these things are manifested from Him and dependent on Him.

3 Therefore Lord Matsyadeva said to Satyavrata (Srimad Bhagavatam 8.24.38):

"You will be thoroughly advised and favoured by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about My glories, which are known as param brahma, will be manifest within your heart. Thus you will know everything about Me."*

The first verse quoted here was spoken by Lord Brahma to Sri Narada Muni.

Anuccheda 43

1 In the conversation Vidura and Maitreya the following question was asked (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.5.4):

"Therefore, O great sage, please give me instruction on the transcendental devotional service of the Lord, so that He who is situated in the heart of everyone can be pleased to impart from within, knowledge of the Absolute Truth in terms of the ancient Vedic principles delivered only to those who are purified by the process of devotional service."*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the words 'sam vartma' mean 'auspicious path'."

"Bhakti-pute" means "purified by love", and "sa-tattvam jnanam" means "knowledge of the Lord's manifestations, which begins with Brahman, Bhagavan and Paramatma." This verse was spoken by Sri Vidura to Sri Maitreya.

Anuccheda 44

1 The born and unborn demigods prayed (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.5.46-47):
"O Lord, persons who, because of their serious attitude, attain the stage of enlightened devotional service achieve the complete meaning of renunciation and knowledge and attain the Vaikunthaloka in the spiritual sky by drinking the nectar of Your topics.*"

2 "Others, who are pacified by means of transcendental self-realisation and have conquered over the modes of nature by dint of strong power and knowledge, also enter into You, but for them there is much pain, whereas the devotee simply discharges devotional service and thus feels no pain."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The word 'akuntha-dhisnyam' means 'Vaikunthaloka'."

"Visadasayah" means "abandoning all duplicity and accepting devotional service as the only goal of life." In the second of these verses the inferiority of both means and end of they who are attached to the path of philosophical speculation (jnana) is described. The word "apare" (others) here means "they who desire liberation". For them there is much labour and trouble (sramah). However, for they who accept the service of the Lord as the only goal of their lives there is no great labour and trouble. They always experience great bliss as a result of their devotional service and they also attain liberation as a by-product of that service. This verse was spoken by the born and unborn demigods to the Supreme Creator.

Anuccheda 45

1 Then Maitreya Muni spoke the following words of praise (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.1):

"The royal dynasty of King Puru is worthy to serve the pure devotees because all the descendants of that family are devoted to the Personality of Godhead. You are also born in that family, and it is wonderful that because of your attempt the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are becoming newer and newer at every moment."*

2 From this it is understood that the devotional service described here is the ultimate good. That is the meaning. This verse was spoken by Sri Maitreya.

Anuccheda 46

1 Sri Kapila explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.19):

"Perfection in self-realisation cannot be attained by any kind of yogi unless he engages in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for that is the only auspicious path, called akuto-bhaya. They are doubtless and fearless, and their entrance into the spiritual kingdom is guaranteed."*

2 The "perfection in self realisation" (brahma-siddhi) here is the direct appearance of the Absolute Truth.

Anuccheda 47

1 He also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.24.44):

"Therefore persons whose minds are fixed on the Lord engage in the intensive practice of devotional service. That is the only means for attainment of the final perfection of life."*

2 Here the word "tivrena" means "intensive" and "pure because it is not mixed with yoga, fruitive work or other things". (The Lord says), "With this devotional service (bhakti-yogena), which consists of many activities, beginning with hearing, they fix (arpitam sthiram) their minds (manah) on Me (mayi). In this way (etavan) they attain the final perfection of life (nihsreyasa). In this world (asmin) devotional service is the best path." This verse was spoken by Lord Kapiladeva.

Anuccheda 48

1 In the teaching of Sanatana Kumara, after he had already explained the path of philosophical knowledge (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.22.39-40):

"The devotees who are always engaged in the service of the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord, can very easily overcome hard-knotted desires for fruitive activities. Because this is very difficult, the non devotees - the jnanis and yogis - although trying to stop the waves of sense gratification, cannot do so. Therefore you are advised to engage in the devotional service of Krsna, the son of Vasudeva.*

2 "The ocean of nescience is very difficult to cross because it is infested with many dangerous sharks. Although those who are non-devotees undergo severe austerities and penances to cross that ocean, we recommend that you simply take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are like boats for crossing the ocean. Although the ocean is difficult to cross, by taking shelter of His lotus feet you will overcome all dangers."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments (on Srimad Bhagavatam 4.22.37):

"In Srimad Bhagavatam 4.22.37, the Lord said, 'Please try to understand (tam avehi) the truth I will teach you.' The Lord carefully gives that instruction in these two verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.22.39-40)."

He then comments on Srimad Bhagavatam 4.22.39-40):

"Here someone may object: Does not the Sruti-sastra (Taittiriya Upanisad 2.1.2) say, 'One who understands Brahman attains the Supreme?' How, then, is it possible that the jnanis and yogis cannot overcome the hard-knotted desires for fruitive activities?

"To answer this objection, the Lord speaks the next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.22.40). In that verse the word 'aplavesam' means 'They who have not taken shelter of the boat that is the Supreme Personality of Godhead to cross the ocean of nescience.' This verse says they find it very difficult to cross that ocean. By engaging in the difficult practices of yoga they hope to cross that ocean filled with sharks that are the six senses. One should take the boat (udupam) of the Lord's feet to cross that difficult to cross ocean (dustararnam).

4 Of these two paths (devotional service and impersonal speculation), which both have the same goal (to cross the ocean of nescience), the path of impersonal speculation is said to be very difficult to follow, whereas the path of devotional service of its own accord carries one to the destination. Here it is said that the impersonalists only desire to cross the ocean of nescience (titirsanti). They are not able actually to cross it. That is the meaning to be understood here. This verse was spoken by Sri Sanat-kumara to Sri Prthu.

Anuccheda 49

1 In this way (Sanat-kumara) instructed (King Prthu). Only wishing to

prove the practical effectiveness of devotional service, King Prthu engaged in devotional activities. Srimad-Bhagavatam (4.23.9-10) explains:

2 "Thus the best amongst human beings, Maharaja Prthu, followed that path of spiritual advancement which was advised by Sanat-kumara. That is to say, he worshipped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna."*

3 "Maharaja Prthu thus engaged completely in devotional service, executing the rules and regulations strictly according to principles, twenty four hours daily. This his live and devotion unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, developed and became unflinching and fixed."*

4 Here the word "tenaiva" means "in this way". This verse was spoken by Sri Maitreya.

Anuccheda 50

1 In the song of Lord Siva (Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.24.69):

"My dear sons of the King, just execute your occupational duty as kings with a pure heart. Just chant this prayer fixing your mind on the lotus feet of the Lord. That will bring you all good fortune, for the Lord will be very much pleased with you."*

2 Lord Siva continued (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.24.70):

"Therefore, O sons of the King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is situated in everyone's heart. He is also within your hearts. Therefore chant the glories of the Lord and always meditate upon Him continuously."*

3 Here Lord Siva says, "You should worship (pujayadhvam) Lord Hari (tam). This means "Do not perform ordinary material duties". "You should glorify (grnantah) and meditate (dhyayantah) on Him, the Supersoul situated in everyone's heart (atma-stham bhutesv avasthitam atmanan). Don't place the activities your mind and words in anything but Him. Always (asakrt) worship Him. Don't interrupt that worship with any other activity."

Anuccheda 51

1 Sri Narada Muni clarifies the nature of devotional service by describing what should and what should not be done. He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.9-13):

2 "The great sage Narada said: When a living entity is born to engage in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme controller, his birth, all his fruitive activities, his life-span, his mind and his words are all factually perfect.*

3 "A civilised human being has three kinds of births. The first birth is by a pure father and mother, and this birth is called birth by semen. The next birth takes place when one is initiated by the spiritual master, and this birth is called savitra. The third birth, called yajnika, takes place when one is given the opportunity to worship Lord Visnu. Despite the opportunities for attaining such births, even if one gets the life-span of a demigod, if one does not actually engage in the service of the Lord, everything is useless. Similarly, one's activities may be mundane or spiritual, but they are useless if they are not meant for satisfying the Lord.*

4 "Without devotional service, what is the meaning of severe austerities, the process of hearing, the power of speech, the power of mental speculation, elevated

intelligence, strength and the power of the senses?*

5 "Transcendental practices that do not ultimately help one realise the Supreme Personality of Godhead are useless, be they mystic yoga practices, the analytical study of matter, severe austerity, the acceptance of sannyasa, or the study of Vedic literature. All these may be very important aspects of spiritual advancement, but unless one understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, all these processes are useless.*

6 "Factually the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the original source of all self-realisation. Consequently, the goal of all auspicious activities - karma, jnana, yoga and bhakti - is the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

7 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In these verses is described the result of serving Lord Hari. Without serving Him, everything becomes worthless. That is the meaning. Here the word 'janma' (birth) means "the seminal birth from a pure father and mother, initiation with a sacred thread ceremony and initiation into the performance of Vedic-sacrifices. Even if one gets a life span as long as that of the demigods, what is the use of his words (vacobhiih), power of mental speculation (citta-vrttibhiih), power of the senses (indriya-radhasa), performance of yoga (yogena), analytical study of matter (sankhyena) or other (sreyobhir anyaih) auspicious activities, such as renunciation and following vows, if he does not serve Lord Hari?

8 Srila Sridhara Svami comments on Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.13:

"Here someone may object: 'How can it be that the results of all spiritual activities other than devotional service are worthless?' To answer this Narada says that Lord Hari (atma) is the goal (avadhiih) of all auspicious activities (sreyasam). This is true (arthatah) because He is more dear (priyah) than anyone or anything.

To this our objector may reply: 'That maya be, but why is Lord Hari the goal of all auspicious activities.'" To this Narada replies: 'He (atma), by casting aside all ignorance, reveals to everyone (sarvesam) their spiritual identity (atma-dah). Another interpretation of the word 'atma-dah' is that before Bali Maharaja and other devotees He appeared in His spiritual form as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and gave Himself as a gift to them. He is also dear (priyah) because His form is full of transcendental bliss."

9 The phrase "atma sarvesam api bhutanam" means that He is the Supersoul in all pure living entities. This is so because He is like the sun and they are like the rays of sunlight. For this reason it is said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.54-55):

10 "Therefore it is his own self that is most dear to every embodied living being, and it is simply for the satisfaction of this self that the whole material creation of moving and non moving entities exist.***

11 "You should know Krsna to be the original Soul of all living entities. For the benefit of the whole universe, He has, out of His causeless mercy, appeared as an ordinary human being. He has done this by the strength of His internal potency."*

12 The two "atmas" in this verse are the individual living entity and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The word "atma-dah" (He who gives Himself) means either that the Lord reveals Himself to His devotees or that the Lord places Himself under the control of His devotees. That is Srila Sridhara Svami's interpretation.

Anuccheda 52

1 Furthermore (in Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.14 it is said):

"As pouring water on the root of a tree energises the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality."*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"By satisfying Lord Hari one attains the same result as if he has satisfied the many demigods with many pious deeds. However, by worshipping the demigods one does not attain the result of satisfying Lord Hari. That is the example given in this verse. This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to the Pracetas.

Anuccheda 53

1 In this matter Lord Rsabhadeva's instructions to His sons should be consulted. There He said (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.3 and 5.5.25):

"Those who are interested in reviving Krsna consciousness and increasing their love of Godhead do not like to do anything that is not related to Krsna. They are not interested in mingling with people who are busy maintaining their bodies, eating, sleeping, mating and defending. They are not attached to their homes, although they may be householders. Nor are they attached to wives, children, friends or wealth. At the same time, they are not indifferent to the execution of their duties. Such people are interested in collecting only enough money to keep the body and soul together."*

"I am fully opulent, almighty and superior to Lord Brahma and Indra, the king of the heavenly planets. I am also the bestower of all happiness obtained in the heavenly kingdom and by liberation. Nonetheless, the brahmanas do not seek material comforts from Me. They are very pure and do not want to possess anything. They simply engage in My devotional service. What is the need of their asking for material benefits from anyone else?"*

2 At the end of his conversation with King Rahugana, a brahmana said (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.13.20):

"My dear King Rahugana, you are also a victim of the external energy, being situated on the path of attraction to material pleasure. So that you may become an equal friend to all living entities, I now advise you to give up your kingly position and the rod by which you punish criminals. Give up attraction to sense objects and take up the sword of knowledge sharpened by devotional service. Then you will be able to cut the hard knot of illusory energy and cross to the other side of the ocean of nescience."*

3 The knowledge (jnana) here is knowledge of devotional service.

Anuccheda 54

1 Sri Rahugana replied (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.13.21-22):

"This birth as a human being is the best of all. Even birth among the demigods in the heavenly planets is not as glorious as birth as a human being on this earth. What is the use of the exalted position of a demigod? In the heavenly planets, due to profuse material comforts, there is no possibility of associating with

devotees.*

2 "It is not at all wonderful that simply by being covered by the dust of your lotus feet, one immediately attains the platform of pure devotional service to Adhoksaja, which is not available even to great demigods like Brahma. By associating with you just for a moment, I am now freed from all argument, false prestige and lack of discrimination, which are the roots of entanglement in the material world. Now I am free from all these problems."*

3 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by a brahmana to King Rahugana.

Anuccheda 55

1 At the conclusion of His instructions to King Citraketu, Lord Sankarsana said (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.16.62):

"By the strength of one's discrimination one should give up the desire for fruitive results in the present life and in the next. Thus becoming experienced in transcendental knowledge, one should become My devotee."*

2 In Prahlada's teachings to the sons of the demons (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.6.1-2):

"One who is sufficiently intelligent should use the human form of body from the very beginning of life - in other words, from the tender age of childhood - to practice the activities of devotional service, giving up all other engagements. The human body is most rarely achieved, and although temporary like other bodies, it is meaningful because in human life one can perform devotional service. Even a slight amount of sincere devotional service can give one complete perfection.*

3 "The human form of life affords one a chance to return home, back to Godhead. Therefore every living entity, especially in the human form of life, must engage in devotional service to the lotus feet of Lord Visnu. This devotional service is natural because Lord Visnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the most beloved, the master of the soul, and the well-wisher of all other living beings."*

4 These verses say "Here (iha), in this human birth, one should engage in devotional service (bhagavatan dharman acaret). Because in a birth among the demigods there is an abundance of sense gratification, and because in a birth as an animal there is no power of discrimination, one should not waste his time when he has attained a human birth. Therefore he says, "From the beginning of childhood (kaumare) one should engage in devotional service." This is so because this (tad api) human birth is temporary (adhruvam) and rarely achieved (durlabham). The Vedic scriptures say that the human birth is the most valuable, because in it one can engage in the activities of devotional service. One should understand the human birth in that way.

5 In the second verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.6.2) he shows that the human birth is appropriate for engaging in devotional service. He says "The human form of life (iha) affords one a chance to return home, back to Godhead (purusasya visnoh padopasarpanam). This is so because Lord Visnu is naturally dear (priyah) to the living entities (bhutanaam). They love Him and He loves them. Here the word "atma" means "the Supersoul", and it is said the devotees attain His abode (padopasarpanam). Here the Lord is called "isvara" (the controller) because He has

the power to do anything, undo anything and change anything. He is also called "suhrt" (the friend) because He wishes auspiciousness for everyone.

6 Prahlada Maharaja concludes (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.6.26):

"Religion, economic development and sense gratification - these are described in the Vedas as tri-varga, or three ways to salvation. Within these three categories are education and self-realisation, ritualistic ceremonies performed according to Vedic injunction, logic, the science of law and order, and the various means of earning one's livelihood. These are the external subject matters of study in the Vedas, and therefore I consider them material. However, I consider surrender to the lotus feet of Lord Visnu to be transcendental."*

7 Here the word "iksa" means "self-realisation". "Tad etat nigamasya" means "all the meanings of the Vedas", and the words "suhrah paramasya pumsah" refer to the Supersoul, who stays in everyone's heart. (Here Prahlada Maharaja says) "However, I consider (many) surrender (svatmarpanam) to Him transcendental (satyam)." This is so because it brings a transcendental result. Or, it is so because it brings a valuable result, whereas the result of performing material duties and other non devotional activities is worthless. That is the meaning. This verse was spoken by Prahlada Maharaja to the sons of the demons

Anuccheda 56

1 He also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.29):

"Of the different processes recommended for disentanglement from material life, the one personality explained and accepted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead should be considered all-perfect. That process is the performance of duties by which love for the Supreme Lord develops."*

2 The meaning of the previous verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.28) and this verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.29) is: "Of the many thousands (sahasranam) of different processes (upaya) for burning the seed of fruitive activities (karma-bija-nirharanam) Lord Sri Narada (bhagavata) taught me this one. This is the best of the many thousands of these processes because it quickly (anjas) and without difficulty brings love (ratih) for the Supreme Lord (isvare bhagavati). The burning of the seed of fruitive activities is a natural by-product of the development of that love. That is the meaning.

Anuccheda 57

1 He describes the different parts of that process in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.30):

"One must accept the bona fide spiritual master and render service unto him with great devotion and faith. Whatever one has in one's possession should be offered to the spiritual master, and in the association of saintly persons and devotees one should worship the Lord, hear the glories of the Lord with faith, glorify the transcendental qualities and activities of the Lord, always meditate on the Lord's lotus feet, and worship the Deity of the Lord strictly according to the injunctions of the sastra and guru."*

Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.33):

2 "By these activities (as mentioned above) one is able to cut down the influence of the enemies, namely lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness and jealousy, and when thus situated one can render service to the Lord. In this way one surely

attains the platform of loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

3 That is not the only result obtained by performing the previously described activities that begin with serving the spiritual master with faith and devotion. One is also able to cut down the influence of the enemies, namely lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness and jealousy, and then one can render service (bhaktih kriyate) to the Lord.

Anuccheda 58

1 In the beginning of his description of the duties of varnasrama-dharma, where he discusses the duties of human beings in general, (Sri Narada Muni said in Srimad Bhagavatam 7.11.7):

2 "The Supreme Being, the Personality of Godhead, is the essence of all Vedic knowledge, the root of all religious principles, and the memory of great authorities. O King Yudhisthira, this principle of religion is to be understood as evidence. On the basis of this religious principle, everything is satisfied, including one's mind, should and even one's body."*

3 Here the phrase "the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the root of religious principles (dharmasya mulam bhagavan) means that the Lord is the authority that establish religious principles. He is the authority that supports the scriptures (smrtam) and they who know the scriptures (tad-vidam). For both these external things are worthless. These must be about devotional service to the Lord. Therefore Sri Manu-samhita explains:

4 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead is all the Vedas, the root of religion, the memory and good character of they who understand the Vedas, the spiritual activities of the saintly devotees, and satisfaction of the self."

5 This is also described in Srimad Bhagavatam (1.1.2):

"Completely rejecting all religious activities which are materially motivated, this Bhagavata Purana propounds the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart. The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all. Such truth uproots the threefold miseries. This beautiful Bhagavatam, compiled by the great sage Vyasadeva (in his maturity), is sufficient in itself for God Realisation. What is the need of any other scripture? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of Bhagavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart."*

6 By the religion of devotional service the "atma", that is the heart, mind, and self are pleased. This is described in Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.6:

"The supreme occupation (dharma) for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendental Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self."*

Because the word "su" which here means "to the highest degree", is used here, this verse describes direct devotional service, where there are many activities, beginning with hearing about the Lord.

7 At the end of this description of religious duties is the story of Narada Muni. There it is said that in his first birth, as a Gandharva, he performed devotional service by singing about the Lord. In his second birth, this time as a sudra, he heard the Lord's glories in the company of saintly devotees. In this way

Narada became an intimate associate of the Lord. He did not perform the duties of varnasrama-dharma.

8 There is also the following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.15.68):

"O King Yudhisthira, because of your service to the Supreme Lord, all of you Pandavas defeated the greatest dangers posed by numerous kings and demigods. By serving the lotus feet of Krsna, you conquered great enemies, who were like elephants, and thus you collected ingredients for sacrifice. By His grace, may you be delivered from material involvement."*

Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The common people follow the duties of varnasrama-dharma, but for the devotees devotional service fulfils all the goals of their lives. This is seen in this verse describing the Pandavas."

The meaning of this is that the devotees engage in direct devotional service to the Lord.

9 That devotional service is superior to performance of varnasrama-dharma is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.17):

"One who has forsaken his material occupations to engage in devotional service of the Lord may sometimes fall down while in an immature stage, yet there is no danger of his being unsuccessful. On the other hand, a non-devotee, though fully engaged in occupational duties, does not gain anything."*

Later in this book (Srimad Bhagavatam) the activities of devotional service, which should be performed by all living entities, and which bring the greatest benefit, are listed in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.11.11):

"These are the general principles...hearing about the activities and instructions given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead (who is the shelter of the saintly persons), chanting about these activities and instructions, always remembering these activities and instructions, trying to render service, performing worship, offering obeisances, becoming a servant, becoming a friend and surrendering one's whole self."*

10 Sri Jada Bharata's faith in devotional service is described in this prose passage (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.9.3.):

"Due to his being especially gifted with the Lord's mercy, Bharata Maharaja could remember the incidents of his past life. Although he received the body of a brahmana, he was still very much afraid of his relatives and friends who were not devotees. He was always very cautious of such association because he feared that he would again fall down. Consequently he manifested himself before the public eye as a madman-dull, blind, and deaf - so that others would not try to talk to him. In this way he saved himself from bad association. Within he was always thinking of the lotus feet of the Lord and chanting the Lord's glories, which save one from the bondage of fruitive action. In this way he saved himself from the onslaught of non devotee associates."

Sri Jada Bharata understood the foolishness of his offensive brothers and he also understood that the spiritual science of devotional service is superior to the duties of varnasrama-dharma. This is described in the following prose passage (Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.9.9):

"After the father died, the nine stepbrothers of Jada Bharata, who considered Jada Bharata dull and brainless, abandoned the father's attempt to give Jada Bharata a complete education. The stepbrothers of Jada Bharata were learned

in the three Vedah-the Rg Veda, Sama Veda, and Yajur Vedas - which very much encourage fruitive activity. The nine brothers were not at all spiritually enlightened in devotional service to the Lord. Consequently they could not understand the highly exalted position of Jada Bharata."*

11 Sri Nrsimha Purana explains:

"Brahma engaged the sages headed by Sanaka in renunciation, the sages headed by Marica in fruitive work, and Narada Muni in unalloyed devotional service."

12 Here the word "tena" (by him) refers to Lord Brahma. Only an appropriate and forced explanation will place the internal activities of direct devotional service, which begin with hearing about the Lord, among the external activities of varnasrama-dharma. In other places are described the activities of devotional service when they are mixed with other activities. This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to Sri Yudhisthira.

Anuccheda 59

1 In the story of Jayanta this question was asked (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.30):

"Therefore, O completely sinless ones, I ask you to kindly tell me what the supreme good is. After all, even half a moment's association with pure devotees within this world of birth and death is a priceless treasure for any man."***

The answer is given in this verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.33);

2 "I consider that one whose intelligence is constantly disturbed by his falsely identifying himself with the temporary material world can achieve real freedom from fear only by worshipping the lotus feet of the infallible Supreme Lord. In such devotional service all fear ceases entirely."***

4 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In the first verse he explains what is the supreme good."

The question is asked (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.31):

"Please speak about how one engages in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, if you consider me capable of properly hearing these topics. When a living entity offers loving service to the Supreme Lord, the Lord is immediately satisfied and in return He will give even His own self to the surrendered soul."***

The answer is given (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.34-36):

"Even ignorant living entities can very easily come to know the Supreme Lord if they adopt those means prescribed by the Supreme Lord Himself. The process recommended by the Lord is to be known as bhagavata-dharma, or devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."***

"O king, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall."***

"In accordance with the particular nature one has acquired in conditioned life, whatever one does with body, words, mind, senses, intelligence, or purified consciousness one should offer to the Supreme, thinking, 'This is for the pleasure of Lord Narayana.'***

Then, after saying this, he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.37):

"When the living entity is attracted by the material energy, which is separate from Krsna, he is overpowered by fear. Because he is separated from the

Supreme Personality of Godhead by the material energy, his conception of life is reversed. In other words, instead of being the eternal servant of Krsna, he becomes Krsna's competitor. This is called 'viparyay smrtih'. To nullify this mistake, one who is actually learned and advanced worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead as his spiritual master, worshipful Deity, and source of life. He thus worships the Lord by the process of unalloyed devotional service."*

In this verse the word "bhaktya" means "by engaging in devotional service that consists of many activities beginning with hearing and chanting the Lord's glories and that is not mixed with impersonal speculation and other things." "Ekaya" means "without interruption and performed with love."

Anuccheda 60

1 Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.36) explains:

"In accordance with the particular nature one has acquired in conditioned life, whatever one does with body, words, mind, senses, intelligence or purified consciousness one should offer to the Supreme, thinking "This is for the pleasure of Lord Narayana."***

From this it is understood that even ordinary work becomes devotional service when offered to the Lord. This path, the path of always working for the Lord, seems to be opposed to the path of always performing the devotional activities that begin with hearing and chanting the Lord's glories. Actually, either of these paths may be followed with steady conviction. This steadiness is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.38):

2 "Although the duality of the material world does not ultimately exist, the conditioned soul experiences it as real under the influence of his own conditioned intelligence. This imaginary experience of a world separate from Krsna can be compared to the acts of dreaming and desiring. When the conditioned soul dreams at night of something desirable or horrible, or when he daydreams of what he would like to have or avoid, he creates a reality that has no existence beyond his own imagination. The tendency of the mind is to accept and reject various activities based on sense gratification. Therefore an intelligent person should control the mind, restricting it from the illusion of seeing things separate from Krsna, and when the mind is thus controlled he will experience actual fearlessness."***

3 Here the word "dvayah" means "the duality of material existence, which began with the pradhana, or unmanifested modes of nature." although this duality does not exist (avidyamanah) in the heart of one who is pure, it is manifest (avabhati) in the mind (dhiya) of one rapt in meditation (dhyatuh) on ignorance. In this way it is manifest to the living entity who is originally pure. It is like (yatha) a dream (svapna) or thinking of desires (manoratha). That is the meaning. In this way the mind accepts some things and rejects others. This activity of the mind should be controlled. In that way, by engaging in unwavering devotional service, one becomes fearless. That is the meaning.

Anuccheda 61

1 Fearing that someone may object, saying, "Is it not true that when one attempts to control the mind by repeated practice of yoga interruptions in his devotional service remain?" I say that one who engages in devotional service is

attached to devotional service is successful in controlling the mind. The way this is done is explained in this second quotation (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.39):

2 "An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation and should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The whole names of Krsna are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world."***

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The words 'janmani karmani namani tadarthakani' mean 'the Lord's births, deeds and names'. Fearing that someone may say 'It is not possible for one to properly understand the Lord's names', this verse says 'One should wander freely, hearing and chanting the famous holy names of the Lord.' Here the word 'asangah' means 'without material desire'."

This verse was spoken by Sri Kavi Videha.

Anuccheda 62

1 Rejecting fruitive work and other activities, he prescribes direct devotional service (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.44-47):

"Childish and foolish people are attached to materialistic, fruitive, although the actual goal of life is to become free from such activities. Therefore, the Vedic injunctions indirectly lead one to the path of ultimate liberation by first prescribing fruitive religious activities, just as a father promises his child candy so that the child will take his medicine."***

2 "If an ignorant person who has not conquered the material senses does not adhere to the Vedic injunctions, certainly he will engage in sinful and irreligious activities. Thus his reward will be repeated birth and death."***

3 "By executing without attachment the regulated activities prescribed in the Vedas, offering the results of such work to the Supreme Lord, one attains the perfection of freedom from the bondage of material work. The material fruitive results offered in the revealed scriptures are not the actual goal of Vedic knowledge, but are meant for stimulating the interest of the performer."***

4 "One who desires to quickly cut the knot of false ego, which binds the spiritual soul, should worship the Supreme Lord, Kesava, by the regulations found in Vedic literatures such as the tantras."***

5 Srila Sridhara Svami comments on 11.3.44:

The word 'paroksa-vadah' means 'concealment of the real nature of something by claiming it is something different that what it really is'. The Sruti-sastra (Aitareya Upanisad 1.3.14) explains, 'They call the four Vedic priests catur-huta. In this way the demigods are fond of using paroksa-vada'. In this verse the paroksa-vada is in the phrase beginning with the words 'karma-moksaya'.

6 "Here someone may object, 'Is it not true that the activities (karmani) given (dhatte) in the Vedas are meant not for ultimate liberation but only for attainment of Svargaloka?' To answer this he speaks the words beginning with 'balanam anusasanam'. Here the example of medicine (agadam) is given. By making him desire khana-laddu candies, a father makes his child drink medicine. First he makes the child drink the medicine, and then he gives him the candy. The goal

here is not to give the child some sandy. The goal is to cure him of the disease. In the same way the Vedas offer many material benefits only to give activities by which the living entities attain liberation."

7 Sridhara Svami comments on Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.45:

"Here someone may object, 'Is it not true that if liberation were the real goal of life then the speaker here would first have rejected all fruitive work?' To answer this he speaks this verse (11.3.45)."

8 The word "ajnah" is defined in this way: A person whose intelligence is full of faith in the devotional activities that begin with hearing about the Lord is a wise man (jna). A person who has no such faith is a fool (ajna). That is the meaning. In the same way a person who has not conquered his material senses (ajitendriyah) cannot attain renunciation from the host of material pleasures that culminate in the happinesses experienced by the demigod Brahma, and neither can he be eager to understand the nature of the Supreme Spirit. That is the meaning.

9 Srimad Bhagavatam (11.20.9) explains:

"As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by sravanam kirtanam visnoh, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions."***

This verse describes a person who has neither faith nor renunciation.

10 By working in defiance of the Vedic injunctions (vikarmana) a person attains death after death (mrtyor mrtym upaiti) and he attains tortures as painful as dying. That is the meaning (in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.45). However, by somehow renouncing all work one will not attain liberation. It is by offering one's work to the Lord that one attains His mercy. This kind of work is described (in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.46) in the word "vedoktam" (the works prescribed by the Vedas). Therefore one is not forbidden to perform the works prescribed by the Vedas (vedoktam eva kurvanah), for by performing them one attains the perfection of freedom from the bondage of material work (naiskarmyam labhate siddhim).

11 Here someone may object: "Is it not true that by working in that way one will become attached to fruit of that work?" Here the reply is: No. By working in that way one remains unattached (nihsangah) and attains freedom from the bondage of material work (naiskarmyam). This happens because the results of work are offered (arpitam) to the Supreme Lord (isvare).

12 Here someone may object: "Is it not true that if one works because of hearing in the Vedas of a certain result, then he will certainly attain the result of that work?" The answer given here is: No. The Vedas describe these results only to attract (rocanartha) the people to perform these beneficial activities. Here the example is given of promising khanda-laddu candies to convince a child to drink medicine. In this way one should understand the Vedas' offering of certain attractive results for performing certain activities.

13 Sri Brhad-aranyaka Upanisad explains:

"He is a miserly man who does not solve the problems of life as a human and who thus quits this world like the cats and dogs, without understanding the science of self-realisation."*

3.8.10

"By observing celibacy and studying the Vedas, brahmanas try to understand the Supreme."

4.4.22

When they understand the highest knowledge learned by performing Vedic sacrifices and other auspicious activities described in the Vedas, they engage in activities that bring no karmic result.

The scriptures say, "Desiring to attain Svargaloka, one performs sacrifices." One who desires to attain Svargaloka is certainly not desireless. Still, eventually by performing auspicious activities he is automatically promoted to become free from karmic results. If this is so, then what can be said of attaining the Lord's mercy by offering to Him the fruits of one's work? That is the meaning.

14 In this way one gradually becomes free of karma. Srimad Bhagavatam (4.31.14), however, explains:

"As pouring water on the root of a tree energises the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality."*

This verse describes the way to quickly satisfy all occupational duties, become free of karmic reactions, and cut the knot of false ego in the heart. This way is also explained in these words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.3.47):

"One who desires to quickly cut the knot of false ego, which binds the spiritual soul, should worship the Supreme Lord, Kesava by the regulations found in Vedic literatures such as the tantras."**

This verse means that one who desires to quickly (asu) cut the knot of false ego in the heart (hrdaya-granthim), which binds the spiritual soul (aparatmanah), should abandon all other duties and (and), worship Lord Kesava according to the regulations found in Vedic literatures such as the tantras (tantroktena).

Anuccheda 63

One should not see the various demigods as independent of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.55):

"Thus the worshipper of the Supreme Lord should recognise that the Personality of Godhead is all-pervading and should worship Him through His presence in fire, the sun, water and other elements, in the heart of the guest one receives in one's home, and also in one's own heart. In this way the worshipper will very soon achieve liberation."***

Here the word "atmanam" means "the Supersoul". This verse was spoken by Sri Avirhotra to Videha.

Anuccheda 64

1 They who do not worship the Lord are described in the passage beginning with these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.1):

"My dear Yogendras, all of you are most perfect in knowledge of the science of the self. Therefore, kindly explain to me the destination of those who for the most part never worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who are unable to quench their material desires and who are not in control of their own selves."***

2 This question is answered in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.2-3):
"Each of the four social orders, headed by the brahmanas, was born

through different combinations of the modes of nature, from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Lord in His universal form. Thus the four spiritual orders were also generated.***

3 "If any of the members of the four varnas and four asramas fail to worship or intentionally disrespect the Personality of Godhead, who is the source of their own creation, they will fall down from their position into a hellish state of life."***

4 Previously, in Sri Drumila's instructions, in the prayers the demigods offered to Lord Narayana, it was said (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.4.10):

"The demigods place many obstacles on the path of those who worship You to transcend the temporary abodes of the demigods and reach Your supreme abode. Those who offer the demigods their assigned shares in sacrificial performances encounter no such obstacles. But because You are the direct protector of Your devotee, he is able to step over the head of whatever obstacles the demigods place before him."***

5 This verse means: "They who offer (dadatah) the demigods their assigned shares (sva-bhagan) in sacrificial performances encounter no obstacles from the demigods (sura-krtah). However, out of envy the demigods do place many obstacles before they who serve You (tvam)." The word "yadi" here is used to show a conclusion, as in the statement "yadi vedah pramanam" (The Vedas are the highest authority). The conclusion here is "You (tvam) become their protector (avita). In this way one who serves You places (dhatte) his foot (padam) on the head (murdhni) of any obstacle (vighna). Making these obstacles like a stairway, the devotee goes to the Lord. That is the meaning. Hearing of the fate of the conditioned souls in the material world, King Videha asked the question posed in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.1. Sri Camasa Muni answered that question in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.2-3 and especially in the last line of Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.3, by describing the terrible condition of the conditioned souls. This verse was spoken by Sri Camasa Muni to the King of Videha.

Anuccheda 65

1 Now that it is established that devotional service should be performed, the King of Videha asks another question (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.19):

"In what colours and forms does the Supreme Personality of Godhead appear in each of the different ages, and with what names and by what types of regulative principles is the Lord worshipped in human society."***

2 The sage answered (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.20):

"In each of the four yugas, or ages-Krta, Treta, Dvapara and Kali - Lord Kesava appears with various complexions, names and forms and is thus worshipped by various processes."***

3 Here the words "nanaiva vidhina" mean "by many different paths". This verse was spoken by Sri Karabhajana Muni to the king of Videha.

Anuccheda 66

1 Also, conversing with Uddhava, the Supreme Personality of Godhead said (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.7.6):

"Now you should completely give up all attachment to your personal friends and relatives and fix your mind on Me. Thus being always conscious of

Me, you should observe all things with equal vision and wander throughout the earth."***

2 The Lord Himself said (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.4.31):

"Uddhava is not inferior to Me in any way because he is never affected by the modes of material nature. Therefore he may remain in this world in order to disseminate specific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead."*

Because the Lord Himself thus described Uddhava as a perfect liberated soul, the Lord's giving instruction to Uddhava (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.7.6) is not meant for Uddhava but for others. In this way the verse should be understood to be addressed to others. Speaking in an oblique way, the Lord's intention here is to say, "Following your path, the devotees should wander over the earth." Here the word "sama-drk" means "Being neither repelled nor enamoured by those things that have no relationship with Me." The word "tu" (indeed) emphasises that one should renounce those things that have no relation to the Lord. That is what the Lord intended to say here.

3 Before the Lord even gave this instruction, Uddhava Himself said (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.4.46-49):

"Simply by decorating ourselves with the garlands, fragrant oils, clothes and ornaments that You have already enjoyed, and by eating the remnants of Your meals, we, Your servants will indeed conquer Your illusory energy."***

4 "Naked sages who seriously endeavour in spiritual practice, who have raised their semen upward, who are peaceful and sinless members of the renounced order, attain the spiritual abode called Brahman."***

5-6 "O greatest of mystics, although we are conditioned souls wandering on the path of fruitive work, we will certainly cross beyond the darkness of this material world simply by hearing about Your Lordship in the association of Your devotees. Thus we are always remembering and glorifying the wonderful things You do and the wonderful things You say. We ecstatically recall Your amorous pastimes with Your confidential conjugal devotees and how You boldly smile and move about while engaged in such youthful pastimes. My dear Lord, Your loving pastimes are bewilderingly similar to the activities of ordinary people within this material world."***

Anuccheda 67

1 Impersonal knowledge (jnana-yoga) cannot bring any good result. Devotional service, however, very easily brings one to the desired goal. Real knowledge is only manifested in relation to devotional service, which itself brings one to the real goal of life. The Lord describes devotional service in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.17):

2 "For the purpose of maintaining his body, a liberated sage should not act, speak or contemplate in terms of material good or bad. Rather, he should be detached in all material circumstances, and taking pleasure in self-realisation, he should wander about engaged in this liberated life-style, appearing like a retarded person to outsiders."***

3 After thus describing the jnana-yoga, the Lord in order to show the nature of devotional service, explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.18):

"If through meticulous study one becomes expert in reading Vedic literature but makes no endeavour to fix one's mind on the Supreme Personality of

Godhead, then one's endeavour is certainly like that of a man who works very hard to take care of a cow that gives no milk. In other words, the fruits of one's laborious study of Vedic knowledge will simply be the labour itself. There will be no other tangible result."*

4 The word "para-brahman" means "the Absolute Truth" and, considering Them the same, does not distinguish between the impersonal Brahman and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When one studies the Vedas he must also fix his mind on the para-brahman. That is said here. If many millions of times one carefully studies the Upanisads and the other parts of the Vedas he will not attain faith in the para-brahman. But if one fixes his mind on the form, pastimes, and other features of the supremely opulent Personality of Godhead, then by studying the Vedas he will attain faith in the impersonal Brahman and the Supreme Personality of Godhead both.

5 For this reason it is said (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.4.40):

"For a person who is suffering in the fire of countless miseries and who desires to cross the insurmountable ocean of material existence, there is no suitable boat except that of cultivating devotion to the transcendental taste for the narrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's pastimes."*

6 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.40):

"My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge, or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavours are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labour becomes fruitless."*

Anuccheda 68

One should not study even Vedic literatures that do not contain descriptions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's transcendental pastimes. The Lord Himself says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.19):

"My dear Uddhava, that man is certainly most miserable who takes care of a cow that gives no milk, an unchaste wife, a body totally dependent on others, useless children or wealth not utilised for the right purpose. Similarly, one who studies Vedic knowledge devoid of My glories is also most miserable."***

In this verse the word "maya" (by Me) means "by the Supreme Personality of Godhead" and "hinam" means "without descriptions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's pastimes and features."

Anuccheda 69

1 The Lord explains the words "maya hinam" (without Me) in the next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.20):

"My dear Uddhava, an intelligent person should never take to literatures that do not contain descriptions of My activities, which purify the whole universe. Indeed, I create, maintain and annihilate the entire material manifestation. Among all My pastime incarnations, the most beloved are Krsna and Balarama. Any so-called knowledge that does not recognise these activities of Mine is simply barren and is not acceptable to those who are actually intelligent."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse says 'What is the use of a scripture that does not contain descriptions of My pastimes, which purify the whole universe? In these pastimes I create, maintain and annihilate the universe. For that reason My pastimes purify the universe. As I think of My pastime-incarnations I say that My birth and pastimes as Lord Rama and Lord Krsna are the best. They are desired by the worlds. They are a great reservoir of spiritual love. Without them even the words of the Vedas are worthless. A wise man will not study such worthless Vedas.'"

3 This is also confirmed by Sri Narada Muni in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.22):

"Learned circles have positively concluded that the infallible purpose of the advancement of knowledge, namely austerities, study of the Vedas, sacrifice, chanting of hymns, and charity, culminates in the transcendental descriptions of the Lord, who is defined in choice poetry."*

4 For this reason Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the avatar that purifies Kali-yuga said:

"The Four Vedas and the Upanisads are far from the nectar descriptions of Lord Hari. That is why these scriptures do not make the heart melt, the body tremble, the body's hairs stand erect, and eyes become filled with tears."

Anuccheda 70

1 After thus explaining that by engaging in devotional service one attains the perfection of all knowledge, he describes the final conclusion of following the path of knowledge (jnana) in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.21):

2 "Coming to this conclusion of all knowledge, one should give up the false conception of material variety that one imposes upon the soul and thus cease one's material existence. The mind should be fixed on Me, since I am all-pervading."***

3 The word jijnasaya is explained in the beginning of this chapter (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.1):

"My dear Uddhava, due to the influence of the material modes of nature, which are under My control, the living entity is sometimes designated as conditioned and sometimes liberated. In fact, however, the soul is never really bound up or liberated, and since I am the supreme Lord of Maya, which is the cause of the modes of nature, I also am never to be considered liberated or in bondage."***

Anuccheda 71

1 After thus describing devotional service mixed with impersonal knowledge, in the next four verses, treating that mixed service with contempt, he describes pure devotional service, which contains perfect knowledge. He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.22):

2 "My dear Uddhava, if you are not able to free your mind from all material disturbance and thus absorb it completely on the spiritual platform, then perform all your activities as an offering to Me, without trying to enjoy the fruits."*

3 This verse is like Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.1 which says:

"The demigods place many obstacles on the path of those who worship You to transcend the temporary abodes of the demigods and reach Your supreme abode. Those who offer the demigods their assigned shares in sacrificial performances encounter no such obstacles. But because You are the direct

protector of Your devotee, he is able to step over the head of whatever obstacle the demigods place before him."***

They who desire impersonal knowledge are actually like the materialists. Assuming that Uddhava is like them, Lord Krsna speaks this verse.

4 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.4):

"My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge, or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavours are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labour becomes fruitless."*

On this evidence Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.22 should be understood to mean, "It is not possible for you to fix your mind on Brahman simply by following the path of impersonal speculation without devotional service. Therefore you should take shelter of the path of devotional service, which is served by all the virtues of the path of knowledge and all other paths also."

Then the Lord explains how to ascend the stairway of devotional service. He says, "Perform all your activities as an offering to Me."

This verse may also be interpreted to mean, "If because in your previous births you had not engaged in devotional service, you wish to understand impersonal Brahman, and you are not able to fix your mind on Brahman, then perform all your activities as an offering to Me."

Here the word "samacara" means "offer" and "nirapeksah" means "without any other desire".

Anuccheda 72

1 Then the Lord says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.23-24):

"My dear Uddhava, narrations of My pastimes and qualities are all-auspicious and purify the entire universe. A faithful person who constantly hears, glorifies and remembers such transcendental activities, who through dramatic performances relives My pastimes, beginning with My appearance, and who takes full shelter of Me, dedicating his religious, sensual and occupational activities for My satisfaction, certainly obtains unflinching devotional service to Me, the eternal Personality of Godhead."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In this verse the Lord describes confidential devotional service, which is eventually attained by offering fruits of one's work to the Lord, and which is performed by a person in pure goodness."

3 Here the word "abhinayan" means "the devotees portray the Lord's birth and pastimes in theatrical performances". Here "dharma" means "pious activities, such as giving cows in charity", and "mad-arthe" means "when these pious activities are performed to celebrate great festivals in honour of My birthday and other days sacred to Me." "Kama" means "the desire to live in a great palace and other desires like that", and "mad-arthe" means "when that desire is fulfilled by living in My temple in order to serve Me". "Artha" means "great wealth in My service". "Mad-apasrayah" means "in one's heart taking shelter of Me and no one else". "Labhate niscalam bhaktim mayi" means "he attains eternally unwavering devotional service to Me, service that consists of many activities beginning with

hearing about Me". By tasting the happiness of devotional service one treats impersonal liberation and other things with contempt. The object of the devotees' service is eternal and never changes or ceases to exist. For this reason the Lord says He is "sanatane" (eternal).

Anuccheda 73

1 Fearing that someone may ask, "What does one do on the path of devotional service?" or "How does one attain faith in the path of devotional service?" the Lord tells what and how in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.25):

2 "One who has obtained pure devotional service by association with My devotees always engages in worshipping Me."*

3 Here "bhaktya" means "with attraction to devotional service", "sah" means "the devotee" and "mam upasita" means "worships Me". The Lord says, "In this way the devotee easily attains knowledge of the spiritual form of Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Anuccheda 74

1 Then the Lord says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.25):

"Thus he very easily goes to My abode, which is revealed by My pure devotees."*

2 Here "anjasa" (very easily) means "by engaging in devotional service" and "padam" means "My abode". This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 75

1 The path of devotional service is most perfect, important, and ancient because it is personally taught by the Lord. Other paths, being taught by various conditioned souls according to their own speculations, are insignificant by comparison and relatively modern. This is confirmed by Uddhava (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.1-2):

2 "My dear Krsna, the learned sages who explain Vedic literature recommend various processes for perfecting one's life. Considering the varieties of viewpoint, my Lord, please tell me whether all these processes are equally important, or whether one of them is supreme."**

3 "My dear Lord, You have clearly explained the process of unalloyed devotional service, by which a devotee removes all material association from his life, enable him to fix his mind on You."***

4 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word 'sreyamsi' means 'the means for attaining the best thing'. Here he asks 'Are all these processes important, or is one of them supreme?' To establish that one of them actually is supreme, he speaks the second of these two verses. Here he says, 'The other paths are not spoken directly by You (the Lord), but the path of devotional service is directly spoken by You. Others claim that their methods are the best ways to attain perfection. How can they all be the best ways to attain it? How can they all give the same result? One of them must be the best.'"

Anuccheda 76

1 The Supreme Personality of Godhead answered (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.3):

"By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma because I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the Vedas."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

Because it brings the best result devotional service is the best. The other paths, each according to its own nature, bring results insubstantial as flowers imagined to float in the sky, although the followers think their path is the best. To distinguish between these different paths and to establish the actual message of the Vedas, the Lord speaks these seven verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.3-9). Here the word "mad-atmakah" means "he who fixes his thoughts on Me."

"Mad-atmakah" may also mean "manifested from My transcendental form". The Lord's form is free from the modes of material nature. This will be proved later in this book.

Anuccheda 77

1 Next the Lord gives the reason the followers of these different patha each claim their path is the best (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.9):

2 "O best among men, the intelligence of human beings is bewildered by My illusory potency, and thus, according to their own activities and whims, they speak in innumerable ways about what is actually good for people."***

3 This verse means that according to their own natures their intelligence is bewildered by My illusory potency (man-maya-mohita-dhiyah). In this way they proclaim many different things (anekantam) to be the goal of life (sreyah) and the way to attain the goal of life.

Anuccheda 78

Then the Lord says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.20):

"My dear Uddhava, neither through astanga-yoga (the mystic yoga-system to control the senses), nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vedas, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of sannyasa can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me."*

Anuccheda 79

1 The Lord also says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.22):

"Neither religious activities endowed with honesty and mercy nor knowledge obtained with great penance can completely purify one's consciousness if they are bereft of loving service to Me."*

2 Here "dharma" means "religious duties performed without material motive", "vidya" means "the spiritual knowledge taught in the Vedic scriptures", and "tapah" means "austerities performed to become able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead".

Anuccheda 80

1 The Lord describes devotional service in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.26):

"When a diseased eye is treated with medicinal ointment it gradually recovers its power to see. Similarly, as a conscious living entity cleanses himself of material contamination by hearing and chanting the pious narrations of My glories, he regains his ability to see Me, the Absolute Truth, in My subtle spiritual form."*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Someone may object, 'Is it not true that the Sruti-sastra says:
One who knows Brahman attains the Supreme.

-Taittiriya Upanisad 2.1.2

and

By understanding the Supreme one crosses beyond death

- Svetasvatara Upanisad 3.8

and therefore one attains the Supreme by attaining knowledge and becoming free of ignorance? What is the need for devotional service?'

"Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.26 answers this objection. There the word 'atma' means 'the heart', and 'parimrjyate' means 'becomes purified'. This occurs by hearing (sravanah) My names and the sacred songs about Me (mat-punya-gatha). The path of knowledge is a secondary aspect of devotional service. It is not completely separate from devotional service."

This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 81

1 Discussing the relative merits of the yogas of work (karma-yoga), knowledge (jnana-yoga), and devotional service (bhakti-yoga), in the next five verses the Lord treats knowledge and work with contempt and declares the primacy of devotional service. There, to show contempt for the diligent performance of austerities, He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.29):

2 "When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshipping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed."***

3 Here the word "ma" means "to Me".

Anuccheda 82

1 To show contempt for the diligent pursuit of knowledge the Lord says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.30):

"Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when I am seen as the Supreme Personality of Godhead".*

2 The Lord is seen (drste), that is He personally appears before the devotee, by the power of devotional service.

Anuccheda 83

1 There the Lord also says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.31):

"Therefore, for a devotee engaged in My loving service, with mind fixed on

Me, the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation is generally not the means of achieving the highest perfection within this world."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In this verse three methods of attaining spiritual realisation are described. Because devotional service does not depend on any other method, and because other methods depend on devotional service, devotional service is the best. That is the conclusion of the three verses that begin here. Here the word 'mad-atmanah' means 'one whose mind is fixed on Me', and 'sreyah' means 'the best method of spiritual realisation'."

3 This verse means that for they who engage in devotional service there is no need for diligent practice of austerities and yoga. Some follow the path that immediately leads to liberation and others follow a path that gradually leads to liberation. The Lord describes the path that gradually leads to devotional service (Bhagavad-gita 18.54):

"One who is thus transcendently situated at once realises the Supreme Brahman. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed to every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me."*

In pure love of God, which is the king of the results attained by engaging in devotional service, there is no scope for the cultivation of impersonal knowledge or the following of any other spiritual path.

Anuccheda 84

1 Whatever good results are attained by following the path of jnana and other spiritual paths are also attained by engaging in devotional service. The Lord confirms this in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.32-33):

2-3 "Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties and all other means of perfecting life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions."***

4 Here the Lord says, "Anything (sarvam) that may be attained by other (itaraih) spiritual paths, such as going on pilgrimage to holy places and following religious vows, My devotee (mad-bhaktah) attains (labhate) by engaging in My devotional service (mad-bhakti-yogena). He attains it easily (anjasa) and without any great effort." What is the everything (sarvam) mentioned here? The Lord answers with the words "svargapavargam" (promotion to Svargaloka or liberation). "Svarga" means "material happiness" and "apavarga" means "the happiness of liberation, which is attained by gradually becoming situated in the platform of pure goodness". Then the Lord describes a happiness greater than even the happiness of impersonal liberation. He says "mad-dhama" (My abode), which refers to the realm of Vaikuntha. Sometimes one's material desires help him attain devotional service. King Citraketu's desire to attain Svargaloka is an example of that. How his material desire helped him attain devotional service is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.17.2-3):

5 "Being praised by great sages and saints and by the inhabitants of Siddhaloka and Caranaloka, Citraketu, the most powerful mystic yogi, wandered about enjoying life for millions of years. With bodily strength and senses free from deterioration, he travelled within the valleys of Sumeru Mountain, which is

the place of perfection for various kinds of mystic power. In those valleys he enjoyed life with the women of Vidyadhara-loka by chanting the glories of the Supreme Lord, Hari."*

6 Sri Sukadeva Gosvami and other devotees desire liberation. For example, only when Lord Krsna Himself promised that the illusory potency maya would stay far away, was Sukadeva Gosvami willing to leave his mother's womb. This is described in Sri Brahma-vaivarta Purana.

7 That the desire for liberation may also help one attain devotional service is explained by the Lord Himself (Bhagavad-gita 18.54):

"One who is thus transcendently situated at once realises the Supreme Brahman. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed to every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me."*

8 They who desire to attain Vaikunthaloka and there become a personal associated of the Lord and they who with love desire to directly serve the Lord's lotus feet attain their desires. This is described in Srimad Bhagavatam (3.15.25) in these words:

"Persons whose bodily features change in ecstasy and who breathe heavily and perspire due to hearing the glories of the Lord are promoted to the kingdom of God, even though they do not care for meditation and other austerities. The kingdom of God is above the material universes, and it is desired by Brahma and other demigods."*

Anuccheda 85

1 At the end of the Eleventh Canto the Lord says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.22):

"This process is the supreme intelligence of the intelligent and the cleverness of the most clever, for by following it one can in this very life make use of the temporary and unreal to achieve Me, the eternal reality."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the Lord says, 'Devotional service to Me is attained by the proper use of intelligence (buddhi) and cleverness (manisa). It reveals the eternal reality (satyam and amrtam). By engaging in devotional service in this birth (iha) a person using the temporary (martyena) and unreal (anrtena) human body, which is subject to death, can attain Me (ma)'. That is real intelligence and cleverness. Here 'buddhi' means 'the intelligence, or the power of discrimination and manisa means cleverness'".

3 This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.72.21):

"Many persons, such as Hariscandra, Rantideva, Unchavrtti, Mudgala, Sibi, Bali, and the legendary hunter and pigeon, all attained the permanent world by utilising their temporary assets."***

4 The reason for this is given in the previous description of devotional service. The verse quoted in the beginning of this section was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 86

1 At the end of Srila Sukadeva Gosvami's teachings the activities of hearing the Lord's glories are described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.4.40):

"For a person who is suffering in the fire of countless miseries and who

desires to cross the insurmountable ocean of material existence, there is no suitable boat except that of cultivating devotion to the transcendental taste for the narrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's pastimes."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The words 'na anyah plavah' means that there is no other way to cross. Therefore, as far as one is able, one should hear the descriptions of the Lord."

Of all the activities of devotional service hearing about the Lord is the first, because without it is not possible to perform the others. That is explained in other chapters of Srimad Bhagavatam and it is also explained in these words at the conclusion of Srila Sukadeva Gosvami's teachings (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.5.1):

3 "This Srimad Bhagavatam has elaborately described in various narrations the Supreme Soul of all that be-the Personality of Godhead, Hari-from whose satisfaction Brahma is born and from whose anger Rudra takes birth."***

4 After saying this, he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.5.13):

"Beloved King Pariksit, I have narrated to you the topics you originally inquired about-the pastimes of Lord Hari, the Supreme Soul of the universe. Now, what more do you wish to hear?"*

5 Here, at the end of Sukadeva's teachings, he says that because hearing the previously described pastimes of the Lord is the best of spiritual activities, therefore devotional service, which has that hearing among its activities, is the best of spiritual paths.

Before that conclusion, however, Sukadeva Gosvami gives a lesson in jnana-yoga. e says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.5.2):

"O King, give up the animalistic mentality of thinking, 'I am going to die'. Unlike the body, you have not taken birth. There was not a time in the past when you did not exist and you are not about to be destroyed."***

When this is understood one can have faith in devotional service. There this teaching is intended to make one steady in devotional service. To His unalloyed devotees the Supreme Personality of Godhead gives the greatest kind of liberation. He gives it to them because they have faith in Him and because for that reason they have given up all fear of death. After hearing the truth of jnana-yoga, King Pariksit had faith in devotional service, as will be described later in the Srimad Bhagavatam.

6 Actually King Pariksit had faith in Lord Krsna from the very first. This is seen in the First Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.19.5):

"Maharaja Pariksit sat down on the banks of the Ganges to concentrate his mind in Krsna consciousness, rejecting all other practices of self-realisation, because transcendental loving service to Krsna is the greatest achievement, superseding all other methods."*

There it is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.19.7):

"Thus the king, the worthy descendant of the Pandavas, decided once and for all and sat on the Ganges' bank to fast until death and give himself up to the lotus feet of Lord Krsna, who alone is able to award liberation. So, freeing himself from all kinds of associations and attachments, he accepted the vows of a sage."*

Because he had faith in Lord Krsna, King Pariksit became free of fear. He said (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.19.15):

"O brahmanas, just accept me as a completely surrendered soul, and let mother Ganges, the representative of the Lord, also accept me in that way, for I

have already taken the lotus feet of the Lord into my heart. Let the snake-bird-or whatever magical thing the brahmana created-bite me at once. I only desire that you all continue singing the deeds of Lord Visnu."*

After hearing the truths of jnana-yoga, King Pariksit became firm in his faith toward Lord Krsna. Then, not considering the three-verse instruction in jnana-yoga to be very important, he engaged in devotional service by hearing about the Lord. In that way he attained the goal of life. Then he said (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.6.2-4):

7 "I have now achieved the purpose of my life, because a great and merciful soul like you has shown such kindness to me. You have personally spoken to me this narration of the Supreme Personality of godhead, Hari, who is without beginning or end."***

8 "I do not consider it at all amazing that great souls such as yourself, whose minds are always absorbed in the infallible Personality of Godhead, show mercy to the foolish conditioned souls, tormented as we are by the problems of material life."***

9 "I have heard from you this Srimad-Bhagavatam, which is the perfect summary of all the Puranas and which perfectly describes the Supreme Lord, Uttamahsloka."***

10 Accepting the spiritual knowledge given by his guru, the king explained why he was not afraid of the serpent Taksaka. He asked permission to chant the Supreme Lord's holy names, meditate on Him, and dedicate his words and thoughts to Him. The king said (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.6.5-6):

11 "My Lord, I have no fear of Taksaka or any other living being, or even of repeated deaths, because I have absorbed myself in that purely spiritual Absolute Truth, which you have revealed and which destroys all fear."***

12 "O brahmana, please give me permission to resign my speech and the functions of all my senses unto Lord Adhoksaja. Allow me to absorb my mind, purified of lusty desires, within Him and to thus give up my life."***

13 Then, in another verse, he says, "Now I have the perfections of knowledge, which dispels all ignorance and brings the happiness in the heart that comes from seeing the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead." He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.6.7):

14 "You have revealed to me that which is most auspicious, the supreme personal feature of the Lord. I am now fixed in knowledge and self-realisation, and my ignorance has been eradicated."***

15 Here the word "pada" means "the lotus feet of the Lord". In the First Canto it was said (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.18.16):

"O Suta Gosvami, please describe those topics of the Lord by which Maharaja Pariksit, whose intelligence was fixed on liberation, attained the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of Garuda, the king of birds. Those types were vibrated by the son of Vyasa (Srila Sukadeva)."

16 Srila Suta Gosvami further explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.18.2 and 4):

"Furthermore, Maharaja Pariksit was always consciously surrendered to the Personality of Godhead, and therefore he was neither afraid nor overwhelmed by fear due to a snake-bird which was to bite because of the fury of a brahmana boy."*

17 "This was so because those who have dedicated their lives to the

transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead of whom the Vedic hymns sing, and who are constantly engaged in remembering the lotus feet of the Lord, do not run the risk of having misconceptions even at the last moment of their lives."*

18 Further explanations are found in the Twelfth Canto Third Chapter and the final chapter of the First Canto. In the First Canto King Pariksit asked (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.19.37):

"You are the spiritual master of great saints and devotees. I am therefore begging you to show the way to perfection for all persons, and especially for one who is about to die."*

19 In answer to the king's question, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami taught him about meditation on and glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He said (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.3.49-51):

20 "Therefore, O King, endeavour with all your might to fix the Supreme Lord Kesava within your heart. Maintain this concentration upon the Lord, and at the time of death you will certainly attain the supreme destination."**

21 "My dear King, the Personality of Godhead is the ultimate controller. He is the supreme soul and the supreme shelter of all beings. When meditated upon by those about to die, He reveals to them their own eternal spiritual identity."**

22 "My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mahamantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom."*

23 In these verses "tatah" means "on Lord Kesava", "avihitah" means "concentrating your thoughts", and "atma-bhavam" means "devotion to the Lord". Meditating on the Lord is performed with great difficulty. However, glorifying the Lord is very easily done. That is the meaning.

24 This is also stated in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.33-2-3-1:

"For those who are wandering in the material universe, there is no more auspicious means of deliverance than what is aimed at in the direct devotional service of Lord Krsna.*

"The great personality Brahma, with great attention and concentration of the mind, studied the Vedas three times, and after scrutinizingly examining them, he ascertained that attraction for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna is the highest perfection of religion.*

"The Personality of Godhead Lord Sri Krsna is in every living being along with the individual soul. And this fact is perceived and hypothesized in our acts of seeing and taking help from the intelligence.*

"O King, it is therefore essential that every living being hear about, glorify and remember the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, always and everywhere.*

"Those who drink through aural reception, fully filled with the nectarean message of Lord Krsna, the beloved of the devotees, purify the polluted aim of life known as material enjoyment and thus go back to Godhead, to the lotus feet of Him (the Personality of Godhead).*

"Sri Sukadeva Gosvami said: Maharaja Pariksit, as you have inquired from me as to the duty of the intelligent man who is on the threshold of death, so I have answered you."*

In this way the conclusion of the scriptures is that one should engage in pure devotional service, which has many different activities.

25 Srimad Bhagavatam (2.2.37) explains:

"Those who drink through aural reception, fully filled with the nectarean message of Lord Krsna, the beloved of the devotees,, purify the polluted aim of life known as material enjoyment and thus go back to Godhead, to the lotus feet of Him (the Personality of Godhead)."*

From this it may be seen that the statement that one should hear the narrations of the Supreme Lord's transcendental pastimes is the final, highest conclusion of the scriptures.

26 It was only to create a situation where faith in devotional service could be manifested that saintly Sukadeva Gosvami said (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.5.2):

"O King, give up the animalistic mentality of thinking, 'I am going to die.' Unlike the body, you have not taken birth. There was not a time in the past when you did not exist, and you are not about to be destroyed."***

For this reason it should be understood that the final conclusion of Sukadeva Gosvami's teachings is that one should engage in devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

27 That King Pariksit's questions were intended to bring replies describing devotional service and nothing else is confirmed in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.8.3. where the king says:

"O greatly fortunate Sukadeva Gosvami, please continue narrating Srimad Bhagavatam so that I can place my mind upon the Supreme Soul, Lord Krsna, and, being completely freed of material qualities, thus relinquish this body."*

28 That one should hear the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the final conclusion of the Vedic scriptures is again confirmed by Srimad Bhagavatam in these words (12.5.1 and 12.4.40):

"This Srimad Bhagavatam has elaborately described in various narrations the Supreme Soul of all that be-the Personality of Godhead, Hari from whose satisfaction Brahma is born and from whose anger Rudra takes birth."***

"For a person who is suffering in the fire of countless miseries and who desires to cross the insurmountable ocean of material existence, there is no suitable boat except that of cultivating devotion to the transcendental taste for the narrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's pastimes."***

Anuccheda 87

1 At the end of his instructions, Sri Suta Gosvami speaks five verses describing devotional service. In the first of these he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.12.53):

"Knowledge of self-realisation, even though free from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Infallible (God). What, then, is the use of even the most properly performed fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilised for the devotional service of the Lord?">*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse explains that devotional service, which begins with hearing the glories of the Lord, is much more important than speculative knowledge (jnana) or fruitive work (karma). Here 'naiskarmyam' means 'Brahman', 'yaj-jnanam',

means 'the path that reveals Brahman', and 'niranjanam' means 'free from material designations'. If a path is devoid of a conception of God (acyuta-bhava-varjitam) it does not look well (na sobhate). That means that the Supreme Lord will not become revealed by following such a path."

Anuccheda 88

1 Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.12.34):

"The great endeavour one undergoes in executing the ordinary social and religious duties of the varnasrama system, in performing austerities, and in hearing from the Vedas, culminates only in the achievement of mundane fame and opulence. but by respecting and attentively hearing the recitation of the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune, one can remember His lotus feet."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The activities of varnasrama-dharma (varnasramacaradisū) are performed with great (parah) labour (parisramah), but still they bring only material fame (yasah) and opulence (sriyam). They do not bring the highest goal of life. The highest goal of life is to attentively hear the transcendental qualities (gunanuvada) of the Supreme Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune (sridhara), and remember (avismrtih) His lotus feet (pada-padmāyoh)."

Anuccheda 89

Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.12.55):

"Remembrance of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet destroys everything inauspicious and awards the greatest good fortune. It purifies the heart and bestows devotion for the Supreme Soul along with knowledge enriched with realisation and renunciation."***

Anuccheda 90

1 Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.12.56):

"O most eminent of brahmanas, you are all indeed extremely fortunate, since you have already placed within your hearts Lord Sri Narayana-the Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller and the ultimate soul of all existence-beyond whom there is no other good. You have undeviating love for Him, and thus I request you to worship Him."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In these two verses he addresses the hearers. He says, 'O most eminent of Brahmanas (dvijagryah), please always (sasvat) worship (bhajata) Lord Narayana (sri-narayanam), who has entered (avivesya) your hearts (atmani).' The verb here is respectfully used in the imperative mood. The word 'bhuri-bhagah' means that they have performed many pious deeds. What is the Lord like? He is the Supersoul present in the hearts of all (akhilatma-bhutam), the Lord who should be worshipped by all (devam), the Supreme Lord beyond whom there is no other god (adevam). What is He like? He is the supreme controller (isam). Therefore 'You (yuyam) who are fortunate (bhuri-bhagah) because you have performed many austerities and other pious deeds, should worship (bhajata) Lord Narayana (narayanam)."

Sridhara Svami's intention here is to say that by worshipping Lord

Narayana one attains the auspicious result of having performed many austerities and pious deeds.

Anuccheda 91

1 Then he says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.12.57):

"I have also now been fully reminded of the science of God, which I previously heard from the mouth of the great sage Sukadeva Gosvami. I was present in the assembly of great sages who heard him speak to King Pariksit as the monarch sat fasting until death."***

2 Here he says "I have been reminded of the Supreme Truth (atma-tattvam), Lord Narayana (narayana) who is present in the hearts of all (akhilatma-bhutam). Now I yearn to attain Him." That is the meaning. He says, "From the mouth of the great sage I (me) heard (srutam) about the Supreme Truth (atma-tattvam)." These verses were spoken by Srila Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 92

1 In this way, in this beautiful Purana, in the teachings that have come from conversations between guru and disciple, the truth that devotional service is the highest spiritual path described in the Vedic literature is proved.

2 This is seen in the following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.22):

"Please describe all these incidents if they relate to the topics of Lord Krsna. The devotees of the Lord are accustomed to licking up the honey available from the lotus feet of the Lord."*

3 In all the Itihasas there are many similar quotations. Afraid of increasing the volume of this book, I will not quote them all. In other places they may be seen.

4 Srimad Bhagavatam (6.3.22) explains:

"Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society."*

5 Here the word "pumsam" means "of the living entities" and "paro dharmah" means "the religion of the entire world". There is no religion better than this. Then he describes the nature of this religion (etavan). He says it is direct devotional service (bhakti-yogah), which begins with chanting of the holy name of the Lord (grahanadibhih). The word "eva" (indeed) here clearly indicates that it is different from any other kind of religion. If the activities of devotional service, beginning with chanting the Lord's holy name were meant to attain the same results attained by fruitive work and other similar paths, then devotional service would not be superior. When one is an offender he will use devotional service to attain these insignificant goals. That is the meaning. Therefore devotional service is not meant to give results that are temporary. This verse was spoken by Sri Yama to his soldiers.

Anuccheda 93

This is also explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.1.17):

"The path followed by pure devotee, who are well behaved and fully endowed with the best qualifications, is certainly the most auspicious path in this material world. It is free from fear, and it is authorised by the sastras."*

The path here is the path of devotional service to Lord Narayana. This

verse is spoken by Sri Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 94

1 That devotional service is the result attained by hearing all Vedic scriptures is explained in these words, which proclaim "How much greater is devotional service!" (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.13.4):

"Persons who hear from a spiritual master with great labour and for a long time must hear from the mouths of pure devotees about the character and activities of pure devotees. Pure devotees always think within their hearts of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, who awards His devotees liberation."*

2 Here "pumsam srutasya" means "of the understanding of the Vedas", meaning, "arthah" means "what should be done", and "iditah" means "is proclaimed". What is that? One should hear (anusravanam) about the character and activities (tat-tad-gunanam) of pure devotees, who (yesam) think within their hearts (hrayesu) of the lotus feet (padaravindam) of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who awards liberation (mukundasya). That is the meaning.

3 This is also described in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.28:

"In the revealed scriptures, the ultimate object of knowledge is Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead. The purpose of performing sacrifice is to please Him. Yoga is for realising Him. All fruitive activities are ultimately rewarded by Him only. He is supreme knowledge, and all severe austerities are performed to know Him. Religion (dharma) is rendering loving service unto Him. He is the supreme goal of life."*

Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.34 explains:

"The great personality Brahma, with great attention and concentration of the mind, studied the Vedas three times, and after scrutinizingly examining them, he ascertained that attraction for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna is the highest perfection of religion."*

4 In the Brhat-sahasra-nama from the Padma Purana it is said:

"Krsna is the origin of Lord Visnu. He should always be remembered and never forgotten at any time. All the rules and prohibitions mentioned in the sastras should be the servants of these two principles."*

5 In both the Skanda Purana Prabhasa-khanda and the Linga Purana it is said:

"By scrutinizingly reviewing all the revealed scriptures and judging them again and again, it is now concluded that Lord Narayana is the Supreme Absolute Truth and thus He alone should be worshipped."*

6 The Vedarpana-mantra (3.13) explains:

"My unborn Lord Visnu, who is the father of austerities and knowledge and the deliverer from troubles, and for whose sake the knowers of Brahman perform austerities, become dear to me."

Anuccheda 95

1 Devotional service is the incomparable final result obtained by performing the activities of varnasrama-dharma prescribed by the Vedic scriptures. Srimad Bhagavatam (10.47.24) explains:

2 "Devotional service unto Lord Krsna is attained by charity, strict vows, austerities and fire sacrifices, by japa, study of Vedic texts, observance of regulative

principles and, indeed, by the performance of many other auspicious practices."***

3 The auspicious activities beginning with giving charity, described here should be performed for the satisfaction of Sri Krsna. That should be understood. Srimad Bhagavatam (4.31.9) explains:

"When a living entity is born to engage in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme controller, his birth, all his fruitive activities, his life-span, his mind and his words are all factually perfect."*

4 In Sri Brhan-naradiya Purana it is said:

"They who have pure devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the deliverer from troubles, attain pious credits that take many thousands and millions of births to earn in other ways."

5 In the Agastya-samhita it is said:

"By following vows, fasting, controlling the senses, and performing many sacrifices for many millions of years one attains devotion to Lord Krsna, the husband of the goddess of fortune."

6 The superiority of devotional service is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.8):

"The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labour if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead."*

Srimad Bhagavatam (12.12.54) says:

"The great endeavour one undergoes in executing the ordinary social and religious duties of the varnasrama system, in performing austerities and in hearing from the Vedas culminates only in the achievement of mundane fame and opulence. But by respecting and attentively hearing the recitation of the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune, one can remember His lotus feet."*

The verse quoted in the beginning of this section was spoken by Sri Uddhava to the goddesses of Vraja.

Anuccheda 96

1 The cultivation of transcendental knowledge is also described in Srimad Bhagavatam. By engaging in devotional service one attains transcendental knowledge. This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.5):

"O almighty Lord, in the past many yogis in this world achieved the platform of devotional service by offering all their endeavours unto You and faithfully carrying out their prescribed duties. Through such devotional service, perfected by the processes of hearing and chanting about You, they came to understand You. O infallible one, one could easily surrender to You and achieve Your supreme abode."*

2 This verse means: "O Lord (bhuman), in this world (iha) many yogis (bahavo pi yoginah), unable to attain transcendental knowledge by practice of yoga, offered (arpita) to You (tvayi) their ordinary prescribed duties (nija-karma) and in that way, by engaging in devotional service (bhaktya), which made them become attracted to hearing about You (kathopanitaya) and thus enabled them to approach You, they easily (anjah) understood (vibudhya) and directly experienced all knowledge, beginning with knowledge of the true nature of the self, and

culminating in knowledge of the Personality of Godhead, and in this way they attained the supremely confidential abode (gati)."

3 In Bhagavad-gita 10.8-11, the Lord revealed the nature of pure devotional service:

"I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who perfectly know this engage in My devotional service and worship me with all their hearts.*

"The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are surrendered to Me and they derive great satisfaction and bliss enlightening one another and conversing about Me."*

"Those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.*

4 "To show them special mercy, I, dwelling in their hearts destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance."*

Anuccheda 97

1 All other ways to attain other goals of life are also said to have their roots in devotional service. Srimad Bhagavatam (10.81.19) explains:

2 "The worship of His feet is the root cause of any person's attainment of heaven or liberation, of all sorts of prosperity in the subterranean regions or on the earth, or of mystic perfections."*

3 Srimad Bhagavatam (8.23.16) explains:

"There may be discrepancies in pronouncing the mantras and observing the regulative principles, and, moreover, there may be discrepancies in regard to time, place, person and paraphernalia. But when You Lordship's holy name is chanted, everything becomes faultless."*

Srimad Bhagavatam (11.5.2-3) again explains:

"Each of the four social orders, headed by the brahmanas, was born through different combinations of the modes of nature, from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Lord in His universal form. Thus the four spiritual orders were also generated."***

"If any of the members of the four varnas and four asramas fail to worship or intentionally disrespect the Personality of Godhead, who is the source of their own creation, they will fall down from their position into a hellish state of life."***

In this way it should be understood that one should perform devotional service always and in all ways. The many things that cannot be attained by external, non-devotional activities, may be attained by engaging in devotional service.

4 Skanda Purana explains:

"When performed by they who have no devotion for Lord Visnu, the pious activities described in the Sruti and Smṛti bring results that torture the body, results like the sins of prostitutes."

5 Sri Yudhisthira explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.72.4):

"Purified persons who constantly serve the slippers on Your feet, meditate upon them and glorify them as the destroyers of all inauspiciousness are sure to realise the cessation of material existence, O lotus-naved one. Even if they have some desires, they will obtain the fulfilment of these, whereas other person are

never satisfied in the pursuit of material desires."***

6 It is said in Brhan-naradiya Purana:

"As water gives life to everyone, so devotional service gives life to the attainment of desires."

7 The verse quoted in the beginning of this section was spoken by Sridama-viprah.

Anuccheda 98

1 In this way it is shown that devotional service gives life to these various methods by which one attains his desires. Therefore, in all the Vedas it is said that one should perform devotional service. Also, without even performing any other activities one can simply perform devotional service alone. This is shown in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.10):

"A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead."*

2 In Sri Visnu Purana, Pulaha Muni said:

"What is not attained when the Supreme Lord, who is the deliverer from evils, who in Vedic yajnas is the Yajna-purusa, and who in yoga is the Supreme Person, is pleased?

3 "Without performing any other activities, a person who takes shelter of Lord Narayana automatically attains the four goals of life."

4 Therefore the result of hearing all the Vedic scriptures is that one comes to understand that he should engage in devotional service to the Lord, who Himself confirms this in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.3):

"By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma because I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the Vedas."***

5 This being so, they who are not very wise worship Lord Visnu in order to attain the various benefits otherwise attained by the other spiritual processes beginning with karma-yoga. Because of committing offenses, these people's worship of the Lord brings them only the fulfilment of these desires and nothing more. In this way one need only engage in devotional service to fulfil these desires. However, much more than this, devotional service gives, the greatest benefit. Srimad Bhagavatam (5.19.27) explains:

6 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead fulfils the material desires of a devotee who approaches Him with such motives, but He does not bestow benedictions upon the devotee that will cause him to demand more benedictions again. However, the Lord willingly gives the devotee shelter at His own lotus feet, even though such a person does not aspire for it, and that shelter satisfies all his desires. That is the Supreme Personality's special mercy."*

7 This verse means "He certainly (satyam) fulfils the requests (arthitam) of the human beings (nrnam) who ask (arthitah) Him." He never gives something that will lead one astray. In that sense He is not always "artha-dah" (the bestower of benedictions). He only gives benedictions that, once given, the receiver does not return. That is the meaning. This means that because of feeling unfulfilled when the happiness obtained in that benediction wanes, the person returns and

asks for another benediction. This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.19.14):

"As supplying butter to a fire does not diminish the fire but instead increases it more and more, the endeavour to stop lusty desires by continual enjoyment can never be successful. (In fact one must voluntarily cease from material desires)."*

8 The supremely merciful Lord, understanding this, gives (vidhatte) His lotus feet (nija-pada-pallavam), which satisfy all desires (icchavidhanam), to the devotees (bhajataṁ) who, because they do not know the sweetness present in His lotus feet, do not desire to attain them (anicchatam). He is like a mother that takes from her son's mouth the clay he was eating and gives him a candy instead. That is the meaning.

9 The great power of devotional service is again shown in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.10):

"A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead."*

10 In Garuda Purana it is said:

"When someone meditates on Him, Lord Kṛṣṇa gives, even though unasked, an unattainable rare treasure the mind cannot even comprehend."

11 It should be understood that in this way the knowers of Brahman, who have Sanaka-kumara as their leader, attained the lotus feet by engaging in devotional service.

Anuccheda 99

1 Glorifying devotional service and condemning fruitive work (karma), Srimad Bhagavatam explains that fruitive work is painful to perform and brings an uncertain result, whereas devotional service is kind to the practitioner, is easily and happily performed, and brings a certain result. This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.18.12):

2 "We have just begun the performance of this fruitive activity, a sacrificial fire, without certainty of its results due to the many imperfections in our action. Our bodies have become black from the smoke, but we are factually pleased by the nectar of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, Govinda, which you are distributing."*

3 The words "asmin karmani" mean "in this sacrifice" and "anasvasa" means "without certainty of result". The result is uncertain because of the presence of many unknown factors. The result is uncertain as, for example, it is in agriculture. However, it is said here that the result of performing devotional service is certain. The phrase "dhuma-dhumratmanam" means "our bodies and minds have become dirtied by the smoke". The word here is in the genitive case. It means "of us". That is the meaning.

4 Here "pada-padmasavam" means "the nectar of the lotus feet" and "madhu" means "honey". The two activities here are: 1. the fruitive activity of this sacrifice and 2. devotional service, where there is hearing the glories of the Lord. The sages here say, "These non-devotional fruitive activities have made us unhappy". In this way the superiority of devotional service is established.

5 This is also described in Srimad Bhagavatam (12.12.54):

"The great endeavour one undergoes in executing the ordinary social and religious duties of the varnasrama system, in performing austerities, and in hearing from the Vedas culminates only in the achievement of mundane fame and opulence. But by respecting and attentively hearing the recitation of the transcendental qualities of the supreme Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune, one can remember His lotus feet."***

Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.22) again explains:

"Certainly therefore, since time immemorial, all transcendentalists have been rendering devotional service to Lord Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, with great delight, because such devotional service is enlivening to the self."*

6 In Brahman-vaivarta Purana Lord Visnu tells Lord Siva:

"If the living entities desire to attain Me they should take shelter of Me. Their hearts polluted by Kali-yuga, the followers of varnasrama waste their lives and everything they possess. This is not true for they who take shelter of Me. They do not waste their lives."

This verse quoted in the beginning of this section was spoken by the sages to Sri Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 100

1 This is also explained in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.17:

"One who has forsaken his material obligations to engage in the devotional service of the Lord may sometimes fall down while in an immature stage, yet there is no danger of his being unsuccessful. On the other hand, a non devotee, though fully engaged in occupational duties, does not gain anything."*

2 By performing the activities of karma-yoga (fruitive work) and other spiritual paths like it, which require great effort, great expense and many other things, one attains only pathetically insignificant results, of which the attainment of Svargaloka is the most prominent. However, by performing the activities of devotional service, which require only slight effort, slight expense, and slight use of any other things, one attains the greatest result. Therefore the conclusion of the Vedic literatures is that one should perform devotional service. Many Vedic scriptures declare that one should perform devotional service and therefore the performance of devotional service is never done in vain. That is the meaning. Furthermore, Srimad Bhagavatam (7.9.10) explains:

3 "If a brahmana has all twelve of the brahmanical qualifications (as they are stated in the book called Sanat-sujata) but is not a devotee and is averse to the lotus feet of the Lord, he is certainly lower than a devotee who is a dog eater but who has dedicated everything-mind, words, activities,, wealth, and life-to the Supreme Lord. Such a devotee is better than such a brahmana because the devotee can purify his whole family, whereas the so-called brahmana in a position of false prestige cannot purify even himself."*

4 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Lord Hari is satisfied by unalloyed devotional service. Nothing but devotional service satisfies Him. That is stated in this verse.

5 "Prahlada Maharaja had previously mentioned the twelve brahmanical qualities, beginning with aristocratic wealth, in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.9.):

"One may possess wealth, an aristocratic family, beauty, austerity,

education, sensory expertise, lustre, influence, physical strength, diligence, intelligence and mystic yoga power, but I think that even all these qualifications one cannot satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, one can satisfy the Lord simply by devotional service. Gajendra did this, and thus the Lord was satisfied with him."*

"Here he says: 'I think (manye) that a dog eater (svapacam) who is a devotee is better (varistham) than a brahmana (viprat) who has these twelve (dvi-sat) qualities.'"

6 The Sanat-sujata gives this list, which begins with piety, of the twelve brahmanical qualities:

"Piety, truthfulness, sense control, austerity, non-enviousness, humility, tolerance, aversion to fault finding, performance of sacrifice, giving in charity, patience, scholarship, and observance of vows are the twelve qualities of a brahmana."

7 "What is the brahmana (viprat) mentioned here like? He is averse (vimukhat) to the lotus feet of the lotus-aveled Lord (aravinda-nabha-padaravinda). What is the dog-eater (svapacam) like? He has dedicated (arpita) his mind (manah) and everything else to the lotus-aveled Lord. Here the word 'ihitam' means 'work'. For this reason this kind of dog-eater is better. Such a dog-eater purifies (punati) his entire family (kulam). However (tu), a proud (bhuri-manah) brahmana cannot purify himself, what to speak of his family. Therefore, for one who does not engage in devotional service these brahmanical qualities only lead to pride. They do not lead to faith in the Lord."

8 The Mukta-phala -tika explains:

"The twelve (dvi-sad) qualities of a brahmana are given in a list beginning with aristocratic wealth (dhana) and high birth (abhijana), or, an alternate list is also given in these words:

"Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, wisdom, knowledge, satisfaction, truthfulness, and religiousness are the twelve qualities of a brahmana."

9 In the Skanda Purana, Narada Muni explains:

"A person who, although not born in an aristocratic family and unaware of the niceties of refined conduct, controls his senses and engages in unwavering devotional service to the Supreme Lord, is famous and glorious among men. However, a peaceful, nobly born brahmana, religious and learned in the eighteen sciences, but who does not serve the Lord, is not glorious at all."

10 In the Kasi-khanda it is said:

"A brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, or sudra engaged in devotional service to Lord Visnu, is the greatest of persons."

11 In Brhan-naradiya Purana:

"They who do not devotedly serve Lord Visnu are outcastes. Outcastes who serve Him with devotion are the best of men."

12 In the Brhan-naradiya Purana:

"O King, a dog-eater that is a devotee of Lord Visnu is greater than a brahmana. A brahmana that has no devotion for Lord Visnu is lower than a dog-eater."

13 In the verse quoted in this section it was said that a devotee purifies (punati) his family (kulam). This proves that he also greatly purifies himself.

Srimad Bhagavatam (2.4.18) explains:

14 "Kirata, Huna, Andhra, Pulinda, Pulkasa, Abhira, Sumbha, Yavana, members of the Khasa races and even others addicted to sinful acts can be purified by taking shelter of the devotees of the Lord, due to His being the supreme power. I beg to offer my respectful obeisance unto Him."*

15 This first quote was spoken by Prahlada Maharaja to Lord Nṛsimha.

Anuccheda 101

1 The brahmanas engaged in performing sacrifices said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.23.40):

"To hell with our threefold birth, our vow of celibacy, and our extensive learning! To hell with our aristocratic background, and our expertise in the rituals of sacrifice! These are all condemned because we were inimical to the transcendental Personality of Godhead."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The word 'trivrt' refers to three births: 1. initiation, 2. acceptance of the sacred thread, and 3. initiation in the performance of Vedic sacrifices. The word 'vratam' means 'the vow of celibacy', and the word 'kriya-daksyam' means 'expertise in performing rituals'."

3 Srimad Bhagavatam (4.31.10) also explains:

"A civilized human being has three kinds of births. The first birth is by a pure father and mother and this birth is called birth by semen. The next birth takes place when one is initiated by the spiritual master, and this birth is called savitra. The third birth, called yajnika, takes place when one is given the opportunity to worship Lord Visnu. Despite the opportunities for attaining such births, even if one gets the life-span of a demigod, if one does not actually engage in the service of the Lord, everything is useless. Similarly, one's activities may be mundane or spiritual, but they are useless if they are not meant for satisfying the Lord."*

The verse quoted in the beginning of this section was spoken by the brahmanas engaged in performing sacrifices.

Anuccheda 102

1 Even offering to the Lord the fruits of work is not treated with much respect in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.14):

"Therefore, with one-pointed attention, one should constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the Personality of Godhead, who is the protector of the devotees."*

2 If one is not able to engage in the direct devotional service of hearing and chanting the Lord's glories he should offer to the Lord the fruits of his work. The Lord explains this in Bhagavad-gita (12.8-11):

"Just fix your mind upon Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and engage all your intelligence in Me. Thus you will live in Me always without a doubt.*

3 "My dear Arjuna, O winner of wealth, if you cannot fix your mind upon Me without deviation, then follow the regulative principles of bhakti-yoga. In this way develop a desire to attain Me.*

4 "If you cannot practice the regulations of bhakti-yoga, then just try to work

for Me, because by working for Me you will come to the perfect stage.*

5 "If, however, you are unable to work in this consciousness of Me, then try to act giving up all results of your work and try to be self-situated.*

6 In the Padma Purana, Karttika-mahatmya, it is said:

7 "A brahmana named Visnu dasa competed with the king of Cola-desa. The brahmana purely worshipped and served the Supreme Lord, and he then attained the Lord. The king offered many Vedic sacrifices to the Lord, but he did not attain the Lord. Seeing that the brahmana had attained the Lord, the king renounced his sacrificial activities and said:

8 "I competed with him by performing many sacrifices and giving wealth in charity, and yet it was he, the brahmana that attained a spiritual form like Lord Visnu and went to the abode of Vaikuntha.

9 "Therefore Lord Visnu is not pleased by many sacrifices and much giving in charity. He is pleased by devotional service."

10 "Then he said to Mudgala Muni:

"Standing before the sacrificial arena, the king loudly called three times: 'Give me eternal engagement, with my mind, words, body and deeds, in devotional service to Lord Visnu!'"

11 "After saying this, the king humbly and steadily accepted the path of pure devotional service. Giving up his body at the sacrificial arena, he then attained the Lord."

12 Holding the practice of yoga in low esteem Srimad Bhagavatam (10.51.60) explains:

"The minds of non-devotees who engage in such practices as pranayama are not fully cleansed of material desires. Thus, O king, the material desires are again seen to arise in their minds."***

13 Here the word "utthitam" means "inclined to sense gratification". The verse quoted in the beginning of this section was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to King Mucukunda.

Anuccheda 103

1 Srimad Bhagavatam (1.6.35) again explains :

"It is true that by practicing restraint of the senses by the yoga system one can get relief from the disturbances of desire and lust, but this is not sufficient to give satisfaction to the soul, for this (satisfaction) is derived from devotional service to the Personality of Godhead."*

2 The Lord very eloquently says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.20):

"My dear Uddhava, neither through astanga-yoga (the mystic yoga system to control the senses), nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vedas, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptances of sannyasa can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me."*

The verse quoted in the beginning of this section was spoken by Sri Narada to Sri Vyasa.

Anuccheda 104

1 Now the inferior position of the impersonalists speculative search for

knowledge (jnana) will be described. Because such knowledge is attained only with great difficulty the path of impersonal knowledge is inferior. This is seen in the following two verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.5.45-46):

"O Lord, persons who, because of their serious attitude, attain the stage of enlightened devotional service achieve the complete meaning of renunciation and knowledge and attain the Vaikunthaloka in the spiritual sky simply by drinking the nectar of Your topics.*

"Others, who are pacified by means of transcendental self realisation and have conquered over the modes of nature by dint of strong power and knowledge, also enter into You. But for them there is much pain, whereas the devotee simply discharges devotional service and thus feels no such pain."*

2 In the teaching of the four Kumaras it is said (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.22.40):

"The ocean of nescience is very difficult to cross because it is infested with many dangerous sharks. Although those who are non-devotees undergo severe austerities and penances to cross that ocean, we recommend that you simply take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are like boats for crossing the ocean. Although the ocean is difficult to cross, by taking shelter of His lotus feet you will overcome all dangers."*

3 Also, in Sri Bhagavad-gita (12.1-5):

"Arjuna inquired: Which are considered to be more perfect, those who are always properly engaged in Your devotional service or those who worship the impersonally Brahman, the unmanifested?*

4 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Those who fix their minds on My personal form and are always engaged in worshipping Me with great and transcendental faith are considered by Me to be most perfect.*

5-6 "But those who fully worship the unmanifested, that which lies beyond the perception of the senses, the all-pervading, inconceivable, unchanging, fixed and immovable-the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth-by controlling the various senses and being equally disposed to everyone, such persons, engaged in the welfare of all, at last achieve Me.*

7 "For those whose minds are attached to the unmanifested, impersonal feature of the Supreme, advancement is very troublesome. To make progress in that discipline is always difficult for those who are embodied."*

8 A person does not become fatigued by following the path of devotional service. Also, by engaging in devotional service one attains the unprecedented result of bringing the Supreme Personality of Godhead under one's control. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.3):

9 "My dear Lord, those devotees who have thrown away the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth and have therefore abandoned discussing empiric philosophical truths should hear from self-realised devotees about Your holy name, form, pastimes and qualities. They should completely follow the principles of devotional service and remain free from illicit sex, gambling, intoxication and animal slaughter. Surrendering themselves fully with body, words, and mind, they can live in any asrama or social status. Indeed, you are conquered by such persons, although You are always unconquerable."*

10 In this verse "udapasya" means "even doing only slightly", "sthane sthitah" means "staying with the devotees", "san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vartam" means "the news about You, which is repeatedly spoken by the devotees", "sruti-gatam"

means "by associating with the devotees one hears the news of the Lord", "prayasah" means "almost always", and "tanu-van-manobhir namanto ye jivanti" means "worshipping You with their body, words, and mind, they live their lives." Although they do not do anything more than that, they conquer You, even though You are always unconquerable by others (trilokyam ajito pi jitah).

11 In Sri Nrsimha Purana it is said:

"By offering Him a fruit, a leaf, a flower, or some water, the devotees easily attain the ancient Supreme Person. Why would they want to struggle to attain impersonal liberation?"

Anuccheda 105

1 Srimad Bhagavatam (10.14.4) explains:

"My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavours are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labour becomes fruitless."*

2 Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse means that without devotional service transcendental knowledge does not become perfect. The word "reyah" here means "material prosperity and liberation", "srtim" means "a path, like the path taken by a swiftly moving mountain stream", "te" means "of You", and "bhaktim udasya" means "having abandoned the best path, which is devotional service." For these people (tesam) there are indeed (eva) only troubles (klesalah). This verse means that if one rejects a small amount of rice and instead beat empty husks that have no rice within, he will not get any result. In the same way, persons who consider devotional service unimportant labour to attain transcendental knowledge (kevala-bodha-labdhye), but they do not gain any result."

3 Here the words "vibho" and "kevala", which means "O pure one", are in the vocative case. "Asau" means "the thing being looked at" and "klesalah" means "troublesome because of the need to accept sannyasa and do many other things".

4 These are described in Bhagavad-gita (13.8-11), where the Supreme Personality of Godhead said:

"Humility, pridelessness, non violence, tolerance, simplicity, approaching a bona fide spiritual master, cleanliness, steadiness, self-control, renunciation of the objects of sense gratification, absence of false ego, the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age and disease, detachment, freedom from entanglement with children, wife, home and the rest, even mindedness amid pleasant and unpleasant events, constant and unalloyed devotion to Me, aspiring to live in a solitary place, detachment from the general mass of people, accepting the importance of self-realisation, and philosophical search for the Absolute Truth-all these I declare to be knowledge, and besides this whatever there may be is ignorance."*

5 There is no real knowledge without devotional service. That is the meaning here. The Lord Himself says (Bhagavad-gita 13.19):

"Thus the field of activities (the body), knowledge and the knowable have been summarily described by Me. Only My devotees can understand this thoroughly and thus attain to My nature."*

6 The Lord also says (Bhagavad-gita 9.3):

"Those who are not faithful in this devotional service cannot attain Me, O conqueror of enemies. Therefore they return to the path of birth and death in this material world."*

7 In an earlier passage of Bhagavad-gita, the Lord had also described devotional service in these words (Bhagavad-gita 9.14):

"Always chanting My glories, endeavouring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion."*

Even though Mudgala and others are not clearly described as having performed devotional service, it should be understood that they performed the beginning activities of devotional service (sadhana-bhakti) at least.

Anuccheda 106

1 The attempt to be independent of the Lord or to take shelter of someone other than the Lord is treated with contempt in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.9.22):

"Free from all material conceptions of existence and never wonderstruck by anything, the Lord is always jubilant and fully satisfied by His own spiritual perfection. He has no material designations, and therefore He is steady and unattached. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the only shelter of everyone. Anyone desiring to be protected by others is certainly a great fool who desires to cross the sea by holding the tail of a dog."*

2 The word "avismitam" means "because there is nothing that He does not already know, the Lord is never surprised by anything." "Avismitam" may also be interpreted to mean that the Lord is eternally smiling". "Svenaiva labhena paripurna-kamam" means "by His own activities His desires are fulfilled." The Lord does not need anyone else to fulfil His desires. That is the meaning. "Samam" means "He is equipoised in all circumstances", "prasantam" means "He is peaceful because His heart is free of all impurity", "balisah" means "a fool who is not dear to the Lord", and "atititarti" means "desires to cross".

3 These fools are described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.27):

"Those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance worship the forefathers, other living beings and the demigods who are in charge of cosmic activities, for they are urged by a desire to be materially benefited with women, wealth, power and progeny."*

4 In Skanda Purana in the conversation of Brahma and Narada, it is said:

"One who neglects Lord Vasudeva and worships someone else neglects his mother and bows down before a degraded woman."

5 In another place in the Skanda Purana it is also said:

"One who turns from Lord Vasudeva and worships someone else is a bewildered fool that turns from nectar and drinks the violent poison halahala."

6 In the Mahabharata it is said:

"One who turns from Lord Visnu and worships someone else is a person that rejects a pile of gold and takes instead a pile of dust."

7 Sri Satyavrata Muni tells the Lord (Srimad Bhagavatam 8.24.49):

"Neither all the demigods, nor the so-called gurus nor all other people, either independently or together, can offer mercy that equals even on ten-

thousandth of Yours. Therefore I wish to take shelter of Your lotus feet."*

8 That both Brahma and Siva are devotees of Lord Visnu and engage in His devotional service is described in Srimad Bhagavatam. About Lord Brahma it is said (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.5-9):

"Lord Brahma, the first spiritual master, supreme in the universe, could not trace out the source of his lotus seat, and while thinking of creating the material world, he could not understand the proper direction for such creative work, nor could he find out the process for such creation."*

"While thus engaged in thinking, in the water Brahmaji heard twice from nearby two syllables joined together. One of the syllables was taken from the sixteenth and the other from the twenty first of the sparsa alphabets and joined to become the wealth of the renounced order of life.*

"When he heard the sound, he tried to find the speaker, searching on all sides. But when he was unable to find anyone besides himself he thought it wise to sit down on his lotus seat firmly and give his attention to the execution of penance, as he was instructed.*

"Lord Brahma underwent penances for one thousand years by the calculations of the demigods. He heard this transcendental vibration from the sky, and he accepted it as divine. Thus he controlled his mind and senses, and the penances he executed were a great lesson for the living entities. Thus he is known as the greatest of ascetics.*

"The Personality of Godhead, being thus very much satisfied with the penance of Lord Brahma, was pleased to manifest His personal abode, Vaikuntha, the supreme planet above all others. This transcendental abode of the Lord is adored by all self-realised persons freed from all kinds of miseries and fear of illusory existence."*

Lord Siva is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.13.16):

"As the Ganges is the best of rivers, infallible Lord Krsna is the best of deities and Siva is the best of the worshippers of Lord Visnu, so Srimad Bhagavatam is the best of Puranas."

9 This is also described in the Twelfth Canto, where Markandeya Muni says to Lord Siva (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.10.34):

"But I do request one benediction from you, who are full of all perfection and able to shower down the fulfilment of all desires. I ask to have unfailing devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead and for His dedicated devotees, especially you."***

10 The words "tatha tvayi" here show that Siva is a great devotee of Lord Visnu. That is the meaning.

In the Eight Canto the Prajapatis pray to Siva (Srimad Bhagavatam 8.7.33):

"Exalted, self-satisfied persons who preach to the entire world think of your lotus feet constantly within their hearts. However, when person who do not know your austerity see you moving with Uma, they misunderstand you to be lusty, or when they see you wandering in the crematorium they mistakenly think that you are ferocious and envious. Certainly they are shameless. They can not understand your activities."*

11 In the Fourth Canto the Pracetas say to eight-armed Lord Visnu (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.30.38):

"Dear Lord, by virtue of a moment's association with Lord Siva, who is very

dear to You and who is Your most intimate friend, we were fortunate to attain You. You are the most expert physician, capable of treating the incurable disease of material existence. On account of our great fortune, we have been able to take shelter at Your lotus feet."*

12 A person who thinks Lord Visnu is equal to other deities cannot attain devotional service. That idea is a great impediment to devotional service. This is explained in the Vaisnava Tantra:

13 "Although he may meditate on the Lord with unbroken thoughts, the dull-witted person who thinks Lord Visnu equal to other deities does not attain unalloyed devotional service to Lord Hari.

14 "One who thinks the demigods headed by Brahma and Siva are equal to Lord Narayana is a great offender to the Lord."

15 The impersonalists and the devotees in *santa-rasa* think other deities are equal to Lord Narayana. An example of this is given in the story of Markandeya Muni, where Siva says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.10.20-22):

16-17 "The inhabitants and ruling demigods of all planets, along with Lord Brahma, the Supreme Lord Hari, and I, glorify, worship and assist those brahmanas who are saintly, always peaceful, free of material attachment, compassionate to all living beings, purely devoted to us, devoid of hatred and endowed with equal vision."*

18 "These devotees do not differentiate between Lord Visnu, Lord Brahma and me, nor do they differentiate between themselves and other living beings. Therefore, because you are this kind of saintly devotee, we worship you."*

19 The meaning may also be interpreted: "We worship (*imahi*) you (*yusman*), the pure devotees headed by Markandeya".

20 "You are all devotees of the Lord, and as such I appreciate that you are as respectable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. I know in this way that the devotees also respect me and that I am dear to them. Thus no one can be as dear to the devotees as I am."*

21 In another passage it is said (by Lord Siva in Srimad Bhagavatam 8.7.40):

"My dear gentle wife Bhavani, when one performs benevolent activities for others, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is very pleased. And when the Lord is pleased, I am also pleased, along with all other loving creatures. Therefore, let me drink this poison, for all living entities may thus become happy because of me."*

22 That Markandeya Muni is a pure devotee of the Lord had been previously described in these words (of Lord Siva in Srimad Bhagavatam 12.10.6):

"Surely this saintly brahmana does not desire any benediction, not even liberation itself, for he has attained pure devotional service unto the inexhaustible Personality of Godhead."***

23 This verse was spoken by Lord Siva to Markandeya Muni. By appearing before him, Lord Siva broke the meditative trance of Markandeya Muni. In this way he appeared before the sage.

24 This is described in Srimad Bhagavatam (12.10.13):

"Sri Markandeya saw Lord Siva suddenly appear within his heart. Lord Siva's golden hair resembled lightning, and he had three eyes, ten arms and a tall body that shone like the rising sun. He wore a tiger skin, and he carried a trident, a bow, arrows, a sword and a shield, along with prayer beads, a damaru drum, a

skull and an ax. Astonished, the sage came out of his trance and thought, 'Who is this, and where has he come from?'"***

25 At first describing the idea of the equality of Brahma, Visnu and Siva, and then affirming Lord Visnu's superiority, Siva says (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.10.20-21):

"The inhabitants and ruling demigods of all planets, along with Lord Brahma, Lord Hari, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, and I, glorify, worship and assist those brahmanas who are saintly, always peaceful, free of material attachment, compassionate to all living beings, purely devoted to us, devoid of hatred and endowed with equal vision."

26 That Lord Visnu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.24-26):

"Firewood is a transformation of earth, but smoke is better than the raw wood. And fire is still better, for by fire we can derive the benefits of superior knowledge (through Vedic sacrifices). Similarly, passion (rajas) is better than ignorance (tamas), but goodness (sattva) is best because by goodness one can come to realise the Absolute Truth.*

"Previously all the great sages rendered service to the Personality of Godhead due to His existence above the three modes of material nature. They worshipped Him to become free from material conditions and thus derive the ultimate benefit. Whoever follows such great authorities is also eligible for liberation from the material world.*

"Those who are serious about liberation are certainly non-envious and they respect all. Yet they reject the horrible and ghastly forms of the demigods and worship only the all-blissful forms of Lord Visnu and His plenary portions."*

27 This is confirmed by Lord Siva in the Brahma Purana:

"A person who yearns to see me or to see grandfather Brahma should yearn to see all-powerful Lord Vasudeva."

28 This is so because by understanding Lord Visnu everything is understood. This is also confirmed in these words of Sarvabhauma, who was initiated by Cintamani:

29 "I have given my heart to Krsna, who wears a garland of forest flowers. I have not given it in the same way to Lord Siva, who wears a garland of skulls. I am like a peacock that rejoices when a dark cloud comes but does not rejoice when the clouds are white.

30 The demigods are lakes, the demigoddesses rivers, and Lord Visnu, the master of the universes, is an ocean. Still, only the dark cloud of Lord Krsna can remove the thirst of this cintamani cataka bird."

31 Therefore, because He is a Vaisnava, Lord Siva should be worshipped. Some Vaisnavas say that if the worship of Lord Siva is compulsory, still one can worship the Supreme Lord Visnu instead of Lord Siva. That is described in the following story from the last part of the Visnu-dharma Purana:

A pure devotee brahmana names Visvakṣena used to live on the earth. One day he sat down at the edge of a forest. Then the son of a village leader approached him and said, "Who are you?" When the brahmana had told his story the leader's son said to him, "Today I have a headache and therefore it is not possible for me to worship Lord Siva. You please worship him in my place. At that point there is the following passage of one and a half verses:

32 "When this was said, he replied, 'We are pure devotees of Lord Hari. Only Lord Hari, who expands in four forms, or His devotee, should be worshipped. We will worship no one else. Go away.'

33 Then the leader's son took a sword and raised it to cut off the brahmana's head. Stunned and not wishing to die in that way, the brahmana thought for a moment and said, "Very well, I will go there." In his mind the brahmana thought, "Because he destroys the universe and expands the mode of ignorance, Lord Siva is the deity of ignorance. However, because Lord Nrsimhadeva kills the demons situated in the darkness of ignorance, and because He thus dispels the darkness of ignorance, Lord Nrsimhadeva is like a sun risen to dispel the darkness of ignorance. Therefore, instead of worshipping Lord Siva, I will worship Lord Nrsimhadeva to dispel ignorance."

Then, taking a handful of flowers, the brahmana said, "Obeisances to Lord Nrsimha!" Filled with anger, the village leader's son at once raised his sword. At that moment the Siva-linga opened and Lord Nrsimhadeva appeared and killed the village leader's son and his associates. This Siva-linga, famous by the name "Linga-sphota" (the linga that opened), is situated in the southern provinces.

34 The pure Vaisnavas give all honour to Lord Siva because he is a pure Vaisnava also. Sometimes some people become Vaisnavas by worshipping Lord Siva. This is explained in the Adi-varaha Purana:

35 By worshipping Lord Siva for many thousands of births a person become wise and free from all sins. Then he becomes a Vaisnava."

36 Between the devotees of Lord Nrsimha and Lord Siva there is a very close connection. This is described in Sri Nrsimha-tapani Upanisad (1.5.10):

"A hundred brahmacaris equal one grhastha. A hundred grhasthas equal one vanaprastha. A hundred vanaprasthas equal one sannyasi. A hundred sannyasis equal one chanter of Siva-mantras. A hundred chanters of Siva-mantras equal one teacher of the Atharva-angirasa part of the Vedas. A hundred teachers of the Atharva-angirasa part of the Vedas equal one chanter of the king of mantras."

The "king of mantras" here is the mantra glorifying Lord Nrsimhadeva.

37 Because the devotees of Lord Siva thought Lord Siva is independent of Lord Visnu, Bhrgu Muni's curse could not be overcome. This is explained in these words of the Fourth Canto (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.2.27-28):

38-39 "When all the hereditary brahmanas were thus cursed by Nandisvara, the sage Bhrgu, as a reaction, condemned the followers of Lord Siva with this very strong brahmanical curse. One who takes a vow to satisfy Lord Siva or who follows such principles will certainly become an atheist and be diverted from transcendental scriptural injunctions."*

40 The methods of worshipping Lord Siva is described in the Vedas are proper, but the methods of Siva-worship described in other, non-Vedic, books are offensive and not proper. Srimad Bhagavatam and other books that oppose these non-Vedic books are authorised Vedic scriptures. The Suta-samhita and similar books that support the non-Vedic scriptures are not authorised scriptures. Therefore the fault (of Lord Siva's followers in this verse) is that they thought Lord Siva is the Supreme Personality of Godhead independent of Lord Visnu. It is Lord Visnu who is the root from which the Vedic scriptures have grown. That is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.2.31):

41 "The Vedas give the eternal regulative principles for auspicious

advancement in human civilisation which have been rigidly followed in the past. The strong evidence of this principle is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is called Janardana, the well-wisher of all living entities."*

42 In this verse the word "yat-pramanan" means that Lord Visnu is the root of the Vedas. Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.23-26 also confirms the importance of devotional service to Lord Visnu.

43 This is also described in the Hari-vamsa, where Lord Siva says:

"O brahmanas learned in the transcendental scriptures, you should always meditate on Lord Hari. Always recite the mantras glorifying Lord Visnu and always meditate on Lord Kesava."

44 Devotion to Lord Siva has that nature. The Vaisnava scriptures describe the methods of worshipping transcendental Deities beyond the material nature with a method of worship that is also beyond the coverings of the external material world. The Lord's associates, who manifest humanlike pastimes as the Lord also does, perform Vedic sacrifices and other kinds of worship only to please the Lord. In this way King Yudhisthira performed the rajasuya sacrifice and other devotees also performed other similar activities. It should be understood that the demigods worshipped in these rituals are worshipped as representatives of the Lord's great potencies. This is explained by Prahlada Maharaja in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam (7.10.32):

45 "Prahlada Maharaja then worshipped and offered prayers to all the demigods, such as Brahma, Siva and the Prajapatis, who are all parts of the Lord."*

46 Sri Yudhisthira said to the Lord (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.72.3):

"O Govinda, I wish to worship Your holy expansions by the Rajasuya sacrifice, the king of Vedic performances. Please grant that we may do this, my Lord."***

47 The demigods are therefore manifested by the Lord's potencies. In the Padma Purana, Karttika-mahatmya, the Lord Himself explained this to Sri Satyabhama:

48 "The worshippers of Surya, Siva, Ganesa, Visnu, and Sakti eventually attain Me as rivers attain the ocean.

49 "Although I am one I appear in five ways. As a person named Devadatta may be the son of someone and have other relationships with other people and this way manifest different features and names in different circumstances, so I appear with different names and pastimes."

50 In truth, the Vaisnavas are the best of all. This is explained in the following verse, which appears in the Skanda Purana in the conversation between Narada and Brahma, and also in the Prahlada-samhita in the description of keeping a vigil during ekadasi:

51 "Neither a devotee of Surya, a devotee of Siva, a devotee of Brahma, a devotee of Sakti, nor a devotee of any other demigod is equal to a devotee of Visnu."

52 The devotees of Surya and the devotees of other demigods do not attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead by worshipping the demigods. Only when they perform pure devotional service, done only to please the Lord, or when they die in a place sacred to the Lord, do they attain Him. In narrating the story of Devasarma and Canmdrasarma, who both worshipped the demigod Surya, the Supreme Personality of Godhead described this when He said:

53 "Because of the spiritual power of living in My holy place, and because of their pious conduct, these two devotees of Mine were brought by My associates to Lord Visnu's transcendental abode.

54 "As long as they lived they worshipped the demigod Surya and performed many pious deeds. I became very pleased with their actions."

55 The holy place here is Mayapuri. When the Lord descended to the world these two devotees became Satrajit and Akrura. In the same way the devotee named Pundarika also attained the Lord by worshipping the Pitas.

56 That only by devotional service, which is not dependent on any other spiritual practice, one attains the Lord, is proved in the Lord's own words in Bhagavad-gita (9.23-25):

57 "Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way.*

58 "I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. Therefore, those who do not recognize My true transcendental nature fall down.*

59 "Those who worship the demigods will take birth among the demigods, those who worship the ancestors go to the ancestors, those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings, and those who worship Me will live with Me."*

60 By worshipping Lord Visnu one attains all virtues and shuns faults, which begin with blasphemy. This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.26):

"One should have firm faith that he will achieve success in life by following those scriptures that describe the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavan. At the same time, one should avoid blaspheming other scriptures. One should rigidly control his mind, speech and bodily activities, always speak the truth and bring the mind and senses under full control."***

61 This is also explained in the Padma Purana:

"All the great demigods should always worship Lord Hari. They should never disrespect Brahma, Siva or the other great souls."

62 In the Gautamiya Tantra also:

"A person who worships Lord Gopala but disrespects other deities kills the present and previous pious credits he has earned."

63 The proper atonement for that offense is recitation of the following prayer from the Narayana-kavaca (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.8.17):

"Hayasirsa mam pathi deva-helanat" (May Lord Hayagriva protect me from being an offender by neglecting to offer respectful obeisances to the Supreme Lord and the demigods).

64 In the Visnu-dharma Purana the following story is recounted: In ancient times King Ambarisa worshipped the Lord by performing austerities for many days. At the conclusion of his austerities the Supreme Personality of Godhead, assuming the form of King Indra and riding on Garuda, who had been transformed into Airavata, appeared before him and offered him a benediction. Seeing the form of Indra, King Ambarisa bowed before Him and offered Him all respect. However, he did not wish any benediction from King Indra. He said, "The Lord whom I worship will give me benedictions. I will not accept benedictions from any one else. Then Indra said, "Whatever benediction He can give I can give also". When King Ambarisa still did not wish any benediction, Indra raised his thunder-bolt

weapon to strike him, but still King Ambarisa would not accept any benediction from Him. At that moment the Lord became pleased. No longer appearing as Indra, the Supreme Person now showed His real form and gave His mercy to King Ambarisa.

65 An insult to Lord Siva is a great sin. This is described in the Fourth Canto (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.2.24) where Nandisvara offers the following curse:

"Those who have become as dull as matter by cultivating materialistic education and intelligence are nesciently involved in fruitive activities. Such men have purposely insulted Lord Siva. May they continue in the cycle of repeated birth and death."*

66 Svayambhuva Manu said to Dhruva Maharaja (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.11.33):

"My dear Dhruva, you thought that the Yaksas killed your brother, and therefore you have killed great numbers of them. But by this action you have agitated the mind of Lord Siva's brother Kuvera, who is the treasurer of the demigods. Please note that your actions have been very disrespectful to Kuvera and Lord Siva."*

After this, considering that Kuvera was Lord Siva's friend, Dhruva asked from him the benediction of always and in all circumstances being a pure devotee of Lord Visnu. The meaning here is that a devotee only asks for the benediction of serving the Lord.

67 In the Kurma Purana the Lord says:

"A person who always worships Me with unalloyed love but also insults Lord Siva goes to hell."

68 This is also seen in the story of King Citraketu.

69 Lord Kapiladeva criticised disrespect toward even ordinary living entities, what to speak of disrespect to great souls like Himself. He said (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.21):

70 "I am present in every living entity as the Supersoul. If someone neglects or disregards that Supersoul everywhere and engages himself in the worship of the Deity in the temple, that is simply imitation."*

71 Here the word "bhutesu" means "the living entities, down even to the forms of life that do not even breathe, in whom the Supreme Lord appears as the Supersoul, and who will be described in the following verses", "bhutatma" means "the Supersoul in the heart", "tam mam avajnaya" means "by disrespecting the living entities one also disrespects Me, who am staying in their hearts", "kurute arca" means "worship of My form as the deity", and "vidambanam" means "a mocking imitation". That is the meaning. Lord Kapiladeva then says (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.22):

72 "One who worships the Deity of Godhead in the temples but does not know the Supreme Lord as Paramatma, is situated in every living entity's heart, must be in ignorance and is compared to one who offers oblations into ashes."*

73 Here the word "maudhyat" means "out of the mistaken idea that the Deity is made of stone or wood", "sarva-bhutesu isvaram mama hitva" means "not understanding that I am the Supersoul in all beings", and "arcam kurute" means "worships My Deity form". Such a person offers Me water and other things thinking I am an ordinary person and My Deity form is made of matter.

In the Agni Purana, in his lament for his dead son, King Dasaratha says:

74-75 "Did I think Lord Hari's Deity form was made of stone? In My heart did I fail to offer respect when I saw on the road a Vaisnava decorated with the signs of the Lord? Is that why, as a result of my misdeeds, I now suffer for the loss of my son?"

76 This is also described in the Padma Purana:

"One who thinks the Deity form of Lord Visnu is made of stone, the spiritual masters are ordinary men, a Vaisnava belongs to a particular caste by birth, the water that has washed the lotus feet of Lord Visnu or the Vaisnavas and that destroys the sins of Kali-yuga is ordinary water, the mantra of Lord Visnu's holy name, which destroys all sins, is an ordinary sound, and Lord Visnu is another demigod like the others, already lives in hell."

77 The verse quoted in text 72 means that the Supreme Lord says: "A fool, not seeing My presence within, does not respect all living entities. Because of this defect his spiritual activities are like offering oblations into ashes. Such a faithless person does not get any good result for his efforts." That is the meaning.

78 In Bhagavad-gita (17.1-3) this is explained:

"Arjuna inquired: O Krsna, what is the situation of those who do not follow the principles of scripture but worship according to their own imagination? Are they in goodness, in passion or in ignorance?*

"The Supreme Lord said: According to the modes of nature acquired by the embodied soul, one's faith can be of three kinds - goodness, passion or ignorance. Now hear about these.*

"According to one's existence under the various modes of nature, one evolves a particular kind of faith. The living being is said to be of a particular faith according to the modes he has acquired."*

In this way one who has only the small faith possessed by ordinary people is considered a neophyte devotee. This kind of devotee is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.41):

79 "A devotee who faithfully engages in the worship of the Deity in the temple but does not behave properly toward other devotees or people in general is called a prakṛta-bhakta, a materialistic devotee, and is considered to be in the lowest position."***

80 Such a neophyte devotee will eventually get the result of his devotional service, but he will not get it immediately. This will be explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.25):

"Performing his prescribed duties, one should worship the Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead until one realises My presence in his own heart and in the hearts of other living entities as well."*

81 In these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.23) the Lord describes the result obtained by they who offend others:

"One who offers Me respect but is envious of the bodies of others and is therefore a separatist never attains peace of mind, because of his inimical behaviour towards other living entities."*

82 Here the word "bhinna-darsinah" means "a person who sees the Supersoul present everywhere and in everyone's heart". The opposite of him is called "abhinna-darsi", which means a person who sees Sri Krsna, the supremely glorious son of Vraja's king, present everywhere. That is the meaning. The former kind of person is described by the words "maninah" (respectful to the Supreme Lord) and

"baddha-vairasya" (inimical to other living entities).

83 Lord Krsna at once gives His mercy to a person who does not trouble others and who is kind to them as a father is to his son."

84 Lord Kapiladeva again explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.24):

"My dear Mother, even if he worships with proper rituals and paraphernalia, a person who is ignorant of My presence in all living entities never pleases Me by the worship of My Deities in the temple."*

85 In this verse the word "avamaniah" means "disrespectful". It is like the word "dvisatah (inimical) used (in Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.23, which was quoted in text 81).

86 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.23.3):

"Sharp arrows which pierce one's chest and reach the heart do not cause as much suffering as the arrows of harsh, insulting words that become lodged within the heart when spoken by uncivilised men."*

87 In this quote it is said that one thing is worse than the other. It is not the opposite. The violence here is not the same as the violence (dvisatah) mentioned previously (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.23, quoted in text 81).

88 In these verses the fault of not having faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead because of ignorance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described. In the following verse Lord Kapiladeva affirms that Deity worship performed according to one's own prescribed duties by a person who understands the nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and because of that knowledge has faith in Him does not go in vain. He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.25):

89 "Performing his prescribed duties, one should worship the Deity of The Supreme Personality of Godhead until one realises My presence in his own heart and in the hearts of other living entities as well."*

90 This verse means: "Performing his prescribed duties (sva-karma-krt), one should worship (arcayet) the Deity (arcadau) of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as long as (tavat) one does not (na) realise (veda) My presence (mam) in the hearts of all living entities (sarva-bhutesu)." This activity (of Deity worship) is helpful for a person who, because he has not attained pure devotional service, does not have full faith in the Lord.

91 This will also be confirmed in the following words spoken by the Lord Himself (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.27-28):

"Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities."**

"When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshipping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes fully situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed."**

"The knot in the heart is pierced, all misgivings are cut to pieces and the chain of fruitive actions is terminated when I am seen as the Supreme Personality of Godhead."***

92 Therefore full faith in the Lord is higher than mere knowledge of the Lord. A faithful person who performs his prescribed duties need not worship the Deity

or perform similar activities. However, until one comes to that stage one should faithfully worship the Deity and perform similar activities.

93 This will also be proved in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.9):

"As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by sravanam kirtanam visno, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions.***

The meaning here is that one should not abandon Deity worship.

94 This is so because the Hayasirsa-pancaratra forbids the abandonment of Deity worship:

"As long as one lives he should not abandon Deity worship, but should continue to worship the Deity. One should continue until he gives up his life or until his head is severed.

95 A person who, although performing his prescribed duties and worshipping the Deity, is not kind to other living entities, does not attain perfection. The Lord confirms this (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.26):

96 "As the blazing fire of death, I cause great fear to whoever makes the least discrimination between himself and other living entities because of a differential outlook."*

97 In this verse the Lord says: "A person who makes distinctions (antarodaram karoti) between himself and others does not see that I have made all living entities to be equals. Seeing hunger and other needs, he fills only his own belly. As death (mrtyuh) I cause the great (ulbanam) fear (bhayam) that is residence in the material world of birth and death to such a person, who sees a difference between himself and others (bhinna-drsah)".

98 The Lord then explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.27):

"Therefore, through charitable gifts and attention, as well as through friendly behaviour and by viewing all to be alike, one should propitiate Me, who abide in all creatures as their very Self."*

99 In this verse the word "atha" means "for this reason", "dana-manabhyam" means "by giving charity as far as one is able, or in the absence of giving charity by showing respect". The words "abhinna-caksusa" have already been explained.

The Lord of Vaikuntha tells the sages headed by Sanaka Kumara (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.16.10):

100 The brahmanas, the cows and the defenceless creatures are My own body. Those whose faculty of judgement has been impaired by their own sin look upon these as distinct from Me. They are just like furious serpents, and they are angrily torn apart by the bills of the vulturelike messengers of Yamaraja, the superintendent of sinful persons."*

101 The vision of seeing the living entities as different, where one sees some as superior and some as the best of all, is described in a general way in the following words, where Lord Kapiladeva says (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.28-33):

102 "Living entities are superior to inanimate objects, O blessed mother, and among them, living entities who display life symptoms are better. Animals with developed consciousness are better than them, and better still are those who have developed sense perception.*

103 "Among the living entities who have developed sense perception, those who have developed the sense of taste are better than those who have developed only the sense of touch. Better than them are those who have developed the sense

of smell, and better still are those who have developed the sense of hearing.*

104 "Better than those living entities who can perceive sound are those who can distinguish between one form and another. Better than them are those who have developed upper and lower sets of teeth, and better still are those who have many legs. Better than them are the quadrupeds, and better still are the human beings.

105 "Among the human beings, the society which is divided according to quality and work is best, and in that society, the intelligent men, who are designated as brahmanas, are best. Among the brahmanas, one who has studied the Vedas is the best, and among the brahmanas who have studied the Vedas, one who knows the actual purport of Veda is the best.*

106 "Better than the brahmana who knows the purpose of the Vedas is he who can dissipate all doubts, and better than him is one who strictly follows the brahmanical principles. Better than him is one who is liberated from all material contamination, and better than him is a pure devotee, who executes devotional service without expectation of reward.*

107 "Therefore I do not find a greater person than he who has no interest outside of Mine and who therefore engages and dedicates all his activities and all his life-everything-unto Me without cessation."*

108 These verses show the hierarchy of living entities, each group better than the previous one. Here the word "adogdha dharman" means "a person who acts without material desires", "nirantarah" means "devotional service that is not mixed with impersonal knowledge or any other thing", "akartuh" means "devotional service where one surrenders to the Lord and does not work for one's own maintenance." In that condition, because one is free of false pride, he understands that he is completely dependent on the Lord. "Sama-darsanat" means "he thinks of the welfare of others because he knows that the Lord has created all living entities to be equal." The verses quoted in this passage (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.33) describe the distinctions between different kinds of living entities. The conclusion is that the Lord says: "one must offer great respect to My devotees, and to others one must also offer respects as it is appropriate and as one is able". That is the meaning.

109 Then Lord Kapiladeva explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.34):

"Such a perfect devotee offers respects to every living entity because he is under the firm conviction that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has entered the body of every living entity as the Supersoul or controller."*

110 The word "jiva-kalaya" here means "the Supersoul, who is present in the hearts of all living entities". Here the following statement of the Lord in Bhagavad-gita (9.29) should be remembered:

"I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto Me in devotion is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him."*

In this way the neophyte devotees should respect all living entities, and the advanced devotees, who have full faith in the Lord, should see the Lord present everywhere.

111 This is also described in the Skanda Purana in these words:

"O hunter, good qualities like non violence, which have developed, are not very astonishing, for those who are engaged in the Lord's devotional service are never inclined to give pain to others because of envy."*

112 As will be explained later, the pure devotees, by following the example of the perfect residents of Gokula, attain the same virtues as the Lord. In this way they naturally become both renounced and non violent. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.18.22):

113 "Self-controlled persons who are attached to the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna can all of a sudden give up the world of material attachment, including the gross body and subtle mind, and go away to attain the highest perfection of the renounced order of life, by which non violence and renunciation are consequential."*

114 The perfect devotees are described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.45):

"The most advanced devotees sees within everything the soul of all souls, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna. Consequently he sees everything in relation to the Supreme Lord and understands that everything that exists is eternally situated within the Lord."***

115 The devotees aspiring to become perfect are described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.14-15):

"As pouring water on the root of a tree energises the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality."*

In this way the worship of the various demigods and the worship of the independent Supreme Personality of Godhead are described.

116 In this way the worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original creator, is described. In these words it is proved that the worship of the Lord is unavoidable and must be performed. In other places in the scriptures it is also explained that in order to become free from material attraction and aversion one should worship the Lord.

Out of pure compassion for a living entity Bharata Maharaja abandoned his devotional service to the Lord. In that way compassion became an obstacle to his devotional service. By that example the idea that compassion for the living entities, and not the worship and service of the Lord, is the most important thing, is refuted.

Therefore one should always engage in those activities that are favourable for pure devotional service, which is beyond the material modes. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.15):

"A devotee must execute his prescribed duties, which are glorious, without material profit. Without excessive violence, one should regularly perform one's devotional activities."*

117 Here the word "ati" (without excessive violence) means that in performing kriya-yoga devotional service according to the regulations of the Pancaratras there may sometimes be some violence, as for example when one picks leaves or flowers.

One should not disrespect other deities, but rather one should honour them because of their relationship with the Supreme Lord. Worship of the demigods as if they were independent of the Supreme Lord is eloquently and vehemently rejected in these words:

"Free from all material conceptions of existence, and never wonderstruck

by anything, the Lord is always jubilant and fully satisfied by His own spiritual perfection. He has no material designations and therefore He is steady and unattached. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the only shelter of everyone. Anyone desiring to be protected by others is certainly a great fool who desires to cross the sea by holding the tail of a dog."*

118 The verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.9.22) quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the demigods to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 107

1 This is also confirmed by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.48.26):

"What learned person would approach anyone but You for shelter, when You are the affectionate, grateful and truthful well wisher of Your devotees? To those who worship You in sincere friendship You reward everything they desire, even Your own self, yet You never increase or diminish."***

2 Here the word "suhrdah" means "because You act for the welfare", "krtajnt" means "because You respond with great honour to even the slightest assistance", "bhajataj" means "engaged in devotional service", "sarvan kaman" means "all desires", and "abhi dadati" means "completely gives". To please Your friends (suhrdah) You give (dadati) even Yourself (atmanam) to them. Even though You thus give everything to many great devotees like this, still You never diminish. That is the meaning of the word "upacaya".

This verse was spoken by Akrura to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 108

1 The non devotees are criticised in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.15.24):

"My dear demigods, the human form of life is of such importance that we also desire to have such life, for in the human form one can attain perfect religious truth and knowledge. If one in this human form of life does not understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His abode, it is to be understood that he is very much affected by the influence of external nature."*

2 Here the word "yatra" means "in that human form of life", "dharmah" means "religious principles that culminate in devotional service to the Lord", "tattvasya jnanam" means "knowledge that culminates in knowledge of the Lord", "ye naradhanam bhagavato vitaranti" means "they whom do not engage in the Lord's devotional service, which is the root from which all pious activities and transcendental knowledge have grown", and "te sammohitah" means "they are bewildered".

This is also described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.20):

"One who has not listened to the messages about the prowess and marvellous acts of the Personality of Godhead and has not sung or chanted loudly the worthy songs about the Lord is to be considered to possess earholes like the holes of snakes and a tongue like the tongue of a frog."*

3 This is also described in the Brahma-vaivarta Purana:

"They who attain the universally desired and very rare human birth, but do not take shelter of Lord Krsna, cheat themselves again and again.

4 "By wandering through 8 400 000 species of life one finally attains a human birth.

5 "They who do not take shelter of Lord Krsna's feet, even though they may be very proud themselves, are only unimportant fools who waste their human life."

6 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Brahma to the demigods.

Anuccheda 109

1 Srimad Bhagavatam (5.18.12) explains:

"All the demigods and their exalted qualities, such as religion, knowledge and renunciation, become manifest in the body of one who has developed unalloyed devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva. On the other hand, a person devoid of devotional service and engaged in material activities has no good qualities. Even if he is adept at the practice of mystic yoga or the honest endeavour of maintaining his family and relatives, he must be driven by his own mental speculations and must engage in the service of the Lord's external energy. How can there be any good qualities in such a man?"*

2 Here the word "akincanah" means "desireless", "gvanih" means "with the virtues that begin with knowledge and renunciation", "surah" means "all the demigods led by Siva and Brahma", and "asate" means "are present".

This verse is spoken by Prahlada Maharaja to Lord Nrsimhadeva.

Anuccheda 110

1 Sages who have attained perfection in following various non devotional paths are condemned in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.10):

2 "Such non devotees engage their senses in very troublesome and extensive work and they suffer insomnia at night because their intelligence constantly breaks their sleep with various mental speculations. They are frustrated in all their various plans by supernatural power. Even great sages, if they are against Your transcendental topics, must rotate in this material world."*

3 In this verse are described the living entities, averse to You (the Lord), who reside in the material world. What of them? Even sages (rsayo pi) perfect in various non devotional paths, who are averse to You (yusmat-prasanga-vimukhah) must live in the material world (iha samsaranti). Or the interpretation may be: if great sages are averse to You they must live in the material world. What is the nature of the saints and sages who are confined to the material world? They are described in this verse. The following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.32) also describes them:

"O lotus-eyed Lord, although non devotees who accept severe austerities and penances to achieve the highest position may think themselves liberated, their intelligence is impure. They fall down from their position of imagined superiority because they have no regard for Your lotus feet."*

4 Sri Yamaraja explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.19-22):

"Real religious principles are enacted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although fully situated in the mode of goodness, even the great rsis who occupy the topmost planets cannot ascertain the real religious principles, nor can the demigods or the leaders of Siddhaloka, to say nothing of the asuras, ordinary human beings, Vidyadharas and Caranas.*

5-6 "Lord Brahma, Bhagavan Narada, Lord Siva, the four Kumaras, Lord Kapila

(the son of Devahuti), Svayambhuva Manu, Prahlada Maharaja, Janaka Maharaja, Grandfather Bhisma, Bali Maharaja, Sukadeva Gosvami, and I myself know the real religious principle. My dear servants, this transcendental religious principle, which is known as bhagavata-dharma, or surrender unto the Supreme Lord and love for Him, is uncontaminated by the material modes of nature. It is very confidential and difficult for ordinary human beings to understand, but if by chance one fortunately understands it, he is immediately liberated and thus he returns home, back to Godhead.*

7 "Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society."*

8 Here Yamaraja explains: "We, the teachers of religion, understand (vijanimah) what is real religion in this way. We do not expound our own theories in scriptures we ourselves have written. Real religion is very confidential (guhya) and not easily understood (durbodham) by non devotees. It is very confidential because when one understands (jnatva) it, he attains liberation (amrtam) as the final result.

9 It is also said (Sri Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.1.38):

"If brahmananda, the transcendental bliss derived from understanding impersonal Brahman, were multiplied a million times, such a quantity of brahmananda could not compare with even an atomic portion of the pleasure relished in pure devotional service."*

In this way the superiority of devotional service is described.

10 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.33.39):

"Anyone who faithfully hears or describes the Lord's playful affairs with the young gopis of Vrndavana will attain the Lord's pure devotional service. Thus he will quickly become sober and conquer lust, the disease of the heart."***

11 The scriptures also explain :

"By tasting the nectar that comes from Lord Krsna's lips, they attain perfection."

In this way they became purified. The following explanation will also be given (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.25):

"Because they are bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yajnavalkya and Jaimini and other compilers of the religious scriptures cannot know the secret, confidential religious system of the twelve mahajanas. They cannot understand the transcendental value of performing devotional service or chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. Because their minds are attracted to the ritualistic ceremonies mentioned in the Vedas, especially the Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Rg Veda, their intelligence has become dull. Thus they have become busy collecting the ingredients for ritualistic ceremonies that yield only temporary benefits, such as elevation to Svargaloka for material happiness. They are not attracted to the sankirtanan movement. Instead they are interested in dharma, artha,, kama and moksa."*

12 The twelve mahajanas mentioned here are very virtuous. They are different from the non devotee sages mentioned in Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.10, the quote in the beginning of this anuccheda.

Anuccheda 111

1 That devotional service to the Lord is the best of all spiritual paths is also

confirmed by the Lord Himself in Bhagavad-gita (6.46-47):

"A yogi greater than the ascetic, greater than the empiricist and greater than the fruitive worker. O Arjuna, in all circumstances, be a yogi."*

2 "And of all yogis, the one with great faith who always abides in Me, thinks of Me within himself, and renders transcendental loving service to Me—he is the most intimately united with Me in yoga and is the highest of all. That is My opinion."*

3 Here, in Bhagavad-gita 6.47, the genitive case (of) is used in the sense of the ablative case (than). (In this way the phrase "best of all yogis" means "better than all yogis"). In this way, Bhagavad-gita 6.46-47 explains that the devotees are the best of all yogis. The other yogis referred to in the phrase "all yogis" are described in these words (Bhagavad-gita 4.25):

"Some yogis perfectly worship the demigods by offering different sacrifices to them, and some of them offer sacrifices in the fire of the Supreme Brahman."*

These are the different methods of yoga that were previously described in Bhagavad-gita. Because the other kinds of yoga are criticised here, this verse proves that devotional service is eternally superior to all other kinds of yoga.

4 That devotional service is the best of all yogas and that it should be performed by all the varnas and asramas is also confirmed by Lord Krsna Himself. The Lord said to Uddhava (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.18-42-43):

"The main religious duties of a sannyasi are equanimity and non violence, whereas for the vanaprastha austerity and philosophical understanding of the difference between the body and soul are prominent. The main duties of a householder are to give shelter to all living entities and perform sacrifices, and the brahmacari is mainly engaged in serving the spiritual master."***

"A householder may approach his wife for sex only at the time prescribed for begetting children. Otherwise, the householder should practice celibacy, austerity, cleanliness of mind and body, satisfaction in his natural position, and friendship toward all living entities. Worship of Me is to be practiced by all human beings, regardless of social or occupational divisions."***

5 This is also confirmed by Sri Narada Muni who, in the course of describing the duties of the different varnas, says (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.11.11):

"Everyone should be engaged in hearing about the activities and instructions given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead (who is the shelter of the saintly persons), chanting about those activities and instructions, trying to render service, performing worship, offering obeisances, becoming a servant, becoming a friend, and surrendering one's whole self."*

6 One is seriously at fault if he fails to engage in devotional service to the Lord. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.2-3):

"Each of the four social orders, headed by the brahmanas, was born through different combinations of the modes of nature, from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Lord in His universal form. Thus the four spiritual orders were also generated."***

"If any of the members of the four varnas and four asramas fail to worship or intentionally disrespect the Personality of Godhead, who is the source of their own creation, they will fall down from their position into a hellish state of life."***

7 This is also confirmed in Mahabharata:

"A person who does not worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who creates and dissolves the universes and also protects them as if He were their mother, should be considered as sinful as a brahmana-killer."

8 The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself affirms in Bhagavad-gita (7.15):

"Those miscreants who are grossly foolish, who are lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by illusion and who partake of the atheistic nature of demons do not surrender unto Me."*

9 Failure to worship the Lord is also criticised in this passage, which appears in both the Agni Purana and the Visnu-dharma Purana:

"There are two classes of men in the created world. One consists of the demonic and the other of the godly. The devotees of Lord Visnu are the godly, whereas those who are just the opposite of that are called demons."*

10 This is further explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.10):

"If a brahmana has all twelve of the brahmanical qualifications (as they are stated in the book called Sanat-sujata) but is not a devotee and is averse to the lotus feet of the Lord, he is certainly lower than a devotee who is a dog-eater but who has dedicated everything-mind, words, activities, wealth and life-to the Supreme Lord. Such a devotee is better than such a brahmana because the devotee can purify his whole family, whereas the so-called brahmana in a position of false prestige cannot purify even himself.

The Narada Purana also explains:

"O King, a dog eater who becomes a devotee of the Lord is far better than a non devotee brahmana."

11 "A person who, even if he knows the meanings of all the scriptures and had travelled to the end of all the Vedas, is not a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, should be considered the lowest of men."

12 This is also confirmed in the Brhan-naradiya Purana in these words:

"They who hate the Vedas, brahmanas, and cows, and who do not worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are considered demons."

13 This is also confirmed by the following prayer (Spoken by the demigods to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.32):

"O lotus-eyed Lord, although non devotees who accept severe austerities and penances to achieve the highest position may think themselves liberated, their intelligence is impure. They fall down from their position of imagined superiority because they have no regard for Your lotus feet."*

14 This verse explains that the non devotees' intelligence is impure (avisuddha-buddhayah) because they do not engage in devotional service (tvayy asta-bhavat).

15 The Supreme Lord confirms the importance of devotional service in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.22):

"Neither religious activities endowed with honesty and mercy nor knowledge obtained with great penance can completely purify one's consciousness if they are bereft of loving service to Me."***

16 Taking shelter of the path of impersonal speculation, the non devotees think themselves superior to all others. However, they are criticised by the Lord Himself in these words (Bhagavad-gita 12.5):

"For those whose minds are attached to the unmanifested impersonal feature of the Supreme, advancement is very troublesome. To make progress in that discipline is always difficult for those who are embodied."*

Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.32 explains that although with great difficulty (krcchrena) the impersonalists attain impersonal liberation (param padam) even in this life, they fall down (patanty adhah) again and their spiritual advancement perishes.

17 Why do they fall down? The demigods say they fall down because they do not worship (anadrta) the Lord's lotus feet. Because they not engage in devotional service, they become unintelligent, because they are unintelligent they do not worship the Lord, and because they do not worship the Lord they cannot become free from the material world. Even though they may have burned away all their previous sinful reactions, because they disrespect the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they cannot become free from continued residence in the material world of birth and death.

18 The Bhagavat-parisista of the Vasana-bhasya explains:

"Even if they imagine that they have become liberated in this life, the impersonalist yogi remain filled with material desires. Only the devotees of the Lord are untouched by material activities."

19 This is also confirmed by the following description of the Rathayatra festival found in the Visnu-bhakti-candrodaya portion of the Skanda Purana:

"Even though his past karma may have already been burned up by the fire of transcendental knowledge, a person who out of illusion fails to follow the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He travels in His Rathayatra festival becomes in his next life a brahma-raksasa demon."

20 This is also confirmed by the following prayer addressed to the Lord (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.4):

"This present form, or any transcendental form expanded by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, is equally auspicious for all the universes. Since You have manifested this eternal personal form upon whom Your devotees meditate, I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You. Those who are destined to be dispatched to the path of hell neglect Your personal form because of speculating on material topics."*

21 The Lord Himself also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.5):

"Therefore, My dear Uddhava, through knowledge you should understand your actual self. Then, advancing by clear realisation of Vedic knowledge, you should worship Me in the mood of loving devotion."***

22 From all this it may be understood that devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternal and it is the best of all spiritual paths. The Srimad Bhagavatam verse (10.2.32) discussed here was spoken by the demigods to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 112

1 Loving devotional service destroys all past karma. The Lord Himself describes this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.25):

"Just as gold, when smelted in fire, gives up its impurities and returns to its pure brilliant state, similarly, the spirit soul, absorbed in the fire of bhakti-yoga, is purified of all contaminations caused by previous fruitive activities and returns to

its original position of serving Me in the spiritual world."***

2 This verse means: "With love shaking away (vidhuya) past karma, the devotee attains his original pure spiritual form and then engages in serving (bhajati) Me (mam)."

This is also described in Sridhara Svami's commentary on Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.21:

"The liberated souls have spiritual forms so they may assist the Lord in His pastimes. In the liberated state they serve the Lord."

Anuccheda 113

1 In the Skanda Purana, Reva-khanda, a devotee prays:

"O Krsna, if you are pleased with him, a dog eater can become Indra, Siva, Brahma or the greatest brahmana.

2 "O infallible Lord, if they become averse to You, the great demigods headed by Brahma and Siva will fall down and become lower than dogeaters."

3 That devotional service removes all past karma is confirmed in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.28.22):

"The blessed Lord Siva becomes all the more blessed by bearing on his head the holy waters of the Ganges, which has its source in the water that washed the Lord's lotus feet. The Lord's feet act like thunderbolts hurled to shatter the mountain of sin stored in the mind of the meditating devotee. One should therefore meditate on the lotus feet of the Lord for a long time."*

4 The meaning of this verse is clear. From this it should be understood that because it is eternal, devotional service is the spiritual path that should be accepted.

The condition of the liberated souls is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.20):

"The individual living entity, even though he lives within material bodies by his karma, is actually spiritual and beyond both gross and subtle matter. O Lord, O Master of all potencies, the Vedas say he is Your part and parcel. Aware that this is the nature of the living entities, the great sages faithfully worship Your feet, which are worshipped in Vedic yajnas, and which grant liberation."

Anuccheda 114

1 It may also be said that devotional service has six different aspects. One of these aspects is meditation on the Lord, which is described in Srimad Bhagavatam from beginning to end. For example, the first verse of Srimad Bhagavatam (1.1.1) describes meditation on the Lord in these words:

"I meditate upon Lord Sri Krsna because He is the Absolute Truth and the primeval cause of all causes of the creation, sustenance and destruction of the manifested universes. He is directly and indirectly conscious of all manifestations, and He is independent because there is no other cause beyond Him. It is He only who first imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmaji, the original living being. By Him even the great sages and demigods are placed into illusion, as one is bewildered by the illusory representations of water seen in fire, or land seen on water. Only because of Him do the material universes, temporarily manifested by the reactions of the three modes of nature, appear factual, although they are unreal. I therefore meditate upon Him, Lord Sri Krsna, who is eternally existent in

the transcendental abode, which is forever free from the illusory representations of the material world. I meditate upon Him, for He is the Absolute Truth."*

2 Two different kinds of meditation are described in the following passage of Bhagavad-gita (12.1-2):

"Arjuna inquired: Which are considered to be more perfect, those who are always properly engaged in Your devotional service or those who worship the impersonal Brahma, the unmanifested?*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: He whose mind is fixed on My personal form, always engaged in worshipping Me with great and transcendental faith is considered by Me to be the most perfect."*

Meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead is more easily performed and is also the best kind of meditation.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead and not the impersonal Brahman is the proper object of meditation and worship. This is confirmed by the Lord Himself in these words (Bhagavad-gita 7.7. and 14.27):

"O conqueror of wealth, there is not truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread."*

"I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman, which is immortal, imperishable and eternal and is the constitutional position of ultimate happiness."*

The conclusion, then, is that the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the best object of meditation. Therefore, because He is all-knowing, because He is the master of all potencies, and because he is the creator, maintainer and destroyer of the material universes, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the best object of meditation.

The verses quoted here (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.1 and 12.13.19) are also discussed in Sri Paramatma-sandarbhā (anuccheda 105).

3 Meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.13.19):

"I meditate upon that pure and spotless supreme Absolute Truth, who is free from suffering and death and who in the beginning personally revealed this incomparable torchlight of knowledge to Brahma. Brahma then spoke it to the sage Narada, who narrated it to Kṛṣṇa-dvaipayana Vyasa. Śrīla Vyasa revealed this Bhagavatam to the greatest of sages, Sukadeva Gosvami and Sukadeva mercifully spoke it to Maharaja Parikṣit."***

4 In this way it is clear that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the best object of meditation. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is also the original speaker of Srimad Bhagavatam. This is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.1):

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead first imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmaji, the original living being."*

Many things that had been previously described again and again, and many other things that had never been described before, are revealed in Srimad Bhagavatam.

5 An example of something previously unknown that was revealed in Srimad Bhagavatam is found in the following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.7.6), in relation to Sri Vyāsadeva's vision in a meditative trance:

"The material miseries of the living entity, which are superfluous to him,

can be directly mitigated by the linking process of devotional service. But the mass of people do not know this, and therefore the learned Vyasadeva compiled this Vedic literature which is in relation to the Supreme Truth."*

6 In this way the statement that devotional service should be performed is repeated again and again in many different places in the scriptures. The final conclusion is given in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.37):

"When the living entity is attracted by the material energy that is separate from Krsna, he is overpowered by fear. Because he is separated from the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the material energy, his conception of life is reversed. In other words, instead of being the eternal servant of Krsna, he becomes Krsna's competitor. This is called viparyayah asmrthih. To nullify this mistake, one who is actually learned and advanced worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead as his spiritual master, worshipful Deity and source of life. He thus worships the Lord by the process of unalloyed devotional service."*

7 Everyone should engage in devotional service to the Lord. This is confirmed in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.22):

"Learned circles have positively concluded that the infallible purpose of the advancement of knowledge, namely austerity, study of the Vedas, sacrifice, chanting of hymns and charity, culminates in the transcendental descriptions of the Lord, who is defined in choice poetry."*

8 This is also confirmed in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.5.12):

"Your friend the great sage Krsna-dvaipayana Vyasa has already described the transcendental qualities of the Lord in his great work the Mahabharata. But the whole idea is to draw the attention of the mass of people to Krsna-katha (Bhagavad-gita) through their strong affinity for hearing mundane topics."*

The meaning of this verse is clear. The Srimad Bhagavatam verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Vidura.

Anuccheda 115

1 Devotional service is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.2):

"Completely rejecting all religious activities which are materially motivated, this Bhagavata Purana propounds the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart. The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all. Such truth uproots the threefold miseries. This beautiful Bhagavatam, compiled by the great sage Vyasadeva (in his maturity) is sufficient in itself for God realisation. What is the need of any other scripture? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of Bhagavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart."*

2 The ten topics of Srimad Bhagavatam are listed in this verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.10.1):

"Sri Sukadeva Gosvami said: In the Srimad Bhagavatam there are ten divisions of statements regarding the following: the creation of the universe, sub creation, planetary systems, protection by the Lord, the creative impetus, the change of Manus, the science of God, returning home, back to Godhead, liberation and the summum bonum."*

In this way the transcendental science of devotional service is listed as one

of the topics of Srimad Bhagavatam.

3 That devotional service should be performed is also stated in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.36, one of the four seed verses (2.9.33-36) of Srimad Bhagavatam. That verse (2.9.36) states:

4 "A person who is searching after the supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, must certainly search for it up to this, in all circumstances, in all space and time and both directly and indirectly."*

5 In the previous three verses transcendental knowledge, confidential transcendental knowledge, and the different aspects of that knowledge were explained. In this, the fourth verse, this statement is given. The first three of these four verses have already been explained in Sri Bhagavat-sandarbha (in anuccheda 95). In Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.31 the word "rahasya" refers to the advanced stage of love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead (prema-bhakti), and the word "tad-anga" refers to devotional service in practice (sadhana-bhakti). Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The word 'rahasya' means 'our devotional service' and the word 'tad-anga' means 'devotional service in practice (sadhana-bhakti).'"

6 The Vedic scriptures are manifested again and again. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.3):

"By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma because I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the Vedas."*

7 Therefore, in this, the fourth (2.9.36) of the seed verses of Srimad Bhagavatam, the Supreme Lord describes devotional service in practice (sadhana-bhakti).

8 The following explanations may be also given. In Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.36 the word "atmanah" means "of Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead", "tattva-jijnasuna" means "by one who desires to understand the secret of pure love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead", "etavad eva" means "one should inquire from the feet of the spiritual master". What should one do? That is explained in the words "anvaya-vyatirekabhyam yat". "Anvaya" means "by performing prescribed activities", and "vyatireka" means "by avoiding forbidden activities."

9 The word "anvaya" is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.55):

"In this material world, to render service to the lotus feet of Govinda, the cause of all causes, and to see Him everywhere, is the only goal of life. This much alone is the ultimate goal of human life, as explained by all the revealed scriptures."*

"Anvaya" is also explained in these words (Bhagavad-gita 9.34 and 18.65):

"Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisances to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me."*

10 The word "vyatireka" is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.2-3):

"From the mouth of brahma, the brahmanical order has come into existence. Similarly, from his arms the ksatriyas have come, from his waist the vaisyas have come, and from his legs the sudras have come. These four orders and

their spiritual counterparts (brahmacarya, grhastha, vanaprastha and sannyasa) combine to make human society complete.*

11 "If one simply maintains an official position in the four varnas and asramas but does not worship the Supreme Lord Visnu, he falls down from his puffed-up position into a hellish condition."*

12 "Vyatireka is also explained in these words (Bhagavad-gita 7.15):

"Those miscreants who are grossly foolish, who are lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by illusion, and who partake of the atheistic nature of demons do not surrender unto Me."*

13 "Vyatireka" is also explained in these words of the Padma Purana:

"If a person in this world does not drink the nectar descriptions of Lord Visnu, which are the sweetest of all nectars, then many hundreds of times he must take birth in different material bodies and suffer the miseries of birth, old age, and death."

14 Where should one search for the Supreme Personality of Godhead? Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.36 says "sarvatra" (one should search for Him everywhere, in all time and space). "Everywhere" means "in all scriptures, performers of activities, places, senses, things, activities, duties and results."

That the Supreme Personality of Godhead should be sought in all scriptures is described in Skanda Purana, in a conversation between Brahma and Narada in these words:

15 "In the material world, which is full of darkness and dangers, combined with birth and death and full of different anxieties, the only way to get out of the great entanglement is to accept loving transcendental devotional service to Lord Vasudeva. This is accepted by all classes of philosophers."*

16 "Anvaya" (performance of prescribed duties) in relation to the Vedic scriptures is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.34):

"The great personality Brahma, with great attention and concentration of the mind, studied the Vedas three times, and after scrutinizingly examining them, he ascertained that attraction for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna is the highest perfection of religion."*

17 This is also explained in the following verse found in both Skanda and Padma Puranas:

"By scrutinizingly reviewing all the revealed scriptures and judging them again and again, it is now concluded that Lord Narayana is the Supreme Absolute Truth, and thus He alone should be worshipped."*

18 "Anvaya" (avoidance of forbidden activities) is described in the Garuda Purana in these words:

"Even though one may have gone to the other side of all the Vedas, and even though one is well versed in all the revealed scriptures, if one is not a devotee of the Supreme Lord, he must be considered the lowest of mankind."*

19 That devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead should be sought among all kinds of performers of action is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.7.46):

"Surrendered souls, even from groups leading sinful lives, such as women, the labourer class, the mountaineers and the Siberians, or even the birds and beasts, can also know about the science of Godhead and become liberated from the clutches of the illusory energy by surrendering unto the pure devotees of the Lord

and by following in their footsteps in devotional service."*

20 This is also explained in the Garuda Purana in these words:

"Even the worms, birds, and beasts are assured of elevation to the highest perfectional life if they are completely surrendered to the transcendental loving service of the Lord, so what to speak of the philosophers among the human beings?"*

21 All people, whether well-behaved, ill-behaved, learned, ignorant, renounced, attached, desiring liberation, already liberated, perfect in devotional service, or not yet perfect in devotional service, are eligible to become the Lord's personal associates. For this reason a devotee sees everyone, even though they many not yet have the Lord's personal association, equally, for they are all eligible to become the Lord's associates. This is described in the following words (Bhagavad-gita 9.30):

22 "Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service, he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination."*

The meaning of this verse is: "If this is the truth about the ill-behaved who are engaged in devotional service, then what can be said of the well-behaved who are engaged in devotional service?"

23 The Lord affirms that both the learned and unlearned are equally eligible to become His devotees (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.33):

"My devotees may or may not know exactly, but if they worship Me with unalloyed love, then I consider them to be the best of devotees."*

24 This is also explained in the Brhan-naradiya Purana in these words:

"As fire burns whatever it touches, so Lord Hari burns away the sins of even the fools."

25 The Supreme Personality of Godhead affirms that both the renounced and the materially attached are equally eligible to become His devotees. He says (11.14.18):

"My dear Uddhava, if My devotee has not fully conquered his senses, he may be harassed by material desires, but because of his unflinching devotion for Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification."***

26 This verse means: "If this is so, then they who are not harassed by material desires will certainly never be defeated by sense gratification." IN this way this verse is like Bhagavad-gita 9.30.

27 That they who desire liberation and they who have already attain liberation are both eligible to become devotees is confirmed in the following two verses. The first verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.26) describes they who aspire to attain liberation:

"Those who are serious about liberation are certainly non envious, and they respect all. Yet they reject the horrible and ghastly forms of the demigods and worship only the all-blissful forms of Lord Visnu and His plenary portions."*

28 The second verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.7.10) describes they who are already liberated:

"All different varieties of atmaramas (those who take pleasure in atma, or spirit self), especially those established on the path of self-realisation, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses

transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls."*

29 That both they who have attained perfection in devotional service and they who have not yet attained perfection in devotional service are both eligible to serve the Lord is described in the following two verses. The first verse describes they who have already attained perfection in devotional service (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.1.15):

"Only a rare person who has adopted complete, unalloyed devotional service to Krsna can uproot the weeds of sinful actions with no possibility that they will revive. He can do this simply by discharging devotional service, just as the sun can immediately dissipate fog by its rays."*

30 The second verse describes they who have not yet attained perfection in devotional service (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.53):

"The lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are sought even by the greatest of demigods, such as Brahma and Siva, who have all accepted the Supreme Personality of Godhead as their life and soul. A pure devotee of the Lord can never forget those lotus feet in any circumstance. He will not give up his shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord for a single-moment-indeed, not for half a moment-even in exchange for the benediction of ruling and enjoying the opulence of the entire universe. Such a devotee of the Lord is to be considered the best of the Vaisnavas."*

31 These devotees become the Lord's personal associates. This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.67):

"My devotees who are always satisfied to be engaged in My loving service, are not interested even in the four principles of liberation (salokya, sarupya, samipya and sarsti), although these are automatically achieved by their service. What then is to be said of such perishable happiness as elevation to the higher planetary systems?"*

32 They become the Lord's eternal associates. This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.15.22):

"The goddesses of fortune worship the Lord in their own gardens by offering tulasi leaves on the coral-paved banks of transcendental reservoirs of water. While offering worship to the Lord, they can see on the water the reflection of their beautiful faces with raised noses, and it appears that they have become more beautiful because of the Lord's kissing their faces."*

33 In Srimad Bhagavatam and other Vedic literatures it is said that by engaging in devotional service in any continent, planet, or universe, one may attain perfection. In this way it should be understood that in any country one may attain perfection by engaging in devotional service.

34 That devotional service may be performed with all the senses is described in these words:

"Worshipping Lord Hari within their minds, the great souls attain Him, the Lord who is beyond words and the mind."

35 This verse proves that with the mind, words, or external senses, one may worship the Lord.

36 The Lord Himself explains that one may worship Him with anything. He says (Bhagavad-gita 9.26):

"If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I

will accept it."*

37 All kinds of activities may be employed in devotional service to the Lord, as is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.12):

"Pure devotional service rendered to the supreme Lord is spiritually so potent that simply by hearing about such transcendental service, by chanting its glories in response, by meditating on it, by respectfully and faithfully accepting it, or by praising the devotional service of others, even persons who hate the demigods and all other living beings can be immediately purified."***

38 This is also confirmed by the Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.27):

"Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform-do that, O son of Kunti as an offering to Me."*

39 In this way, even by engaging in what is only a dim shadow of real devotional service, and even when committing many offenses while engaging in such a dim shadow of real devotional service, one can still attain the real result of devotional service. Ajamila, Musika and many others are examples of this.

40 All kinds of duties may also be employed in devotional service. This is described in the Skanda Purana:

"I offer my obeisances unto Him, the infallible, because simply by either remembering Him or vibrating His holy name one can attain the perfection of all penances, sacrifices or fruitive activities, and this process can be universally followed."*

41 All desires to attain certain results can also be employed in devotional service. Srimad Bhagavatam (2.3.10) explains:

"A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all desires, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead."*

42 By serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead one automatically satisfies all the demigods. This is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.14):

"As pouring water on the root of a tree energises the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else and, as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality."*

Also in the Skanda Purana, in a conversation between Brahma and Narada, it is said:

43 "When the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, who carries in His hands, a conchshell, wheel, club, and lotus flower, is worshipped, certainly all other demigods are worshipped automatically, because Hari, the Personality of Godhead, is all pervading."*

44 Therefore one who directly engages in devotional service, one who donates cows or various things so they may provide something to offer the Lord, one to whom something is given so that gift may be pleasing to the Lord, one who takes milk and other things from cows or other living entities to offer foods to the Lord, and one in whose country or family devotional service is performed, all attain the perfection of engagement in devotional service. This is seen in the statements of the Puranas. In this way an example has been given for each of the cases employed

in Sanskrit grammar. In this way it is proved that devotional service should be performed everywhere and in all circumstances ("sarvatra" as explained in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.36):

45 Devotional service is eternally manifest. This is confirmed in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.36 in the word "sarvada" (always). Devotional service is manifested at the beginning of the universe's creation. That is confirmed in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.3), where the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself says:

"By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma because I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the Vedas."*

That devotional service is manifested during the middle period, when the universes are manifested, is confirmed in many passages of the Vedic literatures.

46 Devotional service is present even during and after the four kinds of annihilations of the material universe. This is described in the following question spoken by Vidura, a question that affirms that the Lord is served even after the material universe is annihilated (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.7.37):

"Please describe how many dissolutions there are for the elements of material nature and who survives after the dissolutions to serve the Lord while He is asleep."*

47 That devotional service is present in all four yugas is confirmed in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.3.52):

"Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Visnu, in Treta yuga by performing sacrifices, and in Dvapara yuga by serving the Lord's lotus feet can be obtained in Kali yuga simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mahamantra."*

48 What more need be said? The Visnu Purana explains:

"If even for a moment remembrance of Vasudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is missed, that is the greatest loss, that is the greatest illusion, and that is the greatest anomaly."*

49 Devotional service may be performed in any circumstance. Even while in the womb Sri Prahlada engaged in the devotional service of hearing the Lord's glories chanted by Sri Narada. In childhood Sri Dhruva and many other engaged in devotional service. In youth Ambarisa and many others engaged in devotional service. In old age Dhrtarastra and many others engaged in devotional service. At the moment of death Ajamila and many others engaged in devotional service. In both the heavenly and hellish material worlds Citraketu and many others engaged in devotional service.

50 The Nrsimha Purana explains:

"As they began chanting the holy name of Lord Hari, the residents of hell suddenly developed loving devotion for Him. At that moment they were transported to the spiritual world."

51 That chanting the holy name of the Lord delivers one from hell is also described in these words spoken by Durvasa Muni (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.62):

"O my Lord, O supreme controller, without knowledge of Your unlimited prowess I have offended Your most dear devotee. Very kindly save me from the reaction of this offense. You can do everything, for even is a person is fit for hell,

You can deliver him simply by awakening within his heart the holy name of Your Lordship."*

52 The glories of chanting the Lord's holy name are also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.11):

"O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge."*

53 "Vyatireka (avoiding what is forbidden) is described in the following passage from both the Brhan-narada Purana and the Padma Purana:

"What is the use of studying the Vedas? What is the use of studying other scriptures? What is the use of going on pilgrimages? What is the use of practicing austerities? What is the use of performing sacrifices? What is the use of these things to they who have no devotion to Lord Visnu?

"What is the use of studying many scriptures? What is the use of performing many sacrifices? What is the use of performing a thousand vajapeya-yajnas? What is the use of these things to a person filled with devotion to Lord Krsna, the saviour from miseries?"

54 That all kinds of spiritual activities are useless without devotional service is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.4.17):

"Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the all-auspicious Lord Sri Krsna again and again because the great learned sages, the great performers of charity, the great workers of distinction, the great philosophers and mystics, the great chanters of the Vedic hymns and the great followers of Vedic principles cannot achieve any fruitful results without dedication of such great qualities to the service of the Lord."*

55 That is also confirmed by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.19.23):

"An intelligent person does not take interest in a place, even in the topmost planetary system, if the pure Ganges of topics concerning the Supreme Lord's activities does not flow there, if there are not devotees engaged in service on the banks of such a river of piety, or if there are no festivals of sankirtana-yajna to satisfy the Lord (especially since sankirtana yajna is recommended in this age)."

56 That is again confirmed by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.59.41):

"Even after Indra had bowed down to Lord Acyuta, touched His feet with the tips of his crown and begged the Lord to fulfil his desire, that exalted demigod having achieved his purpose, chose to fight with the Supreme Lord. What ignorance there is among the gods! To hell with their opulence!"***

57 That the devotees are interested only in devotional service is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.52):

"A pure devotee does not accept any kind of liberation-salokya, sarsti, samipya, sarupya or ekatva-even though they are offered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

58 That the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased only by devotional service is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.52):

"My dear friends, O sons of the demons, you cannot please the Supreme Personality of Godhead by becoming perfect brahmanas, demigods, or great saints or by becoming perfectly good in etiquette or vast learning. None of these

qualifications can awaken the pleasure of the Lord. Nor by charity, austerity, sacrifice, cleanliness or vows can one satisfy the Lord. The Lord is pleased only if one has unflinching, unalloyed devotion to Him. Without sincere devotional service, everything is simply a show."*

59 That only devotional service has value is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.12):

"Knowledge of self-realisation, even though free from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Infallible (God). What, then, is the use of fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilised for the devotional service of the Lord?"*

60 That the devotees are interested only in devotional service is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.15.48):

"Persons who are very expert and most intelligent in understanding things as they are engage in hearing narrations of the auspicious activities and pastimes of the Lord, which are worth chanting and worth hearing. Such persons do not care even for the highest material benediction, namely liberation, to say nothing of other less important benedictions like the material happiness of the heavenly kingdom."*

61 The statement of Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.36, that one should always (sarvada) and everywhere (sarvatra) engage in devotional service, is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.36):

"O King, it is therefore essential that every human being hear about, glorify and remember the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, always and everywhere."*

62 The statement of Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.36, that one should engage in devotional service by performing prescribed activities (anvaya) and avoiding forbidden activities (vyatireka), is further explained by these words from the Padma Purana:

"Krsna is the origin of Lord Visnu. He should always be remembered and never forgotten at any time. All the rules and prohibitions mentioned in the sastras should be the servants of these two principles."*

63 The statement of Srimad Bhagavatam 2.9.36, that one should engage in devotional service always (sarvada) and everywhere (sarvatra) by performing prescribed activities (anvaya) and avoiding forbidden activities (vyatireka), is further explained by these words from Srimad Bhagavatam (2.2.33 and 2.2.36):

"For those who are wandering in the material universe, there is no more auspicious means of deliverance than what is aimed at in the direct devotional service of Lord Krsna."*

64 "O King, it is therefore essential that every human being hear about, glorify and remember the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, always and everywhere."*

65 In this verse the word "nram" means "of the living entities". The living entities are described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.20):

"The individual living entity, even though he lives within material bodies created by his karma, is actually spiritual and beyond both gross and subtle matter. O Lord, O master of all potencies, the Vedas say he is Your part and parcel. Aware that this is the nature of the living entities, the great sages faithfully worship Your

feet, which are worshipped in Vedic yajnas, and which grant liberation."

The living entity attains different destinations as a result of his activities. By engaging in fruitive activities (karma), he attains another material body. By engaging in yoga he attains mystic perfections. By engaging in the study of sankhya philosophy he attains knowledge of the spirit soul. By engaging in jnana-yoga he attains impersonal liberation. In this way, by performing different activities described in the scriptures, he attains different results.

By always (sarvada) and everywhere (sarvatra) engaging in devotional service by performing prescribed activities (anvaya) and avoiding forbidden activities (vyatireka), he attains a glorious secret (rahasya) that is hidden from the perception of they who are engaged in jnana-yoga.

66 That the living entities should engage in devotional service is confirmed by the following words. As Sri Narada was about to explain the science of Srimad Bhagavatam, Sri Brahma gave him the following instruction (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.7.52):

"Please describe the science of Godhead with determination and in a manner by which it will be quite possible for the human being to develop transcendental devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead Hari, the Supersoul of every living being and the summum bonum source of all energies."*

67 Here the word "bhavisyati" means "will inevitably be", "iti" refers to the path of devotional service, and "sankalpya" means "by accepting certain restrictions". This verse was spoken by Sri Brahma to Sri Narada.

Anuccheda 116

1 In order that the great Purana (Srimad Bhagavatam) be revealed, Sri Narada gave the following instruction (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.13):

"O Vyasadeva, your vision is completely perfect. Your good fame is spotless. You are firm in vow and situated in truthfulness. And thus you can think of the pastimes of the Lord in trance for the liberation of the people in general from all material bondage."*

2 Here the word "atho" means "therefore". This verse immediately follows these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.12):

"Knowledge of self-realisation, event though free from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Infallible (God). What, then, is the use of fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilised for the devotional service of the Lord?"*

In Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.13 the words "anusmara tad-vicestitam" (thinking of the pastimes of the Lord) describe pure and unbroken devotional service.

Anuccheda 117

1 At the conclusion of this instruction to Vyasa, Sri Narada said (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.40):

"Please, therefore, describe the Almighty Lord's activities which you have learned by your vast knowledge of the Vedas, for that will satisfy the hankerings of great learned men and at the same time mitigate the miseries of the masses of common people who are always suffering from material pangs. Indeed, there is no

other way to get out of such miseries."*

2 Here the word "vidam" means "of great learned men". This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to Sri Vyasa.

Anuccheda 118

1 In the beginning of Srimad Bhagavatam, Sri Vyasa declared devotional service to be the highest good. In a vision he had during a mystic trance, a vision that has already been discussed in the Tattva-sandarbha, he also saw the truth of devotional service. What he saw is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.7.4):

"Thus he fixed his mind, perfectly engaging it by linking it in devotional service (bhakti-yoga) without any tinge of materialism, and thus he saw the Absolute Personality of Godhead along with His external energy, which was under full control."*

2 In Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.30 Uddhava asked the Lord, "What is the greatest attainment?" and the Lord replied, "Devotion to Me is the greatest attainment." The meaning of these verses is clear. The last verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 119

1 (The importance of devotional service is also seen in the next verse. Unhappy even after compiling the Vedas), Vyasadeva reflects on (what may have been the cause of His unhappiness). He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.4.31):

"This may be because I did not specifically point out the devotional service of the Lord, which is dear both to perfect beings and the infallible Lord."*

2 The meaning of this verse is clear. It was spoken by Sri Vyasa.

Anuccheda 120

1 By this instruction the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the teacher of all, says that devotional service is the most exalted of all spiritual paths. This is also confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.16.40):

"O unconquerable one, when You spoke about bhagavata-dharma, which is the uncontaminated religious system for achieving the shelter of Your lotus feet, that was Your victory. Persons who have no material desires, like the Kumaras, who are self satisfied sages, worship You to be liberated from material contamination. In other words, they accept the process of bhagavata-dharma to achieve shelter at Your lotus feet."*

2 In this verse the word "jitam" means "conquered by You", and "aha" means "You spoke." This verse was spoken by Citraketu to Sri Sankarsana.

Anuccheda 121

1 In this way it is proved that one should engage in devotional service. In many places in the scriptures devotional service mixed with fruitive work or other activities is described. This is done so that they who have faith in these other spiritual paths may come into contact with devotional service and thus attain the real goal of life. When they thus taste the nectar happiness of serving the Lord they will become devotees and always engage in devotional service.

Previously we had explained the glories of devotional service and

demonstrated that it should be performed in all situations. Now we will explain that devotional service should be performed by everyone, that the devotees should do devotional service only and not anything else, that devotional service is the highest religion, and that devotional service fulfils all desires.

2 That devotional service is the highest religion is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.22):

"Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society."*

3 That devotional service fulfils all desires is confirmed by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.2.10):

"A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead."*

4 The exalted nature of devotional service is also described in these words, where the Lord Himself says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.15.35):

"My dear Uddhava, I am the cause, the protector and the Lord of all mystic perfections, of the yoga system, of analytic knowledge, of the pure activities of devotional service, and of the community of learned Vedic teachers."

5 That devotional service is the highest religion is confirmed in the Skanda Purana, where in a conversation between Sanat-kumara and Markandeya Muni it is said:

"The religion of worshipping Lord Visnu is the best of all religions. Worshipping Lord Visnu brings a result many millions of times greater than one can attain by performing all yajnas, austerities and homas, and by bathing in all holy places. Therefore one should, with all his energy, worship Lord Narayana in this world."

6 Again in the Skanda Purana, in a conversation between Brahma and Narada, the following statement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is given:

"A person who performs many thousands of thousands of asvamedha-yajnas does not attain the same result attained by My devotees."

7 That devotional service destroys all inauspiciousness is explained by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.1.17):

"The path followed by pure devotees, who are well behaved and fully endowed with the best qualifications, is certainly the most auspicious path in this material world. It is free from fear, and it is authorised by the sastras."*

8 Srila Sridhara Svami comments: "Devotional service is not like the path of impersonal speculation (jnana), which brings one fear by convincing one not to serve the Lord. Nor is devotional service like the path of fruitive work (karma) which brings fear because it carries with it envy and a host of other vices."

9 That devotional service destroys all inauspiciousness is also affirmed by the Lord Himself in these words from the Skanda Purana, Dvaraka-mahatmya:

"They who engage in My devotional service will never find inauspiciousness, either in this world or the next. Indeed, they personally carry many millions of their family members to the spiritual world."

10 That devotional service destroys all inauspiciousness is also described in these words of the Visnu Purana:

"I always take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, who is the abode of all auspiciousness."

11 That devotional service destroys all obstacles to spiritual advancement is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.33):

"O Madhava, Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the goddess of fortune, if devotees completely in love with You sometimes fall from the path of devotion, they do not fall like non devotees, for You still protect them. Thus they fearlessly traverse the heads of their opponents and continue to progress in devotional service."*

12 The verse immediately preceding this explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.32):

"O lotus-eyed Lord, although non devotees who accept severe austerities and penances to achieve the highest position may think themselves liberated, their intelligence is impure. They fall down from their position of imagined superiority because they have no regard for Your lotus feet."*

This means that even though they may attain impersonal liberation, because they do not worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead the impersonalists are frustrated in attaining the supreme goal of life. The devotees, however, are not frustrated in their attempt to attain the real goal of life. This verse says; "Even though the impersonalists may ascend to impersonal Brahman realisation, they however, again fall down. O Lord, Your devotees, however, do not fall down from their engagement in the activities of devotional service to You. How can they abandon You, the goal of their lives?" That is the meaning.

13 It may be observed that Vrtra, Gajendra, Bharata, and many others fell down from an exalted life in devotional service. However, because their desire to engage in devotional service followed them to their next birth, they ultimately attained success.

The impersonalists, however, do not retain the desire for spiritual advancement when they fall down. Their desires become material. Their position is described in the following words from the Vasana-bhasya:

"After they attain Brahman liberation the impersonalists again fall down, for they are offenders to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the mater of all inconceivable potencies."

14 In this way the impersonalists become filled with material desires and fall down from Brahman liberation. That is clearly described in this verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.32). This verse implies, "O Lord, Your devotees, however, do not fall down." That the impersonalists do fall down and the devotees do not fall down are both facts of equal certainty. They are true without doubt. This verse implies, "O Lord, because the devotees love You, and because they have faith in the activities of devotional service (sadhana-bhakti), they do not fall down."

15 That devotional service removes all obstacles to spiritual progress is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.4.10):

"The demigods place many obstacles on the path of those who worship You to transcend the temporary abodes of the demigods and reach Your supreme abode. Those who offer the demigods their assigned share in sacrificial performances encounter no such obstacles. But because You are the direct protector of Your devotee, he is able to step over the head of whatever obstacle the demigods place before him."***

16 That devotional service removes all obstacles to spiritual progress is again described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.35):

"O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall."***

Anuccheda 122

1 That devotional service removes all obstacles to spiritual progress is confirmed by the Supreme Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.21.24):

"My dear rsi, O leader of the living entities, for those who serve Me in devotion by worshipping Me, especially persons like you who have given up everything unto Me, there is never any question of frustration."*

2 Here the words "mayi sangrbhitatmanam" mean "their hearts are fixed on Me".

That devotional service removes all obstacles to spiritual progress is again confirmed by the Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.18):

"My dear Uddhava, if My devotee has not fully conquered his sense, he may be harassed by material desires, but because of his unflinching devotion for Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification."*

3 The word "badhayamanah" in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.18 means that the neophyte devotee sometimes remembers the Lord and becomes attracted to Him. That is what should be understood here.

That the devotee is not defeated in his attempts at spiritual advancement is also, confirmed by the Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.27):

"Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense-gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities."***

In this way the devotee humbly prays to the Lord and perseveres in his activities of devotional service. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Sukadeva to Sri Kardama.

Anuccheda 123

1 That devotional service removes all fears obtained from wicked living entities or other sources of fear is confirmed by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.43-44):

"Hiranyakasipu could not kill his son by throwing him beneath the feet of big elephants, throwing him among huge, fearful snakes, employing destructive spells, hurling him from the top of a hill, conjuring up illusory tricks, administering poison, starving him, exposing him to severe colds, winds, fire and water, or throwing heavy stones to crush him. When Hiranyakasipu found that he could not in any way harm Prahlada, who was completely sinless, he was in great anxiety about what to do next."*

2 In the Visnu Purana, Sri Prahlada himself said:

"Elephants with tusks hard as thunderbolts attacked me, but I remained

unhurt."

Also in Srimad Bhagavatam (10.6.3) it is said:

"My dear King, wherever people in any position perform their occupational duties of devotional service by chanting and hearing (sravanam kirtanam visnoh), there cannot be any danger from bad elements. Therefore there was no need for anxiety about Gokula while the Supreme Personality of Godhead was personally present."*

3 This is also confirmed by the following statement of Sri Brhan-narada Purana:

"No obstacles can stop one who worships Lord Visnu. Neither kings, nor thieves, nor diseases can trouble him. Pretas, pisacas, kusmandas, grahas, balagrahas, dakinis, and raksasas cannot harm him."

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Narada to Sri Yudhisthira.

Anuccheda 124

1 That they who are engaged in devotional service are always free of fears is again confirmed by the following rhetorical question (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.22.37):

"Therefore, O Vidura, how can persons completely under the shelter of Lord Krsna in devotional service be put into miseries pertaining to the body, the mind, nature, and other men and living creatures?"*

2 This is also confirmed by the following statement of the Garuda Purana:

"Neither Durvasa's curse nor Indra's thunderbolt have the power to harm a devotee who keeps Lord Krsna in his heart."

3 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Maitreya to Sri Vidura.

Anuccheda 125

1 Devotional service destroys both the sufferings created by sins already committed and the desire to commit sins in the future. This is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.19):

"My dear Uddhava, just as a blazing fire turns firewood into ashes, similarly, devotion unto Me completely burns to ashes sins committed by My devotees."*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse means, "As (yatha) a great blazing fire (agnih) burns firewood to ashes, so devotional service to Me (mad-visaya bhaktih), which I have now described burns away all sins." In this way the Supreme Personality of Godhead describes the glory and wonder of devotional service. He says, "O Uddhava, please hear this great wonder."

3 Here the example of a great fire is given. In this example the fire is great. However, even if the fire of devotional service is not very great it will still burn away all sins.

4 In the Padma Purana, Patala-khanda, Vaisakha-mahatmya it is also said:

"As a blazing fire burns firewood to ashes, so in a single moment devotional service to the Lord burns away all sins."

5 This is again confirmed by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.15):

"If one chants the holy name of Hari and then dies because of an accidental misfortune, such as falling from the top of a house, slipping and suffering broken bones while travelling on the road, being bitten by a serpent, being afflicted with pain and high fever, or being injured by a weapon, one is immediately absolved from having to enter hellish life, even though he is sinful."*

Here the potential mood (vidhi-lin) is understood although not expressed. The sentences beginning "pusa prapistha-bhagah", and "yad agneyo staka-palo bhavati" (from the Yajur Veda) are examples of the potential being understood although not expressed.

6 The value of hearing about the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.1.5):

"O descendent of King Bharata, one who desires to be free from all miseries must hear about, glorify, and also remember the Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul, the controller, and the saviour from all miseries."*

7 The word "tasmat" here indicates the reason for hearing the glories of the Lord. It would be wrong to say there is no reason to hear them. The benefit derived from hearing the Lord's glories is not dependent on following a host of rules and regulations. By its own nature, the hearing of the Lord's glories brings the great benefit described here, just as by its own nature, a fire burns firewood to ashes. This was described in the Srimad Bhagavatam verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda.

8 That the performance of devotional service is not dependent on careful attention to a host of rules and regulations is also seen in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.35):

"O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall."***

9 The Srimad Bhagavatam verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda also refutes the idea that a long delay stands between the beginning of devotional service and the attainment of its results. That there is no such delay is also confirmed in the quote from Padma Purana in text 4, which says "tat-ksanat" (devotional service destroys all sins in a single moment).

Anuccheda 126

1 That devotional service brings immediate results is also confirmed in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.1.15):

"Only a rare person who has adopted complete, unalloyed devotional service to Krsna can uproot the weeds of sinful actions with no possibility that they will revive. He can do this simply by discharging devotional service, just as the sun can immediately dissipate fog by its rays."*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse describes a rare and exalted stage of devotional service. The word 'kevalata' means 'not mixed with the activities of the path of austerity or any other spiritual path'. 'Vasudeva-parayana' means 'not having faith in any other path.' That is the meaning here."

3 This verse explains that as the sun (bhaskarah) dissipates fog (niharam) with its rays, so a devotee (vasudeva-parayanah) uproots the weeds of sinful actions by performing devotional service (bhaktya).

Anuccheda 127

1 That one becomes purified by engaging in devotional service is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.1.16):

"My dear King, if a sinful person engages in the service of a bona fide devotee of the Lord and thus learns how to dedicate his life unto the lotus feet of Krsna, he can be completely purified. One cannot be purified merely by undergoing austerity, penance, brahmacarya and the other methods of atonement I have previously described."*

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse affirms that devotional service to the Lord is better than the path of impersonal speculation. One is not purified by following the path of speculation (na tatha puyate). However a person who has dedicated his life to Lord Krsna is purified by serving the Supreme Lord (tat-purusa-nisevaya)."

3 Atonement attained by engaging in devotional service is better than atonement attained by impersonal speculation. This is described in the following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.1.11):

"My dear King, since acts meant to neutralise impious actions are also fruitive, they will not release one from the tendency to act fruitively. Persons who subject themselves to the rules and regulations of atonement are not at all intelligent. Indeed, they are in the mode of darkness. Unless one is freed from the mode of ignorance, trying to counteract one action through another is useless because this will not uproot one's desires. Thus even though one may superficially seem pious, he will undoubtedly be prone to act impiously. Therefore real atonement is enlightenment in perfect knowledge, Vedanta, by which one understands the Supreme Absolute Truth."*

These words are elaborately explained in Srila Sridhara Svami's commentary.

4 Srimad Bhagavatam (6.13.17) explains:

"Indra's sins were diminished by the influence of Rudra, the demigod of all directions. Because Indra was protected by the goddess of fortune, Lord Visnu's wife, who resides in the lotus clusters of Manasa-sarovara Lake, Indra's sins could not affect him. Indra was ultimately relieved of all the reactions of his sinful deeds by strictly worshipping Lord Visnu. Then he was called back to the heavenly planets by the brahmanas and reinstated in his position."*

This means that by meditating on Lord Visnu, Indra became freed from the impious result attained by killing the brahmana Vrtrasura.

Srimad Bhagavatam (6.13.18) then explains:

"O king, when Lord Indra reached the heavenly planets, the saintly brahmanas approached him and properly initiated him into a horse sacrifice (asvamedha-yajna) meant to please the Supreme Lord."*

We may note that ordinary people think one must perform an asvamedha-yajna to become genuinely freed from the results of sins.

5 Here someone may ask: "Why is it by worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead Indra was able to become freed from the sin of killing the great devotee Vrtrasura, who was situated in the platform of pure love for the Lord? It is generally understood that one becomes freed from a great offense only by either experiencing the punishment that is its proper result, or by receiving the mercy of

the Lord of His devotee."

This objection is answered in the following words: The Supreme Personality of Godhead ordered Indra to kill Vrtra, and therefore there is actually no fault on Indra's part. Worshipping the Lord was therefore sufficient atonement for Indra. The Supreme Personality of Godhead ordered Indra to kill Vrtra so Vrtra could become freed from having a demon's body. Therefore Indra is not at fault here.

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 128

1 That devotional service removes the results of past sins is explained in the following two verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.33.6-7):

"To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog-eaters immediately becomes eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even remembers Him."*

2 "Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your holy name! Even if born in the families of dog-eaters, such persons are worshipping. Persons who chant the holy name of Your Lordship must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Aryans. To be chanting the holy name of Your Lordship, they must have bathed at holy places of pilgrimage, studied the Vedas and fulfilled everything required."*

3 The word 'svadah' here means 'a member of the dogeater-caste'. The dictionary defines the word 'svadah' as 'a person who presently eats dog's flesh, as carnivorous animals eat the flesh of various creatures'. The word 'svadah' here, however, refers to a person who in the past ate dog's flesh, performed atonement for that sin, and does not eat dog's flesh in the present. This second meaning is the common usage of the word 'svadah'. The rule 'rudhir yogam apaharati' (customary usage takes precedence over dictionaries and etymology), here eclipses the dictionary definition. In this way the word 'svadah' is defined here.

4 Here the word 'savanaya' refers to the soma-yajna. Simply by once hearing the holy name of the Lord one becomes free from past sins and the low birth they have brought and becomes qualified to perform the soma-yajna. That is the meaning here.

5 If this is true even for dogeaters that become devotees, then how much more true is it for devotees that come from pious backgrounds? Srimad Bhagavatam (11.14.21) explains:

"Only by practicing unalloyed devotional service with full faith in Me can one obtain Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I am naturally dear to My devotees, who take Me as the only goal of their loving service. By engaging in such pure devotional service, even the dogeaters can purify themselves from the contamination of their low birth."*

6 By engaging in devotional service a dogeater becomes purified of the contamination brought by his past sins and he also attains the qualities needed to perform a yajna. In this way he is qualified to perform a yajna. A boy born in a brahmana family is not automatically qualified to perform yajnas. He is only

qualified when he attains saintly qualities and when he is properly initiated. A person born in a brahmana family thus must undergo an elaborate procedure to become qualified to perform a yajna. A devotee, however, is automatically qualified. Therefore a devotee is more worthy of receiving worship than is a brahmana. This is confirmed by Srila Sridhara Svami, who comments here, "This statement declares that a devotee of the Lord is supremely worthy of receiving worship." In this way it is clearly seen that the performance of devotional service removes all the disadvantages created by past sins.

7 This is confirmed in Srimad Bhagavatam 3.33.7 (quoted in text 2). There the word "aho" indicates a sense of being struck with wonder. That verse states: "Even a dogeater is glorious if Your holy name stays on his tongue." How is that? The answer is given "He must have executed all kinds of austerities." The meaning here that a person who chants Your holy name, O Lord, is the most saintly of persons.

8 In this way engagement in devotional service to the Lord removes the diseases and sufferings caused by past sins. This is described in the Skanda Purana in these words:

"I offer my respectful obeisances to the limitless Supreme Personality of Godhead. When one remembers His holy name all one's sufferings and diseases perish."

9 Sri Nama-kaumudi also explains that because chanting of the Lord's holy name fulfils all the desires of the devotee, it also removes all his past sins.

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Devahuti.

Anuccheda 129

1 That devotional service removes material desires is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.17):

"Although one may neutralise the reactions of sinful life through austerity, charity, vows and other such methods, these pious activities cannot uproot the material desires in one's heart. However, if one serves the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, he is immediately freed from all such contaminations."*

2 Here the word "adhama-jam" means "born from irreligious activities". The heart is not purified of sins simply by samskaras. The heart is purified only by serving the feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the meaning here.

3 That engagement in devotional service removes all past sins is explained in these words of Sri Padma Purana:

There are four kinds of effects due to sinful activities. They are listed as follows: 1. the effect which is not yet fructified, 2. the effect which is lying as seed, 3. the effect which is already mature, and 4. the effect which is almost mature. All these four effects become immediately vanquished for those who surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu and become engaged in His devotional service in full Krsna consciousness."*

Note: These four effects of sins are described by Srila Prabhupada in Nectar of Devotion, Chapter One, under the sub-heading "Relief from Material Distress."

4 These four kinds of sinful reactions, 1. the effect which is not yet fructified, 2. the effect which is lying as seed, 3. the effect which is already mature, and 4. the effect which is almost mature, will be described in detail later in this book.

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Sri Visnudutas to the Yamadutas.

Anuccheda 130

1 That devotional service removes ignorance is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.11.30):

"Thus regaining your natural position and rendering service unto the Supreme Lord, who is the all-powerful reservoir of all pleasure and who lives in all living entities as the Supersoul, you will very soon forget the illusory understanding of 'I' and 'my'."*

2 That devotional service removes ignorance is also described in Padma Purana in these words:

"Pure devotional service in Krsna consciousness is the highest enlightenment, and when such enlightenment is there, it is just like a blazing forest fire, killing all the inauspicious snakes of desire."*

3 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Manu to Maharaja Dhruva.

Anuccheda 131

1 That by engaging in devotional service one satisfies everyone is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.14):

"As pouring water on the root of a tree energises the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality."*

2 That everyone is pleased with a devotee is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.9.46-47):

"Suruci, the younger mother of Dhruva Maharaja, seeing that the innocent boy had fallen at her feet, immediately picked him up, embracing him with her hands, and with tears of feeling she blessed him with the words, 'My dear boy, long may you live!'"*

3 "Unto one who has transcendental qualities due to friendly behaviour with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, all living entities offer honour, just as water automatically flows down by nature."*

4 Suruci was of Dhruva's enemy and the co-wife of Dhruva's mother. Dhruva has just come from worshipping the Supreme Lord.

5 That everyone is pleased with a devotee is also described in these words of the Padma Purana:

"A person who worships Lord Hari pleases all the worlds. All moving and unmoving living entities love him."

6 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Maitreya Muni.

Anuccheda 132

1 That devotional service brings with it knowledge, renunciation, and all other spiritual virtues is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.18.12):

"All the demigods and their exalted qualities, such as religion, knowledge

and renunciation, become manifest in the body of one who has developed unalloyed devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva. On the other hand, a person devoid of devotional service and engaged in material activities has no good qualities. Even if he is adept at the practice of mystic yoga or the honest endeavour of maintaining his family and relatives, he must be driven by his own mental speculations and must engage in the service of the Lord's external energy. How can there be any good qualities in such a man?"*

2 That devotional service grants the happiness of Svargaloka, liberation, and residence in the Lord's transcendental abode is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20. 32-33):

"Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties, and all other means of perfecting life, is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service to Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions."***

3 Devotional service brings such great happiness that it inspires one to reject the methods and goals of karma (fruitive work) and jnana (impersonal speculation). This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.14):

"One who has fixed his consciousness on Me desires neither the position or abode of Lord Brahma or Lord Indra, nor an empire on the earth, nor sovereignty in the lower planetary systems, nor the eightfold perfection of yoga, nor liberation from birth and death. Such a person desires Me alone."***

4 Here the word "rasadhipatyam" means "sovereignty in the lower planetary systems", and "apuna-bhavam" means "impersonal liberation". What more? The word "anyat" means "anything else one may aspire to attain." The devotees does not desire (na icchati) any of this. The Lord says, "He desires only Me (mam), who am attained by devotional service and who is the greatest of all goals of life. In this way the devotee is completely surrendered unto Me (mayy arpitatma)."

Anuccheda 133

1 Pure devotional service offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is beyond the modes of nature. All other works are in the realm of the material modes. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.23):

2 "Work performed as an offering to Me, without consideration of the fruit, is considered to be in the mode of transcendental goodness, beyond the material modes. Work performed with a desire to enjoy the result is in the mode of passion. And work impelled by violence and envy is in the mode of ignorance."

3 Here the word "mad-arpanam" means "offered to Me", "nisphalam" means "without desiring to enjoy the results", and "adi" means "pride, envy, and a host of other vices".

Anuccheda 134

1 Non-devotional activities are situated in the realm of the three modes of material nature. Activities of direct devotional service, however, are transcendental and beyond the modes of nature. The Lord Himself explains this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.24):

2 "Absolute knowledge is in the mode of goodness, knowledge based on duality is in the mode of passion, and foolish, materialistic knowledge is in the

mode of ignorance. Knowledge based upon Me, however, is understood to be transcendental."***

3 Here the word "prakrtam" means "material knowledge, which is like the small knowledge of a child or a deaf-mute", "vaikalpikam" means "the knowledge attained by using the material body and senses", "rajah" means "the mode of passion", and "jnana-kaivalyam" means "impersonal knowledge whereby one imagines that the individual living entity and the Supreme Brahman are not different." The word "tvam" (you) is therefore a word that has no meaning in impersonalism. Only the word "tat" (it) has meaning for the impersonalists. When the heart and mind are situated in material goodness then the pure and subtle impersonal feature of the Absolute can be understood. Therefore the impersonal Absolute that is manifested in the mode of material goodness.

4 The different effects of the different modes are explained in these words of Sri Bhagavad-gita (14.17):

"From the mode of goodness, real knowledge develops; from the mode of passion, greed develops; and from the mode of ignorance develop foolishness, madness and illusion."*

5 The rareness of knowledge of the Supreme Person is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.14.2 and 5):

"Demigods situated in the mode of goodness and great saints cleansed of the dirt of material enjoyment hardly ever render pure devotional service at the lotus feet of Mukunda."*

6 "O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Narayana, or Krsna. Such devotees, who are fully peaceful, are extremely rare."*

7 Knowledge of the Supreme Person is not attained by they who are situated in the three modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.14.1):

"O learned brahmana, demons are generally sinful, being obsessed with the modes of passion and ignorance. How, then, could Vrtrasura have attained such exalted love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana?"*

8 Srila Sukadeva Gosvami then explained that non devotees can become enlightened by association of great souls. In his reply he said that Vrtrasura, in his previous birth, associated with Narada Muni and other great devotees. That one attains knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by associating with His devotees is also explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.32):

"Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaisnava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for his uncommon activities. Only by becoming Krsna consciousness and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination."*

9 That one becomes enlightened by associating with a great devotee, who is a pure carrier of the Lord's mercy, is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.18.13):

10 "The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity,

which are for those who are meant for death."*

11 To be freed from the influence of the three modes of material nature is best, so therefore association with a devotee who is free from the influence of the modes is the best kind of association with a devotee.

In Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.1., King Pariksit asks the following question:

"My dear brahmana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu, being everyone's well-wisher is equal and extremely dear to everyone. How, then, did He become partial like a common man for the sake of Indra and thus kill Indra's enemies? How can a person equal to everyone be partial to some and inimical toward others?"*

12 The Supreme Personality of Godhead does not give His real mercy to the demigods and others still under the spell of the three modes of material nature. He gives His real mercy only to the great souls, such as Prahlada, who are free from the spell of the modes. By associating with such devotees one also becomes free from the spell of the three modes of nature. When one has thus shaken off the influence of the modes, he can engage in real devotional service. This is described by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself in these words spoken to Uddhava (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.33):

13 "Therefore, having achieved this human form of life, which allows one to develop full knowledge, those who are intelligent should free themselves from all contamination of the modes of nature and engage exclusively in loving service to Me."***

14 The assertion that knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is "nirguna" should be understood in the secondary sense of "free from the influence of the three modes of material nature" and not in the primary sense of "not having any qualities". The impersonal conception of God imagines that God has no qualities. This idea is "nirguna" in the primary sense. The personal and impersonal ideas of God are both nirguna, but it is the personal idea of God that is nirguna in the sense of being free from the three modes of material nature. Indeed, the impersonal idea of God is a product of the material mode of goodness and the personal idea of God is free from the spell of the modes as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself explains in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.29):

15 Happiness derived from the impersonal idea of God is in the mode of goodness, happiness based on sense gratification is in the mode of passion, and happiness based on delusion and degradation is in the mode of ignorance. But that happiness found within Me is transcendental."

16 In this way Srimad Bhagavatam explains that the happiness of serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead is transcendental and free from the influence of the three modes of material nature. Therefore devotional service, which has many activities, beginning with hearing about the Lord, is beyond the modes of material nature.

17 The devotional activity of hearing about the Lord's glories is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.16):

"O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vasudeva."*

18 It was previously explained that association with great souls frees one from

the spell of the three modes of material nature. Here it is said that by serving these great souls one develops an affinity for hearing about the Supreme Personality of Godhead. From this it may be understood that the activity of hearing the Lord's glories is also beyond the spell of the three modes of material nature.

19 That hearing the glories of the Lord is a transcendental activity beyond the spell of the three modes of material nature is confirmed by the Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 8.24.38):

"You will be thoroughly advised and favoured by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about My glories, which are known as param brahma, will be manifest within your heart. Thus you will know everything about Me."*

20 In these words Lord Matsyadeva explains that knowledge of Brahman (param brahma) is attained by the mercy of the Lord. Here someone may ask: "How can knowledge of Brahman describe various qualities, since Brahman has no qualities? The answer is given: There are two kinds of Brahman knowledge. One kind, the knowledge attained by the Lord's devotees, comes by the Lord's mercy, the other kind, the knowledge attained by the worshippers of impersonal Brahman, comes independently, without the Lord's direct mercy. Therefore the spiritual knowledge attained by the devotees in their practice of devotional service, which is manifested by the Lord's transcendental potency, is filled with spiritual variety.

21 That the spiritual knowledge of the devotees is superior to the knowledge of the impersonalists is confirmed by the Lord Himself in the following words of Sri Bhagavad-gita (18.54):

"One who is thus transcendently situated at once realises the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed toward every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me."*

22 The superiority of devotional service to the Lord is also confirmed by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.7.10):

"All different varieties of atmaramas (those who take pleasure in atma, or spirit self), especially those established on the path of self-realisation, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls."*

23 The worshippers of Brahman attain a liberation that is without any variety. They who understand the real nature of the Absolute do not think very highly of this kind of liberation. They reject it. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.15.48):

"Persons who are very expert and most intelligent in understanding things as they are engage in hearing narrations of the auspicious activities and pastimes of the Lord, which are worth chanting and worth hearing. Such persons do not care even for the highest material benediction, namely liberation, to say nothing or other less important benedictions like the material happiness of the heavenly kingdom."*

24 Devotional service is the opposite of impersonal liberation. Indeed, for one who has attained even the dim reflection of the Lord's mercy impersonal liberation is like hell. This is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam

6.17.28):

"Devotees solely engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana, never fear any condition of life. For them the heavenly planets, liberation and the hellish planets are all the same, for such devotees are interested only in the service of the Lord."*

25 Although an impersonalist may think it is the mercy of the Absolute, impersonal liberation is only a figment of the impersonalist's imagination. Because it comes from the imagination it is actually a product of the three modes of material nature, and because it is a product of the three modes of material nature it eventually leads to another birth in the material world.

26 Someone may ask: "The internal and external senses of the living entity are products of the three modes of material nature. How can the knowledge and activities that come from these two sets of senses ever be free from the grip of the three modes?"

The answer may be given: The power from which knowledge and action come is not material and not a product of the three modes. Because the individual spirit soul is not the most important, because he is in truth a potency subordinate to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and because he is like an empty vessel that cannot act unless filled with the potency of the Lord, it is the Supreme Lord alone that enables the senses to act.

27 This is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.26.24):

"As iron has the power to burn when made red-hot in the association of fire, so the body, senses, living force, mind and intelligence, although merely lumps of matter, can function in their activities when infused with a particle of consciousness by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As iron cannot burn unless heated by fire, the bodily senses cannot act unless favoured by the Supreme Brahman."*

28 This is also confirmed by the Sruti-sastra (Brhad-aranyaka Upanisad 4.4.18) in these words:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the breathing power of the breath. He is the seeing power of the eyes. He is the hearing power of the ears. He is the thinking power of the mind."

29 The Rg Veda also explains:

"Nothing happens without the sanction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

30 When one performs activities to attain a goal that is within the realm of the three modes, then his activities are within the realm of the modes. However, when one performs activities to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then his activities are beyond the realm of the modes of material nature. This is confirmed by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami in the following words from the Devamrta-pana chapter of Srimad Bhagavatam (8..9.29):

31 "In human society there are various activities performed for the protection of one's wealth and life by one's words, one's mind and one's actions, but they are all performed for one's personal or extended sense gratification with reference to the body. All these activities are baffled because of being separate from devotional service. But when the same activities are performed for the satisfaction of the Lord, the beneficial results are distributed to everyone, just as water poured on the root of a tree is distributed throughout the entire tree."*

32 Here the word "prthaktvat" means "by taking shelter of someone other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead" and the word "aprthaktvat" means "by taking shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead." That is the meaning. When knowledge and activities are employed in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead they become spiritual and beyond the touch of the three modes of material nature, and by performing such activities one becomes free from having to take another birth in the material world of birth and death. The so-called knowledge of the impersonalists, however, because it is not employed in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, inevitably leads one to another birth in the material world. The qualities of devotional service, which begin with its ability to please the Lord, will be described later in this book. In the third canto of Srimad Bhagavatam, Lord Kapiladeva described devotional service as being either free from the modes of nature, or within the realm of the modes of nature, all according to whether the heart of the devotee is free from the modes or still under their spell.

Anuccheda 135

1 In this way it is seen that knowledge in devotional service and the activities of devotional service, such as hearing and chanting the Lord's glories, are beyond the touch of the material modes of nature. In the same way residence in the Lord's temple is also beyond the modes. The Lord Himself confirms this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.25):

2 "Residence in the forest is in the mode of goodness, residence in a town is in the mode of passion, residence in a gambling house displays the quality of ignorance, and residence in a place where I reside is transcendental, beyond the modes of nature."

3 In this verse the words "vanam vasah" mean "residence in the forest", "gramyah" means "residence among householders", and "tamasam" means "residence among sinful people". The word "dyuta-sadanam" (gambling house) is here given as an example of one among many kinds of sinful places. "Man-niketam" means "a place where they who are devoted to serving Me stay". The word "vasah" refers to all the different places here, beginning with the forest. This sentence is thus like the sentence "ayur ghrtam".

4 A forest, a place where there are many trees and almost no people, is primarily in the mode of goodness, although traces of passion and ignorance may be present. Because residence in a forest is originally manifested from the mode of goodness, and because by residing in a forest one becomes more strongly situated in the mode of goodness, it is right to say that the mode of goodness is prominent in the forest.

The word "gramyah" is formed by adding a taddhita affix to the word "grama". The word "dyuta-sadanam" means "residence in a gambling house". The word "man-niketam" refers to any place where the Supreme Lord is glorified. Such a place becomes free from the touch of the modes of material nature just as an ordinary object becomes gold by contact with a sparsamani jewel.

5 If one has eyes spiritualised with devotion for the Lord he can see that a place where the Lord is glorified is beyond the modes of material nature. The scriptures explain:

"When the demigods look at the devotees worshipping the Lord in the

temple, they see a host of four-armed residents of Vaikuntha."

The commentator explains:

"This means that, because the Lord is personally present in His temple, the temple is beyond the touch of the three modes of material nature."

Anuccheda 136

1 As different residences are situated in the different modes, so different activities are also situated in the different modes. The Supreme Personality of Godhead explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.26):

2 "A worker free of attachment is in the mode of goodness, a worker blinded by personal desire is in the mode of passion, and a worker who has completely forgotten how to tell right from wrong is in the mode of ignorance. But a worker who has taken shelter of Me is understood to be transcendental to the modes of nature."***

3 The meaning here is that a worker who does not take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead remains under the spell of the three modes of material nature. His body and everything else are under the spell of the three modes.

Anuccheda 137

1 As different activities are situated in the different modes, so different kinds of faith in various activities are also situated in the different modes. The Supreme Personality of Godhead explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.27):

2 "Faith directed toward spiritual life is in the mode of goodness, faith rooted in fruitive work is in the mode of passion, faith residing in irreligious activities is in the mode of ignorance, but faith in My devotional service is purely transcendental."***

3 In this verse the word "adharmā" means "irreligion". The remainder of this verse is like the previous verses. The verse quoted in this anuccheda was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 138

1 That devotional service is above the three modes of material nature is also confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.2.24):

"After hearing the discourses between the Yamadutas and the Visnudutas, Ajāmila could understand the religious principles that act under the three modes of material nature. These principles are mentioned in the three Vedas. He could also understand the transcendental religious principles, which are above the modes of material nature and which concern the relationship between the living being and the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

2 Srīla Sridhara Svāmī comments:

"In this verse the word 'suddham' means 'beyond the three modes of material nature' and 'traivedyam' means 'the religious principles described in the three Vedas'. These religious principles are described as being 'gunasrayam', or 'within the realm of the three modes of material nature.'"

3 The Vedas described here are the karma kanda portion of the Vedas. This portion of the Vedas is described by the following words of Sri Bhagavad-gīta (9.21):

"When they have thus enjoyed vast heavenly sense pleasure and the results of their pious activities are exhausted, they return to this mortal planet again. Thus those who seek sense enjoyment by adhering to the principles of the three Vedas achieve only repeated birth and death."*

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 139

1 That devotional service is the Lord's potency and that it is self-manifest is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.14.45):

2 "Even though in the body of a deer, Maharaja Bharata did not forget the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore when he was giving up the body of a deer, he loudly uttered the following prayer: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is sacrifice personified. He gives the results of ritualistic activity. He is the protector of religious systems, the personification of mystic yoga, the source of all knowledge, the controller of the entire creation, and the Supersoul in every living entity. He is beautiful and attractive. I am quitting this body offering obeisances unto Him and hoping, that I may perpetually engage in His transcendental loving service." Uttering this, Maharaja Bharata left his body."*

3 The word "yah" here refers to Bharata, the son of Lord Rsabhadeva. Even though he was in the body of a deer, at the time of death he was able to speak this prayer. Although it is not ordinarily possible for a deer to speak in this way, because devotional service is self-manifest, the service of glorifying the Lord appeared to Bharata in this way. The same thing happened to the elephant Gajendra.

Anuccheda 140

1 That devotional service brings great happiness to they who directly engage in it is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.22):

"Certainly, therefore, since time immemorial, all transcendentalists have been rendering devotional service to Lord Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, with great delight, because such devotional service is enlivening to the self."*

2 That devotional service brings great happiness even to they who do not directly engage in it is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.22):

"We have just begun the performance of this fruitive activity, a sacrificial fire, without certainty of its result due to the many imperfections in our action. Our bodies have become black from the smoke, but we are factually pleased by the nectar of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, Govinda, which you are distributing."*

3 The Lord Himself describes the happiness of devotional service in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.67):

"My devotees who are always satisfied to be engaged in My loving service, are not interested even in the four principles of liberation (salokya, sarupya, samipya and sarsti), although these are automatically achieved by their service. What then is to be said of such perishable happiness as elevation to the higher planetary systems?"*

4 This statement, that the devotees are not interested in perishable material

happineses, proves that devotional service is above the modes of material nature. This verse says that the devotees are not interested even in the four kinds of liberation, which begin with salokya-mukti, so how can they be interested in perishable material happineses, which will certainly be destroyed in the course of time?

This verse was spoken by Lord Visnu to Durvasa Muni.

Anuccheda 141

1 That devotional service makes one fall in love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.33):

"By these activities (as mentioned above) one is able to cut down the influence of the enemies, namely, lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, and jealousy, and when thus situated, one can render service to the Lord. In this way one surely attains the platform of loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

2 The exalted nature of the devotees' love is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.6.18):

"My dear King, the Supreme Person, Mukunda, is actually the maintainer of all the members of the Pandava and Yadu dynasties. He is your spiritual master, worshipable Deity, friend, and the director of your activities. To say nothing of this, He sometimes serves your family as a messenger or servant. This means He worked just as ordinary servants do. Those engaged in getting the Lord's favour attain liberation from the Lord very easily, but He does not very easily give the opportunity to render direct service unto Him."*

3 Someone may worry, "No one will ever attain real love for the Lord." To answer this worry, this verse says, "The Supreme Personality of Godhead sometimes gives love for Him, love that is called bhakti-yoga". Here the word "karhicit" means "sometimes". The Amara-kosa dictionary explains, "The affixes cit and cana are employed to limit the scope of the preceding word."

4 Finally, after the devotee endeavours for a long time, the Lord gives pure love for Him. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.19.27):

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead fulfils the material desires of a devotee who approaches Him with such motives, but He does not bestow benedictions upon the devotee that will cause him to demand more benedictions again. However, the Lord willingly gives the devotee shelter at His own lotus feet, even though such a person does not aspire for it, and that shelter satisfies all his desires. That is the Supreme Personality of Godhead's special mercy."*

5 That one can please the Supreme Personality of Godhead only by loving and serving Him is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.51):

"My dear friends, O sons of the demons, you cannot please the Supreme Personality of Godhead by becoming perfect brahmanas, demigods or great saints or by becoming perfectly good in etiquette or vast learning. None of these qualifications can awaken the pleasure of the Lord. Nor by charity, austerity, sacrifice, cleanliness or vows can one satisfy the Lord. The Lord is pleased only if one has unflinching, unalloyed devotion to Him. Without sincere devotional service, everything is simply a show."*

6 That one can please the Supreme Personality of Godhead only by loving

devotional service is again confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.9.):

"Prahlada Maharaja continued: One may possess wealth, an aristocratic family, beauty, austerity, education, sensory expertise, lustre, influence physical strength, diligence, intelligence, and mystic power, but I think that even by all these qualifications one cannot satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, one can satisfy the Lord simply by devotional service. Gajendra did this, and thus the Lord was satisfied with him."*

7 In this verse the word "abhijana" means "birth in an aristocratic family", "buddhi" means "intelligence", and "yoga" means "astanga-yoga". This verse is spoken by Prahlada Maharaja to Lord Nrsimhadeva.

Anuccheda 142

1 Here someone may ask: "If the Supreme Personality of Godhead already possesses all happiness, then how is it possible for Him to find more happiness in the devotees' service? He already has all happiness. The idea that he can obtain more happiness contradicts the idea that He eternally has all happiness already."

Here the answer is given: The Vedic literatures certainly support the idea that He finds more happiness in the devotees' service. Here the explanation is given. The all-blissful Supreme Personality of Godhead has a potency, called hladini-sakti, that manifests His transcendental bliss. He places this potency among His devotees and when they service Him it is this potency that pleases Him. In this way the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who already has all pleasure, is pleased by devotional service. This is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.15.13):

2 "When the Supreme Lord is pleased by a person's actions, automatically all the demigods, human beings, animals, birds, bees, creepers, trees, grass and all other living entities, beginning with Lord Brahma are pleased. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Supersoul of everyone, and He is by nature fully pleased. Nonetheless, He came to the arena of Maharaja Gaya and said, 'I am full pleased'."*

3 In this verse the word "visva-jivah" means "He who gives life to all living beings." The compound word beginning with "deva" is in the singular because it is a dvandva-samasa. The word "pritiḥ" means "happiness". This verse was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 143

1 Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is thus always happy in Himself and because His desires are always fulfilled, He is pleased by even the smallest offering. The following example is given in Srimad Bhagavatam (1.11.4-5):

2 "The citizens arrived before the Lord with their respective presentations, offering them to the fully satisfied and self-sufficient one, who, by, by His own potency, incessantly supplies others. These presentations were like the offering of a lamp to the sun. Yet the citizens began to speak in ecstatic language to receive the Lord, just as wards welcome their guardian and father."*

3 In this verse the word "tatra" means "in Dvaraka", and the phrase "raver dipam" means "the offering of a lamp to the sun." The people worshipped

(adrtah) the Lord in that way. That is the meaning. The phrase beginning with the word "priti" explains how the people were able to please the Lord with their prayers and various offerings. Here is given the example of children (arbhakah) approaching their father (pitaram). The word "priti" here means "extraordinary happiness and love." The Lord is here described as "sarva-suhrdam" (the friend and well wisher of all). Because He is everyone's friend, He is also everyone's protector (avitaram).

4 Although He is always satisfied and happy in Himself, and although His desires are always fulfilled, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is nevertheless pleased by His devotees as a proud and loving father is pleased by His children. That is the meaning. He is merciful to His devotees and He fulfils their desires as if He were a kalpa-vrksa tree. He naturally loves His devotees, they naturally worship Him and offer prayers to Him, and He reciprocates by giving them appropriate gifts in return. In this way, even though He is naturally filled with all bliss, the Supreme Personality of Godhead still finds happiness in the devotional service offered by His devotees. This verse was spoken by Srila Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 144

1 The devotion that the devotees feel for the Lord is actually a potency of the Lord Himself. The Lord himself is the original cause of that devotion. The Lord Himself is thus present in the activities of devotional service performed by the devotee's limbs and senses. The devotee's activities of devotional service are thus a reflection of the Lord's potency of devotional service. In this way the power of the Lord's mercy is the actual cause of the devotee's love for the Lord.

That the Lord Himself is the cause of the activities of devotional service performed by the limbs and senses is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.8.40):

2 "O Almighty Lord, how can I possibly describe You? You awaken the vital air, which then impels the minds, senses and power of speech to act. This is true for all ordinary conditioned souls and even for great demigods like Brahma and Siva. So it is certainly true for me. Nevertheless, You become the intimate friend of those who worship You."***

3 In this verse the words "O Almighty Lord, how can I possibly describe You?" mean "How can I possibly describe even a small portion of Your mercy?" This is so because You (tvaya) awaken (udiritah) the vital air (asuh) and when it is set in motion (samspandate), power of speech (vak) and the mind and senses follow (tam anu)." The word "vai" (certainly) indicates that the Lord is both the direct and indirect cause of the senses' actions. This is confirmed by the following words (Sri Brhad aranyaka Upanisad 4.4.18):

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the breathing power of the breath. He is the seeing power of the eyes. He is the hearing power of the ears. He is the thinking power of the mind."

This is true not only for ordinary living entities, but even for the great demigods Brahma and Siva (aja-sarvayoh). Therefore the speaker of this verse (Markandeya Muni) says, "It is certainly also true for me (svasya)."

Although no one is ever really independent, the devotees voluntarily allow the Lord to control their speech and other limbs and senses, and thus they become like puppets in His hands. The verse there says, "O Lord, because they love

(bhava) You with a love that is Your own gift to them, You become (asi) the devotees' intimate friend (bandhuh)."

This verse was spoken by Markandeya Muni to Sri Nara-Narayana Rsis.

Anuccheda 145

1 That devotional service, and nothing else, enables one to directly see the Supreme Personality of Godhead is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.8.36):

2 "O Krsna, those who continuously hear, chant and repeat Your transcendental activities, or take pleasure in others' doing so, certainly see Your lotus feet, which alone can stop the repetition of birth and death."*

3 The meaning of this verse is clear. It was spoken by Sri Kunti-devi to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 146

1 That by engaging in devotional service one attains the Lord's association is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.18.45):

"My dear Uddhava, I am the Supreme Lord of all worlds, and I create and destroy this universe, being its ultimate cause. I am thus the Absolute Truth, and one who worships Me with unfailing devotional service comes to Me."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"That Sri Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead is confirmed by the words 'sarvotpatty-apyayam', which means 'the creator and destroyer of all the material worlds'. 'Ma' means 'Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the cause of everything, who has a spiritual form and who resides in Vaikuntha', 'brahma-karanam' means 'the author of the Vedas', and 'upayati' means 'comes near'."

3 That by engaging in devotional service one attains the Lord's association is also explained in these words (Sri Bhagavad-gita 8.22):

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is greater than all, is attainable by unalloyed devotion. Although He is present in His abode, He is all-pervading, and everything is situated within Him."*

Anuccheda 147

1 Devotional service is rewarded with a gift far beyond the power of the devotee's mind to understand. Dhruva Maharaja, was given his own spiritual planet Dhruvaloka as a reward for his service, is the proof of this.

By engaging in devotional service, the devotee turns the Lord into a submissive servant. The Lord Himself explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.20):

"My dear Uddhava, neither through astanga-yoga (the mystic yoga system to control the senses), nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vedas, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of sannyasa can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me."*

2 After speaking that verse, the Lord explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.21):

"Being very dear to the devotees and sadhus, I am attained through unflinching faith and devotional service. This bhakti-yoga system, which

gradually increases attachment for Me, purifies even a human being born among dogeaters. That is to say, everyone can be elevated to the spiritual platform by the process of bhakti-yoga."*

3 Although these verses from Srimad Bhagavatam Canto Eleven Chapter Fourteen do not clearly single out either sadhana-bhakti (the beginning stage of devotional service) or sadhya-bhakti (the advanced stage of devotional service), it is clear that the beginning stage is not the best or final feature of devotional service. Still, because the beginning stage of devotional service gradually leads one to the advanced stage, it is also glorified in these verses. This is explained in the following question and an answer (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.1):

"My dear Krsna, the learned sages who explain Vedic literature recommend various processes for protecting one's life. Considering these varieties of viewpoint, my Lord, please tell me whether all these processes are equally important. or whether one of them is supreme."*

The Lord answers (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.26):

"When a diseased eye is treated with medicinal ointment it gradually recovers its power to see. Similarly, as a conscious living entity cleanses himself of material contamination by hearing and chanting the pious narrations of My glories, he regains his ability to see Me, the Absolute Truth, in My subtle spiritual form."*

4 The beginning stage of devotional service is clearly glorified in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.18-22):

"My dear Uddhava, If My devotee has not fully conquered his sense, he may be harassed by material desires, but because of his unflinching devotion for Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification."***

"My dear Uddhava, just as a blazing fire turns firewood into ashes, similarly, devotion unto Me completely burns to ashes sins committed by My devotees.***

"My dear Uddhava, neither through astanga-yoga (the mystic yoga system to control the senses), nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vedas, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of sannyasa can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me."*

"Being very dear to the devotees and sadhus, I am attained through unflinching faith and devotional service. This Bhakti-yoga system, which gradually increases attachment to Me, purifies even a human being born among dogeaters. That is to say, everyone can be elevated to the spiritual platform by the process of bhakti-yoga."*

"Neither religious activities endowed with honesty and mercy nor knowledge obtained with great penance can completely purify one's consciousness if they are bereft of loving service to Me."***

Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.18 especially describes the beginning stage of devotional service because in the advanced stage a devotee is not agitated by material desires. The advanced stage is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.35):

"Sages free from false pride live on this earth by resorting to sacred places of pilgrimage and those districts in which the Supreme Lord has manifested His pastimes. Because such devotees keep You lotus feet within their hearts, the water

that washes their feet destroys all sins. Everyone who even once turns his mind toward You, the eternally blissful Soul of all existence, ceases from worshipping family life at home, in which a man is simply robbed of his good qualities."***

4 In these words the Visnu Purana glorifies the advanced stage of devotional service:

"When Lord Visnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead enters the heart, everything else becomes insignificant. What will one attain by running east and west to get this and that?"

6 The advanced stage of devotional service is again described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.23):

"If one's hairs do not stand on end, how can the heart melt? And if the heart does not melt, how can tears of love flow from the eyes? If one does not cry in spiritual happiness, how can one render loving service to the Lord? And without such service, how can the consciousness be purified?"***

7 The advanced stage of devotional service is again described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.24):

"A devotee whose speech is sometimes choked up, whose heart melts, who cries continually and sometimes laughs, who feels ashamed and cries out loudly and then dances - a devotee thus fixed in loving service to Me purifies the entire universe."***

Even the beginning stage of devotional service is purifying. How much more purifying is the advanced stage described here? The stage of devotional service described here is far beyond the stage described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.18 (quoted in Text 4).

8 That the activities of devotional service, which begin with the dim reflection of the Lord's holy name, destroy all sins is proved by the following words spoken by the Supreme Lord Himself (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.19):

"As all fuel is burned to ashes by a full-fledged fire, all sinful activities are totally erased when one engages in devotional service to Me."*

9 Devotional service and astanga-yoga are very different spiritual paths. They are opposites and bring opposite results, as the Lord explains in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.20):

"My dear Uddhava, neither through astanga-yoga (the mystic yoga system to control the senses), nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vedas, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of sannyasa can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me."*

"Being very dear to the devotees and sadhus, I am attained through unflinching faith and devotional service."*

This statement also affirms that it is faith in devotional service that enables one to attain the Supreme Lord.

10 The result of acting in the beginning stage of devotional service is that the devotee attains certain spiritual advantages. The result of advanced devotional service is that one turns the Supreme Personality of Godhead into one's submissive servant.

11 Srimad Bhagavatam (5.6.18) explains:

"My dear King, the Supreme Person, Mukunda, is actually the maintainer

of all the members of the Pandava and Yadu dynasties. He is your spiritual master, worshipable Deity, friend, and the director of your activities. To say nothing of this, He sometimes serves your family as a messenger or servant. This means He worked just as ordinary servants do. Those engaged in getting the Lord's favour attain liberation from the Lord very easily, but He does not very easily give the opportunity to render direct service unto Him."*

This verse means that unless the Supreme Personality of Godhead has become like a submissive servant, completely under the devotee's dominion, He will not give the gift of pure love for Him.

12 Srimad Bhagavatam (11.14.22) explains:

"Neither religious activities endowed with honesty and mercy nor knowledge obtained with great penance can completely purify one's consciousness if they are bereft of loving service to Me."***

This verse explains that devotional service is very different from ordinary religious activities. Indeed, devotional service brings a much better result than ordinary religious activities do. By engaging in devotional service one becomes very pure and attains the advanced stage of devotional service, as described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.23:

"If one's hairs do not stand on end, how can the heart melt? And if the heart does not melt, how can tears of love flow from the eyes? If one does not cry in spiritual happiness, how can one render loving service to the Lord? And without such service, how can the consciousness be purified?"***

In this way the passage beginning with Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.18 and ending with 11.14.24 is explained.

The verse quote in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 148

1 Direct devotional service, where one gives gifts to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is better than ordinary work in this world. Devotional service is thus the actual process of religion. The Lord explains this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.21):

"O Uddhava, greatest of saints, in a dangerous situation an ordinary person cries, becomes fearful and laments, although such useless emotions do not change the situation. But activities offered to Me without personal motivation, even if they are externally useless, amount to the actual process of religion."***

2 Simply by hearing about devotional service one can become purified of all past sins. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.12):

"Pure devotional service rendered to the Supreme Lord is spiritually so potent that simply by hearing about such transcendental service, by chanting its glories in response, by meditating on it, by respectfully and faithfully accepting it, or by praising the devotional service of others, even person who hate the demigods and all other living beings can be immediately purified."*

3 In the Padma Purana, Magha-mahatmya, the Yamadutas say:

"Then Yamaraja said to us: Be respectful to the devotees of Lord Visnu. Do not approach anyone that worships Lord Visnu.

4 "Do not approach a person in whose home a devotee of Lord Visnu eats. Do not approach a person who associates with devotees of Lord Visnu. Such a

person is already free from all sins."

5 In the Brhan-naradiya Purana, at the end of the story of Yajnamali, it is said:

"Even great sinners that associate with the devotees of Lord Hari are automatically freed from all their sins."

6 Yamaraja confirms this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.29):

"My dear servants, please bring to me only those sinful persons who do not use their tongues to chant the holy name and qualities of Krsna, whose hearts do not remember the lotus feet of Krsna even once, and whose heads do not bow down even once before Lord Krsna. Send me those who do not perform their duties toward Visnu, which are the only duties in human life. Please bring me all such fools and rascals."*

7 In the previous verse Yamaraja said (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.28):

"Paramahamsas are exalted persons who have no taste for material enjoyment and who drink the honey of the Lord's lotus feet. My dear servants, bring to me for punishment only persons who are averse to the taste of that honey, who do not associate with paramahamsas and who are attached to family life and worldly enjoyment, which form the path to hell."*

In this verse Yamaraja says, "Bring to me for punishment only persons who are averse to the taste of the honey of Lord Krsna's lotus feet."

8 In the verse before that (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.27) Yamaraja explains:

"My dear servants, please do not approach such devotees, for they have fully surrendered to the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are equal to everyone, and their narrations are sung by the demigods and the inhabitants of Siddhaloka. Please do not even go near them. They are always protected by the club of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore Lord Brahma and I and even the time factor are not competent to chastise them."*

In this verse Yamaraja forbids his messengers to approach the Lord's devotees, who see everyone with equal vision and whose pure glories are sung by the demigods and the inhabitants of Siddhaloka.

9 Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.29 (quoted in text 6), says, "Please bring to me only those persons who do not use their tongues (jihva) to chant the holy name (namadheya) and qualities (guna) of Krsna (bhagavat), whose hearts (cetah) do not remember (smarati) the lotus feet of Krsna (tac-caranaravindam) even once (ekada) and whose heads (sirah) do not bow down (namati) even once before Lord Krsna (krsnaya)."

10 The Skanda Purana describes the glories of bowing down before the Lord in these words:

"A person who even only pretends to bow down before Lord Krsna is at once freed from the sins accumulated in a hundred births."

Because bowing down before the Lord is so glorious, Yamaraja says (in Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.29 quoted in text 6), "Do not bring to me anyone who bows down before Lord Krsna. Please bring me only fools and rascals (asatah)." The reason they are fools and rascals is given in these words: "They do not perform their duties toward Visnu (akrta-visnu-krtyan).

11 The relationship between religious duties and devotional service to Lord Visnu is explained in the Skanda Purana, Reva-khanda, where Lord Brahma says:

"O Lord Kesava, a person who performs all his religious duties must be

Your devotee. O Lord Kesava, a person who performs only sins cannot be Your devotee.

12 O Lord Hari, when someone who is not Your devotee performs pious deeds, all his pious deeds become sins. O Lord Hari, even if he has performed all pious deeds, a person who is not Your devotee stays always in hell. On the other hand, if Your devotee commits sins, even up to killing a brahmana, he is at once freed from the offense."

13 In the Padma Purana the Supreme Personality of Godhead says:

"If someone commits a sin for My sake, his sin counts as a pious deed. If someone performs pious deeds without worshipping Me, then by My power, his pious deeds count as sins."

14 Srimad Bhagavatam (7.11.11) lists some of the activities of devotional service in these words:

"These are the general instructions to be followed by all human beings: hearing about the activities and instructions given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead (who is the shelter of the saintly persons), chanting about those activities and instructions, always remembering these activities and instructions, trying to render service, performing worship, offering obeisances, becoming a servant, becoming a friend, and surrendering one's whole self."*

15 They who do not worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead will fall down from their puffed up positions. This is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.2-3):

"From the mouth of Brahma the brahmanical order has come into existence. Similarly, from his arms the ksatriyas have come, from his waist the vaisyas have come, and from his legs the sudras have come. These four orders and their spiritual counterparts (brahmacarya, grhastha, vanaprastha and sannyasa) combine to make human society complete.*

"If one simply maintains an official position in the four varnas and asramas but does not worship the Supreme Lord Visnu, he falls down from his puffed up position into a hellish condition."*

16 That everyone should engage in devotional service is confirmed by the Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.18.43):

"Everyone should engage in devotional service to Me."

17 That one should always engage in devotional service is explained in the following words of the Padma Purana:

"Krsna is the origin of Lord Visnu. He should always be remembered and never forgotten at any time. All the rules and prohibitions mentioned in the sastras should be the servants of these two principles."*

18 In Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.29, quoted in text 6, the word "akrta-visnu-krtyan means "they who do not glorify, remember, or bow down before the Lord, or serve Him in other ways." Although these persons have tongues with which to glorify the Lord and other senses with which they may serve Him in many ways, they do not wish to glorify or serve Him.

19 Here Yamaraja, the teacher of the science of devotional service, mentions "remembering the lotus feet of the Lord". The remembrance here, is not limited to the Lord's lotus feet, however, but includes all the features of the Lord. Here Yamaraja says, "Bring to me only the non devotees. Do not bring the devotees." The Sruti-sastra explains: "Yamaraja punishes the conditioned souls."

20 That Yamaraja does not punish the devotees is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.1.190:)

"Although not having fully realise Krsna, persons who have even once surrendered completely unto His lotus feet and who have become attracted to His name, form, qualities and pastimes are completely freed of all sinful reactions, for they have thus accepted the true method of atonement. Even in dreams, such surrendered souls do not see Yamaraja or his order carriers, who are equipped with ropes to bind the sinful."*

21 This verse explains that they who remember Lord Krsna's lotus feet do not even see Yamaraja's carriers, who are equipped with topes to bind the sinful.

22 This is also explained in the Nrsimha Purana where Yamaraja says:

"I am Yamaraja. The creator Brahma has deputed me to punish and reward the conditioned souls. I punish they who turn from their spiritual master and from Lord Hari. I bow down to offer my respects to they who bow down before Lord Hari's feet.

23 In the Amrta-saroddhara portion of the Skanda Purana, Yamaraja says:

"Neither Brahma, Siva, Agni, Indra, nor the other demigods, nor I myself have the power to punish the great souls that have become servants of Lord Visnu."

24 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Yamaraja to his messengers.

Anuccheda 149

1 Even a single moment of devotional service will make one's life a great success. This is explained by Sri Saunaka Rsi in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.17):

"Both by rising and by setting the sun decreases the duration of life of everyone, except one who utilises the time by discussing topics of the all-good Personality of Godhead."*

2 In the description of the stories of Ajamila and many other devotees it is seen that sins are destroyed by even the dim reflection of devotional service. That even the slightest effort expended in devotional service destroys all past karmic reactions and brings one to the supreme goal of life is also described in the following statement of Sri Laghu-Bhagavata:

3 "All sins committed in the past, present and future are at once burned to ashes by the fire of glorifying Lord Krsna."

4 That devotional service always has this effect, no matter the circumstances of how one comes to perform it, is seen in the following statement of Sri Brahma-vaivarta Purana:

"O brahmanas, as fire always burns whatever it touches and never stops to consider whether one wishes to be burned or not, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead grants liberation to every person that engages in His devotional service."

5 That devotional service grants liberation is also confirmed in the following conversation between Lord Siva and Goddess Uma in the Skanda Purana:

"They who are only initiated into the worship of Lord Krsna attain liberation. What can be said, then, of they who with devotion always worship the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead?"

6 That devotional service grants liberation is again confirmed in the following

words of the Narada Purana:

"They who even once selflessly worship Lord Visnu do not stay in the world of birth and death."

7 That devotional service grants liberation is again confirmed in the following words of Devadyuti's prayers in the Padma Purana:

"A person who once attentively speaks the word Narayana becomes pure in heart and attains liberation."

8 That devotional service grants liberation is again confirmed in the following words of the Padma Purana:

"A person who, by associating with devotees, or even by accident, comes to worship Lord Krsna, becomes free of all sins and enters the supreme transcendental abode."

9 That devotional service grants liberation is again confirmed in the following words of the Itihasa-samuccaya:

"They who in spite of being cruel, wicked, and addicted to sinful acts, take shelter of Lord Narayana's feet, attain the supreme and transcendental abode."

10 "The devotees of Lord Visnu are always pure. They are never touched by sin. Splendid as the rising sun, they purify all the worlds.

11 "After thousands of births one understands, 'I am a servant of Lord Vasudeva.' One who understands this delivers all the worlds."

12 "Such a person goes to the realm of Lord Visnu. Of this there is no doubt. What, then, can be said of a person who controls his senses and dedicates his life to the Lord's service?"

13 In the Ramayana Lord Ramacandra explains:

"It is My vow that if one only once seriously surrenders unto Me, saying, 'My dear Lord, from this day I am Yours', and prays to Me for courage, I shall immediately award courage to that person and he will always remain safe from that time on."*

14 The Garuda Purana also explains:

"It is Lord Hari's vow that if one only once seriously surrenders unto Him, saying, 'My dear Lord, from this day I am Yours', and prays to Him for courage, the Lord will immediately award courage to that person, and he will always remain safe from that time on."

15 Srimad Bhagavatam (1.1.14) also explains:

"Living beings who are entangled in the complicated meshes of death can be freed immediately by even unconsciously chanting the holy name of Krsna, which is feared by fear personified."*

16 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by Sri Saunaka Rsi.

Anuccheda 150

1 That one becomes liberated by hearing the Lord's holy name is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.16.44):

"My Lord, it is not impossible for one to be immediately freed from all material contamination by seeing You. Not to speak of seeing You personally, merely by hearing the holy name of Your Lordship only once, even candalas, men of the lowest class, are freed from all material contamination. Under the circumstances, who will not be freed from material contamination simply by

seeing You?"*

2 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by King Citraketu to Lord Sankarsana.

Anuccheda 151

1 The Visnu-dharma Purana, Uttara-khanda explains:

"I prefer to live as a devotee of Lord Visnu, even if I live for only five days. That is better living for a thousand kalpas as a non devotee."

2 In Srimad Bhagavatam 3.31.12-21 the unborn child in the womb offers prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There the living entity's life in the material world is described. Only in one birth does the fortunate living entity offer prayers in this way to the Lord, for soon he becomes liberated from the world of birth and death. Such a living entity is rare. Almost all other living entities are not aware of the nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

3 The Nirukti-sastra (13.19) explains: "In the ninth month the body of the embryo is completely formed. Then the living entity there thinks, 'I died and now I am born again. I am born, but soon I will die again..."

4 ...Unable to speak a word of complaint, the conditioned soul in the womb is tormented by the worms about him. First he studies the sankhya-yoga explanation of the 24 material elements, and then, in the tenth month, he is born.

5 In the phrase "purusam va" the word "va (or)" indicates that this description applies only to certain rare living entities that have knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

6 This shows that devotional service can be practiced in any kind of situation. Although living entities of many different kinds experience life in the womb, this explanation describes one kind of living entity and generalises, calling him "the living entity in the womb". This kind of generalisation is also seen in other places in the scriptures.

7 An example of two different events described as if they were one is given in the commentary on Srimad Bhagavatam's description of the birth of the four Kumaras during the creation of the Padma-kalpa. There, in his commentary on Srimad Bhagavatam 3.11.35, Srila Sridhara Svami explains that in this circumstance two different events are described as if they were a single event. This is like the appearance of Lord Varaha. Lord Varaha appeared in the first manvantara, when the earth was plunged in the water. At that time Lord Varaha, born from the demigod Brahma's nostril, rescued the earth and fought with Hiranyaksa. That is one description. Then also Lord Varaha appeared in the sixth manvantara. At that time He was born from Diti, the daughter of Pracetasas Daksa. Because in both appearances Lord Varaha rescued the earth plunged in the water, the two appearances were described in a single narration. The same is true for this description of the unborn living entity. The unborn living entity that offers prayers to the Supreme Lord is one kind of living entity. There are others, however, who are attached to the world of birth and death and do not offer such prayers.

8 That devotional service brings one's relatives to the Lord's supreme abode is seen in the following words of Sri Narada Purana, Dvajaropana-mahatmya:

"Even if they are sinners, the relatives of the renounced devotees of Lord Visnu go to the Lord's supreme abode."

- 9 This is also explained in the Visnu-dharma Purana in these words:
"They who worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead carry with them a hundred of their relatives to the Lord's transcendental abode.
- 10 "They who install a Deity of Lord Hari bring to the Lord's abode all their relatives yet to be born and all their relatives born in the past, going back to the beginning of the kalpa."
- 11 In Vaisnava literature Yamaraja orders his messengers:
"Do not punish the 90 000 relatives of one who devotedly worships Lord Vasudeva."
- 12 The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself says (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.10.18):
"My dear Prahlada, O most pure, O great saintly person, your father has been purified, along with twenty-one forefathers in your family. Because you were born in this family, the entire dynasty has been purified."*
- 13 Here the word "tri-saptabhih" (twenty one) refers to twenty one forefathers in each birth going back to the beginning of the kalpa. In this birth some of the forefathers liberated in this way are Hiranyakasipu, Kasyapa Muni, Marici, and Brahma. This verse was spoken by Lord Nrsimhadeva to Prahlada Maharaja.

Anuccheda 152

1 Even the dim reflection of devotional service destroys all sins and brings one to the abode of Lord Visnu. The Narada Purana explains that two intoxicated drunkards proud as cuckoos once waved a stick tied to a rag as they danced in an old abandoned temple of the Lord. These drunkards attained the result of raising a flag in the Lord's temple and in this way they returned to the Lord's transcendental abode.

In the same way a bird that had been killed by a hunter and then taken up shelter in the mouth of a dog, when the dog ran around a temple the bird attained the result of circumambulating the Lord's temple and in this way it returned to the Lord's transcendental abode.

In the same way one becomes a great devotee of the Lord. In the Nrsimha Purana it is said that in his previous birth Prahlada Maharaja had an argument with a prostitute on the holy day of Nrsimha-caturdasi. Arguing with her all day and night, he neither ate nor slept, and because in this way he fasted and kept an all-night vigil on that holy day he became a great devotee of the Lord.

2 That devotional service brings one to the Lord's transcendental abode is again explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.15):

"Let me take shelter of the lotus feet of Him whose incarnations, qualities and activities are mysterious imitations of worlds affairs. One who invokes His transcendental names, even unconsciously, at the time he quits this life, is certainly washed immediately of the sins of many, many births and attains Him without fail."*

3 In this verse the word "asu-vigame" means "even though at the time of death one may not be able to speak the Lord's holy name very clearly or distinctly", and the word "vivasah" means "even without desiring it". In this way, impelled by some cause other than one's own desire, one chants the Lord holy name. The word "vi" means "without" and the word "vasa" means "desire". The Amara-kosa dictionary explains, "The word 'vasa' means 'desire'."

4 The reason the Lord's holy name has such great power is explained in this verse. The Lord's name is one of His incarnations. That is the reason. The word "avatara-vidambanani" here refers to Lord Nrsimhadeva and the many other incarnations of the Lord, the word "guna-vidambanani" refers to the Lord's transcendental qualities, such as His love for the devotees, and the word karma-vidambanani" refers to His pastimes, such as His lifting of Govardhana Hill.

This verse was spoken by the demigod Brahma to Lord Garbhodakasayi Visnu.

Anuccheda 153

1 This is the description of pure devotional service. Even if mixed with offenses, devotional service is still very powerful. This is seen in the following verses of the Visnu-dharma Purana, spoken by a raksasa to a brahmana who protected himself by chanting a mantra invoking the Supreme Personality of Godhead:

2 "I ran to eat you, but somehow you protected yourself with a mantra. O brahmana, by touching this mantra I have suddenly become pure in heart.

3 "What mantra did you chant to protect yourself? I do not understand it. I do not understand its power. By touching it I have become free of all material desires.

4 The following story is found in the Visnu-dharma Purana. As it was drinking the ghee in a lamp in the Lord's temple, a certain mouse, by its own destiny, was burned by the flaming wick and died. In its next life the mouse became a queen that had great faith in devotional service and gave lamps and other gifts to the Deity of the Lord. In this way she became liberated and attained the Lord's supreme abode.

Another story is told in the Janmastami-mahatmya of the Brahmanda Purana. A certain prostitute did not meet any of her customers on Janmastami day. By thus observing Janmastami, she became liberated.

Another story is told in the Narada Purana. So that he could use it as a suitable place for his sinful deeds, a sinner once cleaned a temple of the Lord. For this service he became liberated and attained the supreme abode of the Lord.

On the other hand, knowledge of impersonal Brahman has nothing to do with real liberation. This is explained in the following statement of the Brahma-vaivarta Purana:

5 "A sinner attached to sense-pleasures who declares, 'I am Brahman', is tortured by having to be born again and again in thousands of wombs.'

6 That even the slightest and briefest effort to serve Him makes the Lord one's submissive servant is seen in the following statement of Lord Siva in the Brahma Purana:

7 "O best of brahmanas, the Supreme Personality of Godhead places His eyes on one who looks at Him day after day. The Supreme Personality of Godhead takes shelter of one who takes shelter of Him. The Supreme Personality of Godhead worships one who always worships Him."

8 This is also described in the Visnu-dharma Purana in these words:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who dearly loves His devotees, sells Himself to them for the price of a tulasi leaf and a handful of water."

9 That the glories of devotional service and chanting the Lord's holy name

are not merely empty flattery but are the real truth is proved by the story of Ajamila and many other stories also. This is also seen in the Sri Bhagavan-nama-kaumudi and many other scriptures. To consider the glories of chanting Hare Krsna to be imagination and to give some imaginary interpretation on the holy names of the Lord are counted among the offenses to the holy name as described in the Padma Purana.

10 This is also described in the Katyayana-samhita in these words:

"One who makes up an imaginary interpretation of the meaning of Lord Hari's holy name is the most sinful of persons. He falls into a terrible hell."

11 In the Brahma-samhita the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains to Baudhayana:

"A person who, after hearing the many spiritual benefits obtained by chanting My holy names, does not believe them, but thinks them only the creations of someone's imagination, is tortured with a host of horrible sufferings in this world of birth and death. I personally throw him into that world of sufferings."

11 To think the glories of chanting the Lord's holy names are imaginary is a great offense. A person who commits this offense will not be able to experience the true benefits of devotional service. This is described in many ancient scriptures. To create imaginary interpretations on the meaning of the holy name are also great offenses to the Lord. These offenses create obstacles to one's advancement in devotional service.

12 The obstacles created by these offenses are described by Sri Saunaka Rsi in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.24):

"Certainly that heart is steel framed which, in spite of one's chanting the holy name of the Lord with concentration, does not change when ecstasy takes place, tears fill the eyes and the hairs stand on end."*

14 The benefits of having performed devotional service in the past are also seen in the present. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.64.25):

"O Kesava, as Your servant I was devoted to the brahmanas and generous to them, and I always hankered for Your audience. Therefore even till now I have never forgotten (my past life)."

15 These words of King Nrga, explaining how he engaged in devotional service, did not commit the offense of thinking the glories of the holy name to be imaginary, and still had to go to Yamaloka, seem to contradict the following words of Yamaraja (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.29):

"My dear servants, please bring to me only those sinful person who do not use their tongues to chant the holy name and qualities of Krsna, whose hearts do not remember the lotus feet of Krsna even once, and whose heads do not bow down even once before Lord Krsna. Send me those who do not perform their duties toward Visnu, which are the only duties in human life. Please bring me all such fools and rascals."*

The answer is that King Nrga had rejected the activities of direct devotional service, which are glorified in the scriptures and which are performed by great devotees like King Ambarisa. Instead of performing direct devotional service, King Nrga performed ordinary pious activities of giving charity. It was this that created the impediment to his advancement in devotional service and brought him to ruin.

16 This is also described in the following words of the Padma Purana, Namaparadha-bhanjana-stotra:

"O brahmana, when, pronounced properly or not, it appears on the voice, walks on the path of the memory, or enters the ears, if it is not stopped by offenses a single utterance of the holy name of the Lord carries one beyond the world of birth and death. However, if the chanter commits offenses, or if he chants to attain wealth, followers, or the happiness of this material body, he will be thrown into the world of birth and death, and his chanting will not quickly bring the desired result."

17 In order to attain material things such as the happiness of the material body, these persons commit the ten offenses that begin with disrespecting the spiritual master.

18 In the Skanda Purana, Prahlada-samhita, Dvaraka-mahatmya, it is said:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead Visnu is not pleased with a person, even if he has performed devotional service in hundreds of births, if he offends a devotee."

19 In another passage of the Skanda Purana, in the conversation of Markandeya and Bhagiratha it is said:

"Lord Hari does not accept twelve years of devotional service performed by one who, seeing a devotee from afar, does not go to greet him.

20 "Lord Hari will not forgive the sins of one who, seeing a devotee, does not offer obeisances and worship."

21 Many other offenses are also seen. In Sri Visnu Purana is the description of a king named Satadhanu, who was very devoted to the Supreme Lord, but who also blasphemed the Vedas and the devotees. For this he was reborn many times as a dog and many other lowly creatures.

22 The importance of serving the devotees is stressed in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.16):

"O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vasudeva."*

23 The Vedanta-sutra (4.1.1.) explains:

"The scriptures teach that spiritual activities should be performed again and again."

24 Because most people are inclined to commit offenses, they should perform spiritual activities again and again. That they who offend the Lord's holy name should chant the holy name again and again is explained in the following words of the Namaparadha-bhanjana-stotra of the Padma Purana:

24 "The chanting of Hare Krsna is recommended for persons who commit offenses, because if they continue chanting they will gradually chant offenselessly. Even if in the beginning one chants with offenses, one will become free from such offenses by chanting again and again."*

25 In the Trailokya-sammohana Tantra and other scriptures it is said that one should again and again chant the eighteen syllable mantra and other similar mantras. There it is said:

26 "O goddess, please hear what Manu has taught. One should chant this mantra ten times. In this way one will become freed from a host of calamities.

27 "One who chants this mantra a thousand times becomes freed from the

greatest sins. Even if one chants with offenses, the greatest sins are destroyed."

28 In the Brahma-vaivarta Purana the following is said about the holy name:

"Even a person who has killed an exalted brahmana, or who has voluntarily drunk liquor, will become purified if day and night he chants 'Krsna! Krsna!'."

29 Offenses create the desire to sin. However, by chanting the holy name, offenses and sinful desires are both destroyed. That is the meaning here.

30 However, offenses and sins are definitely impediments to advancement in devotional service. This is explained by the following words of Sri Visnu dharma-Purana:

'As a swan does not like to stay in muddy water, so Lord Krsna does not like to stay in a heart dirty with sinful desires.

31 "As a crescent moon covered by clouds cannot destroy the darkness, so a voice polluted with lies and other sins cannot properly offer prayers to Lord Krsna."

32 They who have attained perfection in devotional service experience at every moment the highest happiness. They who have not yet attained perfection in devotional service should follow the rules of sadhana-bhakti until they attain the stage of perfection.

From offenses the following obstacles to pure devotional service arise: 1. crookedness, 2. faithlessness, 3. attachment to things that destroy faith in the Lord, 4. slackness in devotional service, and 5. pride in being advanced in devotional service. If by associating with great souls one is not able to overcome these obstacles then, although originally manifested in the past, these faults will remain in the present. The Supreme Personality of Godhead does not accept the devotional service offered by they who are crooked, as, when he appeared as a messenger, He did not accept the service offered by Duryodhana. Crookedness here means to engage in devotional service while committing offenses to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Vedas, the spiritual master, or the devotees.

They who are foolish but not crooked will attain success by performing even the dim reflection of devotional service. However, they who are crooked do not attain that success in devotional service. This is seen in the following statement of Parasara Muni in the Skanda Purana:

33 "Foolish and crooked hearted sinners do not attain success in devotional service to Lord Krsna. They cannot properly glorify and remember the Lord."

34 This is also explained in the Visnu-dharma Purana:

"Their attempt to be truthful is stopped by a hundred impediments. Their attempt to perform austerities is stopped by a thousand impediments. Their attempt to love and serve Lord Krsna is stopped by ten thousand impediments."

35 Srimad Bhagavatam (3.19.36) also explains:

"What grateful soul is there who would not render his loving service to such a great master as the Personality of Godhead? The Lord can be easily pleased by spotless devotees who resort exclusively to Him for protection, though the unrighteous man finds it difficult to propitiate Him."*

36 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by Sri Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 154

1 The devotees of the Lord are not crooked-hearted and are always kind to

the foolish. The crooked-hearted non devotees, however, are not kind even to the wise. The kindness of the devotees is seen in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.4-5):

2 "There are many persons who have little opportunity to take part in discussions about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, and thus it is difficult for them to chant His infallible glories. Persons such as women, sudras and other fallen classes always deserve the mercy of great personalities like yourself."***

3 "On the other hand, brahmanas, members of the royal order and vaisyas, even after being allowed to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, Hari, by receiving the second birth of Vedic initiation, can become bewildered and adopt various materialistic philosophies."***

4 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The first verse says, 'Persons like yourself should be merciful to these foolish people'. The second verse says, 'These people are incurably foolish'.
This verse was spoken by Camasa Muni to King Nimi.

Anuccheda 155

1 Faithlessness means when one hears of or directly sees the glories of the Lord, one does not believe that they are true. Duryodhana's response on seeing the Lord's universal form is one of many examples of this kind of faithlessness.

The actual nature of the Lord's glories is described by Sri Saunaka Rsi in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.14):

'Living beings who are entangled in the complicated meshes of birth and death can be freed immediately by even unconsciously chanting the holy name of Krsna, which is feared by fear personified.'*

2 The Lord's glories are also seen in the personal experience of Prahlada Maharaja, who says (Visnu Purana 1.17.44):

"Then the elephants' tusks, which were hard as thunderbolts, suddenly splintered into pieces. It was not I who broke them. It was my remembrance of Lord Krsna, who delivers His devotees from distress, that saved me from that calamity."

Devotees like Prahlada receive special protection from the Lord, but persons who have no faith in the Lord do not.

3 Being always protected by the Lord is the natural result of becoming a devotee of the Lord. However, the pure devotees desire only to glorify the Lord. They do not desire either to protect themselves or to show off their own glories.

4 That the devotees are protected by the Lord is seen in the following statement of Prahlada Maharaja (Visnu Purana 1.17.44):

"Then the elephants' tusks, which were hard as thunderbolts, suddenly splintered into pieces. It was not I who broke them. It was my remembrance of Lord Krsna, who delivers His devotees from distress, that saved me from that calamity."

5 That the great devotees, such as King Pariksit, do not desire their own protection is seen in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.19.15):

6 "O brahmanas, just accept me as a completely surrendered soul, and let mother Ganges, the representative of the Lord, also accept me in that way, for I have already taken the lotus feet of the Lord into my heart. Let the snake-bird or

whatever magical thing the brahmana created - bite me at once. I only desire that you all continue singing the deeds of Lord Visnu."*

7 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by King Pariksit.

Anuccheda 156

1 Even today, the devotees are protected in this way by the Lord. This should not be doubted. When the Lord is worshipped, this result is obtained.

2 That the devotees become very powerful by the Lord's mercy is seen in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.8.19):

"As Dhruva Maharaja, the King's son, kept himself steadily standing on one leg, the pressure of his big toe pushed down half the earth, just as an elephant being carried on a boat rocks the boat left and right with his every step."*

3 This result was obtained by meditating on all-pervading Lord Visnu. By worshipping the Lord in this way, Dhruva was able to move the earth and the other planets by pushing them with his foot. This verse was spoken by Sri Maitreya Muni.

Anuccheda 157

1 An example of the obstacles that make one fall away from faith in the Lord is given in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.8.26):

2 "My dear King, in this way Bharata Maharaja was overwhelmed by an uncontrollable desire which was manifest in the form of the deer. Due to the fruitive results of his past deeds, he fell down from mystic yoga, austerity and worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If it were not due to his past fruitive activity, how could he have been attracted to the deer after giving up the association of his own son and family, considering them stumbling blocks on the path of spiritual life? How could he show uncontrollable affection for a deer? This was definitely due to his past karma. The King was so engrossed in petting and maintaining the deer that he fell down from his spiritual activities. In due course of time, insurmountable death, which is compared to a venomous snake that enters the hole created by a mouse, situated itself before him."*

3 The word "sah" (he) refers to King Bharata. Ordinary fruitive activities are not strong enough to create such an impediment in the path of devotional service. Therefore the fruitive activities mentioned here must have been offenses performed in a previous birth. In this way King Bharata is like King Indradyumna and other devotees that committed offenses. This verse was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami

Anuccheda 158

1 Some think that the Lord Himself arranges for this kind of previous fruitive activity so the devotee will be separated from Him, long to attain Him, and in this way come to love Him more than before. The previous birth of Narada Muni, where even though he had begun to love the Lord, he still had material desires, is an example of this. The Lord explains this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.6.21):

2 "O Narada (the Lord spoke), I regret that during this lifetime you will not be able to see Me anymore. Those who are incomplete in service and who are not completely free from all material taints can hardly see Me."*

3 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 159

1 Gajendra and others fell into a materialistic way of life because of offenses they committed. Because of slackness in performing devotional service one experiences material happinesses and sufferings caused by oneself and others. This is caused by slackness in devotional service, for they who properly engage in devotional service do not experience any sufferings, as is explained in the following words of the Visnu-sahasra-nama-stotra:

2 "No actually inauspicious condition is ever imposed on the devotees of Lord Vasudeva and therefore they do not fear having taken birth in this world again to suffer the miserable conditions of old-age, disease and death."

3 An aspiring devotee tries to maintain and protect his human body. He does this not merely for the body's sake, but because he desires to make advancement in devotional service. This is not against the principles of devotional service.

A learned scholar that does not avoid slackness in loving service to the Lord commits an offense to the Lord. On the other hand, an incompetent fool that avoids offenses easily attains perfection. The Supreme Lord, who is kind to the distressed, is very merciful to that person. When an intelligent person is an offender he is so out of malice.

4 When a fool is an offender he is not so out of malice. For this reason an intelligent person, who does commit offenses out of malice, finds obstacles like a hundred archers stopping his progress in devotional service.

5 Foolish creatures like mice and other animals that somehow engage in devotional service may attain perfection even if they commit offenses, for their offenses are without malice. The power of devotional service defeats all their offenses. However, they who are proud of their advancement in devotional service commit offenses because they disrespect the other devotees. This is seen in the activities of Daksa, who offended Lord Siva, for that reason he had to take birth as one of the Pracetas, and then, because he offended Narada Muni, had to take birth again.

6 If in the past, or present one has never committed any offenses, by once engaging in devotional service he will immediately attain perfection. In the same way if at the moment of death one somehow or other engages in devotional service he also attains perfection. If at the time of death one chants the Lord's holy name or renders some kind of service to the Lord, then the devotional service that person performed in that life and in previous lives becomes perfect, pure, offenseless devotional service, and by the power of that pure devotional service, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is caused to appear before that person at the moment of his death.

7 The Lord Himself describes this in the following words of Sri Bhagavad-gita (8.6):

"Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kunti, that state he will attain without fail."*

8 Because he did not commit any offenses, Ajamila did not have to again and again chant the Lord's holy name to attain the result of chanting. Because he once engaged in the devotional activities of hearing and chanting the Lord's holy name,

he was not taken away by the Yamadutas.

9 Ajamila said (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.32):

"I am certainly most abominable and unfortunate to have merged in an ocean of sinful activities, but nevertheless, because of my previous spiritual activities, I could see those four exalted personalities who came to rescue me. Now I feel exceedingly happy because of their visit."*

10 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The word 'mangalena' (auspicious) here refers to the very pious activities he had performed previously.

Anuccheda 160

1 Describing his indirect performance of devotional service, Ajamila says (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.33):

"Were it not for my past devotional service, how could I, a most unclean keeper of a prostitute, have gotten an opportunity to chant the holy name of Vaikunthapati when I was just ready to die? Certainly it could not have been possible."*

2 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by Sri Ajamila.

Anuccheda 161

1 As Sri Bharata was leaving his deer-body he chanted the Lord's holy names and therefore in his next body he was able to attain the association of the Lord, who was always manifested in his heart. The previous birth of Ajamila should be understood in the same way. At the moment of death Ajamila worshipped the Lord and because of this he attained all success and became free of all sins.

2 This is also described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.1.6):

"The highest perfection of human life, achieved either by complete knowledge of matter and spirit, by practice of mystic powers, or by perfect discharge of occupational duty, is to remember the Personality of Godhead at the end of life."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In this verse the word 'etavan' means 'the highest goal of life'. That highest goal is given in the words 'narayana-smrtih' (to remember the Personality of Godhead at the end of life). Neither sankhya, nor yoga, nor any other spiritual path but devotional service can bring this highest goal of life. To remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead at the end of life is therefore the highest attainment. No one has the power sufficiently to glorify this attainment. That is the meaning."

4 The author of Nama-kaumudi has also said: "At the moment of death one should worship the Supreme Lord."

Anuccheda 162

1 Even though he was only calling out to his son, who happened to be named 'Narayana', Ajamila attained the result of calling out to the Lord.

2 The glories of chanting the Lord's holy name are described in the Padma Purana in the following prayer of Devadyuti:

"I offer my respectful obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They who remember His name at the time of their death, or at any other time,

become free from a host of sins."

3 This is also explained in the following prose prayer of Srimad Bhagavatam (5.3.12):

"Dear Lord, we may not be able to remember Your name, form and qualities due to stumbling, hunger, falling down, yawning or being in a miserable diseased condition at the time of death when there is a high fever. We therefore pray unto You, O Lord, for You are very affectionate to Your devotees. Please help us remember You and utter Your holy names, attributes and activities, which can dispel all the reactions of our sinful lives."*

The conclusion is that by chanting the Lord's holy name at the moment of death one becomes free from all sins. In this way the holy name is glorified.

4 Chanting the Lord's holy name is again glorified in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.13):

"At the time of death, this Ajamila helplessly and very loudly chanted the holy name of the Lord, Narayana. That chanting alone has already freed him from the reactions of all sinful life. Therefore, O servants of Yamaraja, do not try to take him to your master for punishment in hellish conditions."*

5 In this verse the word "asesa" means "all material desires", and "agha" means "offenses". In this statement is seen the Supreme Lord's great mercy to all who humbly approach Him at the moment of death. This verse was spoken by the Yamadutas to the Visnudutas.

Anuccheda 163

1 The real benefit of devotional service, which is given to the proper recipient, is attraction to the Lord, which is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.6.44):

2 "O my dear Krsna, Your pastimes are supremely auspicious for mankind and are an intoxicating beverage for the ears. Tasting such pastimes, people forget their desires for other things."***

3 That the devotees are free from all vices is described in the following statement of Vaisnava literature:

"The saintly devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are never angry, envious, greedy, or filled with impure thoughts."

4 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srimad Uddhava.

Anuccheda 164

1 That by attaining love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead one becomes free from material desires is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.1.13):

"Because of my vow on the verge of death, I have given up drinking water, yet because I am drinking the nectar of topics about Krsna, which is flowing from the lotus mouth of Your Lordship, my hunger and thirst, which are extremely difficult to bear, cannot hinder me."*

2 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by King Pariksit.

Anuccheda 165

1 Performance of devotional service is explained in the following way.

Because by performing devotional service and making offerings to the Lord, even very small offerings, and even with only a dim reflection of devotion, one attains the supreme goal of life, all people in all varnas should always directly engage in devotional service. They should do this and nothing else.

2 That everyone should engage in devotional service and do nothing else is explained in the following words, where the Lord Himself says (Bhagavad-gita 9.22.-23):

"But those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form - to them I carry what they lack and I preserve what they have.*

3 "Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only Me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way."*

4 These two verses confirm the statement of Srimad Bhagavatam (2.9.36) that one should serve the Lord both directly and indirectly. One should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead and no one else. That is the definition of devotional service.

5 That the Lord is generous in accepting the devotees is confirmed by the Lord Himself in these words (Bhagavad-gita 9.30):

"Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination."*

6 That devotional service is difficult to understand and difficult to attain is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.19 and 3.1.5.24):

"Real religious principles are enacted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although fully situated in the mode of goodness, even the great rsis who occupy the topmost planets cannot ascertain the real religious principles, nor can the demigods or the leaders of Siddhaloka, to say nothing of the asuras, ordinary human beings, Vidyadharas and Caranas."*

7 "My dear demigods, the human form of life is of such importance that we also desire to have such life, for in the human form one can attain perfect religious truth and knowledge. If one in this human form of life does not understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His abode, it is to be understood that he is very much affected by the influence of external nature."*

8 That direct devotional service, where one has no other desire, all obstacles are overcome, and one has attained pure love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is very rare and difficult to attain. This is confirmed by the following statement of the Fourth Canto (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.24.55):

9 "My dear Lord, pure devotional service is even difficult for liberated persons to discharge, but devotional service alone can satisfy You. Who will take to other processes of self-realisation if he is actually serious about the perfection of life?"*

10 That in pure devotional service one has no material desires is described by the Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.25):

11 "I am fully opulent, almighty and superior to Lord Brahma and Indra, the king of the heavenly planets. I am also the bestower of all happiness obtained in the heavenly kingdom and by liberation. Nonetheless, the brahmanas do not seek material comforts from Me. They are very pure and do not want to possess anything. They simply engage in My devotional service. What is the need of their

asking for material benefits from anyone else?"*

12 This verse was spoken by Lord Rsabhadeva.

13 That even if one has material desires, one should still engage in devotional service is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.10):

"A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead."*

14 That in pure devotional service the devotee wants the Lord alone and does not want anything else is confirmed by Gajendra in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 8.3.20):

"Unalloyed devotees who have no desire other than to serve the Lord, worship Him in full surrender and always hear and chant about His activities, which are most wonderful and auspicious. Thus they always merge in an ocean of transcendental bliss. Such devotees never ask the Lord for any benediction."*

15 That the pure devotees do not want anything material is also confirmed by Narada Muni in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.55):

"Prahlada Maharaja was the best person in the family of asuras, who always aspire for material happiness. Nonetheless, although allured by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who offered him all benedictions for material happiness, because of his unalloyed Krsna consciousness he did not want to take any material benefit for sense gratification."*

16 That the devotees want only the Lord is described in these words of the Garuda Purana:

"Because they are completely devoted to Him alone and have Him only (eka) as their goal (anta) in life, they who have given their hearts to the Lord are called (ekanti) devotees of the Lord."

17 In Bhagavad-gita (11.54-55) the Lord Himself describes this pure devotion.

"My dear Arjuna, only by undivided devotional service can I be understood as I am, standing before you, and thus be seen directly. Only in this way can you enter into the mysteries of My understanding.*"

18 "My dear Arjuna, he who engages in My pure devotional service, free from the contaminations of fruitive activities, and mental speculation, he who works for Me, who makes Me the supreme goal of his life, and who is friendly to every living being - he certainly comes to Me."*

19 The word "mat-karma" (work for Me) here means the devotional activities that begin with hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord. The words "aham" (I) and "paramah" (considering Me the Supreme) indicate the goal (the Supreme Personality of Godhead) and method to attain the goal (devotional service). There is no goal or method other than these. Devotional service is further described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.48):

20 "The four principles of advancement in spiritual life - dharma, artha, kama and moksa - all depend on the disposition of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, my dear friends, follow in the footsteps of devotees. Without desire, fully depend upon the disposition of the Supreme Lord, worship Him, the Supersoul, in devotional service."*

21 Here the word "yad-apasrayah" means "dependent on Lord Hari", "anihaya" means "abandoning material desires", and "anidam" means "without material desires. The Amara-kosa dictionary -Thesaurus gives the following

synonyms:

"Iccha, akanksa, sprha, iha and trt are synonyms for desire.

This verse was spoken by Prahlada Maharaja to the sons of the demons.

Anuccheda 166

1 Prahlada Maharaja explains that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the pure devotee are both free from material desires. He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.10.5-6):

2 "A servant who desires material profits from his master is certainly not a qualified servant or pure devotee. Similarly, a master who bestows benedictions upon his servant because of a desire to maintain a prestigious position as master is also not a pure master.

3 "O my Lord, I am Your unmotivated servant, and You are my eternal master. There is no need of our being anything other than master and servant. You are naturally my master, and I am naturally Your servant. We have no other relationship."*

4 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by Prahlada Maharaja to Lord Nrsimhadeva.

Anuccheda 167

1 In the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.11) Prahlada Maharaja explains the relationship between the Lord and the devotee:

"The Supreme Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is always fully satisfied in Himself. Therefore when something is offered to Him, the offering, by the Lord's mercy, is for the benefit of the devotee, for the Lord does not need service from anyone. To give an example, if one's face is decorated, the reflection of one's face in a mirror is also seen to be decorated."*

2 This verse explains that the Supreme Personality of (ayam prabhuh) Godhead does not wish (na vrnite), for His own personal benefit (atmanah), that His devotees (janan) worship (manam) Him. The reason He accepts their worship is that He is very pleased (purnah) to associate (labha) with His devotees (nija). Another reason is that He is kind (karunah) to His devotees. Elaborate arrangements to worship Him do not of themselves please Him at all.

3 What is the devotee like? The answer is given in the word "avidusah" (unaware). As a child is foolish and unaware in the presence of the father, so the devotee is in the presence of the Supreme Lord. This statement shows the humbleness of the devotees. If it were not for the Lord empowering them to understand, the devotees would not understand anything. That is the meaning. In this way on both sides, for both the Lord and the devotee, there are feelings of love and kindness.

4 Fearing that some materialists might think, 'Why should the people worship the Lord? There is no reason to worship Him?' Prahlada gives a reason for worshipping the Lord. He says that everyone is interested in his own personal welfare, and by serving the Lord one automatically benefits himself. In this way, thinking of one's own happiness, one should worship the Lord. Here he gives the following example: "If one's face is decorated, the reflection of one's face in a mirror is also seen to be decorated.' It is not otherwise.

This verse was spoken by Sri Prahlada to Lord Nrsimhadeva.

Anuccheda 168

1 Prahlada continues to describe devotional service (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.51-52):

"My dear friends, O sons of the demons, you cannot please the Supreme Personality of Godhead by becoming perfect brahmanas, demigods or great saints or by becoming perfectly good in etiquette or vast learning. None of these qualifications can awaken the pleasure of the Lord. Nor by charity, austerity, sacrifice, cleanliness or vows can one satisfy the Lord. The Lord is pleased only if one has unflinching, unalloyed devotion to Him. Without sincere devotional service, everything is simply a show."*

2 Here the word "amalaya" means without material desires, "vidambanam" means "simply acting out a show". A devotee that has material desires is simply making an outward show of devotional service because his real interest is in his own benefit. As actors pretend in various ways, these devotees pretend to engage in devotional service.

There are two kinds of material desire. One is the desire for benefits in the earthly realm and the other for benefits in the planets of the demigods. Both of these desires are condemned in the following statement of the Nagapatnis (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.16.37):

3 "Those who have attained the dust of Your lotus feet never hanker for the kingship of heaven, limitless sovereignty, the position of Brahma or rulership over the earth. They are not interested even in the perfections of yoga or in liberation itself."*

4 In the same way Vaivasvata Manu's son Prsadhra, who yearned to attain liberation, asked for pure (ekanta) devotional service.

5 Prahlada Maharaja also wished to renounce all material desires in order to attain liberation. He appealed to Lord Nrsimhadeva (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.10.2):

"Prahlada Maharaja said: My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because I was born in an atheistic family I am naturally attached to material enjoyment. Therefore, kindly do not tempt me with these illusions. I am very much afraid of material conditions, and I desire to be liberated from materialistic life. It is for this reason that I have taken shelter of Your lotus feet."*

6 After that, Prahlada Maharaja prayed to Lord Nrsimhadeva (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.10.7):

"O my Lord, best of the givers of benediction, if You at all want to bestow a desirable benediction upon me, then I pray from Your Lordship that within the core of my heart there be no material desires."*

7 Before recounting these prayers, Narada Muni explained (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.10.1):

"Although Prahlada Maharaja was only a boy, when he heard the benedictions offered by Lord Nrsimhadeva, he considered them impediments on the path of devotional service. Thus he smiled very mildly and spoke as follows."*

8 Sriman Ambarisa, who performed yajnas for the protection of his subjects, was a pure devotee of the Lord. He did not desire anything in this material world and he completely depended on the Lord. The pure devotees are described in the Garuda Purana in these words:

"A pure devotee depends on the Lord for his maintenance and protection."

9 In the following words Prahlada Maharaja criticises those that do not accept the devotional path (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.46):

"O Supreme Personality of Godhead, there are ten prescribed methods on the path to liberation: to remain silent, not to speak to anyone, to observe vows, to amass all kinds of Vedic knowledge to undergo austerities, to study the Vedas and other Vedic literatures, to execute the duties of varnasrama-dhama, to explain the sastras, to stay in a solitary place, to chant mantras silently and to be absorbed in trance. These different methods for liberation are generally only a professional practice and means of livelihood for those who have not conquered their senses. Because such persons are false proud, these procedures may not be successful."*

10 The different practices, beginning with silence (mauna), described here are used as a means of livelihood (varta bhavanti) by hypocrites who do not control their senses (ajitendriyanam). Such hypocrites do not attain the result that comes from controlling the senses. That is the meaning here.

11 That the pure devotees have no material desires is also explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.18.14):

"Although those who are interested only in worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead do not desire anything material from the Lord and do not even want liberation, Lord Krsna fulfils all their desires."*

12 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The word "param" here means "liberation".

13 Prahlada Maharaja again describes the importance of devotional service (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.51):

"My dear friends, O sons of the demons, you cannot please the Supreme Personality of Godhead by becoming perfect brahmanas, demigods or great saints or by becoming perfectly good in etiquette or vast learning. None of these qualifications can awaken the pleasure of the Lord. Nor by charity, austerity, sacrifice, cleanliness or vows can one satisfy the Lord. The Lord is pleased only if one has unflinching, unalloyed devotion to Him. Without sincere devotional service, everything is simply a show."*

14 This verse was spoken by Prahlada Maharaja to the sons of the demons.

Anuccheda 169

1 That devotional service is the essential teaching of all scriptures is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.23-24):

2 "Prahlada Maharaja said: Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia and pastimes of Lord Visnu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind and words) - these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who has dedicated his life to the service of Krsna through these nine methods should be understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge."*

3 In this verse the words "sraavanam kirtanam" mean "hearing and chanting about the Lord's holy names and transcendental qualities", "arcanam" means "worshipping the Lord according to regulative principles", "vandanam" means

"offering respectful obeisances", "dasyam" means thinking "I am the Lord's servant", "sakhyam" means "thinking of the Lord as one's friend", and "atma nivedanam" means "offering for the Lord's service the cows, horses, and all other things one may have in one's possession", and it also means "depending on the Lord for maintenance and protection and being aware that it is not by one's own power one is maintained and protected."

4 Ancient sages have given the following description of great devotees adopting different methods of devotional service:

"Maharaja Pariksit attained the highest perfection, shelter to Lord Krsna's lotus feet, simply by hearing about Lord Visnu. Sukadeva Gosvami attained perfection simply by reciting Srimad Bhagavatam. Prahlada Maharaja attained perfection by remembering the Lord. The goddess of fortune attained perfection by massaging the transcendental legs of Maha-Visnu. Maharaja Prthu attained perfection by worshipping the Deity and Akrura attained perfection by offering prayers unto the Lord. Vajrangaji (Hanumanji) attained perfection by rendering service to Lord Ramacandra, and Arjuna attained perfection simply by being Lord Krsna's friend. Bali Maharaja attained perfection by dedicating everything to the lotus feet of Krsna."*

5 In the verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda the nine kinds of activity described (nava-laksana) are all direct (addha) devotional service to the Supreme Lord (bhagavati). They are not merely the offering to the Lord of the fruits of one's work, but they are direct service to the Lord (bhaktih). These activities of devotional service are offered (arpita) to Lord Visnu (visnu) to please Him. Here Prahlada Maharaja says, "If (cet) someone performs (kriyate) these activities of devotional service, then I think (manye) he is the most learned person (yad-adhitam uttamam)."

6 Pure devotional service is described in the following statement of Sri Gopala-tapani Upanisad (1.18):

"Bhakti means devotional service to the Lord which is free from desire for material profit, either in this life or in the next. Devoid of such inclinations, one should fully absorb the mind in the Supreme. That is the purpose of naiskarmya."*

7 It is not necessary to perform all nine kinds of devotional service. By performing any one of them, any combination of them, or all of them with faith and love one will attain the desired result. These nine processes of devotional service are only a general outline of devotional service. Within that outline there are many activities of devotional service. This verse was spoken by Prahlada Maharaja to his father.

Anuccheda 170

1 Now we will show that pure devotional service is the best spiritual path. By performing pure devotional service one becomes free of his aversion to the Supreme Lord and instead comes to love Him.

2 The Absolute Truth has three features: 1. the varietyless impersonal Brahman, which approached by the path of jnana (knowledge), 2. the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has a great variety of transcendental qualities, and who is approached by devotional service, and 3. these two features taken together, that feature being approached by offering to the Lord the fruits of one's work.

Thus there are three ways to approach the Lord: 1. the pursuit of transcendental knowledge, 2. devotional service, and 3. offering to the Lord the fruits of one's work. These three are the only ways. There are no others.

3 This is explained by the Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.6):

"My dear Uddhava, because I desire that human beings may achieve perfection, I have presented three paths of advancement - the path of knowledge, the path of work and the path of devotion. Besides these three there is absolutely no other means of elevation."***

4 In this verse "yogah" means "the spiritual paths", "maya" means "by Me", the author of the Vedas", and "sreyamsi" means "the attainment of: 1. impersonal liberation, 2. the three goals of economic development, piety and sense gratification, and 3. love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead." Here fruitive work (karma) is clearly different from devotional service (bhakti).

Anuccheda 171

1 These three paths are discussed in the following two verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.7-8):

2. "Among these three paths, jnana-yoga, the path of philosophical speculation, is recommended for those who are disgusted with material life and are thus detached from ordinary, fruitive activities. Those who are not disgusted with material life, having many desires yet to fulfil, should seek perfection through the path of karma-yoga.*

3 "If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My glories, such a person, being neither very disgusted with nor attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of loving devotion to Me."*

4 The word (nirvinnanam) means "they who are disgusted with the so-called pleasures available in the middle or higher material realms, and who have in the hearts definitely renounced them." These two verses describe they who yearn to attain liberation. Of them, they who have renounced material life should practice jnana-yoga, and they who are still attached to material happinesses and not yet able to renounce them, should practice karma-yoga, which will grant the perfections they desire.

5 Devotional service, however, may be practiced by anyone who has faith in it. He need not be very qualified or renounced. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.7.46):

"Surrendered souls, even from groups leading sinful lives, such as women, the labourer class, the mountaineers and the Siberians, or even the birds and beasts, can also know about the science of Godhead and become liberated from the clutches of the illusory energy by surrendering unto the pure devotees of the Lord and by following in their footsteps in devotional service."*

If, somehow or other (yadrchaya), someone associates with the devotees, he will attain the Lord's mercy and in this way his life will become auspicious.

6 This process of becoming advanced in devotional service by associating with the Lord's devotees is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.16):

"O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed

from all vice, great service is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vasudeva."*

7 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 172

1 This verse is further explained in the following two verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.27-28):

2 "Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities."***

3 The word "mat-katha" (narrations of My glories) here means "in many devotional activities, such as hearing about My glories." By having faith in these devotional activities one attains the greatest benefit. Even though he may sometimes feel impelled to perform material activities, the devotee knows (veda) that the happiness he experiences at present due to past pious deeds.

4 This is further explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.8):

"If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My glories, such a person, being neither very disgusted with nor attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of loving devotion to Me."***

5 In this verse the Lord says, "One should worship Me, and not be renounced as the impersonalists are." It is the devotees that are genuinely renounced. That is the meaning.

6 Then the Lord says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.31):

"Therefore, for a devotee engaged in My loving service, with mind fixed on Me, the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation is generally not the means of achieving the highest perfection within this world."***

7 The Lord continues (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.32):

"Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties and all other means of perfecting life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions."***

8 Devotional service is not dependent on either karma-yoga or renunciation. The devotees have faith that devotional service is the best spiritual path. The statement that devotional service has something to do with renunciation is merely a figure of speech. If one simply has faith in karma or jnana and does nothing more, then his efforts are all wasted. However, if one simply has faith in devotional service and does nothing more, that faith is accepted and the devotee attains a great benefit. Without faith it is not possible to attain pure devotional service. If one has no faith at all he cannot attain devotional service.

Here it is said that the devotee is neither attracted to nor repelled by the

objects of the senses. The actions of the devotee are described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.9):

"As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by sravanam kirtanam visnoh, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions."***

When he attains sincere faith in the Lord, the devotee is able to abandon fruitive work. The conclusion is that without engagement in devotional service one cannot attain perfection in spiritual life.

9 The devotional activity of chanting the Lord's holy name is described in the following words of the Skanda Purana, Prabhasa-khanda:

"O best of the Bhrgus to anyone who once, either with faith, or with contempt, chants the holy name, the holy name of Lord Krsna brings liberation."

10 Chanting the glories of the Lord is again described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.25):

"In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin."*

11 In these verses it is explained that hearing about the Lord gives the spiritual result of devotional service.

12 The chanting of the Lord's holy name is again described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.49):

"While suffering at the time of death, Ajamila chanted the holy name of the Lord and although the chanting was directed toward his son, he nevertheless returned home, back to Godhead. Therefore if one faithfully and inoffensively chants the holy name of the Lord, where is the doubt that he will return to Godhead?"*

13 Faith in hearing and remembering the holy name of the Lord brings the best spiritual results to the devotee. It is not simply another part of spiritual life. It is pre-eminently important. There are no hard and fast rules for chanting the holy name, as there are for performing agni-hotra-yajnas and the other duties of karma-yoga. This is because hearing and chanting the holy name of the Lord has great spiritual power.

14 What happens if one is a fool and does not have faith in the holy name? The answer is given in these words of the Padma Purana:

"O best of the Bhrgus, to anyone who once, either with faith, or with contempt, chants the holy name, the holy name of Lord Krsna brings liberation."

If out of ignorance one commits the offense of chanting the holy name with contempt and one does not actually bear deep-seated malice towards the holy name, his advancement in devotional service will be swift and without impediments. However, if one actually knows, even a little, of the true nature of the holy name, and bears malice to the name, then when he chants the holy name his advancement in devotional service will meet with obstacles. It will be like a fire fed with only half the needed fuel.

15 The importance of faith is described by the Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.21.17-18):

"In worshipping the temple Deity, my dear Uddhava, bathing and

decoration are the most pleasing offerings. For the Deity traced on sacred ground, the process of tattva-vinyasa is most dear. Oblations of sesame and barley soaked in ghee are the preferred offering to the sacrificial fire, whereas worship consisting of upasthana and arghya is preferred for the sun. One should worship Me in the form of water by offering water itself. Actually, whatever is offered to Me with faith by My devotee- even if only a little water - is most dear to Me.***

16 "Even very opulent presentations do not satisfy Me if they are offered by non devotees. But I am pleased by any insignificant offering made by My loving devotees, and I am certainly most pleased when nice presentations of fragrant oil, incense, flowers and palatable foods are offered with love."***

17 The words "sraddha" (faith) and "bhakti" (devotion) in these verses explain the nature of devotional service to the Lord, devotional service that pleases the Lord and removes offenses and malice to the Lord. Faith in devotional service is not merely a minor aspect of devotional service. It is essential. A person who knows the real nature of devotional service is able to engage in pure devotional service. The Lord Himself describes such a person in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.8):

18 "If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My glories, such a person, being neither very disgusted with nor attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of loving devotion to Me."***

19 In the following words the Lord describes the devotees that have not yet come to the level of pure devotional service (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.27):

"Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities."***

20 In this verse the word "tatah" has the sense of the ablative ("from that") and describes the steps by which one attains the stage of atmarama (finding satisfaction in the Supreme Self alone). In this way it is explained that devotional service is the king of all methods of spiritual realisation.

21 This will be further explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.34):

"Because My devotees possess saintly behaviour and deep intelligence, they completely dedicate themselves to Me and do not desire anything besides Me. Indeed, even if I offer them liberation from birth and death, they do not accept it."***

22 To confirm that devotional service is the king of all methods of spiritual realisation,, it is also explained in these passages that karma (fruitive work) and jnana (the search for knowledge) cannot reach their final goals without the performance of devotional service.

23 The qualification for attaining pure devotional service is faith alone. Therefore the Lord teaches (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.28), "My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith, love, and conviction." Here the word "sraddhaluh" means "faithful", "prитай" means "attracted to the Lord" and

"drdha-niscayah" means "without abandoning the activities of devotional service." Because it may not be possible to renounce material desires all of a sudden, the Lord says, "one may sometimes be engaged in sense gratification." Still, the Lord criticises the activities of sense gratification because "sense gratification leads to a miserable result". The sense gratification described here does not include sinful activities. In the Visnu Purana sinful activities are forbidden in the following words:

24 "O king, Lord Krsna is pleased with a person who does not even think of performing adultery, theft or violence."

25 In the Visnu Purana and other scriptures it is said that one should offer the fruits of one's work to the Lord. Here it is explained that one cannot offer the fruits of sinful work to the Lord. That is forbidden. Later in this book we will quote the prohibition, "One should act without material desires. One should not act in any other way." Here not performing material activities means not performing sinful activities.

26 In the Visnu-dharma Purana it is said:

"A person who breaks the rules created by Lord Visnu and acts sinfully is not a devotee of Lord Visnu. Only they who act in a saintly way can worship Lord Visnu."

In these words the devotees are forbidden to perform sinful activities.

27 Then again, by engaging in devotional service one loses the desire to act sinfully. Srimad Bhagavatam *4.21.31) explains:

"By the inclination to serve the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, suffering humanity can immediately cleanse the dirt which has accumulated in their minds during innumerable births. Like the Ganges water, which emanates from the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord, such a process immediately cleanses the mind, and thus spiritual or Krsna consciousness gradually increases."*

28 Here the word "sadyah" (immediately) means "simply by becoming attracted to the Lord."

29 Visnu-dharma Purana again explains:

"When one no longer desires to act sinfully, but instead desires to act in a saintly way, Lord Visnu stays in his heart."

30 The Lord protects the devotees from accidental sins, this is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.42):

"One who has given up everything and taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is very dear to Krsna. If he is involved in some sinful activity by accident, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated in everyone's heart, removes his sins without difficulty."*

31 In this verse the word "kathancit" (by accident) means that the devotees do not perform sinful activities deliberately. deliberately performing sinful activities is one of the offenses to the holy name, as the Padma Purana, Namaparadhah-bhanjana-stotra, explains:

"To think that since the Hare Krsna mantra can counteract all sinful reactions one may therefore go on with his sinful activities and then at the same time chant the Hare Krsna mantra to neutralise them is the greatest offense at the lotus feet of Hari-nama. One who thinks in this way cannot be purified by any means, such as by austerities, or by the various punishments of Yamaraja."*

32 Sri Bhagavad-gita (9.30) explains:

"Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination."*

Here the word "su-duracarah" (committing the most abominable action) means committing offenses and being disrespectful. It does not refer to gross sinful activities.

33 The Lord then explains (Bhagavad-gita 9.31):

"He quickly becomes righteous and attains lasting peace. O son of Kunti, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes."*

This verse confirms that it is best not to act badly. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 173

1 Here someone may protest: "So far you have described only karma (fruitive work), jnana (the search for knowledge), and bhakti (devotional service). However, one must also perform his prescribed daily duties and whatever occasional duties are thrust upon him. Therefore jnana (the search for knowledge) and bhakti (devotional service) must always be performed along with these ordinary duties. How can one perform jnana and bhakti without also performing these prescribed duties?"

Fearing that someone would say this, the Lord refutes the idea that the devotees must perform a host of material duties prescribed by the Vedas. He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.9):

2 "As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by sravanam kirtanam visnoh, one has to act according to the regulative principle of the Veda injunctions."***

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The word 'karmani' here means 'regular and occasional prescribed duties'."

4 However, the Lord also orders everyone to obey the orders of the Vedic literatures. He says:

"The Sruti and Smrti scriptures are My commands. A person who disobeys these scriptures is My enemy. He is not My devotee."

5 There is no fault in this statement and it does not contradict what was said before. In order to perform devotional activities that increase one's renunciation and faith one should reject some of the Lord's orders.

6 This is explained by the Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.32):

"Having taken complete shelter at My lotus feet, however, a saintly person ultimately renounces such ordinary religious duties and worships Me alone. He is thus considered to be the best among all living entities."***

7 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse means that by engaging in devotional service one attains the platform of renunciation. When one is renounced he abandons the religious duties meant for those who are not renounced."

The platform of renunciation is described by Karabhajana Muni in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.41):

8 "One who has given up all material duties and taken full shelter of the lotus

feet of Mukunda, who gives shelter to all, is not indebted to the demigods, great sages, ordinary living entities, relatives, friends, mankind, or even one's forefathers who have passed away."*

9 This verse means that the devotee described here is not a servant of the demigods, great sages, and others. He is a servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore he need not serve the demigods and others. The word "kartam" here means "material duties." This means that the devotees are beyond the control of the demigods and others.

10 This is also described in the Garuda Purana in the following words:

"A person who does not worship Lord Hari will say, 'I must worship the demigods and sages, Brahma and Brhaspati'."

11 A devotee who accidentally performs a sinful activity does not need to perform an activity of penance to atone for it. Simply by remembering the Lord, he atones for his accidental sin. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.42):

12 "One who has given up everything and taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is very dear to Krsna. If he is involved in some sinful activity by accident, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated in everyone's heart, removes his sins without difficulty."*

13 In this verse the word "tyaktanya-bhava" means "one who has rejected the worship of the demigods and placed all his love and devotion in the Supreme Personality of Godhead." Such a person rejects fruitive work. He has faith and he takes shelter of the Lord. These two things, having faith and taking shelter are the same thing. Faith here means "faith in the scriptures." They who do not take shelter of the scriptures find themselves in a fearful position. The symptom of faith is that one takes shelter of the scriptures. For these reasons one should not worship the various demigods.

14 That the devotees take shelter of the Lord alone and do not worship the demigods is also explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.14):

"As pouring water on the root of a tree energises the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply by worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality."*

15 Even if his advancement in devotional service is temporarily blocked by obstacle, a devotee who abandons fruitive work and takes shelter of the Lord is not placed in distress because he has abandoned fruitive work. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.17):

"One who has forsaken his material occupations to engage in devotional service of the Lord may sometimes fall down while in an immature stage, yet there is no danger of his being unsuccessful. On the other hand, a non devotee, though fully engaged in occupational duties, does not gain anything."*

16 In the following words Lord Krsna orders the devotees to abandon fruitive work (Bhagavad-gita 18.66):

"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear."*

17 From the beginning of devotional service one should renounce fruitive work. That is the meaning of the prefix "pari" used here with the very "tyaj".

This verse is also confirmed by the following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.41) which has the same meaning:

"One who has given up all material duties and taken full shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, who gives shelter to all, is not indebted to the demigods, great sages, ordinary living entities, relatives, friends, mankind or even one's forefathers who have passed away."*

18 In the following words Lord Krsna describes devotional service (Bhagavad-gita 18.65):

"Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me and offer your homage unto Me. Thus you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend."*

19 In the Gautamiya Tantra it is said:

"They who have fallen in love with Lord Krsna's lotus feet do not divert their attention to chanting about, meditating on, worshipping, or following the orders of anyone else."

20 The activities of the pure devotee King Bharata are described in the following words of Sri Visnu Purana (2.13.9-10):

"Again and again King Bharata would chant, 'O Krsna, O Govinda, O Kesava, O Madhava, O Visnu, O limitless one, O infallible Lord, O master of all yajna, O master of the senses!' Even in his dreams, the king would think only of Lord Krsna."

21 King Bharata did not talk of topics other than Krsna. He renounced talking of other topics and doing other activities. He understood that Lord Krsna is not different from His holy name. In this way King Bharata was a pure devotee of the Lord.

22 In the Padma Purana Lord Krsna explains:

"A person who neglects his material duties and only once says My name comes to Me in the spiritual world, but they who carefully perform their duties but never say My name do not."

23 Therefore a faithful devotee should engage in devotional service alone. He should not perform material pious duties or any other non devotional activities. How is spiritual faith known? The signs of faith were already previously described in the description of the symptoms of surrender. The symptoms of surrender will also be described in the discussion of the verse beginning "anukulyasya sankalpah". The absence of materialism, miserliness and other faults is known as another symptom of faith. In this way the scriptures describe faith.

24 In Bhagavad-gita (9.22), Lord Krsna describes faith in these words:

"But those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form, to them I carry what they lack and I preserve what they have."*

25 A faithful person does not lose faith even in seemingly ordinary things, relatives, qualities and activities that nevertheless have a relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Only they who have ordinary vision see things as faulty or material. A person who is actually making spiritual advancement will not renounce these things.

26 The power of devotional service is described in the following words of the Narada Purana:

"The auspicious water that has washed Lord Krsna's feet stops all

sufferings, all diseases, and even untimely death."

27 Some faithful devotees commit offences and therefore they do not at once attain the desired result. The result remains hidden from them. The faithful devotees naturally become washed of all impurities. This is described in the statement of scripture:

"One who remembers the lotus-eyed Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes pure both within and without."

By properly honouring the great sages and devotees in the disciplic succession, which begins with Sri Narada and Sri Vyasa, one becomes purified in this way. However, if one does not honour the great devotees, he commits an offense.

28 The rules of etiquette that govern civilised society are meant to prevent these kinds of offenses to the great souls. In this way it should be understood. When a person has faith and understand the difference between spiritual perfection and what falls short of that perfection, he becomes like a goldsmith who, desiring to attain pure gold, works very strenuously (to refine the impure gold he has). Thus a sincere devotee takes great trouble to become free of material vices, and when all material faults are destroyed, then Lord Krsna personally appears before him. In this way it should be understood.

29 When the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears before him, the devotee becomes free from even the slightest trace of desire for an exalted position in the material world. When the devotee is enlightened in this way he will never insult the great devotees or commit any kind of offense. All offenses are then stopped.

30 Here may be seen the example of King Citraketu. Unaware of Lord Siva's true identity as a great devotee of the Lord because Lord Siva's true nature was covered by activities that seemed to be beyond the realm of devotional service, King Citraketu committed an offense to him.

Even a faithful devotee may, because of past karma, still be engaged in material activities. However, by humbly engaging in devotional service, the devotee will certainly shake away all attraction to matter.

31 This is seen in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.20.28), where Lord Krsna explains:

"Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment. My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities."***

32 In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.14.18) Lord Krsna explains:

"My dear Uddhava, if My devotee has not fully conquered his senses, he may be harassed by material desires, but because of his unflinching devotion for Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification."***

33 In the following words (Bhagavad-gita 9.30) Lord Krsna describes the nature of unalloyed faith:

"Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination."*

34 In Bhagavad-gita (17.1) Arjuna asks the following question:

"O Krsna, what is the situation of those who do not follow the principles of scripture but worship according to their own imagination? Are they in goodness, in passion or in ignorance?"*

35 This kind of faith is understood through the disciplic succession. It is not necessarily the conclusion of all the scriptures. Many scriptural passages affirm that materialistic behaviour is always inappropriate. For example, in the Visnu Purana it is said:

"Lord Krsna is never pleased by a person who is a thief or an adulterer, or who does harm to others."

These words contradict the previous statement that Lord Visnu may sometimes be pleased with His devotee even if the devotee is engaged in abominable actions. In the Visnu-dharma Purana it is said:

"One who does not follow the rules of proper conduct cannot be considered a devotee of Lord Visnu. The Lord is worshipped only by they who act in a saintly way."

These words contradict the previous statement that a person engaged in abominable actions may still be considered a devotee. The truth is that it is certainly not to a devotee's credit that he perform abominable actions. That sinful actions should be avoided by the devotees is confirmed by the use of the words "api cet" (even though) inn this quote from Bhagavad-gita. It is also confirmed by the verse that immediately follows.

36 Immediately after saying that the devotee is rightly situated even though he may be engaged in abominable actions, Lord Krsna explains (Bhagavad-gita 9.31):

"He quickly becomes righteous and attains lasting peace. O son of Kunti declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes."*

However, it should also be noted that the following is explained the description of offenses to the holy name:

"It is an offense to commit sin on the strength of chanting the holy name."

37 The faith of a devotee who follows the scriptures is better than other kinds of faith. That faith should be followed. Other kinds of faith are mentioned only to show the glory and power of devotional service. This kind of faith situates the devotee in the mode of goodness. However, faith should not be directed to worship of the demigods. That is confirmed in Bhagavad-gita 17.1. The perfection of faith is described in the following passage of Brahma-vaivarta Purana.

38 "One should consider: What is reality? What is illusion? O King, when one thinks in this way he comes to renounce the illusion of material life. Then he can attain perfection. Then he attains the perfection of faith, a perfection that brings a great result."

39 The manifestation of faith among the devotees is described by the Supreme Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.8-9):

"If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My glories, such a person, being neither very disgusted with nor attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of loving devotion to Me.***"

40 "As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by sravanam kirtanam visnoh, one has to act according to the regulative principle of the Vedic injunctions."***

41 In this way the conversation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and Narada Muni explains who is qualified and who is not qualified to engage in devotional service.

42 Lord Krsna further explains (Bhagavad-gita 3.26):

"So as not to disrupt the minds of ignorant men attached to the fruitive results of prescribed duties, a learned person should not induce them to stop work. Rather, by working in the spirit of devotion, he should engage them in all sorts of activities (for the gradual development of Krsna consciousness)."*

43 It is also said in (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.15):

"The people in general are naturally inclined to enjoy, and you have encouraged them in that way in the name of religion. This is verily condemned and is quite unreasonable. because they are guided under your instructions, they will accept such activities in the name of religion and will hardly care for prohibitions."*

44 The infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead further explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.9.50):

"A pure devotee who is fully accomplished in the science of devotional service will never instruct a foolish person to engage in fruitive activities for material enjoyment, not to speak of helping him in such activities. Such a person is like an experienced physician, who never encourages a patient to eat food injurious to his health, even if the patient desires it."*

45 Although faith makes a person qualified to engage in devotional service, and faith does not manifest in a person who does not know the truth, nevertheless, there is no fault in considering the previous purifying activities of a potential recipient of transcendental knowledge, and there is a fault on the part of a preacher of transcendental knowledge if he does not consider these previous activities. Therefore it is said:

"One should not teach transcendental knowledge to a faithless person averse to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Later in this book, in the discussion of offenses, we will explain how teaching faithless persons is an offense to the Lord. Now we will return to the discussion at hand.

Anuccheda 174

1 After describing (in anuccheda 173, texts 39 and 40) the way one is qualified to engage in the three kinds of yoga (karma-yoga, jnana-yoga and bhakti-yoga), the Supreme Lord next explains how they who are devotees and try to please the Supreme Lord engage in karma-yoga. The Lord says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.10-11):

2 "My dear Uddhava, a person who is situated in his prescribed duty, properly worshipping by Vedic sacrifices but not desiring the fruitive result of such worship, will not go to the heavenly planets. Similarly, by not performing forbidden activities he will not go to hell."***

3 "One who is situated in his prescribed duty, free from sinful activities and cleansed of material contamination, in this very life obtains transcendental knowledge or, by fortune, devotional service unto Me."***

4 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In these verses "anasih-kamah" means "not desiring the fruits of action

and 'anyat' means 'forbidden actions'. One may go to the hellish planets in two ways. One way is to neglect ones prescribed duties, and the other way is to perform actions that are forbidden. Because he performs his prescribed duties and also shuns forbidden actions, the devotee does not go to the hellish planets, and because he does not desire the fruits of action he does not go to Svargaloka either. That is the meaning. The phrase 'asmil loke' means 'in this body'. 'Anaghah' means 'he who shuns all forbidden actions', and 'sucih' means 'free from the contamination of material passions'. The word 'yadrcchaya' (by good fortune) shows that devotional service is more rare and difficult to attain than the realisation of impersonal Brahman."

5 The meaning here is that the sincere souls do not desire to enjoy the fruits of material actions and thus they perform Vedic rituals and duties only because the Lord has ordered that they be performed. When association with jnanis, is attained by them, these sincere souls present the results of these prescribed fruitive activities as an offering to the Supreme Lord. When the association of devotees of the Lord is attained by them, these sincere souls engage in devotional activities that please the Supreme Lord directly. That is why the word "yadrcchaya" (by good fortune) is used here. By the association of the devotees and by attaining their mercy, the sincere souls attain good fortune. That is explained here.

6 This is explained in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (2.3.11):
"All the different kinds of worshippers of multi demigods can attain the highest perfectional benediction, which is spontaneous attraction unflinchingly fixed upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, only by the association of the pure devotee of the Lord."*

7 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 175

1 In this way there are different qualifications for: 1. offering the results of one's work to the Lord, 2. spiritual knowledge, and 3. spiritual devotional service to the Lord. The Lord discusses these qualifications in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.21.2):

2 "Steadiness in one's own position is declared to be actual piety, whereas deviation from one's position is considered impiety. In this way the two are definitely ascertained."***

3 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 176

1 When he has no knowledge of the Supreme Lord's transcendental form and no devotion to Him, the soul is in an unfortunate position. In that position the idea that God is impersonal and has no qualities becomes prominent. The most important feature of God is His feature as a person who has transcendental qualities. This feature is manifested in two ways: 1. as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and 2. as the Supersoul. In this way the soul may have faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead or faith in the Supersoul.

2 These three features of the Supreme (Brahma, Paramatma and Bhagavan) are described in the Bhagavad-gita. There the Supreme Personality of Godhead

said (8.3):

"The indestructible, transcendental living entity is called Brahman, and his eternal nature is called adhyatma, the self. Action pertaining to the development of the material bodies of the living entities is called karma, or fruitive activities."*

3 The word "aksara" here refers to the impersonal Brahman, which has already been described. That Brahman is worshipped by the path of transcendental knowledge. This is described by the Lord in the following words (Bhagavad-gita 8.11):

4 "Person who are learned in the Vedas, who utter omkara and who are great sages in the renounced order enter into Brahman. Desiring such perfection, one practices celibacy. I shall now briefly explain to you this process by which one may attain salvation."*

5 Lord Krsna then describes His Supersoul feature in these words (Bhagavad-gita 8.4):

"O best of the embodied beings, the physical nature, which is constantly changing, is called adhibhuta (the material manifestation). The universal form of the Lord, which includes all the demigods, like those of the sun and moon, is called adhidaiva. And I, the Supreme Lord, represented as the Supersoul in the heart of every embodied being, am called adhiyajna (the Lord of sacrifice)."

6 In this way the Supreme Lord appears in two forms, as 1. the universal form, and 2. the all-pervading Supersoul. Now will be shown the two kinds of devotional service employed to worship these two forms of the Lord.

7 Lord Krsna Himself explains this in the following words (Bhagavad-gita 8.8):

"He who meditates on Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his mind constantly engaged in remembering Me, undeviated from the path, he, O Partha, is sure to reach Me."*

8 In Bhagavad-gita (8.9) the Lord continues:

"One should meditate upon the Supreme Person as the one who knows everything, as He who is the oldest, who is the controller, who is smaller than the smallest, who is the maintainer of everything, who is beyond all material conception, who is inconceivable and who is always a person. He is luminous like the sun, and He is transcendental, beyond this material nature."*

9 Using the word "Me", Lord Krsna confirms that He is the real object of devotional service in these words (Bhagavad-gita 8.14):

10 "For one who always remembers Me without deviation, I am easy to obtain, O son of Prtha, because of his constant engagement in devotional service."*

11 Lord Kapiladeva describes these three features of the Supreme Lord in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.32.26):

12 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead alone is complete transcendental knowledge, but according to the different processes of understanding He appears differently, either as impersonal Brahman, as Paramatma, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead or as the purusa-avatara."*

13 "Drsih" here means "philosophical knowledge", and "prthak bhavaih" means "according to different processes of understanding". In this way the Lord is known as the Supreme Brahman, the Supersoul, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

14 The impersonal Brahman is understood by cultivation of philosophical

knowledge, the Supersoul is understood by a specific kind of devotional service, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead is understood by full devotional service. In this verse "jnana-matram" means "knowledge of the nature of the Supreme Brahman", "isvarah" means "the Supersoul", and "puman" means "the Supreme Personality of Godhead". These three features of the Lord have already been described in the Bhagavat-sandarbha and Paramatma-sandarbha.

15 The way of understanding the impersonal Brahman is given in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.6):

"Non devotees, however, cannot realise You in Your full personal feature. Nevertheless, it may be possible for them to realise Your expansion as the impersonal Supreme by cultivating direct perception of the Self within the heart. But they can do this only by purifying the mind and senses of all conceptions of material distinctions and all attachment to material sense objects. Only in this way will Your impersonal feature manifest itself to them."***

16 The way of understanding the Supersoul is given in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.8):

"Others conceive of the Personality of Godhead residing within the body in the region of the heart and measuring only eight inches, with four hands carrying a lotus, a wheel of a chariot, a conchshell and a club respectively."*

17 The way of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead is given in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.7.4):

"Thus he fixed his mind, perfectly engaging it by linking it in devotional service (bhakti-yoga) without any tinge of materialism, and thus he saw the Absolute Personality of Godhead along with His external energy, which was under full control."*

18 Although these three methods (karma, jnana, and bhakti) all act to counteract the conditioned soul's aversion to the Supreme, nevertheless the following explanation is given about them (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.4):

19 "My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit soul and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His actions are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labour becomes fruitless."*

In this way it is seen that spiritual knowledge without reference to devotional service is useless. It has no power to bring real spiritual advancement.

20 In Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.20.31) Lord Krsna explains:

"Therefore, for a devotee engaged in My loving service, with mind fixed on Me, the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation is generally not the means of achieving the highest perfection within this world."***

In this way it is seen that devotional service is independent of knowledge and renunciation.

21 Lord Krsna also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.32):

"Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties and all other means of perfecting life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions."***

Here the Lord explains that because all good results are obtained by devotional service, the cultivation of impersonal knowledge is not a very commendable activity.

22 Some, not giving any importance to the transcendental form of Lord Visnu who is worshipped in devotional service, the path of spiritual variety, instead worship the impersonal Supreme. In the following quote from scripture their method of worship is shown to be inferior.

23 Hiranyakasipu gives the following explanation (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.2.22):

"The spirit soul, the living entity, has no death, for he is eternal and inexhaustible. Being free from material contamination, he can go anywhere in the material or spiritual worlds. He is fully aware and completely different from the material body, but because of being misled by misuse of his slight independence, he is obliged to accept subtle and gross bodies created by the material energy and thus be subjected to so-called material happiness and distress. Therefore, no one should lament for the passing of the spirit soul from the body."*

24 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.2.39) the Lord says:

"O weak women! Only by the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is never diminished, is the entire world created, maintained and again annihilated. This is the verdict of the Vedic knowledge. This material creation, consisting of the moving and non moving, is exactly like His plaything. Being the Supreme Lord, He is completely competent to destroy and protect."*

Thus in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam, and also in Brahma's prayers, the conception of the Supreme as formless and having a form are compared. The idea that Lord Visnu is an ordinary demigod is also criticised there. In these verses the idea that the individual spirit soul is the worshipable Supreme is forcefully refuted. Such an idea is laughed at by the pure devotees, just as the Yadavas laughed at the demon Paundraka who pretended that he was Lord Vasudeva.

25 In Srimad Bhagavatam (3.29.13) the Lord explains:

"A pure devotee does not accept any kind of liberation: salokya, sarsti, samipyta, sarupya or ekatva, even though they are offered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

Because the result attained by they who think the Supreme is impersonal is thus rejected, the conclusion of impersonalism is thus shown to be untrue.

26 Sri Hanuman explains:

"Only a fool will give up service to the Lord and try instead to become the Lord Himself."

In the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.34) the Supreme Lord explains that pure devotional service is the best of all attainments:

27 "Because My devotees possess saintly behaviour and deep intelligence, they completely dedicate themselves to Me and do not desire anything besides Me. Indeed, even if I offer them liberation from birth and death, they do not accept it."*

28 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word 'dhirah' means 'intelligent' and 'mamaikantinah' means 'filled with love for Me'. The Lord says, 'Even though I offer liberation to them, they will not accept it'. What more can be said? They have no material desires. That is the meaning. The word 'apunar-bhavam' here means 'great liberation'."

29 The great glory of pure devotees like these is described in these words of the Garuda Purana:

30 "A performer of yajnas is better than many thousands of brahmanas. A scholar who has crossed to the farther shore of the Vedanta is better than many thousands of performers of yajnas.

31 "A devotee of Lord Visnu is better than many millions of scholars learned in Vedanta. A pure devotee of Lord Visnu is better than many thousands of devotees who have not yet come to the stage of pure devotion."

Anuccheda 177

1 Because it brings the greatest of all blisses, devotional service is naturally filled with bliss. For they who, because of some defect on their part, are not able to taste the sweetness of devotional service, orders to perform certain activities, prohibitions forbidding other activities, and the state of mind that distinguishes a host of virtues and vices, are given. However, to be situated in the state where one sees virtues and vices, is itself a fault on one's part.

2 This is described in the previous chapter (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.36-45) where Lord Krsna describes virtues and faults in direct devotional service:

"Absorbing the intelligence in Me constitutes mental equilibrium and complete discipline of the senses is self control. Tolerance means patiently enduring unhappiness, and steadfastness occurs when one conquers the tongue and genitals. The greatest charity is to give up all aggression toward others, and renunciation of lust is understood to be real austerity. Real heroism is to conquer one's natural tendency to enjoy material life, and reality is seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead everywhere. Truthfulness means to speak the truth in a pleasing way, as declared by great sages. Cleanliness is detachment in fruitive activities, whereas renunciation is the sannyasa order of life. The true desirable wealth for human beings is religiousness, and I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, am sacrifice. Religious remuneration is devotion to the acarya with the purpose of acquiring spiritual instruction, and the greatest strength is the pranayama system of breath control.***

"Actual opulence is My own nature as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, through which I exhibit the six unlimited opulences. The supreme gain in life is devotional service to Me, and actual education is nullifying the false perception of duality within the soul. Real modesty is to be disgusted by improper activities, and beauty is to possess good qualities, such as detachment. Real happiness is to transcend material happiness and unhappiness, and real misery is to be implicated in searching for sex pleasure. A wise man is one who knows the process of freedom from bondage, and a fool is one who identifies with his material body and mind. The real path in life is that which leads to Me, and the wrong path is sense gratification, by which consciousness is bewildered. Actual heaven is the predominance of the mode of goodness, whereas hell is the predominance of ignorance. I am everyone's true friend, acting as the spiritual master of the entire universe, and one's home is the human body. My dear friend Uddhava, one who is enriched with good qualities is actually said to be rich, and one who is unsatisfied in life is actually poor. A wretched person is one who cannot control his senses, whereas one who is not attached to sense gratification is a real controller. One who attaches himself to sense gratification is the opposite, a slave. Thus, Uddhava,

I have elucidated all the matters about which you have inquired. There is no need of a more elaborate description of these good and bad qualities, since to constantly see good and bad is itself a bad quality. The best quality is to transcend material good and evil."***

3 They who taste the sweetness of devotional service are beyond rules, prohibitions, virtues and vices. This is explained by Lord Krsna Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.36):

4 "Material piety and sin, which arise from the good and evil of this world, cannot exist within my unalloyed devotees, who, being free from material hankering, maintain steady spiritual consciousness in all circumstances. Indeed, such devotees have achieved Me, the Supreme Lord, who am beyond anything that can be conceived by material intelligence."***

5 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The word 'gunah' here means 'the piety and sin that is created by virtues and faults and by following rules or transgressing prohibitions'."

Anuccheda 178

1 Engagement in pure devotional service is the natural position of all living entities. This is described in Svetasvatara Upanisad (6.9) in these words:

"No one is the master of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. No one controls Him. He does not have a material body. He is the cause of all causes. He is the master of all masters of the senses. No one is His father. No one is His king."

Thus the individual spirit souls are part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are His potencies. They naturally take shelter of Him. He is like the sun and they are like the rays of light emanating from the sun.

2 In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, in the description of the sacred syllable Om, it is said:

"The letters a, u and m combine to make the sacred syllable Om, which is the heart of the three Vedas.

3 The letter a is said to be Lord Visnu. The letter u is said to be the goddess of fortune. The letter m is said to be Their servant, the individual spirit soul who is the twenty-fifth element in the material world."

4 At the end of that passage it is also said:

"The letter m is said to be all-knowing Lord Sesa."

5 It is also said:

"Some say that the letter u is the goddess of fortune, for she always stays by her husband's side, and her husband here is the letter a. He is like the sun and she is like the sunlight. She is His constant companion."

6 For this reason the Vaisnavas declared that the sacred syllable Om is the maha-vakya, the most important statement in the Vedas.

7 The eight-syllable mantra (Om namo narayanaya) is described in the following words:

"In all times, places, and situations I render every kind of service to the goddess of fortune's husband, glorious Lord Visnu.

8 "In this way it is affirmed that the individual spirit soul's original nature is to be a servant of the Supreme Lord. One who thus understands the true meaning of this mantra should then engage in the Lord's service.

9 "Thus every moving and unmoving living entity in the universe is the servant of the Supreme Lord. Lord Narayana is the supreme controller of all the universes. He is the master. He is the Lord."

10 This is also described in the following prayer spoken by the Personified Vedas to the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.20):

"The individual living entity, while living within these material bodies he has created for himself by his karma, remains actually uncovered by both gross and subtle matter. He is described by the Vedas to be the expanded part and parcel of You, the proprietor of all potencies. Ascertaining the status of the living entity in this manner, learned sages become imbued with faith and take to the worship of Your feet, which are the field into which all the sacrifices of the Vedas are sown and are also the source of liberation."***

11 Here "svena" means "by You", "krtesu puresu" means "residing in different bodies", and "tava purusam vadanti" means "they say the individual spirit soul's eternal nature is to be Your part and parcel." "Akhila-sakti-dhrtas tava" means "You are the master of all potencies. Your marginal potency, known as the individual souls (jivas) as Your part and parcel. However Your internal potency is not Your part and parcel, for it is fully identical with You. You are the root and shelter of all Your potencies. You are like the sun and they are like the individual rays of sunlight." That is the meaning here.

12 Now the reason the spirit souls are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord will be considered. Here the verse says, "abahir-antara-samvaranam", which means "There is no covering either within or without". However there is covering by various designations. That is the meaning. "Nr" here means "of the individual spirit soul", and "gatim" means "that the individual soul takes shelter of the Supreme Lord and depends on Him for maintaining his life. "Vivicya" means "understanding this truth", "kavayah" means "the learned sages", and "visvasitah" means "faithful". These faithful sages "worship Your feet" (bhavata anghrim upasate).

13 Now faith will be considered, the word "nigamavapanam" means "the seed from which all the Vedas have sprouted". This means that the Supreme Lord is the birthplace of the Vedas. When the spirit souls, who are by nature always dependent on the Supreme Lord for their maintenance, become averse to the Lord, they find themselves suffering the miseries of life in the material world or repeated birth and death. They who become favourable to the Lord and love the Lord, however, are able to escape the world of birth and death. This is described in the word "abhavam", which means, "where there is no material world of birth and death". Or, this word can also be interpreted to establish the truth that devotional service and the Supreme Lord worshipped by devotional service are both eternal. Together the words "abhavam anghrim" means "the feet that are free from birth and death". In this way it is established that pure devotional service is the best of all spiritual paths. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Personified Vedas to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 179

1 Now in another section another aspect of devotional service will be considered. How does one attain pure devotional service, which is very rare and difficult to attain and which brings a result that is also rare and difficult to attain

and which brings a result that is also rare and difficult to attain? Now we will consider the cause that brings devotional service into existence.

2 In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.51.53) it is said:

"O my Lord! O infallible Supreme Person! When a person wandering throughout the universes becomes eligible for liberation from material existence, he gets an opportunity to associate with devotees. When he associates with devotees, his attraction for You is awakened. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the highest goal of the supreme devotees and the Lord of the universe."*

3 This verse means. "When a person wandering throughout the universes becomes eligible for liberation from material existence, that is to say when his time for attaining liberation has come, he gets an opportunity to associate with devotees. When he associates with devotees, he attains liberation from material existence." This means that association with devotees is the swift and unstoppable way to attain liberation. This statement is an example of the fourth variety of the *namalankara* (literary ornament) called *atisayokti* (hyperbole), a variety that is described in the following words:

4 "When something is said to very quickly bring a certain result, that is the fourth kind of hyperbole, which is called *purvokti*."

5 An example of this kind of *purvokti* hyperbole is seen in the following words spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to Nalakuvara and Manigriva (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.10.41):

6 "When one is face to face with the sun, there is no longer darkness for one's eyes. Similarly, when one is face to face with a *sadhu*, a devotee, who is fully determined and surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one will no longer be subject to material bondage."*

7 The reason for this is given in Srimad Bhagavatam 10.51.53, (which was quoted in the beginning of this *anuccheda*):

"O Lord, when a person associates with devotees, his attraction for You is awakened."*

When there is no longer any reason for the continued existence of the misconceptions that make one averse to the Lord, these misconceptions come to an end, and then the actual truth, which makes one fall in love with the Lord, is manifested. This is described by Sri Vidura in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.5.3):

8 "O my Lord, great philanthropic souls travel on the earth on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to show compassion to the fallen souls who are averse to the sense of subordination to the Lord."*

9 Here the word "*daivat*" means "because of the destiny created by previous karma", and the word "*adharmasilasya*" means "of one who is averse to the sense of subordination to the Lord". In Srimad Bhagavatam 10.51.53 (quoted in the beginning of this *anuccheda*) the use of the words "*yarhi*" (when) and "*tada eva*" (then) indicate that in this sequence of events there is not a long interval of time. The words "*ca eva*" (also certainly), also indicate that this event does not happen far in the future. That is the meaning. The word "*sad-gatau*" means "any place where the devotees (*sat*) assemble together (*gatau*). O Lord, to that place You personally come." This is described in the following words of the *Itihasa-samuccaya*:

10 "O king, Lord Krsna personally comes to the places where His devotees, who

are free material passion and other vices, congregate. Of this there is no doubt."

11 The word "sad-gatau" thus refers to association with devotees. As has already been explained, in this way ordinary people can attain devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Pingala glorifies association with devotees in these words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.8.34):

12 "Certainly in this city of Videha I alone am completely foolish. I neglected the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who awards us everything, even our original spiritual form, and instead I desired to enjoy sense gratification with many men."***

13 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here Pingala says: Even though I had the association of the saintly devotees of Videha, still I remained a complete fool!

14 If a person is seen to be eager to serve the Lord, but it is not seen that he had association with devotees, it should be understood that at some time in this life or a previous life he did have association with a saintly devotee in the disciplic succession. It may be said that just as Nalakuvara and others had the opportunity to see Narada Muni, so the great demigods also had the opportunity to see him, but still they did not attain the same result that Nalakuvara attained. This happens because of offenses to a great devotee. When one thinks a great devotee is merely an ordinary pious person, one commits an offense. To become free from that offense, one should understand the exalted status of that devotee and then one should sincerely honour and serve him. The demigods explain all this in the following words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.5.45):

15 "O great Supreme Lord, offensive persons whose internal vision has been affected by external materialistic activities cannot see Your lotus feet, but they are seen by Your pure devotees, whose one and only aim is to transcendently enjoy Your activities."*

16 Here the word "te" means "Your". The word "padanyasa-vilasa-laksmyah" refers to the devotees that have a relationship with the Lord. The verse then explains that many persons do not see the Lord's lotus feet. Who are these persons? The verse says they are "offensive persons whose internal vision has been too affected by external materialistic activities". In this way the verse is explained.

17 The word "asad-vrtti" here does not refer to ordinary materialistic activities, for the great devotees are merciful to ordinary materialists, as was described in Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.5.3 (quoted in text 8 of this anuccheda). The great souls give their mercy to they who do not commit offenses. simply by the association of these great souls, these materialistic persons also become saintly devotees. The great souls, because they are independent in their activities, may also give their mercy to offenders and transform them also into devotees, but this does not occur without the great soul's mercy. Nalakuvara and the ordinary demigods are examples of all this.

18 Examples of this are seen in the mercy of Sri Bharata to King Rahugana and in the activities of Uparicara Vasu as described in the Visnu-dharma Purana. After killing many demons to help the demigods, Uparicara vasu renounced the world and went to Patalaloka in order to meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then the demons approached the renounced Vasu and tried to kill him with their weapons, but their weapons all suddenly became completely useless and

ineffective. By the instructions of Sukracarya the demons could understand that they has committed a great offense. Then, by Uparicara Vasu's mercy, they all became great devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

19 In the Visnu-dharma Purana it is said:

"After many birth in the material world they could not destroy the great multitude of their sins. However, the moment they attained love for Lord Govinda, their sins at once ceased to exist."

20 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.9.44), Sri Prahlada tells Lord Nrsimhadeva:

"I do not wish to be liberated alone, leaving aside all these poor fools and rascals. I know that without Krsna consciousness, without taking shelter of Your lotus feet, one cannot be happy. There I wish to bring them back to shelter at Your lotus feet."*

In this way it is seen that Sri Prahlada has given his mercy to every single conditioned soul. How is it, then, that they have not all attained liberation?

21 To this question I reply: Because the individual spirit souls are unlimited in number, they cannot all be understood by the mind and heart. As many as were seen or heard by Prahlada, or as many as could be understood within his mind, all attained liberation by his mercy. That is the meaning of this verse. Other persons may hear and remember the glories of Sri Prahlada. In this way Lord Nrsimhadeva Himself will be merciful to them.

22 Lord Nrsimhadeva Himself affirms this in these words spoken to Prahlada (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.10.14):

"One who always remembers your activities and My activities also, and who chants the prayers you have offered, becomes free, in due course of time, from the reactions of material activities."*

23 Here Lord Nrsimhadeva means "They who chant your glories will become liberated. Certainly, then, will they whom you remember and feel compassion for, will also become liberated." This is the sentiment of the devotees, a sentiment described in Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.51.53 (quoted in text 2 of this anuccheda).

Anuccheda 180

1 In this way it is proved that association with devotees is the cause of liberation. The living entities' aversion to the Lord is based on beginningless ignorance of Him. Otherwise their aversion is not possible.

2 The importance of association with great devotees is explained in the following words (Sri Mahabharata, Vana Parva, 313.117):

"Dry arguments are inconclusive. A great personality whose opinion does not differ from others is not considered a great sage. Simply by studying the Vedas, which are variegated, one cannot come to the right path, by which religious principles are understood. The solid truth of religious principles is hidden in the heart of an unadulterated self-realised person. Consequently, as the sastras confirm, one should accept whatever progressive path the mahajanas advocate."*

3 This is also confirmed by Prahlada Maharaja in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.30-32):

"Because of their uncontrolled senses, persons too addicted to materialistic life make progress toward hellish conditions and repeatedly chew that which has already been chewed. Their inclinations toward Krsna are never aroused, either by the instructions of others, by their own efforts, or by a combination of both.*"

"Persons who are strongly entrapped by the consciousness of enjoying material life, and who have therefore accepted as their leader or guru a similar blind man attached to external sense objects, cannot understand that the goal of life is to return home, back to Godhead, and engage in the service of Lord Visnu. As blind men guided by another blind man miss the right path and fall into a ditch, materially attached men led by another materially attached man are bound by the ropes of fruitive labour, which are made of very strong cords, and they continue again and again in materialistic life, suffering the threefold miseries.*

4 "Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaisnava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Krsna conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination."*

5 It is not possible to attain love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead by engaging in material activities that turn one away from Him. This is described in the Katha Upanisad (1.2.14):

"The Supreme is beyond piety and impiety, beyond cause and effect, beyond what was and what will be."

6 In the Brhad-aranyaka Upanisad (4.4.22) it is said:

"The brahmanas try to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead by studying the Vedas, performing yajnas, giving charity, fasting and performing austerities."

In this way some of the activities pleasing to the Supreme Lord are described.

7 How does one attain love and devotion for the Supreme Lord? The primary cause of that devotion is the Lord's mercy. That mercy is the secondary cause as well.

8 The Lord gives His mercy to whomever He wishes. He does not give His mercy to they who are averse to Him and are therefore suffering the unbearable and endless torments of life in the material world. That He does not do. The touch of His mercy changes the heart of the suffering soul. His mercy brings eternal transcendental bliss and destroys sins. The Sruti-sastra declares that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and individual spirit soul are different. The Lord cannot be touched by the darkness of material illusion. Therefore the recipient of His mercy cannot be touched by material darkness. Such a person does not take birth again. The Lord has all powers. He can do what is impossible. He change anything into anything else. However, He does not give to they who are averse to Him freedom from the sufferings of material life. For such persons the mercy of the Lord's devotees is the only recourse.

9 The devotees of the Lord are not touched by the many sufferings of material life. They remain awake during the nightmare that is the material world. In this condition they feel compassion for the souls suffering in the material world. An example of this is Narada Muni's compassion on Nalakuvara and Manigriva. In this way the conditioned souls suffering in the material world attain the mercy of the Supreme Lord, then the conditioned souls become humble devotees of the Lord and in their hearts they think, "The Supreme Lord is my only shelter". An example of such a humble devotee is the elephant Gajendra. Examples of

conditioned souls who have not become devotees can be found in the hellish worlds of Narakaloka.

10 Devotional service empowers millions of devotees with the Lord's mercy. In that way the Lord will manifest His mercy. This mercy is either the devotees' mercy or the mercy of association with the devotees. This mercy is not independent. It is actually the Lord's mercy. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.31):

11 "O Lord, who resemble the shining sun, You are always ready to fulfil the desire of Your devotee, and therefore You are known as a desire tree (vancha-kalpataru). When acaryas completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because You are very merciful to Your other devotees, You accept this method to help them."*

12 This verse means, "O self-manifested Lord (dyuman), the boat (nauh) that is Your lotus feet (bhavat-padambhoruha), and which is the way to cross the ocean of nescience, is placed (nidhaya) on the shore of the ocean of nescience for the sake of the people."

Here the Lord may ask, "Why do I not personally arrange for this boat? Why is the arrangement made by My devotees instead of by Me?"

Here the demigods reply, "You are merciful to Your devotees (sad-anugraho bhavan) and that is why You arrange that Your devotees distribute Your mercy to the others." Or, these words may also be interpreted to mean, "Your devotees are themselves Your mercy. They are the way You manifest Your mercy in the material world. They are the personifications of Your mercy. It is not otherwise."

This is also described in the following words of the song sung by Lord Siva (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.24.58):

13 "My dear Lord, Your lotus feet are the cause of all auspicious things and the destroyer of all the contamination of sin. I therefore beg Your Lordship to bless me by the association of Your devotees, who are completely purified by worshipping Your lotus feet and who are so merciful upon the conditioned souls. I think that Your real benediction will be to allow me to associate with such devotees."*

14 This verse means, "O Lord, Your mercy is manifested through Your devotees. You do not directly give Your mercy to the impious conditioned souls who are averse to You. You arrange that Your devotees give Your mercy to them."

15 This is described in the following words of the Moksa-dharma:

"When Lord Krsna glances at someone at the moment of his birth, that person should be understood to be very exalted. That person is meant for liberation."

16 This verse means that by associating with the Lord's devotees one becomes free from taking another birth in this material world. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the demigods to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 181

1 Now will be discussed the cause of attaining association with devotees. The great devotees are independent and act as they like. It is not otherwise. In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.24) it is said:

"Once in Ajanabha (the former name of the earth), they came upon the sacrificial performance of the great soul Maharaja Nimi, which was being carried out under the direction of elevated sages."***

2 In this verse "te" means "the Nava-yogendras", and "yadrcchaya" means "independently". "Independently" means "for no reason other than one's own wish". This is confirmed by the Amara-kosa Dictionary, which explains, "The word yadrccha means independence." The Supreme Lord acts to fulfil His devotees' desires. This is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.2):

"My dear Lord, neither I nor anyone else can estimate the potency of this transcendental body of Yours, which has shown such mercy to me and which appears just to fulfil the desires of Your pure devotees. Although my mind is completely withdrawn from material affairs, I cannot understand Your personal form. How, then, could I possibly understand the happiness You experience within Yourself?"***

The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.63):

"I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotee are very dear to Me."*

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Narada.

Anuccheda 182

1 The independence of the great devotees is also seen in the following verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.14.14):

"Once upon a time, when the powerful sage named Angira was travelling all over the universe without engagement, by his sweet will he came to the palace of King Citraketu."*

2 Here the word "tasya" (of him) refers to King Citraketu. In this way he developed devotional sentiments toward the Lord. At a later time the Lord directly appeared before him. When Citraketu was lamenting Angira Muni told him (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.15.19):

"My dear king, you are an advanced devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. To be absorbed in lamentation for the loss of something material is unsuitable for a person like you. Therefore we have both come to relieve you from this false lamentation."*

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 183

1 The devotees become compassionate when they see the unfortunate situation of the conditioned souls. This compassion has nothing to-do with whether the conditioned souls honour that devotee or not. An example of this is Narada Muni's compassion to Nalakuvara and Manigriva. The mercy of the devotees is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.6):

2 "Those who worship the demigods receive reciprocation from the demigods

in a way just corresponding to the offering. The demigods are attendants of karma, like a person's shadow, but sadhus are actually merciful to the fallen."*

3 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by Srimad Vasudeva Maharaja.

Anuccheda 184

1 Association with a great devotee is the best method of purification. Other methods of purification do not compare with it. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.84.11):

2 "Mere bodies of water are not real sacred places of pilgrimage, nor are mere images of earth and stone the true worshipable Deities. These purify one only after a long time, but saintly sages purify one immediately upon being seen."***

3 Why are the holy places and the Deities not honoured here? Because they are secondary sources of purification. Therefore the Lord says, "They purify only after a long time." This verse is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to the assembled sages.

Anuccheda 185

1 Association with the devotees is the cause of attaining devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is described indirectly (vyatireka) in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.12.11-12):

2 "What, then, is the ultimate truth? The answer is that non dual knowledge is the ultimate truth. It is devoid of the contamination of material qualities. It gives us liberation. It is the one without a second, all-pervading and beyond imagination. The first realisation of that knowledge is Brahman. Then Paramatma, the Supersoul is realised by the yogis who try to see Him without grievance. This is the second stage of realisation. Finally, full realisation of the same supreme knowledge in the Supreme Person. All learned scholars describe the Supreme Person as Vasudeva, the cause of Brahman, Paramatma and others.*

3 "My dear King Rahugana, unless one has the opportunity to smear his entire body with the dust of the lotus feet of great devotees, one cannot realise the Absolute Truth. One cannot realise the Absolute Truth simply by observing celibacy (brahmacarya), strictly following the rules and regulations of householder life, leaving home as a vanaprastha, accepting sannyasa, or undergoing severe penances in winter by keeping oneself submerged in water or surrounding oneself in summer by fire and the scorching heat of the sun. There are many other processes to understand the Absolute Truth, but the Absolute Truth is only revealed to one who has attained the mercy of a great devotee."*

4 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"What is the truth? The answer is that non dual knowledge (jnanam) is the ultimate truth (satyam). Here ordinary material activities are rejected and the ultimate goal of life (paramartham) is described. Here six words are used to describe the Supreme Truth. He is: 1. devoid of the contamination of material qualities (visuddham), 2. one without a second (ekam), 3. all-pervading, or He who has neither inside nor outside (anantaram abahih), 4. the perfect and complete Supreme Brahman (brahma), 5. within everything, or the form of what is perceived (pratyak), and 6. peaceful because He is free from material transformation (prasantam). In these words the ultimate truth (jnanam satyam) is

described.

"What is the nature of the ultimate truth? Because He has six opulences, beginning with all wealth, He is called Bhagavan (Bhagavan-chabdah samjna). All learned sages describe (vadanti) the (yac ca) ultimate truth as Vasudeva (vasudevam).

"It is not possible to attain this ultimate truth without first serving the great devotees. This is described in the next verse, which begins with the words, "My dear King Rahugana". One cannot attain (na yati) this ultimate truth (jnanam) by austerities (tapasa), by Vedic karmas (ijyaya), by becoming a sannyasi who begs for food (nirvapanat), by studying the Vedic literature (chandasa), by becoming a householder who helps others (grhad va), or by performing austerities in the water or the fire (jalagni)."

5 In these words the idea that the individual spirit soul is identical with the Supreme is clearly refuted. These verses were spoken by a brahmana to King Rahugana.

Anuccheda 186

1 By honouring the Lord one is able to associate with His devotees. The devotees are interested in serving the Supreme Lord. They are not interested in performing Vedic rituals and duties. That would not be appropriate for them. By associating with devotees who are like this one attains devotion to the Supreme Lord. The transcendentalists may be divided into two groups, as described in the following one and a half verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.2-3):

2 "One can attain the path of liberation from material bondage only by rendering service to highly advanced spiritual personalities. These personalities are impersonalists and devotees. Whether one wants to merge into the Lord's existence or wants to associate with the Personality of Godhead, one should render service to the mahatmas. For those who are not interested in such activities, who associate with people fond of women and sex, the path to hell is wide open. The mahatmas are equipoised. They do not see any difference between one living entity and another. They are very peaceful and are fully engaged in devotional service. They are devoid of anger, and they work for the benefit of everyone. They do not behave in any abominable way. Such people are known as mahatmas."*

3 "Those who are interested in reviving Krsna consciousness and increasing their love of Godhead do not like to do anything that is not related to Krsna. They are not interested in mingling with people who are busy maintaining their bodies, eating, sleeping, mating and defending. They are not attached to their homes, although they may be householders. Nor are they attached to wives, children, friends or wealth. At the same time, they are not indifferent to the execution of their duties. Such people are interested in collecting only enough money to keep the body and soul together."*

4 Here the phrase "mahantas te sama-cittah" refers to the impersonalists, who have faith in the qualityless Brahman. Their various qualities are described in the passage beginning with the word "prasanta". A different group of transcendentalists is described in the passage beginning with the words "ye va". The word "va" (or) introduces the second group. This second group to the first group, the Lord says the transcendentalists in this second group, "have love (krtam sauhrdam) for Me (mayi). That love is the great goal (artha) of their lives.

Therefore they are great souls (mahantah). Because they have made love for Me the great goal of their lives (mayi sauhrdarthah) they are not (na) interested (priti-yuktah) in mingling with people (janesu) who are busy maintaining their bodies (deha-bhara-varतिकesu). They are not attached (na priti-yuktah) to their homes (gehesu), although they may be householders. Nor are they attached to wives and children, (jayatmaja). They are interested in these only so far (yavad-arthah) and they are necessary or favourable for devotional service to the Supreme Lord. In the same way they collect money only as much as is useful for the Lord's service. In this way there are two kinds of transcendentalists: the impersonalists and the devotees. They are not at all the same. The devotees are described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (6.14.5):

"O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Narayana, or Krsna. Such devotees, who are fully peaceful are extremely rare."*

By following the path of impersonalism one realises the impersonal Brahman, and by following the path of devotional service one attains love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, because the impersonalists and devotees do share some qualities, they are both referred to by the word "mahatma" in this verse. These verses were spoken by Sri Rsabhadeva to His sons.

Anuccheda 187

1 Now we will consider the natures of the two classes of transcendentalists described before. The impersonalists are described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.13.36):

"Just as a drunken man does not notice if he is wearing his coat or shirt, similarly, one who is perfect in self-realisation and who has thus achieved his eternal identity does not notice whether the temporary body is sitting or standing. Indeed, if by God's will the body is finished or if by God's will he obtains a new body, the self-realised souls does not take notice, just as a drunken man does not notice the situation of his outward dress."***

2 The devotees of the Lord are of three kinds: 1. They who have attained the forms of eternal associates of the Lord, 2. they who have shaken away all material attachments, and 3. they who are still bewildered by material attachments. Sri Narada and others are examples of the first kind of devotee, Sri Sukadeva and others are examples of the second kind of devotees, and Sri Narada in his previous birth, as well as other devotees are examples of third kind of devotee.

3 The first kind of devotee is described in Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.6.28) where Sri Narada explains:

"Having been awarded a transcendental body befitting an associate of the Personality of Godhead, I quit the body made of five material elements, and thus all acquired fruitive results of work (karma) stopped."*

4 The second kind of devotee is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.12.68):

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, the son of Vyasa-deva. He is the destroyer of all sinful reactions and is full in self-realisation and bliss. Because of this, he has no other desire. Still, he was attracted by the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and out of compassion for the people he described the transcendental historical literature

called Srimad Bhagavatam. This is compared to the light of the Absolute Truth."*

5 The third kind of devotee is described in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.6.21), where the Supreme Personality of Godhead tells Sri Narada in his previous birth:

"O Narada, I regret that during this lifetime you will not be able to see Me anymore. Those who are incomplete in service and who are not completely free from all material taints can hardly see Me."*

6 Even in his previous birth when he was still bewildered by material attachments, Sri Narada still felt love for the Lord. Narada personally described this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.6.17):

7 "O Vyasadeva, at that time being exceedingly overpowered by feelings of happiness, every part of my body became separately enlivened. Being absorbed in an ocean of ecstasy, I could not see both myself and the Lord."*

8 King Bharata may also be mentioned as an example here. Although he wished to renounce the world, because of his past karmic reactions material desires remained concealed in his heart.

Now love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead will be described. Love for the Lord is divided into three kinds, according to the three kinds of devotees already described, each kind of love more intense than the previous kind. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the object of worship and the master of His parts and parcels, is different from the individual spirit soul, who is the worshipper and who is part and parcel of the Lord. The budding sprout of love the individual souls feel for the Supreme Lord may also be considered according to the different rasa, beginning with servitorship and friendship. We will describe this in the Priti-sandarbha.

To directly see the Lord is the great goal of life. However, if it is not possible to see the Lord unless one attains love for Him. The more one loves the Lord the more one became advanced in spiritual life. Without pure love for the Lord, one will not directly see Him. Without love for the Lord, one becomes like a person stricken with jaundice, a person whose tongue cannot taste the sweetness of sugar-candy.

9 This is described by Sri Rsabhadeva in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.6):

"When the living entity is covered by the mode of ignorance, he does not understand the individual living being and the supreme living being, and his mind is subjugated to fruitive activity. Therefore, until one has love for Lord Vasudeva, who is none other than Myself, he is certainly not delivered from having to accept a material body again and again."*

10 From this it is seen that the different grades of devotees are determined by the different levels of love they feel for the Supreme Lord. This is described in Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.3.. When one has great love for the Lord, one becomes free from material desires and the Lord directly appears before him. When one has only a small amount of love for the Lord, these benefits are obtained in a lesser degree. This is also described in Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.3. In the condition of lesser love one does not attain the body of a personal associate of the Lord. In the same way also one does not attain renunciation or become pure at heart. This will be further discussed in another passage.

11 King Nimi asked the following question (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.44):

"Now please tell me in greater detail about the devotees of the Supreme Lord. What are the natural symptoms by which I can distinguish between the most advanced devotees, those on the middle level and those who are neophytes? What are the typical religious activities of a Vaisnava, and how does he speak? Specifically, please describe those symptoms and characteristics by which Vaisnavas become dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."***

12 This verse begins, "Now (atha) please tell (bruta) about the devotees of the Lord (bhagavatam)." This question is asked in order to attain knowledge of the devotees of the Lord. He says, "Please tell about the nature (yad-dharmah) of the devotees among human beings (nrnam). Please tell (bruta) how (yatha) a devotee behaves (acarati). Please tell (bruta) how a devotee speaks (yad brute). In this way he asks questions about the signs manifested from a devotee's body, mind and words.

Here someone may ask: Were not these symptoms already described by Sri Kavi in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.39)?:

"An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation and should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The holy names of Krsna are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world."***

To this question the following reply is given: That is true. Still, those symptoms of the devotees who are dear to the Lord are described again in this verse also (yair lingair bhagavat-priyah). In this verse the actual question asked is: "Please tell (bruta) the symptoms of the devotees according to their levels of advancement, that is according to the devotees' status as uttama (advanced), madhyama (intermediate) or kanistha (neophyte) devotees." That is the meaning here.

Anuccheda 188

1 Sri Havi gave the following reply to that question (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.45):

"A person advanced in devotional service sees within everything the soul of all souls, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna. Consequently he always sees the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the causes of all causes and understands that all things are situated in Him."*

2 By describing the symptoms of the devotees' heart and mind, how the devotees sees others, this verse describes the nature of a great devotee of the Lord.

3 The symptoms of a great devotee of the Lord are also described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.40):

"When a person is actually advanced and takes pleasure in chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is very dear to him, he is agitated and loudly chants the holy name. He also laughs, cries, becomes agitated, and chants just like a madman, not caring for outsiders."*

In these words of Sri Kavi Muni explains that an advanced devotee becomes overwhelmed with love for the Lord. In that condition the devotee's heart melts with love and he manifests various ecstatic symptoms such as laughing and crying.

4 The nature of an advanced devotee is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.41):

"A devotee should not see anything as being separate from the Supreme Lord, Krsna. Ether, fire, air, water, earth, the sun and other luminaries, all living beings, the directions, trees and other plants, the rivers and oceans, whatever a devotee experiences he should consider to be an expansion of Krsna. Thus seeing everything that exists within creation as the body of the Supreme Lord, Hari, the devotee should offer his sincere respects to the entire expansion of the Lord's body."*

5 This kind of devotee sees that all conscious and unconscious living entities (sarva-bhutesu) are expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (atmano bhagavad-bhavam). This devotee sees (pasyati) all living entities (bhutani) as present in the Supreme Lord's heart (atmani). In the same way the Lord is also present in the living entities. A person who sees in this way is the best of devotees (bhagavatottamah).

6 The nature of the advanced devotees of the Lord is also described by the goddess of Vraja in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.35.9):

"Krsna moves about the forest in the company of His friends, who vividly chant the glories of His magnificent deeds. He thus appears just like the Supreme Personality of Godhead exhibiting His inexhaustible opulences. When the cows wander onto the mountainsides and Krsna calls out to them with the sound of His flute, the trees and creepers in the forest respond by becoming so luxuriant with fruits and flowers that they seem to be manifesting Lord Visnu within their hearts. As their branches bend low with the weight, the filaments on their trunks and vines stand erect out of the ecstasy of love of God, and both the trees and the creepers pour down a rain of sweet sap. Maddened by the divine, honeylike aroma of the tulasi flowers on the garland Krsna wears, swarms of bees sing loudly for Him and the most beautiful of all persons thankfully acknowledges and acclaims their song by taking His flute to His lips and playing it. The charming flute soon then steals away the minds of the cranes, swans and other lake-dwelling birds. Indeed, they approach Krsna, close their eyes and, maintaining strict silence, worship Him by fixing their consciousness upon Him in deep meditation."***

7 This verse means that this kind of devotees sees love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead (bhagavati) as being present in the hearts of all conscious and unconscious living entities. The remainder of this verse is like the previous quote. Thus aware that all living entities are devotees of the Lord, such an advanced devotee bows down to offer respect to them all. This was also described Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.41. That is the meaning here.

8 The goddess of Vraja also says (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.21.15):

"When the rivers hear the flute-song of Krsna, their minds begin to desire Him and thus the flow of their currents is broken and their waters are agitated, moving around in whirlpools. Then with the arms of their waves the rivers embrace Murari's lotus feet and, holding on to them, present offerings of lotus flowers."***

9 The Lord's queens speak the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.90.15):

"Kurari, you are lamenting. The inscrutable Supreme Lord is now asleep in the world's night but you are wide awake, finding it impossible to fall asleep. Is it

that, like us, you have had your heart pierced to the core by the lotus eye lord's munificent, smiling pastime glances?"***

10 What is described here is not the world-view of the impersonalist. Because it ultimately denies the existence of both the Lord and the devotees, the devotees of the Lord consider the impersonalists; idea that the individual spirit souls are identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead a grave error and a great offense.

11 In Srimad Bhagavatam (3.29.12) it is said:

"The manifestation of unadulterated devotional service is exhibited when one's mind is at once attracted to hearing the transcendental name and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is residing in everyone's heart. Just as the water of the Ganges flows naturally down towards the ocean, such devotional ecstasy, uninterrupted by any material condition, flows toward the Supreme Lord."*

These words describe the advanced devotees of the Lord. They do not describe the impersonalists, who think the Supreme has no form.

12 In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.55) it is said:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is so kind to the conditioned souls that if they call upon Him by speaking His holy name, even unintentionally or unwillingly, the Lord is inclined to destroy innumerable sinful reactions in their hearts. Therefore, when a devotee who has taken shelter of the Lord's lotus feet chants the holy name of Krsna with genuine love, the Supreme Personality of Godhead can never give up the heart of such a devotee. One who has thus captured the Supreme Lord within his heart is to be known as bhagavata-pradhana, the most exalted devotee of the Lord."***

This verse must describe the advanced devotees of the Lord for any other interpretation would contradict the description here of their most exalted qualities.

Anuccheda 189

1 The intermediate devotee is described by the symptoms of his mind and heart. He is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.46):

"An intermediate, second class devotee shows love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is friendly to all devotees, and is very merciful to neophytes and ignorant people. The intermediate devotee neglects those who are envious of devotional service."*

2 This verse means that the intermediate devotee gives his love (prema) to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, makes friendship (maitrim) with the other devotees (tad-adhinesu), and shows mercy (krpam) to the people who are innocent and ignorant (balisesu) of devotional service.

3 The intermediate stage of devotional service is shown in the following statement of Sri Prahlada (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.43):

"O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of Your glories and activities. My concern is only for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies and countries. I am simply concerned with love for them."*

4 The meaning here is that the intermediate devotee is not agitated at heart

for the condition of they who hate the Lord and His devotees. This means that the devotee is neutral and aloof from such persons. However, the devotee does feel compassion for the people in general, who are childlike and foolish.

However, Prahlada did feel compassion for Hiranyakasipu. This means that the devotee may feel compassion in his heart even for they who hate the Lord and His devotees. Therefore of course he also feels compassion for the innocent and childish people in general. Because he feels pure love for the Lord, the devotee also loves every other being. This is not like the intermediate devotee described in the previous quote (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.46):

5 By seeing a great devotee of the Lord one attains the same bliss as if he had seen the Lord Himself. Therefore, making friendship with the Lord's devotees is very important. It is not to be abandoned, even for the most advanced devotee. However, it is inevitable that the most advanced devotee does feel love for every living being.

6 The most advanced devotees are described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.24.57):

"If one by chance associates with a devotee, even for a fraction of a moment, he no longer is subject to attraction by the results of karma or jnana. What interest then can he have in the benedictions of the demigods, who are subject to the laws of birth and death?"*

7 The most advanced devotees are also described in the song sung by Lord Siva (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.24.30) where Lord Siva tells the Pracetas:

"You are all devotees of the Lord, and as such I appreciate that you are as respectable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. I know in this way that the devotees also respect me and that I am dear to them. Thus no one can be as dear to the devotees as I am."*

8 Srila Suta Gosvami also describes the most advanced devotees in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.7.11):

"Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, son of Srila Vyasadeva, was not only transcendently powerful. He was also very dear to the devotees of the Lord. Thus he underwent the study of this great narration (Srimad Bhagavatam)."

9 An example of the demons, who hate Vyasadeva and the other devotees is seen in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.1.35):

"Kamsa was a condemned personality in the Bhoja dynasty because he is envious and sinful. Therefore, upon hearing this omen from the sky, he caught hold of his sister's hair with his left hand and took up his sword with his right hand to sever her head from her body."*

10 Even the intermediate devotees love the demons. However the advanced devotees do not decline to preach to the demons the glories of the Supreme Lord. That is the specific quality of the advanced devotees. It is with this aim in view that Uddhava and other devotees offered obeisances to Duryodhana and other demons.

11 Lord Siva further describes the advanced devotees in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.3.23):

"I am always engaged in offering obeisances to Lord Vasudeva in pure Krsna consciousness. Krsna consciousness is always pure consciousness, in which the Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Vasudeva is revealed without any covering."*

12 Another example of this is found in the description of Laksmana's kidnapping (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.68.17) where Uddhava's showing respect to Duryodhana is mentioned in these words:

"After he had offered proper respects to the son of Ambika (Dhrtarastra) and to Bhishma, Drona, Bahlika, and Duryodhana, Uddhava informed them that Lord Balarama had arrived."

13 This may be also considered in a different way. An advanced devotee considers all living entities to be pure devotees. He even considers pure devotees the demons who hate the Lord and His devotees. There is nothing improper in this. The great devotees who with millions of their life-breaths worship even a single particle of dust from the Lord's lotus feet become very unhappy with the idea that anyone could act badly. They consider that the demons are devotees, just as they are devotees. They think: "Ah! How is it possible to have a heart that does not love the Lord and His devotees? How is it possible that someone could not love the Supreme Lord and His devotees, who are the causes of all bliss, the abodes of limitless love, the purifiers of all the worlds, decorated with the jewels of the six great virtues, and always working for the welfare of all living beings?" How one could hate the Lord and His devotees is beyond the power of their intelligence to understand. Therefore they see all living beings from Brahma down to the unmoving plants, as pure devotees, filled with love for the Lord.

14 That the advanced devotees cannot imagine any living beings not being a pure devotee of the Lord is seen in the following words of Srila Sukadeva Gosvami (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.1-2):

"Eager to engage in the worship of Lord Krsna, O best of the Kurus, Narada Muni stayed for some time in Dvaraka, which was always protected by the arms of Govinda.***

15 "My dear King, in the material world the conditioned souls are confronted by death at every step of life. Therefore, who among the conditioned souls would not render service to the lotus feet of Lord Mukunda, who is worshipable even for the greatest of liberated souls?****

Anuccheda 190

1 The physical and mental symptoms of the neophyte devotee are described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.41):

2 "A prakṛta, or materialistic devotee does not purposefully study the sastra and try to understand the actual standard of pure devotional service.

Consequently he does not show proper respect to advanced devotees. He may, however, follow the regulative principles learned from his spiritual master or from his family who worships the Deity. He is to be considered on the material platform, although he is trying to advance in devotional service. Such a person is a bhakta-praya (neophyte devotee), or bhaktabhasa, for he is a little enlightened by Vaisnava philosophy."*

3 Here the word "arcayam" means "in relation to the Deity of the Lord." Here it is not in relation to the other devotees (na bhaktesu anyesu). This is so because of the absence of pure love for the Lord, ignorance of the glories of the Lord's devotees, and ignorance of the glories of the Lord's devotees, and a lack of respect for the virtues of the sincere devotees. Such a devotee is called materialistic (prakṛta). He is in the beginning stage of devotional service. That is the meaning.

Such a devotee has neither strong faith nor great learning in the teachings of the scriptures.

4 That the neophyte devotee is not learned in the teachings of the scriptures is seen in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.84.13):

"A human being who identifies this body made of three elements with his self, who considers the by-products of the body his kinsmen, who considers the land of birth as worshipable, and who goes to the place of pilgrimage simply to take a bath rather than meet men of transcendental knowledge there, is to be considered as an ass or a cow."*

5 This is the way of ordinary people think. Thus a devotee who has not yet attained strong faith, knowledge of scripture, or love for the Lord, is known as a neophyte (kanistha) devotee.

Anuccheda 191

1 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"The most exalted devotee is described in the following eight verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.48-55):

2 The first of these verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.48) states:

"Even while engaging his senses in contact with their objects, one who sees this whole world as the energy of Lord Visnu is neither repelled nor elated. He is indeed the greatest among devotees."***

3 The word "api" (even though) here means "even though his senses are engaged with the sense objects, his thoughts are fixed on the Supreme Lord." Such a devotee sees the material world as the external potency (maya) of the Supreme Lord. In this verse the body and mind are described together.

Anuccheda 192

1 In the next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.49) it is said:

"Within the material world, one's material body is always subject to birth and decay. Similarly the life air (prana) is harassed by hunger and thirst, the mind is always anxious, the intelligence hankers for that which cannot be obtained, and all of the senses are ultimately exhausted by constant struggle in the material nature. A person who is not bewildered by the inevitable miseries of material existence and who remains aloof from them simply by remembering the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is to be considered bhagavata-pradhana, the foremost devotee of the Lord."***

2 This verse states that a person who is not bewildered by the miseries of the material body and other material things, miseries that begin with birth and death, and who always remembers Lord Hari, is the best of devotees (sa bhagavata-pradhanah).

3 Lord Krsna Himself describes the great devotees in these words of Sri Bhagavad-gita (7.28):

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life and whose sinful actions are completely eradicated are freed from the dualities of delusion, and they engage themselves in My service with determination."*

Anuccheda 193

1 In the next verse of this sequence (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.50) it is said:

"One who has taken exclusive shelter of the Supreme Lord, Vasudeva, becomes free from fruitive activities, which are based on material lust. In fact, one who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord is freed from even the desire to enjoy material sense gratification. Plans for enjoying sex life, social prestige, and money cannot develop within his mind. Thus he is considered bhagavatottama, a pure devotee of the Lord on the highest platform."***

2 Here "bija" means "material desires", and "vasudevaika-nilayah" means "taking shelter of Lord Vasudeva alone".

Anuccheda 194

1 In the next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.51) it is said:

"Birth in an aristocratic family and the execution of austere and pious activities certainly cause one to take pride in himself. Similarly, if one enjoys a prestigious position within society because his parents are highly respected member of the varnasrama social system, one becomes even more infatuated with himself. But if despite these excellent material qualifications one does not feel even a tinge of pride within himself, he is to be considered the dearest servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."***

2 Here "janma" means "his family", "karma" means "austerities and other auspicious deeds", and "jatayah" means "noble birth where one is a leader of society". Even when these are present, pride (aham-bhavah) is not manifested (na sajjate) in his body (asmin dehe). Instead the activities of devotional service to the Lord are manifested. That is the meaning. Such a person is very dear to Lord Hari (sa hareh priyah). This means that he is a great devotee of the Lord.

Anuccheda 195

1 The next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.52) explains:

"When a devotee gives up the selfish conception by which one thinks 'This is my property and that is his', and when he is no longer concerned with the pleasures of his own material body or indifferent to the discomforts of others, he becomes fully peaceful and satisfied. He considers himself simply one among all the living beings who are equally part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such a satisfied Vaisnava is considered to be at the highest standard of devotional service."***

2 In this verse is discussed whether material wealth (vittesu) is owned by oneself (atmani svah) or by others (parah). Here it is refuted the idea that one personally owns material wealth. One should not think oneself different from others.

Anuccheda 196

1 "The lotus feet of the Lord are sought by the demigods and other great souls who have given their hearts to the invincible Lord. A person who does not move from the lotus feet of the Lord, even to attain the opulences of the three worlds, even for a moment or a second, is to be considered the greatest of all Vaisnavas."

2 The reason such a devotee does not move from the lotus feet of the Lord is given in this verse. The reason is that such a devotee has given his heart (atma) to Lord Hari (ajita). Another reason is that even the demigods headed by Brahma

(suradibhih) find it difficult to attain the Lord's feet.

Anuccheda 197

1 In material sense-gratification one finds only suffering, and in the service of the Lord one finds great happiness. This is another reason the devotee never abandons the lotus feet of the Lord. This is explained in the next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.54):

2 "How can the fire of material suffering continue to burn the hearts of those who worship the Supreme Lord? The Lord's lotus feet have performed innumerable heroic deeds, and the beautiful nails on His toes resemble valuable jewels. The effulgence emanating from those nails resembles cooling moonshine, for it instantly relieves the suffering within the heart of the pure devotee, just as the appearance of the moon's cooling light relieves the burning heat of the sun."***

3 Here it is said the Lord's feet (anghri) have performed heroic deeds (uru-vikramau). The word "sakha" (branches) here refers to the Lord's toes. The Lord's feet are here compared to splendid moonlight that cools the burning sufferings that begin when one has material desires.

Anuccheda 198

1 The next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.55) explains:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is so kind to the conditioned souls that if they call upon Him by speaking His holy name, even unintentionally or unwillingly, the Lord is inclined to destroy innumerable sinful reactions in their hearts. Therefore, when a devotee who has taken shelter of the Lord's lotus feet chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa with genuine love, the Supreme Personality of Godhead can never give up the heart of such a devotee. One who has thus captured the Supreme Lord within his heart is to be known as bhagavata-pradhana, the most exalted devotee of the Lord."****

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In this verse, which begins with the word 'visrjati', the speaker describes what is the best of all the devotee's virtues. That virtue is the fact that Lord Hari (harih) personally (saksat) stays in the devotee's (yasya) heart (hrdayam) and never (na) leaves (visrjati). Staying thus in the devotee's heart, the Lord destroys (nasah) a great flood (ogha) of sins (agha) there. Why does the Lord not leave? He does not leave because His lotus feet are tied up by the ropes of love (pranaya-rasanaya). Such a devotee is said to be the best of all devotees."

3 Lord Hari personally (svayam) stays in the devotee's heart. That is why lust and other vices cannot enter there. This happens from the moment the Lord personally enters the heart. The words "harir avasabhihito 'pi" describe the devotee who loves the Lord in this pure way. When such a devotee calls Him, even accidentally, the Lord at once comes. Thus it is said that the Lord destroys (nasah) a flood (ogha) of sins (agha) for such a devotee.

4 This is also described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.1.11):

"O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental

knowledge."*

5 In these two ways (by saying the Lord's holy name and by the entrance of the Lord in the devotee's heart), it is not possible for sins to remain (in the devotee's heart). This is described in the answer to the question posed in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.44. In the midst of this answer, in the passage beginning with Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.48, many verses describe the symptoms, both in general and in detail, of an advanced devotee.

6 In this way an advanced devotee conquers the Lord and brings the Lord under his control. Sometimes only two or three of these qualities of an advanced devotee are manifested. In due course of time, one by one, all these qualities, which are described in the passage beginning with Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.45 will be manifested in the devotee.

7 The best of all the virtues of the advanced devotee is described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.55. The virtue of remembering the Lord is described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.49. Remembering the Lord is also described in the Last verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.55) of this passage.

8 Other passages may also be quoted to describe the qualities of an advanced devotee. Many different descriptions of the advanced devotee may be brought together. In some descriptions the direct manifestation of the Lord is not mentioned. The Lord's feet may be mentioned or the description of the Lord's glories may also be mentioned.

9 Here many verses, such as Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.49 may be quoted to describe the advanced devotee. Different stages of advancement in devotional service, beginning with the lowest and proceeding higher and higher are described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.47, 51, 52, 48 and 49.

10 When he attains perfection in devotional service, the devotee is no longer bewildered. When his devotional service is still only a new sprout, the devotee has not yet attained perfection in devotional service. This is described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.50 and 53.

11 In the perfect stage of devotional service the stage of meditation known as dhruvanusmrti is manifested. In that stage pure love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead begins to sprout. In that stage one remembers the Lord at every moment. Then one shakes away all material desires and his love for the Lord begins to sprout. Then the sprout of love grows taller and taller.

In Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.46 was explained the devotee's three relationships with others, beginning with his friendship with other devotees. Such a devotee becomes free from material desires. That the devotee is free from material desires and filled with love for the Supreme Lord is described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.45 and 55.

12 In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, the greatness of a person who follows the path of worshipping the Lord is described in the following words:

"A brahmana who follows the five samskaras, beginning with performing austerities, who actively worships the Lord, and who is learned in the five branches of knowledge is known as a great devotee."

13 This description is so because it describes one who has not yet reached the stage of perfect love for the Lord. The five samskaras referred to in the word "tapadi-panca-samskari" are listed in the verse beginning with the words "tapah pundram tatha nama" (which is quoted in full in anuccheda 200, text 10).

14 The word "navejyakarma-karakah" is explained in the following passage:
15-16 "O beautiful one, a devotee of the Lord engages in nine kinds of devotional service. 1. worship of the Lord, 2. chanting mantras glorifying the Lord, 3. engaging in yoga to attain the Lord, 4' offering yajnas to please the Lord, 5. offering obeisances to the Lord, 6. chanting the Lord's holy names, 7. serving the Lord, 8. wearing the signs of the Lord, and 9. worshipping the devotees of the Lord. A brahmana should always worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in these nine ways."

17 The five branches of knowledge mentioned in text 12 refer to knowledge of: 1. the worshipable Supreme Personality of Godhead, 2. His supreme abode, 3. His paraphernalia, 4. His mantras and 5. the individual spirit souls.

18 These five object of knowledge are briefly described in the following words of Sri hayasirsa-pancaratra:

"Lord Krsna is the only Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller. His form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. His large eyes are lotus flowers, and the graceful hair on His head is black.

19 "He is the monarch of the spiritual world, where He is tightly embraced by the playful goddess of fortune, Her form spiritual and splendid like gold, and Her large eyes very beautiful.

20 "He is eternal, present everywhere, perfect, complete, all-pervading, the cause of all, the secret hidden in the Vedas, propound, and the master of many potencies."

21 In Sri Hayasirsa-pancaratra it is also said:

"Now I will describe His transcendental abode, which is eternal, unchanging, made of pure goodness, situated beyond the boundaries of the material world, and effulgent like many millions of suns and moons.

22 "It is made of cintamani jewels. it is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. It is the resting place of everything. It will never be destroyed."

23 "O Brahma, now I will briefly describe the Lord's paraphernalia. In the Lord's abode are many kalpa-vrksa trees, who are the sources of all pleasures.

24 "In that abode are also many vines just like those kalpa-vrksa trees. There are also many flowers and other things, possessing sweet fragrances and sweet tastes, and all like those kalpa-vrksa trees.

25 "The fruits there have no faults, and therefore they are filled with nectar. They are never hard and they have neither skin nor seed.

26 "O Brahma, please know that nothing there is made of matter. It is all spirit. It is all sweet like nectar.

27 "O Brahma, in that realm nectar is everywhere. Everything is sweet like nectar. Everything is nectar."

28 The mantras glorifying the Lord are described in the following verse of Sri Hayasirsa-pancaratra:

"O Brahma, they who know the truth declare that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not different from the mantras glorifying Him."

29-30 The individual spirit souls are described in the following words of Sri Hayasirsa-pancaratra:

"O Brahma, as many drops of spray are created when the wind touches the ocean's waves, so many thousands of individual spirit souls are manifested from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Some of those souls have material bodies

and some do not.

31 The scriptures that describe devotional service affirm that the individual spirit souls are different from the many forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is described in the following prayer spoken by the Personified Vedas to the Supreme personality of Godhead (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.31):

"Neither material nature nor the soul who is her enjoyer were ever born. The living bodies of this world rather come into being by the combination of both of them, just like a bubble which forms where water meets the air. All these conditioned living beings merge back into You, the Supreme, with their various names and qualities, similarly to the merging of rivers into the ocean or of the flavours of all kinds of flowers into honey."***

32 That the individual spirit souls are the Supreme Lord's potency is described in the following words of Sri Visnu Purana (6.7.61):

"Originally, Krsna's energy is spiritual, and the energy known as the living entity is also spiritual. However, there is another energy, called illusion, which consists of fruitive activity. That is the Lord's third potency."*

33 This is also described in Bhagavad-gita (7.5) where Lord Krsna affirms:

"Besides these, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is another, superior energy of Mine, which comprises the living entities who are exploiting the resources of this material, inferior nature.*

34 In Bhagavad-gita (15.7) Lord Krsna gain affirms:

"The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind."*

35 In Sri Narada-pancaratra it is said:

"Although spiritual in nature, the individual spirit soul lives on the boundary of the spiritual and material worlds. If he chooses he can enter the material world and try to enjoy the modes of material nature."

36 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Yogesvara Havi to King Nimi.

Anuccheda 199

1 The devotees of the Lord are situated on different levels of advancement, with those who are free from all material desires situated in the highest level. These different levels described in the passage that begins with Srimad Bhagavatam 10.2.47. These levels, considered according to the qualities manifested by the devotee, are described in five verses of Srimad Bhagavatam. In the following three verses the lowest level, mixed devotional service, is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.29-31):

2 "O Uddhava, a saintly person is merciful and never injures others. Even if others are aggressive he is tolerant and forgiving toward all living entities. His strength and meaning in life come from the truth itself, he is free from all envy and jealousy, and his mind is equal in material happiness and distress. Thus, he dedicates his time to work for the welfare of all others. His intelligence is never bewildered by material desires, and he has controlled his senses. His behaviour is always pleasing, never harsh and always exemplary, and he is free from possessiveness. He never endeavours in ordinary, worldly activities, and he strictly controls his eating. He therefore always remains peaceful and steady. A saintly

person is very cautious in the execution of his duties and is never subject to superficial transformations, because he is steady and noble, even in a distressing situation. He has conquered thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age, and death. He is free from all desire for prestige and offers honour to others. He is expert in reviving the Krsna consciousness of others and therefore never cheats anyone. Rather he is a well wishing friend to all, being most merciful. Such a saintly person must be considered the most learned of men."***

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word "krpaluh" means "unable to tolerate the sufferings of theirs", "sarva-dehinam akṛta-drohah" means "not harming anyone", "titiksuh" means "tolerant", "satyam sarah" means "strong in the truth", "anavadyamta" means "free of envy and other vices", "samah" means "equal in happiness and distress", "upayakah" means "helping others as far as one is able", "kamair ahata-dhīh" means "with a heart unagitated by material desires", "dantah" means "controlling the external senses", "mrduh" means "not hard hearted", "suciḥ" means "acting like a saint", "akincanah" means "without possessiveness", "anihah" means "free from materialistic activities", "mita-bhuk" means "eating little", "santah" means "controlling the mind", "sthīrah" means "steady in one's duty", "mac-charanah" means "taking shelter of Me alone", "munih" means "thoughtful", "apramattah" means "attentive", "gabhiratma" means "unchanging", "dhr̥tīman" means "steady, even when faced with calamities", "jīta-sad-guṇah" means "conquering the six waves, namely, hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age, and death", "amāni" "without desiring honour for oneself", "manadah" means "honouring others", "kalyāṇ" means "expert in enlightening others", "maitrah" means "not cheating others", "karuṇikah" means "acting out of compassion and not personal ambition", and "kaviḥ" means "wise".

4 Here the quality "mac-charanah" (taking shelter of me should be singled out). Later it will be said, "sa ca sattamah" (he is the best of all living entities). The word "ca" (and) here emphasises that one who takes shelter of the Lord is the best of living entities.

Anuccheda 200

1 The intermediate devotee, who is engaged in mixed devotional service is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.32):

"He perfectly understands that the ordinary religious duties prescribed by Me in various Vedic scriptures possess favourable qualities that purify the performer, and he knows that neglect of such duties constitutes a discrepancy in one's life. Having taken complete shelter of My lotus feet, however, a saintly person ultimately renounces such ordinary religious duties and worships Me alone. He is thus considered to be the best among all living entities."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word 'maya' means 'by Me in the form of the Vedas'. Thus 'one should renounce the ordinary duties taught by Me in this way and worship Me alone'. A person who does this is the best of all living entities (sattamah). Should one do this out of ignorance or because one is an atheist? No. 'Fully aware of the virtues of activities in the mode of pure goodness and the faults of other activities, and with firm faith that by engaging in My devotional service he will attain all that is good, a person should renounce all ordinary duties and earnestly engage in My

devotional service.' That is the way these words should be interpreted."

3 This is also described in the following words of the Sri Narayana-vyuhastava Prayers in the Sri Hayasirsa-pancaratra:

"I offer my respectful obeisances to they who renounce all material duties, earnestly engage in devotional service to Lord Visnu,, and always meditate on Him, the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

4 Now in the Srimad Bhagavatam verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda will be explained. This verse means: If one does not have various good qualities but merely understands that the previously described good qualities (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.29-31), such as being merciful, should be accepted and the various faults that are the opposites of the good qualities should be avoided, and if one then renounces one's regular and occasional duties of varnasrama, which were taught by Me, and instead engages in unalloyed devotional service to Me, then one becomes the best of all living entities. The word "ca" (also) here means, "he is also the best, just as the previously described devotee was the best". In this way even a person who has not yet developed all good qualities can become equal to the previously described best of all living entities. Thus the Lord says, "One who attains these good qualities, renounces ordinary knowledge and ordinary duties, and worships Me alone, is the best of all living entities". In this way it is shown that the unalloyed devotee of the Lord is the best of all living entities.

5 In Bhagavad-gita (12.13-14) it is said:

"One who is not envious, but is a kind friend to all living entities, who does not think himself the proprietor and is free from false ego, who is equal in both happiness and distress, who is tolerant, always satisfied, self controlled, and engaged in devotional service with determination, his mind and intelligence fixed on Me, such a devotee of Mine is very dear to Me."*

In this way the neophyte, intermediate and advanced devotees are described. A devotee acts in a saintly manner. He does not worship any Deity but the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Still, even if a devotee acts badly, he is still to be considered saintly.

6 This is explained in Bhagavad-gita (9.30) in these words:

"Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination.

7 Attaining good qualities is not necessary when one associates with the devotees of the Lord. Because by that association one becomes eager to engage in devotional service, the separate endeavour to attain good qualities become irrelevant in that situation.

8 This is described by Sri Prahlada in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.30):

"In the association of saintly persons and devotees one should worship the Lord."*

9 The word "sadhu" here means "one whose activities are those of a saint". Thus there are two levels of devotees who follow the path of devotional service according to rules and regulations (vidhi-bhakti). Of these the devotee whose service is unalloyed is the best. In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda it is said that three kinds of devotees follow the path of worshipping the Supreme Lord. They

are described in the passage beginning with the words "tapadi-panca-samskari" (quoted in anuccheda 198, text 12).

10 The intermediate devotee is described in these words of Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda:

"Performing austerities, wearing tilaka, chanting the holy name, chanting mantras and following the path of yoga are the five samskaras of the intermediate devotee."

11 The neophyte devotee is described in these words:

"One who wears tilaka markings and the marks of the conchshell, disc, and other signs of the Lord, and who bows down to offer respects to the Lord, is said to be a Vaisnava."

Anuccheda 201

1 One who purely loves the Lord in one of the rasas, such as servitorship or friendship, is the best of devotees. The Supreme Personality of Godhead describes him in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.33):

2 "My devotees may or may not know exactly what I am, who I am, and how I exist, but if they worship Me with unalloyed love, then I consider them to be the best of devotees."***

3 Here the word yavan means "without considering time, place, or any other limiting condition", "yas ca" means "the soul of all", and "yadrsah" means "whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss". Such devotees "may or may not know exactly what I am, who I am, and how I exist, but still they worship Me with unalloyed love." This means that, situated in one of the rasas, which begin with servitorship, the devotee loves the Lord as the son of the king of Vraja, or as one of His other forms. In this condition the devotee loves the Lord alone and does not give his love to any other subject. Here the Lord says, "I consider them to be the best of devotees." These devotees are also described in the following prayer spoken by the Yogesvaras in the Fourth Canto (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.7.38):

4 "Dear Lord, persons who see You as non-different from themselves, knowing that You are the Supersoul of all living entities, are certainly very, very dear to You. You are very favourable toward those who engage in devotional service, accepting You as the Lord and themselves as the servants by Your mercy, You are always inclined in their favour."*

5 The Lord Himself gives the following explanation in Sri Bhagavad-gita (7.2 and 7.4-7):

"I shall now declare unto you in full this knowledge, both phenomenal and numinous. This being known, nothing further shall remain for you to know."*

6 "Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego: all together these eight constitute My separated material energies.*

7 "Besides these, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is another superior energy of Mine, which comprises the living entities who are exploiting the resources of this material, inferior energy.*

8 "All created beings have their source in these two natures. Of all that is material and all that is spiritual in this world, know for certain that I am both the origin and the dissolution.*

9 "O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me as pearls are strung on a thread."*

10 In these verses the Supreme Personality of Godhead describes His potencies named pradhana (matter) and jiva (the individual spirit souls), how the world is created of these two potencies, how the material universe, because it is His potency, is in one sense not different from Him, and how He is the Supreme and the shelter of all. Then He teaches the truth about Himself and the true nature of the individual spirit souls. One who understands these truths become wise. Then the Lord says that one who desires His glories is very dear to Him, more dear than the philosophers, the other devotees, or any other persons. The Lord's description of this is given in the following words (Sri Bhagavad-gita 7.16-18):

11 "O best among the Bharatas, four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me; the distressed, the desirer for wealth, the inquisitive, and he who is searching for knowledge of the Absolute.*

12 "Of these, the one who is in full knowledge and who is always engaged in pure devotional service is the best. For I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me.*

13 "All these devotees are undoubtedly magnanimous souls, but he who is situated in knowledge of Me I consider to just like My own self. Being engaged in My transcendental service, he is sure to attain Me, the highest and most perfect goal."*

14 Now Srimad Bhagavatam 4-7-38 (quoted in Text 4) will be explained. Here the phrase "tvayi visvatmani atamno ikset" means "They see all living entities as not different from You for they are Your potencies". "Na prthak" means "they do not see the living entities as independent of You". "Amutas te preyan nasti" means "No one is more dear to You than such a person". "Vatsala" means, "O Lord who loves Your servants". Then they say, "You are very favourable (anugrhana) toward those who engage in undeviating (ananya) devotional service (vrtti), accepting You as the Lord and themselves as the servants (bhrtyesa)". In this way the wise devotees are glorified.

15 Now the verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.33) quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda will be explained. Here the acceptance and rejection of knowledge and ignorance is explained. Here also the previous description of saintly person is superseded and the devotees are described as superior. In this way the superiority of devotional service is established.

16 The words 'te me matah' mean "that is My final opinion". That is the meaning, even though it is not expressed in exactly that way. In the pronouns "ye" and "te" the singular number is intended. The plural number used to show respect. How much more then should respect be shown to the devotees filled with ecstatic love for the Lord? That is the meaning. Devotional service in ecstatic love (prema) will be described later in the description of spontaneous (raganuga) devotional service.

Anuccheda 202

1 In the previous portion of this book the different kinds of devotees were described. In this present portion the different levels of devotional service will be described. First the devotees and the fruitive workers will be contrasted.

2 In the Skanda Purana, Markandeya Muni tells King Bhagiratha:

"They who live only for religion, who indulge in sex only to beget children, and who cook only to give happiness to the brahmanas, are known as Vaisnavas."

3 The word "Vaisnava" is thus defined as one who acts in this way and that only to carry out the orders of Lord Visnu. The word "Vaisnava" is also defined in the following words of Sri Visnu Purana:

4 "Please know that a Vaisnava is a person who does not abandon the duties of his varna, who is equal to all, who is a friend even to his enemies, who never steals anything or harms anyone, and who is peaceful at heart."

5 In the Padma Purana, Patala-khanda, Vaisakha-mahatmya, the word "Vaisnava" is defined in the following way:

"Please know that a Vaisnava is one who lives only for the sake of religion, who performs religious duties only to please Lord Hari, and whose days and nights are used only to perform pious deeds."

6 The relationship between the Vaisnavas and the devotees of Lord Siva is expressed in the following words of Sri Narada Purana:

"They who are equally respectful to both the great controller Lord Siva and the all-pervading Supersoul Lord Visnu are the best of devotees."

7 In this way it is seen that great devotees of the Lord are present even among the devotees of Lord Siva. However, it is an offense to consider Lord Siva to be equal to Lord Visnu, as confirmed by the following words of the Vaisnava Tantra:

"A person who considers demigods like Brahma and Siva to be on an equal level with Narayana is to be considered an offender and an atheist."*

8 Thus the devotees are situated on many different levels of advancement. Among them there are different levels of power, different levels of mercy, different levels of the desire to engage in devotional service, and, as they associate with devotees, different speeds, quickly or slowly, at which they attain pure devotional service. In the same way, as one associates with jnanis, one attains jnana.

9 Devotional service free from all material attachments is the goal of life, and it is attained by the Lord's mercy in the association of His devotees. Now we will examine the different features of devotional service.

10 First one associates with devotees. From that association faith develops. From faith one becomes attracted to hear the Vaisnava philosophy passed down through the guru-parampara. Then one develops the beginnings of love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then one becomes attracted to the path of devotional service.

11 Then one desires to make spiritual advancement. Taking shelter of one (diksa) or many (siksa) spiritual masters one hears the philosophy of devotional service. In this way one understands the truth from beginning to end.

12 Free from all false conceptions of the Lord, the devotee then proceeds to meditate on the Lord. He meditates on the Lord as present everywhere. In this way the Lord is manifest to him everywhere. Then the devotee develops firm faith.

13 Then one becomes attracted to a particular form of the Lord and one fixes one's meditation on this form alone. Then one's faith is very splendidly manifested.

14 Then one comes to the conclusion that one of the Supreme Lord's forms is greater than the others. They are not all equally great. Still, because of ignorance of that best form, one may place his faith in another of the Lord's forms. The path of devotional service is described in that way.

15 When one meditates on the Lord to understand Him that is a specific part of the path of devotional service, a part characterised by meditation on the Lord.

That is the path of they who consider knowledge most important. The path of they who consider love for the Lord most important is a different part. In that path one associates with the Lord's devotees, hears about the Lord's pastimes and in this way develops attraction, love and faith in the Lord. Thus this path begins with hearing about the Lord.

16 This path is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.16):
"O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from vice, great service is done. By such service one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vasudeva."*

17 It is also described in these words (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.25.25):
"In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin."*

18 The path of they who consider love for the Lord most important, and who yearn to serve the Lord with love, is the best path. The path of they who consider knowledge most important is not the best path. Sri Prahlada explains this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.8.49-50):

19 "Neither the three modes of material nature (sattva-guna, rajo-guna and tamo-guna), nor the predominating deities controlling these three modes, nor the five gross elements, nor the mind, nor the demigods nor the human beings can understand Your Lordship, for they are all subjected to birth and annihilation. Considering this, the spiritual advanced have taken to devotional service. Such wise men hardly bother with Vedic study. Instead,, they engage themselves in practical devotional service.*

20 "Therefore, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, the best of all persons to whom prayers are offered, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You because without rendering six kinds of devotional service unto You, offering prayers, dedicating all the results of activities, worshipping You, working on Your behalf, always remembering Your lotus feet and hearing about Your glories, who can achieve that which is meant for the paramahamsas?""*

21 Here the word "karma" means :devotional service", and "karma-smrtih" means "meditation on the Lord's pastimes". In the way devotional service to the Lord's feet (caranayoh) is manifested in all circumstances. The siksa-guru (teacher-guru), who teaches about these two things (devotional service and meditation on the Lord's pastimes) may later also become one's sravana-guru (initiating spiritual master). One may accept as many siksa-gurus as one likes, but one may accept only one mantra-guru (initiating guru). This will be proved later in this book.

22 That one should become attracted to a particular form of the Lord is confirmed by the following evidence (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.48):

"Having obtained the mercy of his spiritual master, who reveals to the disciple the injunctions of Vedic scriptures, the devotee should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form of the Lord the devotee finds most attractive."***

23 This is also confirmed by the statements of Sri Avirhotra and other authorities. That one may be attracted to a particular aspect of the path of

devotional service is confirmed by the following statement of the Supreme Lord Himself (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.27.7):

"One should carefully worship Me by selecting one of the three methods by which I receive sacrifice: Vedic, tantric or mixed."***

24 The sravana-guru (initiating spiritual master) is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.21):

"Therefore any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona-fide guru is that he has realised the conclusion of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters."***

25 Here the word "sabde brahmani" means "in the Vedas", "pare brahmani" means in the manifestation of the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead", and "nisnatam" means "by directly seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is invisible to the material senses, he has attained faith".

26 Sri Narada also explains at the end of King Puranjana's story (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.29.51):

"One who is engaged in devotional service has not the least fear in material existence. This is because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Supersoul and friend of everyone. One who knows this secret is actually educated, and one thus educated can become the spiritual master of the world. One who is an actually bona fide spiritual master, representative of Krsna, is not different from Krsna."*

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Prabhuddha to King Nimi.

Anuccheda 203

1 In the Brahma-vaivarta Purana it is said:

"It is said that there are two kinds of speakers: 1. passionate and 2. dispassionate. Passionate speakers are lusty and greedy. Their words do not touch the heart.

2 "Without careful study to determine the truth, a passionate person gives instruction. Teaching without careful study brings the destruction of the people."

3 The dispassionate speaker is described in the following words:

"One who desires to hear the truth should approach a bona fide spiritual master, whose words are like nectar and who is like an ocean of truth. He should not take into consideration the spiritual master's family, disposition, or performance of Vedic rituals."

4 The spiritual master's eloquences and other virtues are described in these words from the Brahma-vaivarta Purana:

"When hearing the spiritual master's teachings even a person filled with lust, greed, and a host of vices, even a miser, and even a person filled with despair, will enter the eternal spiritual world. A person who can eloquently speak so this is done is the best of spiritual masters."

5 When such a highly qualified spiritual master is not to be found, some people, desiring to hear different views, take shelter of many teachers. This is

described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.9.31);

6 "Although the Absolute Truth is one without a second, the sages have described Him in many different ways. Therefore one may not be able to acquire very firm or complete knowledge from one spiritual master."***

The meaning of this verse is clear. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Dattatreya to King Yadu.

Anuccheda 204

1 The path of they who consider love for the Lord most important, a path that begins with hearing, is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.26):

"O Vyasadeva, in the association and by the mercy of those great Vedantists, I could hear them describe the attractive activities of Lord Krsna. And thus listening attentively, my taste for hearing of the Personality of Godhead increased at every step."*

2 The activity of hearing performed by they who think knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is most important is described in the four famous verses of Srimad-Bhagavatam. These persons' activity of thinking is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.34):

"The great personality Brahma, with great attention and concentration of the mind, studied the Vedas three times, and after scrutinizingly examining them, he ascertained that attraction for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, is the highest perfection of religion."*

3 Faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which is created by such study and thinking, is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.21.27-30):

"My dear respectable ladies and gentlemen, according to the authoritative statements of sastra, there must be a supreme authority who is able to award the respective benefits of our present activities. Otherwise, why should there be persons who are unusually beautiful and powerful both in this life and in the life after death?*

4-5 "This is confirmed not only by the evidence of the Vedas but also by the personal behaviour of great personalities like Mahu, Uttanapada, Dhruva, Priyavrata and my grandfather Anga, as well as by many other great personalities and ordinary living entities, exemplified by Maharaja Prahlada and Bali, all of whom are theists, believing in the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who carries a club.*

6 "Although abominable persons like my father, Vena, the grandson of death personified, are bewildered on the path of religion, all the great personalities like those mentioned agree that in this world the only bestower of the benedictions of religion, economic development, sense gratification, liberation, or elevation to the heavenly planets is the Supreme Personality of Godhead."***

7 This verse says, "My dear respectable ladies and gentlemen (arha-sattamah), according to the authoritative statements of sastra there must be a supreme authority who is able to award the respective benefits of our present activities (yajna-patih). That is the opinion of the scriptures (kesancit)."

Still fearing that some might foolishly try to dispute this truth and present another, inevitably illogical opinion, the Bhagavatam gives the fact that the living

entities are placed by destiny in a variety of situations in this world as evidence of the Supreme Lord's existence. The Bhagavatam explains, "otherwise, why should there be persons who have unusually beautiful or powerful (jyotsnavatyah) bodies (bhuvah) both in this life (iha) and in the life after death (amutra)?" In other words, if there were no Supreme Lord then this would not be so.

8 This is the meaning. The inert and unconscious material nature has no power, by itself, to give to the living entities the results of their actions. This is confirmed in the following words of Vedanta-sutra (3.2.39):

"Because it is logical to assume that there must be a person who awards the results of actions."

9 The many demigods are not independent. That is confirmed by the Antaryami-sruti. They are not as powerful as the Supreme Lord and they are not independent in awarding the various results of actions. Therefore it is the independent Supreme Personality of Godhead alone who gives the results of actions. In the next three verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.21.28-30) the opinions of great self-realised souls is given as evidence to confirm the truth of this.

10 Here the words "asmat-pituh pituh" mean "of my grandfather Anga". Because they were learned in the Vedic scriptures, Maharaja Prahlada and Maharaja Bali are also counted here. These great persons all affirm (krtyam asti) that the Supreme Personality of Godhead (gadabhrt) is always present in everyone's heart and outside the heart also. That is the meaning here.

11 Or, the words "krtyam asti" may mean "it is the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone, and not anyone else, who is the supreme controller". Then the atheists are criticised in the words "dauhitradin mrtyor dharma-vimohitan" (abominable persons like my father, Vena, the grandson of death, are bewildered on the path of religion). In this way scripture, logic, and the opinions of the great enlightened souls combine to affirm that Lord Visnu, who is here called by the name Gadabhrt, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Lord Gadabhrt is described in the passage beginning with the word "varga". Here "varga" means "the three goals of life", "svarga" (residence in the heavenly planets) is the result of pious deeds, "apavarga" means "liberation", "Aikatmya-hetuna" means "because He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is situated in everyone's heart", and "prayena" means "almost always."

12 This is also confirmed by the following statement of Skanda Purana:

"Lord Visnu, the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the giver of liberation. He binds the conditioned souls with the ropes of repeated birth and death and He also frees them from those ropes."

Anuccheda 205

1 Faith in devotional service is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.21.31-32):

"By the inclination to serve the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, suffering humanity can immediately cleanse the dirt which has accumulated in their minds during innumerable births. Like the Ganges water, which emanates from the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord, such a process immediately cleanses the mind, and thus spiritual or Krsna consciousness gradually increases.*

2 "When a devotee takes shelter at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality

of Godhead, he is completely cleansed of all misunderstanding or mental speculation and he manifests renunciation. This is possible only when one is strengthened by practicing bhakti-yoga. Once having taken shelter at the root of the lotus feet of the Lord, a devotee never comes back to this material existence, which is full of the threefold miseries."*

3 Here the word "tapasvinam" means "of they who suffer in the world of birth and death". In the passage beginning with the word "yatha" an example is given to show the glories of the Lord's lotus feet. "Asangah" means "without being attached to anything else", "vijnana-visesah" means "direct perception of the Supreme Personality of Godhead", and "viryan" means "strong for that reason". These words describe a person who has taken shelter of the feet (anghri-mule) of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 206

1 That in most cases the same person is both initiating spiritual master (sravana-guru) and instructing spiritual master (bhajan-siksa-guru) is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.22):

2 "Accepting the bona fide spiritual master as one's life and soul and worshipable deity, the disciple should learn from him the process of pure devotional service. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the soul of all souls, is inclined to give Himself to His pure devotees. Therefore, the disciple should learn from the spiritual master to serve the Lord without duplicity and in such a faithful and favourable way that the Supreme Lord, being satisfied, will offer Himself to the faithful disciple."***

3 The initiating spiritual master is described in the previous verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.21) in these words:

"Any person who seriously desires to achieve real happiness must seek out a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of his spiritual master is that he must have realised the conclusion of the scriptures by deliberation and be able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, are to be understood as bona fide spiritual masters."*

4 Here it is said that the spiritual master (guru) is like one's life and soul (atma) and one's worshipable deity (daivata). Without deceit (amayaya) one should follow him (anuvrttya) and learn from him (sikset). In this way (yaih) the Supreme Personality of Godhead (atma), who gave Himself to Bali Maharaja and other devotees, will give Himself.

One may accept many instructing spiritual masters (siksha-gurus). This has already been explained. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Prabhuddha to King Nimi.

Anuccheda 207

1 One may accept only one initiating spiritual master (mantra guru). This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.48):

"Having obtained the mercy of his spiritual master, who reveals to the disciple the injunctions of Vedic scriptures, the devotee should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form of the Lord the devotee finds most attractive."***

2 Here "anugraha" means "the mercy of the initiating spiritual master", and "agama" means "the scriptures, where the rules for chanting mantras are described". Because the word spiritual master is here in the singular number, it is understood that one should accept only one initiating spiritual master.

3 The disciple is not allowed to reject his initiating spiritual master. This is confirmed by the following words of Brahma-vaivarta Purana:

"Lord Hari rejects anyone who rejects his spiritual master. A person who rejects his spiritual master becomes wicked. His knowledge becomes covered with dirt."

4 However, if one's spiritual master is not satisfactory, one should accept another spiritual master. In this way one may reject many unsatisfactory spiritual masters. When a spiritual master preaches against the truth, he should be rejected. This is explained in the following words of Sri Narada-pancaratra:

5 "One who has accepted mantra-initiation from a spiritual master who is not a devotee of Lord Visnu goes to hell. The disciple should again become initiated, properly initiated by a spiritual master who is a devotee of Lord Visnu."

6 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Avirhotra to King Nimi.

Anuccheda 208

1 The initiating spiritual master enlightens his disciple in the knowledge of the scriptures. This is explained in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.10.12):

2 "The spiritual master can be compared to the lower kindling stick, the disciple to the upper kindling stick and the instruction given by the guru to the third stick placed in between. The transcendental knowledge communicated from guru to disciple is compared to the fire arising from the contact of these, which burns the darkness of ignorance to ashes, bringing great happiness to both guru and disciple."***

3 Here the word "adya" means "the stick below", "tat-sandhanam" means "the stick in the middle, which is the object of friction", "pravacanam" means "instruction", and "vidya" means "the knowledge of scripture". The knowledge created by this contact is compared to fire.

4 This is also confirmed by the following statement of Sruti-sastra (Taittiriya Upanisad 1.3.3):

"The spiritual master comes first. The disciple comes after. When they meet knowledge is manifested."

5 In the Mundaka Upanisad (1.2.12) it is said:

"To learn the transcendental subject matter one must approach a spiritual master."*

6 In the Chandogya Upanisad (6.14.2) it is said:

"One who approaches a bona fide spiritual master can understand everything about spiritual realisation."*

7 In the Katha Upanisad (1.2.9) it is said:

"O dear one, the truth cannot be understood by logic. It is understood only by hearing the words of the spiritual master."

8 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 209

1 One must also accept an instructing spiritual master (siksha guru). This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.33):

2 "Those who endeavour with their conquered senses and vital air to bring the impetuous and most unsteady mind under control but have abandoned the shelter of their spiritual masters' feet experience only distress in their cultivation of various practices. They encounter hundreds of disturbances, O unborn Lord, like merchants riding a boat on the ocean who have failed to engage a pilot."*

2 This verse means, "Those who (ye) endeavour with their conquered senses and vital air to bring the impetuous and most unsteady (adanta) mind (manas turagam) under control (yantum) but have abandoned (samavahaya) the shelter of their spiritual masters' (guroh) feet (caranam) experience only distress in their cultivation of various practices (upaya-khidah). They encounter hundreds of disturbances (vyasana-satanvitah)."* These persons remain in the world of repeated birth and death.

3 The last part of the verse means, "O unborn Lord (aja), they are like merchants riding a boat on the ocean (jaladhau) who have failed to engage a pilot (akrta-karna-dharah)."*

The spiritual master reveals the truth of devotional service to the Lord. By the spiritual master's mercy one remains undefeated by even hundreds of obstacles and one quickly bring his mind under control. That is the meaning here.

4 In the Brahma-vaivarta Purana it is said:

"One who devotedly serves his spiritual master and remembers the Lord personally meets the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They who are proud and will not serve a spiritual master do not meet the Lord."

5 In the Svetasvatara Upanisad (6.38) it is said:

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed."*

6 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Personified Vedas.

Anuccheda 210

1 Now will be discussed the truth that one must accept an initiating spiritual master. One should accept a spiritual master in order to attain the highest goal of life. One should not accept a spiritual master to attain ordinary, material goals. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.18):

2 "One who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master, a father, a husband, a mother, or a worshipable demigod."*

3 Here the word "samupeta-mrtyum" means "one who is on the path of repeated birth and death."

4 Sri Narada Muni also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.15):

"The people in general are naturally inclined to enjoy, and you have encouraged them in that way in the name of religion. This is verily condemned and is quite unreasonable. Because they are guided under your instructions, they will accept such activities in the name of religion, and will hardly care for

prohibitions."*

5 A person who seeks a spiritual master in order to attain material goals will naturally not take shelter of the feet of a spiritual master who can deliver his disciple from death. That is the meaning. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Rsabhadeva to His sons.

Anuccheda 211

1 One should not see his spiritual master as an ordinary fruitive worker. Rather one should see his spiritual master in the same way one sees the Supreme Lord Himself. Lord Krsna confirms this in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.17.27):

2 "One should know the acarya as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods."*

3 This verse is part of the description of a brahmachari's duties. This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 212

1 The spiritual master who is approached by persons seeking the highest goal of life is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.15.26-27):

2 "The spiritual master should be considered to be directly the Supreme Lord because he gives transcendental knowledge for enlightenment. Consequently, for one who maintains the material conception that the spiritual master is an ordinary human being, everything is frustrated. His enlightenment and his Vedic studies and knowledge are like the bathing of an elephant."*

3 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Krsna, is the master of all other living entities and of the material nature. His lotus feet are sought and worshipped by great saintly persons like Vyasa. Nonetheless, there are fools who consider Lord Krsna an ordinary human being."*

4 The spiritual master (esah) has the same virtues as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. The spiritual master has the same nature as the Lord. That is the meaning here. These verses were spoken by Sri Narada to King Yudhisthira.

Anuccheda 213

1 Some pure devotees say that the spiritual master and Lord Siva are both non-different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are seen in this way because they are both very dear to the Lord. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.30.38):

2 "Dear Lord, by virtue of a moment's association with Lord Siva, who is very dear to You and who is Your most intimate friend, we were fortunate to attain You. You are the most expert physician, capable of treating the incurable disease of material existence. On account of our great fortune, we have been able to take shelter at Your lotus feet."*

3 This verse states, Lord Siva (bhavasya) is Your dear friend. We have attained You (tvam gatim), who are the most expert physician (bhisaktamam), capable of treating the incurable disease of material existence, of birth (bhavasya) and death (mrtyoh)". Lord Siva is the spiritual master of the speakers of this verses. This verse was spoken by the Pracetas to the eight-armed Purusa-avatara.

Anuccheda 214

1 By taking shelter of the spiritual master, one thus attains love for the Supreme Lord. Now different varieties of worship will be shown. The Lord may be approach as impersonal and without variety or as personal and possessing variety. The first way is the path of impersonal knowledge. The second way is of two kinds. In one kind one accepts the ahangrahopasana method of the impersonalists, and in the other kind one accepts the path of devotional service to the Lord. The knowledge of the impersonalists is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.27) where Lord Krsna explains:

"Real knowledge is the awareness that reveals My all-pervading presence."***

2 The knowledge (jnanam) here is knowledge that sees no difference.

Anuccheda 215

1 Many different methods of spiritual advancement are described. Impersonal knowledge has already been described. The method may be seen in the conversation of King Prthu and Sri Sanatkumara and in other places also in Srimad-Bhagavatam. From that hearing contemplation follows. First the hearers develop a sense of understanding. Then they can understand the nature of spirit, which is different from dull matter. In the realm of spirit there are many forms of the Supreme Lord and many forms of the Lord's spiritual potencies. This the impersonalists are not able to understand. The Lord and His potencies are like the moon disc and the many individual rays of moonlight that emanate from the moon disc, rays of light that are distinct from each other and from the moon disc also. These different spiritual forms cannot be seen with material eyes. Only if, by the mercy of a great soul, one has spiritual eyes, can one see the variety that is the true nature of spirit. If one does not have such spiritual eyes one sees a spiritual nature that has no variety and one aspires to merge into that varietyless spirit. That varietyless spirit is the object of the impersonalists continual meditation. This meditation and merging is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.2.15-16):

2 "O King, whenever the yogi desires to leave this planet of human beings, he should not be perplexed about the proper time or place, but should comfortably sit without being disturbed and, regulating the life air, should control the senses by the mind.*

3 Thereafter, the yogi should merge his mind, by his unalloyed intelligence, into the living entity, and then merge the living entity into the Superself. And by doing this, the fully satisfied living entity becomes situated in the supreme stage of satisfaction, so that he ceases from all other activities."*

4 Here "etam" means "the intelligence", "ksetra-jne" means "the seer of the intelligence and other things", and "nilayet" means "he merges". By his intelligence (buddhya) he merges the knower of the field of activities into the pure soul (atmani), who is free of being the seer and other things. Then he merges the pure soul (atmanam) into the Supreme (atmani). Being locked up (avarudhya) in the Supreme, he thinks he has attained oneness with the Supreme. In this way he attains satisfaction (labdhopasantih). Then he ceases (viramet) from all other activities (krtyat). In this way, by seeming to end his own existence, he attains the

Supreme."

Anuccheda 216

1 This impersonal knowledge is described in the following words of Bhagavad-gita (8.3):

"The indestructible, transcendental living entity is called Brahman, and his eternal nature is called adhyatma, the self."*

2 In this verse the word "sva" means "of the pure spirit soul", "bhavah" means "meditation", and "adhyatma" means "in relation to the soul". That is the meaning. Described here is ahangrahopasana meditation, where the individual soul thinks, "I am the supreme controller, the master of all potencies". The result of this meditation is that the Lord's power becomes manifested in the meditator. An example of this is seen in the Visnu Purana, where Prahlada Maharaja meditating on himself in this way, thwarts the snake-noose and other weapons used against him. In this way, as an insect, meditating on another insect, actually does become that insect, so the meditating transcendentalist attains sarupya, sarsti or another kind of liberation.

3 Now devotional service will be described. Devotional service has two natures, a borderline nature and an original nature. The Garuda Purana explains:

4 "Now I will describe devotional service to Lord Visnu. By engaging in one attains everything. Lord Hari is pleased by devotional service. Nothing else pleases Him."

5 After that it is also said there:

"The verbal root 'bhaj' means 'to serve'. Therefore the learned say that the noun 'bhakti', which refers to the best of all spiritual paths, means 'devotional service'."

6 In this verse the borderline nature of devotional service is described in the phrase "yaya sarvam avapyate" (by devotional service everything is attained). This is also described in the following words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (2.3.10):

"A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desires, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead."*

The word "budhah" (by the wise) here affirms that the "bhakti" (devotional service) here cannot be the same as the ahangrahopasana of the impersonalists. The word "seva" (service) here describes the original nature of devotional service. Devotional service is performed in three ways: with body, words and mind. Ahangrahopasana, however, is performed out of fear, hatred and other faulty motives. The word "sadhana-bhuyasi" means that devotional service is best of all spiritual paths. The two natures of devotional service are also described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.34):

7 "Even ignorant living entities can very easily come to know the Supreme Lord if they adopt those means prescribed by the Supreme Lord Himself. The process recommended by the Lord is to be known as bhagavata-dharma, or devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."****

8 Here the phrase "avidusam pumsam" means "by they who engage in devotional service but do not understand the true glories of devotional service", "atmanah" means "of the Supreme, who is manifested as Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagavan", "anjah" means "without effort", "labdhaye" means "to attain", and

"upayah" means "methods". The word "bhagavata" means "spoken by the Supreme Lord Himself". This word is explained by the Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.3):

9 "By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma because I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the Vedas."***

10 In this way devotional service is described (proktah) by the Lord Himself. Then the verse declares, "Please understand (viddhi) the spiritual process (tan) known as bhagavata-dharma (bhagavatan)". The word "hi" (certainly) is used to emphasise that this is the way to attain success. Direct devotional service is called bhagavata-dharma in this verse. It is revealed to be the highest dharma in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.3.22):

"Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society."*

The words "atma-labdhaye proktah" here refer to the borderline nature of devotional service. This means that one cannot attain the Supreme in any other way. The words "atma-labdhaye upayah" here refer to the original nature of devotional service. The methods here refer to the methods described by the Lord Himself. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Kavi to King Nimi.

Anuccheda 217

1 Devotional service is of three kinds: 1 aropa siddha, 2. sanga-siddha, and 3. svarupa-siddha. Aropa-siddha devotional service is performed when, even though one personally has no devotion, the Lord somehow engages one in the activities of devotional service. Sanga-siddha devotional service is performed when, even though one has no devotion, by associating with devotees one becomes engaged in the activities of devotional service. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.22):

"Accepting the bona fide spiritual master as one's life and soul and worshipable deity, the disciple should learn from him the process of pure devotional service. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the soul of all souls, is inclined to give Himself to His pure devotees. Therefore, the disciple should learn from the spiritual master to serve the Lord without duplicity and in such a faithful and favourable way that the Supreme Lord, being satisfied, will offer Himself to the faithful disciple."*

2 Sanga-siddha devotional service is also described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.23):

"A sincere disciple should learn to dissociate the mind from everything material and positively cultivate association with his spiritual master and other saintly devotees."***

In this way one attains devotional service, which is sometimes attained by the help of jnana and karma.

3 Svarupa-siddha devotional service is manifested when devotional service is no longer mixed with jnana or karma, when the Lord directly appears before the devotee, and when the devotee has pure and unwavering devotion for the Lord. This kind of devotional service is characterised by the various devotional activities

that begin with hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord. These activities are described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.23):

"Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia and pastimes of Lord Visnu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind and words), these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who had dedicated his life to the service of Krsna through these nine methods should be understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge."*

4 This means hearing about Lord Visnu and chanting the glories of Lord Visnu. These activities are different from the activities of aropa-siddha devotional service. Even if one is bewildered, foolish or has a host of shortcomings, and even if one merely imitates the activities of devotional service, by performing these activities he comes into contact with svarupa-siddha devotional service and he attains the result of that service.

5 Examples of this are Sri Prahlada, whom in his previous birth fasting on Sri Nrsimha-caturdasi, the hawk that circumambulated the temple of the Lord following a dog, and many fools who even though they cannot see the truth, still may sometimes bow down before the Supreme Lord. In this way there are three kinds of devotional service. Devotional service may also be divided in two ways: 1. akaitava (sincere), and 2. sakaitava (insincere).

6 Thus aropa-siddha devotional service and sanga-siddha devotional service are both called by the name bhakti (devotional service). However, if one has even a single ulterior motive, to benefit either oneself or someone else, then his devotional service is called sakaitava (insincere).

7 The glory of svarupa-siddha devotional service is that it has a direct relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one engages in this kind of devotional service alone, then the devotional service is akaitava (sincere). However, if the devotional service is mixed with karma or jnana, then the devotional service is sakaitava (insincere). Akaitava devotional service has already been described here in a quote that referred to it by the word "akincana". Akaitava devotional service is also described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.2):

"Completely rejecting all religious activities which are materially motivated, this Bhagavata Purana propounds the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart. The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all. Such truth uproots the threefold miseries. This beautiful Bhagavatam, compiled by the great sage Vyasadeva (in his maturity), is sufficient in itself for God realisation. What is the need of any other scripture? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of Bhagavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart."*

In this way the two kinds (akaitava and sakaitava) of devotional service have been described.

8 Akaitava devotional service is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.52):

"My dear friends, O sons of the demons, you cannot please the Supreme Personality of Godhead by becoming perfect brahmanas, demigods or great saints or by becoming perfectly good in etiquette or vast learning. None of these qualifications can awaken the pleasure of the Lord. Nor by charity, austerity, sacrifice, cleanliness or vows can one satisfy the Lord. The Lord is pleased only if one has unflinching, unalloyed devotion to Him. Without sincere devotional service, everything is simply a show."*

9 Aropa-siddha devotional service is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.12 and 12.12.35):

"Knowledge of self-realisation, even though free of all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the infallible (God). What then is the use of fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilised for the devotional service of the Lord?"*

In these words fruitive activities, whether performed with material desire or without material desire, are criticised, for these activities have no relationship with the Supreme Lord. However, if somehow or other these activities are offered to the Supreme Lord, they then become activities of devotional service. Vedic duties are described in this way in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.36):

10 "In accordance with the particular nature one has acquired in conditioned life, whatever one does with body, words, mind, senses, intelligence or purified consciousness one should offer to the Supreme, thinking, "This is for the pleasure of Lord Narayana."***

11 In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.31) the following question is asked:

"Please speak about how one engages in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, if you consider me capable of properly hearing these topics. When a living entity offers loving service to the Supreme Lord, the Lord is immediately satisfied, and in return He will give even His own self to the surrendered soul."***

This question is answered in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.34):

"Even ignorant living entities can very easily come to know the Supreme Lord if they adopt those means prescribed by the Supreme Lord Himself. The process recommended by the Lord is to be known as bhagavata-dharma, or devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."***

Devotional service, which is the direct means to attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and which consists of a host of activities that begin with hearing and chanting the Lord's glories, is referred to here by the word "bhagavata-dharma".

12 Some of the activities of devotional service are revealed in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.39):

"An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation and should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The holy names of Krsna are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world."***

13 In the next chapter it is said (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.22-23):

"Accepting the bona fide spiritual master as one's life and soul and worshipable deity, the disciple should learn from him the process of pure devotional service. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the soul of all souls, is inclined to give Himself to His pure devotees. Therefore, the disciple should learn from the spiritual master to serve the Lord without duplicity and in such a faithful and favourable way that the Supreme Lord, being satisfied, will offer Himself to the faithful disciple.***

"A sincere disciple should learn to dissociate the mind from everything material and positively cultivate association with the spiritual master and other saintly devotees. He should be merciful to those in an inferior position to him, cultivate friendship with those on an equal level, and meekly serve those in a higher spiritual position. Thus he should learn to deal properly with all living beings.***

"To serve the spiritual master the disciple should learn cleanliness, austerity, tolerance, silence, study of Vedic knowledge, simplicity, celibacy, non-violence, and equanimity in the face of material dualities such as heat and cold, happiness and distress.***

"One should practice meditation by constantly seeing oneself to be an eternal cognisant spirit soul and seeing the Lord to be the absolute controller of everything. To increase one's meditation one should live in a secluded place and give up all false attachment to one's home and household paraphernalia. Giving up the decorations of the temporary material body, one should dress himself with scraps of cloth found in rejected places, or with the bark of trees. In this way one should learn to be satisfied in any material situation.***

"One should have firm faith that he will achieve all success in life by following those scriptures that describe the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavan. At the same time, one should avoid blaspheming other scriptures. One should rigidly control his mind, speech, and bodily activities, always speak the truth, and bring the mind and senses under full control.***

"One should hear, glorify, and meditate upon the wonderful transcendental activities of the Lord. One should specifically become absorbed in the appearance, activities, qualities, and holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus inspired, one should perform all of one's daily activities as an offering to the Lord. One should perform sacrifice, charity and penance exclusively for the Lord's satisfaction. Similarly one should chant only those mantras that glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And all one's religious activities should be performed as an offering to the Lord. Whatever one finds pleasing or enjoyable he should immediately offer to the Supreme Lord, and even his wife, children, home, and very life air he should offer at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.***

"One who desires his ultimate self-interest should cultivate friendship with those persons who have accepted Krsna as the Lord of their life. One should further develop an attitude of service to all living beings. One should especially try to help those in the human form of life and among them, especially those who accept the principles of religious behaviour. Among the religious persons, one should especially render service to the pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.***

"One should learn how to associate with the devotees of the Lord by

gathering with them to chant the glories of the Lord. This process is most purifying. As devotees thus develop their loving friendship, they feel mutual happiness and satisfaction. And by thus encouraging one another they are able to give up material sense gratification, which is the cause of all suffering.***

"The devotees of the Lord constantly discuss the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead among themselves. Thus they constantly remember the Lord and remind one another of His qualities and pastimes. In this way, by their devotion to the principles of bhakti-yoga, the devotees please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who takes away from them everything inauspicious. Being purified of all impediments, the devotees awaken to pure love of Godhead, and thus, even within this world, their spiritualised bodies exhibit symptoms of transcendental ecstasy, such as standing of the bodily hairs on end."***

"Having achieved love of Godhead, the devotees sometimes cry out loud, absorbed in thought of the infallible Lord. Sometimes they laugh, feel great pleasure, speak out loud to the Lord, dance, or sing. Such devotees, having transcendental material, conditioned life, sometimes imitate the unborn Supreme by acting out His pastimes. And sometimes, achieving His personal audience, they remain peaceful and silent.***

"Thus learning the science of devotional service and practically engaging in devotional service of the Lord, the devotee come to the stage of love of Godhead. And by complete devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana, the devotee easily crosses over the illusory energy, maya, which is extremely difficult to cross."***

14 As was said in the previous description of devotional service, the devotee should avoid association with non-devotees. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.23):

"A sincere disciple should learn to dissociate the mind from everything material and positively cultivate association with his spiritual master and other saintly devotees. He should be merciful to those in an inferior position on him, cultivate friendship with those on an equal level and meekly serve those in a higher spiritual position. Thus he should learn to deal positively with all living beings."***

15 In this way even the fruits of ordinary work may be offered to the Lord in order to eventually attain the perfection of devotional service.

Srila Sridhara Svami comments on Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.36:

"In the phrase 'atmana vanusrta-svabhavata' the word 'atmana' may mean either 'with the mind' or 'with the false ego'. The meaning is this. It is not only the performance of Vedic duties that may be offered to the Lord. Even ordinary work, performed according to one's own nature, may be offered to Him. This is explained by the Lord Himself in the following words of Sri Bhagavad-gita (9.27):

16 "Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform, do that, O son of Kunti, as an offering to Me."*

17 In the previous verses this advice was given, "One should act according to the nature of one's life-breath, intelligence, and body." When one, according to his own nature, offers his work to the Lord, he may attain two different results for any misdeeds he performs. They who yearn to attain impersonal knowledge do not consider misdeeds different from good deeds. They who yearn to attain devotional service to the Lord see that their present sufferings are due to the

material desires still remaining in their hearts. They pray to the merciful Lord, asking that He show mercy to them.

18 In the Visnu Purana it is said:

"Fools are attracted to the world of the senses. O Lord, I am not like them. I always remember You and I pray that You will never leave my heart."

19 In the Padma Purana it is said:

"Just as the minds of young girls take pleasure in young boys, and young boys take pleasure in young girls, kindly allow my mind to take pleasure in You alone."*

20 This means, "May my good deeds and my misdeeds both lead me to complete love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

21 Even materialists may offer their materialistic activities to the Lord. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.46):

"By executing without attachment the regulated activities prescribed in the Vedas, offering the results of such work to the Supreme Lord, one attains the perfection of freedom from the bondage of material work. The material fruitive results offered in the revealed scriptures are not the actual goal of Vedic knowledge, but are meant for stimulating the interest of the performer."***

Thus one offers the results of Vedic duties to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Kavi to Maharaja Nimi.

Anuccheda 218

1 They who offer to the Lord the results of Vedic duties are glorified in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 8.5.47):

2 "Karmis are always anxious to accumulate wealth for their sense gratification, but for that purpose they must work very hard. Yet even though they work hard, the results are not satisfying. Indeed, sometimes their work results only in frustration. But devotees who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Lord can achieve substantial results without working very hard. These results exceed the devotee's expectations."***

3 This verse means, "Karmis are always anxious to accumulate wealth for their sense gratification, but for that purpose they must work very hard. Yet even though they work hard, plowing and doing other work, the results are not satisfying. But devotees who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Lord can achieve substantial results without working very hard. These results exceed the devotee's expectations. This is because the final result they attain is release from the material world of birth and death."

4 This is also described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.35):

"O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall."***

5 This is again described in Srimad Bhagavatam (5.19.27):

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead fulfils the material desires of a devotee who approaches Him with such motives, but He does not bestow benedictions upon the devotee that will cause him to demand more benedictions again. However, the Lord willingly gives the devotee shelter at His own lotus feet, even though such a person does not aspire for it, and that shelter satisfies all his

desires. That is the Supreme Personality's special mercy."*

6 That is how Maharaja Nabhi attained as his son Lord Rsabhadeva, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is also explained in these words of Sri Bhagavad-gita (2.40):

7 "In this endeavour there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear."*

8 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the demigods to the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anucchedas 219-221

1 The process of offering the fruits of one's work to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in the following three verse. In Srimad Bhagavatam (1.5.32) it is said:

2 "O Brahmana Vyasadeva, it is decided by the learned that the best remedial measure for removing all troubles and miseries is to dedicate one's activities to the service of the Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead (Sri Krsna)."

3 Here the word "brahman" means "O Veda-vyasa". "Etat tapa-traya-cikitsitam samsucitam" means "the remedy for the threefold miseries, a remedy spoken by the swanlike enlightened souls who were staying at that place during the four months of Caturmasya". What is that remedy? The remedy is "bhagavati karma yat", which means "dedicating one's activities to the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead". What is the Supreme Personality of Godhead like? He is described here by the word "bhagavati", which means "full of all opulences and glories" and "the whole of which everything that exists is a part and parcel". The word "isvare" is also used to describe Him because he is the controller of the individual souls, who are all His parts and parcels. In this situation He is also given the name "Paramatma" (the all-pervading Supersoul).

4 Here someone may object: How can the same material activities that were once the cause of bondage in the world of birth and death at another time bring one liberation from the threefold miseries of material existence?

To this objection the following reply is given: The same thing may bring different results under different circumstances. This is explained in the following statement (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.33):

5 "O goo soul, does not a thing, applied therapeutically, cure a disease that was caused by that very same thing?"*

6 Here "ya amayah" means "the disease", and "yena jayate" means "created by butter or other things". That thing (tad eva dravyam) that first caused the disease does not (na) by itself cure the same disease. However, when mixed with other substances and it can be part of a medicine (cikitsitam) that does cure the disease.

7 This is further explained in the next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.34):

"Thus when all a man's activities are dedicated to the service of the Lord, those very activities which caused his perpetual bondage become the destroyer of the tree of work."*

8 Here "pare" means "to the Supreme Personality of Godhead" and "kalpitah" means "even when offered with materialistic motives". Because these activities destroy the bondage of continued material existence, they give one the ability (kalpante) to renounce materialistic activities (atma-vinasaya).

Anuccheda 222

1 The results of action are all granted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. Fools think that they themselves bring the results of their own actions. Such persons remain in the material world and enjoy only the most meagre benefits from their labours. Intelligent persons who understand that all results come from the Lord and who offer what they do to Him attain results that are the opposite of meagre. This is explained in two prose passages of Srimad Bhagavatam. The first of these passages (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.7.6.) gives the following explanation:

2 "After performing the preliminaries of various sacrifices, Maharaja Bharata offered the results in the name of religion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva. In other words, he performed all the yajnas for the satisfaction of Lord Vasudeva, Krsna. Maharaja Bharata thought that since the demigods were different parts of Vasudeva's body, He controls those who are explained in the Vedic mantras. By thinking in this way, Maharaja Bharata was freed from all material contamination, such as attachment, lust and greed. When the priests were about to offer the sacrificial ingredients into the fire, Maharaja Bharata expertly understood how the offering made to different demigods was simply an offering to the different limbs of the Lord. For instance, Indra is the arm of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Surya (the sun) is His eye. Thus Maharaja Bharata considered that the oblations offered to different demigods were actually offered unto the different limbs of Lord Vasudeva."*

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse means 'After performing (sampracaratsu) the preliminaries of various sacrifices (nana-yagesu anga-kriya), Maharaja Bharata offered the results in the name of religion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva. In other words, he performed all the yajnas for the satisfaction of Lord Vasudeva, Krsna (apurvam tad vasudeva eva bhavayamanah). Maharaja Bharata thought that since Surya and the other demigods were different parts of Vasudeva's body (avayavesu) and were therefore not separate from He, He controls those who are explained in the Vedic mantras. By thinking in this way, Maharaja Bharata was freed from all material contamination, such as attachment, lust and greed. When the priests were about to offer the sacrificial ingredients into the fire (sa yajamano yajna-bhaga-bhajah). Maharaja Bharata expertly understood (abhyadhyayat) how the offering made to different demigods (devah) was simply an offering to the different limbs (avyayavesu), beginning with the eyes, of the Lord Vasudeva (purusasya). For instance, Indra is the arm of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Surya (the sun) is His eye. Thus Maharaja Bharata considered that the oblations offered to different demigods were actually offered unto the different limbs of Lord Vasudeva.'*

"The karma-mimamsakas explain the word 'apurva' in two ways. The first interpretation is that the results of action are given in a subtle way during the present time. In the second interpretation the results are given at a later time by the karma-sakti potency.

4 "This is explained in the following words:

"Two potencies bring the results of yajnas. The results are brought by a subtle potency."

5 "In this way the fruits of rituals (kriya) are called 'dharma'".

"Here someone may ask the following question: If the demigods are limbs of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and if the Vedic yajnas are therefore most important, then by performing yajnas worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead indirectly (apurvam). Is this not so?

"To this question the scriptures give the following reply:

6 "The suitability of the person and the Vedic ritual is determined by scripture. The word 'apurva' is used because the result of the yajna is not attained immediately."

7 "The yajnas offered to the demigods are meant for worshipping the demigods. By the mercy of the demigods one attains the shelter of the demigods. Here animal sacrifices are not appropriate. One should offer rice and other things instead.

8 "How does one take shelter of Lord Vasudeva in this remote way? If it is said that the yajna-performer's worship is this remote, then that means that Lord Vasudeva is the Supersoul who is the original instigator of the yajna, and for this reason He is the original performer of the yajna and the ultimate shelter of the yajna also. The performer of the yajna is not the shelter of the yajna. In the Nyaya-sastra it is said, 'The result described in the scriptures rests in the person who originally set the yajna in motion'. If this were not so then the rtvik priest would be the shelter of the yajna. This is described in this passage in the words 'saksat kartari'. In this way, by taking shelter of the demigods one also takes shelter of Lord Vasudeva. That is described in this passage by the word 'para-devatayam'.

9 How is Lord Vasudeva the Supreme Personality of Godhead? This passage of Srimad Bhagavatam explains, 'sarva-devata-linganam mantranam arthaniyamakataya', which means 'because He is the controller of King Indra and the other demigods, who are explained in the Vedic mantras'. Thus, because He is the person who should be pleased in the yajnas and also because He gives the results of the yajnas, Lord Vasudeva is the remote shelter in whom the Vedic yajnas rest. That is the meaning here.

10 "Here the word 'naipunya' means 'expert in meditation', 'mrditah' means 'destroyed', and 'kasayah' means 'lust and other material defects'. The word 'adhvaryubhih' is used in the plural because the Advaryu priest has many different duties to perform."

Note: The quotation from Srila Sridhara Svami's commentary ends here.

11 The yajnas are a limb of Lord Visnu. If one worships Lord Visnu with the idea that Lord Visnu is but one component of the Vedic yajnas, then one commits an offense.

12 This is described in the following words of the Padma Purana, Uttarakhanda:

"One who offers yajnas to the demigods and gives them gifts, or one who acts independently and does as he likes, is known as an offender."

The word "offender" here means "one who has strayed from the path of worshipping Lord Visnu".

13 The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Krsna, Himself declares (Sri Bhagavad-gita 9.23-24):

"Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith

actually worship only Me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way.*

14 "I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. Therefore, those who do not recognise My true transcendental nature fall down."*

15 The truth is that all the paths of the Vedas lead to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is confirmed by Srīman Akrura in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.40.9-10):

16 "But all these people, my Lord, even those who have turned their attention away from You and are worshipping other deities, are actually worshipping You alone, O embodiment of all the demigods.***

17 "As rivers born from the mountains and filled by the rain flow from all sides into the sea, so do all these paths in the end reach You, O master."***

18 Here the word "gatayah" means "paths" and "antatah" means "in the conclusion of philosophical inquiry".

Anuccheda 223

1 The second prose passage (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.7.7.) gives the following explanation:

"In this way, being purified by ritualistic sacrifices, the heart of Maharaja Bharata was completely uncontaminated. His devotional service unto Vasudeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa, increased day after day. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva, is the original Personality of Godhead manifest as the Supersoul (Paramatma) as well as the impersonal Brahman. Yogis meditate upon the localised Paramatma situated in the heart, jñānis worship the impersonal Brahman as the Supreme Absolute Truth, and devotees worship Vasudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose transcendental body is described in the sastras. His body is decorated with the Srīvatsa, the Kaustubha jewel and a flower garland and His hands hold a conchshell, disc, club and lotus flower. Devotees like Narada always think of Him within their hearts."*

2 Here the word "evam" (thus) means "after the preceding statement". Then the passage explains, "the devotional service (bhaktih), which was characterised by faithful hearing, chanting and other devotional activities, of he whose heart was pure (visuddha-sattvasya) was manifested (ajayata) with pure activities (karma-visuddhya). That devotional service was offered to Lord Vasudeva (vasudeve), the Supreme Personality of Godhead (bhagavati), who is famous and glorious because His form and opulences are perfect and complete, because He resides everywhere, and because of the glories of His holy name, who in His form known as the Paramatma (Supersoul) resides in the heart (antar-hṛdaye akasah sariram), who is called Brahman (brahmani) because that aspect of His nature has no variety, whose feature as Bhagavan is thus proved not to be varietyless as Brahman is, whose form as the Supreme Person is described in the Vedic scriptures, who is thus seen in the scriptures, and who is marked with the Srīvatsa and other signs. Here the word "edhamanaraya" means "increasing day after day".

Anuccheda 224

1 Offering work to the Lord is of two kinds: 1. working to please the Lord, and 2. offering the results of work to the Lord. This is described in the following words of the Kurma Purana:

2 "May the Supreme Personality of Godhead always be pleased with this

work. One who always thinks in this way offers his work to the Supreme."

3 "Or, one may also offer the results of one's works to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The sages say that this is also a peerless offering to the Supreme."

4 Devotional service is caused in three ways: 1. kamana (with material desire), 2. naiskarmya (free from material activities), and 3. bhakti-matra (devotional service alone).

5 It is not possible for any living being to attain a state where he does not have any desires at all. This is described in the following words:

"Whenever a person acts his actions are impelled by some kind of desire."

6 In kamana and naiskarmya devotional service there is mostly offering the results of one's work to the Lord. In addition there is a reflection of working to please the Lord. This is so because of the devotee's tendency to consider his own self-interest most important. In bhakti-matra devotional service, however, pleasing the Lord is the centre of action. This is so because in this stage the devotee considers the Lord his life and soul.

7 The results attained by engaging in kamana devotional service are described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 8.5.47):

"Karmis are always anxious to accumulate wealth for their sense gratification, but for that purpose they must work very hard. Yet even though they work hard, the results are not satisfying. Indeed, sometimes their work results only in frustration. But devotees who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Lord can achieve substantial results without working very hard. These results exceed the devotee's expectations."*

8 An example of naiskarmya devotional service is the yajna King Anga offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The results of naiskarmya devotional service are described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.46):

"By executing without attachment the regulated activities prescribed in the Vedas, offering the results of such work to the Supreme Lord, one attains the perfection of freedom from the bondage of material work. The material fruitive results offered in the revealed scriptures are not the actual goal of Vedic knowledge, but are meant for stimulating the interest of the performer."***

9 The result attained by engaging in bhakti-matra devotional service is described in the prose of Srimad Bhagavatam 5.7.7., which was quoted in text 1 of this anuccheda.

10 Bhakti-matra devotional service is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.35):

"Whatever work is done here in this life for the satisfaction of the mission of the Lord is called bhakti-yoga, or transcendental loving service to the Lord, and what is called knowledge becomes a concomitant factor."*

11 Because it is helpful in performing devotional service, the knowledge (jnanam) mentioned here is knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The great devotees desire to please the Lord (bhagavat-paritosanam).

12-13 Bhakti-matra devotional service is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.30.39-40):

"Dear Lord, we have studied the Vedas, accepted a spiritual master and offered respect to brahmanas, advanced devotees and aged personalities who are spiritually very advanced. We have offered our respects to them, and we have not

been envious of any brother, friends or anyone else. We have also undergone severe austerities within the water and have not taken food for a long time. All these spiritual assets of our are simply offered for Your satisfaction. We pray for this benediction only, and nothing more."*

14 Here the word "adabhram" means "for a long time". The speakers here say, "We desire that these may be for Your pleasure". This verse was spoken by the Pracetas to the eight-armed Purusa-avatara.

Anuccheda 225

1 In this way aropa-siddha devotional service is described. Then the kind of mixed devotional service is called sanga-siddha is shown. Svarupa-siddha devotional service is described in these words of the sage Prabuddha (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.22):

"Accepting the bona fide spiritual master as one's life and soul and worshipable deity, the disciple should learn from him the process of pure devotional service. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the soul of all souls, is inclined to give Himself to His pure devotees. Therefore, the disciple should learn from the spiritual master to serve the Lord without duplicity and in such a faithful and favourable way that the Supreme Lord, being satisfied, will offer Himself to the faithful disciple."***

In this way there is neutrality, mercy and friendship in what is called bhagavata-dharma. Karma-misra (devotional service mixed with fruitive activities) is of three kinds. 1. sakama (with material desires), 2. kaivalya-kama (desiring liberation), and 3. bhakti-matra-kama (desiring only devotional service). Kaivalya-kama is described in these words:

2 "The activities of devotional service bring attainment of the four goals of life (sense gratification, economic development, religion and liberation). However, a person who sincerely takes shelter of Lord Narayana attains these four goals automatically, without have to struggle in any way."

3 In this way pure devotional service is described. However, one may have various kinds of desires and as these desires are manifested devotional service becomes mixed in various ways. In this way it is understood. Sakama devotional service is mixed mostly with fruitive actions (karma). Fruitive actions here means pious actions that follow various prescribed duties. The nature of this kind of devotional service is broadly described by the Yamadutas in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.1.40):

4 "That which is prescribed in the Vedas constitutes dharma, the religious principles and the opposite of that is irreligion. The Vedas are directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana, and are self-born. This we have heard from Yamaraja."*

5 The Vedas deal mainly with the three modes of material nature. This is described in the following statement of Sri Bhagavad-gita (3.45):

"The Vedas deal mainly with the subject of the three modes of material nature. O Arjuna, become transcendental to these three modes. Be free from all dualities and from all anxieties for gain and safety, and be established in the self."*

6 Simply by engaging in devotional service one becomes perfect. To act out of ignorance is not the same as to act in devotional service. Ignorant action, or "karma", is defined in these words of Sri Bhagavad-gita (8.3):

7 "The indestructible, transcendental living entity is called Brahman, and his eternal nature is called adhyatma, the self. Action pertaining to the development of the material bodies of the living entities is called karma, or fruitive activities."*

8 Here the word "visargah" means "making offerings to the demigods". All religious duties performed in that way are called "karma". "Bhutanam" means "of the living entities", "bhavah" means "desires", and "udbhava-karah" means "creators". In this way it is explained that karma is different from devotional service. That devotional service is far better than ordinary pious deeds is described in the Eleventh Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.19.27), where the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

9 "Actual religious principles are stated to be those that lead one to My devotional service."***

10 Because they are also offerings to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, pious deeds are here called "bhakti-krt", or the companions of devotional service. Sakama devotional service that is also mixed with these pious deeds (karmas) are described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.21.6-9):

11 "Commanded by Lord Brahma to beget children in the worlds, the worshipful Kardama Muni practiced penance on the bank of the River Sarasvati for a period of ten thousand yeas.*

12 "During that period of penance, the sage Kardama, by worship through devotional service in trance, propitiated the Personality of Godhead, who is the quick bestower of all blessings upon those who flee to Him for protection."*

13 When he saw the sage, tears fell from the eyes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is a sign that Kardama Muni was actually a niskama devotee, free of all material desires. Only to honour the order of the demigod Brahma did he act like a person pushed by material desire. In this way it should be understood. This verse was spoken by Sri Maitreya to Vidura.

Anuccheda 226

1 Kaivalya-kama (desiring liberation) devotional service is sometimes mixed with karma and jnana, and sometimes mixed with jnana alone. Kaivalya-kama devotional service mixed with jnana alone is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.19.27):

"Real knowledge is the awareness that reveals My all-pervading presence."***

2 Hearing, renunciation, yoga, sankhya, and other activities are parts of jnana, and that is why jnana may also be part of devotional service. Devotional service mixed with both karma and jnana is described by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.27.21-23):

3 "One can get liberation by seriously discharging devotional service unto Me and thereby hearing for a long time about Me or from Me. By thus executing one's prescribed duties, there will be no reaction, and one will be freed from the contamination of matter.*

4 "This devotional service has to be performed strongly in perfect knowledge and with transcendental vision. One must be strongly renounced and must engage in austerity and perform mystic yoga in order to be firmly fixed in self-absorption.

*

5 "The influence of material nature has covered the living entity, and thus it

is as if the living entity were always in a blazing fire."*

6 Here the word "nimittam" means "result". In this case the cause of this result has no material desires. The word "amalatmana" means "by he who has a pure heart", "jnana" means "with knowledge revealed by the scriptures", and "yogah" means "meditation on the individual spirit soul and the Supersoul".

7 The word "yoga" has many meanings, as the Amara-kosa dictionary explains:

"The word yoga means preparation, method, meditation, meeting and logic."

8 When there is no longer any distinction between the meditator and the object of his meditation, the meditation is called "samadhi". The following explanation is found in Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.81.19):

"The worship of His feet is the root cause of any person's attainment of heaven or of liberation, of all sorts of prosperity in the subterranean regions or on the earth, or of mystic perfections."***

9 In this way it is explained that they (karma and jnana) are parts of devotional service, and devotional service is the whole that contains them. That is the vision of exalted souls. That is the meaning here. They who engage in devotional service mixed with karma and jnana attain only liberation as a result of their efforts. The verses quoted in texts 3-5 were spoken by Lord Kapiladeva.

Anuccheda 227

1 Devotional service mixed with jnana is described by the Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.18.21):

2 "Dwelling in safe and solitary place, his mind purified by constant thought of Me, the sage should concentrate on the soul alone, realising it to be non-different from Me."***

3 Here the word "bhavah" means "meditation". This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 228

1 Devotional service that is mixed with jnana (jnana-misra) when there is a desire for liberation (kaivalya-kama) has thus been described. Now will be described devotional service mixed with karma (karma-misra) when there is a desire for devotional service alone (bhakti-matra-kama). This is described in the following words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.19.20-24):

2-4 "Firm faith in the blissful narrations of My pastimes, constant chanting of my glories, unwavering attachment to ceremonial worship of Me, praising Me through beautiful hymns, great respect for My devotional service, offering obeisances with the entire body, performing first-class worship of My devotees, consciousness of Me in all living entities, offering of ordinary, bodily activities in My devotional service, use of words to describe My qualities, offering the mind to Me, rejecting of all material desires, giving up wealth for My devotional service, renouncing material sense gratification and happiness, and performing all desirable activities such as charity, sacrifice, chanting, vows and austerities with the purpose of achieving Me, these constitute actual religious principles, by which those human beings who have actually surrendered themselves to Me automatically develop love for Me. What other purpose or goal could remain for

My devotee?"***

5 Here the word "mad-arthe" means "for the purpose of serving Me", "arthasya parityagah" means "avoiding what is opposed to devotional service", "bhogasya" means "offering sandal paste and other gifts", "sukhasya" "being affectionate like to one's son", "ista" means "the cause of devotional service", "dharmaih" means "with devotional service, which is called bhagavata-dharma", and "evam dharmair atma-nivedanam" means "with one's body, mind and words one should engage in devotional service and completely surrender unto Me".

6 This is also described in Srimad-Bhagavatam (5.18.12):

"All the demigods and their exalted qualities, such as religion, knowledge and renunciation, become manifest in the body of one who has developed unalloyed devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva. On the other hand, a person devoid of devotional service and engaged in material activities has no good qualities. Even if he is adept at the practice of mystic yoga or the honest endeavour of maintaining his family and relatives, he must be driven by his own mental speculations and must engage in the service of the Lord's external energy. How can there be any good qualities in such a man?"*

7 At the end of Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.19.24 the Lord declares "ko 'nyo 'rtho 'syavasisyate", which means what goal remains to be attained, or what method of attaining a goal needs to be performed by one whose only desire is to engage in My devotional service?" This means that because such a devotee has completely surrendered to the Lord and taken shelter of Him, nothing else remains to be done by him.

Anuccheda 229

1 Devotional service mixed with both karma and jnana is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.29.15-19):

2 "A devotee must execute his prescribed duties, which are glorious, without material profit. Without excessive violence, one should regularly perform one's devotional activities.*

3 "The devotee should regularly see My statues in the temple, touch My lotus feet and offer worshipable paraphernalia and prayer. He should see in the spirit of renunciation, from the mode of goodness, and see every living entity as spiritual.*

4 "The pure devotee should execute devotional service by giving the greatest respect to the spiritual master and the acaryas. He should be compassionate to the poor and make friendship with persons who are his equals, but all his activities should be executed under regulation and with control of the senses.*

5 "A devotee should always try to hear about spiritual matters and should always utilise his time in chanting the holy name of the Lord. His behaviour should always be straightforward and simple, and although he is not envious but friendly to everyone, he should avoid the company of person who are not spiritually advanced.*

6 "When one is fully qualified with all these transcendental attributes and his consciousness is thus completely purified, he is immediately attracted simply by hearing My name or hearing of My transcendental quality."*

7 Here the word "nisevitena" means "properly executed", "animittena" means "without desire", "sva-dharmena" means "by performing one's regular and occasional duties", "mahiyasa" means "with faith and other virtues", "kriya-

yogena" means "with devotional activities described in the Pancaratras and other scriptures", "sastena" means "in auspicious times, places and circumstances" and it also means "without desire", "nati-himsrena" means "without excessive violence", "ati" means "because one knows that all living beings are like limbs of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one avoids harming or killing anyone", "mad-dhisnyam means "My worshipable Deity form", "mad-bhavanaya" means "meditating one Me as the Supersoul in all living beings", "sattvena" means "with patience and tolerance", "asangamena" means "with renunciation", "yamaih" means "with celibacy, a vow of poverty, honesty, and non-violence", "niyamah" means "purity, satisfaction, austerity, scripture study, and meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead", "adhyatmika" means "the scriptures that explain the difference between the individual spirit soul and the Supreme Personality of Godhead", "nirahankriyaya" means "without pride", "mad-dharmanah" means "of the person who follows My dharma", and "asayah" means "consciousness". The Lord then declares, "sruta-matra-gunam mam anjasabhyeti" (the devotee is immediately attracted simply by hearing My name or hearing of My transcendental quality).

8 In Srimad Bhagavatam (3.29.11) it is said:

"The manifestation of unadulterated devotional service is exhibited when one's mind is at once attracted to hearing the transcendental name and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is residing in everyone's heart. Just as the water of the Ganges flows naturally down towards the ocean, such devotional ecstasy, uninterrupted by any material condition, flows towards the Supreme Lord."*

9 This verse describes uninterrupted meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because here one hears about the Lord, the devotional service here is mixed with transcendental knowledge. The verses quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda were spoken by Lord Kapiladeva.

Anuccheda 230

1 Now devotional service mixed with jnana will be explained. In Srimad Bhagavatam (6.16.62) it is said:

2 "One should further understand that the spirit soul, although very difficult for the materialist to perceive, is above all these conditions, and by the strength of one's discrimination one should give up the desire for fruitive results in the present life and in the next. Thus becoming experienced in transcendental knowledge, one should become My devotee."*

3 The word "drsta" here means "was is seen in this life and the next", and "svena tejasa" means "with one's power of discrimination". This verse was spoken by Lord Sankarsana to King Citraketu.

Anuccheda 231

1 Now svarupa-siddha devotional service will be discussed. Svarupa-siddha devotional service is divided into sakama (with material desires) and kaivalya-kama (with the desire fore liberation). Each of these has different qualities. Sakama svarupa-siddha devotional service is divided into two types: 1. in the mode of ignorance, and 2. in the mode of passion. The first of these is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.8):

2 "Devotional service executed by a person who is envious, proud, violent and angry, and who is a separatist is considered to be in the mode of darkness."*

3 Here the word "abhisandhaya" means "having in view", "samrambhi" means "angry", and "bhinna-drk" means "concerned only with his own happiness and distress, and therefore merciless to others". That is the meaning.

Anuccheda 232

The second kind of sakama svarupa-siddha devotional service is described by the Supreme Lord in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.9):

2 "The worship of Deities in the temple by a separatist, with a motive for material enjoyment, fame, and opulence, is devotion in the mode of passion."*

3 Here the word "prthak" means "separate from Me", and "bhavah" means "desire". Thus it is shown that such a person, pushed by the mode of passion, does not desire to attain Me (the Lord).

Anuccheda 233

1 Svarupa-siddha kaivalya-kama (desiring liberation) devotional service is in the mode of goodness. This is described by the Supreme Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.10):

2 "A worker free of attachment is in the mode of goodness, a worker blinded by personal desire is in the mode of passion, and a worker who has completely forgotten how to tell right from wrong is in the mode of ignorance. But a worker who has taken shelter of Me is understood to be transcendental to the modes of nature."*

3 This verse means, "to attain liberation (karma-niharam uddisya) he offers the results of his activities to the Supreme Personality of Godhead (parasmin)." Following the rules of devotional service he must worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is meant to be worshipped by everyone (yastavyam). The person described here does not worship (yajet) the Lord according to the philosophy of devotional service. He sees liberation as a goal separate (prthag-bhavah) from devotional service. Such a person is said to be in the mode of goodness (sattvikah). The meaning is that this last kind of devotional service is performed so one may become free from past karmic reactions.

4 That such a person is in the mode of goodness is confirmed by the following statement of Lord Krsna (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.26):

"A worker free of attachment is in the mode of goodness blinded by personal desire is in the mode of passion, and a worker who has completely forgotten how to tell right from wrong is in the mode of ignorance. But a worker who has taken shelter of Me is understood to be transcendental to the modes of nature."*

5 The Lord also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.24):

"Absolute knowledge is in the mode of goodness, knowledge based on duality is in the mode of passion, and foolish, materialistic knowledge is in the mode of ignorance. Knowledge based upon Me, however, is understood to be transcendental."*

6 The Lord again explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.25.29):

"Happiness derived from the self is in the mode of goodness, happiness based on sense gratification is in the mode of passion, and happiness based on

delusion and degradation is in the mode of ignorance. But that happiness found within Me is transcendental."*

In this way the goals and the means to attain the goals are different according to the different modes of material nature. This is explained in the second half of Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.10, which was quoted in text 2.

Anuccheda 234

1 In order to understand the best kind of devotional service, these different varieties of devotional service have been described. That best kind is svarupa-siddha devotional service. Because in it one desires only to engage in devotional service, svarupa-siddha devotional service is transcendental and free of both material desires and the influence of the modes of nature. Because it is free of all sense of material possessiveness, it is better than the previously described varieties of devotional service. Svarupa-siddha devotional service is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.29.11-14):

2-3 "The manifestation of unadulterated devotional service is exhibited when one's mind is at once attracted to hearing the transcendental name and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is residing in everyone's heart. Just as the water of the Ganges flows naturally down towards the ocean, such devotional ecstasy, uninterrupted by any material condition, flows towards the Supreme Lord.
*

4 "A pure devotee does not accept any kind of liberation: salokya, sarsti, samipya, sarupya or ekatva, even though they are offered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

5 "By attaining the highest platform of devotional service, as I have explained, one can overcome the influence of the three modes of material nature and be situated in the transcendental stage, as is the Lord."*

6 The word "mad-guna-sruti-matrena" does not describe the attainment of any goal other than devotional service. The word "sarva-guhasayah" means "invisible to the material senses, He manifests His eternal form in the hearts of the conditioned souls". "Mayi avicchinnā mano-gatih" means "the activities of the mind go to Me without being interrupted or diverted to anything else." This uninterrupted activity of the mind is explained with an example in the phrase beginning with "yatha". In this example the word "gatih" is understood in the second part. That is because this passage is written in the Vedic style. The word "laksanam" means "nature".

7 Here someone may object: How is it possible to hear the glories of the Lord? The Lord is completely different from the world of matter, and the material mind has no power to understand Him. For these two reasons it is not possible for anyone to describe His glories.

To this objection the following reply is given: In this verse the word "ahaituki" means "without seeking any other result", "avyavahita" means "pure devotional service (svarupa-siddha bhakti) not aropa bhakti or any other kind of imperfect devotional service, which is naturally filled with obstacles and defects. The words "ya bhaktih" refer to devotional service like this, pure devotional service (svarupa-siddha). In this kind of devotional service one is able to serve the Lord with one's ears and other senses. The words "matra", "avicchinnā", "ahaituki" and other words here show that in this condition the mind is perfectly

able to worship the Lord in this way.

8 Pure devotional service is described by the Lord Himself in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.25.26):

"A worker free of attachment is in the mode of goodness, a worker blinded by personal desire is in the mode of passion, and a worker who has completely forgotten how to tell right from wrong is in the mode of ignorance. But a worker who has taken shelter of Me is understood to be transcendental to the modes of nature."***

By thus taking shelter of the Lord and performing other devotional activities one becomes free from the grip of the material modes. In this way one becomes able to hear and understand the Lord's glories.

9 The Lord describes His glories in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.13.40):

"All superior transcendental qualities, such as being beyond the modes of nature, detached, the well-wisher, the most dear, the Supersoul, equally situated everywhere, and free from material entanglement - all such qualities, free from the transformations of material qualities, find their shelter and worshipable object in Me."***

10 In this way it is said that the Lord's qualities are spiritual, not material. In Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.13 (quoted in text 4) the word "ahaituki" (without material motive) is explained. In this verse the Lord declares, "A pure devotee (janah) does not accept (na grhnanti) salokya or any other kind of liberation, even though they are offered (diyamanam) by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, if by accepting that liberation the devotee is not able to serve the Lord (mat-sevanam vina)." For the sake of serving the Lord the devotee will accept liberation, but for his own sake the devotee will not accept liberation. That is the meaning here.

Here the word "sarsti" means "possessing opulences like the Lord's opulences". "Ekatva" means either merging into Bhagavan or merging into Brahman. In either situation because one has merged into the Lord one has no opportunity to serve Him, and for this reason the devotees never accept these impersonal liberations. That is the meaning. In the next verse it is said that pure devotional service (bhakti-yogakhyah) is beyond the touch of the modes of material nature. It is the highest platform of spiritual attainment (atyantikah).

11 In Srimad Bhagavatam (3.15.48) it is said:

"Persons who are very expert and most intelligent in understanding things as they are engage in hearing narrations of the auspicious activities and pastimes of the Lord, which are worth chanting and worth hearing. Such persons do not care even for the highest material benediction, namely liberation, to say nothing of other less important benedictions like the material happiness of the heavenly kingdom."*

The liberation described here is impersonal liberation, where one merges into the existence of the Lord.

12 Here someone may object: If it is so that one must become free from the three modes of material nature before the Lord will appear before him and grant him liberation, then how is it possible that devotional service has the qualities you have described? How can it be self-perfect?

This objection is answered by the passage beginning with the word "yena". Here the Lord says, "One should not become discouraged and abandon his

activities of devotional service, for by engaging in devotional service one will eventually attain a spiritual nature like Mine (mad-bhavaya). Then I will directly appear before you. In this way one becomes qualified (upapadyate) for spiritual life."

13 In Srimad Bhagavatam (5.19.19-20) it is said:

"If one's position is ascertained by a bona fide spiritual master and one is properly trained to engage in the service of Lord Visnu according to the four social divisions (brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya and sudra) and the four spiritual divisions (brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha and sannyasa), one's life becomes perfect.*

"After many, many births, when the results of one's pious activities mature, one gets an opportunity to associate with pure devotees. Then one is able to cut the knot of bondage to ignorance, which bound him because of the varied fruitive activities. As a result of associating with devotees, one gradually renders service to Lord Vasudeva, who is transcendental, free from attachment and to the material world, beyond the mind and words, and independent of everything else. That bhakti-yoga, devotional service to Lord Vasudeva, is the real path of liberation."*

14 There are many different paths of devotional service, which is free from the touch of the modes of material nature. This is explained in the beginning of the passage under discussion here (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29,7):

15 "O noble lady, there are multifarious paths of devotional service in terms of the different qualities of the executor."*

16 Here the word "margaih" means "with different kinds", "margena" means "with different kinds of activities, such as hearing, with different kinds of consciousness, with different rasas, which begin with servitorship, with different modes of nature, which begin with the mode of ignorance, and with different activities of the modes of nature, which begin with ignorant violence." In this way the people have different kinds of consciousness (pumsam bhavo vibhidyate).

17 In the Mukta-phala-tika, Srila Bopadeva comments on Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.14 (which was quoted in text 5):

"Here the word 'atyantikah' means 'nothing is greater than it'. The 'it' referred to here is 'bhakti-yoga', which is mentioned in the word 'bhakti-yogakhyah'. This is so because that is the primary meaning. Other paths make one attracted to things other than Lord Visnu. They do not bring the same result as bhakti-yoga."

18 Devotional service is defined in the following words of Sri Gopala-tapani Upanisad (1.14):

"Devotional service to Lord Krsna is performed when the heart no longer desires any material benefit to be obtained in this life or the next. This is freedom from the bonds of karma."

19 In the Satapatha-brahmana it is said:

"Yajnavalkya said: Wishing to please Him, one should lovingly worship Lord Hari."

20 Here the word "premna" means "with pleasing Him as one's only desire", and "atma-hitaya" means "for His benefit".

Anuccheda 235

1 Thus there are many kinds of devotional service. Many adjectives, such as "akincana" and "ahaituki" have been used to describe devotional service.

Devotional service is of two main kinds: 1. vaidhi, and 2. raganuga. In vaidhi-bhakti one performs devotional service by following the rules spoken in the scriptures.

Vaidhi-bhakti is itself divided into two kinds. In the first kind one is concerned with actions and one is made aware of what should be done and what should not be done. This first kind of vaidhi-bhakti is described in the following words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.14):

2 "Therefore, with one-pointed attention, one should constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the Personality of Godhead, who is the protector of the devotees."*

3 In the second kind of vaidhi-bhakti one is concerned with worship, vows, and similar activities. This second kind of vaidhi-bhakti is described by the Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.27.53):

4 "But one who simply engages in devotional service with no consideration of fruitive results attains Me. Thus whoever worships Me according to the process I have described will ultimately attain pure devotional service unto Me."***

5 Here the word "nairapeksyena" means "without material motives". What is unmotivated (ahaituka) devotional service like? It is described in this verse in the statement beginning with the word "bhakti-yogam". It is also described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.27.8-9), where Lord Krsna Himself explains:

6 "Now please listen faithfully as I explain exactly how a person who has achieved twice-born status through the relevant Vedic prescriptions should worship Me with devotion."***

7 "A twice-born person should worship Me, his worshipable Lord, without duplicity, offering appropriate paraphernalia in loving devotion to My Deity form or to a form of Me appearing upon the ground, in fire, in the sun, in water or within the worshipper's own heart."*

8 This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 236

1 Thus the observance of ekadasi, janmastami and other holy days, are understood to be activities in vaidhi bhakti. Surrendering to and taking shelter of the Lord, service to the spiritual master and the Vaisnavas, and hearing and chanting the Lord's glories, are also included among the activities of vaidhi-bhakti. All of these activities together, or only one of them, or two or three of them, lead the devotee to advanced devotional service. That is confirmed by the scriptures.

The first of these, namely surrendering to and taking shelter of the Lord, puts an end to the fearful condition of repeated birth and death where one is troubled by the six enemies that are the vices of this world. Thus one should take shelter of the Lord and no one else. By desiring only to engage in devotional service one destroys the aversion to the Lord that is caused by those vices.

Taking shelter of the Lord alone is of two kinds: 1. not taking shelter of anyone else but the Lord. 2. intelligently rejecting any shelter but the shelter of the Lord. The first of these is described in the following words addressed to the Lord (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.3.21):

2 "No one in this material world has become free from the four principles birth, death old age, and disease, even by fleeing to various planets. But now that

You have appeared, My Lord, death is fleeing in fear of You, and the living entities, having obtained shelter at Your lotus feet by Your mercy, are sleeping in full mental peace."*

3 The second is described by Lord Krsna Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.14-15):

"Therefore, My dear Uddhava, abandon the Vedic mantras as well as the procedures of supplementary Vedic literatures and their positive and negative injunctions. Disregard that which has been heard and that which is to be heard. Simply take shelter of Me alone, situated within the heart of all conditioned souls. Take shelter of Me wholeheartedly, and by My grace be free from fear in all circumstances."***

4 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word "codanam" means "the Sruti-sastra", and the word "praticodanam" means "the Smrti-sastra".

5 In Bhagavad-gita (18.66), Lord Krsna declares:

"Abandon all varieties of religion, and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear."*

6 The nature of surrendering to the Lord is described in the Vaisnava-tantra:

"The six divisions of surrender are the acceptance of those things favourable to devotional service, the rejection of unfavourable things, the conviction that Krsna will give protection, the acceptance of the Lord as one's guardian or master, full self-surrender, and humility."*

7 These six items of surrender may be divided into a whole and parts. Acceptance of the Lord as one's guardian or master is the whole, for in truth its definition is not different from the definition of the word "surrender". The other items of surrender are all the assistants of this one item. The words "anukulya" and "pratikulya" refer either to the devotees or to the surrendered soul.

8 The conviction that Krsna will give protection is explained in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.16.37):

"My dear sons, the Lord is the controller of the three modes of nature and is responsible for the creation, preservation and dissolution of the universe. His wonderful creative power, yoga-maya, cannot be easily understood even by the masters of yoga. That most ancient person, the Personality of Godhead, will alone come to our rescue. What purpose can we serve on His behalf by deliberating on the subject?"*

9 Full self-surrender is explained in the following statement of the Gautamiya Tantra:

"A certain effulgent being resides in my heart. Whatever he orders, I do."

10 In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, in the explanation of the word "namah" in the eight-syllable mantra, it is said:

11 "The syllable 'ma' means 'false-ego' and the syllable 'ma' means 'that which forbids'. Thus the word 'namah' thus means that the individual spirit soul, the knower of the field of activities, is not permitted to act independently.

12 "The individual spirit soul is completely dependent on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His life and livelihood is completely dependent on the Lord. Therefore he should completely abandon all ideas that he is independent.

13 "Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is completely independent, nothing is unattainable for Him. He has no troubles. He can do whatever He

wishes."

14 In the Brahma-vaivarta Purana it is said:

"Lord Krsna is never far from they who are humble. Many tall mountains stand between Lord Krsna and they who are proud."

15 One who proudly thinks he is independent must stay in the material world of repeated birth and death. This is described in the Brahma's prayers in the Third Canto (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.9.):

16 "O my Lord, the material miseries are without factual existence for the soul. Yet as long as the conditioned soul sees the body as meant for sense enjoyment, he cannot get out of the entanglement of material miseries, being influenced by Your external energy."*

17 Humility is described in the following verse (Srila Rupa Gosvami's Sri Padyavali 66):

"O Lord, no one is more merciful than You and no one is more pathetic than I. I am very lowly and fallen. O Lord Yadunatha, please reflect on my case and do whatever is appropriate."

18 Acceptance of the Lord as one's guardian or master is described in the Nrsimha Purana, where Lord Nrsimhadeva says:

"Anyone who prays unto Me and takes shelter of Me becomes My ward, and I protect him always from all sorts of calamities."*

19 One may surrender to the Lord in three ways: with the body, mind and words. This is explained in the following words of Sri Brahma Purana:

"They become liberated who with their thoughts, words, and deeds surrender to the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead. Yamaraja has no power to approach them."

20 This is also explained in these words of Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa (11.677):

"One who with words and thoughts says, 'O Lord, I am Yours', and who surrenders his body to the Lord, becomes filled with bliss."

21 One who surrenders his entire body to the Lord at once attains all good fortune. Other attain different degrees of good fortune according to the degree of their surrender. Surrender to the Lord is glorified in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.9):

22 "My dear Lord, for one who is being tormented on the terrible path of birth and death and is constantly overwhelmed by the threefold miseries, I do not see any possible shelter other than Your two lotus feet, which are just like a refreshing umbrella that pours down showers of delicious nectar."***

23 This verse means that the showers of the Lord's sweetness chase all miseries far away from the surrendered souls.

Anuccheda 237

1 In this way taking shelter of the Lord is described. Without first taking shelter of the Lord one cannot attain perfection. If one takes shelter of the Lord, then one attains all perfection.

2 This is described in the Garuda Purana:

"They who, shunning the paths of yoga and meditation, take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, cross beyond death and go to the abode of Lord Visnu."

3 Therefore, one who desires perfection, and is able, should serve the feet of

the spiritual masters who teach the scriptures and mantras glorifying the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By the mercy of these spiritual masters, one will become free of all impurities and attain the great mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is described by Sri Narada in the following words of the Seventh Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam (7.15.22-25):

4 "By making plans with determination, one should give up lusty desires for sense gratification. Similarly, by giving up envy one should conquer anger, by discussing the disadvantages of accumulating wealth one should give up greed, and by discussing the truth one should give up fear."*

5 "By discussing spiritual knowledge one can conquer lamentation and illusion, by serving a great devotee one can become prideless, by keeping silent one can avoid obstacles on the path of mystic yoga, and simply by stopping sense gratification one can conquer envy.*

6 "By good behaviour and freedom from envy one should counteract sufferings due to other living entities, by meditation in trance one should counteract sufferings due to providence, and by practicing hatha-yoga, pranayama and so forth one should counteract sufferings due to the body and mind. Similarly, by developing the mode of goodness, especially in regard to eating, one should conquer sleep.*

7 "One must conquer the modes of passion and ignorance by developing the mode of goodness, and then one must become detach from the mode of goodness by promoting oneself to the platform of suddha-sattva. all this can be automatically done if one engages in the service of the spiritual master with faith and devotion. In this way one can conquer the influence of the modes of nature.*

8 In the Vamana-kalpa, Lord Brahma explains:

"One's mantra is identical with his spiritual master. One's spiritual master is identical with Lord Hari. When the spiritual master is pleased, then Lord Hari is pleased."

9 It is also said:

"When Lord Hari is angry, one's spiritual master can protect him. When one's spiritual master is angry, no one can give protection. Therefore with all efforts one should strive to please his spiritual master."

10 Therefore one should always serve his spiritual master. In another place in the scriptures, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself declares:

"First one should worship his spiritual master, and then afterward one should worship Me. One who does this attains perfection. One who does not finds that all his efforts are in vain."

11 In the Narada-pancaratra it is said:

"With body, mind and words, one should worship his Vaisnava spiritual master, who is like Lord Visnu, and who teaches the science of Lord Visnu. One who knows the true meaning of the scriptures is a Vaisnava.

12 "One who teaches the true meaning of the verses in the scriptures is always to be worshipped. What more need be said? He is a manifestation of Lord Visnu Himself."

13 In the Padma Purana, Devadyuti prays:

"For me devotion to my spiritual master it is more important than devotion to Lord Hari. If I am devoted to my spiritual master, then Lord Hari will personally reveal Himself to me."

14 In such a situation there is no need even to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead separate from the worship of one's spiritual master. This is explained in the Agama-sastra, where, in the course of describing the results of purascarana, it is said:

15 "As an alchemist's touch turns copper into gold, so the spiritual master's touch makes his disciple transcendental like Lord Visnu Himself."

16 This is also explained in Srimad Bhagavatam (10.80.34), where Lord Krsna declares:

"I, the Soul of all beings, cannot be satisfied as much by ritual worship, by generating progeny, by observing penances or by self-control, as I am by faithful service rendered to one's spiritual master."***

17 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse explains that no one is more to be worshipped than the spiritual master who gives transcendental knowledge. Therefore no duty is more important than the worship of him. In this verse the word "ijya" means "the ritual duties of a householder". "Prajatih" means "the second birth by accepting the sacred thread". That word describes the duties of a brahmacari. "Tapasa" describes the duties of a vanaprastha" and "upasamena" describes the duties of a sannyasi". "Aham" means "I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead". The Lord then declares: "I, the Soul of all beings, cannot be satisfied by these things in the same way as I am by faithful service rendered to one's spiritual master."

18 Knowledge is of two kinds: 1. knowledge of Brahman, and 2. knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This verse has just been explained according to the first kind of knowledge. An explanation according to the second kind of knowledge follows.

Here the word "ijya" means "worship", "prajatih" means "Vaisnava initiation", "tapah" means "samadhi" and "upasama" means "faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to Sridama Vipra.

Anuccheda 238

1 It is good to serve other Vaisnavas when this service is ordered by one's spiritual master and when it does not create an impediment to the service of one's spiritual master. If one acts otherwise, he is at fault. Sri Narada explains this in the following words:

2 "He attains misfortune who worships someone else in the presence of his spiritual master. His worship becomes fruitless."

3 The qualities of a bona fide spiritual master are described in Srimad Bhagavatam (11.3.21). If one's spiritual master does not have these qualities, and is envious of advanced devotees, and thus refuses to allow his disciples to honour and worship other devotees, the disciple should leave such a pretender spiritual master is not at fault. He has not disobeyed the teachings of the scriptures. The truth is that such a pretender spiritual master and his disciple both fall into calamity. This is described in the following words of Sri Narada-pancaratra:

4 "A spiritual master who speaks wrongly, without logic, and a disciple who hears wrongly, without logic, both go to a terrible hell for a long time that seems not to end."

5 Such a spiritual master should be worshipped from afar. If the spiritual

master hates Vaisnavas, he should be rejected. This is described in the Smrti-sastra:

"A spiritual master who is materialistic, unaware of what should and should not be done, and deviated from the true spiritual path, should be rejected."

6 One who does not have the qualities of a Vaisnava is not a Vaisnava. This is explained in the verse beginning with the words "avaishnavopadistena" (quoted in anuccheda 207). If the spiritual master does not have the qualities thus described, it is best that one should serve a genuine exalted (maha-bhagavata) devotee instead of him. This exalted devotee, who should be equipoised and kind-hearted to his disciples, should be accepted as if he were one's spiritual master.

7 In the Sri Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya it is said:

"Association is very important. It acts just like a crystal stone, which will reflect anything which is put before it.* Therefore, for his own well-being an intelligent person will associate with someone who will bring good fortune."

This means that without the mercy of a great Vaisnava one cannot attain the condition where his heart is attracted to the Supreme Lord.

8 Therefore one should appropriately serve all persons who show the signs of being devotees of the Lord. Service to the great devotees is of two kinds: 1. association with devotees, and 2. worship and service of devotees. Association with devotees is described by Lord Krsna in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.1-2):

9-10 "My dear Uddhava, by associating with my pure devotee one can destroy one's attachment for all objects of material sense gratification. Such purifying association brings Me under the control of My devotee. One may perform the astanga-yoga system, engage in philosophical analysis of the elements of material nature, practice non violence and other ordinary principles of piety, chant the Vedas, perform penances, take to the renounced order of life, execute sacrificial performances and dig wells, plant trees, and perform other public welfare activities, give in charity, carry out severe vows, worship the demigods, chant confidential mantras, visit holy places or accept major and minor disciplinary injunctions, but even by performing such activities one does not bring Me under his control."***

11 In the previous chapter, the Lord also explained (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.47):

"One who has executed sacrificial performances and pious works for My satisfaction, and who thus worships Me with fixed attention, obtains unflinching devotional service unto Me. By the excellent quality of his service such a worshipper obtains realised knowledge of Me."***

12 Here the word "sadhu-sevaya" means "by a person who has faith in devotional service and who thus knows that all other spiritual paths are improper". "Ista" means "agnihotra, darsa, paurnamasa, caturmasya, yaga, pasuyaga, vaisvadeva and bali-hrana, which are all described in the Seventh Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam". "Purta" means "suralaya, arama, kupa, vapi, tadaga, and prapanna-sastra".

13 The Lord describes "ista" in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.43):

"One may worship Me within fire by offering oblations of ghee."

The Lord describes "purta" in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.38):

"One should work for the construction of flower gardens, fruit gardens and

special areas to celebrate My pastimes."

14 Thus the Lord explains, "One who has executed sacrificial performances and pious works for My satisfaction, and who thus worships Me with fixed attention, obtains unflinching devotional service unto Me." This means that in the association of devotees one attains faith in confidential devotional service. The Supreme Lord is present in the sacrificial fire and thus agni-hotra-yajnas are offered to please Him. Digging wells, planting gardens, and other like activities are done here for the purpose of serving the Lord. Thus in the association of devotees one should serve the Supreme Lord. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is supremely independent and supremely powerful. It is He who gives the results of all actions. To explain the confidential truth of all this, the Lord Himself declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.49):

15 "My dear Uddhava, O beloved of the Yadu dynasty, because you are My servant, well-wisher and friend, I shall now speak to you the most confidential knowledge. Please hear as I explain these great mysteries to you."***

16 Not yet having described that portion of His glories, the Lord proceeds to reveal that confidential knowledge in the passage beginning with Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.1.

17 In Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.1 the word "tyagah" means "renunciation", "daksina" means "charity", "yajnah" means "worship of the demigods", and "chandamsi" means "confidential mantras". Here the Lord explains, "By associating with My devotees, one brings Me under his control. By performing yoga or sankhya one does not bring Me under his control in the same way." That is the meaning here. The devotees are able to bring the Supreme Personality of Godhead under their control. Therefore the devotees are not ordinary persons. That is the meaning here.

18 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word 'vratani' means 'ekadasi' and 'other vows'."

However, of course, this does not mean that other Vaisnava vows are to be neglected. Still, this one vow, the ekadasi vow, bring a very great result, and thus the regular observance of it should not be avoided.

They who are qualified to perform pious deeds are described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.14.17):

19 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, is the enjoyer of sacrificial offerings. Yet although His Lordship eats the oblations offered in the fire, my dear King, He is still more satisfied when nice food made of grains and ghee is offered to Him through the mouths of qualified brahmanas."*

20 The verse preceding this gives the following explanation (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.14.16):

"When one is enriched with wealth and knowledge which are under his full control and by means of which he can perform yajna or please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one must perform sacrifices, offering oblations to the fire according to the directions of the sastras. In this way one should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

The devotees described here are not able to abandon the regulated performance of yajnas.

21 They who are qualified to engage in devotional service are described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.19.21):

"Worship of My devotees is most important."

After one is initiated one must regularly worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One is not able to renounce that worship.

22 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"In the Kali-yuga one who offers cooked rice to Lord Visnu and then eats the remnants of that offering, obtains the pious results of a six month fast."

23 These words do not detract from the importance of observing ekadasi. One should regularly observe ekadasi and the other Vaisnava vows, for that brings a great result. Now we will reveal something about worshipping the Supreme Lord by observing ekadasi and the other Vaisnava vows.

24 Srila Sridhara Svami comments on Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.11.32:

"Here the word 'santyajya' means 'renouncing obstructions to true devotional service, obstructions such as fasting on viddha-ekadasi, failure to fast on krsna-ekadasi, and failure to offer foods to the Lord on ekadasi.'"

25 Commenting on the word "bhagavad-dharman" in a conversation of Sri Bhisma and Sri Yudhisthira in the First Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam (1.9.27), Srila Sridhara Svami explains:

"Dvadasi and other vows are pleasing to Lord Hari".

In the Third Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.1.19), Srila Sridhara Svami comments on the words "vratani cere hari-tosanani":

"This refers to ekadasi and other vows."

The importance of ekadasi is also seen in the description of the Supreme Lord's mercy to King Ambarisa, the crest jewel of the devotees.

Anuccheda 239

1 Now we will continue the discussion. There are two ways to bring the Supreme Lord under one's control: a primary way and a secondary way. In the primary way one attains pure love for the Lord. This way is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (5.6.18):

"My dear King, the Supreme Person, Mukunda, is actually the maintainer of all the members of the Pandava and Yadu dynasties. He is your spiritual master, worshipable Deity, friend and the director of your activities. To say nothing of this, He sometimes serves your family as a messenger or servant. This means He worked just as ordinary servants do. Those engaged in getting the Lord's favour attained liberation from the Lord very easily, but He does not very easily give the opportunity to render direct service unto Him."*

2 In the second way to bring the Lord under one's control one attains a result different from what is attained in the first way. The gopis are examples of devotees who employed the first way, and Banasura is an example of a devotee who employed the second way. In the second way the devotee is very eager to attain the result of his efforts. In the following words the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself gives examples of both ways to bring Him under control (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.3-6):

3-6 "In every yuga many living entities entangled in the modes of passion and ignorance gained the association of My devotees. Thus, such living entities as the Daityas, Raksasas, birds, beasts, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Nagas, Siddhas, Caranas, Guhyakas and Vidyadharas, as well as such lower-class human beings as the vaisyas, sudras and women and others, were able to achieve My supreme abode.

Vrtrasura, Prahlada Maharaja and other like them also achieved My abode by association with My devotees, as did personalities such as Vrsaparva, Bali Maharaja, Banasura, Maya, Vibhisana, Sugriva, Hanuman, Jambavan, Gajendra, Jatayu, Tuladhara, Dharma-vyadha, Kubja, the gopis in Vrndavana and the wives of the brahmanas who were performing sacrifice."***

7 Here the word "daiteyah" means "the asuras and danavas", "yatudhanah" means "the raksasas". An example of someone who took birth in these species is given in the passage beginning with the word "tvastra". "tvastra" means "Vrtrasura, who in his previous birth had the association of Lord Sankarsana, Narada Muni and Angira Muni."

8 "Kayadhava" means "Prahlada, the son of Kayadhu". When he was still in his mother's womb, Prahlada had the association of Narada Muni. The word "adayah" (beginning with) here refers to many other persons born in the previously described demonic species.

9 Vrsaparva was a danava. Abandoned by his natural mother, he was adopted by a great sage and thus he became a devotee of Lord Visnu. His story is recounted in another Purana. Bali had the association of Lord Vamana and Prahlada Maharaja. This was because he understood the philosophy of devotion. Banasura had the association of Bali, Siva and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Afterwards his many arms were cut off. He understood the glories of Lord Visnu. He attained the association of the great devotee Lord Siva. This was like having the association of the Supreme Lord Himself.

10 Maya was a danava. At the beginning of building the assembly house, he had the association of the Pandavas and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At the end he attained the association of the Lord. Vibhisana was a yatudhana. He had the association of Hanuman and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. "Mrgah" refers to many animals, beginning with Sugriva and ending with Gajendra. "Rksa" refers to Jambavan. He had the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. "Gajah" refers to Gajendra. In his previous birth he had the association of great devotees, and in his final birth he had the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. "Grdhrah" refers to the bird (khagah) named Jatayu. He had the association of Garuda, Dasaratha and many other great souls. He directly saw both Sri Sita-devi and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Many gandharvas and others are not specifically mentioned here because they are not very famous. Vaisyas and others among the human species are mentioned here. "Vanik-pathah" refers to Tuladhara. His glorious story is recounted in the Mahabharata. He had the association of gandharvas and Jajali Muni. The conclusion is that one should seek out the association of great devotees.

"Vyadhah" refers to the hunter Dharma. "Sudrah" refers to the lowest caste.

11 The story of Dharma-vyadha is recounted in the Varaha Purana. In a former birth in the previous Kali-yuga, while he was in the company of a Vaisnava king named Vasu, he killed a brahmana, mistaking the brahmana for a deer. Then he became a brahma-raksasa. When the king went to Visnuloka within the material world, he entered the king's body. When the king's enjoyment in Visnuloka came to an end, he again attained the body of a king. By the power of the recitation of the prayer called Brahma-para, he left that body. He was called Dharma-vyadha and he was very averse to any violence. At the end he saw Lord Jagannatha and offered prayers to Him. Embracing the Lord, he attained sayujya-

mukti.

12 Kubja had the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In her previous birth she had the association of Narada Muni. She is famous among Lord Krsna's associates in Mathura. The gopis here refers the gopis in general. They came to Vraja, where they married Lord Krsna and enjoyed many pastimes with Him. They had the association of Lord Krsna's eternal beloveds. They saw Lord Krsna and enjoyed many pastimes with Him. In this way they associated with the Lord. The yajna-patnis had association with great devotees who chanted the glories of Lord Krsna. Here the word "apare" means "daityas and others".

Anuccheda 240

1 No method of spiritual advancement is better than the association of devotees. This is confirmed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.7):

2 "The persons I have mentioned did not undergo serious studies of the Vedic literature, nor did they worship great saintly persons, nor did they execute severe vows or austerities. Simply by association with Me and My devotees, they achieved Me."***

3 Here the Lord explains, "The persons I have mentioned did not undergo serious studies of the Vedic literature, nor did they worship great saintly persons, nor did they execute severe vows or austerities. Simply by association with Me and My devotees, they achieved Me."***

Vrtrasura and others may have performed other kinds of spiritual activities in their previous births, but it was by associating with devotees that they finally attained spiritual success. This is also true of Dharma-vyadha and others.

4 Here the word "mat-sanga" means "association with Me or with My devotees". In either case there is association with Me". That is the meaning here. The association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is present in the association of His devotees. By associating with the Lord's devotees, one attains the Lord's mercy. Thus there is no fault in the declaration that association with the Lord's devotees is the best of all spiritual activities.

5 In some situations one is able to associate with the Lord directly, and from this one attains love for the Lord. Therefore we say that in this situation the word "sat" means "the incarnation of the Lord". In this way the Lord gives His mercy. This does not deny the interpretation of the word "sat" as "devotee".

Anuccheda 241

1 Association with the Lord's devotees is the primary way to bring the Lord under one's control. There is no other way. This is revealed in the following description of the gopis and others (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.8):

2 The inhabitants of Vrndavana, including the gopis, cows, unmoving creatures such as the twin arjuna trees, animals, living entities with stunted consciousness such as bushes and thickets, and snakes such as Kaliya, all achieved the perfection of life by unalloyed love for Me and thus very easily achieved Me."***

3 Here the word "bhavena" means "with love, which is attained only by associating with devotees." This love is the primary way to bring the Lord under one's control.

4 This is explained in Srimad Bhagavatam (9.4.66) where the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

"As chaste women bring their gentle husbands under control by service, the pure devotees, who are equal to everyone and completely attached to Me in the core of the heart, bring Me under their full control."*

5 The Lord also says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.21):

"Being very dear to the devotees and sadhus, I am attained through unflinching faith and devotional service. This bhakti-yoga system, which gradually increases attachment for Me, purifies even a human being born among dog-eaters. That is to say, everyone can be elevated to the spiritual platform by the process of bhakti-yoga."*

6 Like the gopis, the cows were also spontaneously attracted to the Lord. Here the words "nagah" refers to the yamalarjuna and other trees, "mrgah" refers to the beings previously described, and "nagah" refers to Kaliya and other serpents. Here it is said that both yamalarjuna and Kaliya attained the same eternal association of the Lord. Here it is said that one becomes perfect by "sat-sanga", which was previously defined in two ways (as the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or the association of His devotees). One does not attain the spiritual love described here by practicing yoga or following other non-devotional paths. This is described in Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.12.2), where the word "yatha" indicates that devotional service is the best of all spiritual paths.

Anuccheda 242

1 This is confirmed by the Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.9):

"Even though one engages with great endeavour in the mystic yoga system, philosophical speculation, charity, vows, penances, ritualistic sacrifices, teaching of Vedic mantras to others, personal study of the Vedas or the renounced order of life, still one cannot achieve Me."***

2 Here the word "yam" refers "which love". This occurs even though (api) these devotees endeavour (yatnavan) with yoga to attain love for the Lord.

3 To show the most exalted status of the gopis, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gives an explanation that begins with the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.49):

"My dear Uddhava, O beloved of the Yadu dynasty, because you are My servant, well-wisher and friend, I shall now speak to you the most confidential knowledge. Please hear as I explain these great mysteries to you."***

4 To reveal the greatest secret, the Lord speaks the passage that begins with these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.12.10):

"The residents of Vrndavana, headed by the gopis, were always completely attached to Me with deepest love. Therefore, when My uncle Akrura brought My brother Balarama and Me to the city of Mathura, the residents of Vrndavana suffered extreme mental distress because of separation from Me and could not find any other source of happiness."***

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 243

1 Even if one is not situated in transcendental knowledge, by associating with devotees he attains the goal of life. This is confirmed by the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.23.55):

2 "Association for sense gratification is certainly the path of bondage. But the same type of association, performed with a saintly person, leads to the path of liberation, even if performed without knowledge."*

3 Here the word "adhiya" means "without knowledge". The ignorance here is the mistaken idea that Narada Muni and other great sages are ordinary persons. This verse was spoken by Sri Devahuti.

Anuccheda 244

1 Thus the result of associating with great devotees has been described. The result obtained by serving great devotees is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.7.19):

2 "By serving the feet of the spiritual master, one is enabled to develop transcendental ecstasy in the service of the Personality of Godhead, who is the unchangeable enemy of the Madhu demon and whose service vanquishes one's material distresses."*

3 Here the word "yesam" means "of you great devotees", "sevaya" means "by service", and "juta-sthasya" means "eternal". In this way one attains a festival of love for the feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (bhagavatah padayo rati-raso bhavet). The adjective "tivra" here shows that by associating with devotees one attains the best result of devotional service. The result of associating with devotees is described in the passage beginning with the word "vyasanardana". "Vyasana" here means "the material world of repeated birth and death". The value of associating with devotees is also seen in these words of Lord (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.21):

"Worship of My devotees is the most important."

In these words the Lord declares, "By worshipping My devotees one attains more intense love for Me than by worshipping Me directly."

4 This is confirmed by the following statement of Padma Purana, Uttarakhanda:

"My dear Devi, although the Vedas mention worship of demigods, the worship of Lord Visnu is topmost and is ultimately recommended. However, above the worship of Lord Visnu is the rendering of service to Vaisnavas, who are related to Lord Visnu."*

5 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Maitreya Muni to Vidura.

Anuccheda 245

1 The result attained by not associating with devotees is shown in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.84.130):

"One who accepts this bodily bag of three elements (bile, mucus, and air) as his self, who has an affinity for an intimate relationship with his wife and children, who considers his land worshipable, who takes bath in the waters of the holy places of pilgrimage but never takes advantage of those person who are in actual knowledge, he is no better than an ass or a cow."*

2 Here the word "kunape" means "the material body, which is meant for

death, and which is defiled with the three material elements of bile, mucus, and air", "bhaume" means "thinking the land of his birth to be his worshipable Deity", "yat" means "of whom", "abhijnesu" means "they who are not wise knowers of the truth", and "atma-buddhih" means "filled with love for the material body". Such a person is said to be as lowly as a cow (sa eve go-kharah). He is like a wild ass from the forests of Sindhu or Sauvira. He is like a person born in a mlechha family. Although he thinks himself very wise and intelligent, he does not know what is the truth. Therefore he is lowly and degraded, the words "bhauma ijya-dhih" mean that he thinks the land of his birth to be his worshipable deity. He is to be distinguished from a neophyte devotee, who has begun the process of spiritual elevation. The neophyte devotee is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.47):

"A devotee who faithfully engages in the worship of the Deity in the temple but does not behave properly toward other devotees or people in general is called a prakṛta-bhakta, a materialistic devotee, and is considered to be in the lowest position."*

3 The position of the devotees is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.14):

"As pouring water on the root of a tree energises the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality."*

These words are not to be taken lightly. This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to the assembled sages.

Anuccheda 246

1 The result attained by serving great devotees is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.9.12):

"O Lord who have a lotus navel, if a person happens to associate with a devotee whose heart always hankers after Your lotus feet, seeking always their fragrance, he is never attached to the material body or, in a bodily relationship, to offspring, friends, home, wealth and wife, which are very, very dear to materialistic persons. Indeed, he does not care for them."*

2 Here the word "martyam" means "the material body, which is most dear to the conditioned soul". The devotees, however, forget about the material body and the children and others that are in relationship with the body.

Anuccheda 247

1 That one should appropriately worship the Vaisnavas is described in the following words of the Itihasa-samuccaya:

"To gain Lord Visnu's mercy, one should first please the Vaisnavas. When the Vaisnavas are pleased, then Lord Visnu is merciful. Of this there is no doubt.

2 The opposite of this is described in the following words of the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda:

"A person who worships Lord Govinda but does not worship the Lord's devotees, is not himself a devotee. He is only a pretender."

3 In Srimad Bhagavatam (4.21.12) it is said:

"Maharaja Prthu was an unrivalled king and possessed the sceptre for ruling all the seven islands on the surface of the globe. No one could disobey his irrevocable orders but the saintly persons, the brahmanas and the descendants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (the Vaisnavas)."*

4 This explanation is given about Sri Prthu Maharaja's pastimes. Something else is more important than birth in an exalted family. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.11.35):

5 "If one shows the symptoms of being a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya or sudra, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification."*

6 In the Padma Purana, Sri Narada Muni explains:

"What more need be said? Brahmanas who are not Vaisnavas should never be seen, touched or spoken to."

7. In the Magha-mahatmya it is said: "One who refuses even to look at a non-Vaisnava brahmana, considering him degraded like a dog-eater, is a true Vaisnava. Above the class distinctions of ordinary society, he purifies the three worlds.

8 "They who are devoted to the Supreme Lord are never to be considered sudras. They are all great souls. They who are not devoted to Lord Visnu are all sudras, regardless of the class of their birth."

9 In the Itihasa-samuccaya it is said:

"O best of brahmanas, when he is remembered, spoken to, or worshipped, a Vaisnava, even if born in a candala family, brings great purification."

10 If one sees a Vaisnava in any other way, one commits a great offense. This is described in the following words of the Itihasa-samuccaya:

"One who thinks that because of his birth a Vaisnava is a low-class sudra, or svapaca, goes to hell for a long time."

11 The nature of advanced devotional service is described in the Garuda Purana where the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

"The qualities of devotional service are: 1. love for My devotees, 2. being very pleased to worship Me, 3. being very pleased to hear about My glories, 4. manifesting a choked voice, tears in the eyes, and other symptoms of ecstatic love,...

12 ...5. dancing in ecstatic love for Lord Visnu, 6. being free of hypocrisy, 7. personally worshipping the Lord, and 8. not being a professional worshipper, who worships Lord Visnu only to earn his livelihood.

13 "These are the eight symptoms of devotional service. When these symptoms are manifested in a person born in a mleccha family, that person is the king of brahmanas. That person is the best of sages. He is wise. He is truly learned. To him gifts should be given, and whatever he offers should be accepted. As Lord Hari is worshipped, so should he also be worshipped."

14 The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself declares:

"Even though a person is a very learned scholar of the Sanskrit Vedic literature, he is not accepted as My devotee unless he is pure in devotional service. However, even though a person is born in a family of dog-eaters, he is very dear to me if he is a pure devotee who has no motive to enjoy fruitive activity or mental speculation. Indeed all respect should be given to him and whatever he offers should be accepted. Such devotees are as worshipable as I am."*

15 Aware of the glories of devotional service, Durvasa Muni respectfully

touched the feet of King Ambarisa. However, King Ambarisa did not reciprocate by worshipping Durvasa Muni. Sri Uddhava, other devotees and even the Supreme Lord Himself have offered obeisances to brahmanas who were not Vaisnavas. However, other Vaisnavas do not always do this in all circumstances. The Supreme Personality of Godhead explains (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.64.41):

16 "My dear followers, never treat a learned brahmana harshly, even if he has sinned. Even if he attacks you physically or repeatedly curses you, always continue to offer him obeisances."***

17 To do otherwise is to disobey the Supreme Lord Himself. Therefore the verse from the Magha-mahatmya quoted in text 7 of this anuccheda should be understood to mean that one should not be eager to associate with Non Vaisnavas. This is also seen in the way Yudhisthira, Draupadi and other Vaisnavas dealt with Asvatthama. A person who honours Vaisnavas should not call the activities of Vaisnavas into question. This is seen in the following statement of the Lord (Bhagavad-gita 9.30):

18 "Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination."*

20 In the Garuda Purana it is said:

"Even if he refuses to perform the duties of his asrama, and even if he acts badly, a devotee of Lord Visnu is glorious like the rising sun. He purifies all the worlds."

21 This is confirmed by the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.33.7) where Devahuti tells Lord Kapiladeva:

"Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your holy name! Even if born in the families of dog-eaters, such person are worshipable. Persons who chant the holy name of Your Lordship must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Aryans. To be chanting the holy name of Your Lordship, they must have bathed at holy places of pilgrimage, studied the Vedas and fulfilled everything required."*

22 Here the primary, etymological meaning of the word "svapaca" should be accepted. Therefore, even if he is of low birth, and even if his activities are abominable, a devotee of the Lord is not to be reviled or dishonoured. However, the devotee himself may feel remorse for his misbehaviour.

23 In the Garuda Purana it is said:

"A person who, hearing harsh words from a devotee, remains peaceful and tolerant, bows down before the devotee, and speaks sweetly to him, is a true Vaisnava."

24 In this way it is shown that one should serve the devotees of the Lord. That service begins with hearing the glories of the devotees. In Srimad Bhagavatam (5.5.2.) it is said:

"One can attain the path of liberation from material bondage only by rendering service to highly advanced spiritual personalities. These personalities are impersonalists and devotees. Whether one wants to merge into the Lord's existence or wants to associate with the Personality of Godhead, one should render service to the mahatmas. For those who are not interested in such activities, who associate with people fond of women and sex, the path to hell is wide open. The mahatmas are equiposed. They do not see any difference between one living

entity and another. They are very peaceful and are fully engaged in devotional service. They are devoid of anger, and they work for the benefit of everyone. They do not behave in any abominable way. Such people are known as mahatmas."*

25 By associating with great souls one attains the supreme auspicious benefit. The Lord explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.26.28-31):

26 "O greatly fortunate Uddhava, in the association of such saintly devotees there is constant discussion of Me and those partaking in this chanting and hearing of My glories are certainly purified of all sins."***

27 "Whoever hears, chants and respectfully takes to heart these topics about Me becomes faithfully dedicated to Me and thus achieves My devotional service."***

28 "What more remains to be accomplished for the perfect devotee after achieving devotional service unto Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth, whose qualities are innumerable and who am the embodiment of all ecstatic experience? ***

29 "Just as cold, fear and darkness are eradicated for one who has approached the sacrificial fire, so dullness, fear and ignorance are destroyed for one engaged in serving the devotees of the Lord."***

30 In the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.26.27) the Lord describes the exalted qualities of the devotees:

"My devotees fix their minds on Me and do not depend upon anything material. They are always peaceful, endowed with equal vision, and free from possessiveness, false ego, duality and greed."***

In Srimad Bhagavatam 11.26.29 the word "bhaktim" means "love".

31 Lord Siva glorifies the devotees in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.24.570):

"If one by chance associates with a devotee, even for a fraction of a moment, he no longer is subject to attraction by the results of karma or jnana. What interest then can he have in the benedictions of the demigods, who are subject to the laws of birth and death?">*

32 Sri Saunaka Rsi glorifies the devotees in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.18.13):

"The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets of liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death."*

33 In Srimad Bhagavatam 11.26.31, the Lord gives an example. In that verse the word "vibhavasum" means "fire" and "srayamanasya" means "of one who approaches the fire of a yajna to begin worship". For such a person cold and other distresses are removed (apyeti). Fear (bhayam), which is caused by wicked persons and other causes, is also removed. In the same way a person who serves the devotees of the Lord (sadhun) becomes free of the material dullness caused by karma and other causes. The ignorance that is the root of the fears created in the material world of repeated birth and death, is then destroyed.

Anuccheda 248

1 Now will be considered hearing the glories of the Lord. This hearing occurs when sounds describing the Lord's names, forms, qualities and pastimes,

touch the ears. Hearing the holy name of the Lord is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.16.44):

2 "My Lord, it is not impossible for one to be immediately freed from all material contamination by seeing You. Not to speak of seeing You personally, merely by hearing the holy name of Your Lordship only once, even candalas, men of the lowest class, are freed from all material contamination. Under the circumstances, who will not be freed from material contamination simply by seeing You?"*

3 In this way by once hearing the holy name of the Lord one attains final liberation. However, by repeatedly hearing the holy name one attains great devotion to the Lord, which is better than liberation. This verse was spoken by King Citraketu to Lord Sankarsana.

Anuccheda 249

1 Hearing about the transcendental form of the Lord is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.5):

"O my Lord, persons who smell the aroma of Your lotus feet, carried by the air of Vedic sound through the holes of the ears, accept Your devotional service. For them You are never separated from the lotus of their hearts."*

2 The word "tu" (but) in this verse hints the existence of those persons who do not honour the Lord's transcendental forms, and who are thus the opposites of the devotees. Those persons are rebuked in the following words of the preceding verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.4):

"O Lord, those who are destined to be dispatched to the path of hell neglect Your personal form because of speculating on material topics."*

The word "asat-prasangah" here refers to they who are averse to the Lord.

3 In Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.5. is described great devotion to the Lord's feet. Here the word "gandham" means "the sweet fragrance of the words, form and other things". The devotees smell (jighranti) this sweet fragrance through the holes of the ears (karna-vivaraih). As through the nostrils one smells a sweet fragrance, so through the ears they relish the sweetness of the Lord. Here the word "sruti" means "the Vedas and other scriptures that follow the Vedic conclusion". The scriptures are the breeze (vata) that carries the fragrance of the Lord's sweetness. "Paraya bhaktya" means :with devotion characterised by spiritual love." Then the speaker says, "O Lord, You have no power to leave a person who has taken shelter of Your feet (grhita-caranam)." This verse was spoken by the demigod Brahma to Lord Garbhodakasayi Visnu.

Anuccheda 250

1 Hearing about the transcendental qualities of the Lord is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.3.14-15):

"I have related to you the narrations of all these great kings, who spread their fame throughout the world and then departed. My real purpose was to teach transcendental knowledge and renunciation. Stories of kings lend power and opulence to these narrations but do not in themselves constitute the ultimate aspect of knowledge."**

2 "The person who desires pure devotional service to Lord Krsna should hear the narrations of Lord Uttamasloka's glorious qualities, the constant chanting of

which destroys everything inauspicious. The devotee should engage in such listening in regular daily assemblies and should also continue his hearing throughout the day."***

3 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In this verse the speaker describes the dynasties of the great kings. However, he does this with a desire to speak (vivaksaya) about transcendental knowledge (vijñana) and renunciation (vairagya). Elaborate descriptions (vacō vibhūtiḥ) of departed (pāreyaśam) kings are not the ultimate aspect of knowledge (paramārthyam). In the next verse the words "nityam" and "abhikṣnam" means "every day".

4 In one sense, however, this statement is contradicted by the fact that among these descriptions of the great kings are descriptions of Lord Rama, Lord Lakṣmana and other incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As a parasol bearer follows a king, so renunciation follows these descriptions of the Lord. In Srimad Bhagavatam (1.1.13) it is said:

"O expert and thoughtful men, relish Srimad Bhagavatam, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls."*

Although Srimad Bhagavatam thus explains the nectar of transcendental rasas, those rasas are sometimes the santa-rasa and other rasa employed in direct devotional service, and sometimes they are santa-rasa and other rasas employed as helpers to lead one to direct devotional service. In this way the nectar rasas of devotional service are on different levels.

5 Here the word "guṇah" means "mercy and other virtues". The nature of the Lord's virtues is seen in the following statement of Bhagavad-gīta (11.36):

"O master of the senses, the world becomes joyful upon hearing Your name, and thus everyone becomes attached to You. Although the perfected beings offer You their respectful homage, the demons are afraid, and they flee here and there. All this is rightly done."*

6 The great devotees relish hearing the transcendental qualities of the Lord. This is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (1.16.5-6):

"Please describe all these incidents if they relate to the topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The devotees of the Lord are accustomed to licking up the honey available from the lotus feet of the Lord."*

7 Although the word "guṇa" here affirms that the Lord's forms and pastimes are all most excellent, it is nevertheless true that the Lord has a great variety of forms and pastimes.

8 Here the word "bhaktim" means "love" and the word "amalam" means "free from the desire for impersonal liberation". The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 251

1 The following explanation is given (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.12.13):

"Who are the pure devotees mentioned here? In an assembly of pure devotees, there is no question of discussing material subjects like politics and sociology. In an assembly of pure devotees, there is discussion only of the qualities, forms and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is

praised and worshipped with full attention. In the association of pure devotees, by constantly hearing such topics respectfully, even a person who wants to merge into the existence of the Absolute Truth abandons this idea and gradually becomes attached to the service of Vasudeva."*

2 This is true of one who desires impersonal liberation. How much more true, then, it must be for one who desires only to engage in devotional service? Here the word "satim" means "free from the desire to attain impersonal liberation or anything other than devotional service". These other desires deviate one from the path of devotional service. This verse was spoken by a brahmana to King Rahugana.

Anuccheda 252

1 They who are not interested in hearing the glories of the Lord are described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.1.4):

"Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the parampara system. That is, it is conveyed from spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?"*

2 In this verse three kinds of persons are described: 1. the liberated souls, 2. they who aspire to become liberated, and 3. the materialists, who are interested in sense gratification. Here the word "pasughnah" means "a butcher or a hunter".

3 These three classes of persons are described in the following words:

"O prince, may you live a long life. O brahmacari, may you die now. O saintly person, may you live or die. But you, O butcher, don't either live or die."*

Note: The prince is here blessed to live a long life, for while he lives he may enjoy many hedonistic pleasures and thus postpone the suffering he will have to experience in the next life as the karmic result of his many sins. The brahmacari is presently performing severe austerities. He is blessed to die so his austerities may end and he may enjoy his reward of blissful life in the spiritual world. The saint is blessed either to live or to die. If he lives he preaches the glories of the Lord in this world and if he dies he returns to the spiritual world. Either destiny is good for him. The butcher is blessed to neither live nor die. In this life he suffers because of his sins and in the next life he will suffer even more. Therefore he should neither live nor die.

4 This nyaya affirms that a butcher is not able to relish spiritual happiness. He cannot understand spiritual happiness and, because it is very confidential, he cannot taste the sweet nectar of the topics of the Supreme Lord. Because a butcher is demonic by nature he is fit only to be criticised. Because he is violent by nature the word "pasughna" is used to describe him. The word "pasughna" means "a hunter or a butcher". Such a person does not consider the beauty and other good qualities of deer and other animals. He is interested only in harming others. Because such a person cannot taste the nectar of Krsna consciousness, Srimad Bhagavatam declares "vina pasughnat" (except a butcher). Because they are also averse to the Supreme Lord, such persons are violent in two ways. This second form of violence is described in the following words of the Third Canto (Srimad

Bhagavatam 3.13.50):

5 "Who, other than one who is not a human being, can exist in this world and not be interested in the ultimate goal of life? Who can refuse the nectar of narrations about the Personality of Godhead's activities, which by itself can deliver one from all material pangs?"*

6 This verse was spoken by King Pariksit to Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 253

1 Hearing descriptions of the Lord's pastimes is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.3.12):

"Transcendental knowledge in relation with the Supreme Lord Hari is knowledge resulting in the complete suspension of the waves and whirlpools of the material modes. Such knowledge is self-satisfying due to its being free from material attachment, and being transcendental it is approved by authorities. Who could fail to be attracted?"

2 Here the words "jnanam yat" mean "knowledge of the Lord's pastimes". What is that knowledge like? The verse explains, "it results in the complete (a) suspension (pratinivrttam) of the waves (urmi) and whirlpools (cakram) of the material modes (guna). Such knowledge is self-satisfying (atma-prasadah) due to its being free from material attachment." What more may be said of it? "It brings liberation (kaivalya) as its result". This transcendental knowledge is described by the Lord Himself in these words (Bhagavad-gita 18.54):

"One who is thus transcendently situated at once realises the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed toward every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me."*

The Srimad Bhagavatam verse explains, "This knowledge is the path (sammatah panthah) by which one attains loving devotional service to the Lord (bhakti-yogah). Simply by hearing about the Lord all these results are obtained. Simply by hearing about Lord Krsna's pastimes (hari-kathasu) one becomes filled with happiness (nirvrtah). One no longer finds happiness in any other thing. Therefore who (kah) could fail (na) to be attracted (ratim kuryat)?"

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 254

1 What more may be said? Srimad Bhagavatam (1.5.8) explains:

"You have not actually broadcast the sublime and spotless glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That philosophy which does not satisfy the transcendental senses of the Lord is considered worthless."*

2 In Srimad Bhagavatam (1.5.13) it is also said:

"O Vyasadeva, Your vision is completely perfect. Your good fame is spotless. You are firm in vow and situated in truthfulness. And thus You can think of the pastimes of the Lord in trance for the liberation of the people in general from all material bondage."*

3 The Lord's pastimes are divided into two groups: 1. the pastimes that begin with creation, and 2. the pastimes of the Lord's pastime-incarnations. The second group is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.6.46):

4 "O Narada, now I shall state, one after another, the transcendental incarnations of the Lord known as lila-avatars. Hearing of their activities counteracts all foul matters accumulated in the ear. These pastimes are pleasing to hear and are to be relished. Therefore they are in my heart."*

5 Preceding this verse is this statement (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.6.42):

"Karanarnavasayi Visnu is the first incarnation of the Supreme Lord, and He is the master of eternal time, space, cause and effects, mind, the elements, the material ego, the modes of nature, the senses, the universal form of the Lord, Garbhodakasayi Visnu, and the sum total of all living beings, both moving and non moving."*

6 In Srimad Bhagavatam 2.6.46 the word "purusa" means "the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of time and other potencies and the creator of the mind and other ingredients of the material world". Here the speaker says, "I will describe the guna-avatars beginning with Lord Brahma, and the vibhuti-avatars beginning with Daksa, and I also will describe the Lord's pastimes beginning with His pastime of creation."

This verse declares, "O Narada, now I shall state, one after another, the transcendental incarnations of the Lord known as lila-avatars. Hearing of their activities counteracts all foul matters accumulated in the ear. Therefore they are in my heart. Hearing of these activities removes the desire to hear of anything else. Now I will describe these beautiful pastimes one after another. These pastimes should be completely drunk up (by the ears)." This verse was spoken by Lord Brahma to Narada Muni.

Anuccheda 255

1 Hearing of the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also glorified in the prayers by the Personified Vedas (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.21):

"O Lord, You manifest Your personal forms to propagate this unfathomable science of the self. The fortunate souls who can thus relieve themselves of the fatigue of material life by diving into the vast ocean of nectar which is Your pastimes, O Lord, no longer desire even liberation. They renounce the happiness of family life because they been able to associate with the swarms of swans who enjoy at the lotus flower of Your feet."***

2 In the First Canto (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.34) it is also said:

"Thus the Lord of the universes maintains all planets inhabited by the demigods, men and lower animals. Assuming the roles of incarnations, He performs pastimes to reclaim those in the mode of pure goodness."*

Here the word "lilavatanuratah" refers to the Supreme Lord.

3 In Bhagavad-gita (4.9) Lord Krsna Himself affirms:

"One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna."*

4 In this way even a conditioned soul residing in a material body can conquer over death and become a personal associate of the Supreme Lord. This truth is also confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.14.5-6):

5 "O warrior, the inquiry made by you is just befitting a devotee because it concerns the incarnation of the Personality of Godhead. He is the source of liberation from the chain of birth and death for all those who are otherwise

destined to die."*

6 "By hearing these topics from the sage (Narada), the son of King Uttanapada (Dhruva) was enlightened regarding the Personality of Godhead, and he ascended to the abode of the Lord, placing his feet over the head of death."*

7 Here the word "munina" means "by Sri Narada". In this way are heard the topics of the Lord's incarnations. Thus in this body one conquers over death. Then one becomes a personal associate of the Lord. That is said in this verse.

8 Dhruva Maharaja's becoming a personal associate of the Lord is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.12.29):

"Before getting aboard, Dhruva Maharaja worshipped the airplane, circumambulated it, and also offered obeisances to the associates of Visnu. In the meantime he became as brilliant and illuminating as molten gold. He was thus completely prepared to board the transcendental plane."*

9 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Maitreya.

Anuccheda 256

1 Now hearing the Lord's holy names will be described. One should also hear about the great devotees of the Lord.

2 This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.13.4):

"Persons who hear from a spiritual master with great labour and for a long time must hear from the mouths of pure devotees about the character and activities of pure devotees. Pure devotees always think within their hearts of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, who awards His devotees liberation."*

3 Although it is possible for one to jump over the many stages of spiritual advancement and attain perfection in a single moment, still, the general path is that first one hears the Lord's holy name, and in that way one's heart becomes purified. When one's heart is purified, by hearing about the Lord's transcendental form the Lord's form appears in one's heart. When the Lord's form appears in this way, the Lord's transcendental qualities are then clearly manifested.

4 As one makes spiritual advancement and the Lord's pastimes become manifest, the names, forms, and qualities of the Lord's personal associates are also manifest. In this way the devotional activities of hearing and remembering are described. Thus one hears the glories of the Lord, glories chanted by the great souls. Hearing of the Lord's glories brings great happiness to the devotees who are attracted to the Lord. Hearing of the glories of the Lord is of two kinds: 1. hearing the Lord's glories as they are revealed by the great souls, and 2. hearing the glorification of these revelations the great souls have given of the Lord's glories. The former is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (1.3.40):

5 "This Srimad Bhagavatam is the literary incarnation of God, and it is compiled by Srila Vyasadeva, the incarnation of God. It is meant for the ultimate good of all people, and it is all-successful, all-blissful and all-perfect."*

6 These words are spoken to glorify Srimad Bhagavatam and identify its author (Srila Vyasadeva). This verse was spoken by Srila Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 257

1 Srimad Bhagavatam is also glorified in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.3):

"O expert and thoughtful men, relish Srimad Bhagavatam, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls."*

2 Because it is nectar flowing from Srila Sukadeva Gosvami's mouth, Srimad Bhagavatam brings the greatest happiness. Because they have qualities like this, the Vaisnava scriptures, such as Sri Krsna-karnamrta, written by Sri Lilasuka, should be embraced to one's heart. Hearing the glorification of the revelations the great souls have given of the Lord's glories is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.20.25):

3 "My dear Lord, You are glorified by the selected verses uttered by great personalities. Such glorification of Your lotus feet is just like saffron particles. When the transcendental vibration from the mouths of great devotees carries the aroma of the saffron dust of Your lotus feet, the forgetful living entity gradually remembers his eternal relationship with You. Devotees thus gradually come to the right conclusion about the value of life. My dear Lord, I therefor do not need any other benediction but the pure opportunity to hear from the mouth of Your pure devotee."*

4 The following description is given in the previous verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.20.24):

"My dear Lord, I therefore do not wish to have the benediction of merging into Your existence, a benediction in which there is no existence of the nectarean beverage of Your lotus feet. I want the benediction of at least one million ears, for thus I may be able to hear about the glories of Your lotus feet from the mouths of Your pure devotees."*

The preceding verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.20.23) means, "O Lord, the breeze carrying even a single drop of the sweetness of Your lotus feet, a breeze wafting from the mouth of Your pure devotees, at once eclipses the happiness of impersonal liberation. This breeze brings to us, who have forgotten the truth about You, the memory of You." These verses were spoken by King Prthu to Lord Visnu.

Anucchedas 258 and 259

1 Hearing of the Lord's pastimes brings great glory and great happiness. Both are described in two verses the first of which follows (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.29.40):

2 "My dear king, in the place where pure devotees live, following the rules and regulations, and thus purely conscious and engaged with great eagerness in hearing and chanting the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in that place if one gets a chance to hear their constant flow of nectar, which is exactly like the waves of a river, one will forget the necessities of life, namely hunger and thirst, and become immune to all kinds of fear, lamentation and illusion."*

3 Here the word "tasmin" means "in the association of devotees", "mahadbhir mukharitah" means "glorified by the great souls", "sesa" means "the best", "avitrsah" means "without any idea of ever becoming satisfied", "gadha" means "attentive", and "asana" means "hunger".

4 In the second of these two verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.29.41) it is said: "Because the conditioned soul is always disturbed by the bodily necessities

such as hunger and thirst, he has very little time to cultivate attachment to hearing the nectarean words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

5 This verse means, "Because the conditioned soul is always disturbed by the bodily necessities such as hunger and thirst, he has very little time to cultivate attachment to hearing the nectarean words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."* Thus the conditioned souls neglect the glories of the Lord, which are chanted by the great souls. Instead they think only of their own material happiness. That is the meaning of these two verses. These verses were spoken by Sri Narada to King Pracinabarhi.

Anuccheda 260

1 Hearing Srimad Bhagavatam is the best kind of hearing. This is so because the words of Srimad Bhagavatam are most glorious and also because Srimad Bhagavatam is the sweetest nectar. This is confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.2):

2 "This beautiful Bhagavatam, compiled by the great sage Vyasadeva (in his maturity), is sufficient in itself for God realisation. What is the need of any other scripture? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of Bhagavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart."*

3 Here the word "maha-muni" means "the Supreme Lord, whose lotus feet are worshipped by all great souls". The words "kim va paraih" show the glory of Supreme Personality of Godhead. This verse was spoken by Sri Vyasa.

Anuccheda 261

1 At the end of Srimad Bhagavatam (12.13.15) it is said:

"Srimad Bhagavatam is declared to be the essence of all Vedanta philosophy. One who has felt satisfaction from its nectarean mellow will never be attracted to any other literature."*

2 Here the word "rasamrta-trptasya" means "one who is satisfied by drinking that nectar". This verse was spoken by Srila Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 262

1 In this way it should be understood: Hearing the holy name of the Supreme and the descriptions of Him brings the greatest benefit. Thus hearing is of two kinds: 1. hearing the Lord's glories as they are revealed by the great souls, and 2. hearing the glorification of these revelations the great souls have given of the Lord's glories. The latter especially means glorification of Srimad Bhagavatam.

2 In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.3.48) it is said:

"The devotee should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form of the Lord the devotee finds most attractive."***

Thus one should again and again hear the holy names and descriptions of the form of the Lord one finds most attractive. One should hear these descriptions from the mouth of a self-realised soul. By hearing the holy names and descriptions of Lord Krsna, one attains the greatest good fortune. This is so because Lord Krsna is the original form of the Lord. In the same way one should also glorify Lord Krsna and serve Him in other ways also. Thus the Supreme Lord should be glorified and the books about the Lord, books written by great souls like Srila

Sukadeva Gosvami, should also be glorified.

3 In this way hearing about the Lord is revealed. Hearing comes first, before glorifying or the other methods of devotional service to the Lord, for without first hearing one cannot attain knowledge of the Lord or the different activities of devotional service. Specifically, if the books written by great souls to glorify the Lord are not manifested, then it is not possible to attain the good fortune of hearing about the Lord. Therefore those books should also be glorified, for they are most important.

4 This is confirmed by the followings words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.5.11):

"On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, etc., of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilisation. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed are heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest."*

5 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word 'srnvanti' means 'one hears someone else chant the Lord's holy names (namani), 'grnanti' means 'one accepts the Lord's holy names when they are heard', and 'gayanti' means 'one personally chants the Lord's holy names'."

6 Now will be discussed the activities of glorifying the Lord. As before, the activities of glorification relate to the different features of the Lord, beginning with His holy name. The glorification of the Lord's holy name is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.10):

7 "The chanting of the holy name of Lord Visnu is the best process of atonement for a thief of gold or other valuables, for a drunkard, for one who betrays a friend or relative, for one who kills a brahmana, or for one who indulges in sex with the wife of his guru or other superior. It is also the best method of atonement for one who murders women, the king, or his father, for one who slaughters cows, and for all other sinful men. Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Visnu, such sinful persons may attract the attention of the Supreme Lord, who therefore considers, 'Because this man has chanted My holy name, My duty is to give him protection'."*

8 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word 'suniskrtam' means 'the best process of atonement'. The reason this is so is given in these words: "Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Visnu, such sinful persons may attract the attention of the Supreme Lord, who therefore considers, 'Because this man has chanted My holy name, My duty is to give him protection'."*

9 The Supreme Lord is present in His holy name. By hearing the holy name, the great devotees attain love for the Lord.

10 In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, in the 108 names of Lord Rama, Lord Siva explains: "O goddess, whenever I hear a word that begins with the syllable 'ra', my heart becomes filled with love, for I think, 'will the next syllable make the word Rama?'"

11 If this is so, then how powerful must the Lord's holy name be in destroying sins? The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by the Visnudutas to the Yamadutas.

Anuccheda 263

1 The result obtained by chanting the Lord's holy name is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.400):

2 "When a person is actually advanced and takes pleasure in chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is very dear to him, he is agitated and loudly chants the holy name. He also laughs, cries, becomes agitated and chants just like a madman, not caring for outsiders."*

3 The word "evam" (thus) in this verse is explained by the following statement of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.390):

"An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation and should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The holy names of Krsna are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world."***

4 Here the word "vratah" means "activities", "sva-priyani" means "which are dear", "namani" means "the names that are chanted", "jatanuragah" means "the love that is aroused by chanting the holy names", "druta-cittah" means "the heart melting with love", and "hasati" means "pushed by ecstatic love, he laughs". The word "nama-kirtya" is in the instrumental case for it is by chanting the holy name that one becomes advanced in spiritual life. Thus Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.40 is explained.

5 The nature of advanced devotional service is also described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.42):

"Devotion, direct experience of the Supreme Lord, and detachment from other things, these three occur simultaneously for one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Lord, in the same way that pleasure, nourishment and relief from hunger come simultaneously and increasingly, with each bite, for a person engaged in eating."***

6 In the commentary it is said:

"Someone may protest: 'The supreme goal is very difficult to attain. Great yogis attain it only after many births. How is it possible that one can attain in one birth merely by chanting the holy names of the Lord?' Fearing that someone may raise this objection, the speaker of Srimad Bhagavatam gives this example."

7 In other Puranas, in the Sri Bhagavan-nama-kaumadi and in the Sahasra-nana-bhasya the following explanation is given:

8 "Day and night one may be humble, peaceful, and fearless and one may eat frugally, see with spiritual vision and conquer over sleep. Even if one does all this, his heart may still not become attached to the Supreme Lord. However, if, unconcerned about the opinions of others, one always chants the Lord's holy names, the holy names will make one fall in love with the Supreme Lord."

9 The qualities, beginning with fearlessness, mentioned here, are meant to help one become exclusively attached to the holy name. However, they are not part of the activities of glorifying the holy, for devotional service is independent of all other activities. That is the nature of devotional service. The following explanation is given in the Visnu-dharmottara Purana in the story of the Ksatra-

bandhu who had committed great sins, very great sins, and all sins:

10 "The brahmana said: If you are not able to do all this, then I will tell you something else, something very simple, something you can do very easily.

11 "The Ksatra-bandhu said: I cannot do what you have said, for my mind is very restless. Please tell me something that my body and voice have the power to do.

12 "The brahmana said: They who stumble with hunger and thirst, they who are awake, they who are dreaming, and they who restlessly wander in this world should always chant 'O Govinda!'"

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Kavi to the king of Videha.

Anuccheda 264

1 In another verse of Srimad Bhagavatam (6.2.11) it is said:

"By following the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies or undergoing atonement, sinful men do not become as purified as by chanting once the holy name of Lord Hari. Although ritualistic atonement may free one from sinful reactions, it does not awaken devotional service, unlike the chanting of the Lord's names, which reminds one of the Lord's fame, qualities, attributes, pastimes and paraphernalia."*

2 The chanting of the Lord's holy name not only destroys sins, it also reminds one of the Lord's transcendental qualities. This verse was spoken by the Visnudutas to the Yamadutas.

Anuccheda 265

1 At the end of the second canto of Srimad Bhagavatam, King Pariksit expresses a desire to know what is the highest good. In the beginning of the second canto, Sri Sukadeva Gosvami gives this, the best of all answers (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.1.8-10):

2 "At the end of the Dvapara-yuga, I studied this great supplement of Vedic literature named Srimad Bhagavatam, which is equal to all the Vedas, from my father, Srila Dvaipayana Vyasadeva.*

3 "O saintly King, I was certainly situated perfectly in transcendence, yet I was still attracted by the delineation of the pastimes of the Lord, who is described by enlightened verses.*

4 "That very Srimad Bhagavatam I shall recite before you because you are the most sincere devotee of Lord Krsna. One who gives full attention and respect to hearing Srimad Bhagavatam achieves unflinching faith in the Supreme Lord, the giver of salvation."*

5 After thus explaining the supreme glory of Srimad Bhagavatam Srila Sukadeva Gosvami proceeds to recite the different parts of Srimad Bhagavatam. There he explains the supreme importance of chanting the holy name of the Lord. In the following words he describes the supreme goal and best way to attain it (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.1.11):

6 "O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge."*

7 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"This verse means, 'No method of spiritual advancement is better than this'. Here the word 'icchatam' means 'of they who have material desires'. This method is the way for them to attain their desires. 'Nirvidyamanaanam' means 'of they who desire liberation'. This method is the way for them to attain liberation. 'Yoginam' means 'of the jnanis'. This method is the way for them to attain their goal. That is the conclusion (nirnitam). No further evidence is needed to prove this point.

8 In this way the chanting of the holy names of the Lord is greatly glorified. In Srimad Bhagavatam (1.6.26) it is said:

"Thus I began chanting the holy name and fame of the Lord by repeated recitation, ignoring all the formalities of the material world. Such chanting and remembering of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are benedictory. So doing, I travelled all over the earth, fully satisfied, humble and unenvious."*

9 In the Padma Purana it is said that ten kinds of offenses to the holy name are to be avoided. Sri Sanat Kumara explains:

"One who commits all kinds of offenses may become delivered by taking shelter of Lord Hari. One who commits offenses to Lord Hari is an animal, even though he may stand on two feet.

10 "One who takes shelter of the holy name of the Lord becomes delivered by the power of the holy name. He falls down who commits offenses to the holy name, the friend of all."

11 The offenses to the holy name are described in the following words (Padma Purana, Brahma-khanda, 25.15-18):

"1. To blaspheme the great saintly persons who are engaged in preaching of the Hare Krsna mantra is the worst offense at the lotus feet of the holy name. One should not criticise a preacher of the glories of the Hare Krsna mantra. If one does so he is an offender. The nama-prabhu, who is identical with Krsna, will never tolerate such blasphemous activities, even from one who passes as a great devotee. The second namaparadha is described as follows: 2. In this material world the holy name of Lord Visnu is all auspicious. Visnu's name, form, qualities, and pastimes are all transcendental, absolute knowledge. Therefore, if one tries to separate the Absolute Personality of Godhead from His holy name of His transcendental form, qualities, and pastimes, thinking them to be material, that is offensive. Similarly, to think the names of the demigods such as Lord Siva to be as good as the name of Lord Visnu, or, in other words to think Lord Siva and the other demigods to be other forms of God and therefore an equal to Visnu, is also blasphemous. This is the second offense at the lotus feet of the Lord.*

12 "3. The third offense at the lotus feet of the holy name, which is called guror avajna, is to consider the spiritual master to be material and therefore envy his exalted position. 4. The fourth offense (sruti-sastra-nindanam) is to blaspheme Vedic literature, such as the four Vedas and the Puranas. 5. The fifth offense (tathartha-vadah) is to consider the glories of the holy name to be exaggerations. 6. Similarly, the sixth offense (hari-namni kalpanam) is to consider the holy name of the Lord to be imaginary. 7. The seventh offense is described as follows: To think that since the Hare Krsna mantra can counteract all sinful reactions one may therefore go on with his sinful activities and at the same time chant the Hare Krsna mantra to neutralise them is the greatest offense at the lotus feet of Hari-nama.*

13 "8. The eighth offense is stated thus: It is offensive to consider the chanting

of the Hare Krsna mantra to be a religious ritualistic ceremony. Performing religious ceremonies, following vows, and practicing renunciation and sacrifice are all materialistic auspicious activities. The chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra must not be compared to such materialistic religiosity. This is an offense at the lotus feet of the Lord. 9. The ninth offense is described as follows: It is an offense to preach the glories of the holy name among person who have no intelligence or no faith in the subject matter. Such people should be given the chance to hear the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, but in the beginning they should not be instructed about the glories of the spiritual significance of the holy name. By constant hearing of the holy name, their hearts will be purified, and then they will be able to understand the transcendental position of the holy name.

*

14 "If one has heard the glories of the transcendental holy name of the Lord but nevertheless continues in a materialistic concept of life, thinking 'I am this body and everything belonging to this body is mine (aham mameti)', and does not show respect and love for the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, that is an offense."*

15 These verses should be understood in the light of the following passage from Sri Visnu-yamala, where the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

16 "I forgive many millions of offenses committed by one who faithfully chants My holy names in this world. Of this there is no doubt."

17 In the description of the first offense (text 11), no mention was made of physical violence to devotees of the Lord. Physical violence and other kinds of troubles presented before devotees of the Lord are all offenses, as described in the Skanda Purana, where Sri Markandeya tells King Bhagiratha:

18 "Only fools blaspheme the great devotees of the Lord. Accompanied by their ancestors, such fools fall into the hell that bears the name Maha-raurava.

19 "A person who attacks the devotees of the Lord, criticises them, hates them, refuses to greet them, is angry with them, and is not happy to see them, falls down into the six hells.

20 Even passively to hear criticism of the devotees is an offense. This is described in the following words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.74.40):

21 "Anyone who hears criticism of the Supreme Lord or of His faithful devotee yet fails to immediately leave the place will certainly fall down, deprived of all the pious credit of his past activities."***

22 If one is unable to do anything else, one should at least go away. If one is able, one should cut out the blasphemer's tongue. If one is unable to do that one should commit suicide. Sati-devi explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.4.17):

23 "If one hears an irresponsible person blaspheme the master and controller of religion, one should block his ears and go away if unable to punish him. But if one is able to kill, then one should by force cut out the blasphemer's tongue and kill the offender, and after that one should give up his own life."*

24 The second offense to the holy name of the Lord (which is described in text 11) should be understood in the light of the following words spoken by Lord Krsna in the Bhagavad-gita (10.41):

25 "Know that all opulent, beautiful and glorious creations spring from but a spark of My splendour."*

26 The second offense should also be understood in the light of these words of

Srimad Bhagavatam (10.68.37):

"The dust of Krsna's lotus feet, which is the source of holiness for all places of pilgrimage, is worshipped by all the great demigods. The principle deities of all planets are engaged in His service, and they consider themselves most fortunate to take the dust of the lotus feet of Krsna on their crowns. Great demigods like Lord Brahma and Lord Siva, and even the goddess of fortune and I, are simply parts of His spiritual identity, and we also carefully carry the dust on our heads. And still Krsna is not to use the royal insignia or even sit on the royal throne.?"*

27 It should also be understood in the light of these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.28.22):

"The blessed Lord Siva becomes all the more blessed by bearing on his head the holy waters of the Ganges, which has its source in the water that washed the Lord's feet. The Lord's feet act like thunderbolts hurled to shatter the mountain of sin stored in the mind of the meditating devotee. One should therefore meditate on the lotus feet of the Lord for a long time."*

28 It should also be understood in the light of these words spoken by Lord Brahma (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.6.32):

"By His will, I create, Lord Siva destroys, and He Himself, in His eternal form as the Personality of Godhead, maintains everything. He is the powerful controller of these three energies."*

29 In his commentary on this verse, Sri Madhavacarya quotes the following verses from the Brahmanda Purana:

"Because He chases away (dra) all troubles and sufferings (ru), Lord Visnu is known as Rudra. Because He is the supreme controller (isana) He is known as Isana. Because of His greatness (maha) He is known as Mahadeva.

30 "Freed from the ocean of repeated birth and death, the liberated souls drink (pibanti) nectar in the spiritual sky (nakam). Because He is the maintainer of the spiritual world, Lord Visnu is known as Pinaki.

31-32 "Because He happily removes all troubles, Lord Visnu is called Siva. Because he resides (vasa) in the bodies of the conditioned souls, bodies obtained by past karma (krtti), He is known as Krttivasa. Because He purifies the conditioned souls He is known as Virinca. Because He is the greatest He is known as Brahma. Because of His power and opulence He is known as Indra.

33 "Thus the one Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Visnu, is addressed by many different names in the Vedas and Puranas."

34 In the Vamana Purana it is said:

"These names, beginning with Narayana, and also other names, the names of the demigods, are all names of Lord Visnu alone. Of this there is no doubt."

35 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"As a king can extend his rule far beyond the sphere of his palace, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead can claim the names of the various demigods as His names also."

36 In the Brahma Purana it is said:

"The names of Lord Brahma, such as Caturmukha, Satananda, and Padma-bhu, and the names of Lord Siva, such as Ugra, Bhasmadhara, Nagna, and Kapali are also names of Lord Krsna."

37 Therefore in the description of the second offense to the holy name (in the Padma Purana verse quoted in text 11) the words "sri-visnoh sivasya guna-

namadikam bhinnam yo dhiya pasyet" mean "one who sees that all-pervading, all-encompassing Lord Visnu's powers, names, qualities, and other features are different from those of Lord Siva".

38 Thus the words "Visnu" and "Siva" are not different, for they are both names of Lord Visnu. This is confirmed by the genitive case ending in "visnoh" as well as the use of the words "sri" and "ca" (also). Therefore in the compound word "siva-namaparadhah (in the verse quoted in text 13) the word "siva" is a name of Lord Visnu.

39 Now will be considered the fourth offense, blasphemy of Vedic literature. They who, claiming to be worshippers of Dattatreya and Rsabhadeva, actually follow the path of the blasphemers and atheists, think that the glories of the holy name are exaggerations (artha-vadah). They think the glories of the holy name are imaginary (kalpanam). This is described in the Vyasa-gita passage of the Kurma Purana:

40 "Atheism is millions and millions of times worse than committing offenses to the Lord and the spiritual master."

41 After hearing the glories of the holy name from the personal associates of Lord Visnu, Ajamila declared (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.29):

"It is now clear that as a consequence of such activities, a sinful person like me must be thrown into hellish conditions meant for those who have broken religious principles and must then suffer extreme miseries."*

42 Seeing both his own misdeeds and the glory of the holy name, Ajamila said (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.32-33):

"I am certainly most abominable and unfortunate to have merged in an ocean of sinful activities, but nevertheless, because of my previous spiritual activities, I could see those four exalted personalities who came to rescue me. Now I feel exceedingly happy because of their visit.*

"Were it not for my past devotional service, how could I, a most unclean keeper of a prostitute, have gotten an opportunity to chant the holy name of Vaikunthapati when I was just ready to die? Certainly it could not have been possible."*

43 Now will be considered the seventh offense: to commit sin on the strength of chanting the holy name. Although the power of the holy name destroys sins, nevertheless, a person who strives to attain the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, feet that are eternal and full of knowledge and bliss and are the ultimate goal of all human endeavours, and who then commits sins, thinking the holy name is merciful and will certainly grant forgiveness, commits the greatest sin. The holy name will punish such a person with great troubles. Such an offense is equal to many millions of other sins.

44 Even if one performs atonement by performing many austerities (yamaih), such as the yamas and niyamas, or even if one is beaten by men holding sticks, he will not become purified of that offense. Even if one performs the atonement of again and again chanting the holy name, as described in the verse beginning with the words "namaparadha-yuktanam" and even if one is sincerely devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as is described in the verse beginning with the words "sarvaparadha-krd api", one will still fall down.

45 When Indra on the strength of worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead with an asvamedha-yajna, killed Vrtrasura, Indra did so on the order of

the great sages who wished to rescue Vrtra from having to live as a demon, and he also did so with the purpose of saving the worlds from calamity. Therefore Indra's actions do not constitute the offense of committing sin on the strength of chanting the holy name.

46 The eighth offense is to consider the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to be a religious ritualistic ceremony. This is explained in the following words of the scriptures:

47 "Chanting the holy names of Lord Hari is like reciting the mantras of the Vedas."

Here the holy name is glorified by using the kind of comparison called atidesa.

48 It is also said:

"The holy name of Lord Krsna is the sweetest of sweet things and the most auspicious of auspicious things. It is the transcendental fruit of the vine of all Vedic literature."

49 In the Sri Visnu-dharma Purana it is also said:

"A person who chants the two syllables 'Hari has already studied the four Vedas: Sama, Rg, Yajur and Atharva.'"*

50 In the Skanda Purana, Goddess Parvati explains:

"Don't study the Rg Vedas. Don't study the Yajur Veda. Don't study anything of the Sama Veda. O my son, instead of the Vedas, always chant 'O Govinda!' Always chant the holy names of Lord Hari."

51 In the Padma Purana, in the 108 Holy Names of Lord Rama, it is said:

"To once recite one name of Lord Visnu is better than reciting all the Vedas."

52 Now will be considered the ninth offense, which is to instruct the faithless. It is an offense to reveal the glories of the holy name to persons rapt in thoughts of "i" and "mine". This is so because such persons will not be respectful to the holy name.

53 A person who chants the holy name in order to attain wealth, the happiness of his material body, or other material things, also commits an offense. This is explained in the following words of the Padma Purana, Namaparadha-bhanjana-stotra (quoted in anuccheda 153, text 16):

"O brahmana, when, pronounced properly or not, it appears on the voice, walks on the path of the memory, a single utterance of the holy name of the Lord carries one beyond the world of birth and death. However, if the chanter commits offenses, or if he chants to attain wealth, followers, or the happiness of this material body, he will be thrown into the world of birth and death, and his chanting will not quickly bring the desired result."

In this way the ten offenses are described. The fate of they who commit these offenses is described in the following statement of the Padma Purana, Vaisakha-mahatmya:

54 "They who are disrespectful to the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, for that sinful deed go to a terrible hell.

55 For these offenses there is not atonement other than continuing to chant the holy name of the Lord. This is described in the following words:

56 "The chanting of Hare Krsna is recommended for person who commit offenses, because if they continue chanting they will gradually chant offenseless.

Even if in the beginning one chants with offenses, one will become free from such offenses by chanting again and again."*

57 Thus the repeated chanting of the holy name purifies one from offenses to the devotees and other offenses also. This is seen in the activities of King Ambarisa, where the offenses (of Durvasa) were forgiven in that way.

58 This is also described in the following words of the Nama-kaumudi:

"Offenses to great devotees may be pushed away either by experiencing the calamities they bring, or by attaining the mercy of the offended devotee."

59 The conclusion, then, is that one should take shelter of the holy name alone. This is eloquently affirmed in the following statement of Srimad Bhagavatam (2.1.11):

"O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge."*

60 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 266

1 This is also explained in the Narada Purana, where Sri Narada declares:

"Even the manus and the kings of the sages cannot cross to the farther shore of the glories of the holy name. How can I, whose intelligence is very weak, properly worship the holy name?"

2 Now will be considered the glorification of the transcendental form of the Lord. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.30.3):

"Once their eyes were fixed upon His transcendental form, women were unable to withdraw them, and once that form had entered the ears of the sages and become fixed in their hearts, it would never depart. What to speak of acquiring fame, the great poets who described the beauty of the Lord's form would have their words invested with transcendently pleasing attraction. And by seeing that form on Arjuna's chariot, all the warriors on the battlefield of Kuruksetra attained the liberation of gaining a spiritual body similar to the Lord's."***

3 This verse explains that the poets who described the beauty of the Lord's form would have their words invested with transcendently pleasing attraction. This is also confirmed by the four Kumaras in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.15.49):

"O Lord, we pray that You let us be born in any hellish condition of life, just as long as our hearts and minds are always engaged in the service of Your lotus feet, our words are made beautiful (by speaking of Your activities) just as tulasi leaves are beautified when offered unto Your lotus feet, and as long as our ears are always filled with the chanting of Your transcendental qualities."*

This verse was spoken by the king to Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 267

1 Now will be considered the glorification of the transcendental qualities of the Lord. This is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.22):

"Learned circles have positively concluded that the infallible purpose of the

advancement of knowledge, namely austerities, study of the Vedas, sacrifice, chanting of hymns, and charity, culminates in the transcendental descriptions of the Lord, who is defined in choice poetry."*

2 Here the word "sruta" means "study of the Vedas", "svista" means "sacrifices and other rituals to worship the Lord", "sukta" means "japa-chanting of mantras", "buddhi" means "the knowledge attained by studying the scriptures", and "datta" means "charity". When these are offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they bring a result that is eternal (avicyuto rthah). What is that result? The verse explains, "They culminate in the transcendental descriptions of the Lord, who is defined in choice poetry". When the descriptions of the Lord's transcendental qualities are manifest then attraction to the Lord and love for the Lord are also manifest. Because these are filled with eternal bliss and glory, the words "infallible purpose (avicyuto rthah) are used here. The word "avicyuta" here indicates that the result obtained here is attraction to the Lord and love for Him. This verse was spoken by Sri Vyasa to Sri Narada.

Anuccheda 268

1 Now will be considered the glorification of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.8.4): "Persons who hear Srimad Bhagavatam regularly and are always taking the matter very seriously will have the Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna manifested in their hearts within a short time."*

2 Here the word "nati-dirghena" means "in a very short time", and "visate" means "is manifested". This verse was spoken by Sri Pariksit.

Anuccheda 269

1 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.12.49-50):

"Words that do not describe the transcendental Personality of Godhead but instead deal with temporary matters are simply false and useless. Only those words that manifest the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord are actually truthful, auspicious and pious."***

2 "Those words describing the glories of the all-famous Personality of Godhead are attractive, relishable and ever fresh. Indeed, such words are a perpetual festival for the mind, and they dry up the ocean of misery."*

3 Here the words "asatir asat-katha na kathyate" mean "Words that do not describe the transcendental Personality of Godhead and His devotees, but instead deal with temporary matters are simply false and useless." The words "yad uttamasloka-yaso nugiyate" mean "Only words describing the glories of the pastimes of the all-famous Personality of Godhead are true." Why are such words true and auspicious? The reply is given with the word "bhagavad-gunodayam", which means "The Supreme Personality of Godhead personally appears in the heart of one who chants His glories. Thus the Lord gives the devotee the gift of love for Him." That is the meaning.

4 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"O King, as an affectionate cow goes to her calf, so Lord Hari goes wherever His glories are chanted."

5 In the Visnu-dharma Purana and Skanda Purana the Supreme Lord declares:

"I will never leave any person who always recounts My glories, or delights in hearing My glories, or whose heart enjoys descriptions of My glories."

6 Srimad Bhagavatam 12.12.50 (quoted in text 2) means that if one has a sweet singing voice, one should sing songs describing the glories of the Lord. Such songs are praised in that verse.

7 The singing of the holy names of the Lord is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.39):

"An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation and should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The holy names of Krsna are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world."***

8 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.69.45):

"Lord Hari is the ultimate cause of universal creation, maintenance and destruction. My dear king, anyone who chants about, hears about, or simply appreciates the extraordinary activities He performed in this world, which are impossible to imitate, will surely develop devotion for the Supreme Lord, the bestower of liberation."***

9 If one is not able to sing the glories of the Lord, or if a person very expert in singing those glories is present, one may hear those songs. Even if one thinks he will not like to hear, he will in truth feel great happiness by hearing these songs.

10 In the Sri Visnu-dharma Purana, Lord Visnu explains:

"If one's heart is attracted by music, one should place his thoughts in Me and sing songs glorifying Me."

11 In the Padma Purana, Karttika-mahatmya, the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

"I am not in Vaikuntha, nor in the heart of the yogis, I remain where my devotees engage in glorifying My activities.*

12 "When such devotees are worshipped with scents, incense, and other offerings, that worship is better than worship of Me. That worship brings Me great pleasure. I am not as much pleased when I am worshipped directly."

13 Such devotees bring great good to all other living entities, what to speak of to themselves. This is described in the Nrsimha Purana, where Sri Sri Prahlada explains:

14 "O Lord Nrsimha, the saintly devotees who cheerfully sing Your holy names are the true friends of all living beings."

15 When many people meet to glorify (kirtana) the Lord, such glorification is called sankirtana. Because it is very wonderful, sankirtana is better than kirtana. Nama-sankirtana (the great chanting of the Lord's holy name), is described in these words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who descended to this world to deliver the people of Kali-yuga (Siksastaka 3):

16 "One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honour but is always prepared to give all respects to others, can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord."*

The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 270

1 By engaging in the devotional activity of kirtana (chanting the Lord's glories) even the fallen souls who have neither wealth, birth in a good family, virtues, nor pious deeds, may attain the shoreless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is confirmed by the Vedas, Puranas, and other scriptures.

2 The fallen condition of the people in Kali-yuga is described in the following words of the brahma-vaivarta Purana:

"In the Kali-yuga even expert and intelligent persons will not perform austerities, yoga, Vedic study, yajnas or pious deeds."

3 The devotional activity of chanting the glories of the Lord appears among the fallen people of Kali-yuga, easily gives to them all the results of the different spiritual activities prescribed for the other yugas, and thus brings them all spiritual success. This is so because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is especially satisfied by the chanting of His glories.

4 In the Skanda Purana, Caturmasya-mahatmya, it is said:

"Hari-kirtana (the glorification of Lord Hari) is the best of all austerities. Especially in Kali-yuga, one should perform Hari-kirtana to please Lord Visnu."

5 This is also confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.3.52):

"Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Visnu, in Treta-yuga by performing sacrifices and in Dvapara-yuga by serving the Lord's lotus feet can also be obtained in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra."*

6 Whatever was obtained by any spiritual path in the Satya-yuga or any other yuga is all obtained in the Kali-yuga by Hari-kirtana.

7 It is also said (Sri Visnu Purana 6.2.17):

"Whatever is achieved by meditation in Satya-yuga, by the performance of yajna in Treta-yuga, or by the worship of Krsna's lotus feet in Dvapara-yuga is also obtained in the age of Kali simply by chanting and glorifying Lord Kesava."*

8 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 271

1 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.36):

"Those who are advanced and highly qualified and are interested in the essence of life know the good qualities of Kali-yuga. Such people worship the age of Kali because in this age, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one can advance in spiritual knowledge and attain life's goal."*

2 This verse means, "Knowing its good quality, which is the method of kirtana and not interested in its various faults, they worship the age of Kali." That good quality is revealed in these words: "In that age simply by sankirtana, and by no other means, one attains all that was obtained in the Satya-yuga and the other yugas by performance of meditation and by a thousand other methods of spiritual attainment."

Anuccheda 272

1 The glory of kirtana is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.37):

"Indeed, there is no higher possible gain for embodied souls forced to wander throughout the material world than the Supreme Lord's sankirtana movement, by which one can attain the supreme peace and free oneself from the cycle of repeated birth and death."***

2 Here the words "atah" and "yatah" both mean "than kirtana". "Paramam santim" means there is no peace better than what is obtained by performing kirtana. This is confirmed by the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.19.36):

"The word "sama" (peacefulness) or santa-rasa indicates that one is attached to the lotus feet of Krsna."*

3 These words of the Lord affirm that by performance of kirtana one attains faith in the Lord far greater than the faith attained by meditation or any other spiritual practice. By kirtana the cycle of repeated birth and death is brought to an end. By meditation performed in the Satya-yuga one does not attain this same deep faith in the Supreme Lord.

4 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"In Kali-yuga the great devotees worship the Lord by performing kirtana."

5 These words of the Skanda Purana glorify the performance of kirtana, which brings great faith in the Supreme Lord. The Lord, who is very merciful to the fallen souls, does not reveal any spiritual path better than kirtana. If someone says that simply by moving the lips in kirtana one does not attain the same result obtained by meditation or other spiritual practices, he should not be believed.

Anuccheda 273

1 Hearing that the people who live in Kali-yuga have great faith in the Supreme Lord, the great souls pray that they may also take birth in Kali-yuga. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.38):

2 "My dear King, the inhabitants of Satya-yuga and other ages eagerly desire to take birth in this age of Kali, since in this age there will be many devotees of the Supreme Lord, Narayana."***

3 In this way the people of Kali-yuga will have great devotion and love for the Lord, as was described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.37 (quoted in anuccheda 272, text 1).

4 Great devotion to the Lord is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 6.14.5):

"O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Narayana or Krsna. Such devotees, who are fully peaceful are extremely rare."*

5 It is not possible to adequately describe the virtues of performing kirtana in Kali-yuga. To chant the holy name of the Lord only devotion is needed. There are no restrictions according to time and place. This is described in the Visnu-dharma Purana, in the story of the ksatra-bandhu, where it is said:

6 "O hunter, in chanting the holy names of Lord Krsna there are no restrictions of time, place or accepting remnants."

7 In the Skanda Purana, Padma Purana-Vaisakha-mahatmya, and Visnu-dharma Purana it is said:

"One should chant the holy names of Lord Krsna, who holds the cakra, always and everywhere."

8 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"The holy name of Lord Krsna fulfils all desires. It is independent. It does not depend on the restrictions of time, place, situated, or purification."

9 In the Visnu-dharma Purana it is said:

"For one who has Lord Krsna in his heart, the Kali-yuga becomes Satya-yuga. For one who does not have Lord Krsna in his heart, the Satya-yuga becomes Kali-yuga."

10 One should not think, "It is because in the Kali-yuga it is not possible to attain success by any other means, that a little endeavour in kirtana brings a great result."

11 In Sri Visnu Purana (6.8.55) it is said:

"One who fixes his mind on the Supreme Lord never goes to hell. When one meditates on the Lord even Svargaloka seems an obstacle. When one's heart goes to the Lord even Brahmhaloka seems small and pathetic. Staying in His devotee's pure heart, the eternal Lord gives the gift of liberation. Why should anyone be surprised, then, that sins at once perish when the infallible Supreme Lord is glorified?"

12 These words of Sri Visnu Purana show that the glorification of the Lord is much more important than meditation, which leads in stages to samadhi. This is also confirmed by the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (2.1.11):

"O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge."*

13 In the Vaisnava-cintamani it is said:

"By merely moving one's lips to glorify Lord Visnu, one attains a result better than what is attained by long and difficult meditations."

14 It is also said in the scriptures:

"One on whose mouth the holy names of Lord Krsna always stay must already have worshipped the Lord for hundreds of births."

15 However, in the Namaparadha-bhajan-stotra it is said:

"One who commits all kinds of offenses may become delivered by taking shelter of Lord Hari. One who commits offenses to Lord Hari is an animal, even though he may stand on two feet."

16 In every yuga kirtana (glorification of the Lord) is equally powerful. However, by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, it is especially to be performed in Kali-yuga. Therefore in Kali-yuga it is praised as being most important. In Kali-yuga the other activities of devotional service should be performed in connection with kirtana.

17 The importance of kirtana in Kali-yuga is described by these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.32):

"In the age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead, who constantly sings the names of Krsna. Although His complexion is not blackish He is Krsna Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions."*

18 That the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is supremely independent and important is confirmed by the following words (Sri Narada Purana 3.126):

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the only means of deliverance is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way."*

19 This truth is also eloquently explained in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.36-38. The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Karabhajana to Maharaja Nimi.

Anuccheda 274

1 Thus it is shown that in Kali-yuga by the chanting the holy names of the Lord one attains great devotion to Him. However, they who commit offenses to the holy name remain outside of the sphere of devotional service. This is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (12.3.43-44):

2 "O King, in the age of Kali people's intelligence will be diverted by atheism, and they will almost never offer sacrifice to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme spiritual master of the universe. Although the great personalities who control the three worlds all bow down to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, the petty and miserable human beings of this age will not do so."**

3 "Terrified, about to die, a man collapses on his bed. Although his voice is faltering and he is hardly conscious of what he is saying, if he utters the holy name of the Supreme Lord he can be freed from the reaction of his fruitive work and achieve the supreme destination. But still people in the age of Kali will not worship the Supreme Lord."***

4 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 275

1 In this way kirtana is explained. To be included within kirtana are humble prayers and appeals to one's worshipable Deity. The Srimad Bhagavatam's description of the glorification of the Lord's holy names and other features are most substantial and significant than those found in other puranas. In Kali-yuga the Srimad Bhagavatam is especially praised. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.43):

2 "This Bhagavata Purana is as brilliant as the sun, and it has arisen just after the departure of Lord Krsna to His own abode, accompanied by religion, knowledge, etc. Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the age of kali shall get light from this Purana."*

3 If a person has a pure heart, engages in the devotional activities that begin with surrender, and does not abandoning the process of chanting the Lord's holy name, a process described in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.1.11), he will find himself engaged in smaranam (meditation) which his mind is fixed on the Supreme Lord. Meditation has many forms, beginning with meditation of the Lord's holy names. Meditation is described in a general way by the Supreme Lord Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.13.14):

4 "The actual yoga system as taught by My devotees, headed by Sanaka-kumara, is simply this: Having withdrawn the mind from all other objects, one should directly and appropriately absorb it in Me."*

5 Here the word "yatha" means "properly". This verse means "One should absorb the mind in me." In the Skanda Purana, Lord Brahma declares:

"By scrutinisingly reviewing all the revealed scriptures and judging them again and again, it is now concluded that Lord Narayana is the Supreme Absolute Truth, and thus He alone should be worshipped."*

Anuccheda 276

1 Meditation on the holy name is described in the following words of the Jabali-samhita:

"One who desires liberation should always chant, sing, glorify and remember the holy name of Lord Hari."

2 A pure heart is needed in order to successfully meditate on the holy name. Meditation on the holy name is not as powerful and effective as chanting the holy name. This is so, although it is not expressly stated in this quote. Meditation on the Lord's form is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (12.12.55):

3 Remembrance of Lord Krsna's lotus feet destroys everything inauspicious and awards the greatest good fortune. It purifies the heart and bestows devotion for the Supreme Soul, along with knowledge enriched with realisation and renunciation."***

4 Here the word "paramatmani" means "Sri Krsna" and "bhaktim" means "loving devotional service". Love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the primary result obtained by devotional service. The other results accompany that primary result. This verse was spoken by Srila Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 277

1 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.80.11):

"The Lord of the bhojas, Vrsnis and Andhakas is not at Dvaraka. He gives Himself away to anyone who simply remembers His lotus feet. What doubt is there then that He, the spiritual master of the universe, is willing to bestow prosperity and enjoyment upon a devotee who engages in worshipping Him, even though these material benefits are not very desirable?""***

2 Here the word "smaratah" means "of one who meditates". The supreme Personality of Godhead directly appears before a devotee who meditates on Him. He becomes submissive to such a devotee. That is the meaning. "Artha-kaman" is in the plural because it includes liberation and the other goals of life. Here the parable of "linga-samavaya-nyaya" is appropriate. Meditation on the Lord's form is also glorified in these words of the Garuda Purana:

3 "When even a moment passes without remembrance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one should bitterly lament as if his precious wealth had suddenly been stolen by a band of thieves."

4 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken to Sridama Vipra by His wife.

Anuccheda 278

1 Now the different stages of meditation (as described before) on the Lord's qualities, associates, service, and pastimes will now be considered. Meditation proceeds in five stages. The first stage is smarana, where the mind is sometimes attracted to the Lord. The next stage is dharana, where the mind is more

completely attracted to the Lord. The next stage is dhyana, where one specifically meditates on the form of the Lord. The next stage is dhruvanusmrti, where one's meditation on the Lord becomes like a flood of nectar. The final stage of meditation is samadhi, where the Lord alone is present in one's thoughts.

2 Smarana is described in these words of the Narada Purana:

"Eternal Lord Narayana is pleased with even a sinner who somehow or other remembers Him. Of this there is no doubt."

3 Dharana is described by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.27):

"The mind of one meditating upon the objects of sense gratification is certainly entangles in such objects, but if one constantly remembers Me, then the mind is absorbed in Me."***

4 Dhyana is described in these words of the Nrsimha Purana and other scriptures:

"Even a sinner who engages in undivided meditation on the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead finds that all his troubles become transformed into blessings.

5 Here the word "nirdvandvam" means "ignoring the troubles caused by heat, cold, and other dualities", and "iritam" means "spoken by the scriptures". Even a sinner engaged in such meditation finds that all this troubles become transformed into blessings. That is the meaning here.

6 Dhruvanusmrti is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.29.11-12):

"The manifestation of unadulterated devotional service is exhibited when one's mind is at once attracted to hearing the transcendental name and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is residing in everyone's heart. Just as the water of the Ganges flows naturally down towards the ocean, such devotional ecstasy, uninterrupted by any material condition, flows towards the Supreme Lord."***

7 Dhruvanusmrti is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.53):

"The lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are sought even by the greatest of demigods, such as Brahma and Siva, who have all accepted the Supreme Personality of Godhead as their life and soul. A pure devotee of the Lord can never forget those lotus feet in any circumstance. He will not give up his shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord for a single moment, indeed, not for half a moment, even in exchange for the benediction of ruling and enjoying the opulence of the entire universe. Such a devotee of the Lord is to be considered the best of the Vaisnavas."***

8 Srila Ramanuja Acarya has also discussed this topic in his commentary on the first sutra of Vedanta-sutra.

9 Samadhi is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.10.9):

"Because Markandeya's material mind had stopped functioning, the sage failed to notice that Lord Siva and his wife, the controllers of the universe, had personally come to see him. Markandeya was so absorbed in meditation that he was unaware of either himself or the external world."***

10 Here the word "tayoh" means "of Lord Siva and his wife". Because they are both potencies and amsas of the Lord they are here called "jagad-atmanoh", which

means "the creators of the universe". The word "ruddha-dhi-vertih" means "rapt in meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Before this verse it was said (Srimad Bhagavatam 12.10.6):

"Surely this saintly brahmana does not desire any benediction, not even liberation itself, for he has attained pure devotional service unto the inexhaustible Personality of Godhead."*

In this way it is shown that the samadhi described here is different from the samadhi of the impersonalists, which is called asamprajnata-samadhi.

This verse was spoken by Srila Suta Gosvami.

Anuccheda 279

1 When one thinks only of the Lord's pastimes and other features and does not think of anything else, that is samadhi. The following description is given in Srimad Bhagavatam (1.5.13):

"O Vyasadeva, your vision is completely perfect. Your good fame is spotless. You are firm in vow and situated in truthfulness. And thus you can think of the pastimes of the Lord in trance for the liberation of the people in general from all material bondage."*

2 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse describes the devotees in the dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, and madhurya rasas. The devotees in santa-rasa generally do not meditate on the Lord's pastimes. This is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (12.12.690):

3 "Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the son of Vyasadeva, Sukadeva Gosvami. It is he who defeats all inauspicious things within this universe. Although in the beginning he was absorbed in the happiness of Brahman realisation and was living in a secluded place, giving up all other types of consciousness, he became attracted by the most melodious pastimes of Lord Sri Krsna. He therefore mercifully spoke the supreme Purana, known as Srimad Bhagavatam, which is the bright light of the Absolute Truth and which describes the activities of Lord Krsna."***

4 The verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Sri Narada to Sri Vyasa.

Anuccheda 280

1 If one is able and eager to do it, one may, without abandoning chanting and remembering the Lord's holy name, become active in serving the Lord's lotus feet. In order to attain the perfection of service and meditation, some devotees are engaged in this way.

2 In the Visnu-rahasya the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

"O Narada, the meditating yogis do not please me as much as they who both meditate on me and serve Me with devotion."

3 The word "yogah" here means "samadhi". The word "pada-seva" means "service with devotion". That service is performed respectfully and in the proper time, place and situation. It is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.21.31):

4 "By the inclination to serve the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, suffering humanity can immediately cleanse the dirt which has accumulated in their minds during innumerable births. Like the Ganges water,

which emanates from the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord, such a process immediately cleanses the mind, and thus spiritual or Krsna consciousness gradually increases."*

5 The word "tapasvinam" means "of they who are suffering in the world of repeated birth and death", and "malam" means "the many kinds of material desires". The Lord's feet are glorified in the example beginning with the word "yatha". This verse was spoken by King Prthu to Lord Visnu.

Anuccheda 281

1 Service to the Lord's feet is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.51.55):

"O all-powerful one, I desire no boon other than service to Your lotus feet, the boon most eagerly sought by those free of material desire. O Hari, what enlightened person who worships You, the giver of liberation, would choose a boon that causes his own bondage?"***

2 Here the word "akincana" means "without any material desires, even up to the desire for liberation." The reason the devotee has no material desires is given in these words:

"O Hari, what enlightened person who worships You, the giver of liberation, would choose a boon that causes his own bondage?"***

Anuccheda 282

1 The next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.51.56) explains:

"Therefore, O Lord, having put aside all objects of material desire, which are bound to the modes of passion, ignorance and goodness, I am approaching You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for shelter. You are not covered by mundane designations. Rather, You are the Supreme Absolute Truth, full in pure knowledge and transcendental to the material modes."***

2 These verses are addressed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is eternal and perfect in knowledge and bliss, and whose feet are the proper object of devotional service. This verse was spoken by King Mucukunda to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 283

1 Included within serving the Lord's feet are seeing, touching, circumambulating, and bowing down before the Deity, as well as visiting the temple of the Lord, and the pilgrimages places sacred to the Lord, such as Mathura, Dvaraka, Jagannatha Puri, and the Ganges. As long as one lives one should surrender to the Lord and live near the Lord's temple. They who live by the Ganges and at other sacred places are all great devotees of the Lord. Service to the Lord finds its final expression in service to the great devotees of the Lord. Therefore the Ganges and other sacred places inspire feelings of devotion in the living entities.

2 Service to the devotees of the Lord is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.16):

"O twice born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vasudeva."*

3 The word "punya-tirtha" here also means the Ganges and other holy places. The Ganges is described in these words of the Third Canto (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.28.22):

"The blessed Lord Siva becomes all the more blessed by bearing on his head the holy waters that washed the Lord's lotus feet."*

4 The commentator explains that Lord Siva is called by the name Siva because he has attained the highest happiness. Happiness like that is attainable only by devotional service. No happiness is greater than the happiness of devotional service.

5 The Brahma Purana glorifies Jagannatha Puri in these words:

"The transcendental significance of Purusottama-ksetra, which is the eighty-square mile field of Jagannatha, cannot be properly described. Even the demigods from higher planetary systems see the inhabitants of this Jagannatha Puri as having exactly the same bodily features possessed by one in Vaikuntha. That is, the demigods see the inhabitants of Jagannatha Puri as being four-handed."*

6 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"For a person who has lived in Dvaraka for six months, for one month, or even for one fortnight there is awaiting elevation to the Vaikunthalokas and all the profits of sarupya-mukti (the privilege of having the same four-handed bodily features as Narayana)."

7 In the Padma Purana, Patala-khanda, it is said:

"How wonderful it is that simply by residing in Mathura even for one day, one can achieve a transcendental loving attitude toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead! This land of Mathura must be more glorious than Vaikuntha-dhama, the kingdom of God!"*

8 In the Adi-Varaha Purana the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

"My birthplace is very dear to me."

9 A place where Lord Krsna is worshipped is the best of all holy places.

Because Lord Krsna is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, any place sacred to Lord Krsna gives the supreme goal of life to all who come there.

10 In the Adi-Varaha Purana the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares: "Any person who becomes attracted to places other than Mathura will certainly be captivated by the illusory energy."*

11 Because Tulasi-devi is very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, service to her is included in the general category of service to the Supreme Lord.

12 In the Agastya-samhita and the Garuda-samhita it is said:

"As Sita-devi is dear to Lord Rama, the master of the three worlds, so is Tulasi-devi, who purifies everyone."

13 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"Especially in the age of Kali the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of the demigods and universes, is attracted to the Tulasi forest. He is not attracted to any other place.

14 "They who properly plant a Tulasi tree or gaze upon a Tulasi forest, go to the supreme abode of the Lord."

15 In the Skanda Purana, in the prayers to Tulasi-devi, it is said:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who destroys the demons' pride, is pleased even just to hear the name Tulasi."

In this way service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described. That service also includes service to the Ganges and all else sacred to the Lord.

16 Now will be considered worship of the Lord (arcana), which begins with the invitation (avahana) to the Lord to appear. If one has faith in the path of worship, one should take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master and ask questions of him. This is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.3.48):

"Having obtained the mercy of his spiritual master, who reveals to the disciple the injunctions of Vedic scriptures, the devotee should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form of the Lord the devotee finds most attractive."***

17 Although in the opinion of Srimad-Bhagavatam the path of worshipping the Deity, as it is described in the Pancaratras and other scriptures, is not compulsory, and without engaging in Deity worship one may attain the final goal of life by engaging in even only one of the nine processes of devotional service, processes that begin with surrender, nevertheless, in the opinion of they who follow the path of Narada Muni and other great sages, by accepting initiation from a bona fide spiritual master one attains a relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a relationship established through the feet of one's spiritual master, and when one is thus initiated, the process of Deity worship is compulsory.

18 Therefore in the Agama-sastra it is said:

"Diksa is the process by which one can awaken his transcendental knowledge and vanquish all reactions caused by sinful activity. A person expert in the study of the revealed scriptures know this process as diksa.*

19 "It is the duty of every human being to surrender to a bona fide spiritual master. Giving him everything: body, mind and intelligence, one must take a Vaisnava initiation from him."*

20 The words "divyam jnanam" (transcendental knowledge) here refers to the descriptions of the Lord's transcendental form in sacred mantras. Chanting those mantras establishes a relationship with the Supreme Lord. This is explained in the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda's description of the eight-syllable mantra. Thus for wealthy householders the path of Deity worship is most important.

21 The sages tell Maharaja Vasudeva (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.84.37):

"This is the most auspicious path of progress for a religious householder of the twice-born orders: to faithfully worship the Personality of Godhead with his uncontaminated possessions which have been acquired by just means."***

22 A wealthy householder who acts like a penniless person and seeks to serve the Lord only by meditating on Him or performing similar services and not by spending money for the cause of the Lord is a hypocrite and a miser. Such a person is either materialistic or lazy. He is at fault because he does not have faith in the Lord.

23 Such a person is at risk of falling down, as is explained in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.38):

"Only those who render unreserved, uninterrupted, favourable service unto the lotus feet of Lord Krsna, who carries the wheel of the chariot in His hand, can know the creator of the universe in His full glory, power and transcendence."*

24 General speaking, for householders the path of Deity worship (arcana) is better than the path of direct service (paricarya). This is because of the many rules to be followed in the path of Deity worship. Householders should offer yajnas to

the Supreme Personality of Godhead and not to the demigods. By worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead all the demigods are automatically pleased in the same way that the branches, leaves, and other parts of a tree are nourished when water is given to the tree's root. Failure to worship the Lord in this way is a great fault for a householder.

25 In the Skanda Purana, Sri Prahlada explains: "O King, do not eat in the home of one who does not worship the Deity of Lord Krsna. The food there is not fit to be eaten."

26 Any initiated devotee who fails in this duty falls into hell. This is described in the scriptures. For example, in the Visnu-dharmottara Purana it is said:

"One should worship Lord Hari once, twice, or three times each day. One who eats without first offering the food to the Lord goes to hell."

27 If one is not able or qualified to engage in Deity worship, then the Agni Purana gives this prescription:

"One who with faith and devotion gazes at Lord Hari after or while the Lord is worshipped, pleases the Lord. That devotee attains the benefits of practicing yoga."

28 The word "yoga" here means "the yoga or devotional service as is described in the Pancaratras and other Vaisnava scriptures". In some circumstances it is appropriate to perform Deity worship in meditation. This is described in the following statement of the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda:

"O beloved, everyone should meditate on worshipping the Deity of the Lord."

29 In the path of Deity worship one must first be initiated. Then there are many rules that must be followed. These rules are described in the scriptures.

30-31 Initiation is described in these words of the Agama-sastra:

"Even though born in a brahmana family, one cannot engage in Vedic rituals without being initiated and having a sacred thread. Although born in a brahmana family, one becomes a brahmana after initiation and the sacred thread ceremony. Unless one is initiated as a brahmana, he cannot worship the holy name properly."*

32 The rules of scripture are described in these words of the Visnu-rahasya:

"By following the rules of worship and respectfully worshipping the Deity of Lord Hari, one attains a result a hundred times better than the result of worshipping in ignorance of the rules."

33 Here the word "bhaktya" means "with great respect". One who worships in this way attains a result a hundred times greater. One who does not worship in this way does not attain such a result. That is the meaning here. The rules of worship are understood according to the teachings of the Vaisnava-sampradaya.

34 In the Visnu-rahasya it is said:

"One should accept words of teaching offered by persons who always worship Lord Visnu with their body, mind, words and deeds. Such persons are like Lord Visnu Himself."

35 In the Kurma Purana, it is said:

"One should ask questions of saintly Vaisnava brahmanas learned in the Vaisnava scriptures, acting properly, and firm in their vows. One should carefully follow what they teach."

36 In the Vaisnava Tantra it is said:

"One should not follow the teachings of a person who is not always devoted to his spiritual master, to the chanting of japa and to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Visnu."

37 This is described in the following words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (9.4.21):

"In performing his prescribed duties as king, Maharaja Ambarisa always offered the results of his royal activities to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, who is the enjoyer of everything and is beyond the perception of material senses. He certainly took advice from brahmanas who were faithful devotees of the Lord, and thus he ruled the planet earth without difficulty."*

38 This passage describes King Ambarisa. The Srimad Bhagavatam verse quoted in the beginning of this anuccheda was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 284

1 The substance of all the Vedic mantras is the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. Every mantra begins with the prefix nama Om and eventually addresses by name the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By the supreme will of the Lord there is a specific potency in each and every mantra chanted by great sages like Narada Muni and other rsis. Chanting the holy name of the Lord immediately renovates the transcendental relationship of the living being with the Supreme Lord. To chant the holy name of the Lord one need not depend upon other paraphernalia, for one can immediately get all the desired results of connecting or linking with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It may therefore be questioned why there is a necessity for further spiritual activities in devotional service for one who engages in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord.*

2 The answer is that although it is correct that one who fully engages in chanting the holy name need not depend upon the process of initiation, generally a devotee is addicted to many abominable material habits due to material contamination from his previous life. In order to get quick relief from all these contaminations, it is required that one engage in the worship of the Lord in the temple. The worship of the Deity in the temple is essential to reduce one's restlessness due to the contaminations of conditional life. Thus Narada in his pancaratrīki vidhi, and other great sages have sometimes stressed that since every conditioned soul has a bodily concept of life aimed at sense enjoyment the rules and regulations for worshipping the Deity in the temple are essential.*

3 In the Ramarcana-candrika it is said of Lord Ramacandra:

"Among Vaisnava-mantras, the Rama-mantra is the best. The Rama-mantra is millions and millions of times more effective than Ganesa-mantras or mantras for the other demigods.

4 "O king of brahmanas, even if one is not initiated and has not performed either purascarya or nyasa, he can attain perfection simply by chanting the Rama-mantra."

5 Vaisnava mantras do not need to be purified by the processes beginning with sadhya. This is described in the following statement of the Mantradeva-prakasika:

"In chanting Saura-mantras, Nrsimha-mantras, and other Vaisnava-mantras there is no need to perform the purifying rituals known as sadhya, siddha, susiddha and ari."

6 In another Tantra it is said:

"Mantras glorifying Lord Nrsimha, Lord Surya Narayana and Lord Varaha, mantras with the sacred syllable Om, and mantras from the Vedas do not require to be purified by performing siddha or other rituals."

7 In the Sanatkumara-samhita it is said:

"O Narada, mantras glorifying Lord Gopala are all self-manifest. That is why there is no need to purify them with sadhya, siddha, susiddha, and ari."

8 In another scripture it is said:

"To all varnas and asramas, to women, and to every social class, the Gopala-mantra quickly grants whatever is desired."

9 The rules of chanting mantras are described in these words of the Brahma-yamala:

"Devotional service performed without reference to the Vedas, Puranas, Pancaratras, etc., must be considered sentimentalism and it causes nothing but disturbance to society."*

10 This is explained in the Fourth Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam (4.18-35), where the earth-goddess says:

"To benefit all human society, not only in this life but in the next, the great seers and sages have prescribed various methods conducive to the prosperity of the people in general.*"

11 "One who follows the principles and instructions enjoined by the great sages of the past can utilise these instructions for practical purposes. Such a person can very easily enjoy life and pleasures.*"

12 "A foolish person who manufactures his own ways and means through mental speculation and does not recognise the authority of the sages who lay down unimpeachable directions is simply unsuccessful again and again in his attempts."*

13 In the Padma Purana, Lord Narayana tells Narada Muni:

"O sage, one who is My devotee and worships My Deity form according to the rules and regulations never meets, even in dream, any troubles or obstacles. He becomes completely fearless."

14 Deity worship is of two kinds: 1. kevala (transcendental) and 2. karma-misra (mixed with fruitive activities). The first kind, which is performed by faithful devotees who have renounced all material desires, is described by Sri Avirhotra in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.3.47):

"One who desires to quickly cut the knot of false ego, which binds the spirit soul, should worship the Supreme Lord, Kesava, by the regulations found in Vedic literatures such as the tantras."***

15 Sri Narada Muni also gives this explanation (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.29.46):

"When a person is fully engaged in devotional service, he is favoured by the Lord, who bestows His causeless mercy. At such time the awakened devotee gives up all material activities and ritualistic performances mentioned in the Vedas."*

16 In the Sri Agastya-samhita it is said:

"As the duties and prohibitions of the karma-kanda portion of the Vedas cannot approach a liberated soul, so they also cannot touch a devotee of Lord Rama."

17 They who are very attached to material activities, whose faith in material nature and who do not understand the truth of devotional service are ordered, "Do not neglect the rules and regulations of the karma-kanda portion of the Vedas".

This is so for those householders who are attached to the things of this world.
18-19 The rules of Deity worship are described by Lord Krsna in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.27.6-11):

"My dear Uddhava, there is no end to the innumerable Vedic prescriptions for executing Deity worship, so I shall explain this topic to you briefly, one step at a time.***

"One should carefully worship Me by selecting one of the three methods by which I receive sacrifices: Vedic, Tantric, or mixed.***

"Now please listen faithfully as I explain exactly how a person who has achieved twice-born status through the relevant Vedic prescriptions should worship Me with devotion.***

"A twice-born person should worship Me, his worshipable Lord, without duplicity, offering appropriate paraphernalia in loving devotion to My Deity form, or to a form of Me appearing upon the ground, in fire, in the sun, in water, or within the worshipper's own heart.***

"One should first purify his body by cleansing his teeth and bathing. Then one should perform a second cleansing by smearing the body with earth and chanting both Vedic and Tantric mantras.***

"Fixing the mind on Me, one should worship Me by his various prescribed duties, such as chanting the Gayatri mantra at the three junctures of the day. Such performances are enjoined by the Vedas and purify the worshipper of reactions to fruitive activities."***

The description also continues in the verses that follow in Srimad Bhagavatam's Eleventh Canto.

20 The meaning of these verses is clear. These verses were spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 285

1 In the Sri Narada-pancaratra, in the beginning of His description of faith, Lord Narayana explains: "O Narada, even a liberated soul who because of an emergency or a calamity does not perform his ordinary duties, is greatly at fault.

2 "Therefore every wise man should carefully perform even the most ordinary duties until the time his material body perishes."

3 Deity worship mixed with ordinary duties (karma) is of two kinds. In Sri Narada-pancaratra it is said that all kinds of worship should be done with reference to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul present in everyone's heart.

4 In the Visnu-yamala it is said:

"With water that has washed the feet of Lord Visnu one may offer tarpana to the pitas. One may honour the demigods by offering them food first offered to Lord Visnu."

5 Ganesa, Durga, Visvaksena, and other demigods worship and serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His abode of Vaikuntha. The Ganesa, Durga and other demigods mentioned here are different from the Ganesa, Durga and other demigods present in the material world. This is so because the spiritual world of Vaikuntha is different from the material world. This is explained in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (2.9.10):

"In the personal abode of the Lord, the material modes of ignorance and

passion do not prevail, nor is there any of their influence in goodness. There is no predominance of the influence of time, so what to speak of the illusory, external energy. It cannot enter that region. Without discrimination, both the demigods and the demons worship the Lord as devotees."*

6 In this way the demigods of Vaikuntha are all internal potencies of the Sri Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the eighteen-syllable mantra glorifying Lord Krsna, the name "Durga" refers to the goddess who establishes the various activities of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is seen in the Vedas, Tantras, and other scriptures.

7 In the Narada-pancaratra, in a conversation of Sruti and Vidya, it is said:
"Because She is willing to suffer all troubles in order to worship and serve her beloved Lord and give Him nectar happiness that never stops, the goddess who is the potency of devotional service is called "Durga" by the saintly Vaisnavas."

8 This Goddess Durga is not different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is confirmed by the following words of Sri Gautamiya-kalpa:

"Goddess Durga is identical with Lord Krsna. Lord Krsna is identical with Goddess Durga."

9 This is also confirmed by the words:

"O Goddess Durga, You are the presiding Deity of the eighteen syllable mantra."

10 Some say that the Supreme Lord's universal form (virat-purusa) is not different from His form in the spiritual world (maha-purusa), so the Durga in the material world is not different from the Durga in the spiritual world. The truth is that the Durga in the material world is a partial expansion of Goddess Maya. The Durga in the material world is engaged in the service of protecting the eighteen-syllable mantra. She is a maidservant of the Durga in the spiritual world, who is an internal potency of the Lord. She is not the deity that controls service to the Lord.

11 In a passage of the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, a passage where the spiritual world of Vaikuntha, which is beyond the touch of the illusory potency maya, is described, it is said:

"The fourth rampart surrounding Vaikuntha is guarded by Satya, Acyuta, Ananta, Visvaksema, Ganesa, Sankhanidhi and Padmanidhi.

12 "The sages say that in the seventh rampart the east is guarded by Indra, the southeast by Agni, the south by Yama, the southwest by Nairrta, the west by Varuna, the northwest by Vayu, the north by Soma and the northeast by Siva.

13 "In the spiritual world are many Sadhyas, Maruts, and Visvadevas. These eternally liberated souls are different from the demigods that reside in the upper planets of the material world.

14 "The demigods that reside in the upper planets of the material world are not eternal. They aspire to attain the eternal spiritual world. That is the conclusion of the Vedas."

15 Also, the Supreme Personality of Godhead manifests many different forms in the spiritual world. In the beginning of its description of the different Deities in the eighteen-syllable mantra, it is said in the Trailokya-sammohana Tantra:

16 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead has different forms with different names, such as Deva-deva (the master of the demigods), Gopa-vesa-dhara (He who is a cowherd boy) and Hari (He who removes all that is inauspicious)."

17 The pure devotees do not misunderstand the names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to be names of ordinary demigods. Still, because they are servants of the Lord in the spiritual world of Vaikuntha, the Visvakṣena and other demigods of the spiritual world should be given all honour.

18 That the devotees of the Lord should be given all honour is explained in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.84.13):

"A human being who identifies this body made of three elements with his self, who considers the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen, who considers the land of birth as worshipable, and who goes to the place of pilgrimage simply to take a bath rather than meet men of transcendental knowledge, is to be considered as an ass or a cow."*

19 The offense of not honouring the Lord's devotees is described in these words of the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda:

"A person who worships Lord Govinda but does not worship the Lord's devotees, is not himself a devotee. He is only a pretender."

20 The worship of the Lord's devotees is also described in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.27.29):

"With offerings such as proksana one should worship Durga, Vinayaka, Vyasa, Visvakṣena, the spiritual masters and the various demigods. All these personalities should be in their proper places facing the Deity of the Lord."***

21 In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda it is said:

"One should not worship demigods not mentioned in the Vedas. One should not think the demigods are independent of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

22 "One should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Narayana, who is worshipped by all the worlds, and one should also worship the demigods that are His associates.

23 "To these demigods one should offer the remnants of what was enjoyed by Lord Hari. A Vaisnava should perform a yajna when he offers Lord Hari's remnants to them."

24 Srimad Bhagavatam 11.27.29 (quoted in text 20) was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 286

1 Thinking the worship of them to be part of the worship of the Lord's associates, one should not worship ghosts and other like beings. This is so because they are not associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The worship of them is forbidden.

2 In the Padma Purana it is said:

"Worship of yaksas, pisacas, as well as ghosts and demons who drink liquor and eat flesh, and even worship of the demigods who reside in the higher material planets, is considered sinful like drinking liquor.

3 Even the so-called compulsory worship of the material demigods is forbidden when that worship involves liquor or other abominable things. In the same way, it is also forbidden to worship Lord Balarama with offerings of varuni liquor.

4 Now will be considered, in relation to the worship of the Supreme Lord's abode, the existence of impurity, the three material modes, and other inauspicious

things. The Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda and the Brahma-samhita both affirm that these inauspicious things cannot touch the transcendental abode of the Supreme Lord. Some people, claiming that the Narada-pancaratra gives a different view, quote the passage beginning with the words "The four inauspicious things, beginning with impiety, are engaged in creating evil." However, the real meaning of this passage is that impiety and other inauspicious things are potencies of the all-pervading Supersoul.

5 In the worship of the Lord's abode, the shoes of the spiritual master are to the left of the Supreme Lord. On the local level, the Supreme Personality of Godhead incarnates through His representative, the spiritual master. In this way the spiritual master is a form of the Lord. When the Lord appears directly, in His original form as the master of all, His empowered incarnation of the spiritual master is at His left side.

6 In the worship of Lord Ramacandra and other forms of the Lord, Mainda, Dvidida and others are the pure devotees who associate with the Lord in His eternal transcendental abode. When Akrura was becoming purified of all sins, he could see Prahlada and other personal associates of the Lord (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.39.54). When King Prthu milked the earth, Prahlada became the calf. At those two times Prahlada did not take birth. However, during the Caksusa-manvantara he did take birth as Hiranyakasipu's son.

7 Many other personal associates of Lord Rama and the other eternally manifested forms of the Lord also appear in the material world to assist the Lord when He incarnates there. Mainda, Dvidida, and the other eternal associates of the Lord are individual spirit souls, although they are given special powers (sakty-avesa) by the Lord. However, there are also troubles presented by Bali, who was Sugriva's enemy, and many other demons also, and at a later time there are also troubles presented by Narakasura, who was the enemy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and many other demons also. Thus a great variety of persons associate with the Lord when He appears in the material world.

8 When Lord Krsna manifests His pastimes in Gokula, Sri Rukmini and His other associates in Dvaraka are also present. They are not openly present but they are present as Vimala and other potencies of the Lord. Because they are not openly present they are not mentioned in meditations on the Lord's Gokula's pastimes.

9 Rukmini and the other associates of the Lord at Dvaraka are also present in Gokula. There they bear other names, such as the name Radha. The conch-disc, and club the Lord carries in Dvaraka are present in Gokula as the conch, disc, and club that are auspicious markings on the Lord's feet. As the Ganges and Yamuna are both present in Dvaraka, so they are both present in Gokula, the Ganges being the famous Manasa-ganga on Govardhana Hill. Visvaksena and other associates of the Lord at Dvaraka are present in Gokula as Bhadrasena and others. When Lord Krsna's abode of Gokula is worshipped, then the ocean of milk at Svetadvipa is also worshipped automatically. Because in Gokula a great flood of milk flows from many millions of cows, Gokula is also known by the name Svetadvipa.

10 This is explained in Sri Brahma-samhita (5.56) where at the end of a description of Gokula it is said:

"In Vrndavana, spiritual cows are always supplying spiritual milk. Not a single moment is wasted there. In other words, there is no past, present or future. Not a single particles of time is wasted. Within this material universe the devotees

worship that transcendental abode as Goloka Vrndavana."*

11 This is also confirmed in other scriptures. In the transcendental abode of the Lord the sun, moon, and fire are not material. This is so because in that abode there is no excessive heat or cold. Because everything is all-auspicious and all-pleasing, nothing in that abode is material.

12 This is confirmed by the following words of Sri Nrsimha-tapani Upanisad (1.5.10):

"In the transcendental abode of Sri Krsna, the master of all mantras, there are no sufferings. There the sun does not shine, the wind does not blow, the moon does not shine, the stars do not shine, fire does not burn, death cannot enter, and there are no defects."

13 Thus it is explained that the personal associates of the Lord engage in pure devotional service, free from any touch of fruitive action.

14 Now, as far as I can understand it, I will discuss the purity and other virtues of the pure devotees. The purity of the pure devotees is that, desiring to serve the Lord in a specific way, they meditate on the form of a specific personal associate of the Lord. In this way they act to attain the goal of directly serving the Lord in a particular way.

15 Whenever they meditate on the specific form of the Lord they desire to attain, they also meditate on becoming His personal associate. They do this because pure devotees hate the impersonalists' ahangrahopasana meditation, where one imagines to have become identical with the Lord.

16 When it is said that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the individual spirit souls are one it is meant only in a very general sense. They are one only in the sense that the individual spirit souls are the spiritual potency of the Lord and in the sense that both the Lord and His personal associates have spiritual forms. One should offer nyasas and other things to the feet of the Lord's form as Kesava or His other forms. One should meditate on the various forms of the Lord, chant the appropriate various mantras, and touch the limbs of the Lord. One should not meditate on the various material demigods. That is not appropriate for the devotees.

17 Now will be described the primary kind of meditation, where the yogi-devotee meditates on the Supreme Personality of Godhead residing in His transcendental abode in the lotus flower of the devotee's heart. This meditation is described in the scriptures in the passage beginning with the words "One should meditate on Lord Krsna residing in beautiful Vrndavana."

18 Now will be considered worshipping the Lord in meditation. One should meditate on the Kama-gayatri mantra in a circle of light and there one should meditate on Goloka Vrndavana. In Brahma-samhita (5.37) it is said:

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who resides in His own realm, Goloka."*

This is certainly so, for the word "eva" (certainly) is used here.

19 Lord Krsna, the master of Vrndavana, does not personally stay on the sun planet. There He stays in a form of light. In one's heart one should meditate on the worship of Lord Krsna, the same kind of worship that is performed externally. In this way one should also worship the Lord's flute and other paraphernalia. In this way one should enter the spiritual effulgence that emanates from Lord Krsna's transcendental bodily limbs. When one has thus entered, one may meditate on

Lord Krsna's face and the other parts of His transcendental body.

20 In this way one gazes on the Lord's flute and other ornaments. One does this to gaze on Lord Krsna, and one also gazes on the Lord's dear associates and paraphernalia. One does not meditate on one's own body. This is so because of the previously explained reason.

21 When one worships the Lord in meditation one should meditate on the Lord's pastimes and associates as they actually were when they appeared in this world. With the power of one's creative imagination one should not invent ideas of how they are. One should meditate on them as they are in truth. As they appeared in the material world during the time of the Lord's advent there, so they also appear in the spiritual world eternally, where their numbers are without limit.

22 In the spiritual world the demons are not alive. They are merely toys, like puppets.

23 In Srimad Bhagavata (10.14.61) it is said:

"In this way the boys spent their childhood in the land of Vrndavana playing hide-and-go-seek, building play bridges, jumping about like monkeys and engaging in many other such games."***

Note: In these pastimes the boy Krsna imitates in play the pastimes of Lord Ramacandra.

24 In these words it is seen that the Supreme Personality of Godhead sometimes plays by imitating His own pastimes in His various incarnations. This is carefully shown, with proper logical arguments in Sri Bhagavat-sandarbhā and other books.

25 Now the glories of worshipping the Lord in one's meditation will be described. In the Narada-pancaratra, Lord Narayana explains:

"By worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead in one's meditation, one becomes free from old-age, disease and fear."

26 In the Narada-pancaratra, Lord Narayana again explains:

"O sage, I am pleased with any person who with great devotion worships Me in meditation."

27 Worship performed in meditation is independent of other kinds of worship. The Deity of the Lord conceived in meditation is one of the eight kinds of Deities. This Deity is described in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.3.50);

"Gathering whatever ingredients are available, one should worship the Deity, either in His external form, or conceived in meditation within the devotee's heart."

This is so because Sri Avirhotra has used the word "va" (or) in this verse.

28 Now the different kinds of Deities will be considered. Because He has many different forms, the Lord manifests as many different kinds of Deities, such as His form as Salagrama-sila. In the scriptures it is said:

"Wherever is a Salagrama-sila stone, there Lord Hari is personally present."

29 The chosen Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead brings all perfection to the worshipper. This occurs spontaneously, without effort. Worshipping the chosen Deity of the Lord is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.3.48) it is said:

"The devotee should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form of the Lord the devotee finds most attractive."***

30 For each of the Lord's forms, beginning with His original form of Lord

Krsna, there is a transcendental abode, beginning with the abode of Mathura-mandala. This is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.1.28):

"The city and district of Mathura are very intimately connected with Krsna, for Lord Krsna lives there eternally."*

31 For each of these abodes, beginning with Mathura and Vrndavana, there are mantras and ways of meditation. This is described in Sri Gopala-tapani Upanisad and other scriptures. Thus one should meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He appears in Mathura and His other transcendental abodes. Also one should meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead as being identical with His Deity form.

32 That the Supreme Personality of Godhead is identical with His Deity form is described in the following statement of scripture:

"He commits an offense who thinks the Deity of the Supreme Lord is merely a statue made of stone."

33 About His Deity form, the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.27.13):

"The Deity form of the Lord, who is the shelter of all living entities can be established in two ways: temporarily or permanently. But a permanent Deity, having been called, can never be sent away, My dear Uddhava."***

34 Here the word "pratistha" means "the Deity of the Lord", "jiva" means "of Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead who gives life to all living beings", and "mandiram" means "the abode of Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, an abode that is the home of My various primary and secondary bodily features, or in other words My transcendental body". Or the word "mandiram" may also mean "the Deity form that is My home because it has been installed by the proper ritual". These are the meanings. In the Hayasirsa-pancaratra, in the description of installing the Deity, is given the following mantra for inviting the Lord to appear as the Deity:

"O Lord Visnu, please come here."

Another mantra for this purpose is given in these words:

35 "O Lord, please place Your all-knowing form, a form that is the Supreme truth, in this Deity form. Please wake up, conscious and alive, as this Deity form."

36 The word "jiva-mandiram" may also be interpreted to mean "the Deity form, which is directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the shelter of all living entities". In this way the great devotees see that the Deity is directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. The Lord and the Deity are not different.

37 This is confirmed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. Speaking about His Deity form, the Lord declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.27.32):

"My devotee should then lovingly decorate Me with clothing, a brahmana thread, various ornaments, marks of tilaka and garlands, and he should anoint My body with fragrant oils, all in the prescribed manner."***

38 Here the words "mam" (to Me) and "sa-prema" (with love) should be noted.

39 In the Visnu-dharma Purana, Lord Visnu describes His Deity form to King Ambarisa in these words: "Please place all your thoughts in My Deity form. Leave all other shelters and take shelter of My Deity form alone. Devotedly worship My

Deity. Meditate on My Deity, who is kind to the devotees.

40 "When one is walking, standing, sleeping, eating, in front, behind, above, or below, one should always think of the Deity, knowing full well that the Deity and I are the same person.

41 The method of inviting the Lord to appear as the Deity and the method of worshipping the Deity are described in these words of the Agama-sastra:

"Avahanam' is when one respectfully invites the Lord to appear as the Deity. 'Samsthaapanam' is when with devotion one causes the Lord to enter the Deity.

42 "'Sannidhapanam' is when one says to the Deity, 'I am Yours'. In this way one sees himself as a servant of the Deity. 'Sannirodhanam' is when one continues the ritual of worship until it is completed. 'Sakali-karanam' is when the Lord reveals all the limbs of His transcendental form."

43 When the scriptures declare that sudras and other low-caste persons are not allowed to worship the Deity, the scriptures refer to sudras that are not Vaisnavas. This is explained in the following words of the scriptures:

"They who are devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are never sudras. They are all exalted devotees. However, they who are not devoted to Lord Visnu are all sudras, regardless of the caste of their birth."

44 In the Seventh Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam (7.14.34) Sri Narada explains:

"O king of the earth, it has been decided by expert, learned scholars that only the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, in whom all that is moving or non moving within this universe is resting and from whom everything is coming, is the best person to whom everything must be given."*

In this way it is affirmed that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the highest object of worship. Therefore the jnani philosophers who desire liberation should take shelter of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

45 In Srimad-Bhagavatam (7.15.2) it is said:

"A person desiring liberation for his forefathers or himself should give charity to a brahmana who adheres to impersonal monism (jana-nistha). In the absence of such an advanced brahmana, charity may be given to a brahmana addicted to fruitive activities (karma-kanda)."

In these words it is said that the jnanis (impersonalists) are the best objects of charity. However, in another place in the scriptures the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

46 "Even though a person is a very learned scholar of the Sanskrit Vedic literatures, he is not accepted as My devotee unless he is pure in devotional service. However, even though a person is born in a family of dog-eaters, he is very dear to Me if he is a pure devotee who has no motive to enjoy fruitive activity or mental speculation. Indeed, all respect should be given to him, and whatever he offers should be accepted. Such devotees are as worshipable as I am."*

47 In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.9.21) it is said:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, the son of mother Yasoda, is accessible to devotees engaged in spontaneous loving service, but He is not as easily accessible to mental speculators, to those striving from self-realisation by severe austerities and penances, or to those who consider the body the same as the self."*

48 It is also said in Srimad Bhagavatam (6.14.5):

"O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Narayana or Krsna. Such devotees who are fully peaceful, are extremely rare."*

49 In these words it is confirmed that a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the most exalted. How much more, then, must it be true that the worship of the Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a Deity worshipped by these exalted devotee, is the most exalted form of worship? Therefore it is said in the scriptures:

"Even if all one's past karma has already been burned away by the fire of transcendental knowledge, if one foolishly does not follow the Deity of the Lord as He goes in procession one will become a brahma-raksasa in the next birth."

50 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.14.34-35) the following explanation is given:

"O King of the earth, it has been decided by expert, learned scholars that only the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, in whom all that is moving and unmoving within this universe is resting and from whom everything is coming, is the best person to whom everything must be given."*

51 "O King Yudhisthira, the demigods, many great sages and saints including even the four sons of Lord Brahma, and I myself were present at your Rajasuya sacrificial ceremony, but when there was a question of who should be the first person worshipped everyone decided upon Lord Krsna, the Supreme Person."*

52 Here the word "tatra" (there) means "in the Rajasuya-yajna".

Anuccheda 287

1 In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.14.36) it is said:

"The entire universe, which is full of living entities, is like a tree whose root is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Acyuta (Krsna). Therefore simply by worshipping Lord Krsna one can worship all living entities."***

2 Thus by pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead one also pleases all living entities automatically. That is the meaning here.

Anuccheda 288

1 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.14.37) it is also said:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead has created many residential places like the bodies of human beings, animals, birds, saints, and demigods. In all of these innumerable bodily forms, the Lord resides with the living being as Paramatma. Thus He is known as the purusavatara."*

2 Here the word "jiva" means "the giver of life". This word refers to the Supersoul, who is present in the hearts of all conditioned living beings.

Anuccheda 289

1 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.14.38) it is also said:

"O King Yudhisthira, the Supersoul in every body gives intelligence to the individual soul according to his capacity for understanding. Therefore the Supersoul is the chief within the body. The Supersoul is manifested to the individual soul according to the individual's comparative development of knowledge, austerity, penance and so on."*

2 Here the word "tasmāt" means "than the higher and lower", and "purusah patram" means "the person who is the object". Thus it is seen that the devotees of

the Lord are better than the impersonalists. Therefore, as far as one has knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so far is one advanced in spiritual life.

Anuccheda 290

1 Seeing that in the course of time faults had become manifested among the devotees of the Lord, the Vedas revealed another way to worship the Lord. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.14.39):

2 "My dear King, when great sages and saintly persons saw mutually disrespectful dealings at the beginning of Treta-yuga, Deity worship in the temple was introduced with all paraphernalia."*

3 This verse means, "Seeing the mutually disrespectful dealings, they introduced Deity worship." In this way the path of Deity worship was revealed. That is the meaning.

4 Deity worship is the best means of spiritual advancement for they who have these kinds of faults. In the scriptures it is said:

"Deity worship is meant for people of Treta-yuga who are all less intelligent."

Deity worship is also described in the conversations of Brahma, Ambarisa, and other great souls as recorded in the Nrsimha Purana and other scriptures.

Anuccheda 291

1 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.14.40) it is said:

"Sometimes a neophyte devotee offers all the paraphernalia for worshipping the Lord, and he factually worships the Lord as the Deity, but because he is envious of the authorised devotees of Lord Visnu, the Lord is never satisfied with his devotional service."*

2 Here the word "tatah" means "because of being like this," and "kecit" means "they who are devoted to Deity worship and convinced that Deity worship is the best path". That is the meaning.

Here someone may object: Even if one offends others he can still attain perfection by worshipping the Deity.

Fearing that someone may make this claim, Srimad Bhagavatam speaks this verse. With a desire to refute this idea and establish the truth that one should be respectful to others, Srimad Bhagavatam speaks the words that begin with the phrase "upastapi".

Anuccheda 292

1 The word "purusa" in the previous verse is explained in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (7.14.41):

"My dear King, of all persons a qualified brahmana must be accepted as the best within this material world because such a brahmana, by practicing austerity, Vedic studies and satisfaction, becomes the counterpart body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

2 This verse means that they know that such a person is the best.

Anuccheda 293

1 The brahmanas, who were also described in the previous verse, are again

glorified in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (7.14.42):

"My dear King Yudhisthira, the brahmanas, especially those engaged in preaching the glories of the Lord throughout the entire world, are recognised and worshipped by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the heart and soul of all creation. The brahmanas, by their preaching, sanctify the three worlds with the dust of their lotus feet, and thus they are worshipable even for Krsna."*

2 Here the word "jagad-atmanah" means :engaged in preaching the truth of spiritual life to the people, and thus convincing them to follow the restrictions of spiritual life". The word "daivatam" means "worshipable". This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to King Yudhisthira.

Anuccheda 294

1 In the beginning of the next chapter (chapter 15 of the seventh canto), the brahmanas who are the best of all other brahmanas are described in the following two verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.15.1-2):

2 "My dear King, some brahmanas are very much attached to fruitive activities, some are attached to austerities and penances, and still others study the Vedic literature, whereas some, although very few, cultivate knowledge and practice different yogas, especially bhakti-yoga."*

3 "A person desiring liberation for his forefathers or himself should give charity to a brahmana who adheres to impersonal monism (jnana-nistha). In the absence of such an advanced brahmana, charity may be given to a brahmana addicted to fruitive activities (karma-kanda)."

4 This verse means that for they who desire impersonal liberation the most important kind of worship is worship of a jnani (impersonalist). When a jnani is not present, then other persons may be worshipped. However, they who desire to attain devotional service and pure love of God should worship a devotee who loves the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such a devotee always thinks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the shelter of all. Therefore the worship of such a devotee is the best of all kinds of worship.

5 Because He is the shelter in which everything rests, because He has extraordinary powers, and because He is all-pervading, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Visnu is personally present as the Salagrama-sila and His other Deity forms. He is the all-pervading Supersoul. He is not like a human being. Jagannatha Puri and the other places where He resides are very holy places of pilgrimage. Even the insects and worms who live in these sacred places attain the highest goal of life. This is confirmed by the words of scripture.

6 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"Any place where there is a Salagrama-sila becomes sacred for 24 miles. All charity, japa and yajna performed there becomes multiplied by many millions of times."

7 In the Padma Purana it is said:

"Any human being, or any insect or worm for that matter, who dies within two miles of a Salagrama-sila goes to the spiritual world of Vaikuntha."

8 The conclusion, then, is that worship of the Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the best kind of worship. This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to King Yudhisthira.

Anuccheda 295

1 Other places where the Supreme Personality of Godhead is personally manifested are described by the Lord Himself in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.42-46):

2 "O saintly Uddhava, please know that you may worship Me in the sun, fire, brahmanas, cows, Vaisnavas, sky, wind, water, earth, individual soul and all living entities.***

3-5 "My dear Uddhava, one should worship Me within the sun by chanting selected Vedic mantras and by performing worship and offering obeisances. One may worship Me within fire by offering oblations of ghee, and one may worship Me among the brahmanas by respectfully receiving them as guests, even when uninvited. I can be worshipped within the cows by offerings of grass and other suitable grains and paraphernalia for the pleasure and health of the cows, and one may worship Me within the Vaisnavas by offering loving friendship to them and honouring them in all respects. Through steady meditation I am worshipped within the inner space of the heart, and within the air I can be worshipped by knowledge that prana, the life air, is the chief among elements. I am worshipped within water by offerings of water itself, along with other elements such as flowers and tulasi leaves, and one may worship Me within the earth by proper application of confidential seed mantras. One may worship Me within the individual living entity by offering food and other enjoyable substances, and one may worship Me within all living entities by seeing the Supersoul within all of them, thus maintaining equal vision.***

6. "Thus, in the previously mentioned places of worship and according to the processes I have described, one should meditate on My peaceful, transcendental form with four arms holding a conchshell, Sudarsana disc, club and lotus flower. In this way, one should worship me with fixed attention."***

7 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Now eleven objects of worship will be described. Here the word 'bhadra' is in the vocative case. In the first three verses (42-44), the Lord describes different objects of worship and different methods of worship. Here the word 'trayya vidyaya' means 'with prayers, worship and other kinds of service', 'anga' means 'O Uddhava', 'mukhya-dhiya' means 'by seeing the truth about the breath of life', 'toye' means 'with water and other things', 'dravyaih' means 'with tarpana and other offerings', 'sthandile' means 'on the ground', and 'mantra-hridayaih' means 'with confidential mantras and nyasas'. Then, in verse 46, the Lord describes the way these objects of worship should become objects of meditation. Here the word 'iti' means 'in this way', and 'esu' means 'in these objects of worship.'

8 The four-armed, all-pervading Supersoul may be worshipped in two ways. The first way is to worship Him in the temple, for example by scenting the temple with fragrant oils. The second way is described in these verses in the words 'vaisnave bandhu-sat-krtya' (one may worship me within the Vaisnavas by offering loving friendship to them and honouring them in all respects) and "gosv anga yavasadina" (I can be worshipped within the cows by offerings of grass and other suitable grains). Thus one should honour and befriend the Vaisnavas and understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the supreme master. This is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.46):

"An intermediate, second class devotee shows love to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is friendly to all devotees."*

Here it is said that grass should be offered to the cows. It is not proper, of course, to make such an offering to the four-armed Supreme Personality of Godhead, for that is not proper food for Him.

9 The Supreme Lord has already explained (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.41);

"Whatever is most desired by one within this material world, and whatever is most dear to oneself, one should offer that very thing to me. Such an offering qualifies one for eternal life."***

10 Direct service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.44 (quoted in text 4 of this anuccheda) in the words "hrdi khe dhyana-nisthaya" (through steady meditation I am worshipped within the inner space of the heart) and "toye dravyais toya-puraskrtaih" (I am worshipped within water by offerings of water itself).

11 These words describe meditation on the Supersoul, who is present in fire and the other material elements. These words do not describe the form of the Lord chosen by the devotees, a form that is the shelter of all and is served with great love. This is so because that form, which is served with spiritual love, is thought by the devotees to have delicate features (and therefore it is not appropriate to think of Him as being present in fire and in various harsh conditions that present themselves to the all-pervading Supersoul).

12 The form of the Lord chosen by the devotees is described by the Lord Himself in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.27.32):

"My devotee should then lovingly decorate Me with clothing, a brahmana thread, various ornaments, marks of tilaka and garlands, and he should anoint My body with fragrant oils, all in the prescribed manner."***

13 In this way the scriptures describe the devotees' loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

14 In the Narada Purana it is said:

"O brahmanas, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is attained only by devotional service. He is never attained merely by collecting money. When He is worshipped with devotion, Lord Visnu grants the desires of His devotees.

15 "When He is worshipped with a little water, Lord Hari, who is the master of the universes and the destroyer of all sufferings, is at once pleased. He is like a thirsty man given a cup of clear water."

16 Of course, in this example it should be understood that the Supreme Lord is the origin of everything (including the water that is offered to Him). To think otherwise is to commit a great blunder. To worship the Lord by taking Him to a pleasant lake is praiseworthy in the hot summer but not praiseworthy during the monsoon.

17 In the Garuda Purana it is said: They who in the summer worship Lord Kesava by taking Him to a pleasant lake and offering Him many different flowers become free from the tortures of Yamaraja.

18 "O best of kings, they who take Lord Jagannatha to a pleasant lake during the monsoon season spend a long time in hell."

19 This is also explained in other scriptures. Many hundreds of rules are given for the appropriate times and places of various kinds of services offered to the Lord. To offer these services at other times is forbidden. This is explained in the

Visnu-yamala in the passage that begins, "Now the ways to serve Lord Visnu in the various reasons will be described.

20 The Supreme Lord also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.41):

"Whatever is most desired by one within this material world, and whatever is most dear to oneself, one should offer that very thing to me. Such an offering qualifies one for eternal life."***

21 In this way the appropriate mantras, meditations, and places as well as the appropriate pleasing and beautiful forms, tastes, scents, touches and sounds, are understood. One who does not follow these rules finds his worship of the Lord is performed in vain. In this way the Lord's form as the Supersoul, who is present in fire and other like places in this world, is understood.

Anuccheda 296

1 Now offering foodstuffs to the Lord will be discussed. In Srila Kesavacarya's Krama-dipika, in the description of the Aniruddha-mantra, it is said that pure devotees of Lord Krsna desire a mula-mantra glorifying Lord Krsna.

2 When the Lord eats His meal, one should meditate on a fire or a light coming from the Lord's mouth. As the Lord enjoys His meal one should meditate on the Lord's mouth smiling with happiness. Because Lord Krsna enjoys pastimes like those of a human being, He enjoys His meals in the same way meals are enjoyed in the world of human beings.

3 Now chanting japa will be considered. Even though there are many different Vaisnava mantras with different meanings, these mantras all bring the final goal of life. In the eight-syllable mantra and other Vaisnava mantras the purpose is to surrender to the Lord, even when the mantra does not address the Lord in the dative case.

4 One should follow the various rules of Deity worship when they are appropriate. All the various activities of devotional service ultimately lead to the perfection of pure devotional service. Still, those activities are of a great variety. Some are considered pure devotional service and others are not pure devotional service. The Lord Himself describes result of Deity worship in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.27.49):

5 "By worshipping Me through the various methods prescribed in the Vedas and tantras, one will gain from Me his desired perfection in both this life and the next."***

Anuccheda 297

1 The Supreme Lord also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.27.53):

"But one who simply engages in devotional service with no consideration of fruitive results attains Me. Thus whoever worships Me according to the process I have described will ultimately attain pure devotional service unto Me."***

2 Here the word "nairapeksyena" means (free from material designations", and "bhakti-yogena" means "with love". The second half of this verse means, "In this way Deity worship is performed." This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 298

1 Accepting flowers offered to the Lord and drinking water that has washed

the lotus feet of the Lord are some of the signs by which a Vaisnava is known. The great glories of these many signs are described in thousands of scriptures.

2 Now the persons who are qualified to worship the Lord will be described. In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.27.4) it is said:

"This process is accepted by and appropriate for all the occupational and spiritual orders of society. Therefore I consider worship of You in Your Deity form to be the most beneficial of all spiritual practices, even for women and sudras."***

3 Here the word "sarva-varnanam" means "of the three varnas".

4 In the Smrty-artha-sara, as well as in the Vaisakha-mahatmya portion of the Padma Purana, it is said:

"Following the path described in the Agama-sastras, women and sudras may, thinking of Him as the Lord in their hearts, engage in the Deity worship of Lord Visnu.

5 "By chanting the Lord's holy names, even sudras may worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All may worship the Lord by following the path of the Agama-sastras, which follow in the footsteps of the Vedas.

6 "Women who are dear and kind to their husbands are also qualified to worship Lord Visnu. This is the eternal teaching of the Vedas."

7 In the Visnu-dharma Purana it is said:

"Lord Krsna is pleased with anyone who is in eight ways devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the initiating spiritual master, and the sacred mantras glorifying the Lord.

8 "1. One should be affectionate to the devotees of the Lord. 2. One should be very happy to worship the Lord. 3. With a pure heart one should regularly worship the Lord. 4. In worshipping the Lord one should be free of pride and hypocrisy.

9 "5. One should be eager to hear about the Lord. 6. One should engage one's body in the service of the Lord. 7. One should always remember the Lord. 8. One should make the chanting of the holy name of the Lord one's life and soul.

10 "These are the eight activities of devotional service, which even a person in a mlechha family may perform. Anyone who engages in these eight activities of devotional service becomes a saintly sage. He becomes honest, truthful, famous, and glorious among men."

11 In the tattva-sagara it is said:

"As bell-metal is turned to gold when mixed with mercury in an alchemical process, so one who is properly trained and initiated by a bona fide spiritual master immediately becomes a brahmana."*

12 In Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.21 it is said:

"In Satya -yuga the Lord is white and four-armed, had matted locks and wears a garment of tree bark. He carries a black deerskin, a sacred thread, prayer beads and the rod and waterpot of a brahmacari."***

13 In the different yuga the Supreme Lord appears in different incarnations and is worshipped in different ways. A specific incarnation is established as the incarnation for a specific yuga. In this way the upasana-sastras explain the incarnations for the four yugas. Even when the time is not appropriate for a certain method of worship, one may still worship the Lord in that way. Thus, the scriptures explain, in every yuga one may, as one wishes, worship any form of the Lord with any of the proper methods of worship.

14 This is also described in Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.27.4 (which was quoted in text 2 of this anuccheda). That verse was spoken by Uddhava to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 299

1 In this way the worship of the Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead has been explained. In the Agama-sastras and other scriptures other aspects of Deity worship are also discussed. Included in these are Sri Krsna-janmastami, Karttika-vrata, Ekadasi, Magha-snana and other auspicious vows.

2 In the Visnu-rahasya, in a conversation of Brahma and Narada, Janmastami is described in the following words:

"With devotion, and without cheating on one's true financial situation, the devotees should observe the birthday of Devaki's son. One who does not observe this holy day will stay in hell for the lifetimes of fourteen Indras."

3 It is also said:

"One who neglects Sri Krsna-janmastami and follows another vow in its place does not attain any pious merit that has even been seen or heard of anywhere."

4 Not cheating on one's true financial situation is described in these words of the Eight Canto (Srimad Bhagavatam 8.19.37):

"Therefore one who is in full knowledge should divide his accumulated wealth in five parts: for religion, for reputation, for opulence, for sense gratification and for the maintenance of his family members. Such a person is happy in this world and in the next."*

5 Now Karttika will be described. In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"O child, all holy places reside in the month of Karttika, which is eternally dear to Lord Krsna. Whatever pious deeds one performs to please Lord Visnu during the month of Karttika brings a benefit that is eternal. O Narada, I speak to you the truth.

6 "A person who refuses to follow the vow of this month, which is very dear to Lord Damodara, loses his pious deeds and takes birth as an animal.

7 Now ekadasi will be described. Even they who are not Vaisnavas should regularly observe ekadasi. This is described in the following words of the Visnu-dharma Purana:

"Whether a Vaisnava or a worshipper of Surya, one should regularly observe ekadasi."

8 In the Saura Purana it is said:

"Whether a Vaisnava, a worshipper of Lord Siva, or a worshipper of Surya, one should regularly observe ekadasi."

9 In the Narada-pancaratra, in the discussion of duties to be performed after initiation, after the passage beginning with the words "samayams ca pravaksyami", it is said:

"During ekadasis of both pakshas one should not eat. At that time one should keep an all-night vigil and one should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

10 In the Visnu-yamala, in the discussion of the dig-viddha ekadasi, it is said:

"One should not act impiously on either the sukla or the krsna ekadasis, without distinction. In the same way, on ekadasi one should not, if one is able, eat

fruits or other foods. One should not perform a sraddha ceremony on ekadasi. On dvadasi one should not sleep during the day and one should not pick tulasi leaves."

11 During dvadasi one should not bathe Lord Visnu during the daytime. In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, in the description of Vaisnava-dharma, it is said:

"One should observe the vow of dvadasi".

12 In the Skanda Purana, Kasi-khanda, Sauparna-dvaraka-mahatmya, Candrasarma recounts the following vow of devotional service:

13 "O Lord Krsna, please hear my vow. For this day on I will never eat during ekadasi. On every ekadasi I will observe an all-night vigil.

14 "With great devotion I will worship You every day. I will not observe the viddha-ekadasi. To please You I will observe the eight maha-dvadasis. This is my vow."

15 In the Agni Purana it is said:

"On ekadasi one should not eat. That is the great vow of the Vaisnavas."

16 In the Gautamiya Tantra it is said:

"If a Vaisnava foolishly eats during ekadasi, he worships Lord Visnu in vain. He will go to a terrible hell."

17 In the Matsya and Bhavisya Puranas it is said:

"One should fast on the sukla and krsna ekadasis and break the fast on dvadasi. That is the great vow of the Vaisnavas."

18 In the Skanda Purana it is said:

"He who eats during ekadasi murders his mother, father, brother and spiritual master. He falls from the path that leads to Visnuloka.

19 The Vaisnavas always fast on ekadasi. On ekadasi they will not even eat maha-prasadam, what to speak of other foods, which they are forbidden to eat at any time.

20 In the Narada-pancaratra it is said:

"O Narada, one must always accept the remnants of food offered to the Lord. However, on ekadasi one must not accept them. Even Goddess Laksmi, and her peers observe ekadasi. What, then, can be said of other persons?"

21 In the Brahmanda Purana it is said:

"Without first offering them to Lord Visnu, one should not enjoy or consume any leaf, flower, fruit, water, food, drink, or medicine.

22 "They who do enjoy or consume these things without offering them first should perform atonement. One should always offer all of these things first to Lord Visnu before one consumes or enjoys them oneself."

23 Now will be discussed the importance of always observing an all-night vigil on ekadasi. In the Skanda Purana, Lord Siva tells Goddess Uma:

"They who do not observe an all-night vigil on ekadasi are rebuked by the Vaisnavas and their piety is destroyed.

24 "They who never consider observing an all-night vigil on dvadasi are not qualified to worship Lord Krsna."

25 By observing ekadasi and dvadasi one pleases Lord Visnu. This is explained in the following words of the Padma Purana, Uttara khanda:

"O goddess, now I will describe the observance of dvadasi. Simply by hearing these words one pleases Lord Krsna."

26 In the Bhavisya Purana it is said:

"Sacred ekadasi destroys all sins. It is a lamp that lights that path of devotion to Lord Visnu. It leads one to the highest goal of life."

27 By showing how ekadasi is observed by Sri Ambarisa and other great souls who have faith in devotional service alone and who eat only maha prasadam offered to the Lord, Srimad Bhagavatam affirms that the observance of ekadasi is an important part of devotional service to Lord Visnu.

28 In the Padma Purana, Karttika-mahatmya, is told the story of how by observing ekadasi during the month of karttika a brahmana's daughter became Lord Krsna's dear Satyabhama. What more need be said?

29 Now the month of Magha will be discussed. In the Garuda Purana it is said:

"O leader of the demigods, O husband of Saci, the rare month of Magha is very dear to the Vaisnavas, devas, rsis and munis. It is especially dear to Lord Madhava."

30 In the Skanda Purana, in a conversation of Brahma and Narada, it is said:

"O Narada, year after year one should regularly bathe during the month of Magha. One should do this to please Lord Krsna and to destroy all one's past sins."

31 In the Bhavisya Purana, Uttara-khanda it is said:

"A person who renounces sense pleasures and bathes at dawn during the month of Magha goes to Visnuloka with twenty one generations of his kinsmen."

32 Many other vows beginning with Sri Rama-navami and Vaisakha-vrata should also be understood here. All are included as pious deeds.

33 Pious deeds are described in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (3.1.19):

"While so traversing the earth, he simply performed duties to please the Supreme Lord Hari. His occupation was pure and independent. He was constantly sanctified by taking his bath in holy places, although he was in the dress of a mendicant and had no hair dressing nor a bed on which to lie. Thus he was always unseen by his various relatives."*

34 Here the word "vratani" means "many vows, beginning with ekadasi". This verse describes the activities of Vidura. This verse was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 300

1 In this way the devotees of the Lord follow these various vows to please their chosen Deity.

2 Thirty two offenses in the path of serving the Lord's feet and serving His Deity form are described in the Agama-sastras, where it is said:

"One should not wear shoes or ride on a palanquin when one enters the house of the Lord."

In the Varaha Purana it is said:

"One should not eat the food known as rajanna."

More offenses are described in the passage that begins with the words, "Outside of My scriptures."

3 In the Varaha Purana the Supreme Personality of Godhead says:

"O earth goddess, Vaisnavas should carefully avoid committing offenses in their worship of Me."

4 In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.27.17-18) it is said:

5 "One should worship Me in the form of water by offering water itself. Actually, whatever is offered to Me with faith by My devotee, even if only a little water, is most dear to Me. Even very opulence presentations do not satisfy Me if they are offered by non devotees."***

6 The words "faith" and "devotion" indicate respect for the Supreme Lord. All offenses have disrespect of the Lord as their nature. There is disrespect for the Lord's status as the supreme master, and there is also disrespect born from ignorance. Therefore disrespect, which is the creator of offenses, should be given up. That is the meaning. This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 301

1 Disrespect to great souls destroys everything. This is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (4.31.21):

2 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes very dear to those devotees who have no material possessions but are fully happy in possessing the devotional service of the Lord. Indeed, the Lord relishes the devotional activities of such devotees. Those who are puffed up with material education, wealth, aristocracy and fruitive activity are very proud of possessing material things, and they often deride the devotees. Even if such people offer the Lord worship, the Lord never accepts them."***

3 Here the words "adhana" and "atma-dhana" refer to they whose only wealth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such person are very dear (priya) to the Lord. The Lord (harih) relishes (rasajna) the service of His devotees. What persons are foolish and unintelligent? This question is answered in the words beginning with "sruta". Here the word "papam" means "offense". This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to the Pracetas.

Anuccheda 302

1 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 5.10.25):

"O my dear lord, you are the friend of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the friend of all living entities. You are therefore equal to everyone, and you are free from the bodily conception. Although I have committed an offense by insulting you, I know that there is no loss or gain for you due to my insult. You are fixed in your determination, but I have committed an offense. Because of this, even though I may be as strong as Lord Siva, I shall be vanquished without delay due to my offense at the lotus feet of a Vaisnava."*

2 The meaning of this verse is clear. This verse was spoken by King Rahugana to Sri Bharata.

Anuccheda 303

1 If one foolishly offends a devotee, one should try to attain the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

2 In Skanda Purana, Avanti-khanda, Vyasa explains:

"If a human being daily reads Bhagavad-gita, Lord Kesava forgives the thirty two kinds of offenses he commits."

3 In the Skanda Purana, Dvaraka-mahatmya it is said:

"One who recites or hears the thousand names of the Lord is not touched

by even a thousand offenses."

4 In the Skanda Purana, Reva-khanda, it is said:

"If on dvadasi a person keeps an all-night vigil to please Lord Visnu, and then recites prayers glorifying Tulasi-devi, then Lord Kesava forgives the thirty two kinds of offenses he commits."

5 In another passage of the Skanda Purana it is said:

"If one plants a Tulasi tree, especially during the month of Sravana (July-August), the Supreme Personality of Godhead forgives thousands of the offenses he commits."

6 In the Skanda Purana, Karttika-mahatmya, it is said:

"If one worships Salagrama-sila and Tulasi-devi together, then Lord Kesava forgives the thirty two kinds of offenses he commits."

7 In another passage of the Skanda Purana it is said:

"If a person whose body is decorated with the weapons of Lord Krsna engages in the worship of Lord Krsna, the Lord Krsna again and again forgives thousands of his offenses."

8 In the Adi-Varaha Purana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

"A person who in the middle of the year fasts and bathes in the Ganga at My sacred Sukara-tirtha becomes pure in heart.

9 "An offender who thus fasts and bathes at Mathura also becomes pure in heart. A devotee who thus serves both holy places as if they were one becomes free from the offenses committed in thousands of births."

10 Here the word "saukarake" means "the holy place named Sukara-tirtha". A great offender who offers prayers to the Lord or for a long time chants the holy name of the Lord attains the mercy of the Lord. Such a person is forgiven.

Without the Lord's mercy one is not forgiven.

11 Daksa tells Lord Siva (Srimad Bhagavatam (4.7.15):

"I did not know your full glories. For this reason, I threw arrows of sharp words at you in the open assembly, although you did not take them in account. I was going down to hell because of my disobedience to you, who are the most respectable personality, but you took compassion upon me and saved me by awarding punishment. I request that you be blessed by your own mercy, since I cannot satisfy you by my words."*

12 More will be said of this later in this book.

13 Now offering obeisances will be discussed. Although offering obeisances may be considered a part of Deity worship, it is also separate, in the same way glorifying and remembering the Lord are separate. Thus offering obeisances will be considered separately here. The other activities of devotional service may also be considered in this way.

14 Now will be discussed the truth that offering obeisances may be considered separately from Deity worship. Hearing the glories of the Supreme Lord's limitless transcendental qualities and opulences, some devotees may feel very humble, lowly and unqualified to serve the Lord's feet. Thus they may decide only to offer obeisances to the Lord and not directly engage in Deity worship. In this way offering obeisances is considered separate from Deity worship.

15 In the Nrsimha Purana it is said:

"Offering obeisances is the best of all yajnas. By once offering sastanga (dandavat) obeisances one attains Lord Hari."

16 Offering obeisances is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.14.8), where Brahma tells Lord Krsna:

"One who seeks Your compassion and thus tolerates all kinds of adverse conditions due to the karma of his past deeds, who engages always in Your devotional service with his mind, words and body, and who always offers obeisances unto You is certainly a bona fide candidate for becoming liberated."*

17 The reason why the devotees offer obeisances to the Lord is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.7):

"In time, great scientists may be able to count all the atoms of the universe, all the stars and planets in the sky, and all the particles of snow, but who among them can count the unlimited transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead? He descends on the surface of the globe for the benefit of all living entities."*

18 Here the word "tat" means "therefore", and "namah" means "obeisances". The ninth word "mukti-pade" means "You who are the shelter of liberation". This is confirmed by the tenth word. Or, if it is considered the fifth word according to prose order, the word "mukti" may also mean "spiritual love". The word "pade" then means "the object". "Mukti-pade" then means "You, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, who are the object of the devotees' love". The word "daya-bhak" means "an inheritor, like a person who inherits something from his brother". The verse then means, "O Lord, You become favourable to such a person in this way". This interpretation (that it does not mean "liberation") of the word "mukti" must be correct, for liberation itself is attained by merely once offering obeisances to the Lord. This is confirmed by the following words of the Visnu-dharma Purana:

19 "When a person once offers obeisances to Lord Krsna, that offering of obeisances becomes a guide to lead him out from the frightening and impassable jungle of repeated birth and death."

20 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word 'su-samiksamanah' means 'waiting'."

This words thus means that every moment the devotee expects the Lord's causeless, limitless mercy (anukampam). Seeing and meditating in this way in his heart (hrda), the devotee becomes blissful. Also, with his words (vaca) and body (vapusa) the devotee offers obeisances (namo vidadhat). That is the explanation of this verse.

21 One should avoid the various offenses in offering obeisances. These are described in the Visnu-smṛti and other scriptures as being: 1. offering obeisances with one hand, 2. offering obeisances when the body is completely covered with cloth, 3. offering obeisances directly facing the Lord, or from behind or from the left side and 4. offering obeisances very close to the Lord within the inner Deity room. The verse discussed here (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.8) was spoken by Lord Brahma to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 304

1 Now servitorship will be discussed. A general description of servitorship to Lord Visnu is given in these words of the scriptures:

"After a thousand births one comes to understand: 'I am the servant of Lord Vasudeva, the maintainer of all the worlds'."

2 In this way one engages in devotional service. By thinking in this way one attains perfection. More will be said of this later in this book.

3 At the end of the passage beginning with the verse quoted in text 1 are these words:

"What then can be said of those persons who control their senses and have given their lives to the service of the Lord?"

4 Sri Prahlada speaks the following prayers (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.50):

"Therefore, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, the best of all person to whom prayers are offered, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You because without rendering six kinds of devotional service unto You: offering prayers, dedicating all the results of activities, worshipping You, working on Your behalf, always remembering Your lotus feet and hearing about Your glories, who can achieve that which is meant for the paramahamsas?"*

In the commentary on this verse it is said that service to the Lord includes offering respectful obeisances, offering prayers, dedicating all the results of activities, worshipping You, working on the Lord's behalf, always remembering the Lord's lotus feet and hearing about the Lord's glories.

5 Sri Uddhava declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.6.46):

"Simply by decorating ourselves with the garlands, fragrant oils, clothes and ornaments that You have already enjoyed, and by eating the remnants of Your meals, we, Your servants, will indeed conquer Your illusory energy."***

6 The different activities of service are described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (9.4.18-20):

"Maharaja Ambarisa always engaged his mind in meditating upon the lotus feet of Krsna, his words in describing the glories of the Lord, his hands in cleansing the Lord's temple, and his ears in hearing the words spoken by Krsna or about Krsna. He engaged his eyes in seeing the deity of Krsna, Krsna's temples and Krsna's places like Mathura and Vrndavana, he engaged his sense of touch in touching the bodies of the Lord's devotees, he engaged his sense of smell in smelling the fragrance of tulasi offered to the Lord, and he engaged his tongue in tasting the Lord's prasada. He engaged his legs in walking to the holy places and temples of the Lord, his had in bowing down before the Lord, and all his desires in serving the Lord, twenty four hours a day. Indeed, Maharaja Ambarisa never desired anything for his own sense gratification. He engaged all his senses in devotional service, in various engagements related to the Lord. This is the way to increase attachment for the Lord and be completely free from all material desires."*

7 This verse means that his desires (kamam) were placed in service (dasye). The word "ca" (and) means that he thought, 'I am a servant of Lord Krsna. I will serve Him'. That was his desire. That is the meaning here. He did not desire to enjoy the sense gratification available in Svargaloka or other places (na tu kamakamyaya). He had no desires other than devotional service.

8 This verse was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 305

1 Worship of the Lord that is performed with the activities of service is the best kind of worship. In Srimad Bhagavatam (9.5.16) it is said:

"What is impossible for the servants of the Lord? By the very hearing of

His holy name one is purified."*

2 If one somehow or other hears the holy name of the Supreme Lord, then what more need he do to become purified? By hearing the Lord's holy name one thinks, "I am a servant of the Lord". What spiritual activities and what spiritual attainment then remain undone (avasisyate) by him? No spiritual activity is better than what he has done. That is the meaning. This verse was spoken by Durvasa Muni to King Ambarisa.

Anuccheda 306

1 Now thinking of the Lord as one's friend will be described. Being a friend of the Lord and desiring His welfare is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.14.32):

"How greatly fortunate are Nanda Maharaja, the cowherd men and all the inhabitants of Vrajabhumi! There is no limit to their fortune because the Absolute Truth, the source of transcendental bliss, the eternal Supreme Brahman, has become their friend."*

Here the word "mitra" indicates friendship with the Lord.

2 In the Ramarcana-dipika it is said:

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead now stays in a place as if He were a human being. Many great devotees have come to see Him and to act like His friends and relatives."

3 Intimate love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as His friend or relative, is even better than being a servant of the Lord. Friendship for the Supreme Personality of Godhead is in this way described in the Vedic scriptures. This is not surprising. That one must have a nature like the Lord's to thus approach Him is described in these words of the scriptures:

"the Lord cannot be served by one whose nature is not like the Lord's nature."

Sometimes it is said that being thus in an equal position with the Lord is an impediment to true devotional service. The pure devotees of the Lord reject this idea. They accept that friendship with the Lord is very favourable for devotional service.

4 Servitorship and friendship are two ways of direct devotional service to the Lord. This is shown in the following Srimad-Bhagavatam verse and its commentary. There Sridama Vipra declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.81.36):

"Life after life may I have a relationship of love, friendship, sympathy and service toward Him, the supremely compassionate reservoir of all transcendental qualities. And may I cultivate my firm attachment to Him by the precious association of His devotees."***

5 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Seeing Lord Krsna's love for His devotees, Sridama Vipra prays for devotion to the Lord. Here the word "sauhrdam" means :love", "sakhyam" means "being the well-wisher", "maitrim" means "benefiting Him", and "dasyam" means :being His servant and order-carrier". Sridama prays, "Let my (me) relationship with Him be (syat) like this. Let it not be a relationship of awe inspired by His great opulences".

6 Because it is the goal of the nine methods of devotional service, pure love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not included among the items discussed

here. However, being a friend of the Lord and being His well-wisher are included. Friendship and servitorship are accepted in this way.

7 Offering the results of one's work and attaining faith in devotional service are not mentioned here because these two are not direct devotional service. Offering the results of one's work leads to faith in devotional service and faith in devotional service leads to engagement in devotional service. This has already been explained. The devotee becomes the well-wishing friend of the Lord and the Lord becomes the well-wishing friend of His devotee. They associate with each other eternally.

8 It is not very difficult to worship the Lord as one's friend. Sri Prahlada explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.38):

"O my friends, sons of the asuras, the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His Supersoul feature always exist within the cores of the hearts of all living entities. Indeed, He is the well wisher and friend of all living entities, and there is no difficulty in worshipping the Lord. Why, then should people not engage in His devotional service? Why are they so addicted to unnecessarily producing artificial paraphernalia for sense gratification?"*

9 Here the word "chidravat" means "like the sky, which is never contaminated". The reason why there is no difficulty in worshipping the Lord is given in the following words: 1. In His pure form the Supreme Lord is the Supersoul present in all embodied beings (dehinam sva atma), 2. the Supreme Lord is the friend of everyone, equally and without exception (samanyatah), 3. as the Supersoul in the heart He is the well wisher of all. Therefore at the appropriate times He gives either material things or a wealth of spiritual love for Him (hareh). The conclusion, however, is, "What is the use of temporary material benefits like having a beautiful wife or mastery over others?" This verse was spoken by Sri Prahlada to the sons of the demons.

Anuccheda 307

1 The Supreme Personality of Godhead declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.66):
"As chaste women bring their gentle husbands under control by service, the pure devotees, who are equal to everyone and completely attached to Me in the core of the heart, bring Me under their full control."*

2 The example given in this verse shows the nature of devotional service in friendship with the Lord. This verse is spoken by the Lord of Vaikuntha to Durvasa Muni.

Anuccheda 308

1 In Srimad Bhagavatam (4.12.37) it is said:

"Persons who are peaceful, equipped, cleansed and purified, and who know the art of pleasing all other living entities, keep friendship only with devotees of the Lord. They alone can very easily achieve the perfection of going back home, back to Godhead."*

2 Here the word "acyuta-priya-bandhavah" means "they whose friends are the persons dear to the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead" and the word "acyuta-padam" means "the spiritual world, where the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master". Thus it is shown that the word "acyuta", appearing two times in this verse, has the same meaning each time. The meanings

are not different. This verse was spoken by Maitreya Muni.

Anuccheda 309

1 Now will be discussed surrendering everything to the Lord. That means offering everything, from the external material body to the pure spirit soul, to the Lord. That means that one does nothing for one's own sake, but everything for the sake of the Lord. That means that all one's activities and goals are meant to please Him. When one surrenders to the Lord, one becomes like a cow sold to a buyer. When the cow is sold, the seller no longer works to maintain the cow. The buyer must now work to maintain it. The seller does not again maintain the cow.

2 Surrendering everything to the Lord is described in these words of Sri Rukmini (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.52.39):

"Therefore, my dear Lord, I have chosen You as my husband, and I surrender myself to You. Please come swiftly, O almighty one, and make me Your wife. My dear lotus-eyed Lord, let Sisupala never touch the hero's portion like a jackal stealing the property of a lion."***

3 Some say that surrendering everything means surrendering one's material body to the Lord. This is described in Bhakti-viveka:

"When one sells a cow, one no longer worries how to maintain the cow. In the same way, when one surrenders one's body to Lord Hari, one puts an end to the struggle to maintain it."

4 Others say that surrendering everything means surrendering oneself, the pure spirit soul, to the Lord. This is described in the prayers of Sri Yamunacarya (Stotra-ratna 49):

"O Lord, whatever I possess in terms of this body and its paraphernalia, and whatever I have from the modes of nature, today I offer at Your feet."

5 Others say that surrendering everything means surrendering to the Lord the deeds that begin with one's right hand. Thus the word that one performs with one's body or other instruments is not performed for one's own benefit. It is offered to the Lord. This is described in the following words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (9.4.18-20):

6-8 "Maharaja Ambarisa always engaged his mind in meditating upon the lotus feet of Krsna, his words in describing the glories of the Lord, his hands in cleansing the Lord's temple, and his ears in hearing the words spoken by Krsna or about Krsna. He engaged his eyes in seeing the Deity of Krsna, Krsna's temples and Krsna's places like Mathura and Vrndavana, he engaged his sense of touch in touching the bodies of the Lord's devotees, he engaged his sense of smell in smelling the fragrance of tulasi offered to the Lord, and he engaged his tongue in tasting the Lord's prasada. He engaged his legs in walking to the holy places and temples of the Lord, his head in bowing down before the Lord, and all his desires in serving the Lord. twenty four hours a day. Indeed, Maharaja Ambarisa never desires anything for his own sense gratification. He engaged all his senses in devotional service, in various engagements related to the Lord. This is the way to increase attachment for the Lord and be completely free from all material desires."*

9 Here the word "cakara" means : "he offered". "Krsna-padaravindayoh" means "in many different ways he served Lord Krsna's lotus feet and the other parts of the Lord's transcendental body". "Lingam" means "the Deity form of the

Lord", "alayah" means "the Lord's devotees, the Lord's temple, and the holy places sacred to the Lord", "tat-pada-sarjoo-saurabhe srimat-tulasyah" means "he smelled the fragrance of Sri Tulasi offered to the lotus feet of the Lord", "tad-arpite" means "maha-prasada foods and other things offered to the Lord", and "kamam ca dasye" means "his desires were placed in serving the Lord". What activities did he perform? That is explained in the words "yathottamasloka-janasraya ratih" (he engaged all his senses in devotional service, in various engagements related to the Lord). In these many ways he surrendered to the Lord. Worshipping the Lord by remembering Him and in other ways also, he surrendered to the Lord.

10 The Lord explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.24):

"Firm faith in the blissful narrations of My pastimes, constant chanting of my glories, unwavering attachment to ceremonial worship of Me, praising Me through beautiful hymns, great respect for My devotional service, offering obeisances with the entire body, performing first-class worship of My devotees, consciousness of Me in all living entities, offering of ordinary, bodily activities in My devotional service, use of words to describe My qualities, offering the mind to Me, rejecting of all material desires, giving up wealth for My devotional service, renouncing material sense gratification and happiness, and performing all desirable activities such as charity, sacrifice, chanting, vows and austerities with the purpose of achieving Me, these constitute actual religious principles, by which those human beings who have actually surrendered themselves to Me automatically develop love for Me. What other purpose or goal could remain for My devotee?"***

11 Remembering the Lord, glorifying Him and serving His feet are all included with devotional service. Although the Agama-sastras sometimes describe Deity worship as something different from devotional service, it is not really different. Bathing and dressing the Deity as well as the other activities of Deity worship are all appropriate activities of devotional service. Also, these activities are not opposed to or different from surrendering everything to the Lord.

12 Surrendering everything is praised in these words of Sri Prahlada (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.6.26):

"Religion, economic development and sense gratification, these are described in the Vedas as tri-varga, or three ways to salvation. Within these three categories are education and self-realisation, ritualistic ceremonies performed according to Vedic injunction, logic, the science of law and order, and the various means of earning one's livelihood. These are the external subject matters of study in the Vedas, and therefore I consider them material. However, I consider surrender to the lotus feet of Lord Visnu to be transcendental."*

13 Surrendering everything is also praised in these words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.34):

"A person who gives up all fruitive activities and offers himself entirely unto Me, eagerly desiring to render service unto Me, achieves liberation from birth and death and is promoted to the status of sharing My own opulences."*

14 Surrendering everything to the Lord is seen to be of two kinds: 1. surrender performed without ecstatic love, and 2. surrender performed with ecstatic love. The verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.34) quoted in the preceding text is an example of the former. An example of the latter is found in Srimad Bhagavatam (11.11.35) where the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

"Accepting oneself as My eternal servant, one should give oneself completely to Me."***

15 Another example of surrender with ecstatic love is seen in these words of Sri Rukmini (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.52.39):

"Therefore, my dear Lord, I have chosen You as my husband, and I surrender myself to You. Please come swiftly, O almighty one, and make me Your wife. My dear lotus-eyed Lord, let Sisupala never touch the hero's portion like a jackal stealing the property of a lion."***

16 The verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.18-20) quoted in texts 6-8 of this anuccheda were spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 310

1 In this way devotional service performed by following the rules and regulations (vaidhi bhakti) has been described. Some features of vaidhi bhakti have been described here, some have not been described here, and some have not been described here, and some have been glorified in other parts of this book. The different kinds of faith and different kinds of glorious features or vaidhi bhakti described here are not at odds with each other. They are meant for different kinds of persons in the same way different kinds of medicines are meant for different kinds of patients.

2 Now spontaneous devotional service (raganuga bhakti) will be described. In raganuga bhakti there is great love and a strong desire to attain the Lord. This is called raga. When the eyes and other senses are attracted to the handsomeness and other transcendental qualities of the Lord, that is called raga, or passionate love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

3 There are many different kinds of raga. This is seen in the following statement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.38):

"My dear mother, devotees who receive such transcendental opulences are never bereft of them. Neither weapons nor the change of time can destroy such opulences. Because the devotees accept Me as their friend, their relative, their son, preceptor, benefactor, and Supreme deity, they cannot be deprived of their possession at any time."*

4 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the beloved (priya) of the dear gopis, the Supreme Brahman (atma) for the sages headed by Sri Sanaka-kumara, the son (suta) of they who are headed by the King of Vraja, the friend (sakha) of they who are headed by Sridama, the preceptor (guru) of they who are headed by Pradyumna, the brother of someone, the cousin of someone, and the father-in-law of someone. He is the friend (suhrah) of many friends headed by Sridama. He is the master (daivam istam) of many servants headed by Daruka.

5 Here it may be said that the demigods Siva fell in love with the Supreme Lord's incarnation of Srimati Mohini-devi, and this should be considered ecstatic love for the Lord. This idea is not accepted, for it is not confirmed by the words of scripture. Lord Siva became bewildered by the Lord's illusory potency (maya) and his love for Mohini was material lust.

6 When one thinks of the Lord in one of these different relationships and engages in the activities of devotional service that begin with hearing about the Lord, glorifying Him, remembering Him, serving His feet, offering obeisances to Him, and surrendering everything to Him, and when one loves the Lord, but one's

love is not yet natural or spontaneous, his devotional service is called ragatmika bhakti.

7 When one has already attained passionate love for the Lord, love like a great Ganges river of devotion in which the waves are the various activities of devotional service, and when the activities of devotional service are no longer a means of attaining something that is not already attained, his devotion is called raganuga bhakti.

8 From the passionate love (raga) thus described, attraction (ruci) is born. Attraction (ruci) is not manifested of its own accord. It comes from love (raga). When the faint reflection of the light shining from the nectar moon of this passionate love (raga) shines in the crystal jewel of the heart, then attraction (ruci) is born by the action of passionate love (raga). When attraction (ruci) thus follows (anuga) passionate love (raga), the condition is known as raganuga bhakti.

9 Some call this stage of devotional service avihita bhakti, for it is impelled by attraction alone and is not bound to follow rules and regulations. This explanation should not be accepted. It is not possible for a person completely aloof from all rules and regulations to engage in devotional service.

10 In Srimad Bhagavatam (2.1.7) it is said:

"O King Pariksit, mainly the topmost transcendentalists, who are above the regulative principles and restrictions, take pleasure in describing the glories of the Lord."*

11 Vaidhi bhakti, which is dependent on following rules and regulations, is weak, but raganuga bhakti, which is independent of rules and regulations, is powerful. By engaging in raganuga bhakti one comes to dislike anything that has no relation to devotional service. This is explained in the Third Canto, where, describing attraction to the descriptions of the Lord, Sri Vidura says (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.5.13):

12 "For one who is anxious to engage constantly in hearing such topics, krsna-katha gradually increases his indifference towards all other things. Such constant remembrance of the lotus feet of Lord Krsna by the devotee who has achieved transcendental bliss vanquishes all his miseries without delay."*

13 Ruci means when the mind is in the grip of hearing the previous described topics of the Lord. Because raganuga bhakti is not dependent on rules and regulations, the servitorship (dasya) and friendship (sakhya) for the Lord manifested in raganuga bhakti are different from the servitorship and friendship for the Lord manifested in vaidhi bhakti.

14 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.5.24) it is said:

"These nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who has dedicated his life to the service of Krsna through these nine methods should be understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge."*

15 Great importance is not given to the stages of development manifested in raganuga bhakti. However, importance is given to the stages of development in ragatmika bhakti. In ragatmika bhakti comes the manifestation of ruci. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.8.35):

16 "The Supreme Personality of Godhead is absolutely the most dear one for all living beings because He is everyone's well-wisher and Lord. He is the Supreme Soul situated in everyone's heart. Therefore I will now pay the price of complete

surrender, and thus purchasing the Lord I will enjoy with Him just like Laksmi-devi."*

17 Thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as her friend and well-wisher, in this verse Pingala desires to attain Him as her husband. That is the meaning here.

18 In the Chandoga-parisista it is said:

"Following a vow of chanting caru-mantras, a girl attains oneness with her desired husband."

The "oneness" mentioned here is artificial, not real. As a girl may thus purchase an ordinary husband, in the same way, by full self-surrender, one may purchase the Supreme Personality of Godhead as one's husband and enjoy with Him as Laksmi-devi enjoys with her handsome husband. In this way is shown Pingala's attraction (ruci) to the Lord.

Anuccheda 311

1 The activities of raganuga bhakti are described in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.8.40):

"I am now completely satisfied and I have full faith in the Lord's mercy. Therefore I will maintain myself with whatever comes of its own accord. I shall enjoy life with only the Lord, because He is the real source of love and happiness."***

2 This verse means, "In my mind (atmana) I will enjoy (viharami) with Him (amuna), my affection lover". The mind is mentioned here because the mind is most important in the path of attraction (ruci) to the Lord. Because she did not have the spiritual form of a beloved of the Lord, Pingala engaged her mind in meditating on the Lord in this way. Deity worship tends to remove the boldness (that is a natural part of amorous pastimes). Therefore Deity worship naturally leads to vatsalya rasa, where one is a parent or other guardian of the Lord. This verse was spoken by Sri Pingala.

Anuccheda 312

1 In this way raganuga bhakti where the devotee has the idea of becoming one of the Lord's beloveds is shown. An example of this is seen in the Brahma-vaivarta Purana, in the story of the girl Kamakala. Examples of ruci-bhakti where the devotee has the idea of becoming a servant of the Lord or associating with Him in the other rasa are seen in other places in the scriptures. An example of a servant is given in the following words of Sri Prahlada (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.24):

"My dear Lord, now I have complete experience concerning the worldly opulence, mystic power, longevity and other material pleasures enjoyed by all living entities, from Lord Brahma down to the ant. As powerful time, You destroy them all. Therefore, because of my experience, I do not wish to possess them. My dear Lord, I request You to place me in touch with Your pure devotee and let me serve him as a sincere servant."*

2 In Sri Narada-pancaratra a devotee says:

"O master of the universes, when, with a graceful and deep voice will you order me, "Take a camara in your hand and fan Me'."

3-4 In the Skanda Purana and in the Sanat-kumara-samhita, in the story of King Prabhakara, it is said:

"Although he was sonless, the king did not desire a son. He considered that his condition was already ordained by his part karma. Instead, he wished that Lord Vasudeva, the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is glorified by all the Upanisads and who is the Supersoul in everyone's heart, would become his son. He wanted to crown the Supreme Lord as the next king and give the kingdom to Him. He did not wish for a son that would not be the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself."

5 Finally the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared before the king and said, "I will become your son."

6 In the Narayana-vyuha-stava it is said:

"I offer my respectful obeisances to they who always meditate on Lord Hari as their husband, son, friend, brother, father, or mother."

7 In this verse the words husband, son, friend, and brother refer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the object of meditation and the words father and mother refer to the devotee who is meditating on the Lord. The affix "vat" (like) here means that the devotee does not directly become the Lord's mother, but rather becomes a follower of the Lord's mother. The same is true for the Lord's father. To think otherwise is to accept the impersonalists' error of ahangrahopasana (thinking oneself the object of worship). Here the word "dhyayant" (they meditate) confirms the previous explanation of the importance of the mind in raganuga bhakti. The word "api" (even) here means "How exalted are they who serve the Lord in perfect raganuga bhakti?"

8 Here someone may object: The Purva-mimamsa affirms, "Religion means following the orders of scripture", and the Brahma-yamala also affirms, "Devotional service to the Lord that ignores the authorised Vedic literatures like the Upanisads, Puranas, Narada-pancaratra, etc., is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society."* Therefore to ignore the orders of the Sruti-sastra and other scriptures is a great fault.

9 The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself affirms:

"The Sruti and Smrti sastras are My commands. Therefore one who disobeys the scripture disobeys Me. Such a person hates Me. He may claim to be devoted to Me, but in truth he is not."

10 This verse shows that disobedience to the duties and prohibitions of the Sruti-sastra and other scriptures makes one ineligible to be a Vaisnava. How, then can one attain perfection by following a kind of devotional service (ragatmika bhakti) that ignores these rules and regulations?

If this is said, then the following reply is given: Spiritual potency is present in the Lord's holy name, qualities and all else that is in relation to Him. It is not present in the rules of ordinary religion. In many places the scriptures affirm that one attains the result of devotional service without reference to impersonal speculation or any other method. The rules of the scriptures do not have power to act by themselves, without reference of a person. They have power because they have come from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore they who, having no knowledge of attraction (ruci) to the Lord, raise these objections, have no real understanding of the activities of ragatmika bhakti.

11 This is shown by the following statement of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.35):

"O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while

running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall."***

12 A person who is somehow or other engaged in the attempt to fix his mind in thinking of the Lord is a person who actually follows the rules of devotional service. A person who does not have attraction for the Lord and does not yearn to always engage in devotional service does not actually follow the rules of devotional service. Such a person may perish from the attack of impersonalism or from other calamities. The rules of devotional service are not established for their own sake. They are meant to make one attracted to the Lord, to make the mind fall in love (ragatmika) with the charming Supreme Personality of Godhead.

13 The Supreme Personality of Godhead declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.11.33):

"My devotees may or may not know exactly what I am, who I am and how I exist, but if they worship Me with unalloyed love, then I consider them to be the best of devotees."***

This means that even if one acts with the wrong motive, or even out of malice, and even if one is merely mimicking the actions of devotional service, if one somehow or other engages in ragatmika bhakti, he will attain the result obtained by engaging in ragatmika bhakti. This is described in the scriptures.

14 Simply by mimicking the activities of the Lord's nurse or mother, Putana attained the perfection of ragatmika bhakti. This is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.14.35) where Brahma tells Lord Krsna:

"My mind becomes bewildered just trying to think of what reward other than You could be found anywhere. You are the embodiment of all benedictions, which You bestow upon these residents of the cowherd community of Vrndavana. You have already arranged to give Yourself to Putana and her family members in exchange for her disguising herself as a devotee. So what is left for You to give these devotees of Vrndavana, whose homes, wealth, friends, dear relations, bodies, children and very lives and hearts are all dedicated only to You?"***

If this was true for Putana, then what may be said of the devotees who are attracted (ruci) to the Lord and always sincerely engaged in the activities of devotional service? In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.6.35-36) it is also said:

15-16 "Putana was always hankering for the blood of human children, and with that desire she came to kill Krsna. But because she offered her breast to the Lord, she attained the greatest achievement. What then is to be said of those who had natural devotion and affection for Krsna as mothers and who offered Him their breasts to suck or offered something very dear, as a mother offers something to a child?"*

17 The Lord Himself declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.36):

"Material piety and sin, which arise from the good and evil of this world, cannot exist within My unalloyed devotees, who, being free from material hankering, maintain steady spiritual consciousness in all circumstances. Indeed, such devotees have achieved Me, the Supreme Lord, who am beyond anything that can be conceived by material intelligence."***

18 The state of being an unalloyed (ekanti) devotee of the Lord is attained by having faith in devotional service. When one is attracted (ruci) to the Lord, one naturally respects the rules and regulations described in the scriptures. Attraction to the Lord is very rare. If a person has no respect for the rules and regulations of the scriptures and thinks himself an unalloyed devotee, he is merely a proud

hypocrite. This is confirmed by the following words of the Brahma-yamala:

"Devotional service to the Lord that ignores the authorised Vedic literatures like the Upanisads, Puranas, Narada-pancaratra, etc., is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society."*

Therefore the criticism that they do not honour the rules of scripture cannot be thrown at they who are genuinely attracted (ruci) to the Lord. This is also seen in Srimad Bhagavatam 10.6.35-36 (quoted in texts 15 and 16 of this anuccheda).

19 In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda it is said:

"They who have no love or attraction for the Supreme Personality of Godhead and act as they like, ignoring the instructions of the Vedas, are known as offenders and atheists."

Here the word "priti" means "attraction".

20 One who deliberately dishonours the instructions of scripture is to be criticised, but one who is merely ignorant of those instructions is not to be criticised. This is seen in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.35):

"O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall."****

21 In the Gautamiya Tantra it is said:

"For they who are always fallen in love with the lotus feet of Lord Krsna there is no japa, no Deity worship, no meditation, and no rules."

22 When attraction (ruci) is not yet manifested even the best raganuga bhakti is considered to be mixed with vaidhi bhakti. Even a devotee who has attraction (ruci) for the Lord may, in order to benefit the people of the world, engage in raganuga bhakti mixed with vaidhi bhakti. Therefore, in some situations it is appropriate to practice raganuga bhakti mixed with vaidhi bhakti.

23 Some devotees chant the eighteen-syllable mantra and meditate on Lord Krsna surrounded by all His associates attracted by the music of His flute at the time for milking the cows. Other devotees think in this way: "I chant this mantra that my spiritual master has given me so that I may attain my desire and become one of the people of Vraja. Then I will directly serve Lord Krsna, the son of Vraja's king."

24 Now will be discussed these words spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead (and previously quoted in text 9):

"The Sruti and Smrti sastras are My commands. Therefore one who disobeys the scripture disobeys Me. Such a person hates Me. He may claim to be devoted to Me, but in truth he is not."

Disobedience of the commands of scripture is of two kinds: 1. disobeying the dharma-sastras, and 2. disobeying the bhakti-sastras.

25 A person who has faith in devotional service does not fall down from his position as a Vaisnava if because of wickedness, or another reason, or for no reason at all, he does not perform the duties described in the dharma-sastras. This is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.5.41):

"One who has given up all material duties and taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Mukunda, who gives shelter to all, is not indebted to the demigods, great sages, ordinary living beings, relatives, friends, mankind, or even one's forefathers who have passed away."*

26 The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself declares (Bhagavad-gita 9.30):

"Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination."*

27 They who are attracted to the Lord in this way do not desire the happiness of liberation from the world of birth and death, what to speak of the horrible happiness created by sinful deeds. They do not commit sins, if somehow by mistake or by accident they commit a sin, that sin is destroyed in a single moment.

28 Also, in Srimad Bhagavatam (11.5.42) it is said:

"One who has given up everything and taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is very dear to Krsna. If he is involved in some sinful activity by accident, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated within everyone's heart, removes his sins without difficulty."*

29 The duties and prohibitions described in the Vaisnava-sastras have the pleasure of Lord Visnu as their only goal. Thus a person who is attracted (ruci) to the Lord and who loves (raga) the Lord will perform certain activities and refrain from other activities. This is because such a person has the pleasure of the Lord as the only goal of his life.

30 A person following the path of ragatmika bhakti does not consider what should be done and what should not be done from the point of view of ordinary considerations. He accepts only activities that are favourable for devotional service.

31 Thus a devotee who is attracted (ruci) to the Lord and who follows the path of raganuga bhakti will follow the scriptures' description of how to engage in devotional service. However, even the residents of Gokula, the raganuga-bhaktas who were personal associates of the Lord, performed Vaisnava duties and even ordinary worldly duties to bring auspiciousness to Krsna and protect Him from troubles and obstacles.

32 The Supreme Personality of Godhead declares (in Brahma-yamala, also quoted in texts 9 and 24 of this anuccheda):

"The Sruti and Smrti sastras are My commands. Therefore one who disobeys the scripture disobeys Me. Such a person hates Me. He may claim to be devoted to Me, but in truth he is not."

These words do not apply to the devotees engaged in raganuga bhakti, for such devotees are already on the right path in spiritual life. Rather, this verse is addressed to they who follow the wrong paths, the paths of heretics and atheists like Buddha, Rsabhadeva, Dattatreya and others.

33 The scriptures declare:

"A heretic opposed to the religion of the Vedas may worship his own deity. However, he will go to hell until the time when the universe is destroyed by floods."

34 Even though many Vedic rules are not followed in it, raganuga bhakti is not outside the path of the Vedas. Actually raganuga bhakti is the perfection of the religion described in the Vedas and the scriptures that explain the Vedas. This is so because raganuga bhakti makes one attracted (ruci) to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the Vedas are described many heretics and atheists, such as Buddha, who are opposed to the Vedas and thus are outside the sphere of

Vedic religion. For example, in Srimad Bhagavatam (1.3.24) it is said:

35 "Then, in the beginning of Kali-yuga, the Lord will appear as Lord Buddha, the son of Anjana, in the province of Gaya, just for the purpose of deluding those who are envious of the faithful theist."*

36 Therefore raganuga bhakti is proper and correct. It is much better than vaidhi bhakti. The previously discussed rules of the scriptures are meant for merging into the existence of the Lord. When the mind is attracted to the Lord, then one may merge into Him. It is not a matter of rules and regulations. It is a matter of the nature of the mind.

37 The rules encourage what is favourable for this and forbid what is not favourable. In that way one quickly merges into the existence of the Lord. When all unwanted materialism is destroyed, then one is able to merge into the existence of the Lord. This is a vivid example of the great power of the path followed by the mind. When the conditions are favourable, then one can attain the goal sought by the impersonalists.

38 The following explanation (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.15) is given to show the power of the mind's thoughts and emotions:

39 "Maharaja Yudhisthira inquired: It is very wonderful that the demon Sisupala merged into the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead even though extremely envious. This sayujya-mukti is impossible to attain even for great transcendentalists. How then did the enemy of the Lord attain it?"*

40 Here the word "ekantinam" means "of the impersonalists".

Anuccheda 313

1 Generally it is not possible, even for the great impersonalists, to merge into the existence of the Lord. Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.16) asks this question:

"O great sage, we are all eager to know the cause for this mercy of the Lord. I have heard that formerly a king named Vena blasphemed the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that all the brahmanas consequently obliged him to go to hell. Sisupala should also have been sent to hell. How then did he merge into the Lord's existence?"*

2 Here the word "tamasi" means "in hell". In the Vamana Purana it is said that after suffering in many different hells, Vena was rescued by the power of King Prthu.

Anuccheda 314

1 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.18) it is also said:

"From the very beginning of his childhood, when he could not even speak properly, Sisupala, the most sinful son of Damaghosa, began blaspheming the Lord, and he continued to be envious of Sri Krsna until death. Similarly, his brother Dantavakra continued the same habits."*

2 The meaning of this verse is clear.

Anuccheda 315

1 Sri Narada gave this reply: To whom do you refer when you say that a person who offends the Supreme Personality of Godhead must go to hell? Do you refer to a person who gives suffering to the Lord? Or, if you do not refer to such a person, do you refer to a person who offends the Lord by drinking liquor and

performing other forbidden acts?

2 The bewildered conditioned souls have the power to blaspheme and offend only things created from the material modes of ignorance, passion and goodness. They who have taken shelter of the material nature do not have the power to blaspheme or offend a person whose form, qualities and other features are not material. Unlike the conditioned souls, the Supreme Personality of Godhead does not identify Himself as a product of the material nature. Therefore He is never troubled by the offenses committed by the conditioned souls. This is explained in the following three and a half verses of Srimad Bhagavatam.

3 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.22) it is said:

"O King, blasphemy and praise, chastisement and respect, are experienced because of ignorance. The body of the conditioned soul is planned by the Lord for suffering in the material world through the agency of the external energy."*

4 Here the word "nindanam" means "describing faults", and "nyakkarah" means "eclipsed". This means, "for making one aware of praise, criticism, and other dualities". Then the verse explains, "The body of the conditioned soul is planned by the Lord for suffering in the material world through the agency of the external energy."*

Anuccheda 316

1 Srimad Bhagavatam (1.7.23-24) continues:

"My dear King, the conditioned soul, being in the bodily conception of life, considers his body to be his self and considers everything in relationship with the body to be his. Because he has this wrong conception of life, he is subjected to dualities like praise and chastisement.*

2 Because of the bodily conception of life, the conditioned soul thinks that when the body is annihilated the living being is annihilated. Lord Visnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the supreme controller, the Supersoul of all living entities. Because He has not material body, He has no false conception of 'I' and 'mine'. It is therefore incorrect to think that He feels pleasure or pain when blasphemed or offered prayers. This is impossible for Him. Thus He has no enemy and no friend. When He chastises the demons it is for their good, and when He accepts the prayers of the devotees it is for their good. He is affected neither by prayers nor by blasphemy."*

3 The word "iha" means "in the material world". These verses explain, "The conditioned soul, being in the bodily conception of life, considers his body to be his self and considers everything in relationship with the body to be his. Because he has this wrong conception of life, he is subjected to dualities like praise and chastisement. Because of the bodily conception of life, the conditioned soul thinks that when the body is annihilated the living being is annihilated.* However, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not like the conditioned soul. How can He be punished or made to suffer? There is no way that this can be possible."

4 The reason the Supreme Personality of Godhead does not identify with a material body is given with the word "kaivalyat" (because His body is not material). This is described in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (1.7.35):

"The bodies of the inhabitants of Vaikuntha are completely spiritual, having nothing to do with the material body, senses, or life air."*

If the inhabitants of Vaikuntha have pure and spiritual bodies that cannot be blasphemed or offended, then how much more so must the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead be spiritual, pure, eternal, and full of knowledge and bliss? That is the meaning here.

5 The conditioned souls cannot even approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He Himself affirms this in the following words of Bhagavad-gita (7.25):

"I am never manifest to the foolish and unintelligent. For them I am covered by My internal potency and therefore they do not know that I am unborn and infallible."*

6 The Supreme Personality of Godhead is different from the individual spirit souls because: 1. He is the Supersoul present in everyone's heart, 2. He is untouched by the material energy, 3. He can never be harmed, 4. He is the supreme controller (dharma-kartuh) and 5. as the master of limitless wonderful potencies, He is the master and teacher of all.

Anuccheda 317

1 Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is never troubled by blasphemy or any other offense, therefore one should meditate on Him, somehow or other, by any means available. In Srimad Bhagavatam 10.12.39 it is said:

"If even only once or even by force one bridges the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead into one's mind, one can attain the supreme salvation by the mercy of Krsna, as did Aghasura. What then is to be said of those whose hearts the Supreme Personality of Godhead enters when He appears as an incarnation, or those who always think of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the source of transcendental bliss for all living entities and by whom all illusion is completely removed"?"*

Therefore they who meditate on the Supreme Lord's effulgence merge into the Lord's effulgence, and they who meditate on the Lord because they hate Him also merge into the Lord's effulgence. By thus merging these persons become purified of their blasphemies and other sins. That such persons attain sayujya-mukti (impersonal liberation) is described in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.26):

2 "Therefore by enmity or by devotional service, by fear, by affection or by lusty desire, by all of these or any one of them, if a conditioned soul somehow or other concentrates his mind upon the Lord, the result is the same, for the Lord, because of His blissful position, is never affected by enmity or friendship."*

3 The word "yunjyat" means that if one is not able to meditate on the Lord with love, lust or in any favourable way, then one should meditate on Him in whatever way one can, even if that means to meditate on Him with hatred. Here the vidhi-lin (potential mood) is used to indicate a command. Somehow or other one should think of the Lord alone and nothing else (neksate prthak). Thus the mind is fixed on the Lord. That is the meaning.

Here the word "vairena" means "with enmity" and "nirvairena" means "without enmity" or "in a neutral way". Thus one may meditate on the Lord without passionate desire, hatred or any other emotion. That is the meaning here. When one meditates (yunjyat) on the Lord without enmity and with full concentration of the mind, that meditation is known as devotional service (bhakti-yoga). That is the meaning.

The word "snehah" means "affection", which is different from lust (kama). This means mutual, sincere love. The Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes attracted to His affectionate devotee.

Anuccheda 318

1 The result of all this is that one quickly becomes merged in the Lord. Thus the path of thinking of the Lord, even if it is done with enmity and even if one blasphemes the Lord is not on the same level as mere vaidhi bhakti. This is explained in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.26):

2 "By devotional service one cannot achieve such intense absorption in thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as one can through enmity toward Him. That is my opinion."*

3 This is the nature of fear and enmity (vairanubandhena). When they are directed to the Lord one may easily merge into the existence of the Lord (tanmayatam). By engaging in vaidhi bhakti (bhakti-yogena) one does not attain that result at all (tu na tatha).

Anuccheda 319

1 In this way it is said that the enemies of the Lord merge into the effulgence emanating from the Lord's transcendental form. Even though their hatred was material in nature, it brought them the great and auspicious result of merging into the Lord's effulgence. This is explained in the following example (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.2.17-28):

2-3 "A grassworm confined in a hole of a wall by a bee always thinks of the bee in fear and enmity and later becomes a bee simply because of such remembrance. Similarly, if the conditioned souls somehow or other think of Krsna, who is saccid-ananda-vigraha, they will become free from their sins. Whether thinking of Him as their worshipable Lord or an enemy, because of constantly thinking of Him they will regain their spiritual bodies."*

4 This verse means, "By fear and hatred they attain their own spiritual forms, which are like that of the Lord. The word "evam" means :thus". The form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is like the form of a human being. Because of the influence of the illusory potency, the Lord is often believed to be an ordinary human being in the material world.

5 Here someone may object: The grassworm does not commit a sin by hating the bee. However by hating the Supreme Lord one certainly does commit a sin.

Fearing that someone would object in this way, this verse explains, "By thinking of the Lord as their enemy, they become purified of their sins." This is so because meditation on the Lord has this power.

Anuccheda 320

1 One does not attain perfection merely by following the rules of vaidhi bhakti. Neither does one attain perfection by disobeying the rules of vaidhi bhakti. The way to attain perfection is given in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.30):

2 Many, many persons have attained liberation simply by thinking of Krsna with great attention and giving up sinful activities. This great attention may be due to lusty desires, inimical feelings, fear, affection or devotional service. I shall

now explain how one receives Krsna's mercy simply by concentrating one's mind upon Him."***

3 This verse means, As some persons concentrate their minds on the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus attained liberation by following the rules of vaidhi bhakti, so many other persons also attained liberation by violating the rules of vaidhi bhakti and following lust and other vices in their stead." Among lust and other vices are the sin of hatred and fear. They gave up (hitva) that sin. Because it is mixed with hatred, fear is also considered a sin.

4 Some consider lust a sin. However, the following should be considered: When it is directed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, lust is transcendental and removes sin, whether one thinks of the Lord as one's husband or one's paramour. If this kind of lust is transcendental, then does it remove hatred and other sins because that is its nature, because the lusty person drinks nectar from the lips of the supremely pure Personality of Godhead and therefore this "lust" is not actually lust at all but something far beyond what is known in this world as lust, or merely because the scriptures affirm that it destroys sins? It is not like that. Sri Sukadeva Gosvami rebukes King Pariksit in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.29.13);

5 "This point was explained to you previously. Since even Sisupala, who hated Krsna, achieved perfection, then what to speak of the Lord's dear devotees."*

6 In these words lust and other like emotions are criticised and lust is praised. Because lust for the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not different from love for Him, there is nothing wrong with it. Here lust is one kind of love.

7 In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.31.19) the gopis declare:

"O dearly beloved! Your lotus feet are so soft that we place them gently on our breasts, fearing that Your feet will be hurt. Our life rests only in You. Our minds, therefore, are filled with anxiety that Your tender feet might be wounded by pebbles as You roam about on the forest path."*

8 Unconcerned for their own happiness, the gopis wish that Krsna will be happy. Kubja, however is mostly concern about her own happiness. She is not like the gopis, and therefore her attitude is the be criticised. She is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.48.7):

"Simply by smelling the fragrance of Krsna's lotus feet, Kubja cleansed away the burning lust Cupid had aroused in her breasts, chest and eyes. With her two arms she embraced between her breasts her lover, Sri Krsna, the personification of bliss, and thus she gave up her long-standing distress."***

9 She also declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.48.9):

"O beloved, please stay here with me for a few day more and enjoy. I cannot bear to give up Your association, O lotus-eyed one."***

In this way she expresses her love.

10 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.48.8):

"Having thus gotten the hard-to-get Supreme Lord by the simple act of offering Him body ointment, unfortunate Kubja submitted to that Lord of freedom the following request."***

11 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.48.11):

"Lord Visnu, the Supreme Lord of all lords, is ordinarily difficult to approach. One who has properly worshipped Him and then chooses the benediction of mundane sense gratification is certainly of poor intelligence, for he

is satisfied with an insignificant result."***

12 In Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.48.8 (quoted in text 10) the word "kaivalya-nathah" means "the Lord who is served by pure devotees". Kubja is described here as "unfortunate" because her body was deformed bent in three places. The word "aho (Oh!) is uttered in surprise. Her offering of body ointment to the Lord was an activity of devotional service. Because of this service she was prompted to ask (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.48.9):

"O beloved, please stay here with me for a few days more and enjoy. I cannot bear to give up Your association, O lotus-eyed one."***

In these words she begs that she may become fortunate.

13 In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.80.25) it is said:

"What piety has this unwashed, impoverished (brahmana) performed? Everyone looks down on him as most fallen, and yet the spiritual master of the three worlds, the abode of goddess Sri, is serving him reverentially. Leaving her, the goddess of fortune, sitting on her bed, the Lord has embraced this (brahmana) as if he were His older brother."***

The residents of the palace spoke these words about Sridama Vipra.

14 Here someone may object: Why is lusty Kubja praised? This objection is answered in Srimad Bhagavatam 10.18.11 (quoted in text 11). There it is said, "One who chooses the benediction of mundane sense-gratification is certainly of poor intelligence." The meaning here is that a girl who desires the Supreme Personality of Godhead is supremely intelligent. Her desire to enjoy with the Supreme Lord removes hatred and a host of sin.

15 This is so because the pastimes of the Lord are by nature all-perfect. This is confirmed by the following words of Sri Vedanta-sutra (2.1.33);

"The pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are transcendental, although they seem to be like those of an ordinary human being in the material world."

16 As He enjoys amorous pastimes like these with the gopis and Kubja, so the Lord also enjoys with Sri, Bhu, Lila and other goddesses in Sri Vaikunthaloka and other places. The Lord is eternally perfect and independent. He can enjoy any pastimes that He wishes to enjoy. Therefore these pastimes should be understood as existing because the Lord wishes to enjoy them. These pastimes are naturally very charming and sweet like nectar. It is not possible to fully understand the nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His amorous pastimes exist because He wishes to enjoy them. To that extent they may be understood.

17 The goddesses who are the Lord's beloveds are manifested from His internal potency. Therefore their forms are all pure and spiritual. These goddesses are very exalted and important. They are not ordinary or unimportant by any means. Their pastimes of drinking the nectar of the Lord's lips is not improper. This has already been explained. These pastimes exist because the Supreme Lord wishes to enjoy them.

18 One should not make the mistake of thinking these goddesses to be ordinary persons. They are the internal potencies of the Lord, and it is by the Lord's wish that they have attained His association.

19 The scriptures declare that amorous pastimes with the Supreme Personality of Godhead are not sins. Rather, hearing of these pastimes removes sin. Certainly there is no fault in amorous pastimes where the Supreme Lord assumes the role of

the husband. On the contrary, such pastimes are glorified in the scriptures. In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.90.27) it is said:

20 "And how is it even possible to describe the great austerities that must have been performed by the women who were able to serve Him, the spiritual master of the universe, in pure, ecstatic love? Thinking Him to be their own husband, rendered such intimate services as massaging His feet."***

21 Many exalted sages have become the Lord's beloveds and enjoyed these pastimes with Him. This is described in many places in the scriptures. For example, Sri Madhvacarya quotes the following words of the Kurma Purana:

22 "By performing great austerities, Agnideva's sons became women and attained Lord Vasudeva, the unborn and all-powerful creator of the universes, as their husband.

23 In the Narayana-vyuha-stava these exalted devotees are offered respects in these words:

"I offer my respectful obeisances to they who always meditate on Lord Hari as their husband, son, friend, brother, father or mother."

24 To enjoy amorous pastimes with the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a paramour is also no sinful. In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.29.32) the gopis tell Lord Krsna:

"Our dear Krsna, as an expert in religion You have advised us that the proper religious duty for women is to dutifully serve their husbands, children and other relatives. We agree that this principle is valid, but actually this service should be rendered to You. After all, O Lord, You are the dearest friend of all embodied souls. You are their most intimate relative and indeed their very Self."***

25 Srila Sukadeva Gosvami also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.33.35):

"He who lives as the overseeing witness within the gopis and their husbands, and indeed within all embodied living beings, assumes forms in this world to enjoy transcendental pastimes."***

26 Lord Krsna Himself declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.32.22):

"O gopis, I am not able to repay My debt for your spotless service, even within a lifetime of Brahma. Your connection with Me is beyond reproach. You have worshipped Me, cutting off all domestic ties, which are difficult to break. Therefore please let your own glorious deeds be your compensation."***

27 This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. Many other great devotees also attained this kind of relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Another example of this is given in these words of the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda:

28 "When they saw Lord Ramacandra, the handsome Supreme Personality of Godhead, all the great sages in the Dandaka forest desired to enjoy with Him.

29 "Becoming women, they took birth in Gokula and enjoyed amorous pastimes with Lord Krsna. Then they became liberated from the ocean of repeated birth and death."

30 Then men also may attain the forms of women and associate with the Lord in this way. The Lord appears before them not as the material god of love (Kamadeva), but as a spiritual god of love. This is explained in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.32.2):

"Then Lord Krsna, a smile on His lotus face, appeared before the gopis.

Wearing a garland and a yellow garment, He directly appeared as one who can bewilder the mind of Cupid, who himself bewilders the minds of ordinary people."***

Thus, because He is worshipped by the material god of love, Lord Krsna is the spiritual god of love (Kamadeva).

31 Sri Uddhava and many other great devotees have glorified the Lord's beloveds. Sri Uddhava declares (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.47.580):

"Among all persons on earth, these cowherd women alone have actually perfected their embodied lives, for they have achieved the perfection of unalloyed love for lord Govinda. Their pure love is hankered after by those who fear material existence, by great sages, and by ourselves as well. For one who has tasted the narrations of the infinite Lord, what is the use of taking birth as a high class brahmana, or even as Lord Brahma himself?"***

32 What more need be said? In the Vamana Purana it is said that even the Vedas Personified attained this nature. Desiring to become eternally perfect gopis, the Vedas personified took birth among the gopis. The glory of the gopis is described by the Vedas Personified in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.23):

33 "By practicing the mystic yoga system and controlling their breath, the great sages conquered the mind and senses. Thus engaging in mystic yoga, they saw the Supersoul within their hearts and ultimately entered into the impersonal Brahman. However, even the enemies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead attain that position simply by thinking of the Supreme Lord. The damsels of Vraja, the gopis, simply wanted to embrace Krsna and hold His arms, which are like serpents. Being attracted by the beauty of Krsna, they ultimately acquired a taste for the nectar of the Lord's lotus feet. We can also taste the nectar of Krsna's lotus feet by following in the footsteps of the gopis."*

34 The meaning of this verse is very clear. This verse means, "Seeing with the eyes of scripture, with a great effort the sages worship the Absolute Truth, who is known as Brahman. However, without worshipping the Lord, only by thinking of Him, the enemies of the Lord also attain the Brahman.

35 "The beautiful-eyebrowed gopis, their hearts attached to the serpentlike arms of You, who are Nanda's son, attained the sweetness of love for the nectar of Your lotus feet.

36 "We Personified Vedas will become like these gopis and we will also attain the nectar of Your lotus feet." That is the meaning. The inflections of the words are altered to show this meaning.

37 Here the words "the nectar of Your lotus feet" are spoken with great respect. The words 'even the enemies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead attain that position simply by thinking of the Supreme Lord' show that by following the path of thinking of the Lord one quickly attains the goal. The words "We can also taste the nectar of Krsna's lotus feet by following in the footsteps of the gopis" show the method practiced by a person following the path of raganuga bhakti. If this were not the best method to attain the best goal, then the Personified Vedas, who are fully aware of all methods and all goals, would not have adopted it.

38 In this verse two pairs of paths of remembering the Lord are described. In the first pair the path of the Personified Vedas is superior. In the second their path is inferior. The word "api" (also) applies to both these pairs of paths. Thus this

word is not employed only once here. The word "striyah" here refers to the eternal gopis. In the Vamana Purana it is said that the Personified Vedas see the gopis in the eternal abode of Lord Krsna.

Note: The two pairs of paths of remembering the Lord are: 1. the paths of Personified Vedas and the enemies of the Lord, and 2. the paths of Personified Vedas and the gopis. The Personified Vedas are superior to the enemies of the Lord but inferior to the gopis.

39 All of this is nicely explained in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.29):

"Many, many persons have attained liberation simply by thinking of Krsna with great attention and giving up sinful activities. This great attention may be due to lusty desires, inimical feelings, fear, affection or devotional service. I shall now explain how one receives Krsna's mercy simply by concentrating one's mind upon Him."***

In this way one becomes free of the sins of fear and hatred.

Anuccheda 321

1 Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.29 (which was quoted in anuccheda 320, text 2) is further explained by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.30), where some examples are given:

2 "The gopis by their lusty desires, Kamsa by his fear, Sisupala and other kings by envy, the Yadus by their familial relationship with Krsna, you Pandavas by your great affection for Krsna, and we, the general devotees, by our devotional service, have obtained the mercy of Krsna."*

3 Here references is made to the previous lives of the gopis and the other devotees. With the word "vayam" (we) Sri Narada refers to his previous birth.

4 Sri Narada explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.6.28):

"Having been awarded a transcendental body befitting an associate of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I quit the body made of five material elements, and thus all acquired fruitive results of work (karma) stopped."*

In this way in his previous birth he attained the perfect form of a personal associate of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this way the word "vayam" (we) is explained.

5 Thus vaidhi bhakti has been described. Raganuga bhakti is described in these words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.36);

"Material piety and sin, which arise from the good and evil of this world, cannot exist within My unalloyed devotees, who, being free from material hankering, maintain steady spiritual consciousness in all circumstances. Indeed, such devotees have achieved Me, the Supreme Lord, who am beyond anything that can be conceived by material intelligence."***

6 The Lord also explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.19.35):

"To constantly see good and bad is itself a bad quality. The best quality is to transcend material good and evil."***

7 In this way it is seen that ragatmika bhakti is not dependent on the rules and regulations of vaidhi bhakti. In Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.29 the past tense is used to describe the attainment of the result. However, in the following verse the gopis are described in the present tense. By hearing of the Supreme Lord's

transcendental qualities, the gopis become rapt in meditation on Him. They are described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.90.26):

8 "Glorified variously by countless songs, He is the Lord who forcibly attracts the minds of any women who simply hear about Him. What to speak, then, of those women who see Him directly?"***

9 Sisupala, who had been a liberated associate of the Lord in Vaikuntha, appeared to have been killed when he arrived as an unwelcome guest and tried to cause a calamity. Then his true position as a devotee of the Lord was revealed. In Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.31 (quoted in text 2) the words "sambandhad yo vrsnayo yuyam", mean "you Vrsnis have a relationship of affection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead". Therefore Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.26) affirms:

"Therefore by enmity or by devotional service, by fear, by affection, or by lusty desire, by all of these or any one of them, if a conditioned soul somehow or other concentrates his mind upon the Lord, the result is the same, for the Lord because of His blissful position, is never affected by enmity or friendship."*

10 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.30) it is said:

"Many, many persons have attained liberation simply by thinking of Krsna with great attention and giving up sinful activities. This great attention may be due to lusty desires, inimical feelings, fear, affection or devotional service. I shall now explain how one receives Krsna's mercy simply by concentrating one's mind upon Him."*

These quotes both affirm the same conclusion.

11 This same conclusion is also confirmed in a verse that follows in the same passage. There it is said (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.32):

"Somehow or other one must consider the form of Krsna, very seriously. Then, by one of the five different processes mentioned above, one can return home, back to Godhead. Atheists like King Vena, however, being unable to think of Krsna's form in any of these five ways, cannot attain salvation. Therefore, one must somehow think of Krsna, whether in a friendly way, or inimically."*

12 In Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.31 (quoted in text 2) the words sambandha (relationship) and sneha (affection) are both related to raganuga bhakti. In their previous lives the Vrsnis and Pandavas, like the gopis, were aspiring devotees engaged in vaidhi bhakti. From sambandha (a relationship with the Lord) comes sneha (affection for the Lord), and from that comes ruci (attraction to the Lord). In this way it is shown that vaidhi bhakti eventually leads to raganuga bhakti.

Anuccheda 322

1 Here someone may object: If simply by hating the Supreme Lord one attains perfection, then why did King Vena fall into hell?

Fearing that someone would raise this objection, Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.32) explains:

"Somehow or other one must consider the form of Krsna very seriously. Then, by one of the five different processes mentioned above, one can return home, back to Godhead. Atheists like King Vena, however, being unable to think of Krsna's form in any of these five ways, cannot attain salvation."*

2 The words, "katamo 'pi na vena syat pancanam purusam prati" mean "Vena did not have one of the five relationships with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, relationships that begin with enmity." This means that Vena did not

have a relationship of blaspheming and hating the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

3 Vena's sins bore fruit because he did not engage in intense meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even though he was a demon, he did not hatefully and violently attack the Supreme Personality of Godhead, an attack that would have brought him liberation. That is the meaning.

4 In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.2.34) it is said:

"Even ignorant living entities can very easily come to know the Supreme Lord if they adopt those means prescribed by the Supreme Lord Himself. The process recommended by the Lord is to be known as bhagavata-dharma, or devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."***

In this way even very great sins perish. This is so even if one is ignorant.

Anuccheda 323

1 Therefore, in Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.32) it is said:

"Therefore, one must somehow think of Krsna, whether in a friendly way, or inimically."*

2 The conclusion here is that one should somehow fix his mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The conclusion here is not that one should engage in vaidhi bhakti. Here the word "kenapi" means "somehow or other". By engaging in vaidhi bhakti one finally attains the Lord after a long time and a great struggle. However, by engaging in raganuga bhakti, by thinking of the Lord as one's enemy or in other ways, one quickly and easily attains the Lord. A fallen sinner who hates the glorious Supreme Personality of Godhead is actually virtuous. Who, then, is truly fallen and degraded? The answer is that a person who is indifferent to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a person who does not love the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is truly fallen and degraded. This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to Sri Yudhisthira.

Anuccheda 324

1 If the path of thinking of the Lord somehow or other is this powerful, then how powerful must be the path of raganuga bhakti, where one thinks of the Lord with love? This is affirmed by the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (11.5.48):

2 "Inimical kings like Sisupala, Paundraka and Salva were always thinking about Lord Krsna. Even while they were lying down, sitting or engaging in other activities, they enviously meditated upon the bodily movements of the Lord, His sporting pastimes, His loving glances upon His devotees, and other attractive features displayed by the Lord. Being thus always absorbed in Krsna, they achieved spiritual liberation in the Lord's own abode. What then can be said of the benedictions offered to those who constantly fix their minds on Lord Krsna in a favourable, loving mood?"***

3 Here the word "akrti-dhiyah" means that their thoughts were placed in the Lord's forms.

4 In the Garuda Purana it is said:

"Even foolish sinners like Sisupala and Duryodhana who personally insulted the Supreme Personality of Godhead attained liberation. Simply by remembering the Lord, they became purified of all their sins. How, then, can there

be any doubt that the great devotees, who sincerely love the Lord, also become purified and attain liberation?"

5 In Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.27) it is said:

"By devotional service one cannot achieve such intense absorption in thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as one can through enmity to Him."*

However, one should not interpret these words to mean that hating the Supreme Personality of Godhead is better than all other relationships with the Lord.

6 In Srimad Bhagavatam (3.16.31) the Lord assured the two Vaikuntha inhabitants, Jaya and Vijaya:

"By practicing the mystic yoga system in anger, you will be cleansed of the sin of disobeying the brahmanas and within a very short time return to Me."*

7 These words were spoken by the Lord of Vaikuntha to Jaya and Vijaya. To become free of their offense they must practice mystic yoga. Because they are by nature eternally perfect associates of the Lord, this entire incident was arranged so that the Lord would have the opportunity to enjoy pastimes of fighting with them. For this reason some consider that these activities of the Lord should be considered activities of devotional service. That is not true. Words like "bhakti" (devotional) and "seva (service) are used when one has a favourable relation with the Lord. They cannot be used when one is an enemy of the Lord.

8 In the Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda, it is said:

"The yogis are able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead because they are devoted to Him, not because they hate Him. Anger and envy will not help one see Lord Krsna.

9 Here someone may object: The enemies of the Lord are also devotees. This is seen in the following statement of Sri Uddhava (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.2.24):

"I consider the demons, who are inimical toward the Lord to be more than the devotees because while fighting with the Lord, absorbed in thoughts of enmity, they are able to see the Lord carried on the shoulder of Garuda, the son of Tarkasya (Kasyapa) and carrying the wheel weapon in His hand."*

10 To this objection the following reply is given: Please do not think in this way. This verse is an example of the rhetorical device called utpreksa, where one imagines one thing to be like another that is in truth very different. This verse does not prove that the demons are devotees of the Lord. In this example utpreka, Uddhava, overcome with longing and grief, sees only the good fortune attained by the demons, their good fortune in directly seeing the Lord. He says, "Alas, we cannot see the face of the Lord. At the moment of death we will not be able to see, even in meditation, the moonlike face of the Lord. Therefore the demons are better devotees than us, for at the moment of their deaths they had the opportunity to see the moonlike face of the Lord." The conclusion is that this verse does not in any way prove that hating the Lord is the same as devotional service. This verse was spoken by Sri Narada to Sri Vasudeva.

Anuccheda 325

1 In this way raganuga bhakti is attained. Raganuga bhakti is primarily directed to Lord Krsna. In Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.41 it is said:

"My dear King Yudhisthira, the gopis by their lust desires, Kamsa by his

fear, Sisupala and other kings by envy, the Yadus by their familial relationship with Krsna, you Pandavas by your great affection for Krsna, and we, the general devotees, by our devotional service, have obtained the mercy of Krsna."*

Here it is seen that Lord Krsna is the object of raganuga bhakti. Also, only the demons who direct their hatred to Lord Krsna attain the perfection of merging into His effulgence. The demons who hate the Lord's other full and partial forms do not attain that perfection.

2 For this reason Srimad Bhagavatam (7.1.32) declares:

"Therefore one must somehow think of Lord Krsna, whether in a friendly way or inimically."*

3 By engaging in raganuga bhakti one very quickly fixes his mind on the Lord. That is why raganuga bhakti, and not vaidhi bhakti, is discussed in the eleventh canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. Sometimes raganuga bhakti is directed to the four-armed form of the Lord, but pure raganuga bhakti is seen primarily in Sri Gokula, where raganuga bhakti is most prominent, and where the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His original form as Lord Krsna, enjoys pastimes as the son, master, friend, or beloved of His devotees.

4 These different relationships with the Lord are described in Bhagavad-gita (4.11), where Lord Krsna affirms:

"As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Prtha."*

5 These different relationships are also seen in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.43.17):

"The various groups of people in the arena regarded Krsna in different ways when He entered it with His elder brother. The wrestlers saw Krsna as a lightning bolt, the men of Mathura as the best of males, the women as Cupid in person, the cowherd men as their relative, the impious rulers as a chastiser, His parents as their child, the King of the Bhojas as death, the unintelligent as the Supreme Lord's universal form, the yogis as the Absolute Truth and the Vrsnis as their supreme worshipable Deity."***

6 That the Lord accepts different relationships to fulfil the desires of His devotees is seen in these words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.14.2):

"My dear Lord, neither I nor anyone else can estimate the potency of this transcendental body of Yours, which has shown such to me and which appears just to fulfil the desires of Your pure devotees."***

7 To please His devotees the Lord pretends to desire their services of giving Him food and drink, bathing Him, fanning Him, and affectionately serving Him in many ways. These activities of devotional service are described by the Lord Krsna Himself in these words (Bhagavad-gita 9.26):

8 "If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept it."*

9 In these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.15.17) Srila Sukadeva Gosvami praises the devotees' eager service:

10 "Some of the cowherd boys, who were all great souls, would then massage His lotus feet, and others, qualified by being free of all sin, would expertly fan the Supreme Lord."***

11 That the Supreme Personality of Godhead thus fulfils the desires of His devotees does not negate His supreme power over everything. That supreme

power is manifested in other situations. In truth it is glorious and praiseworthy that He is happy to fulfil His devotees' wishes. This is seen in His pastime of being bound by the queen of Vraja and delivering the yamala-arjuna trees.

12 Even though He has all power, the Lord voluntarily agrees to be under the control of the queen of Vraja. In the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.9.19) Srila Sukadeva Gosvami praises that quality of the Lord:

"O Maharaja Pariksit, this entire universe, with its great, exalted demigods like Lord Siva, Lord Brahma and Lord Indra, is under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Yet the Supreme Lord has one transcendental attribute: He comes under the control of His devotees. This was now exhibited by Krsna in this pastimes."***

13 Even today many devotees follow the path of raganuga bhakti and thus worship Lord Krsna, the son of Vraja's king. In Sri Visnu Purana, when the gopas were very surprised to see Him lift Govardhana Hill, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gave them this reply:

14 "If your truly love Me, then please think of Me as your kinsman."

15 In an alternate reading of this text the Lord says, "O My kinsmen, then please honour Me like a kinsman."

16 The Lord also said to them (Sri Visnu Purana 5.13.12):

"I am not a demigod. I am not a gandharva. I am neither a yaksa nor a danava. I am your kinsman. Please don't think of Me in any other way."

17 In Srimad Bhagavatam (10.3.45) Lord Krsna tells Maharaja Vasudeva:

"Both of you, husband and wife, constantly think of Me as your son, but always know that I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By thus thinking of Me constantly with love and affection, you will achieve the highest perfection: returning home, back to Godhead."*

Because knowledge of the Lord's supreme power and opulence is prominent in the hearts of Maharaja Vasudeva and many other devotees, the Lord here gives permission to think of Him in two ways: as the all-powerful Supreme Lord and as one's kinsman.

18 Although Yasoda, the queen of Vraja, saw the Lord's great power and opulence by gazing into His mouth, this is not said to be her true good fortune. Influenced by the Lord's yogamaya potency, she always thought of Lord Krsna as her son. In this way the Lord was merciful to her in many ways. In this way she was very fortunate. Vasudeva and Devaki were not as fortunate as Nanda and Yasoda. The good fortune of Nanda and Yasoda is that they think of Krsna as their son. In this way they enjoy His childhood pastimes. Maharaja Pariksit praises Nanda and Yasoda in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.8.46-47):

19 "O learned brahmana, mother Yasoda's breast milk was sucked by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What past auspicious activities did she and Nanda Maharaja perform to achieve such perfection in ecstatic love?*

"Although Krsna was so pleased with Vasudeva and Devaki that He descended as their son, they could not enjoy Krsna's magnanimous childhood pastimes, which are so great that simply chanting about them vanquishes the contamination of the material world. Nanda Maharaja and Yasoda, however, enjoyed these pastimes in full, and therefore their position is always better than that of Vasudeva and Devaki."*

20 Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, the king of sages, also praised the love of Nanda

and Yasoda for Lord Krsna. He said (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.9.19):

"O Maharaja Pariksit, this entire universe, with its great, exalted demigods like Lord Siva, Lord Brahma and Lord Indra, is under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Yet the Supreme Lord has one transcendental attribute: He comes under the control of His devotees. This was now exhibited by Krsna in this pastime."*

21 Sri Narada told Sri Vasudeva and Devaki (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.47):

"My dear Vasudeva, you and your good wife Devaki have manifested great transcendental love for Krsna, accepting Him as your son. Indeed, you are always seeing the Lord, embracing Him, speaking with Him, resting with Him, sitting together with Him, and taking your meals with Him. By such affectionate and intimate association with the Lord, undoubtedly both of you have completely purified your hearts. In other words, you are already perfect."***

22 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Loving Lord Krsna as their son, they attained the perfection of the great treasure of devotional service."

23 Sri Narada also told Vasudeva and Devaki (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.49):

"Do not think of Krsna as an ordinary child, because He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, inexhaustible and the Soul of all beings. The Lord has concealed His inconceivable opulences and is thus outwardly appearing to be an ordinary human being."***

24 These words do not contradict what was previously said of Nanda and yasoda. Srila Sridhara Svami comments in these words:

"Someone may object: If by loving a son one becomes liberated, then every parent would automatically attain liberation. This verse is spoken to answer this objection."

25 Thus to think of Lord Krsna as one's son is a great opulence and a great good fortune. That is the meaning. The word "akrthah" here is an example of arsa usage, where what is ordinarily a grammatical flaw is considered correct because it is used by a great sage. The letter "a" in "akrthah" should be omitted because the word "ma" is used here. In the Sabda-kosa it is said, "abhava na hy ano na". Because of these two prohibitions the words "kuru" should be used here in place of "akrthah".

26 Whether they are aware of the truth or not aware, the devotees who follow the path of pure raganuga bhakti, worshipping the Lord without awe and veneration are in a glorious position. In Srimad Bhagavatam (11.11.33) Lord Krsna affirms:

"My devotees may or may not know exactly what I am, who I am, and how I exist, but if they worship Me with unalloyed love, then I consider them to be the best of devotees."***

27 Because it is the most pure, raganuga bhakti in Sri Gokula is the best kind of devotional service. This is said. Pure raganuga bhakti is not possible in any other place. By understanding the glories of raganuga bhakti, and by understanding the truth of the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supremely exalted nature of devotional service to Lord Krsna is proved. Thus also it is proved that Lord Krsna, who enjoys transcendental pastimes in Gokula is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead.

28 Devotional service to Lord Krsna is described in these words (Srimad

Bhagavatam 1.2.5):

29 "O sages, I have been justly questioned by you. Your questions are worthy because they relate to Lord Krsna and so are of relevance to the world's welfare. Only questions of this sort are capable of completely satisfying the self."*

30 In Srimad Bhagavatam an inquiry was made to determine what brings genuine satisfaction to the heart. In this way questions were asked about Lord Krsna and the following answer was given (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.6):

31 "The supreme occupation (dharma) for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendental Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self."*

In this way the spiritual path that begins with making a great effort to offer the Lord the results of one's work and culminates in faith in devotional service is described. In this way devotional service is manifested. Hearing descriptions of the various incarnations of the Lord eventually brings one to the stage where one's thoughts are fixed in Lord Krsna, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is described in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 2.8.3):

32 "Narrations concerning the Lord who possesses wonderful potencies, are certainly auspicious for living beings in all planets. O greatly fortunate Sukadeva Gosvami, please continue narrating Srimad Bhagavatam, so that I can place my mind upon the Supreme Soul, Lord Krsna, and, being completely freed from material qualities, thus relinquish this body."*

33 In this verse the word "hareh" means "of the various incarnations of the Lord". "Akhilatmani krsne" means "to Lord Krsna, who is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, in whom all incarnations are present, and who is also the friend of Arjuna." This verse was spoken by Maharaja Pariksit.

Anuccheda 326

1 At the end of His conversation (in the eleventh canto of Srimad Bhagavatam), Lord Krsna in the previous chapter (chapter 28) described the results obtained by jnana, yoga, and bhakti. Nevertheless, Sri Uddhava, because he was a pure devotee, refused to accept even the slightest part of jnana and yoga. Uddhava said (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.1-2):

2 "My dear Lord Acyuta, I fear that the method of yoga described by You is very difficult for one who cannot control his mind. Therefore please explain to me in simple terms how someone can more easily execute it."***

3 "O lotus-eyed- Lord, generally those yogis who try to steady the mind experience frustration because of their inability to perfect the state of trance. Thus they weary in their attempt to bring the mind under control."*

4 Here Uddhava explains that the goal of jnana and yoga is attained only with great difficulty. However, the goal of faithful devotional service is attained very easily. Therefore one should engage in devotional service. That is the meaning here.

5 Here Uddhava says, "The great souls reject jnana and yoga. Instead they engage in devotional service to You, O Krsna. They do not have a high regard for the results obtained by practicing jnana and yoga."

Sri Uddhava continues his explanation in the next four verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.3-6, which are discussed here in anucchedas 126-129). In the

first of these verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.3) he says:

6 "Therefore, O lotus-eyed Lord of the universe, swanlike men happily take shelter of Your lotus feet, the source of all transcendental ecstasy. But those who take pride in their accomplishments in yoga and karma fail to take shelter of You and are defeated by Your illusory energy."***

7 (In the previous verse, Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.2) it is said that some become weary (visidanti) by practicing jnana and yoga. This verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.3) then declares: "Now (atha) therefore (atah) the swanlike men (hamsah) who are expert at distinguishing what is valuable and what has no value, happily (sukham) serve (srayeran) Your lotus feet (padambujam eva nu), which are flooded with all transcendental bliss." The unstated meaning of this verse is that they do this in order to directly see the Lord's lotus feet.

8 The verse continues, "However, they (ami) who are proud (maninah) and devoted to yoga and karma (yoga-karmabhih) are defeated (vihatah). They do not (na) engage in devotional service because they are proud (maninah)." The best spiritual path is the one that brings one to the Lord's mercy, which He liberally bestows on even the most fallen souls. The great effort that must be expended to pursue jnana and yoga are not the best path.

Anuccheda 327

1 A pure devotee does not attain the small result obtained by jnana and yoga. He attains a different, a very great result. Sri Uddhava explains (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.29.4):

2 "My dear infallible Lord, it is not very astonishing that You intimately approach Your servants who have taken exclusive shelter of You. After all, during Your appearance as Lord Ramacandra, even while great demigods like Brahma were vying to place the effulgent tips of their helmets upon the cushion where Your lotus feet rested, You displayed special affection for monkeys such as Hanuman because they had taken exclusive shelter of You."***

3 Here the words "asesa-bandho dasesv ananya-saranesu" mean "O friend who are unlimitedly kind to everyone, even the demons, and who give them various gifts, beginning with liberation". The verse continues "What is surprising about that (tavaitat kim citram)? You give Yourself (atma-satvam) to Your pure devotees (dasesu) who are averse to jnana, yoga, and karma (ananya-saranesu). This means that You become subordinate to them, submissive to them." That is the meaning here.

4 Lord Krsna Himself affirms (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.20):

"My dear Uddhava, neither through astanga-yoga (the mystic yoga-system to control the senses), nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vedas, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of sannyasa can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me."*

5 In this verse it is seen that noble birth, noble qualities, and other like considerations are not relevant to participation in the Lord's confidential internal pastimes. Here the word "saha" (with) indicates friendship. "Mrgaih" means "with the animals that wander in Vrndavana forest", "svayam" means "like that", and "isvaranam" means "of the demigods headed by Siva and Brahma". Here

Uddhava says, "O Lord, the results obtained by practicing jnana, yoga, and karma cannot be very valuable, for You give them even to the demons. However, You are willing to become the friend, messenger, and charioteer for the Pandavas and Your other devotees. In this way You become submissive to Your devotees. You are under their control." In this way devotional service to Lord Krsna is described as the best of spiritual paths.

Anuccheda 328

1 In the next verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.5) Uddhava describes the result obtained by engaging in devotional service:

"Who, then, could dare reject You, the very Soul, the most dear object of worship, and the Supreme Lord of all, You who give all possible perfections to the devotees to take shelter of You? Who could be so ungrateful, knowing the benefits You bestow? Who would reject You and accept something for the sake of material enjoyment, which simply leads to forgetfulness of You? And what lack is there for us who are engaged in the service of the dust of Your lotus feet?"***

2 This verse says, "Who, knowing how handsome and glorious You are, and knowing the benefits You bestow, could abandon You?" Lord Kapiladeva describes the Lord's handsomeness in a passage beginning with these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.28.13):

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead has a cheerful, lotuslike countenance, with ruddy eyes like the interior of a lotus and a swarthy body like the petals of a blue lotus."*

3 The attractiveness of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.28.34):

"By following this course, the yogi gradually develops pure love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari. In the course of his progress in devotional service, the hairs on his body stand erect through excessive joy, and he is constantly bathed in a stream of tears occasioned by intense love. Gradually, even the mind, which he used as a means to attract the Lord, as one attracts a fish to a hook, withdraws from material activity."***

4 Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.5 (quoted in text 1) then asks, "O Supreme Lord, what learned and qualified person would reject You?" No such person would. That is the meaning. Any person who would reject the Supreme Lord is ungrateful.

5 O Lord, what are You like? The verse explains, "You are dear (dayitam) to all (akhila). You are millions of times more dear than life itself. You are the supreme controller (isvaram)." The word "nu" is used here in the sense of "conclusion". The verse then asks, "Who, in order to attain material wealth (aisvaryaya), or in order to attain liberation, which enables one to forget (vismrtaye) the world of repeated birth and death, would follow the paths of dharma or jnana and worship the demigods?" The answer is: No one. The words "kim va" imply, "We will attain all these benefits simply by engaging in devotional service". The word "va" here implies disrespect.

6 That all goals may be attained by devotional service is confirmed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.32):

"Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties and all other means of perfecting

life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions."***

Anuccheda 329

1 Here the Supreme Personality of Godhead may raise the following objection: Why is it that the devotees renounce so many attainments, but they do not renounce Me? Did I do something to convince them to act in this way?

Sri Uddhava gives the following reply (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.6):

2 "O my Lord! Transcendental poets and experts in spiritual science could not fully express their indebtedness to You, even if they were endowed with the prolonged lifetime of Brahma, for You appear in two features: externally as the acarya and internally as the Supersoul, to deliver the embodied living being by directing him how to come to You."*

3 The first part of this verse means, "O Lord (isa), even they who know everything (kavayah), who live as long as Lord Brahma, and who worship You during that entire time." The verse then continues, "These blissful saintly devotees remember (smarantah) how You helped them. Thus they consider that they are indebted (apacaitim) to You. They do not see (upayanti) any way to repay their debt, and therefore they never leave You."

4 What the Lord did to help them is then described in these words; "You appear in two features: externally as the acarya and internally as the Supersoul, to deliver the embodied living being by directing him how to come to You."*

Anuccheda 330

1 Then, in the next four verses, the Supreme Personality of Godhead proceeded to explain the nature of pure devotional service unto Him. He said (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.8-11):

"Yes, I shall describe to you the principles of devotion to Me, by executing which a mortal human being will conquer unconquerable death."***

"Always remembering Me, one should perform all his duties for Me without becoming impetuous. With mind and intelligence offered to Me, one should fix his mind in attraction to My devotional service."***

"One should take shelter of holy places where My saintly devotees reside, and one should be guided by the exemplary activities of My devotees, who appear among the demigods, demons and human beings."***

"Either alone or in public gatherings, with singing, dancing, and other exhibitions of royal opulence, one should arrange to celebrate those holy days, ceremonies, and festivals set aside specially for My worship."***

In these verses the Supreme Personality of Godhead mercifully describes the activities of devotional service.

2 Most people are engaged in a frantic competition to exploit the resources of material nature. The wise, however, are not like that. They are introspective. They worship the Supersoul present in the heart. Seeing the condition of the people in general, the Supreme Personality of Godhead endeavours to turn the people away from their material competition and place their attention on Him, the Supersoul in their hearts. In the following words He describes His Supersoul form (Bhagavad-gita 10.42):

3 "With a single fragment of Myself I pervade and support this entire universe."*

In this verse and in the following one, the Lord teaches the worship of His partial expansion as the Supersoul. He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.12):

4 "With a pure heart one should see Me, the Supreme Soul within all beings and also within oneself, to be both unblemished by anything material and also present everywhere, both externally and internally, just like the omnipresent sky."*

5 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"In these three verses (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.12-14), the Lord describes internal devotional service. He says, 'One should see Me, the Supreme Soul within all beings and also within oneself'."

6 What is the nature of the Supreme Lord? He explains in this verse, "I am within and without and I am perfect and complete". How is that? He again explains, "I am unblemished by anything material". How is that? Again He explains, "Because I am all-powerful, I am not touched by ether or the other material elements". That is the meaning. The words "mam eva ikseta" do not only mean that one should see the Supersoul. They also mean that one should see the form of Lord Sri Krsna. This is so because Srila Sridhara Svami has explained in his commentary, "In these verses the Lord describes internal devotional service."

Anucchedas 331 and 332

1-2 The Supreme Personality of Godhead then continues (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.13-14):

"O brilliant Uddhava, one who thus views all living entities with the idea that I am present within each of them, and who by taking shelter of this divine knowledge offers due respect to everyone, is considered actually wise. Such a man sees equally the brahmana and the outcaste, the thief and the charitable promoter of brahmanical culture, the sun and the tiny sparks of fire, the gentle and the cruel."***

3 Here "kevalam jnanam" means "seeing the Supersoul". In this verse the Lord declares, "One who thus views all living entities with the idea that I am present, in My form of Sri Krsna, within each of them, is considered actually wise. Seeing Me, he sees equally the brahmana and everyone else."

4 The Supreme Lord then explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.15):

"For him who constantly meditates upon My presence within all persons, the bad tendencies of rivalry, envy, and abusiveness, along with false ego, are very quickly destroyed."***

In this way by serving the Lord in devotional service one becomes free from rivalry and other faults.

5 Then the Supreme Lord explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.16):

"Disregarding the ridicule of one's companions, one should give up the bodily conception and its accompanying embarrassment. One should offer obeisances before all, even the gods, outcastes, cows and asses, falling flat upon the ground like a rod."***

In this way one should offer respectful obeisances to everyone.

6 Then the Supreme Lord explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.17):

"Until one has fully developed the ability to see Me within all living beings, one must continue to worship me by this process with the activities of his speech, mind and body."***

Thus one should continue this method of worship until one sees the Supreme Lord everywhere.

7 Then the Supreme Lord explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.18):

"By such transcendental knowledge of the all-pervading Personality of Godhead, one is able to see the Absolute Truth everywhere. Freed thus from all doubts, one gives up fruitive activities."***

8 It is also said (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.30.20):

"Always engaging in the activities of devotional service, devotees feel ever-increasingly fresh and new in all their activities. The all-knower, the Supersoul within the heart of the devotee, makes everything increasingly fresh. This is known as the Brahman position by the advocates of the Absolute Truth. In such a liberated stage (brahma-bhuta), one is never bewildered. Nor does one lament or become unnecessarily jubilant. This is due to the brahma-bhuta situation."***

9 Thus in this verse spoken by the Supreme Lord to the Pracetas, and in Srila Sridhara Svami's commentary on this verse as well, it is confirmed that devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is always new and fresh. Thus the result of devotional service is described.

10 In the Gopala-tapani Upanisad (2.34) it is asked:

"Why is Lord Krsna the best form of the Supreme Lord?" In this way it is affirmed that the humanlike spiritual form of Lord Krsna is the best form of the Supreme Lord and therefore the worship of Him is the highest kind of worship.

11 This is confirmed by Lord Krsna Himself in the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.19):

"Indeed I consider this process: using one's mind, words, and bodily functions for realising Me within all living beings, to be the best possible method of spiritual enlightenment."***

12 Here the word "sarva-kalpanam" means "of all spiritual processes", "sadhricinah" means "most appropriate", and "mad-bhavah" means "meditation on Sri Krsna".

13 Thus it is better to worship Lord Krsna than to worship the Supersoul. This is confirmed by Lord Krsna Himself in the final words of Sri Bhagavad-gita (18.61-66):

14 "The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated on a machine made of the material energy.*

15 "O scion of Bharata, surrender unto Him utterly. By His grace you will attain transcendental peace and the supreme and eternal abode.*

16 "Thus I have explained to you knowledge still more confidential. Deliberate on this full, and then do what you wish to do.*

17 "Because you are My very dear friend, I am speaking to you My supreme instruction, the most confidential knowledge of all. Hear this from Me, for it is for your benefit.*

18 "Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me and offer your homage unto Me. Thus you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend.*

19 "Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear."*

20 In the previous chapters of Bhagavad-gita were presented first confidential knowledge, then more confidential knowledge, which is the knowledge of the Supersoul, and then the most confidential knowledge, which is the knowledge of fixing the mind on Lord Krsna, taking shelter of Him alone, surrendering to Him along, and worshipping Him. Lord Krsna begins His description of the most confidential knowledge with these words (Sri Bhagavad-gita 9.1-2):

21 My dear Arjuna, because you are never envious of Me, I shall impart to you this most confidential knowledge and realisation, knowing which you shall be relieved of the miseries of material existence.*

22 "This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realisation, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed."*

In the verses that follow this, Lord Krsna praises they who have faith in Him and criticises they who have no faith in worshipping Him in His original form as Lord Krsna. He says (Bhagavad gita 9.11-13):

23 "Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form. They do not know My transcendental nature as the Supreme Lord of all that be.*

24 "Those who are thus bewildered are attracted by demonic and atheistic views. In that deluded condition, their hopes for liberation, their fruitive activities, and their culture of knowledge are all defeated.*

25 "O son of Prtha, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible."*

26 Bhagavad-gita 9.11 means, "Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form". In this way it is proved that to worship Lord Krsna is in every way better than to worship the all-pervading Supersoul, and the worship of Lord Krsna is the most confidential knowledge described in the Bhagavad-gita.

Anuccheda 333

1 How important and exalted, then, must be the activities of devotional service. Lord Krsna Himself explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.21):

"O Uddhava, greatest of saints, in a dangerous situation an ordinary person cries, becomes fearful and laments, although such useless emotions do not change the situation. But activities offered to Me without personal motivation, even if they are externally useless, amount to the actual process of religion."***

2 Here the word "mayi" means "offered to Me", "yo yo dharmah" means "whatever activities are prescribed by the Vedas", "nisphalaya kalpyate" means "if they brings no result". These activities are offered without any desire to attain a result. That is the meaning. If they are offered in that way, however, these activities are not useless. The words "bring no result" here mean that they do not bring karmic results that will become an impediment to devotional service. That is the meaning.

3 If this is so for these activities, then how much more so must it be for direct devotional service to Lord Krsna, which is so rare? Here an example is given with

the word "bhayadeh". Here the Lord says, "The fear and other emotions that Kamsa and other demons felt for Me were not in vain." This is so because these emotions brought liberation. That is the meaning.

Anuccheda 334

1 Pure devotees of Lord Krsna, who are like Sri Uddhava, find that Lord Krsna is both the goal and the means to attain the goal. Lord Krsna explains (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.33):

2 "Through analytic knowledge, ritualistic work, mystic yoga, mundane business and political rule, people seek to advance in religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. But because you are My devotee, whatever men can accomplish in these multifarious ways you will very easily find within Me."***

3 Here Lord Krsna says, "All of the four goals of human life, goals that begin with material piety, You will very easily find within Me". Here the word "jnane" means "liberation", "karmani" means "pious deeds and sense gratification", "yoge" means "the various kinds of mystic perfections", "vartayam" means "mundane business", and "danda-dharane" means "in political rule". In this way the four goals of human life are understood. This verse was spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Anuccheda 335

1 Sri Uddhava again offers prayers. He says (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.29.40):
"Obeisances unto You, O greatest of yogis. Please instruct me, who am surrendered unto You, how may I have undeviating attachment to Your lotus feet."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here Sri Uddhava says, 'Although You have already helped me in many ways, still I make this request.' Then Uddhava says 'O Lord, please instruct me'. The word 'anapayini' here means even after liberation'."

This verse was spoken by Sri Uddhava.

Anuccheda 336

1 In another passage Sri Uddhava asks the following question (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.14.31):

"My dear lotus-eyed Krsna, by what process should one who desires liberation meditate upon You, of what specific nature should his meditation be, and upon which form should he meditate? Kindly explain to me this topic of meditation."***

2 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here Sri Uddhava asks, 'How should one who desires liberation meditate on You. Please tell this to me'. Uddhava continues, 'I am Your servant, and I wish to understand this. I need not engage in yoga meditation.' Sri Uddhava himself answered this question in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.6.460):

"Simply by decorating ourselves with the garlands, fragrant oils,, clothes and ornaments that You have already enjoyed, and by eating the remnants of Your meals, we, Your servants, will indeed conquer Your illusory energy."***

Anuccheda 337

1 Auspiciousness greater than that manifested in Lord Krsna was never manifested in any one of the many incarnations of the Lord. In Srimad Bhagavatam (3.2.23) it is said:

2 "Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than He who granted the position of mother to a she-demon (Putana) although she was unfaithful and she prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?"*

3 The words "dhatriya ya ucita gatih" mean "the position of a mother". This verse was spoken by Sri Uddhava.

Anuccheda 338

1 Thus is revealed the great glory of devotional service to Lord Krsna, who enjoys transcendental pastimes in Sri Gokula. That glory is also revealed in the following statement of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.6.35):

"Putana was always hankering for the blood of human children, and with that desire she came to kill Krsna, but because she offered her breast to the Lord, she attained the greatest achievement. What then is to be said of those who had natural devotion and affection for Krsna as mothers and who offered Him their breasts to suck or offered something very dear, as a mother offers something to a child?"*

2 The glory of devotional service is also revealed in the following passage of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.7.1), which has already been quoted in Sri Krsna-sandarbha:

"King Pariksit said: My lord, Sukadeva Gosvami, all the various activities exhibited by the incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are certainly pleasing to the ear and to the mind. Simply by one's hearing of these activities, the dirty things in one's mind immediately vanish. Generally we are reluctant to hear about the activities of the Lord, but Krsna's childhood activities are so attractive that they are automatically pleasing to the mind and ear. Thus one's attachment for hearing about material things, which is the root cause of material existence, vanishes, and one gradually develops devotional service to the Supreme Lord, attachment for Him, and friendship with devotees who give us the contribution of Krsna consciousness. If you think it fit, kindly speak about those activities of the Lord."*

The Lord's best pastimes are those in Gokula such as His pastime of the rasa dance with the gopis. This is also confirmed by the following words (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.33.39):

3 "Anyone who faithfully hears or describes the Lord's playful affairs with the young gopis of Vrndavana will attain the Lord's pure devotional service. Thus he will quickly become sober and conquer lust, the disease of the heart."*

4 Here the word "ca" means "others also" and "atha" means "or". Thus the words "srnuvad atha varnayet" means "hears or describes". Thus one meditates on the Lord's pastimes or perceives them in other ways. "Param" means "nothing is better than this", "hrd-rogam" means "one is quickly cured of lust and other vices in the heart". In this way it is proved that the worship of Lord Krsna as He enjoys pastimes with His most beloved Sri Radha is the highest form of worship.

However, these pastimes are very confidential. One should not think these

pastimes are like the pastimes of human beings with material senses and material relations of father, sons, servants and the like. Such an idea contradicts the true situation. Such an idea will become an impediment to one's spiritual progress. In one sense, some parts of these pastimes are especially confidential. In another sense, all of these pastimes are very confidential. In this way it should be understood. This verse was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami.

Anuccheda 339

1 In this way the path of devotional service has been revealed. This confidential knowledge should be revealed to a person who has attained the mercy of his spiritual master or the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a person who has attained the goal of his spiritual endeavours. This confidential knowledge should not be revealed to others. This is explained in the following words of Srimad Bhagavatam (8.17.20):

2 "O Lady, even if someone inquires, you should not disclose this fact to anyone. That which is very confidential is successful if kept secret."*

3 Here the word "sampadyate" means "gives the result". This verse was spoken by Lord Visnu to Aditi.

Anuccheda 340

1 In this way the path of sadhana bhakti has been revealed. The path to perfection is revealed in these words of Srimad Bhagavatam (1.2.16):

"O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service, one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vasudeva."*

2 The path to perfection is also revealed in these words of Sri Narada Muni (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.23-26): "O Muni, in the last millennium I was born as the son of a certain maidservant engaged in the service of brahmanas who were following the principles of Vedanta. When they were living together during the four months of the rainy season, I was engaged in their personal service.*

"Although they were impartial by nature, those followers of the Vedanta blessed me with their causeless mercy. As far as I was concerned, I was self-controlled and had no attachment for sports, even though I was a boy. In addition, I was not naughty, and I did not speak more than required.*

"Once only, by their permission, I took the remnants of their food, and by so doing all my sins were at once eradicated. Thus being engaged, I became purified in heart, and at that time the very nature of the transcendentalist became attractive to me.*

"O Vyasadeva, in that association and by the mercy of those great Vedantists, I could hear them describe the attractive activities of Lord Krsna. And thus listening attentively, my taste for hearing of the Supreme Personality of Godhead increased at every step."*

3 The path to perfection is also revealed in these words of Lord Kapiladeva (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.25):

"In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction

becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin."*

4 Devotional service performed with a desire to attain liberation is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.26):

"Thus consciousness engaged in devotional service in the association of devotees, a person gains distaste for sense gratification, both in this world and in the next, by constantly thinking about the activities of the Lord. This process of Krsna consciousness is the easiest process of mystic power. When one is actually situated on that path of devotional service, he is able to control the mind."*

5 Pure devotional service is described in these words (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.25.34):

"A pure devotee, who is attached to the activities of devotional service and who always engages in the service of My lotus feet, never desires to become one with Me. Such a devotee, who is unflinchingly engaged, always glorifies My pastimes and activities."*

In this way the sequence of activities by which one gradually makes advancement in devotional service is to be understood.

6 The activities of pure devotional service are also described in this instructions spoken by Sri Prahlada to the demons' sons (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.30-31):

"One must accept the bona fide spiritual master and render service unto him with great devotion and faith. Whatever one has in one's possession should be offered to the spiritual master, and in the association of saintly persons and devotees one should worship, the Lord, hear the glories of the Lord with faith, glorify the transcendental qualities and activities of the Lord, always meditate on the Lord's lotus feet and worship the Deity of the Lord strictly according to the injunctions of the sastra and guru.*

7 In some circumstances it may be possible to pass over the various stages in the path of devotional service and quickly attain perfection. The following example is given (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.42-43):

8 "Devotion, direct experience of the Supreme Lord, and detachment from other things, these three occur simultaneously for one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Lord, in the same way that pleasure, nourishment and relief from hunger come simultaneously and increasingly, with each bite, for a person engaged in eating.*

9 "My dear King, the devotee who worships the lotus feet of the infallible Personality of Godhead with constant endeavour thus achieves unflinching devotion, detachment and experienced knowledge of the Personality of Godhead. In this way the successful devotee of the Lord achieves supreme spiritual peace."***

10 Srila Sridhara Svami comments:

"Here the word "prapadyamanasya" means "of a person who worships Lord Hari", "bhaktih" means "devotional service characterised by love of God", "paresanubhavah" means "the direct manifestation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the abode of spiritual love", "viraktih" means "filled with spiritual happiness by seeing the Lord, one becomes detached from his home and other material attractions", "ity esa trika eka-kalah" refers to the time of engaging in devotional service", "yathasnatah" means "of one engaged in eating", "tustih" means "happiness", and "pustih syuh" means "filling the stomach". This means

that with every bite one's hunger becomes diminished. This happens with every mouthful of rice. By once worshipping the Lord the three things that begin with love for the Lord are manifested simultaneously. When one worships the Lord constantly "bhajato nuvrttya" one gains great love for the Lord. As by eating many mouthfuls of food one attains great satisfaction, so by worshipping the Lord constantly by the Lord's mercy one also attains great satisfaction and the supreme success in life. This is described in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.43."

11 Here the word "santim" means "the final success", "saksat" means "which has neither inside nor outside". This is so because by always worshipping the Lord one attains the final goal of life. In the previous verse (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.42) an example of devotional service, satisfaction, and other things was given. In that example devotional service and pleasure were compared because they both have happiness as a common element, nourishment and direct perception of the Lord were compared because they both have satisfaction of the self as a common element, and relief from hunger was compared to detachment because they both have peacefulness as a common element. As by eating food one becomes free from hunger, so by worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead one becomes detached from material things. This example is given here because it shows disinterest in other things. This verse was spoken by Sri Kavi to Maharaja Nimi.

In this way devotional service, which is known as abhidheya, has been explained. One should learn more about devotional service by studying the scriptures and hearing the explanations of the great devotees.

Epilogue

Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, at whose lotus feet stay the spiritual master, the scriptures, faith, attraction, following, and perfection, whose lotus feet are my everything, whose eyes are flooded with tears of mercy, and who are the shelter of they who have no other shelter, are my only shelter.

Thus ends Srila Jiva Gosvami's Sri Bhakti-sandarbha.