CHAPTER VII

The place of Bhakti in Philosophy and Religion
CHAPTER VII.

THE PLACE OF BHAKTI

IN

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION.

So far we have discussed Bhakti mostly in the light of the emotional approach to God; but now we shall discuss Bhakti in the light of intellectual or philosophical point of view in order to assign a proper place to Bhakti in philosophy and religion. De facto, our true self is the source of infinite knowledge within us. Hence self-perfection is the highest aim of human life.

According to Will Durant, philosophy is a hypothetical interpretation of the unknown (as in metaphysics), or of the inexactly known (as in ethics or Political philosophy); it is the front trench in the siege of truth. Science is analytical description, philosophy is synthetic interpretation. Science wishes to resolve the
whole into parts, the organism into organs, the obscure into the known. It does not inquire into the values and ideal possibilities of things, nor into their total and final significance; it is content to show their present actuality and operation; it narrows its gaze resolutely to the nature and process of things as they are. The scientist is as impartial as Nature. But the philosopher is not content to describe the fact; he wishes to ascertain its relation to experience in general and thereby to get at its meaning and its worth; he combines things in interpretative synthesis; he tries to put together, better than before, that great watch of thec Universe, which the inquisitive scientist has analytically taken apart. In brief, to observe processes and to construct means is science; to criticise and coordinate ends in philosophy. A fact is nothing except in relation to desire; it is not complete except in relation to a purpose as a whole. Science without philosophy, facts without
perspective and valuation, cannot save us from havoc and despair. Science gives us knowledge, but only philosophy can give us wisdom. Specifically, philosophy means and includes fields of study and discourse: (logic, aesthetics, ethics, politics and metaphysics)¹ whereof metaphysics is the chief and others are subordinate to it. Metaphysics is the study of the "ultimate reality" of all things; of the real and final nature of matter, mind and spirit or God. Broadly speaking, we use the term 'philosophy' here in the sense of metaphysics, which is in fact the study of the Ultimate Reality of all things (viz. God, world, souls, Jīva, Jagat and śiva). Śrī Śaṅkaraçārya uses the term in this sense as will be seen from his wellknown aphorism.²

---

2. জ্ঞান ধরনে রসফলা | শিলপত্রামুখি: সলকেপূখামুখিণ: ২০।
   ব্লার্নালাল্পকালয় (২০)
In fact, "to know oneself" is the highest knowledge because, by knowing it, we can know the reality of the universe. Man is the epitome of the universe. That which exists in the Macrocosm is to be found in the microcosm.

According to Mrs. Annie Besant, philosophy is an explanation of life, constructed by the mind and accepted as true by the intellect. Without an explanation, which satisfies the reason, a man remains restless and discontented. The unintelligibility of life is torture to the thoughtful; one cannot rest in the midst of a whirl of forces and of events, a chaos, which throws up fragments which cannot be fitted into a rational whole. The mind imperatively demands order, succession, causal connections, the stately rhythm of purposeful movements, the relation of past to present, of present to future. To understand is the deepest instinct in the Mind of Man, and it can never rest.
satisfied until this understanding is obtained. Man can suffer patiently, struggle perseveringly, endure heroically, if he feels within him a purpose, sees before him a goal. She holds that men have striven to understand the mysteries of existence by approaching them from one of three mutually opposed viewpoints:

1. All comes forth from Matter, the One Existence, and this, from its own inherent energy, produces all forms, and gives birth through them to life. All materialistic philosophies are built on this basis.

2. All comes forth from Spirit, pure mind, the One Existence, and matter is merely a creation of the Spirit engaged in thought. There is really no matter; it is an illusion and if the Spirit rises above this illusion he is free, self-sufficing, omnipotent. He imagines himself separate, and is separate; he imagines objects, and is surrounded by them; he imagines pain, and he suffers; he
imagines pleasure and he enjoys. Let him sink into himself, and all the universe will fade away as a dream, and "leave not a wrack behind". All idealistic philosophies are built on this basis.

3. Spirit and Matter are two aspects of One Existence, the All, coming forth from the One together, united as inseparably during manifestation as the back and front of the same object, merging into Oneness again at the close of a period of manifestation. In the All exist simultaneously all that has been, all that is, all that can be, in one Eternal Present.³

According to Prof. M.N. Dwivedi, philosophy is the search of the one (Atman or Brahman)

³. Annie Besant: "Theosophy" - P. 52 and 53.
Knowledge of the Self or Ātma is the highest of all. Know that self alone that is one without second. Indian religion and Indian philosophy are broadly speaking identical. Right knowledge is the theoretical aim of philosophy and Mokṣa is the practical aim of all the systems of Indian philosophy, except the Purva Mīmāṃsā, which aims at heavenly Bliss. True religion is extremely practical; it is indeed based entirely on practical experience, and not upon theory or speculation of any kind, for religion begins only where theory ends. Its object is to mould the character, unfold the divine nature of the

4. M.N. Dwivedi: "Imitation of Samkara".

5. লেখকের কার্যত ইন্দ্রক্ষ নিত্য নির্মলতায় জগতি
থিকু আছে।

M.112:5
soul, and make it possible to live on the spiritual plane, its ideal being the realization of Absolute Truth and the manifestation of Divinity in the actions of the daily life.6

In brief, Religion is the yearning of the individual soul for the Infinite. It develops by conscious attempts. It finds its highest fulfilment with the sublimation of the individual being into the being of the Universal. Religion (Dharma) is the natural bond of unity between man and God. It is natural because God is the ideal self of man.7

---


7. न ज्ञाते ज्ञातां ज्ञेयस्त्रां ज्ञेयस्त्रांम्।
अंतर्गतात् सर्वेश्वरां सिद्धत्वाविद्ध सर्पिल॥
भ. ७.६.१७
यो नै भूमा लत्सुर्खं नात्मे सुखं अस्ति।
च. ५७. २३
Religion is like a friendly policeman who guides man through this Traffic of Life to reach the goal of a perfectly happy and successful living.

With this much prelude in regard to the general nature of philosophy and Religion from the Eastern as well as the Western point of view, we shall consider in brief the Bhāgavata Philosophy, especially in regard to the doctrine of Brahman, Jīva and Jagat. The Bhāgavata Philosophy in general, appears to be a powerful attempt at reconciling Vedāntic idealism and Sāṁkhya realism, with the emphasis on the former.

According to Śrī Viṣṇu-Puri, the Bhakti which the Bhāgavata inculcates is a sort of Vedāntic Bhakti - to coin a new phrase. If the Bhakta chooses, he remains eternally in

---

8. A. Fārthasaṁrthya: "The Art of Living" - (The Path to Perfection) - P. 36.
his status of a devotional Jiva. But union
with the Divine is also his privilege and can
be realised if he prefers it. But says the
Bhāgavata, the saints prefer the other way,
leading to perpetual devotion and not to
absorption. Or, as popularly put, the Bhakta
wants to be the eater of sugar and not to be
sugar itself. 9

The opening verse of the Bhāgavata is
an adoration of the "Ultimate Truth" (परं -
śrīcakṣu). The word परं is explained by
Śrīdhara as meaning God (परमेश्वर). And
the truth (तथ्य) is used here in the
sense of Reality (विश्वास्थि). It is
held that by virtue of this supreme underlying
reality of God, the world of mind and matter
appears as real. The fact that the world is
produced from God, is sustained in Him, and is

9. Viṣṇu-Puri : "Bhakti Ratnāvīl" -
Introduction - P. V.
ultimately dissolved in Him is but an inessential description (तद्दृशयत्र) of God. His pure essence (द्वस्त्र्य) consists of pure formless consciousness. It continues the same in all the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep; it is this that enlivens the body, senses, life and mind. It is neither born, nor grows, nor decays, nor dies; yet it presides over all changes as the One constant factor as pure consciousness. This Reality is called Bhagavan by the Vaisnavaś, Brahman by the Vedantists and Parmatman by others. When this Reality is

10. अनन्यं तत्त्वं ज्ञातिसिद्धिरसायिनिः स्वयं
लोकसायिनिः \ सुमुकोऽवस्था शुद्धस्य तद्भवति
ध्येयम् तत्त्वं क्यदा निरस्तास्यहृदयं
परं प्रकृतिः

Bh. I: 1: 1

11. द्वर्णमयो न नामो

Bh. II: 27: 14

12. ज्ञेयस्तु तत्त्वसेवयात्
भगवानसर्वस्तु
ज्ञेयतर्थेऽर्थेऽर्थान्तरस्तु

Bh.) 2: 11
conceived in its fullness in all its proper relations, it is called Bhagavan, whereas, when it is conceived without its specific relations as the One (from सृढः to grow, grown so great as to unify all in one) in its abstract character it is called Brahman, and it is called Paramatman in its (चर्म ) transcendent aspect. From the ultimate point of view, there is no distinction or difference among Bhagavan, Brahman, and Paramatman. There is only one Reality, which manifests itself as power and possessor of power.\textsuperscript{13}

However, the above interpretation of the Bhagavata Philosophy by Jiva Goswami; is contradicted by the Samkhya theory of the Bhagavata, for it denies the Reality of individual souls and the reality of the world...
appearance. It may be noted here that the Bhāgavata Sāmkhya Philosophy is theistic and so it radically differs from the classical atheistic Sāmkhya, as expounded byĪsvara Kṛṣṇa.

The fundamental difference of the Bhāgavata School of Sāmkhya from that of the classical Sāmkhya is that it admits one Puruṣa, as the Real, all pervading Soul, which is the Real Seer of all our experiences and the basic universal Being that underlies all things of this universe. In the eleventh Skaḍdha, it is held that the Ultimate Reality is One and that all differences are mere differences of names and forms.14.

De facto, the philosophy of the Bhāgavata, though monistic or Advaita is independently its own. It seems to be a synthetic view (उपनिषदमें महावद्यम्) of the various Dvaita

14. सरस आक्र אר כים לון אריק
גאז ווי ענוי ווי ווי.

“איה אתגוהני עבודהיל לעביהו”
and Advaita philosophies of the time, like the Bhagavad Gītā of olden days. Bhakti and Jñāna are not diametrically opposed to each other but they are beneficial and complementary to each other like dispassion and philosophic wisdom (श्लोक and ज्ञान)\textsuperscript{15}. This is why some Ācāryas hold that knowledge and devotion depend mutually upon each other. Due to knowledge, devotion increases and due to devotion knowledge also is found to expand and grow. Thus, these two are mutually depending upon each other. There are some Ācāryas who go one step still further and say that not only do they mutually depend upon each other but they rise simultaneously in a seeker's bosom, and not severally. According to these Ācāryas, Shakti and Jñāna are not two different things. Both of them are the experience of

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize
15. श्लोक और ज्ञान "अबिक्रिया और अविक्रिया ज्ञान" -
\end{footnotesize}
one and the same Reality. They appear to be different due to the difference in the seat of their manifestation. Bhakti is the attitude of the heart, and Jnāna is the attitude of the intellect of the creature towards his Creator. The goal of both is practically the same viz. God realization. In actual experience both are one and the same. So where the Bhakti experience is, there alone in the peak of
supreme devotion is the infinite knowledge of the supreme self. It is equally true that where there is Divine Wisdom, there alone is the Infinite Devotion to the Lord, as revealed in

17. शक्ति अवनन्द्या शक्ति शक्तिमिन्दोकितुः।
शक्ति शक्तिमिन्दोकितुः शक्तिमिन्दोकितुः ॥
गांधे ॥ ५४

अजुभुता पुस्कारान गृहेश्वरो गृहेश्वरो गृहेश्वरो ॥
समवेद्यतस्मादि अद्वितीयमाति तुल्यमिती ॥
अजुभुता प्रसिद्धाणां अवनन्द्याः शक्तिमिन्दोकितुः ॥
स्वाता तत्त्वादि शक्तिमिन्दोकितुः शक्तिमिन्दोकितुः ॥
गांधे ॥ ५५

18. तन्न को मोह को शक्ति
एकत्वमवनुपद्वत: ॥
I ७.१
From one point of view Jnāna Yoga and Bhakti Yoga are the two different aspects of devotion; for in truth Jnāna Yoga is Abheda Bhakti and Bhakti Yoga is Bheda Bhakti, for Bhakti culminates in self-surrender, while Jnāna ends in self-knowledge. In essence self-surrender and self-knowledge are one at bottom.

The way of man's approach or "Turn Back" to God is in essence the same in Christian and non-Christian teachings. It has three stages, an ethical stage i.e. the stage of purification (विलिन्युति), knowledge and love i.e. "illumination" ultimately leading to the mystical union of the soul with God as revealed in Neo-Platonism.

19. लेखाः इसानी निन्द्युक्त एवंभक्ति विद्विषाध्यवस्थाः ।
प्रियो द्वितीय इत्यत्वात् स्व-व मभिध्यः ॥
अद्व: ७: १७

20. स्वामीकीर्तिविनित्वादिकौ "भक्ति त्वमेव त्वान" 
कल्याणा प्रहिता धन्वः पूर्वै: ६०
In brief, the mystic way is for Plotinus the way of inner freedom and detachment from external things. It is also the way of introversion. Since the One is "within, at the innermost depth", we must turn our gaze within, closing our eyes to the world about us, retiring inwards, and seeking there the Divine vision. 21

It is always useful to know and bear in consciousness the inmost nature of the three-fold activities of Cognition, Desire and Action — thought, emotion and occupation. 22

In the world mental as in the world Spiritual; each man must progress by his own efforts. 23

---


23. H. P. Blavatsky: "The Key to Theosophy" — P. xiii.
In the initial stage the devotee believes himself to be distinct from God but after passing through the following three stages viz. -

1. I am His (त्वद्वेलाभिः),
2. I am Thine (त्वद्वेलाभिः),
3. I am Thyself (त्वद्वेलाभिः),

he believes himself to be one with God. The last of the above three stages is called Para-Bhakti or Abheda Bhakti. It is similar to the Mahāvākya - "Thou art that". The same sentiment has been practically expressed by Hanumānājī, the best of the Bhaktas and the Jñānis in revealing himself before Śrī Rāma. In Jñāna Yoga (i.e. Abheda Bhakti) the aspirant resorts to logical reasoning (Vicāra); and believes that

---

24. १४७ २५

25. १४७ २५
"I am one with God, I am Truth - consciousness - bliss (सत्य ज्ञान श्री आत्मा राज). As I am truth, I am beyond time, and therefore, birthless and deathless. As I am consciousness, I am wisdom itself, and therefore, I have not to attempt for the acquisition of knowledge. As I am bliss itself, I am above the need of the worldly persons and things for the sake of happiness. I am not the body, and so I am free from birth, death, old age, disease etc., I am not the vital breath, and so I am above hunger and thirst; I am not the senses and so the contact of or separation from sense-objects does not give me pain or pleasure; and I am not the internal organ (केशवे i.e. मन (मन्त्रिकसर), and so, I am beyond the touch of grief or infatuation, attraction and repulsion (आरागिन). I am neither the doer nor the enjoyer. At the rise of the sun, the living beings of the world engage themselves in good or bad activities, but the Sun itself, the Eye of the whole world
is not at all affected by the pains or pleasures, joys or sorrows of the worldlings. Likewise, the self that is the \textit{\textit{Atman}} is not at all affected by the objects, emotions and thoughts of the embodied beings. By constant meditation on the above truth with a quiet, pure and loving mind, the aspirant attains to \textit{Moksha} or beatitude.

In Bhakti Yoga i.e. Bheda Bhakti, the true devotee believes that the universe in its manifold names and forms is nothing but the One - the \textit{Brahman}. It is all the play of the Lord. Thus, the true devotee is one who sees the oneness of all life, sees the divine presence everywhere, and thus attains to beatitude. In both the above spiritual disciplines, heart-purity and concentration or the four-fold means (कर्याधिन चतुर्दशिये),

\begin{center}
\textbf{\texttt{26. \textit{अध्या ति नामः}} \textit{कर्याधिनः चतुर्दशियः लोभो निरह्वाकं वृष्टिः नित्यं विभर्तिः}}
\end{center}
are of vital importance. Whatever be the means adopted, mind must be persuaded away from its natural fascinations for the sense-objects, and it must be guided to live a life of the nobler values of ethical and moral principles. Jñāna leads to faith, faith leads to love and love leads to the strengthening of devotion.

It will be seen from the above that the way of life and the way of salvation, preached by Bhakti, involve divine wisdom. It is only after God-vision that true Bhakti is generated in man. It is only when a man has attained to the full knowledge of God that he is able to meditate on Him with full devotion. In fact

---

27. क्षिप्रदैविकिनिजाधिकारिनामः सिद्धेन्द्रं परिमोक्षः ।
ईश्वरनायिकेन विशेष निदानन्तरं ।
शामादिनासांस्थापितं निरुक्तस्तम्भितं संकृतं ॥
होकरोङ्गायं निभेक्मुखस्मणं। ॥ १६

28. यद नानेवंसंगृहो क्षमाति युवालोकम् ।
न एक्षर्विनकारिणां नरभाष्माणि भैरवि ।
आत्रः । १५ | १७
the highest devotion (Para Bhakti) and the highest realization (Atmanubhava) seem to be in reciprocal causation unless a man comes to possess the highest devotion, he will not have a vision of God and unless he has a vision of God, true Bhakti will not spring in him. 29

As shown above, only a Jñāna (i.e. a true philosopher) is a true devotee of Bhūmikā (i.e. God-vision). Furthermore, the Gītā speaks of the Jñāna (i.e. a true philosopher) as the Bhāgavatottama, the best of the four types of devotees. 30

"The wise man is the Bhakta par-excellence. Exceedingly dear am I to the man of


30. "न्यायिक हृदयः अज्ञानो वा ज्ञानो ज्ञातुर्निष्ठ ज्ञातुर्मात्र ज्ञातुर्मात्र ज्ञातुर्मात्र।

उपदेश नित्यावर्धितः नामो वर्णोऽभावः॥

महाभारतः ७.१६
wisdom and he is dear to me." 31 By the grace of God, a true devotee will be able to ward off all perils. 32 Besides, the Gītā reveals that they alone can cross Maya who take refuge in God. 33 The Bhāgavata also says that one can attain Mokṣa only by taking refuge in God, and by divine grace, consequent upon perfect detachment.

---

31. evantyapya hi bhūtaḿayādviśeṣaṁ ā।
     evaṁ bhūtah atahadityaśrāyati ||
     गौर्या: ७: १७

32. saṁyādiṣ्यात्मकत्वात् सत्यदारातिरिष्टं ||
     गौर्या: १८: ५४

33. tālāvām de prabhūte paramāte tathālaṁ tarāṇi lāye ||
     गौर्या: ७: १४
from all excepting God. ³⁴

A man may be a Prince or a great Preceptor but if he has no love for God nor does he try to know of God or to remember God in his lifetime is an animal in the form of a human being. ³⁵

A man can be truly spirited or religious minded, if he can conquer his animal nature by realising his true self and its relation to the universal spirit. To realise the eternal truth, first of all, the heart must be purified, and concentrated on God; for God is revealed only unto the pure at heart, and that too, according to the —

---

³⁴ o) s s f % T c T • s f f z j "
³⁵ \]^3n f R p n t c T H T f ? r r ~ = T
( l i e. 2 . • T ■ i f 2
V 11 > l

---

³⁴. एं साखिल दिवशेयदानतः ॥
ब्रह्मांनातिसिद्धान्तपदोऽविद तिर्थस्तिक्रियः।
ले उक्तरावित्यविलय वे देवसायां
स्त्री पदार्थिनिः प्रेमः। महेन्द्रशतस्य एव
भ. २०७१. ४२

³⁵. है रघुनाथ गोपाल सर्हे "सेरहे सर्हान,"
चा नहीं जा, भो भो
gradation of purity, sanctity and piety of the soul.\textsuperscript{36} Git Suddhi is thus the condition precedent to God-realisation. First, when a man realises God, he has a feeling of disgust for all worldly things.\textsuperscript{37} The true devotee must therefore, develop the attitude of having nothing but the One (एकत्वः इतिसंवेदन), the Bhagavān of the Bhāgavata.\textsuperscript{38}


37. तत्क गन्तपलि निविद्या श्रोतब्धम् कुलः च॥

38. "ग”marsa चतुर्विविद्याधिकालसदृश्यं ध्वनिष्ठः उदयं"

द्वस्तरोद्भवं तन्त्रसः सम्यक्युष्मान् च।।

होन्नलोकत्वम् त्वर्यैम् स्वविद्यानां प्रवदेशं।

वैदिकस्य कृत्यं साधिहि ध्यायम्।।

"भ" १: २: १४

"भ" २: १: ५
Secondly, a man is freed from his sins as soon as God reveals Himself to his vision, as a lit-up fire reduces the entire fire-wood to ashes. It may be questioned here whether sinlessness is a cause or an effect. It is a case of reciprocal causation; for the purity of the heart, sinlessness and detachment lead to God vision, and God vision leads to the state of purity, sinlessness and detachment.

Thirdly, it is only a result of God-vision that one is able to solve the riddle of this universe, as revealed to Arjuna in the Gita. He alone becomes one with Brahman, who sees the multiplicity of all beings inherent in the One and their evolution from that One alone.

39. अभावातः सप्तिक्षीर्णि शस्यसात्सुकुमारस्य तथा।
   -Gita 4:39.

40. तमं विन्यस्य भूतसः अस्ति स विद्यते परमेश्वरः।
   विन्यश्व -स्वायत्विस्तरं तथा पश्चाति तस पद्यालिक।
   तस्मां पश्चाति अन्वेषन श्रमविनिधतं स्वप्नपथे।
   सो दिहुन्चयक्ति दसौ गानाः ततो भावान्तरस्य गायितम्।
   -Gita 13:24-25.
In brief, a true Bhakta sees the One in the many and the many in the One, as everything originates from and sustained by God and is ultimately resolved into God. 41

Fourthly, a true Bhakta that is a Bhakti Jñānī attains to a vision of absolute equality. 42

41. सत्यं परं प्रीतिं ! ब्रह्म- 1.1.1.
      अन्नकालं यतं ! अभायं 1.1.2.
      आत्मनिर्वचनं ! शेष नाशं 1.1.3.
      सत्यं स्वरूपं श्रद्धा !
      तत्तत्त्वगतिः सांतक उपासित।
      चौ.३:१४:१.

42. अस्मद्वुन्यं सुभं, संज्ञा: समकाशिणम्यकं ध्वन्नः !
      पुल्लगुज्जिताः औरस्तुच्यविसमस्वस्स्टुवः।!
      चौ. १४: १५: २५.
      संमं श्रद्धेऽसंज्ञा संज्ञा तथा सांतकगाणस्यः।
      श्रीलोकं श्रद्धुद्वेशु अश्वं भक्तिनिर्जनः।
      -चौं. १२: १६.
It is this mystic vision or equal vision that distinguishes a true devotee from everybody else. Dr. Rānaḍe holds that the mystic i.e. the true Bhakta or Bhakta-ধार्मিক must see the form of God continuously, immenently in the universe and transcendentally above it. 43 It is only than that the sixth sense (or spiritual eye) of direct perception of higher truths develops and frees it from dependence upon the sense powers. 44

Lastly, as a full blown lotus flower cannot contain within itself its own perfume, but must necessarily radiate it to prince and pauper alike, so the realizer of God must proclaim God to the whole world and spread God's Gospel. Communion is therefore, an essential feature of the Bhāgavata religion.

43. Dr. R.D. Rānaḍe : "The Bhagavata-gītā as a Philosophy of God-realisation" - P.269.

44. Swāmī Abhedānanda : "How to be a Yogi" - P. 7.
It would be evident from the above discussion that:

1) For attaining Para Bhakti, a man must have a disgust for worldly things.

2) He must be sinless that is quite pure at heart. This is why the Bible says - "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." In the Rg-Veda too it is said that only the God-minded see God for ever more. After getting the vision of God the after-effects of God-vision are as under:

a) Warding off of all perils by divine grace.

b) Solution of the world riddle.

c) Vision of equality.


46. तत्सदा पदार्थं नि०००
RV 1:22.

e). Saints' responsibility to spread God's gospel or community of saints.

f). Joy and peace for evermore.\(^{47}\)

In truth, the above mentioned are the marks of a true Jñānī too. This is why in the last analysis Para Bhakti and Brahma Jñāna or divine love and divine wisdom are said to be the two aspects of one and the same Ultimate Reality, the Bhagavān of the Bhāgavata. In the words of Swāmī Sivānanda, "Concentration is done either on a point in space (Bhakti Mārga) or on the entire existence (Jñāna Mārga). Mind has to be concentrated on one substance, be it this or that. The annihilation of thought is the death of individuality,\(^{48}\) which is the


experience of the Absolute. Bhakti has thus an essential place in the scheme of religion and in the realm of philosophy. The God of the Bhakta is the self-in-self (अभ्यस्त्व त्र्यम्), while the God of the Jñānī is selfless Self-Divine (अभ्यस्त्व तालाल स्त्रयः). This is the truth supreme revealed in the Bhāgavata (अभ्यस्त्व धर्मः तालाल स्त्रयः). A true Bhakta says, "Oh Lord! I am Thine. All is Thine, I am not a separate entity. I have no power to do anything, you are doing everything taking myself as an instrument. O Lord! You are everywhere. I am walking over Your Body. I am not able to live separately, for I am seeing you everywhere. You appear as the man and the woman and as the old man that totters with a stick on the road. You have become everything. I have no independence. I am your slave. A slave has no optional views. He can do only what the master commands him to do. I am doing nothing."
Only you are doing through me. You are the Doer. You are the Enjoyer. I am nothing. Thy will will be done."

In the opinion of Swami Sivananda, this is the highest type of Love. This is Divine Love. The ego cannot assert itself, for God alone is everywhere. The mind cannot modify itself into Vrttis of sense-objects; for to him, there is no object except God. Who is there to be loved or hated? The Bhakta is, therefore, blissful at all times. The mind cannot think of anything else but God; for everything is God. Wherever the mind goes, there it experiences Samādhi (সামাধি, समाधि, शामी; 'concentration'); for it does not find an object of enjoyment, independent of God. God is filling every speck of space. The whole

world is clothed with the Glory of God. The saint and the sinner, the virtuous and the vicious, the good and the bad, the man and the animal, all are forms of God. How can the mind deal with them in an undivine way? There the mind experiences Samādhi; for the mind has consciousness, but it has no object. This is Samādhi. Samādhi is thoughtless consciousness, objectless knowledge. This is Parā Bhakti. This is one with Vedantic realization. Vedānta Sākṣātkāra (व्यक्तिरत्न ) and Parā Bhakti are only two names of one and the same thing. The effect of both is the annihilation of the ego or the destruction of the mind.

The essential unity of Divine Love and Divine Wisdom is revealed by Śrī Ramaṇa Mahārṣi as follows:

50. ॐ आत्माकारं सत्संगं श्रवं सङ्गो

I. These are "verses 1."
"The Self is the only Reality. There are no others, for one self or only one life is vibrant in every atom. The self-knower or the realized one, therefore, does not see the world as different from himself. In fact - 'as we are, so is the world'. The pure-hearted wise ever visualise God.\textsuperscript{51} De facto 'I - I' is the self; but when it flies off at a tangent and says, 'I am this or that, I am such and such' it is the ego. The ego-sense is the basis of the individuality and it is only the individual ego which passes from life to life; and so all that is required to realise the Self is "to be still" i.e. to have a strong desire to recollect the forgotten thing and to keep the surface mind quite still."\textsuperscript{52} Hence,

\textsuperscript{51} सत्यमथिति अवर्गं; \\
\textsuperscript{RV 1:22.}

\textsuperscript{52} Sri Ramaṇa Mahārṣi: "Golden Jubilee Souvenir" - P. 96.
Atmā-vidyā is the easiest thing to attain; and discrimination and dispassion are the two wings of the Soul—bird flying to its Home. The obstacle is the mind. It must be got over or transcended whether in the home or in the forest. Mokṣa can be attained even while one lives here and now; for we are one with Brahman. Self-realization is the climax of Divine Wisdom and Divine Love. Self-surrender is the same as self-knowledge. De facto, the self is pure, contentless consciousness. For self-realization we have to attempt to get in from without i.e. to turn inwards towards the self (Ātmā). The attempt is Vicāra and the inner movement is Grace. Grace is ever present; but the seeker must earnestly strive to qualify himself for the grace. Both Vicāra

53. अतिः अत्माराज्यं अवहासयति अत्माराज्यं अवहासयति निबधयति।
धिष्ठेत निबधते अत्माराजस्य उत्सर्जस्त उच्छोचते।।
श्रेयंवेषः "सर्वंशेदात्तिनिहातं सार्वतंग" ।

V-35= 979
and Krpa are necessary; for each has to endeavour for Self-realization. God helps them who help themselves. Abiding in God (अनन्त निरपेक्ष) is the true Āsana for Ātma Yoja, as self perfection (Ātma Siddhi) is the highest aim of life. In reality, the egoless state is the natural, the real state, while the ego-state is the unnatural and the false state. Our ultimate freedom (Moksha) lies in our becoming aware of our selfhood and nonduality.\(^5^4\)

In brief, the goal of philosophy and Religion or of Jhana and Bhakti is God-realization (i.e. Saguna Brahman in Bhakti and Nirguna Brahman in Jhana). In fact, Bhakti is the emotional approach to God, while Jhana is the intellectual approach to God, while the three fibres of the supreme religion of the Bhagavata

---

viz. Jñāna, Bhakti and Vairāgya are at bottom one. They are the three different aspects of one and the same experience of the Ultimate Reality. Detachment or internal renunciation of worldism (जन्म अभ्यस्य) is dispassion in the true sense of the term; God-sight or vision of God everywhere is the true mark of Parā Bhakti and the destruction of the sense of duality (i.e. अस्वं भाव तत्त्व- तत्त्व) in toto is true knowledge of the Reality. No religion or philosophy can, therefore, afford to ignore the three factors of Bhakti, Jñāna and Vairāgya in any scheme of religion and philosophy. De facto, the three fibres - detachment, devotion and wisdom form a triangle, whereof each is a

55. ज्ञान से भक्ति वैराग्य एक क्षण में अभिलभित होने के लिए हैं। ज्ञान से भक्ति रोककर ज्ञान से भक्ति की अप्रभावित रूप में ज्ञान का वीर्य के कारण हैं।

56. ज्ञान भक्ति वैराग्य के पारिवर्तन होने के कारण हैं। ज्ञान से भक्ति वैराग्य के पारिवर्तन होने के कारण हैं। ज्ञान के अंतर्गत भक्ति वैराग्य के पारिवर्तन होने के कारण हैं।
Thus, both - Bhakti and Jñāna lead the aspirant to the Summum Bonum of life.

De facto, man is the architect of his own destiny, which he can by no way escape. The question of mercy, forgiveness or redemption is absolutely irrelevant. The inexorable law of Karman is bound to have its way. The path of knowledge and the path of devotion stand on par both with regard to the ultimate aim and their concern with the development of the mind. Both the paths aim at the supreme excellence of man and both assert that this can be achieved by the infinite developments of man's mind. But their difference of approach is not less emphatic. The path of knowledge is a hard task-master. It demands uncompromising abstention, ruthless suppression of nature, strict inhibition of the instinctive life of man. But the path of devotion is for the sublimation of man's inherent tendencies. It
admits the claims of instinctive life involving human frailties. It tunes natural life to higher spiritual values transfigures the animal into the God; for man is not a stranger to the "region beyond", but is an integral part of it. He belongs to a different order than where he is. This sojourn is bound to end, and he will one day be awakened to the native glory of his unfathomable depth - selfhood. Call it divine grace, redemption or anything, it is bound to come for the spiritual resurrection of man buried in materiality.\footnote{57 Siddheśvara Bhṛṭṭācārya: "The Philosophy of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavata" - Vol. II - P. 220.}

To sum up, the Bhāgavata is a gospel of divine life and not a text-book of systematic philosophy as ordinarily understood. The Bhāgavata philosophy has its theoretical as well as its practical aspects known respectively
as Brahma-Vidyā and Bhāgavata Dharma. From the stand-point of Vijnāna (i.e. Ātmanubhava) it is admitted by all teachers that Bhāgavat (i.e. Bhagavān) is the only Absolute Reality; and Dharma is the means of realising Him through complete self-surrender to His grace. Both the aspects are non-dualistic from the stand-point of Vijnāna and dualistic from that of the relative knowledge gained in the other three states viz. waking, dream and dreamless sleep. The essence of this philosophy is -

(1) that Brahman or Ātmān is the only Absolute Reality;

(2) that the Ātman is the inner witness of the three states, which remains unchanged even in the midst of the change of states, and which alone can explain the fact of memory of the three states;
(3) and that the whole universe, including body, mind and ego is an expression in name and form of this Reality and as such, has no independent existence of its own. 58

The Bhāgavata specifically favours Love Divine i.e. the emotional and volitional approaches as more effective, easy and natural to the ordinary man, and as open to all, irrespective of caste, creed, colour, age or sex. Without love, everything else is considered useless and ineffective. Mere dry Jñāna or ritual is only a waste of energy. 59 The essential truths which the Bhāgavata emphasises again and again are the imperishability of the


soul, the goodness, power and helpfulness of God and the attainment of salvation by the method of Bhakti. Thus, the main theme of the Bhāgavata is the importance of Hari-Bhakti or devotion to God, especially in His manifestation as Kṛṣṇa.

The Bhāgavata has united the Upaniṣadic approach with the Yoga-technique of Patañjali. This is why it is called the supreme religion or the Paramahansa-Dharma. The central note of philosophy and religion viz. Self-discovery is nowhere so emphatically borne out, as in the Bhāgavata-Dharma. It aims at nothing less than the realisation of Bhagavan, the Supreme Person, the highest fulfilment of the individual. It is a self-complete religious system that takes due

cognizance of the harmonious growth of all the three faculties—willing, knowing and feeling—phasing them out into their natural order of hierarchy. Thus, Bhakti has an honoured place in the scheme of religion and philosophy.