

1.

## Bhakti Sandarbha 236

**śaraṇāpatti** = the condition HAVING ATTAINED SURRENDER; being already surrendered

Afflicted by fear of saṁsāra by the enemies in the form of the six vargas (lust, greed, anger, delusion, pride and envy) one surrenders to the Lord, being without any other shelter. Though a person desires bhakti, he is afflicted by aversion to the Lord caused by the six vargas. Thus the person surrenders.

There are two methods of taking shelter of the Lord: by announcing that one has no other shelter and by giving up other means of shelter by using good intelligence. The first type is illustrated:

martyo mṛtyu-vyāla-bhītaḥ palāyan  
lokān sarvān nirbhayaṁ nādhyagacchat  
tvat pādābjaṁ prāpya yadṛcchayādya  
susthaḥ śete mṛtyur asmād apaiti

**No one in this material world, fearful of the snake of time, has become free from fear, even by fleeing to various planets. But now that you have appeared, death is fleeing in fear of you, and the living entities, having obtained shelter at your lotus feet by your mercy, are fearless and tranquil. SB 10.3.27**

The second type is illustrated:

tasmāt tvam uddhavotsṛjya codanām praticodanām  
pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca śrotavyaṁ śrutam eva ca  
mām ekam eva śaraṇam ātmānaṁ sarva-dehinām  
yāhi sarvātma-bhāvena mayā syā hy akuto-bhayaḥ

**O Uddhava! Give up śruti and smṛti, the path of enjoyment and the path of renunciation, desire to hear more about dharma, and what you have already heard about dharma. Surrender to me alone, the soul of all beings, using all methods, with bhāva in your mind. You will be fearless by my mercy. SB 11.12.14-15**

2.

## Amnaya Sūtra 58

sā ca śaraṇāpatti-lakṣaṇā

sā - that; ca - and; śaraṇa - surrender and taking shelter; āpatti - attainment; lakṣaṇā - characteristic.

Faith is characterized by taking shelter of the Lord and surrendering unto Him.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.18) it is said:

yo brahmāṇam vidadhāti pūrvam  
yo vai vedāṁś ca prahiṇoti tasmai  
taṁ hi vedam ātma-buddhi-prakāśam  
mumukṣur vai śaraṇam ahaṁ prapadye

"Because I desire liberation, let me surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who first enlightened Lord Brahmā in Vedic knowledge through Lord Brahmā's heart. The Lord is the original source of all enlightenment and spiritual advancement."\*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (18.66), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear."\*

In the Vaiṣṇava Tantra it is said:

ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ  
prātikūlyasya varjanam  
rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso  
gopṭṛtve varaṇam tathā  
ātma-nikṣepa-karpaṇye  
ṣaḍ-vidhā śaraṇagatiḥ

"The six divisions of surrender are: 1. the acceptance of those things favorable to devotional service, 2. the rejection of unfavorable things, 3. the conviction that Kṛṣṇa will give protection, 4. the acceptance of the Lord as one's guardian or master, 5. full self-surrender, and 6. humility."\*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.102) it is said:

śaraṇa lañā kare kṛṣṇe ātmā samarpaṇa  
kṛṣṇa tāre kare tat-kāle ātma-sama

"When a devotee thus fully surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, Kṛṣṇa accepts him as one of His confidential associates."

3.

## Rupa Goswami – BRS 1.2.198

Ātma-nivedanam in its pure form is rare because of the difficulty in execution, not because of having an elevated status, since it may be executed even without bhāva. Sakhya is rare because of the difficulty in execution and its extremely elevated status, since sakhya in its pure form possesses the most elevated bhāva. However if ātma-nivedanam becomes mixed with emotional relationships, it will become rare because of its elevated status as well. Pure ātma-nivedanam is seen in Bali Mahārāja when he gave himself to the Lord. Śaraṇāpatti is acceptance of the Lord as one's protector (as the predominant factor) but ātma-nivedanam is making oneself the possession of the Lord. That is the distinction between the two.

4.

## BVT ~ Bhakti-tattva-viveka

In relation to the adhikāra for śuddha-bhakti, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.14):

yaḥ kenāpy ati-bhāgyena jāta-śraddho 'sya sevane

nātisakto na vairāgyabhāg asyām adhikāry asau

“When one is not too attached to or detached from this material world and by some good fortune develops faith in the service of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, he is considered to possess the adhikāra for śuddha-bhakti.”

The purport is that when worldly people realize the futility of material existence after being afflicted by various types of distress and by suffering in the absence of their desired objects, they begin to lead their lives in a mood of detachment from the material world. If by some good fortune at such a time they acquire the association of Bhagavān's devotees, they enquire from them and come to understand that there is no higher destination than the attainment of Bhagavān. Gradually they develop firm faith in this and engage in bhajana. At that time it can be said that they have developed śraddhā in kṛṣṇa-bhakti. This very śraddhā is the root cause of the eligibility for śuddha-bhakti, as confirmed by Śrīla Jīva

Gosvāmī's explanation (found in Bhakti-sandarbha, Anuccheda 172) of these verses from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.27-28):

jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu  
veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ  
tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayaḥ  
juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “My devotees who have developed faith in hearing the narrations of My pastimes remain detached from fruitive activities and try to accept the objects of the senses just enough to maintain their lives, knowing well that sense enjoyment leads to a miserable result. Still enduring the reactions to their previous karma and endeavoring to become free from the cycle of the pleasant and unpleasant results which arise from such activities, they sincerely regret those fruitive activities and silently condemn them. They simply tolerate the reactions to those activities while simultaneously remaining engaged in My bhajana with firm faith and resolve.”

While explaining the above verses which describe how a faithful devotee performs bhajana, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has commented in the Bhakti-sandarbha, “tad-evam-ananya-bhakty- adhikāre hetum śraddhā-mātram uktvā sa yathā bhajeta tathā śikṣayati,” which means that śraddhā is the sole cause of the adhikāra to perform śuddha-bhakti. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī also mentions, “śraddhā hi śāstārtha-viśvāsaḥ. śāstram ca tad aśaraṇasya bhayaṁ tac charaṇāsyāb-hayaṁ vadati. ato jātāyāḥ śraddhāyās tat śaraṇāpattir eva liṅgam iti,” which means faith in the words of the scriptures is called śraddhā.

The scriptures mention that those who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of Bhagavān have nothing to fear, but those who have not done so remain fearful. Thus, it can be understood from the symptoms of śaraṇāpatti whether or not śraddhā has developed within someone.

What is śaraṇāpatti? Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes “jātāyām śraddhāyām sadā tad anuvṛtti-ceṣṭaiva syāt” and “karma-parityāgo vidhīyate,” which means upon the appearance of śraddhā, kṛṣṇānuvṛtti-ceṣṭā or the constant endeavor to serve Kṛṣṇa is always visible in a person's behavior and the tendency to perform karma or fruitive activities is altogether removed. This is śaraṇāpatti.

In Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (18.66), after giving separate explanations of karma, jñāna and bhakti, through a most confidential statement Bhagavān has given instruction on śaraṇāpatti:

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja  
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayisyāmi mā śucaḥ

We should understand the words “sarva-dharma” in this verse to mean dharmas which are obstacles to śaraṇāpatti such as the pursuance of one’s occupational duties within the varṇāśrama system and the worship of demigods. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is saying, “Rejecting all of these, one should perform śaraṇāpatti unto Me, meaning one should develop exclusive śraddhā towards engaging in My bhajana. Don’t be fearful of the reactions which come to those who commit the sin of rejecting their occupational duties. I assure you that I will free you from the reactions of all such sins.”

The doubt may arise that the word śraddhā, meaning faith, actually refers here to respect. The paths of karma, jñāna and so forth also require śraddhā. Thus śraddhā is not only the cause of bhakti, but of karma and jñāna also. The philosophical principal is that the word śraddhā actually means feelings of faith in the injunctions of the scriptures, and included within this feeling another sentiment certainly exists which is called ruci or taste. Despite possessing faith, one may not desire to participate in a particular activity unless he has developed ruci for it.

Śraddhā in the paths of karma and jñāna is always mixed with a particle of bhakti in the form of ruci. Only through the influence of this fraction of bhakti are the paths of karma and jñāna able to yield any result. Similarly, the śraddhā which develops for bhakti is endowed with ruci, and this śraddhā is none other than the seed of the bhakti-latā or creeper of devotion which is sown in the heart of the jīva.

Śraddhā in the paths of karma and jñāna is mixed with ruci for the activities of karma and jñāna respectively, but the nature of this śraddhā is different. Only the śraddhā which is endowed with ruci for bhakti culminates in the symptoms of bhakti. This is called śaraṇāpatti.

Only when one's ruci for bhakti advances through the progressive stages of sadhu-saṅga, the performance of bhajana, anartha-nivṛtti and finally assumes the form of niṣṭhā does it become śuddha-ruci. Thus śraddhā is a separate tattva or entity from bhakti.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes in Bhakti-sandarbhā, “tasmāc chraddhā na bhakty aṅgam kintu karmaṇy asamartha vidvat tāvad ananyatākhyāyām bhaktāv adhikāri-viśeṣaṇam eva.” Hence, śraddhā is not a limb of bhakti, but an attribute for the adhikāra for śuddha-bhakti resulting from one's having become indifferent to the activities of karma-kāṇḍa. It says in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.9):

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvata  
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “One should continue performing his occupational duties as long as he hasn't become indifferent to them and hasn't developed śraddhā towards hearing the narrations of My pastimes.”

The purport is that one is qualified to renounce his occupational duties only when he develops śraddhā in hearing the narrations of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. This is the conclusion of the scriptures.

To clarify a possible doubt here, we must note that if śraddhā, which is the very cause of the qualification for śuddha-bhakti, is itself not a limb of bhakti, then how can jñāna and vairāgya, which in some instances manifest before the appearance of śraddhā, be limbs of bhakti? Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.248):

jñāna-vairāgyor bhakti-praveśāyopayogitā  
īṣat prathamam eveti nāṅgatvam ucitam tayoh

“In some particular instances jñāna and vairāgya may be useful while a devotee is in the initial stages of entering into bhakti-tattva, but they can never be said to be limbs of bhakti.”

Hence, it is an established fact that only that śraddhā which is endowed with the symptoms of śaraṇāpatti is the cause of the qualification for śuddha-bhakti.

Sometimes people are heard saying that faith in hearing the narrations of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes is developed by some through the strict performance of their

occupational duties, by some through the cultivation of jñāna and by others through renunciation of the objects of the senses. But such statements are erroneous. It is possible that these processes may have been cultivated just prior to the appearance of śraddhā, but through a more detailed analysis it becomes apparent that somehow or another there must have been some sat-saṅga or association with devotees just between the two instances; that is, between the cultivation of the above-mentioned processes and the appearance of śraddhā. In this context the following verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.51.53) is worthy of consideration:

“O my dear infallible Lord! Becoming opposed to You, the living entity sometimes attains worldly sense pleasure by pursuing the path of karma and sometimes attains liberation through the cultivation of jñāna. Thus he is entangled in the repeated cycle of birth and death. If while wandering in this way the jīva somehow becomes fortunate and receives the association of Your devotees, with great determination he fixes his intelligence at Your lotus feet, understanding You to be the only shelter of saintly persons, the origin of all creation, both material and spiritual, and the ultimate goal.”