

# THE DIVINE NAME

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*by*

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śrī-rupaṁ sāgrajātaṁ saha-gaṇa-raghunāthānviataṁ taṁ  
sa-jīvam

sādvaitaṁ sāvadhūtaṁ parijana-sahitaṁ  
kṛṣṇa-caitanya-devaṁ

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namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te

kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ

yad advaitaṁ brahmopaniṣadi tad apy asya tanu-bhā

ya ātmāntaryāmī puruṣa iti so 'syāṁśa-vibhavaḥ

ṣaḍ-aiśvaryaīḥ pūrṇo ya iha bhagavān sa svayam ayaṁ

na caitanyāt kṛṣṇāj jagati para-tattvaṁ param iha

rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinī śaktir asmād

ekātmānāv api bhuvī purā deha-bhedaṁ gatau tau

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ā-pāmaraṁ yo vitatāra gaurah

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gaurah sac-caritāmṛtamrita-nidhir gauram sadaiva stuve

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gaurād asti kṛpālur atra na paro gaurasya bhr̥tyo 'bhavaṁ

gaure gauravaṁ ācarami bhagavan gaura prabho rakṣa mām

madhuryair-madhubhiḥ sugāndhi bhajana-svarṇāmbu-jānām

vanam

kāruṇyāmṛta-nirjarair-upacitaḥ sat-prema-hemācalaḥ

bhaktāmba-dhara-dharaṇī vijayinī niṣkampa-śampā-valir-

devo naḥ kuladaivatam vijayatām caitanya kṛṣṇo hariḥ

namo 'stu nāma rupāya namo 'stu nāma jalpine

namo 'stu nāma śuddhāya namo nāma mayāya ca

**ājānulambita bhujau kanakāvadātau  
saṅkīrtanai kapitarau kamalāyatākṣau  
viśvambharau dvījavarau yugadharma pālau  
vande jagadpriya karau karuṇāvatārau**

I bow Ye! O Divine Brāhmaṇa Twins!  
With arms extending to the knees,  
And splendour as of sparkling gold;  
O Sole Progenitors of Saṅkīrtana old!  
Twain Descents of Divine Mercy! I bow Ye again!  
Universe's Supports and Benefactors Twain!  
Lotus-Eyed Brāhmaṇa Gems! O Purest Rages!  
Divine Fulfillers of the laws of all ages!

**anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau  
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rāsām sva bhakti-śriyam  
hariḥ purāṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba sandipitāḥ  
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanāḥ**

Out of Mercy alone the Glories of the Divine Name,  
Unprecedented in epic history to spread Kṛṣṇa Prema,  
and to relish Its luscious sweetness with gay abandon  
Śrī Kṛṣṇa graced this earth as Śrī Śacinandana.  
Twas ne'er given before in history's chequered record  
And was tasted anew by Him with Bhaktas in gay accord.  
May Gaura-Hari of the splendour of molten gold  
Illumine the hearts of us all - both young and old.

# 1 PREFACE

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is ever dallying as an exemplary lover of Himself as Śrī Gaurāṅga. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the essential nature of the Supreme Being, is the only Real and Eternal truth. He is the only object of Love. Śrī Gaurāṅga is the possessor and distributor of that Love. He was Himself singing Kṛṣṇa's Name and was teaching others how to Love Kṛṣṇa and sing His Name. In so doing He distinguishes pointedly the Real Name which is identical with the object Himself from the apparent or false one which is taken profanely, blasphemously or in vain. He emphasised that in Kali-yuga worldly people indulge in (1) duplicity, (2) intoxication, (3) sensuality and (4) killing animals and so are unable to meditate upon or worship Viṣṇu and perform Vedic sacrifices. So the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's Name is the only meditation, the only sacrifice, the only worship in this Kali-yuga. Name is the means, Name is the end. But it should be noted with utmost care that Kṛṣṇa's Name is not mere combination or utterance of letters. A similarity in utterance and appearance are not identical. The minutest spark of fire set consciously or unconsciously, seriously or playfully, will instantaneously burn an inflammable thing; whereas thousand glow-worms will not act in thousand years. Kṛṣṇa's Name is identical with Kṛṣṇa Himself and pregnant with all the properties and attributes of Kṛṣṇa. So His Name unlike all other names is full of energy, perfect, eternal, pure, devoid of illusion and eternally free. Aurora is sufficient to dispel the darkness of night and to drive the wild animals to their lairs and thieves and dacoits to other resorts; it enables us to distinguish the various objects of senses and ushers the advent of the glowing lamp of heaven. So does Nāmābhāsa (the utterance of Name avoiding the ten profanations) stop poverty, destroy our worldly hankerings and dispel the illusory gloom, so that we may see the Name face to face.<sup>1</sup>

Through the blessings of our Divine master 108 Śrī Paramahansa Jagadguru Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī

Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the learned scholar Śrīpāda Rāghava Caitanya Prabhu has collected quotations from Vedas, Upaniṣads, Smṛtis and Authorised Scriptures for his 'Divine Name' which is Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sāgara for the needy devotee. English knowing people or devotees will be benefited and pleased to acquire a copy of this super spiritualised publication. My sincere thanks are due to Śrīpāda Ambarīṣa Brahmācārī, Śrīpāda Trivikrama Mahārāja and Śrī Kali Charan Panda to publish the Book within a short time. May the Divine Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa bless them.

Invoking the blessings of  
Śrīla Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, The Divine Master,

Tridaṇḍi Bhikṣu Bhakti Vaibhava Purī

Śrīpāda Rāghava Caitanya Dāsa

Śrīla Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja



Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda

Śrī Śrī Gaurāṅga Rādhā Vinoda Bihari

## 2 DIVINE NAME AND ITS EFFICACIES

### 21. *Divine Name - The sweetest of all*

"THE Name 'Kṛṣṇa' is sweeter than all the sweetest sounds, more auspicious than the most auspicious things, the best fruit of the creeper like Vedas and Transcendental by nature. This Name if uttered even once, with faith or without it, will deliver any one, be he just a man and nothing more, from worldly bondage."<sup>2</sup>

Inexpressible is the Transcendental Glory of the Divine Name. Who on the face of the earth can estimate Its efficacy? How many books are written on the subject and how many souls have experienced the thrilling joy and marvellous benefits of the same! How many have even turned divinely mad after the Ever-Blissful Lord on hearing the inspiring results of repeating the Holy Name! Millions and millions indeed, have crossed this ocean of never-ending miseries trusting on the Glory of the Divine Name. It is as unfathomable as the Glory of the Divine Lord Himself. The All-Merciful Lord, out of His compassion to His fallen children, manifests Himself in this mundane world as the Divine Name. All the Śāstras unanimously and emphatically agree on the Infinite Glory of the Holy Name.

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2madhura madhuram etan maṅgalaṁ maṅgalānām

sakala nīgama valli sat-phalaṁ cit-svarupam

sakṛdapi parigītaṁ śraddhayā helayā vā

bhṛḡuvara naramātraṁ tārayet kṛṣṇa-nāma

(śrī-hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.451; padyāvalī 26; skanda purāṇa,

prabhāsa

khaṇḍa)

"The Name of Hari, the Name of Hari, O! The name of Hari alone and nothing else, nothing else in Kali Yuga, nothing else can lead us to our Final Goal."<sup>3</sup>

## 22. *Divine Name - The sole remedy for all ills*

In the age of Kali, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Manifests Himself as the Holy Name. The whole world is liberated by the chanting of this Holy Name. In the above Śloka Śrī Hari's Name is repeated thrice for the purpose of emphasis. The use of the article 'Eva' in the verse is to convince those ignorant of the efficacy of Śrī Hari-Nāma by positive assertion. The idea is strengthened further by the addition of the word 'Kevala'. It informs us about the futility of the numerous existing methods of religious practices, such as knowledge, Yoga, austerities, Karma, etc., in this age of Kali. The word 'Nāsti' by negative assertion, supported by the word 'Eva', has been repeated in the Śloka thrice to signify that the non-believers in the Holy Name will in no case attain salvation - never, never, never.

## 23. *Different Divine Dispensations*

The topic - what constitutes service of the Supreme Godhead, is a very tough one. It lies beyond Tarka or man's

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3harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam

kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā  
(bṛhad-nāradīya-purāṇa 38.126)

kali-kāle nāma-rūpe kṛṣṇa-avatāra  
nāma haite haya sarva-jagat-nistāra

dārḍhya lāgi "harer nāma"-ukti tina-vāra  
jaḍa loka bujhāite punaḥ 'eva'-kāra

'kevala'-śabde punarapi niścaya-karaṇa  
jñāna-yoga-tapa-karma-ādi nivāraṇa

anyathā ye māne, tāra nāhika nistāra  
nāhi, nāhi, nāhi — e tina 'eva'-kāra  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 17.22-25)

reasoning. The Śāstras declare in unambiguous words that the methods followed in different ages vary from one another. "In Kṛta Yuga or Satya Yuga, there was a different set of religious methods to be followed by human beings, in Tretā Yuga they were changed into another form, the Dharma of Dvāpara Yuga is said to be still different from that of the other Yugas and the Dharma of Kali Yuga too is stated to be a different one."<sup>4</sup>

The Supreme Lord Himself has settled the nature of His worship for every age and proclaimed the same for the information of all. For this purpose He comes down into this mundane world in each of the four ages. The establishment of the form of worship appropriate to every age is a Divine Deed. The form of worship laid down in the Śāstras and established by the Supreme Lord for the current age Kali Yuga is the chanting of the 'Holy Name' or 'Nāma-Saṅkīrtana'.

"That which is achieved through meditation of Śrī Viṣṇu in the Satya Yuga, performance of religious sacrifices in Tretā Yuga and ritualistic worship in Dvāpara Yuga, can be attained in Kali Yuga through mere chanting of the Divine Name."<sup>5</sup>

Thus there are four different forms of spiritual practices to be followed by the souls in the four different ages. The object of all the forms of worship is the same. **Chanting of Śrī Hari's Name is the declared Divine Dispensation (Yuga Dharma) for the current age.**

## 24. *Divine Name - The best in Kali Yuga*

Hence, in the words of the Śāstras, **the performance of the chanting of the Holy Name is the only method of worship that is suitable to the people of the present Kali Yuga.** Everything is attained by means of this Divine Dispensation. Recourse to the Name of the Lord is the sole efficacious method in this age, suitable for all kinds of people after God-realization. The other methods, though prescribed in

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4 anye kṛta-yuge dharmās-tretāyāmapare matāḥ  
dvāpare anyā evoktaḥ kalāvanye prakīrtitāḥ  
(mahābhārata)

5 kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇuṁ tretāyām yajato makhaiḥ  
dvāpare paricaryāyām kalau tad dhari-kīrtanāt  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.3.52)

the Śāstras, are not effective in this Kali Yuga. One cannot get total deliverance from the influence of Māyā in this age by any other form of worship. By this statement the Śāstras do not denounce other methods. They have got their own place and utility. They can help humanity in attaining many other achievements. They can make one the richest man in the world, a great monarch, an eminent scholar, a leader over a vast number of people and an enjoyer of various luxuries. The realization of Transcendental Bliss or 'Prema' to the Supreme Godhead is unattainable by methods other than Śrī Hari-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana in this dark age of Kali.

**"O King! Though Kali, being a repository of all evils, is condemned as worse than all other ages, it possesses one great virtue not found in other ages, viz., in this age a person can attain freedom from worldly bondage and secure Supreme Bliss solely through Kīrtana of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Name (even if he does not pursue any other form of spiritual method)."**<sup>6</sup>

## 25. *Age of Machines*

The condition of man in this age is lamentable. At every moment he is crushed down under the iron heels of rampant materialism. In spite of the various advancements claimed in the field of scientific inventions, he is getting day by day worse in character. All the pomp and show of the workaday world in this age has only made man a slave of baser objects. Man has become an unfortunate victim to various unhealthy habits and circumstances, with the result that he is merely hunting after creature-comforts. He is in the midst of many an unnatural want which promote selfishness, and lacks badly in the nobler traits of humanity. Kali Yuga is the black age of all sins, sorrows, torments, tortures, calamities and other sufferings of the like. Scientists have called the present age 'the age of machines'. Science is making rapid progress. Fresh inventions,

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6kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ

kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgaḥ paraṁ vrajet

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.3.51)

dazzling the eyes of the people of the world, are appearing very often. Marvellous dreadful destructive weapons are one of the prime objects of human research now. Factories and workshops, various locomotives of modern types, high power steamships, submarines, radios, electric trains, telephones, aeroplanes, wireless, talkies, television, x-ray, motor cars, printing machineries, gramophones, atom bombs, rockets, neon-lights, many effective drugs like penicillin, etc., and a host of similar wonderful inventions, are the achievements of science. Being proud of these few triumphs, science now boasts that it has made a successful conquest of nature even.

## 26. *Age of free controversy*

But alas! Really it has not yet pierced even the outer veil of nature. Philosophers have described the present age as 'the age of free controversy'. The word 'controversy' is a synonym for the word 'Kali'. Hence, the authors of the great Purāṇas have termed the present age as 'Kali Yuga'. Freedom of Speech is a characteristic feature of the present age. It claims numerous philosophies propounding views diametrically opposite to each other. Dry intellectual wranglings or irreligious rivalries are the order of the day. Even a lay man on the road would not hesitate to deliver a sermon to a public audience and pick up an unnecessary and senseless argument with best of brains in the world.

## 27. *Abodes of Kali*

The legacy of hatred, jealousy, disease and starvation is incalculably on the increase. Kali has mercilessly exercised its influence on the vast population of the world. All its vices springing from the fivefold abodes of Kali, the bosom companions of irreligion, are followed with pleasure by the present day people, young or old, literate or illiterate, Hindu or non-Hindu, without any distinction. Śrīmad Bhāgavata declares the following places as the abodes of Kali (Kali

Sthānas)<sup>7</sup>:- (1) Gambling in any form, such as playing cards even without stakes, dice, speculation, betting, horse race, etc., and also trading in the name of religion, (2) addiction to intoxicants and stimulants, such as drinking, smoking, chewing, snuffing, etc., (3) illicit connection with women or too much attachment to one's own wedded wife, (4) cruelty to animals; this includes the habit of living upon the flesh of animals. Indifference to the attainment of one's own spiritual welfare as this is cruelty to one-self, proclaiming as truth what one knows to be an untruth, advising people on all ways and ends, excepting the everlasting and soul-stirring principle of religion and love of God, and (5) improper ways of earning wealth and wasting the same lavishly on materialistic pursuits. The last one is the worst amongst the lot. Possession of wealth is often the root cause of many of the evils that occur in the domestic life. A wealthy person becomes blind with the riches and falls an easy prey to all sorts of vices. He carelessly gambles, becomes a habitual drunkard and a chain-smoker, falls a victim to the sensuous passions, freely mixes with members of the other sex, dances to their tunes, turns a moral wreck and finally, living upon unholy and objectionable food, brings ruin to himself, ruled by arrogance, lust, hatred and other baser traits of humanity. Alas! The defects of Kali, described in the Śāstras with reference to distant future, can be noticed even now in the earlier part of the age.<sup>8</sup> In spite of these faults or inabilities of Kali Yuga, **the one good quality that offsets all its drawbacks is the marvellous efficacy of the Kīrtana or the chanting of the Name of the Supreme Lord.**

## 28. *Divine Grace - Essential*

Human beings are weaklings in all respects. Their achievements may be many in the material sphere, but they can attain very little by their own efforts in the spiritual sphere.

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7 abhyarthitas tadā tasmai sthānāni kalaye dadau  
dyūtaṁ pānaṁ striyaḥ sūnā yatrādharmas catur-vidhaḥ  
  
punaś ca yācamānāya jāta-rūpam adāt prabhuḥ  
tato'nṛtaṁ madarṁ kāmāṁ rajo vairāṁ ca pañcamam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.17.38-39)



The path for God realization is very difficult to tread and the weak human beings have neither the required strength nor the necessary patience to achieve their goal. At every point humanity is carried away by strong currents of temptations. A man is often caught in a whirlpool of hardships. But, **all his hardships and obstacles vanish in no time, if he is fortunate to possess one thing, and that is Divine Grace.** A Jīva cannot free himself from the bondage of Māyā by his own efforts. It is only the Grace of the Beloved Lord that saves man from the thralldom of Māyā.

## 29. *Self-surrender - Way to Divine Grace*

How could we, pulled up as we are with the vanities of the world, deserve Divine Grace? **An earnest longing in all humility from the depth of our heart is the only course, open to us for the present, to attain the Mercy of the Lord.** We must weep from the bottom of our hearts, with absolute self-surrender at the Feet of the Lord and we are sure to be listened to. Let us - little men, forget our ego and feel the vanity of the transitory pleasures of this fleeting world. Let us relinquish all the pride and vainglorious attempts and admit our helplessness. Surely the Merciful Lord will come to our rescue. Did He not rescue a host of His devotees who surrendered themselves to Him and afford eternal shelter to them? Yes! Certainly He did. Our Śāstras are full of such glorious instances. **Chanting of the Divine Name is the most efficacious method to invoke the Grace of the Divine Lord.**

## 210. *Divine Name - The sole path for all*

"O King! For those devotees who have lost all their attachments to worldly objects, for those seeking salvation from fear and afflictions, for those desirous of enjoying the various fruits of their actions and also for those men of wisdom delighted in themselves (Ātmārāma), **the only certain course for success declared unanimously by all the sages of yore is the hearing, chanting, and meditation of the Glory of the Divine Name of Śrī Hari.**"<sup>9</sup>

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9      etan nirvidyamānānām icchatām akutobhayam  
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītaṁ harernāmānukīrtanam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 2.1.11)

## 211. Divine Name - The Elixir of Life

The Holy Name of Śrī Hari is the only refuge for all types of persons, be he a follower of the path of Karma, Jñāna, Yoga, Tapasyā or Bhakti. For those practicing devotion or Bhakti, it is the most potential factor, the main source of inspiration. To devotees who have advanced in this path, it is the life of their lives, the most coveted object, the very pith and marrow of their existence. **The Divine Name has a unique position. It is both the means as well as the end. It is the greatest benefactor both before and after God-realization. It enables one to have the attainment of the Highest Goal, viz., Divine Love or Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema, and It is also the manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema.** Though we have often heard about the Holy Name, we know very little of Its Real Nature.

## 212. Divine Name—Its true nature

"The Name 'Kṛṣṇa' is Cintāmaṇi - the Bestower of all objects of desire. It is an Embodiment of Divine Intelligence, Spiritual Ecstatic Bliss, All-Pure, Ever-Perfect, absolutely free from any material nature and fully identical with the form or Svarūpa, i.e. Bhagavān Himself."<sup>10</sup>

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10      nāma-cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś-caitanya-rasa-vigraḥ  
          nityaḥ śuddhaḥ pūrṇamukto 'bhinnatvān nāma nāminoḥ  
          (padma purāṇa; viṣṇu-dharma)

deha dehī vibhāgo 'tra neśvare vidyate kvacit  
(mahā varāha purāṇa; bṛhad-vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī)

kṛṣṇa nāma cintāmaṇi anādi cinmaya  
yei kṛṣṇa sei nāma eka tattva haya  
caitanya vigraha nāma nitya mukta tattva  
nāma nāmī bhinnanaya nitya śuddha sattva

kṛṣṇa rūpa kṛṣṇa haite sarvada abheda  
nāma rūpa eka vastu nāhika prabheda  
śrī nāma smarile rūpa āise saṅge saṅge  
rūpa nāma bhinnanya nace nānā raṅge  
(śrī hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi, pr. 17-18)

In the Transcendental Realm there is no difference between the Lord, His Body or His Name. They are one and the same in all re-spects. The Name is identical and equipotent with the Lord. Like a philosopher's stone, the Name grants all the wishes of Its servitors. It is not an object of the material world, and hence It is entirely outside the sphere of all empiric approach and is also incapable of any adulteration with Māyā. In this material world, however, there is always a difference between an object and its name, form, attributes and actions.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Who flooded the whole of India by His unique Message of Divine Love and Nāma-Saṅkīrtana and Who is accepted by one and all as the Promulgator of the cult of Saṅkīrtana speaks thus:-

### 213. *Name and Form identical*

“The Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the Transcendental Form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are identical. The Name, Form, the Holy Image, all the three are exactly the same. All these three are Transcendental by nature and hence there is not the least difference between Them. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Body is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. There is no categorical difference between the Body and the Being in the Transcendental Plane. So also with respect to the Name and the Form or Svarūpa denoted by the Name.”<sup>11</sup>

The above theory is not applicable to the material world. Here the word ‘fire’ is different from the object, i.e., fire denoted by the name. Hence, even if you repeat the word ‘fire’ any number of times, it never burns any portion of the body. The word ‘water’ is similarly different from the object water. Repetition of word ‘water’, lacs of times, does not quench a thirsty man, nor will it serve the purpose of putting out fire, etc. But, the case with the Holy Names of the Su-preme Lord is altogether different. The Name ‘Rāma’, or the Name ‘Kṛṣṇa’ is

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11\*\*\* 'kṛṣṇa-nāma', 'kṛṣṇa-svarūpa' — duita 'samāna'

'nāma', 'vigraha', 'svarūpa' — tina eka-rūpa  
tine 'bheda' nāhi, — tina 'cid-ānanda-rūpa'

deha-dehīra, nāma-nāmīra kṛṣṇe nāhi 'bheda'  
jīvera dharma — nāma-deha-svarūpe 'vibheda'  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 17.130-132)

not in any way different from the Divine Form denoted by these Names. The identity of the Name with the Divine Form, i.e., Bhagavān Himself, is not a monopoly of a section amongst the Hin-dus alone. It is supported even by the other religions like Christianity, etc. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John, 4th Gospel, ch. 1, 1)." Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu further adds on this issue thus: "Therefore, the Name, the Body and the Sportive Deeds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are not subject to the understanding of human senses. They are Self-Effulgent and Self-Revealing Truths."<sup>12</sup>

While corroborating the above statement, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, in his celebrated work 'Śrī Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu' quotes the follow-ing Śloka from Padma Purāṇa:

## 214. *Divine Name—Beyond human conception*

"Hence, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Name, Form, Qualities and Līlās are be-yond the comprehension of human senses. When a Jīva actually realizes that in his spiritual nature he is the eternal servant of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then and then alone the Transcendental Name, etc., spontaneously manifest Themselves in his spiritual sense-organs, such as the tongue, eyes, ears, etc. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Qualities and His Sportive Deeds, the characteristic traits of His servitors, being eternal, spiritual and full of Transcendental Bliss, are not comprehensible by the material forms, pleasures, odours, sounds and touch of fallen Jīvas, slaves of the triple qualities of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas."<sup>13</sup>

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12      ataeva kṛṣṇera 'nāma', 'deha', 'vilāsa'  
prākṛtendriya-grāhya nahe, haya sva-prakāśa

kṛṣṇa-nāma, kṛṣṇa-guṇa, kṛṣṇa-līlā-vṛnda  
kṛṣṇera svarūpa-sama — saba cid-ānanda  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 17.134-135)

13      ataḥ śrī kṛṣṇa nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ  
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ  
(padma-purāṇa)

## 215. *Lord Caitanya—His method of propaganda*

The Glory of the Transcendental Name and Its practice is inspiringly exemplified in the life of a great saint, who was one of the most favourite devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. His marvellous life was the practice of the chanting of the Holy Name in living form before us. His ideal life in this field has won for him the epithet 'Nāmācārya' (practicing teacher of the chanting of the Divine Name). By following the great events of his career attentively, we are enlightened with full details on the above subject. The establishment of the Divine Dispensation for this age of Kali, i.e., 'Nāma-Saṅkīrtana' was one of the purposes of the Advent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu into this world. Though He was the inspiring Fountain behind the activities of all His devotees, He fulfilled many of His purposes through the agency of His favourite agents. Thus, through the career of Nāmācārya Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura, He taught the world the Transcendental Glories of the Holy Name, the way to practice the same and the final realization of such practices.

## 216. *Saint's lives—Humanity's guiding stars*

The ideal lives and teachings of saints are a precious heritage for guiding the destinies of men and for inspiring them in their march forward to the attainment of Divine Bliss. We all know that the lives of great men carry with them magnetic influence from which we cannot often escape. Both in the mundane as well as in the spiritual realms, lives of great personalities, the hardships and the selfless sacrifices that they underwent for their respective causes, generate in the minds of men an impetus to emulate them. Our country is flooded with the biographies of many eminent persons who have achieved their greatness both in the physical and intellectual regions. These biographies somehow do not help humanity to achieve peace and happiness, nor do these settle the discord and chaos that are on the increase. Without the lives and teachings of saintly personages the achievements of humanity must indeed be very poor. God-loving saints or Bhaktas who come down and move in this world, not for any selfish purpose of their own, but solely for the welfare of humanity, are none other than the agents of the Lord, deputed by Him for the express purpose of regeneration and uplift of all fallen souls. Ṭhākura Haridāsa, a celebrated devotee of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu,

occupies a prominent position amongst the long line of devotees India can boast of.

### 3 NĀMĀCĀRYA SRI Haridāsa

#### Ṭhākura

##### 31. *His advent*

THIS great devotee made his appearance in this world at the village of 'Budhan' in the district of Jessore in East Bengal, somewhere towards the middle of the 15th century. It is roughly estimated that he was born thirty to thirty-five years prior to the Advent of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. There are no authentic records of his antecedents, his parents, boyhood, education, etc. He was born in a Muslim family. We know him under the name of 'Haridāsa', which literally means 'a servant of Śrī Hari'.

##### 32. *Ṭhākura at Benāpola*

Though born of a Muslim family, he possessed an inexplicable aptitude for taking the Name of Śrī Hari. Hence, violating the rules of Muslim society, he incessantly repeated Śrī Hari's Name. He felt it was the sole support of his life. Having lost all attachment to worldly life even when very young, Ṭhākura Haridāsa left his native village. He came to another village 'Benāpola' in the same district and took up residence in a small solitary cell situated in a forest. He spent the whole of his time in repeating loudly the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

##### 33. *Ṭhākura and Tāraka-Brahma-Nāma*

The 'Tāraka-Brahma-Nāma', a formula composed of the sixteen names of the Lord and formed of thirty-two syllables was the one that Ṭhākura Haridāsa adopted for his usual

chanting.<sup>14</sup> No doubt this was a grave violation of his social order. But, the broad-minded saint Ṭhākura Haridāsa was never given to such narrow sectarian feelings. Living upon alms, he continued staying at Benāpola in the same solitary cell taking resort to loud chanting of the Name of Śrī Hari.

### 34. *Ṭhākura and his adversaries*

Though a genuine saint, the great Ṭhākura Haridāsa could not escape the scathing criticism and vilification of a section of people there. Their actions and expressions were such that one is forced to believe that such persons are born in this world only for similar purpose. The very sight of Haridāsa Ṭhākura kindled wrath in their hearts which went on burning with wild flames. A malicious section of the Hindu society proved undilutedly hostile towards this great saint. His simple unostentatious living, utmost sincerity and single-minded devotion, did not move the granite hearts of his opponents. He had to face oppositions of numerical odds. Vehement criticisms were afloat which he patiently tolerated. These qualities of Haridāsa Ṭhākura could not, however, improve the situation; on the contrary, they stirred up all the demoniac propensities of his opponents to the maximum. But to the pure hearted, simple and devoted inhabitants of the village, Ṭhākura Haridāsa was a never-ending fountain of spiritual inspiration. They were extremely delighted to see his matchless devotion. They felt that they were highly blessed to have the presence of such a great devotee of the Lord in their midst. But neither the devotional achievements of Ṭhākura Haridāsa, nor the humble suggestions of the religious-minded people of the locality, could bring about an improvement in the hostile attitude of the rowdy section of the people. Their evil impulses and mischievous suggestions, on the contrary, were on the increase. Ṭhākura Haridāsa too was equal—nay, stronger than all these forces put together. Their activities did not disturb his unflinching and spontaneous attachment towards his Lord and His services even to a slightest degree. No, he did not fall a victim to these ungodly and antisocial elements. He worshipped the sacred Tulasī, chanted daily, day and night, the Name of the Lord, three lacs of times, and ate



food cooked in the houses of Brāhmaṇas, which he obtained by begging.

### 35. *Ṭhākura and Rāmacandra Khān*

All the virtuous inhabitants of the village regarded Ṭhākura Haridāsa as a great saint. They were greatly impressed by the various marks of devotion which they had never witnessed and his extra-ordinary love for the Holy Name. He gained within a short time great popularity amongst the local people. His reputation spread even to distant places. People from different places collected there to have a sight of the saint. They rendered him various services and tried to follow his soul-stirring instructions. The enemies of Ṭhākura Haridāsa could not tolerate the increasing influence that he was gaining day by day. Among these enemies Rāmacandra Khān, a local Hindu chieftain, was the foremost. He was puffed up with the vanities of wealth and a following. He was an uncompromising atheist, a terrible hater of devotion and a noted leader of a group of sceptics. He became awfully jealous of Haridāsa Ṭhākura and his reputation in the village and near-about. He wanted to bring discredit to the noble character of the great Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He devised various plans to gain his ends. He became persistent and behaved like a venomous serpent trampled under foot. He lost all his patience and could not feel quite at home till something substantial was done to disgrace Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Rāmacandra Khān would not hesitate to commit the meanest of deeds to bring about the disgrace of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Accordingly, he conspired with his evil-minded friends and decided to carry out a certain plan that would pull down Haridāsa Ṭhākura from the esteemed position he was occupying.

### 36. *Rāmacandra Khān's evil plots*

Being a great devotee, Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a living example of all the excellent virtues. Even the worst critic could not detect a weak spot in his character. Rāmacandra Khān knew this very well. He thought that he could bring about a moral disgrace of Haridāsa Ṭhākura before his admirers. Unfortunately Rāmacandra Khān took Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura to be a mere beginner in the devotional field—a weak-minded emotionalist who could be made an easy victim to the

temptations of the world. Puffed up with the vanities of wealth, youth and rank, he did not understand the marvellous glories of the devotees of Śrī Hari. Having full faith in his newly invented plan, Rāmacandra Khān secured the help of the best prostitutes of the locality, and asked them to spoil the character of Ṭhākura Haridāsa. He promised them with huge rewards. All these prostitutes, except one, did not accept the offer and retired; but one of them, a young and most beautiful amongst the whole lot, ventured to accept the offer and assured him success by bringing ruin on the character of Haridāsa Ṭhākura in three days' time. Rāmacandra Khān was immensely pleased. He awaited the moment of his forthcoming success with great impatience and offered all help that he could muster to the young woman. He pressed her to take an armed sentry with her, so that Ṭhākura Haridāsa could be caught red-handed. But the young harlot declined this proposal and said that she would go first by herself and that on her winning over Haridāsa Ṭhākura, she would take the sentry to capture him on her second visit. Rāmacandra Khān, who wanted the ruin of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, willingly accepted the harlot's plan and left her to her own way, he himself being absorbed in building castles in the air.

### 37. *Ṭhākura and the young harlot*

The young harlot, tempted by the huge offer of Rāmacandra Khān, started on her great adventure. She made a selection of the best of costumes and putting them on reached the solitary cell of Ṭhākura Haridāsa. It was an opportune time. The sun had set on the western horizon. The solitary cell of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, surrounded by forest and the approaching darkness, appeared lonelier than ever before. An extraordinary calm atmosphere prevailed, surcharged with the holiness, both inside and outside the hut of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who remained totally lost in the eddies of Transcendental Bliss. He was chanting incessantly the Name of Godhead with deep concentration. There is no need to mention that he had lost all consciousness.

It was exactly at this time that the young harlot reached him. However, she was not a stranger to certain etiquettes to be observed before holy personages. Hence, first, she made her obeisances to the sacred Tulasī that was grown in front of the hut and then bowing down to Ṭhākura Haridāsa, she stood there awhile. She then slowly sat down at his door-step. She

exhibited her body to Haridāsa Ṭhākura in various gestures and postures, like one mad with sensuous passions. She tried her best to make Haridāsa Ṭhākura a prey to her wishes. She finally requested him: "O holy sir! You are a miracle of beauty and in the prime of youth. Which woman can resist her passions by your sight? I do not feel there is any such lady in the world. I have fallen immoderately a slave to passions by the sight of your charming appearance. I have no power to check this. If you do not accept me, it will be impossible for me to live." Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not totally disappoint her. He had, by the Divine Will, his own plans ready for her. He said, "I shall certainly accept your prayer. Till I complete my due number of chanting the names I would not be in a position to oblige you. In the meantime be seated here listening to the chanting of the Holy Name. As soon as I complete my fixed quota of Names I shall fulfil your wish." The young woman was highly satisfied. She felt that her efforts were sure to yield her a triumph soon, and waited for the moment listening to the Sāṅkīrtana of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who continued his chanting of the Holy Name till morning.

The young woman too waited listening to the chanting. Even by the approach of the early morning she could not notice any sign of its coming to an end. So, at daybreak she returned home utterly disappointed. She apprised Rāmacandra Khān of all the details of her meeting with Haridāsa Ṭhākura. She assured him that her prayer would be certainly fulfilled when she would meet Haridāsa Ṭhākura the next night. To Rāmacandra Khān her words were an oasis of hope and the young harlot waited for her next opportunity.

### 38. *Harlot's second memorable night*

On the second day, the young woman with all fresh hopes of success reached the solitary hut of Ṭhākura Haridāsa. She reached the place just after sunset. As on the previous day, after bowing down to the sacred Tulasī and Ṭhākura Haridāsa she approached him. Haridāsa Ṭhākura consoled her by soft words. He said, "Yesterday you had to return disappointed; please do not be displeased with me. Unfailingly, I will accept you. You need not have the least doubt about it. Till I finish the requisite number of Names you be listening to it. As soon as the number is completed your wish will be fulfilled." The woman followed the instructions of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Time rolled on rapidly; the young woman became more and more

impatient as dawn was approaching; she became restless. Noticing this impatient attitude of the woman, Haridāsa Ṭhākura gently spoke to her thus: "I have taken a vow of chanting a crore of the Names of the lord during this month. The number is nearing completion. I expected the same to be completed this night and hence chanted the names throughout, but could not succeed. By tomorrow I am sure, the number will be completed and my vow also would be fulfilled. Then I will be able to enjoy your company freely." That night too, the young harlot returned by sunrise utterly disappointed. She reported all that happened to Rāmacandra Khān and the assurance of hope she got from Haridāsa Ṭhākura.

Full of hopes of success in her plan and with renewed enthusiasm, the harlot reached the lonely hut of Haridāsa Ṭhākura on the third night. As on the previous two days, she bowed to the sacred Tulasī and Haridāsa Ṭhākura, and sat at the entrance of the cell listening to the chanting of the Name and repeating the same by herself. Haridāsa Ṭhākura confirmed his previous assurances and said that he would definitely complete the number the same night and fulfil her wish.

### 39. *Third attempt—Harlot converted*

She was happy that she would have her wish fulfilled on the same night. She too repeated the Name on that day. What a tremendous change! Is it a miracle or a dream? By chanting the name all the night in the holy company of Ṭhākura Haridāsa the sinful heart of the young woman was completely changed. She fell prostrate at his feet and confessed to him frankly all about the evil plan of Rāmacandra Khān. She said: "I am the worst of sinners. Being a harlot by profession there is hardly any sin that I have not committed. I could now understand that you are not an ordinary person. You are a jewel amongst the devotees of the Lord. Under the sinful instructions of this villain Rāmacandra Khān, I have shamelessly turned all my efforts to contaminate your devotional heart. For three consecutive days I continued my efforts. Your spotless and ever-devoted nature has worked marvels in my sinful heart. By singing the Holy Name in your company all my evil propensities are totally destroyed. Now have mercy on this wretch. Please extricate this sinner from this deplorable condition." Haridāsa Ṭhākura was ever kind and sympathetic to all fallen souls. The sudden metamorphosis

of this young prostitute and her truly repenting words moved his merciful heart to pity. He never thought even for a moment of the loathsome activities of this young woman. He pardoned her completely and said: "I am fully alive to all the evil plots of Rāmacandra Khān. He knows not what he does. I wish him well. It is only for your sake that I continued my stay in this village for all these three days. If not, I would have left the place on the very first day." The young woman before Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a thoroughly changed person. She was not there for satisfying her evil passions. She no longer saw in Haridāsa Ṭhākura a person who would gratify her sensuous appetites; on the contrary, she saw in him her spiritual guide and her saviour from the thralldom of Māyā, her sole support of life. She requested him in all humility, to enlighten her as to how she could overcome the miseries of this transitory life. She had by then proved herself to be a worthy aspirant for spiritual enlightenment. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was fully convinced of her fitness to receive initiation into the secrets of devotion. He said: "Distribute freely all the wealth that you have to Brāhmaṇas. Take shelter in this hut. Chant the Holy Name constantly and worship the sacred Tulasī. In a short time, I am sure, you will attain the Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."<sup>15</sup> The merciful Haridāsa Ṭhākura now initiated her with the Divine Name and repeating the Name of the Lord left the place forever.

### 310. *Ṭhākura - Invulnerable to sense-allurements*

Let Haridāsa Ṭhākura, whose heart was ever addicted to drinking deep the nectar of Divine Name, be glorified! Let all praises be unto him who in spite of the repeated efforts of the young prostitute did not fall a victim to her lustful desires, but remained as hard as a mountain-rock pursuing his

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15ṭhākura kahe, — "gharera dravya brāhmaṇe kara dāna  
ei ghare āsi' tumi karaha viśrāma

nirantara nāma lao, kara tulasī sevana  
acirāt pābe tabe kṛṣṇera caraṇa"

(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 3.136-137)

hari nāmāmṛtametat pibantu śatadhāvagāhantam  
(śrī hari-nāmāmṛta)

activities undisturbed. There is a world of difference between a genuine devotee of the Lord and an ordinary man. Yes, they are opposite poles. Those who are treading on the path of devotion ever engaged in taking the Holy Name of the Lord, do not fall a prey to sins even when such sins gather close to them. They are beyond the influence of the various temptations, however irresistible they may be to others.

The young woman, who had become the recipient of the causeless mercy of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, obeyed the instructions of her Guru to the last word. By the boundless mercy of her master, she could understand the position of beauty, wealth, etc., in this changing world.

Adieu, farewell earth's bliss!  
This world uncertain is;  
Fond are life's lustful joys;  
Death proves them all but toys.  
Rich men! Trust not in wealth  
Gold cannot buy your health;  
Physic himself must fade;  
All things to end are made.  
Beauty is but a flower  
Which wrinkles will devour;  
Brightness falls from the air;  
Queens have died young and fair.  
(Nashe)

### 311. *Harlot—a faithful disciple and saint*

Without the least hesitation she fulfilled the wishes of her eternal guide. All her wealth was distributed to the Brāhmaṇas. Though of young age and beautiful complexion she got her head shaved, and with a single piece of cloth for covering her nudity stayed in the cell offered by Ṭhākura Haridāsa—her merciful master. Obeying the command of her saviour, she repeated three lacs of Names in the course of the whole day and night. She worshipped the Tulasī every day unflinching. Avoiding delicious meals she was satisfied with uncooked food. Often she resorted to fasts. These methods helped her considerably to have perfect control over all her senses within a short time, and unalloyed love for Bhagavān sprouted in her pure heart. To the great surprise of all, she became a famous devotee of the Lord. She gained the position of a spiritual teacher. Her reputation spread like a wild

conflagration, throughout. Devotees of great eminence from different parts often visited her hut for a sight of her.<sup>16</sup>

### 312. *Glory of the Divine Name*

The inhabitants of the surrounding villages were greatly astonished by the wonderful capacity of Ṭhākura Haridāsa that brought about a miraculous change in the life of a mere prostitute of sinful actions. Those very persons who once hated her felt it now a great privilege to meet her. What a wonder! She, who was once the cause of the downfall of many and a repository of many foul deeds, was now fit to release others from the terrible grips of vices to a plane of perfect purity - the Eternal Plane of Transcendental Service of the Supreme Lord, and all this happened by the mercy of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. People bowed with great reverence whenever they spoke of him.

### 313. *Rāmacandra Khān's doom*

Meanwhile, Rāmacandra Khān, who was building castles in the air, had to meet with utter disappointment. He had to pay a heavy price for this crime of his. His cruel heart grew all the more wicked and his hatred for Godhead and His devotees increased very much. He brought down terrible destruction on himself. Once again, he committed an unpardonable offence to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, the eternal companion of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. All his foul deeds

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16tabe sei veśyā gurura ājñā la-ila

grha-vitta yebā chila, brāhmaṇere dila

māthā muḍi' eka-vastre rahila sei ghare

rātri-dine tina-lakṣa nāma grahaṇa kare

tulasī sevana kare, carvaṇa, upavāsa

indriya-damana haila, premera prakāśa

prasiddhā vaiṣṇavī haila parama-mahāntī

baḍa baḍa vaiṣṇava tāñra darśanete yānti

(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 3.139-142)

began to recoil on him. The offensive actions made him an irrepressibly arrogant man. He stopped paying regular revenue to the Ruler. Hence, the Muslim Ruler got offended and raided his house. He halted in the Durgā Maṇḍapa of his house. He polluted the place by butchering animals. He cooked objectionable food there. Rāmacandra Khān and all his family members were taken prisoners. The Ruler and party remained there for three days, and all his property was plundered including his village, and he was forced to take objectionable food consisting of blood and flesh of animals. Rāmacandra Khān lost his caste, his wealth, his relations and everything he possessed as his own. Offences, when committed against the devotees of the Lord are not forgiven even by Bhagavān Himself. They are the worst impediments in the path of God-realisation. Offences committed against the Bhaktas bring along with them manifold sufferings, not only to the person concerned, but even to many others. Over and above this, it brings complete destruction of the place, i.e., the village or township itself.

### ***314. Divine Name—Redeems worst of sinners***

The above incident of converting that young woman of bad character to the position of a spiritual preceptor has got in it many lessons to teach us. In the first instance, it establishes the Glory of the Divine Name. The repetition of the Divine Name does deliver even the worst of sinners. The chanting of the Name delivered her from all sins and created in her real penitence for her past sinful deeds. It has awakened subsequently an earnest longing for taking shelter in the utterance of the Name which in course of a short period favoured her with the experience of spiritual rapture and Divine Realisation.

### ***315. Prerequisites for Sādhū's company***

The young woman appears before us with a heavy load of sins. She can be well compared with any other individual of this workaday world. An unnatural greed for money and a loathsome tendency to satisfy the sensuous cravings are generally noted in almost all in the present day. In spite of her madness for wealth and passions, she possessed one good quality which her other friends of the same profession or even



many other so-called moralists of the world do not have. This, in fact, was her asset. She had a natural instinct in her to respect Sādhus, the sacred Tulasī, etc. This we can gather from her behaviour before Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura. The conception of morality and immorality as understood by the people of the material world is to be completely and favourably moulded for one's spiritual progress. Extremists in either of these are sure to meet with an utter failure in the spiritual path.

The woman in our narrative did not approach Haridāsa Ṭhākura with any philosophical arguments. She was not a scholar in any sense. She was neither convinced nor converted by polemics or a show of miracle or supernatural powers. Her reformation was brought about by the simple method of listening to the Holy Name and Its repetition, and her natural receptive disposition completed the work.

### **316. *Essential requisites for Nāma-Bhajana***

A spiritual aspirant must possess a natural instinct to pay due respect to Sādhus and other godly objects. They must never underestimate them on any ground. With reverence and faith they must be prepared to follow the instructions of Sādhus. This is what is otherwise called 'Śraddhā' or faith. Real faith is the outcome of one's previous unconscious association with true devotees of the Lord. It is this special gift that would enable a person to come in contact with Sādhus and hear their soul-stirring words. This is altogether different from blind faith. Those who possess blind faith are seldom attracted by genuine devotees or their words. The words emanating from the lips of pure devotees are not material sounds. They are, on the contrary, Transcendental Sounds capable of producing the most marvellous experiences in the heart of submissive listeners. An aspirant, who longs to follow the path of God-realisation, must submissively hear the Holy Name uttered by genuine Sādhus. After serving the devotee, the Holy Name is to be accepted from him as his special favour, and It is to be chanted constantly in the holy company fully observing all his instructions. Attachments to the material world and worldly objects in any form is an obstacle in the spiritual path. They are to be discarded totally. Association with them in any form would once again bring on us unpleasantness and physical mortifications. Even such matters as food, clothing, residence, etc., should be refused from those who are extremely worldly-minded. One must always follow

the preceptor's instructions which are given for his spiritual uplift. Unless we follow the above instructions, our progress in the spiritual path remains ever blocked.

## 4 LORD'S NAME - THE DIVINE

### PANACEA

AFTER hearing some of the wonderful effects of the Divine Name, we often take recourse to the chanting of the Name, overlooking the important instructions as immaterial. From our practical experience in this world, we see these people, in spite of their show of religious practices of chanting the Name, etc., lack in the elementary principles of religion, not to speak of higher achievements. Their examples in society have proved stumbling blocks in reviving faith in God or His Name. The system of medical treatment insists upon the patient to carry out the instructions of the doctor strictly with respect to the medicine as well as the diet. The Holy Name is the Divine Medicine to save us from the chronic disease of worldliness and as such it is indispensable to take the Name fully observing all the other injunctions of the Śāstras.

Śrī Kulaśekhara Ālvār, one of the ancient renowned saints of South India and a noted exponent of Bhakti, in his popular devotional work 'Śrī Mukundamālā Stotra' mentions thus:

#### 41. *Materialised mind uncongenial to devotion*

“O my mind! Why do you instigate me to run after various medicines when you have before you a highly potential one with astounding results? Did you ever think of it even for a short while? Your madness and restlessness are proverbial. The mischief that you often work on the lives of ascetics and the untoward sufferings you cause them thereby are innumerable and most damaging. You have easily conquered ordinary human beings by your two pronged drive of Saṅkalpa (forming ideas), and Vikalpa (dissolving them), and the Almighty Lord alone knows when they are to get their release from your well-fortified prison chambers. I do not know with what objects amongst the creations of the Lord I

can properly compare to you, either with a grasshopper that never sits in a place, but goes on frisking as often as possible or with any angry monkey bit by a scorpion. Really you are incomparable!"<sup>17</sup>

Did not the great Arjuna on behalf of the entire world state in Gītā, "O Kṛṣṇa, You want me to control the mind. But how can I do it? It is so wavering, vehement, powerfully defiant and firm that its control, I consider, is very hard to achieve as of the wind."<sup>18</sup> Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa too agreed with the same sentiments of His devotee Arjuna and seconded them with extraordinarily high compliments. "O mighty armed! True, you are perfectly right; you may be easily successful in conquering many of your opponents by your mighty arms. But this restless mind is difficult to conquer."<sup>19</sup> Most people may be ignorant of your wicked activities; yet, they may be knowing this much that you are the bitterest enemy of humanity striving for God-realisation.

"O Mind! Thou art the worst enemy of those who indulge frequently in transitory objects; thou art also the best friend of those few fortunate souls who constantly remember the Blessed Lord. How thou misguidest the poor forgotten souls by thy false and clever arguments! I have now understood thy evil leanings; thanks, thanks to thee my worthy friend, for the lesson thou hast taught! No longer I hope to satisfy thy whims and fancies and no more suggestions from thee to that effect for the present. Now, drink this Divine Medicine—the Holy Name of the Lord—without any further excuse. Thou art very clever in framing excuses

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17vyāmoha-praśamauśadhaṁ muni-mano-vṛtti-pravṛtty-auśadhaṁ  
daityendrārti-karauśadhaṁ tri-bhuvane sañjīvanaikaauśadham  
bhaktātyanta-hitauśadhaṁ  
bhava-bhaya-pradhvamsanaikaauśadhaṁ  
śreyaḥ-prāpti-karauśadhaṁ piba manaḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-divyauśadham  
(śrī-mukunda-mālā-stotra 32)

18cañcalaṁ hi manaḥ kṛṣṇa pramāthi balavad dṛḍham  
tasyāhaṁ nigrahaṁ manye vāyor iva suduṣkaram  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 6.34)

19asaṁśayaṁ mahā-bāho mano durnigrahaṁ calam  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 6.35)

with thy unusual arguments and reasonings, in bringing about a downfall from proper devotional approach. Do not put forward any such specious pleas as suggesting the practice of other methods like asceticism, Karma, Jñāna, Yoga, renunciation, penance, etc. They are not in the least equal to This Elixir. They neither possess as many virtues as the Divine Name nor are they as efficacious and easy as the latter. Start forthwith this course of treatment without any hesitation and you will reap its wonderful effects. 'Proof of a pudding is in the eating.'"

The Divine Name is the most powerful remedy for delivering one from the sinister influences of infatuation and ignorance. Every soul who has forgotten the Supreme Lord without any exception is under the spell of this enemy called ignorance. Having fallen a prey to this, the unfortunate soul identifies itself with the material body and its surrounding relations. It forgets its real nature and its original relation with the All-Merciful Lord - the Soul of all souls. Taking recourse to constant chanting of the Divine Name, one becomes eligible for the Grace of the Lord which is evidenced by one's immediate redemption from the thralldom of infatuation (Moha) which is our misidentification. It is only the Divine Grace of Bhagavat Prasāda that can save us from this degraded condition. "O Acyuta! By Your Grace my delusion is completely gone."<sup>20</sup>

It helps the steady concentration of the mind on the Absolute Godhead by totally destroying mind's all evil propensities like the wavering and the stubborn natures.

It is a marvellous medicine to do away with all the opposing factors, external or internal. In our spiritual struggle, we are beset with obstacles everywhere, within and without. Unless we are free from all these stumbling blocks, our advance towards our goal is out of question. The easiest and best course of operation in driving away all these adversaries is performed with this Divine Medicine.

This is the best rejuvenating agent in all the infinite number of worlds. This not only delivers the materialised soul from the worst lamentable labyrinth of extreme worldliness, but also enlivens and spiritualises it with fresh life.

Beginning from the lowest stage of devotion to the highest realisation of Godhead and His unflinching loving services, no other process is as conducive to the devotee as this

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20naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā tvat-prasādān mayācyuta

(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 18.73)

Divine Medicine. Free from all risks and restrictions, it is the easiest and best method that any devotee, under the most trying physical conditions of health and climate, can adopt for the achievement of his purpose in life. A novice likes it better than any other course because of its special attractive features, all-accommodating outlook and easy accessibility. For an advanced soul or a God-realised person, it is the very pith and marrow of his existence—the life-giving factor - nay, the very life itself.

This Divine Medicine strikes at the very root of the terrible suffering of this repeated cycle of births and deaths. The movement of this wheel of worldliness, busily engaged in its routine cycle of births and deaths, is maintaining an alarming speed. No mortal can arrest its motion. "One who is born is destined to die and vice versa. It is allotted to all to die."<sup>21</sup> "O great hero! For those who have taken birth, death also is assigned along with their bodies, whether it be at this moment, or at the end of a century, death is indeed a definite and inevitable phenomenon."<sup>22</sup> "Death as it must come, comes to all!" Though the world is flooded with wonderful inventions, there is not a single one so far devised by any human genius to stop this unpleasant cyclic movement revolving ceaselessly. By its marvellous inventions scientists may boast that they have conquered nature itself. It is a mere boast—a childish prattle. Did modern science solve any of the puzzling problems facing humanity from time immemorial? Did the human brain invent any device by which man can know the actual time and circumstance under which he should take leave of his so-called friends and near relations? Alas! Many powerful brains credited with astounding inventions or discoveries had to meet with tragic ends in unknown lands which unfortunately they could not foresee.

The only course of arresting these events rests with the Almighty Lord. The credit goes to Him alone and to none else; not to any proud conditioned soul who out of sheer foolishness feels as a rival and hence an adversary of the Great Lord.

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21jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 2.27)

22mṛtyur janmavatāṁ vīra dehena saha jāyate  
adya vābda-śātānte vā mṛtyur vai prāṇināṁ dhruvaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.1.38)

Over and above, 'Hari-Nāma' is the only Potential Medicine in this dark age that helps the attainment of the everlasting good, the summum bonum of human existence.

The Transcendental Name appears similar to that of a material Name. The Holy Name is not a mere composition of Sanskrit alphabets. It is pregnant with many mystic potentialities. It attracts the utterer and the hearer. This Divine Name is the only wealth that multiplies when stolen. That is not the case with material wealth which enriches the robber and impoverishes the robbed. But the Name enriches both him who steals It or the person from whom It is stolen and by whom It is imparted. It blesses both of them. The more he takes It, the more thrilled he will feel to take It, carrying Its healthful and divine contagion to others equally lucky. The Holy Name, being totally Divine, makes Its manifestation on the lips of His pure devotees. In our present fallen state all our senses except the ears have not got any access to the Name. Aural reception is the first course that is prescribed for us. Hence, those who attentively hear the Divine Name from the lips of true devotees, with a spirit of submissiveness and honest inquiry to know more and more about Godhead Who is the only Independent Truth, and after offering them sincere and loving services, are alone eligible to realise the true nature of the Divine Name.

The Divine Name does not manifest Itself to those who do not serve the Supreme Lord. The proper hearing of the Name from a pure devotee makes him eligible for the next stage of repeating It. The devotee favours you with the Divine Name. He becomes your Guru. A true Guru is he who has experienced the Supreme Godhead and who is engaged exclusively in serving Him with his words, deeds and thoughts, subordinating all other activities to these. He need not be of a particular caste or creed.<sup>23</sup> The Guru is the Divine Medium for the manifestation of the Supreme Lord in the form of Sound - the Holy Name. The Guru alone can impart the Divine Lord in the form of His Name and none else. The Holy Name imparted by the genuine Guru, when repeated constantly, will lead us to the realisation of the true nature of the Name, i.e., the attainment of Transcendental Love itself,

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23kibā vipra, kibā nyāsi, śūdra kene naya  
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei 'guru' haya  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 8.128)

reinforced with the realisation of Its identity with the Form, Qualities, Pastimes, etc.

## 42. *Ṭhākura at Chandpur*

As the surroundings proved unfavourable for spiritual practices, Haridāsa Ṭhākura left Benāpola for a different place. He reached the village of Chandpur, which was situated in the neighbourhood of Saptagrāma-Trivenī in the northern district of Hooghly in West Bengal. Saptagrāma, to which Chandpur and other villages are attached, was under the supervision of two brothers Hiraṇya Majumadāra and Govardhana Majumadāra in matters of revenue. They were the revenue accountants under the Nawab. Śrī Balarāma Ācārya, the family priest of the Majumadāra brothers, had his house at Chandpur, lying a little east to the residence of the Majumadāra brothers. Balarāma Ācārya was the recipient of the special favour of Haridāsa Ṭhākura and hence with utmost devotion and care, he entertained the Ṭhākura in his village. For the convenience of his spiritual master, Balarāma Ācārya erected a small hut in a secluded place. Residing in that lonely hut, Haridāsa Ṭhākura carried on his chanting of the Holy Name, accepting food from his disciple Balarāma Ācārya. Śrī Raghunātha das, the only son of Govardhana Majumadāra, later on well-known as one of the specially favoured devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, was then a boy having his education under Balarāma Ācārya. With a desire to have the sight of a saint, he used to visit Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who was very merciful to him. Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta of Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī states that the mercy of Ṭhākura Haridāsa was the cause of Raghunātha dāsa becoming the recipient of the Grace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu at a later period.

## 43. *Ṭhākura on the effects of the Name*

While Haridāsa Ṭhākura was continuing with his spiritual practices there, an unusual event took place. One day, Balarāma Ācārya, after series of humble entreaties, succeeded in taking Haridāsa Ṭhākura to a gathering in the house of the two Majumadāra brothers. Both the brothers received Haridāsa Ṭhākura with great respect befitting his position. They prostrated themselves at his feet and offered him a



special seat. Besides the two Majumadāra brothers, who were themselves noted scholars of Śāstric lore, the gathering included a large number of scholars and other important celebrities. Everyone present there spoke in praise of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Both the Majumadāra brothers were highly pleased to hear these high compliments. The whole assembly knew that Haridāsa Ṭhākura chanted every day three lacs of Holy Names. Eventually the audience there dwelt freely on the Glory of the Holy Name. This discussion soon took a slightly controversial turn. Some said that the repetition of the Name of Bhagavān destroys all sins, while some others opined that by taking recourse to chanting of the Name all the Jīvas are freed from the clutches of the octopus of Māyā. But the holy Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not favour either of the views. He said that these are not the primary results of chanting the Name of Godhead. **Unalloyed Love at the Feet of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the real fruit of chanting the Divine Name.**

“A person who is constant in his service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the ways enunciated above, viz., by hearing, chanting Hari-Nāma, etc., finds his heart melted and by reason of realising the quality of love by chanting the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, experiences the Bliss of Prema towards Hari in such a heart. He loses all consideration for the opinion of the people and like one possessed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, laughs, cries, shouts, sings and dances at intervals.”<sup>24</sup>

Salvation or the destruction of sins is only the secondary result of chanting the Name. The primary object of the sunrise is to illuminate the world, making everything visible in their real nature and giving delight to one and all by bestowing light and energy; but incidentally it also dispels darkness.

“Let the Holy Name of Śrī Hari the Benefactor of the world be glorified; Who like the rising of the sun destroys all darkness, even so, the Holy Name by Its manifestation, removes all the sins of the world.”<sup>25</sup>

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24evaṁ-vrataḥ sva-priya-nāma-kīrtiyā jātānurāgo druta-citta uccaiḥ  
hasaty atho roditi rauti gāyaty unmāda-van nṛtyati loka-bāhyāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.2.40)

25ahaḥ saṁharadakhilam sakṛd-udaya-deva sakala lokasya  
taraṇiriva timira jaladhim jayati jagan-mangalam harer nāma  
(śrī bhagavān-nāma-kaumudī 1)

Haridāsa Ṭhākura requested the Paṇḍitas present there to explain the above Śloka. They, on the contrary, insisted on Haridāsa Ṭhākura himself to do it for the benefit of all. Haridāsa Ṭhākura agreeing to their proposal, gave his expositions thus: “Take the rising of the sun. It is an excellent example to illustrate our view. Even before the sun actually rises above the eastern horizon we see all the darkness being slowly dispelled. Pears of all evil elements, such as thieves, demons, evil spirits, etc., that haunt the nights are totally removed, and by the actual appearance of the sun other useful purposes are achieved. Similarly, the dawning of the appearance of the Holy Name dispels all the sins of the aspirants as Its secondary result, and by the full blooming of the Name unflinching Love at the Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is achieved. Mukti or salvation is an insignificant result that an aspirant can derive by the mere dim reflection of the Name (Nāmābhāsa). Sincere devotees of the Lord spurn this Mukti even though it is offered to them by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.”

“When the dying Ajāmila by unintentionally uttering the Name of Śrī Hari while calling his son by his name could attain Vaikuṇṭha Dhāma, how much more beneficial would the result be if the Name Itself is chanted with implicit faith?”<sup>26</sup>

“My Own devotees, says the Lord, never accept the different forms of salvation, e.g., attainment of My Realm, power, wealth, and fame similar to that of Mine, the privilege of living near Me always, even the favour of becoming one with Myself even if offered by Me unreservedly. They covet nothing except My loving service.”<sup>27</sup>

The above statement of Haridāsa Ṭhākura was met with a protest. It is strange that not a single view, however appreciable and convincing it may be, cannot escape the protests of a certain section of the people. Even the most

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26mriyamāṇo harernāma gṛṇan putropacāritam

ajāmilo 'py agāddhāma kimuta śraddhayā gṛṇan  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.49)

mriyamanāṇatvādeva aśraddhayāpi gṛṇan kim punaḥ śraddhayeti  
(sārārtha-darśinī)

27sālokya-sārṣṭi-sāmīpya- sārūpyaikatvam apy uta

dīyamānaṁ na gṛhṇanti vinā mat-sevanam janāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.29.13)

brilliant ideas of extraordinarily pious and virtuous people are met with vehement opposition in this world, at least once. This habit has become, specially, the rule of the present day.

#### 44. *Ṭhākura and Gopāla Cakravartī*

At the residence of the Majumadāra brothers there was a Brāhmaṇa employed as a bearer by name Gopāla Cakravartī, who used to carry money and letters to the Ruler who was residing in his capital at Gauḍa. He was entrusted with the responsibility of collecting the revenues amounting to the extent of rupees twelve lacs annually and remitting it to the Nawab. He was of a handsome complexion blooming with youth and learning. He was one amongst the audience. He could not tolerate the views of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He differed totally on the issue that salvation is attainable by a mere dim reflection of the Name. The young man shouted with burning wrath: "Well, learned scholars, you have now heard the statement of this sentimentalist! The liberation that is impossible even by means of the knowledge of Brahman after crores of births is offered so cheaply by him with a mere dim reflection of the Name!"

#### 45. *Ṭhākura on Bhakti and Mukti*

Ṭhākura Haridāsa answered the criticism by freely quoting the Śāstras. Once again he established his previous statement with sufficient emphasis, basing his claims on the authority of the scriptures to the entire satisfaction of the audience, except this arrogant youth, a trifling argumentarian. Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied: "Well, why do you challenge the Śāstras and entertain a doubt in you? It is not my individual opinion. I do not want to thrust my personal views on you. The Śāstras that are common to both of us have declared it. They, in addition, point out the insignificant position of the bliss enjoyed by liberation in comparison with the perennial flow of happiness that can be attained by rendering loving services to Bhagavān. It is simply on account of this fact that the genuine devotees or Bhaktas never hanker after or accept any type of liberation mentioned in the Śāstras though they are voluntarily offered by the Lord Himself."

"O Teacher of the universe! To me immersed in the pure ocean of Bliss by meeting Thee, the Bliss of the attainment of

the Brahman appears to be as contemptible as the tiny speck of water filling a hole in the ground caused by the hoof of a cow.”<sup>28</sup>

Haridāsa Ṭhākura's reply did not cool down his temper; on the contrary, it was like adding fuel to fire. The unfortunate Gopāla Cakravartī had lost all control over his temper. He shouted in the presence of all other elderly persons and scholars that he would cut off the nose of Haridāsa Ṭhākura if the dim reflection of the Holy Name did not secure liberation. Haridāsa Ṭhākura wilfully agreed to this. He was not a mere fanatic who stood for his own conviction or a sectarian who dogmatically fought for his views, but a genuine devotee of the Supreme Lord who had fully realised what he expressed. He was not fighting merely on bookish knowledge or on the power of a vociferous disposition. He knew his position very well by dint of his practical experience. He said: “Undoubtedly, if by the dim reflection of the Holy Name liberation is not attained, I fully agree to cut off my nose.”

#### 46. *Gopāla Cakravartī rebuked*

The blasphemous utterance of this foolish Brāhmaṇa was not at all approved by the rest of the audience. They all resented it very much and rose against him. The two Majumadāra brothers rebuked him severely on the spot and utterly condemned his unwarranted behaviour. Balarāma Ācārya, more than anyone else, felt highly offended. He remarked: “Fool of an ass! You boast much of your learning; what do you know about Bhakti? This is not the place for your verbal jugglery. You have dug your own grave by insulting the great Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Inevitable perdition is soon to befall you. None can help.”

#### 47. *Ṭhākura consoles the gathering*

Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not wish to remain in the assembly for long. He rose up. Majumadāra forthwith dismissed the services of this Brāhmaṇa from his office and

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28tvat-sākṣāt-karaṇāhlāda viśuddhābdhi-sthitasya me  
sukhāni goṣpadāyante brahmaṇy api jagad guro  
(śrī hari-bhakti-sudhodaya 14.36)

with the entire audience fell prostrate at the feet of Ṭhākura Haridāsa. All the persons gathered there knew something about the sayings of the Śāstras and the grave consequences of insulting great devotees. They all prayed Haridāsa Ṭhākura to pardon them. Haridāsa Ṭhākura with a sweet smile consoled them all by soft words. He said: "Why do you worry? You have not done anything wrong to me. In fact, you are not responsible for this unhappy incident. It is only this ignorant Brāhmaṇa who misbehaved thus. Even he is not to be blamed. His argumentative disposition has brought about this action. **The Glory of the Divine Name lies beyond the scope of human intelligence and arguments.** Intellectual achievements, however great and astounding they may be, are utterly inadequate to have any access to the Divine Name and Its marvellous potentialities. Hence, from where can he get these most secret principles? Please retire to your respective houses. May you all, by the Mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, attain eternal good. On my account, let not any one feel sorry." Haridāsa Ṭhākura took leave of them all and returned to his hut.

#### 48. *Evil consequences of disparaging Sādhus*

The first action of Hiranya Majumadāra on returning home was to prevent Gopāla Cakravartī from crossing his door-steps. Gopāla Cakravartī had not to wait long for the consequence of his offensive misbehaviour. In three days' time he was attacked with an acute type of leprosy. Of all the limbs of his body, his prominent nose was the first unfortunate victim. It totally disappeared from his face. It was followed by the delicate and beautiful fingers and toes. They too got withered and corroded away in a short period.

Everyone in the village was struck with consternation on the terrible turn of events facing Gopāla Cakravartī. The glory of Haridāsa Ṭhākura touched everyone to the heart. They offered their obeisances to Haridāsa Ṭhākura.

One can easily understand that Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not take the misconduct of the Brāhmaṇa seriously. What of that? How can his Beloved Lord tolerate the vilification of His devotees? He did not pardon the offender. Devotees are always by nature forgiving and hence ever-willing to pardon the faults and shortcomings of the ignorant. They never wish any sorrow to befall their opponents. But, Bhagavān in His very essence never endures even the slightest attack or calumny on His loving devotees. He never hesitates to come

down even for rescuing His devotees or doing any other act that can stem the situation.

Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a person of overflowing kindness. As is natural to the devotees of the Lord, he was of a very soft and sympathetic disposition. The news of the terrible calamity that befell Gopāla Cakravartī, though a vilifier and opponent of Ṭhākura Haridāsa, caused immense pain to the latter. Taking leave of Balarāma Ācārya, he left for Sāntipura in the district of Nadia in West Bengal.

This unhappy incident in general and the discussion that took place between Haridāsa Ṭhākura and Gopāla Cakravartī in particular are of great significance. We are favoured with an inspiring exposition on some of the cardinal points in our religion and particularly the Holy Name and Its potentialities from the lips of an authentic person like Haridāsa Ṭhākura.

#### 49. *Qualifications of a religious preacher*

The large assembly of learned people proved worthy of their learning by allowing Haridāsa Ṭhākura to expound his views on the particular scriptural text. Haridāsa Ṭhākura is the 'Nāmācārya'. He is one who really practises what he speaks. No one is fit to preach religion who does not follow in his own life what he stands for. Every true preacher of religion should live the principles he preaches. His must be the teachings of Śāstras fully translated in day to day life into each and every action. In other words, an Ācārya is a living embodiment of the Śāstras before us. As such, he is the Proper authority to explain the texts of the Śāstras, the real significance of which is realised by him.

The views raised by Gopāla Cakravartī are those holding sway in the heart of a vast part of population that goes by the name of intellectuals or learned men. They think too much of themselves. These people depend mainly upon their own efficiency, their own reasons and experiences. They feel that they have an appreciable command over all Śāstras as well. But unfortunately, they have fallen a victim to the wise saying 'little learning is dangerous'. Often they are like 'the frog in the well'. They have got their own peculiar notions on any topic which according to them is the highest philosophy, the sublime truth, the one common goal of achievement. They are not prepared to hear anything more than this. They have no patience to do so. When occasion arises by chance, they lose

all their patience. They fret and fume. They make a vivid picture of their learning and other qualities in them. They swell and swell beyond their capacity and finally burst out throwing here and there a little of the filthy substance crammed in them. This is actually what we have seen in Gopāla Cakravartī too. He feels that he has understood the entire range of Śāstras. He has finally come to the conclusion that merging oneself in the Impersonal Brahman by means of knowledge is the *summum bonum* of all the teachings of the scriptures. He never believes anything more than this. In fact this is only a one-sided view, i.e., is not the full import of the Śāstras.

#### 410. *Scriptures—The sound authority*

Instead of placing his individual experience of reasonings, Ṭhākura Haridāsa draws our attention to the scriptural authority which is the only sound source of knowledge (Pramāṇa) for Divine Matters. Gopāla Cakravartī and his type of persons do pose that they are believers in God and Śāstras; but their actions and words are just the contrary. They do not conform to their professions even to the slightest extent. If one believes in God, he must necessarily believe the word of God as well. Mere lip service either to the Lord or His sayings, i.e., the Śāstras, would not serve any real purpose.

#### 411. *Scriptures and the modern public*

Most of the people living in the modern world treat the Śāstras as a set of irrational books containing an abundance of dogmas, rituals, myths and fictitious stories. They consider them as outmoded. Some hold them as 'kitchenbooks' as they are only useful for old ladies and widows who lack in real intelligence and as such are engaged in the kitchen for cooking purpose. A few who accept the infallible nature of these invaluable treasures and their validity in the field of religion interpret them in a highly intellectual manner. Their conclusions are mainly based on their direct perception and inference. For these the Śāstric texts are there that they may interpret their texts to suit their idiosyncrasies. They go on twisting the next to a great extent, sometimes explaining them on grammatical, etymological, and philosophical grounds,

sometimes splitting them into so many alphabets, and once again uniting them in their own ways, to support their views.

And still a few others desire that all the statements of the Śāstras must be proved through the help of scientific apparatus in some recognised laboratory under the expert supervision of some eminent scientist. They hold the opinion that it is high time the Śāstras submit themselves to the scrutiny of science and reason for the welfare of humanity as a whole in this age of machines. If the Śāstras are not capable of standing this scientific test their survival is foredoomed.

Yet another section (and these are the most dangerous) while denouncing all these arguments, patiently wait for the approval of western scholars. They claim to be more polished in their behaviour, up-to-date in dress and civilised in their views than the rest of the people in the world. They move in high circles, imitate the Westerners in external activities, in keeping the hat or holding the pipe. They accept only those books or writings or those men as are favoured by eminent writers of western countries. Such groups of people guided by some special instinct in them, follow the instructions of foreigners faithfully. They prefer to be in the midst of what they consider to be the intelligent and civilised section of society of ultra modernists than to be in the midst of a set, in their opinion, of primitive and quixotic Hindus who have crude notions in everything.

Some accept the Vedas alone as the original Śāstras and accept their statements only as understood by their empiric mind as authentic records in religious matters. They do not give any place to the other works. Some accept the Vedas, the Vedāntas (Upaniṣads), the Vedānta Sūtras and Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā as their infallible Śāstras. They denounce the Purāṇas, the epics, etc., as later works; such books are of minor importance. Even when these people are concerned and defeated, they will harp on the same string, denying all other views excepting theirs as untenable and unwarranted additions, intentionally and mischievously prepared to crush their views. Hence, they hold such other Śāstric works as unauthentic.

Still a different group blame the Brāhmaṇas and denounce the very Śāstras saying that they are created by these selfish people to exploit the other innocent three castes. They remark that these works contain only certain instructions to threaten the people with the existence of hell and tempt them with certain pleasures of heaven, etc., and that these statements help the Brāhmaṇas earn their livelihood by



duping the remaining people. All these diverse dispositions are due to the extreme ignorance on the subject. There is a proverb 'faults are thick where love is thin'. These people are lacking badly in good instincts born of previous religious merits. As such, they relish the type of cheap literature that is available on footpaths and bookstalls and which abounds in obscene photos that easily increase sensuous passions, senseless and fabulous stories, useless funs, etc. Generally most of the fettered souls cannot claim a highly enlightened position from their very birth. There are certain fortunate souls with very high instincts in them and they develop early in their lifetime association with Sādhus and practise detachment, etc. Neither a dogmatic affirmation without any understanding nor a dogmatic denial is a sign of wisdom. A submissive attitude with an unbiased mind is a true sign of a seeker after Truth. Many of the ignorant people are unwilling to accept their ignorance. They are so egoistic that they never believe that there are greater persons in the world than they themselves. It appears as though they have come down with the resolution that they will not accept any enlightenment from anybody. Their behaviour only reminds us of the Mantra of the Upaniṣad. "Those who, remaining in the midst of extreme ignorance, consider themselves to be learned and enlightened, come to grief like one blind man leading another."<sup>29</sup> Both would fall in a ditch and get their bones and skulls broken.

#### 412. *Scriptures defined*

What are the Śāstras and why do we believe in them? The Śāstras, though appearing in book-form before us, printed by human labour, on machines invented by us, on the paper manufactured by us, are not, as many think, any production of the material world. They are the words of the Godhead Himself coming down into this world through the lips of unconditionally surrendered Sādhus who are the transparent mediums for the same. They are the reports and messages of the Transcendental Realm that have come down to the

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29avidyāyam-antare vartamānāḥ svayaṁ dhīraḥ paṇḍitam-anyamānāḥ  
jaṅghanyamānāḥ pariyanti mūḍhā andhe naiva nīyamānām  
yathāndhāḥ

(muṇḍaka upaniṣada 1.2.8)

mundane world for the edification of humanity. They contain records of the inspiring lives of great personalities, their thrilling experiences, together with great secrets on the details of the Supreme Godhead, the very object of their worship, and His Activities. They are infallible Truths above human pitfalls and are the same for all ages. 'To err is human'. 'Every man hath a fool in his sleeve'. 'No man is always wise'. Human intelligence with its reasoning, however brilliant and developed it may be, has got in it fourfold errors since they are gathered from this imperfect world through the medium of our deceptive and defective senses. That is why we always notice one type of argument replaces another which in turn is again defeated by a still different one and so on and so forth. The Śāstras, as the Word of the Supreme Lord, are far above such inefficiencies, such as (1) Bhrama (error due to wrong perception of one thing for another), (2) Pramāda (error due to heedlessness), (3) Vipralipsā (error due to the wish to deceive oneself and others), and (4) Karaṇāpātava (error due to self-deception and deception of senses). The Śāstras are not the compositions of human beings or any other similar fallen Jīvas. They are existing from time immemorial. They are self-revealed truths manifested into this mundane world by the Divine Will through a channel of spoken communication brought about by a succession of genuine spiritual masters.

There is no religion in this world without its authentic scriptures. They are the true sources of knowledge. If these authorities are ignored religion becomes unsteady and irrational. Śāstras are not irrational. They are based on true reasons and practical experiences or realisations, whereas, we, the reasoning animals, stand on perverted reasons, untested conclusions and unsound suppositions. Ours is only a war of hollow words, whereas, the Śāstras are records of practical experiences. The Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the Vedānta Sūtras, the Purāṇas, the great epics like Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa, the Pañcarātras and all such works, commentaries, etc., based on the above by the Ācāryas who are commissioned by Bhagavān for the benefit of humanity are known by the word 'Śāstras'. Śāstras need not be confined in one particular language alone. They can be in any of the languages of the world. The Śāstras deal with the Transcendental Objects and their knowledge and hence are not easily intelligible to a novice whose knowledge is enshrouded in the ideas of the material world. He must listen to expositions on them from the lips of the genuine Sādhus with a submissive spirit as the Sādhus are living Śāstras and unerring broadcasting mediums.

This is the first and foremost requisite for those who aspire for God-realisation. This is indispensably necessary for all without which the Śāstras will not unfold their real truths. Challenging their authority is only a sign of sheer foolishness and irrepressible arrogance. An arrogant man never succeeds in the material world, not to speak of the spiritual. If the Divine Lord, His Name, Form, etc., are all objects of our perceptions, everyone who makes an attempt for them would have succeeded. There will be no necessity for the word 'Transcendent' in the dictionary; and the world also would not have produced so many philosophies that are diametrically opposite to each other.

Coming to Haridāsa Ṭhākura's exposition on the Divine Name, we are enlightened with Its High Position. Mukti, which Gopāla Cakravartī so highly speaks of and pleads for, is attained by a mere dim reflection of the Holy Name. Before achieving the results of chanting the Name of the Lord, we are expected to cross two other stages, en route. They are the stages of 'Nāmāparādha' and 'Nāmābhāsa'. We shall try to know more about these in twelfth and thirteenth chapters of this book.

### ***413. Verbal jugglery - The sign of ignorance***

Gopāla Cakravartī, in spite of his verbal jugglery on the Name, is utterly ignorant of the secrets of the Holy Name and Its Glories. But he is adamant in holding his view. This is the sign of extreme ignorance and egoism. He is also ignorant of true devotion and its astounding effects. To him liberation from all worries and merging in the Impersonal Brahman is the highest goal. This is a mere side issue - a secondary result of a dim reflection of the Holy name. He belongs to the school of people who consider Bhakti to be weak and vulgar, and hence, Bhaktas, however great they may be, as persons of no consequence. The people of this school include Bhakti in fruitive actions. Gopāla Cakravartī is under the impression that Haridāsa Ṭhākura too is only a follower of this misnomered Bhakti school. But, Haridāsa Ṭhākura is neither a follower of the fruitive actions nor one who is an advocate of dry intellectualism. He is not an opportunist to whom religion is more a matter of convenience than a creed and whose views are vacillating this way or that like a pendulum. These opportunists like Gopāla, adopt a certain philosophy for convenience of argument; but when the question of sacrifice,

hardship and practical living arises, they are found wanting to such an extent that none will ever be able to discover their erstwhile theoretical stand.

#### 414. *Bhakti - Second to none*

Ṭhākura Haridāsa is out and out a strong advocate of Bhakti or devotion to Bhagavān. Amongst the various methods of religious practices mentioned in the Śāstras, Bhakti or devotion to Bhagavān holds a position supreme to all else. Its marvellous characteristics, magnificent efficacies, infallible results, and thrilling influence on its ardent devotees are inexpressible facts that add to its glory. It is not a strange subject to the people of the world; on the contrary; it is a subject much talked about and discussed by many spiritual people and persons of great eminence in the mundane world, in different languages and in different ways, and yet how very little it is understood in its right spirit, and how less practised in daily life. After putting in some very insignificant and mild efforts, and sometimes even without these, by merely reading some books, we often deceive ourselves into the belief that we have attained Bhakti, without any understanding as to the difficulty of attaining it. Bhakti being the highest attainment of human existence is not given to the Jīvas by the Supreme Lord for the mere asking.

"By following the process of Jñāna, salvation easily is attained, and the performance of righteous actions, leads one to various enjoyments here and hereafter, whereas, even by thousands of similar methods devotion to Śrī Hari remains unattainable."<sup>30</sup>

Aspirants for Bhakti are to face innumerable severe tests. The Lord plays in hard game with them and only those sincere souls, free from any iota of worldly desires or self aggrandisement in the form of salvation, can turn out successful in their efforts. Those who desire Bhakti must be prepared to face any eventuality, persecution and harassment, both in and outside one's own family and society. The life of Ṭhākura Haridāsa narrated in this book is an inspiring example of the above fact. The idiosyncrasies, fancies, and the

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30 jñānataḥ su-labhā muktir bhuktir yajñādi-puṇyataḥ  
seyaṁ sādhana-sāhasrair hāri-bhaktiḥ su-durlabhā  
(tantra-vacana)

persecutions of the husband can be borne with calm and silence only by a faithful and devoted wife; whereas, one who seeks merely her own pleasures and comforts always looks for caresses from her husband. The path of devotion is not a bed of roses, decidedly not an easy-going path, strewn with soft and sweet smelling flowers, as many of us are prone to think.

A few liberal minded of Gopāla Cakravartī's class or type, believe Bhakti as an effective means to Mukti or salvation. **But for a true Bhakta, Bhakti is both the means as well as the end in itself. To him Bhakti is its own reward. He does not long for any gain extraneous to Bhakti.**

Both The Majumadāra brothers, and the large gathering present there, already knew the gravity of committing offences to great devotees and their terrible after-effects on the lives of the offenders. Hence, in order to free themselves from the terrible consequences, they all jointly requested Haridāsa Ṭhākura to pardon them. This is the best remedy of getting relief from the evil effects of committing offences. The offender must get himself pardoned by the saint whom he has offended.

## 5 Haridāsa Ṭhākura AT Śāntipura

### 51. *His meeting with Advaita Ācārya*

AT Śāntipura, Haridāsa Ṭhākura met the great Śrī Advaita Ācārya and prostrated himself before him and the latter, being extremely delighted, embraced Ṭhākura Haridāsa and received him with all cordiality. Advaita Ācārya, an elderly person, was the leader of the Vaiṣṇava community in Navadvīpa. He came from a Brāhmaṇa family of high lineage. His ancestors were very eminent in learning. Originally belonging to Sylhet (Assam), he became a disciple of the great saint Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, and in subsequent years settled at Śāntipura and later on at Navadvīpa. He was fairly well-to-do. The people of Śāntipura, as well as Navadvīpa, regarded him with great respect for his vast learning of the Śāstras, pious life and sincere devotion. He was one of the select few of the eternal associates of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

Advaita Ācārya arranged a lonely hut for Ṭhākura Haridāsa on the banks of the Ganges and daily explained to him the real import of Śrīmad Bhāgavata and Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā. Haridāsa Ṭhākura had his alms of food everyday from the house of Advaita Ācārya, and spent his days completely lost in the eddies of Spiritual Bliss. He remained absorbed in the topics relating to the Sportive Pastimes of the Lord in the company of this revered host. While days rolled on unnoticed in such unparalleled spiritual happiness, Haridāsa Ṭhākura approached Advaita Ācārya one day with a humble request. "Hōly sir! What is the benefit of feeding me daily? This is a place noted for Brāhmaṇas. Many eminent persons of high lineage are here. Ignoring all of them, the great hospitality that you are extending to me may possibly offend them all. Yes, it may pave the way to some social trouble. Hence, I appeal to you from the bottom of my heart not to continue it, and to do such actions that may be agreeable to the social and spiritual principles of one's life."

## 52. *Bhakta - His unique position*

Advaita Ācārya was an eminent scholar of sound principles, holding an extraordinary position amongst the devotees. He knew his position pretty well. He knew that in this age of Kali, it is well nigh impossible to get a crore of Brāhmaṇas. He asked Haridāsa Ṭhākura to shed all such baseless fears, and assured him that he would do only such observations that are sanctioned by the sacred Śāstras. "By feeding you, a crore of Brāhmaṇas are really fed."<sup>31</sup> With this reply, he offered Haridāsa Ṭhākura the food cooked on the occasion of the anniversary – 'Śrāddha-day'. The above deed undoubtedly is a severe and inexcusable violation of the existing social code. According to the prevailing customs amongst the orthodox Brāhmaṇas, such food can be offered only to members of their own community. Giving it to anyone outside the community and especially to one who is a non-Hindu is a grave violation of the custom of the community. By this action, the great Advaita Ācārya is not to be misunderstood as one who has trespassed the social principles or Vedic Varṇāśrama Dharma. He has, in fact, laid bare before and taught the world the unique position of a genuine devotee over all castes and creeds, and his sole eligibility to accept the offerings of even high cast Brāhmaṇas on such special occasions. The above fact is not against the Śāstras.

'Among thousands of Brāhmaṇas, one who performs Vedic rites is superior, amongst thousands of such Vedic Brāhmaṇas, one who is well-versed in the meanings of the Vedic lore is superior; amongst a crore of Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Śāstras, a devotee of Śrī Viṣṇu is considered to be still more superior and even amongst thousands of devotees of Śrī Viṣṇu, **a single-minded devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is spoken of as the supreme most.**'<sup>32</sup>

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31tumi khāile haya koṭi-brāhmaṇa-bhojana  
eta bali, śrāddha-pātra karāilā bhojana  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 3.222)

32brahmaṇānaṁ sahasrebhyaḥ satrayajī viśiṣyate  
satrayajī sahasrebhyaḥ sarva vedānta pāragah

Such was the lofty position that Tḥākura Haridāsa enjoyed even before the great Advaita Ācārya, the leader of the Vaiṣṇava community at Navadvīpa.

Advaita Ācārya's sympathy to the fallen humanity has no parallel elsewhere. The deplorable condition of the people moved his heart. He wished to do something substantial to them. He devised ways and means for the deliverance of all these suffering souls. He took an oath for bringing on Earth the Manifestation of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the midst of all, and started regularly worshipping Him with the Ganges water and the sprays of Tulasī, a very efficacious method mentioned in the Sāstras. Haridāsa Tḥākura too, with renewed enthusiasm and faith, went on with his chanting of the Name, eagerly expecting the Advent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Influenced by the sincere devotion and repeated entreaties of both Advaita Ācārya and Haridāsa Tḥākura, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu manifested his Advent into this world and inundated our country from Himalayas to Cape Comorin like a furious deluge with Divine Name, the swelling waves of which overflowed in all directions, making the inhabitants beneficiaries of this great onrush.

“The cult of unalloyed devotion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa reached its highest degree of development and received its great impetus on the appearance of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu - the Fullest Manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who was born in Navadvīpa on the banks of the Ganges, a little over four hundred and fifty years ago and flourished for nearly half a century. He was Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself manifested in the form of His great devotee. **Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Mystery and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Its Explanation.** Whenever Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes on earth as the Mystery of Love in the junction period of

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sarva vedānta vit kotyā viṣṇu bhakto viśiṣyate  
vaiṣṇavānām sahasrebhya ekantyako viśiṣyate

bhakta raṣṭavidhāhyeṣa yasmin mlecche 'pi vartate  
sa viprendromuniśreṣṭaḥ sa jñānī sa ca paṇḍitaḥ

tasmai deyaṁ tato grāhyaṁ sa ca pūjyo yathā hariḥ  
name 'bhaktaścaturvedī madbhaktaḥ śvapacaḥ priyaḥ

tasmai deyam tato grāhyaṁ sa ca pūjyo yathā hyaḥam  
(garuḍa purāṇa)



Dvāpara and Kali, He comes again in the Form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the explanation of that Mystery, 5000 years after, **to show mankind the way to Himself.**"<sup>33</sup>

"Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's Love, Devotion and spirituality will ever remain unparalleled. **He preached Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Seed and Soul of Love Absolute,** and while preaching, He would burst forth in praises of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. And all India was flooded with Śrī Caitanya's Divine Love."

**"Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu preached and proved the potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Name - that His Name is the Lord Himself. If anybody says, 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', mentally or loudly and concentrates his mind on It, he is bound to absorb Its Love-Nectar, be drunk with Its Ecstasy, see Kṛṣṇa in Form and in everything, and finally go to Goloka after passing out of this life. The world has never seen such an Avatāra, the Manifestation of All-Love - Kṛṣṇa."**<sup>34</sup>

"Like master, like servants. His apostles were of such purity and sublimity that it would be hard to find one such like them even in India of the past. Anyone of them was competent to save a whole world. They left thousands of books on Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's Career and Teachings, which are of the utmost value to the students and adherents of all religions of all climes, ages and denominations. Love is the theme of every book, and it is difficult to resist its essence pouring into you as you read them. For Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu cannot be understood without first understanding Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His Līlā on Earth."

The doing of great personalities like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, etc., do not submit to the reasoning faculties of ordinary limited human intelligence. They continue to remain an enigmatic puzzle even to the best of the brains of the world. Listening to them with real faith is the only course open to us. Haridāsa Ṭhākura's career in this world is crowded with many miraculous and thrilling incidents. It is simply impossible to record each and every such deed. To add to the glories of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, of which we have already heard, Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī explains another incident.

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33Extracts from 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa - The Lord of Love'

34Extracts from 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa - The Lord of Love'

### 53. *Ṭhākura and Māyādevī*

Once, sitting in his cave as usual, Haridāsa Ṭhākura was reciting loudly the Holy Name. It was a full moon day. The cool and silvery moonlight spread over the country, making the atmosphere all around very fascinating. The sparkling ripples of the Ganges flowing close by added fresh beauty and solitude to the prevailing calm outlook. The entrance to his cell was sanctified by the presence of a Holy Tulasī plant grown in an elevated place especially erected for the purpose. The whole scenery, both inside and outside that cave of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, was so lovely that it would easily steal away any heart.

At this moment, there appeared in this charming scene a beautiful woman. The glowing lustre around her was so dazzling that it drove away all the darkness making the place fully illuminated. The sweet fragrance of her body, mixing with the gentle breeze, made all the ten quarters delightful. The sweet ringing of her ornaments was more captivating to the ears than the melodious songs of the Gandharvas. Gently she bowed down to the Tulasī, perambulated the same, and approached the entrance of Haridāsa Ṭhākura's cave. With folded hands she worshipped his feet and taking her seat on the threshold spoke thus: "Truly, you are a benefactor to the whole world. Both in appearance and qualities, you are an exception. Enchanted by these, I have come over here to enjoy your loving company. Please have the kindness to accept my humble request. You are a great devotee. Devotees are by nature embodiments of kindness and sympathy. They are ever exceptionally merciful to the suffering humanity."

So saying this attractive stranger woman tried to convert the great Haridāsa Ṭhākura by various charming gestures and postures, the sight of which undoubtedly would violently disturb the mental equilibrium of even great Munis. But these efforts of the young woman did not prove effective before Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He was a hard nut to crack. He remained firm. He, on the contrary, pitied the unfortunate woman and said: "I have taken an oath of chanting a special fixed number of Names daily. Till the fixed quota of Names is completed it is impossible to attend to any other work. This is my vow. When my routine of Kīrtana is over I may have enough time for rest. Be seated at the entrance and attend the chanting of the Name. On completion of my vow I shall certainly agree to your proposal."

Ṭhākura Haridāsa, who was deeply absorbed in constant meditation on the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was totally unconscious of the external world. Hence, all the attempts of this bewitching woman resulted in an utter failure before our great saint, yes, they ended as 'wasted fragrance in desert air'.

At the end of the third day, when she was totally disappointed, she approached once again Haridāsa Ṭhākura with these words: "You have deceived me by your consoling words for all the past three days. It seems there is no end of your Kīrtana, either during the day or the night."

On hearing her words Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied: "What can I do? I am helpless. I have already taken an oath. How can I break it now?" She now understood him well. She was convinced beyond any doubt that she was only 'making attempts to extract sunbeams from cucumbers'. All her hopes were frustrated. She thought that there was no use of meddling with him any further. She, therefore, finally decided to reveal herself before him. With all reverence she bowed down to Haridāsa Ṭhākura and said: "I am Māyā, the deluding energy of Godhead. I came to test you once. I can claim that I have deluded all Jīvas, from Brahmā downwards. None could stand my test. But today I accept my utter failure. My pride is humbled. Yes, I am miserably defeated by you. You are the only exception that I have ever witnessed. You are a great 'Mahābhāgavata'. By a mere sight to your person, and by listening to your chanting of the Holy Name, my heart is completely purified. I too long to remain absorbed in drinking the Nectarine Bliss emanating from the Divine Name. Ah! What a marvellous and soul-stirring experience it is! Have the mercy to initiate me too with the sweet Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The whole of India is submerged under the sweeping currents of Divine Love. Everyone is carried away by this inundation. Really why India? The whole world is exceptionally fortunate. Those who are deprived of this great influence are the most unfortunate amongst the creation of the Lord. Even in crores of births there is little hope for one who has not tasted the Bliss of Divine Name. On a previous occasion I had accepted the Holy Name 'Rāma' from the great Śiva. Now, I eagerly long to be favoured with the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' by your grace and I humbly request you to initiate me into the same. **The Name 'Rāma' is well-known for its characteristics of delivering one and all from the thralldom of Māyā, whereas the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' distinguishes itself by imparting 'Kṛṣṇa Prema' in addition.** Pray bless me with the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and make me fit to experience this surging ocean of Divine Love." With these

words, she worshipped the feet of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Her prayer was granted. How can one escape the overflowing kindness of Ṭhākura Haridāsa? Yes, she was initiated with the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Why did Māyādevī request Haridāsa Ṭhākura for the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa when she had already been initiated with the Name of Śrī Rāma by no less a personage than the great Śiva? Is there any difference between the Names of the Lord? Is it essential that everyone should repeat the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa? What harm is there if we utter the name of Kali, Śiva, Gaṇapati, Kārtikeya, etc.? A person of a thoughtful disposition is often confronted with similar questions when he comes across such typical occurrences. Doubts are the outcome of misunderstandings. Proper enlightenment on the subject clears all our misconceptions. A correct idea of the Absolute Truth, or the Ultimate Reality Whom we know by the common epithet - 'Godhead' and 'a true conception of Śrī Kṛṣṇa', are sure to help us satisfactorily in solving this problem. This definitely would help us to wipe out all our erroneous notions.

#### 54. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa - The Darling Lord of millions*

To any Hindu in India Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not a strange figure. Though most of the people in India lamentably lack in having a proper understanding of His Real Personality, and the significance underlying His Divine Deeds, He is widely known even amongst the unlettered masses. Śrī Kṛṣṇa! How sweet is the Name Itself! Ah! Is there anything sweeter to the heart of lovers than this pretty little Enchanter, full of pranks, fun and frolic? He is the Love, Light, Life and the very Soul of Vṛndāvana, the very life-breath of the Vrajavāsīs. Millions of people from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin hail His Glories, sing the fascinating events of His marvellous Deeds, listen with rapt attention to his soul-stirring Messages, repeat His sweet Names and experience flashes of His contact which is verily ineffable joy and satisfaction in their hearts. There is no occasion in India amongst the majority of Hindus when Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not referred to in one way or other. Whether in the days of festivities or on marriage occasions, whether in times of weal or woe, or in time of social rejoicings, it has become a habitual custom to remember Him and to sing His captivating Pastimes, in the midst of inexplicable heartfelt feelings of love and enthusiasm. He holds a continuous sway in the hearts of lacs and lacs of inhabitants in India. He is the most popular

Figure, the sweetest Object of veneration and worship. He is the most Beloved Lord and Saviour - nay, the Absolute-Par-Excellence.

### 55. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa - His Personality*

Numerous conceptions about Śrī Kṛṣṇa are current even amongst eminent scholars in India. His inconceivable potency prevents all the empiric thinkers and their efforts from having a thorough conception of His Divine Personality. He is moulded by each of these savants in his own thoughts, giving new colours and shapes to His Divine Personality and Deeds. If at all we are interested to know something genuine about him we must necessarily listen to the authentic scriptures that speak of Him, and rely on the words of those pure devotees who have realised Him in His true nature. The remarks of critics are based on their individual understandings purely gathered through the material senses. It is obviously evident that the mundane reasoning faculties have no access to Divine Objects. Hence, depending solely on the statements of ordinary critics, or the so-called scholars, we cannot get a true conception of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, His Divine Personality, Deeds, or Messages. Such statements only take us away from the real facts, by the weight of intellectual representations based on individual ideas of a defective nature. Almost all the conclusions of today are changed and replaced by new reasons tomorrow. Intellectual conclusions are, therefore, incomplete and unsteady even in the visible plane of matter. Therefore, wise persons take their firm stand on the revealed scriptures which alone can unfold the Truth before us.

The numerous conceptions about Śrī Kṛṣṇa that exist, themselves are a sound proof that most of these scholars are ignorant of His Real Personality. Each one is depicting Him in the way that is intelligible to him.

The first group regards Śrī Kṛṣṇa as one of the endless Descents of Bhagavān Śrī Viṣṇu. To them Śrī Viṣṇu is the Supreme Godhead. The word 'Viṣṇu' literally means one Who pervades the entire universe. Our Purāṇas have described various Descents of Bhagavān Viṣṇu appearing in this world on different occasions for fulfilling manifold purposes concerned with the administration of the universe. The Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, too, is included in the list of the many Descents that have manifested in this mortal plane. Some of them (forming the second group), after making a deep study of these

Descents, Their Deeds, etc., distinguish Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the fullest or the most perfect (Purna Avatāra) of all such Manifestations of the Divinity. They take Him as 'Class One' of all these Avatars. And a third section of people realise Him as a Personal Manifestation (Saguṇa Brahman) of the Impersonal Absolute (Nirguṇa Brahman). According to them the Ultimate Reality is conceived as one that is void of all attributes. All intellectual empiric thinkers of the world are supporters of this view. They hold that the Absolute is incomprehensible to human understanding, and as such, is indefinable. This Attributeless Absolute incarnates into this world for various purposes, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the best of such Manifestations. A fourth section of men do not enter into any of these controversies, discussions or abstract philosophical speculations. They are very simple in their views. They are contented with the historic records and hence they declare Him as a mighty warrior, a great hero, and a powerful ruler of the Yādava race. They see in Him an eminent politician of marvellous tactics and ingenuity, of surpassing far-sightedness, a keen statesman, an uncompromising and a terrible chastiser of the wicked, a great conqueror of extraordinary strategical abilities, a successful oppressor of innumerable tyrannical exploiters, and an able and just administrator. A fifth group proclaim Him as the foremost of the Prophets Who ever graced the world, Who by His philosophical expositions infused new vigour in the teeming millions of the world. Yet a sixth section of the society usurping the power of Judge, in their arrogance laugh at Him as a voluptuous enjoyer. These stiff-necked, dry intellectualists, boast too much of their purity and scale the moral merits of Divine Personalities from a low material level, and pass remarks on Them. A seventh group simply deny Him, taking Him as merely allegorical - the product of a poet's mind. Thus, if we make a patient and careful scrutiny of the prevailing notions, we can still gather many curious views on the Divine Personality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The fundamental reason of these varying and mostly conflicting views on this unique Personality, is due to the fact that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is an incomprehensible Personality in Whom all the contradictory qualities such as unity (Ekatva) and diversity, fullness and division, simultaneously exist.

A thorough and reliable account of His most charming Personality, marvellous Career and rejuvenating Teachings, can be had from Mahābhārata, Harivaṁśa, Śrīmad Bhāgavata and some other Purāṇas, like Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa, etc.; of

these, Śrīmad Bhāgavata is the foremost authority. Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the epitomised quintessence of all the Sāstras, whose chief purpose is the glorification of Bhakti and Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā, declares Him as 'Absolute-Par-Excellence'. "When the world is oppressed in every age by the tyrannical conquests of the enemies of Indra, i.e., the demons, His partial Manifestations make this world happy by destroying them. These Descents are the Partial Avatāras of the Supreme Lord - Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is Svayam Bhagavān Himself."<sup>35</sup>

## 56. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - His Avatāras

After giving a long list of all the Avatāras, such as (1) Chatuḥśanas, (2) The Divine Boar – Varāha, (3) Nārada, (4) Nara and Nārāyaṇa, (5) Kapila, (6) Dattātreyā, (7) Yajña, (8) Rṣabha, (9) Pṛthu, (10) The Divine Fish - Matsya, (11) The Divine Tortoise – Kūrma, (12) Dhanvantari, (13) Mohinī, (14) Nṛsiṃha, (15) Vāmana, (16) Paraśurāma (17) Vyāsa, (18) Rāma, (19) Balarāma, (20) Śrī Kṛṣṇa (21) Buddha, and (22) Kalki, Who were merciful enough to manifest Their appearances in different ages for the welfare of humanity, Vyāsadeva emphatically distinguishes **Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Godhead Himself**. All the rest are only His partial Manifestations and secondary incarnations, either in part (Amśa), or in part of part (Kalā).<sup>36</sup> **But Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not an Avatāra; He is Avatari Himself, the very Fountain-source of all the Avatāras from Whom the various Manifestations originate. He is the Eternal Reality Who reveals Himself to us in the three aspects as 'Brahman', 'Paramātmā' and 'Bhagavān'.**

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35ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam  
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokaṁ mṛḍayanti yuge yuge  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.3.28)

36bhāgastvardhaṁ tadardhañca amśitya 'bhidhīyate  
tadadhaṁ kulamākhyātāṁ kalā tasyārdha mucyate  
tadadhaṁ śakti rakhyātā āveśaḥ syāktadardhakaḥ  
evaṁ catuḥ ṣaṣṭibhāgair avatārāḥ parātmanaḥ  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-yāmala)

"The Tattva which the knowers of reality declare as 'Advaya-jñāna' is expressed by the designation of 'Brahman', 'Paramātmā' and 'Bhagavān'."<sup>37</sup>

The above Śloka gives a beautiful exposition of the Absolute Reality summarising all the philosophical conceptions of the various religions of the world. All the notions of the world about the Absolute Truth find its place in this exposition. The Ultimate Reality or Tattva is spoken of as Advaya-jñāna. Very often, the term 'Advaya-jñāna' is confused with the Nirguṇa Advaita Tattva or the Attributeless Brahman of the monistic school. **The word "Advaya", i.e., one without a second or Sole, is used only in the sense that there is no other second entity equal or superior to that of the Supreme Lord.** The word 'Advaya' never denies the existence of other entities, as many often misunderstand. Though the Reality is termed by the word 'Indivisible Knowledge', It reveals Itself to Its different votaries in different ways, according to the particular capacity of realisation they possess, viz., these three aspects as 'Brahman', 'Paramātmā' and 'Bhagavān'. These Revelations are not to be confused as entirely independent objects, but as aspects of the One and the Same Reality. The above described variation in their realisation is due to the difference in their angle of vision, caused by the divergent methods adopted by the votaries and by the degree of surrender they offer to the Supreme Reality.

## 57. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - Brahman

The first of these three Aspects of Revelation, viz. Brahman is in fact the unqualified (Nirviśeṣa) and imperfect (Asamyak) Manifestation of Bhagavān, Who is the most perfect Person, in Whom all the qualities are most perfectly developed. Bhagavān is abundantly qualified with an infinite number of most auspicious and perfect Attributes. In Bhagavān we experience a full display of all the Śaktis or energies; but in Brahman they remain only in a potential state. Brahman in other words is the philosophical Absolute in which the various attributes and powers remain undifferentiated. Hence, the Attributeless Brahman of the

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37vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam  
brahmeti paramātmēti bhagavān iti śabdyate  
(śrīmad-bhāgavatā 1.2.11)



Upaniṣads is an incomplete or Imperfect Manifestation (Asamyak Āvirbhāva) of the Absolute Divinity. Brahma Saṁhitā describes this Aspect of the Supreme Divinity as His Bodily Effulgence. "I worship Govindā, the Primeval Lord, Whose effulgence is the source of the non-differentiated Brahman mentioned in the Upaniṣads, being differentiated from the infinity of glories of the mundane universe, and Who appears as the Indivisible, Infinite and Limitless truth."<sup>38</sup>

Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā adds to the same issue thus: "I am indeed the Mainstay of Brahman and the very ground of immortality. I am also the basis of the eternal religion and of perpetual Divine Bliss."<sup>39</sup> Brahman is the ultimate goal of all Jñānīs.

### 58. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - Paramātmā

Paramātmā, the second Aspect of Divine manifestation, is more qualified than Brahman, the first one. But when compared with Bhagavān, this Aspect is only a Partial (Āmśika) Manifestation, having relation chiefly to Māyā Śakti and Jīva Śakti. Paramātmā remains as the Immanent Lord, both in the unconscious material universe, as well as in the conscious Jīva souls who are numerically infinite. It is Paramātmā Who looks after the functions of creation, preservation, and dissolution of the infinite number of worlds, in various aspects, and He is the regulator of both the individual Jīva and the collective world. Paramātmā is the ultimate goal of all the Aṣṭāṅga Yogīs.

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38yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad aṇḍa koṭi

koṭiṣv aśeṣa vasudhādi vibhūti bhinnam  
tad brahma niṣkalam anantam aśeṣa bhūtaṁ  
govindam ādi puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi  
(brahma-saṁhitā 5.40)

39brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham amṛtasyāvyayasya ca

śāśvatasya ca dharmasya sukhasyaikāntikasya ca  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 14.27)

## 59. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - Bhagavān

Bhagavān represents the highest, in the long list of the countless Divine Manifestations. He is realised as a Person with Whom are associated distinctive features, potencies, attributes, abodes, and entourage in the company of His internal energy. In Bhagavān there is a direct and full display of His Antaraṅgā Svarūpa Śakti. The other two Śaktis, Bahiraṅgā Māyā Śakti and the Taṭasthā Jīva Śakti, are displayed indirectly, through the medium of His Partial Aspect Paramātmā. Bhagavān is the possessor of all Śaktis - the Sarva Śaktimān, the Summum bonum of Bhaktas. The word 'Bhagavān' is defined thus:

"He is a Person in Whom the six Divine Qualities of; Aisvarya - majesty, or special power to attract, and bring under control all sentient and insentient like; Virya - prowess or an unusual and miraculous influence resembling precious gems, magic spells, etc., that could win over any power on the face of the earth; Yaśas - name and fame or an incomparable reputation arising from various excellent qualities of body, mind, and speech; Śrī - prosperity, all kinds of wealth; Jñāna - knowledge, such as omniscience; and Vairāgya - dispassion or non-attachment to the objects of the material world, in short, absolute freedom from Bahiraṅgā Māyā Śakti, are developed in the fullest degree. Bhagavān is entirely free, from any influence of the material attributes, such as Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These Guṇas or attributes are due to the influence of His Bahiraṅgā Māyā Śakti. Since she, being subservient to Him, is unable to exercise any influence on her Lord, as such, Bhagavān is above all these material attributes. The various qualities that the Śāstras attribute to Him are all of Divine Essence."<sup>40</sup>

"The nature of the Attributes of Śrī Hari is such that it compels even great sages, who delight in themselves, and who

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40aisvaryasya samagrasya viryasya yaśasaḥ śrīyaḥ  
jñāna-vairāgyayoścaiva śaṅṇām bhaga itiṅgaṇā  
(viṣṇu purāṇa)

are dispassionate to the core, to render loving selfless services to the Lord."<sup>41</sup>

The principles and virtues described in the three Aspects, viz. Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān, can be realised in their most perfect and infinite development in the Personality of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Hence, Śrīmad Bhāgavata, Śrī Brahma Saṁhitā, Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā, and a host of Śāstras unanimously and unambiguously declare Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Absolute Godhead, in Whom all other Aspects are fully identified.

"The Indivisible Knowledge alone is the Eternal Truth. It is the Sublime Truth, beyond the jurisdiction of mundane qualities, the fullest entity in Himself, all-pervading, and void of transformation (this illustrates the unqualified Aspect, Brahman). The same Truth is immanent in all the jīvas and unaffected by the events of the world (this explains Paramātmā - the Partial Aspect). The most perfect status of Indivisible Knowledge is Bhagavān. The wise call Him by the Name 'Vāsudeva', He being the Son of Śrī Vāsudeva."<sup>42</sup>

### **510. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - The fountainhead of all potencies**

Many hold the view that the Absolute Truth or Knowledge is an abstract one, void of any Form, Power, Name, Attributes, Activities, etc. This statement, though popular amongst the classes to a great extent, and amongst the masses to some extent, is not well founded on the authority of the Śāstras. It is merely one-sided interpretation of the texts of the Śāstras. Purāṇas declare Him as Infinitely Powerful. His energies are inscrutable and beyond the reach of human thought and reason, and they are capable of performing most impossible effects. These energies are not concocted things or

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41ātmarāmāś ca munayo nirgranthā apy urukrame

kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.7.10)

42jñānam viśuddham paramārtham ekam

anantaram tv abahir brahma satyam  
pratyak praśāntam bhagavac-chabda-samjñam  
yad vāsudevam kavayo vadanti  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 5.12.11)

imaginary objects. They are of the essence of the Lord. They are inseparable entities; but the Lord in His infinite power transcends all of them.

"Śaktis of Śrī Viṣṇu are of three kinds. They are (1) Parā Śakti (Cit Śakti), (2) Kṣetrajñā (Jīva Śakti), and (3) Avidyā (Māyā Śakti)."<sup>43</sup>

The Parā Śakti is otherwise known as Svarūpa or Antaraṅgā Śakti; Māyā Śakti is understood otherwise as Bahiraṅgā Śakti, and the Jīva Śakti as Taṭasthā or Marginal Śakti.

The Svarūpa Śakti is again classified in three different aspects as Sandhinī, Saṁvit and Hlādinī Śaktis. In her Sat aspect, she is Sandhinī. This Sandhinī Śakti is the energy of the existence of all. In her Cit aspect, she is known as Saṁvit, the energy of self-enlightening knowledge. This is the energy that helps the promotion of knowledge. In her Ānanda aspect, she is Hlādinī, the delight imparting energy. It is by the influence of this energy that delight is experienced. Svarūpa Śakti is concerned directly with all the activities and expansions in the Divine Realm. Māyā Śakti causes the creation, sustenance, and dissolution of phenomenal world, and Jīva Śakti is bringing out infinite number of Jīvas, which are the expressions of the Taṭasthā or Jīva Śakti of Bhagavān.

Of these three Śaktis, the Hlādinī Śakti is the most important. She transcends the other two. Śrī Rādhikā, Who is the eternal consort and the most favourite of all the devotees of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is represented as the highest Manifestation of the Hlādinī Śakti.<sup>44</sup> Śrī Rādhikā has attained

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43viṣṇu-śaktiḥ parā proktā kṣetra-jñākhyā tathā parā  
avidyā-karma-saṁjñānyā tṛtiyā śaktir-iṣyate  
(viṣṇu purāṇa 6.9.60)

44govindā-nandinī rādhā, govinda-mohinī  
govinda-sarvasva, sarva-kāntā-śiromaṇi  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 4.82)

the most sublime stage of Mahābhāva,<sup>45</sup> which is unattainable to any other devotee. Application of material attributes of Śrī Rādhikā, the Invariable Embodiment of Prema Bhakti, is the outcome of sheer ignorance, absence of proper understanding of Her Real Personality. Without the least distinction of any classification of sex, Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Śakti and Śaktimān (Possessor of Śakti) are identical. Śakti is inseparable from her Possessor, as noted in the case of fire and its burning capacity. In fact, Śakti and Śaktimān are not altogether two different Personalities. They are One and the Same Indivisible Truth manifested as the Divine Couple out of the inconceivable potency of the Lord, for giving fillip to the Transcendental Sportive Activities.

"The chief of the gopīs is Śrī Rādhā, the Consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in Glory and on Earth. 'Rādhā' means adoration or Loye - Devotion. Śrī Rādhā is the Embodied Manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Love-Principle, the Energy of His Soul, the Principle of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which sets His Love in motion. **Rādhā is inside of Kṛṣṇa as His Principle of Love-Energy, and She is outside of Kṛṣṇa as the Embodiment of that Principle. Rādhā is the first Active Principle of Nature, the Active Love-Principle, which unconsciously gives birth to creation and pervades it as the purest spiritual energy. Like Kṛṣṇa, She is above and out of reach of the creative Cardinal Attributes. Kṛṣṇa is the Soul. Rādhā is the Heart-Soul and Her eight other companions are the eight chief devotional aspects, and the other Gopīs the inclinations and minor attributes of Her Ensouled mind. Rādhā and Her chief companions are Kṛṣṇa's chief companions in Goloka. They came with Him in glory and were born in Vṛndāvana as Gopīs. Other Gopīs who were in the Rāsa dance, were manifestations of Vedic hymns and truths which are entities in nature, the form-centres of Nature's purest sentiments and conceptions. Other Gopīs were manifestations of goddesses, the Presiding Deities of Nature's spiritual forces and attributes, while others were manifestations of some of the highest illuminated male saints (Rṣis) who had prayed for ages and ages, in every birth, to**

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45mahābhāva-svarūpā śrī-rādhā-thākuraṇī

sarva-guṇa-khani kṛṣṇa-kāntā-śiromaṇi

tayor apy ubhayor madhye rādhikā sarvathādhikā

mahābhāva-svarūpeyaṁ guṇair ativarīyaśi

(ujjvala-nīlamanī 69,70)

serve the Lord personally with the tender devotion of a loving woman. The love of these Gopīs for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was absolutely selfless. They loved Him for the sake of the spontaneous, causeless love they felt for Him and Which His Personality inspired in them, for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was that causeless Love Itself. The Rāsa dance represented the vibrations of the Soul-absorbed Mind, vibrations which filled the universe with the nectar of Bliss, and destroyed its Karma of a whole Kalpa, the Karma which formed its Prārabdha for the time."

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa danced separately with each Gopī. Each Gopī has Her Own Kṛṣṇa beside Her. One Kṛṣṇa became as many as there were Gopīs and yet It was the Selfsame Kṛṣṇa. One soul played like so many Souls with so many hearts and yet the hearts saw but One Soul. Each Gopī saw Her Own Kṛṣṇa and was unconscious of any other, as she danced absorbed in that Śrī Kṛṣṇa; round and round, arms round necks, eyes into eyes, all forgetting, the world forgot, round and round in the whirl of ecstasy, afloat on the waves of Love, that is Bliss - round and round, the Lover and the Loved, the Little Soul twining round the Great Soul, the Great Soul pouring Its Nectar into the Little Soul. "<sup>46\*</sup>

"Ignorant writers and prudish religionists of the West have dared to call this Gopī Līlā of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as shocking to all religious sense, in the face of the fact that three hundred and odd millions of Hindus of the present day and myriads of millions of Hindus of the past, whose giant intellect and all-towering height of spirituality the world of today are beginning to wonder at - call this Līlā the most Transcendental of all the Divine Deeds that have ever been performed on the face of the globe. **According to these little critics of the greatest Avatāra of the Supreme Deity, that Supreme Deity cannot possess any other sentiments of love than those of a Father and a Saviour, that God ought not to feel or show the love of a husband for his wife or of a lover for his lady-love. If this be the fact, will they answer the question as to whence has man got these sentiments, if not from his Maker, of Whom he is but an imperfect image? Whence has he got them if not from the Source of Creation itself of which he is such a tiny part and product? This denial to God of the possession of a lover's sentiment implies an impertinence, which God alone, out of His infinite affection for His creatures, can pardon. It only betrays the dense ignorance of**

**these critics in regard to the origin and laws of creation and of the relations of creation with its Creator."<sup>47\*</sup>**

"Nature (creation) is the materialised Will-force of God. The Will-force of God is a reflection of God Himself - the objectified phases of the semblance of manifoldness of the Absolute One. **God is the Husband and the Energy of His Will, Nature, is His Wife. God is the Lover and Nature is His Lady-Love. By His All-Pervading essence, the only support and sustenance of Nature, He clasps His Lady-Love to His bosom and dances with Her to the intricate steps of the music of Her Laws. This is the Rāsa dance in the aggregate, the Rāsa dance that is being performed every moment within Nature, though hidden from our outlooking physical vision.** What is true of the Great Universe is also true of its miniature man. Within our heart of heart is the forest of Vṛndāvana, in which the microscopic blue river of Love - Yamunā flows, lapping with thrills of joy the bank of the bowery lawn where Śrī Kṛṣṇa - our Soul - with His Gopīs - an ensouled mental aspirations - is performing His ever-favourite, never-ending Rāsa dance. And we are unconscious of it all, because our mind's outer ken is employed outside of us with outer objects. If we can withdraw the mind's vision from outwards and direct it into the depth of our heart, then will belief come in the Rāsa dance of Kṛṣṇa with its practical realisation. We are then of Vraja and each of us of the enlightened inner eye, a dancing Gopī - male or female, whatever we may be externally, it matters not. We are all Gopīs, human-male or human-female. We are all spiritually feminine, for Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is the One Male and we, particles of Nature, are all female. We are all the lady-loves, the brides and wives of our One Husband, Lover and Beloved - Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the working out of the ever-beneficial laws of Inner Nature - the laws that throb for the weal of mankind - this innermost performance of Nature's constant Rāsa dance with Her Lord is reflected for a time upon Her outer surface to fill outer Nature and mankind with the ecstasy of its supermost spirituality, the blessing of the Absolute Love."

The conception of all these inherent Śaktis establishes beyond any doubt that the Absolute Truth known by the word 'Bhagavān' is a Perfect Person. He is not a Formless Entity as many depict. He is a Person in Whom infinite attributes and energies inseparably exist. In many places of our Śāstras,

words such as Ānanda Ghana, Rasa Ghana, etc., are freely used in association with the Personality of Bhagavān. The importance of these words can never be ignored. They make us understand that Bhagavān is a Person possessing a Mūrti or a Form of His Own. Since we are in the habit of measuring every object that is placed before us, and our experience of Divine Objects are insignificantly poor, our ideas of this Personality of the Lord are mostly erroneous. The very idea of a Mūrti or Form of the Lord throws us in a whirlpool of thoughts and confusions suggestive of materialistic speculations. Almost all these efforts end like those of 'attempting to milk rams'. This Form of the Lord is not to be understood as something gross, like that of the material body of human beings. The Body of Bhagavān is non-phenomenal. This Body consists entirely of pure Existence, Knowledge and Bliss; as such It is always spoken of as 'Sat-cid-ānanda Vighraha'. This Body is not essentially different from His being. In Bhagavān there is no such difference of an organic body and a soul, as in the case of human beings. His Being and His Body are One and the Same. The Śāstras declare that the Body of the Lord is like that of a human being. The similarity that they speak is only in respect of the form and not of the ingredients. The Śāstras in certain places speak of Him as Formless. This statement is only to deny the presence of a material body or material senses in Him. The same Śāstras too, dilate on the beauty of Lord's Form to a great length taking minutely each and every limb one after another. Do they expound contradictory theories and increase confusions in the minds of ignorant men? No, never. They with all emphasis, establish the existence of the self-existing natural Form of the Lord which is of a purely Divine stuff. The Lord is not subject to any change as we notice in the case of material objects; but due to His inconceivable power He is capable of adopting any type or any number of Forms as He pleases. The Ascension and Descension of Bhagavān is merely actuated by His free will. This Divine Form of the Lord is no doubt unthinkable to the materially minded. It is a matter of realisation and not one of argument. Persons who are guided by dry empirical reasonings fail to understand this conception of a Transcendental Personality. These barren intellectualists, sublimely unconscious of their own limitations, of their profound incapacity and unwillingness to fathom even the simplest problem presented to them, talk nowadays as if they are gifted with an inexhaustible fund of impenetrating reason. They boldly come forward with their assertion that they can accept nothing, let it be of any source, that is not passed



through the crucible of their reason, and acknowledge no scriptures however authentic they may be, or the sound sayings of eminent saints. Someone has spoken of this mistaken notion in the following Śloka very impressively.

"Gems lie littered at the feet and glass adorns a crown. None but the ignorant confounds the two and thinks the glass to be a gem and the gems, glass. To a wise person glass will always be glass and a gem always a gem."<sup>48</sup>

Between the sound reasonings based on practical realisations found in the infallible Śāstras of our noble religion - Sanātana Dharma, and the conclusions of barren empiricists guided by the understandings and experiences of the deceptive senses of man, who is liable to fall a victim to manifold errors, the relation has all along been that of the gem and the glass, deceptive to the ignorant but clear to any one not blinded by vain and unwarranted pretensions. The conclusions of empiric wisdom, however convincing they be on the surface, are only mere expressions of half-truths and untruths.

These empiric scholars are under the impression that when the Absolute wishes to make His Manifestation into this world, He does so by Himself entering into a body made of flesh, blood and bones. For the sake of understanding they thus use the word incarnation for such Divine Manifestations. This conclusion is entirely baseless and is due to the absence of a proper conception regarding the Nature and Potentialities of Divine Lord. In Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself throws proper light on this issue.

"Persons actuated by extreme ignorance disregard My Human form as they are utterly oblivious of My true Supreme Nature and of the fact that I am the Supreme Lord of the universe."<sup>49</sup>

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48maṇirluṭhāti pādeṣu kāco mukuṭa śobhanaḥ

mohācca vibhrameccittaṁ kācaḥ kāco maṇirmaniḥ

49avajānanti mām mūḍhā mānuṣīm tanum āśritam

paraṁ bhāvam ajānanto mama bhūta-maheśvaram

(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 9.11)

nanu ca satyam ananta-koṭi-brahmāṇḍa-vyāpī

saccid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ kāraṇārṇava-śāyī mahā-puruṣaḥ

sva-prakṛtyā jagat sṛjati yaḥ prasiddhaḥ, sa eva hi bhavān, kintu

vasudeva-sūnos taveyaṁ mānuṣī tanur ity etad- amśenaiva kecit

A great saint of the modern age from Bengal has interpreted the above Śloka in a simple and inspiring manner, the free rendering of which is as follows:

**"My Real and Eternal Form** which is grossly misunderstood by persons under the influence of sheer ignorance is invariably of Sat (existence), Chit (knowledge), and Ānanda (bliss). My energies do function in accordance with My Own Will and Grace. But I remain unconcerned with all their actions. Whenever I wish I make Myself visible to the mundane world. This act is carried out through the operation of My internal potency and mainly guided by My own compassion to the fallen souls. My energy, being subservient to Me, cannot have any influence over Me. I am fully beyond the ken of any material nature or law. I am Omnipotent and Self-Effulgent. My Own Will is the cause of My coming to the world. No other power is capable of inducing Me for such a Manifestation. Those who are quite ignorant of My eternal nature and Personality associate Me with various mundane attributes. My Supreme Personality resembles a human form, but it is wholly non-phenomenal. It is a most Beautiful Form of Eternal Adolescence and of a

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tava nikaṣaṁ vadantīty ata āha avajānantīti, mama mānuṣyās tanor  
asyā paraṁ bhāvaṁ kāraṇārṇava-sāyi-mahā- puruṣādibhyo 'py  
utkṛṣṭaṁ svarūpam ajānanta eva te, kīdṛṣaṁ ? bhūtaṁ satyaṁ yad  
brahma tac ca tan maheśvaraṁ ceti, tan maheśvara-padaṁ  
satyāntara-vyāvartakam atra jñeyam "yukte kṣmādāvṛte bhūtam"  
iti amaraḥ, "tam ekaṁ govindaṁ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaṁ  
vṛndāvana-sura- bhūruha-bhāvanāsīnaṁ satataṁ sa-marud-gaṇo  
'haṁ paramayā stutyā toṣayāmi iti śruteḥ""narākṛti para-brahma" iti  
smṛteś ca, mamāsyā mānuṣyās tanoḥ saccid-ānanda-mayatvaṁ  
mad-abhijña-bhaktair ucyata eva, tathā sarva-brahmāṇḍa-vyāpitaṁ ca  
bālye yan-mātrā śrī-yaśodayā dṛṣṭam eva, yad vā mānuṣīm tanum eva  
viśiṇaṣṭi param utkṛṣṭaṁ bhāvaṁ sattāṁ viśuddhaṁ sattvaṁ  
saccidānanda-svarūpam ity arthaḥ, "bhāvaḥ sattā svabhāvābhīprāyaḥ"  
ity amaraḥ, paraṁ bhāvam api viśiṇaṣṭi mama bhūta-maheśvaraṁ mama  
srjyāni bhūtāni ye brahmādyās teṣāṁ api mahāntam īśvaram, tasmāt  
jīvasyeva mama parameśvarasya tanur na bhinnā, tanur evāham,  
aham eva tanuḥ sāṅśād brahmaiva "śābdaṁ brahma dadhad vapuḥ" iti  
mad-abhijña-śukokter iti bhavādṛṣais tu viśvasyatām iti bhāvaḥ  
(sārārtha varṣiṇī)

**Medium Stature.** These ignorant persons suppose this Eternal Form of Mine to be a mortal one, subject to the influence of Māyā or My illusory potency."

The scriptures describe the Form of the Lord sometimes as two-handed and sometimes as four-handed, etc., and as possessing various limbs and organs like head, eyes, feet, etc. In fact, the various Forms manifested by the Lord are all eternal and co-exist in Him. Of all the Forms manifested by the Lord, **the two-handed one with a wonderful flute in His hands is the best and most beautiful.**

### *511. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - His Divine Attributes*

The various Attributes of Bhagavān explained in the Śāstras are not imposed upon Him from outside. They are on the other hand invariable aspects of His Own Self and as such they are all his inherent Attributes. These Attributes can be summarised thus: (1) Capacity to pervade in and over all objects and places, (2) capacity for self-manifestation, (3) capacity to be above the gross and subtle bodies, (4) capacity for not being subject to transformations or changes, such as birth, existence, growth, transformation, decay and destruction, (5) capacity to be invisible to mortal eyes, and (6) capacity to be above mundane influence in matters such as birth, form and action.

From the innumerable unambiguous texts of the various Śāstras one can without any difficulty understand the true Nature and Personality of Bhagavān and how He is fully identified with the Personality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is not merely an Avatāra alone, as many understand, but the Avatārī Himself - the Absolute-Par-Éxcellence. To deal with all these minute details in course of this brief narration is impossible.

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa Who is known as Govinda is the Supreme Godhead. He has a Body formed of All-Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. He is the Beginningless and yet Origin of all and He is the Cause of all causes."<sup>50</sup>

The Manifestations or the Avatāras of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are innumerable like the waves of an ocean. They are mainly grouped under six heads, (1) Puruṣāvatāras, (2) Guṇāvatāra,

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50īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ

anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

(brahma-samhitā 5.1)

(3) Lilāvatāras, (4) Manvantarāvatāras, (5) Yugāvatāras, and (6) Saktyāveśāvatāras.

Though categorically there is no difference between the various Avatāras of the Lord, **yet Śrī Kṛṣṇa is superior to all the others, inasmuch as there are certain special qualities noticed in Him which are in excess over those mentioned in His Avatāras of the above six categories.**

This difference is not to be treated from a material point of superiority and inferiority complexes. Any such discrimination of mundane nature would be a blasphemous commission of a grave offence against the Lord. The consequences of such offences are nothing but total doom.

The qualities of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa are innumerable. These qualities as experienced and expressed by his favourite devotees are summarised into sixty-four.<sup>51</sup>

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51ayaṁ netā su-ramyāṅgaḥ sarva-sal-lakṣaṇānvitaḥ

ruciras tejasā yukto baliyān vayasānvitaḥ

(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.123-44, 2.1.45-217)

(1) suramyāṅga: Possessing a charming body, (2) sarva sallakṣaṇānvitaḥ: Possessed of all the excellent characteristics, (3) ruciraḥ: Radiant, (4) tejasā yuktaḥ: Heroic and shining, (5) baliyan: Strong, (6) vayasānvitaḥ: Youthfull, (7) vividhādbhutabhaṣāvit: Acquainted with many and strange languages, (8) satyavākyaḥ: Truthful, (9) priyamvadaḥ: Capable of pleasant speech, (10) vavadūkaḥ: Eloquent, (11) supaṇḍityaḥ: Learned and wise, (12) buddhiman: Intelligent, (13) prathibhanvitaḥ: Possessed of genius, (14) vidagdhaḥ: Crafty, (15) caturaḥ: Ingenious, (16) dakṣaḥ: Dexterous and quick, (17) kṛtajñaḥ: Grateful, (18) sudṛḍhavrataḥ: Resolute, (19) deśakalasupatrajñaḥ: Possessing a knowledge of fit time, place and object or considerate to circumstances, place, time and person, (20) śāstracakṣuḥ: Acting according to the Sastra, adept in Śāstric lore, (21) śuciḥ: Pure and purifying, (22) vaśī: Self-controlled, (23) sthiraḥ: Steadfast, (24) dantaḥ: Capable of tolerating unbearable suffering, (25) kṣamaśīlaḥ: Forgiving, (26) gambhīraḥ: Profound, (27) dhṛtimān: Contended and placid, (28) samaḥ: Equable, (29) badānyaḥ: Liberal in gift, (30) dharmikaḥ: Dutiful, (31) sūraḥ: Brave, (32) karuṇaḥ: Compassionate, (33) māṇyamānakṛt: Respectfull, (34) dakṣiṇaḥ: Amiable and well-behaved, (35) vinayī: Humble, (36) hṛiman: Modest, (37) śaraṇāgata-pālakaḥ: Protector of devotees, (38) sukhī: Happy, (39) bhaktasuhṛt: Friend of the devotee, (40) premavaśyaḥ: Controllable by love, (41) sarvaśubhankaraḥ: Beneficent to

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all, (42) pratapī: Subjugator of enemies, (43) kirtimān: Famous, (44) rakta-lokaḥ: Popular, (45) sādhusamāśrayaḥ: Partial to the good, refuge to the good and virtuous, (46) nārīgaṇa manoharī: Enchanter of women, (47) sarvārādhyāḥ: Pre-eminently adorable, worshipped by all, (48) samṛddhimān: Prosperous, (49) varīyān: The Preeminent, (50) īśvaraḥ: Independent and supreme.

The above fifty qualities are present in the human beings to a very limited extent.

(51) sadāsvalapasamprāptaḥ: Unconditioned, (52) sarvajñāḥ: Omniscient, (53) nityanūtaṇaḥ: Ever-new, (54) saccidānanda sā andrāṅgaḥ: Having self-existent, self-conscious, blissful compact form, (55) sarvasiddhi niṣevitaḥ: Possessed of all powers and perfection.

The above fifty-five qualities are present in Brahma, Siva, etc., in a greater degree than in human beings, but to a far lesser extent than in Bhagavān Himself.

(56) avicintya mahā śaktiḥ: Possessed of infinite and indescribable powers, (57) koṭibrāhmaṇaḍavigraḥ: Holder of infinite universes and possessing crores of Forms in the universe, (58) avatārāvalibījam: The seed of all descents, (59) hatārigatidāyakaḥ: Giver of salvation or Mukti to enemies killed, (60) ātmārāma gaṇakarṣaṇ: Embodiment of attraction to multitudes of liberated souls.

All the above sixty qualities are present in a perfect form in Śrī Nārāyaṇa and other important Avatars of the Lord.

(61) sarvādbhuta ca matkāra līlākallolavāridhiḥ: An ocean of most wonderful and captivating pastimes, (62) atulyamadhura prema maṇḍata prīya maṇḍalaḥ: Ever encircled by a host of devotees proficient in their incomparable, confidential loving service to Him, (63) trijagan mānasākārṣi muralī kalakūjitaḥ: Wonderful Flutist Who attracts the mind of the inhabitants of all the three worlds, by the melodious music of His Flute, (64) asamānordhvarūpa śrīvismāpi ta carācaraḥ: **Unequally sweet and marvellously Beautiful Form that not only attracts both movables and immovables but also enchants Him.**

**Śrī Kṛṣṇa stands distinguished from other Avatāras by virtue of His Mādhurya or Sweetness.**

### **512. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - His Līlā Mādhurya**

He is an Ocean of Transcendental Pastimes in which inexhaustible waves of Līlās keep the devotees drowned in extreme wonder and enchantment. The marvellous raptures those sports create in the hearts of the devotees are beyond the capacity of expression. There is no vocabulary in human, celestial or in any other language that can do full justice to this soul-captivating Sportive Activities of the Lord. Uddhava speaks thus in Bṛhad Vāmana Purāṇa: "Let the most delightful Sportive Deeds of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Lakṣmī, and His innumerable Manifestations appear in my heart, but the wonderful Rāsa dance which enchants even the heart of my Master Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Dvārakā, is indeed marvellously bewitching to me."<sup>52</sup>

Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests His Sports in His three Eternal Abodes of Dvārakā, Mathurā, and Vṛndāvana. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Manifestation is full in Dvārakā, fuller in Mathurā, and fullest in Vṛndāvana, from the point of Mādhurya rasasvada. Leaving Vṛndāvana, He never resides in any other place. Vṛndāvana is the most favourite Sporting Land of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.<sup>53</sup>

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**All the above sixty-four Divine Qualities are present in their most perfectly developed condition in Śrī Kṛṣṇa.** The Divine Qualities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as we have already read, are infinite in number. They are never exhausted and none can comprehend the limit of such virtues. **These Qualities or Gunas are not Prakṛita or phenomenal.**

52parisphuratu sundaram caritram atra lakṣmī-pates  
tathā bhuvana-nandinas tad-avatāra-vṛndasya ca

harer api camatkṛti-prakara-varadhanah kintu me  
bibharti hṛdi vismayam kam api rāsa-līlā-rasaḥ  
(bṛhad-vāmana-purāṇa; śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.210)

53trailokye pṛthivi dhanya yatra vṛndāvanam purī  
tathāpi gopikāḥ pārtha yatra rādhābhidhā mama  
(ādi purāṇa)

### 513. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - His Prema Mādhurya

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa being All-Love, He knows nothing but Love, gives and accepts nothing but Love, acts nothing but Love, breathes nothing but Love, speaks nothing but Love, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Love itself, the Love that destroys all distance, the Love that draws the Lover and the Loved closest to each other. It knows no ceremony, knows no formal respect. It knows no motive. Love is its own cause, motive, and satisfaction. Divinity demands our reverence and inspires us with awe. Despite its strong attraction we can but adore it from a distance, we cannot approach it too near. But Love draws us to its bosom and holds us close. Love is a master and Love is a slave. It knows no barrier, sees no faults - nay, sees virtue in faults. It responds to its own clear call or vibrates to the voice of its own inspiration and blesses its own creation with greater gifts of its own wealth. In the four kinds of Bhakti, viz., Dāsyā, Sakhya, Vātsalya, and Mādhurya, the last, i.e., the feeling of a loving wife to her lord sums up the essence of all the foregoing three feelings. It is the highest and tenderest feeling of devotion. The true wife is the servant, friend, mother, and lover of her husband. She is slave, equal, and superior by virtue of her all-surrendering love. Every form of pure love is self-surrender. The love that knows no surrender or sacrifice is a mockery. It mocks itself more than its object, for sacrifice is its chief test and best expression. Love that only loves if loved, is pure selfishness. It is self-deception. But the Love that loves for its own sake and is the fullest satisfaction in itself, the love that loves whoever or whatever its object loves, is the Love Absolute that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is. The human soul that develops it, binds Śrī Kṛṣṇa thereby and holds Him its prisoner for good. When that Love develops the tenderness of a Loving wife it captivates the Heart of hearts and entrances the Soul of souls - Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

"Those Sādhus who have fixed their hearts and minds in Me and who share others' woe as if it were their own, win Me over through loving devotion like a chaste and virtuous wife loyally devoted to her equally dutiful and devoted husband."<sup>5447.1</sup> The tie of relationship that is existing between

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54mayi nirbaddha-hṛdayāḥ sādhaḥaḥ sama-darśanāḥ

vaśe kurvanti mām bhaktyā sat-striyaḥ sat-patiṁ yathā

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 9.4.66)

a paramour and his sweetheart goes a step further than the one that is explained in the above para. It trespasses all the social barriers, conventional formalities, obligatory responsibilities, reverence, conservatism, and the like, and wends its way straight to an unfathomably deep pool of free and refined love. This feeling finds a beautiful expression in the following Śloka: "A married woman, having her husband, who loves her paramour, though engrossed in her household duties enjoys in the heart of her heart the raptures of ever new union with the latter."<sup>5547.2</sup> The intensity of feelings for her paramour knows no limits, because it is something inexplicable that she has fallen in love with in her paramour and that too when the object of her carnal love, i.e., her husband is living by her side. She loves the paramour in spite of herself. The course of illicit love is very strange. Love is said to be blind, but illicit love is definitely blind. Its ways are crooked. She always feels in her heart thus: "How much more beneficial would it have been if this thorn of her husband were removed to pave the way for her paramour in the house, so that she could serve him with her mind, soul, and body." In majority of cases, to an unbiased person, it is seen that the paramour is far inferior to her husband in such points as looks, physique, wealth, etc.; but she is under the uncontrollable spell of that blind and intense carnal love which considers no risk too great for meeting the object of her love, because the chances of meeting are few and far between. So every meeting becomes a novelty to her, as it involves many escapades, escalades and even hair-breadth escapes to surmount. All the incidents of her meeting with him remain fresh in her memory for a longer time than in the case of her first meeting with her husband. **The intensity of the feeling of love though it is illicit, is uncontrollable. Similarly a devotee practising the loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa though apparently engrossed in worldly activities, is secretly in the innermost recess of his heart harbouring an intense feeling of Divine Love to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and continues to taste the ever new luscious sweetness of ever fresh intercourse or communion with his Beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa without any external show of the same.**

He is always surrounded by a host of loving devotees, the depth of whose feelings fail to find an analogy elsewhere.

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55para-vyasaninī nārī vyagrāpi grha-karmasu

tad evāsvādayaty antar nava-saṅga-rasāyanam

(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, M. 1.211)



"O most loving One! When You go away in the daytime to the pasture lands of Vraja, we are utterly deprived of Your sight. To us those moments of separation are more than an aeon, and when once again after Your return at the end of the day we see You and satiate our yearning by feasting upon Your bewitching Face, beautified with the flowing curls of hair, we cannot bear to lose sight of You even for a fraction of a second. Our impatience reaches its climax and we take the creator Brahmā to be a dull-witted person for providing us with eyelids that deprive us of Your sight by their constant twinklings."<sup>56</sup>

"O Destroyer of the demon Agha! By Your charming company many of those memorable moonlit nights rolled on as the twinkling of an eye; but alas! Now afflicted as we are by the pangs of Your separation, even a fraction of a moment appears as more than an age."<sup>57</sup>

### 514. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - His Venu Mādhurya

The soul-maddening powers of the wonderful Flute of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are the popular subject that is much discussed in diverse ways. Who in India has never heard of the enchanting results of this mysterious instrument? "When Śrī Kṛṣṇa plays on the Flute in His original, varied, and soul-captivating tunes, great gods like Indra, Śiva, Brahmā, and many others like Śkanda, Kātyāyanī, Gaṇeśa, etc., listen to them with their heads and hearts full of reverence. Though, they are all experts

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56aṭati yad bhavān ahni kānanam  
truṭi yugāyate tvām apaśyatām  
kuṭīla-kuntalam śrī-mukham ca te  
jaḍa udikṣatām pakṣma-kṛd dṛśām  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.31.15)

57brahma-rātri-tatir apy agha-śatro  
sā kṣaṇārdhavad agāt tava saṅge  
hā kṣaṇārdham api vallavikānām  
brahma-rātri-tativad virahe 'bhūt  
(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.212)

- nay, even founders in various tunes, rhythm, etc., they get confused over the new types of tunes and their melodies."<sup>58</sup>

To speak on the glories of this enchanting and favourite instrument of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is like a pygmy's attempts aspiring after the moon. The melodious sound of this Flute wrought inexpressible and unimaginable wonders in the hearts of sages like Sanaka, Sanandana, etc. Their meditation was greatly disturbed, their minds being completely captured by the sound. The movements of the clouds high up in the sky became arrested; Nārada with his celebrated 'Tumburu' was overtaken repeatedly by ineffable joy and never-ending surprise. Brahmā was astounded beyond measure for words to express; it swelled eagerness in the heart of the King Bali with accompanying restlessness, and the great Lord Anantadeva shook His Head with immeasurable joy; such are the astounding effects of this instrument that penetrated and spread in all the ten directions. How tremendous was its influence in the hearts of the milk-maids of Vraja who dedicated their hearts unconditionally to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and got utterly confused even in their routine activities; who without the least hesitation abandoned their nearest of kith and kin, social rules and even care of their own bodies extremely dear to them? What a marvellous attainment? Even the movements of the sun and moon and even the time-wheel too stopped. Rivers started flowing upwards, movables turned to immovables and vice versa. Birds, beasts, etc., all lost their consciousness. All conscious became unconscious and the unconscious conscious ones.

### 515. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa - His Rūpa Mādhurya*

"The Divine Form which Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested in this world through the medium of His Yoga Māyā and for the purpose of making everyone understand the miraculous capacity of His internal energy which is capable of bringing out the appearance of such extraordinarily Beautiful

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58savanaśas tad upadhārya sureśāḥ

śakra-śarva-parameṣṭhi-purogāḥ

kavaya ānata-kandhara-cittāḥ

kaśmalaṁ yayur aniścita-tattvāḥ

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.35.15)

Forms, and which is at the same time most suitable for His Pastimes like that of human beings. This Form is so bewitching not only to the world but even to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself that He is enchanted with the same. It is the pinnacle of excellence and perfection, a charming ornament of ornaments, a miracle of matchless beauty."<sup>59</sup>

"Which woman in all the three worlds, o Beloved Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who, after being captivated by the over-melodious and ravishing tunes of Your wonderful Flute, would not deviate from the laid-out moral codes of her religion? By beholding Your most Beautiful Form that enchants the hearts of all beings in the three worlds, cows, beasts, birds and even trees stand surcharged with incomparable joy."<sup>60</sup>

Śrī Kṛṣṇa seeing His reflection (Image) on the wall bedecked with gems, was stunned with Its all-alluring grandeur and soliloquised thus: "This ravishing flood of exquisite sweetness, never comprehended by Me anywhere before, overpowers Me! Alas! I too being covetous of relishing His sweetness like Śrī Rādhikā, ardently desire to enjoy Him."<sup>61</sup>

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59yan martya-līlāupayikaṁ sva-yoga-  
māyā-balaṁ darśayatā grhītam  
vismāpanaṁ svasya ca saubhagarddheḥ  
paraṁ padaṁ bhūṣaṇa-bhūṣaṇāṅgam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.2.12)

kṛṣṇa-mādhuryera eka svābhāvika bala  
śravaṇe, darśane ākarṣaye sarva-mana

āpanā āsvādite kṛṣṇa kareṇa yatana  
kṛṣṇa-ādi nara-nārī karaye cañcala  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 4.147-148)

60ka sṛyaṅga te kala-padayata-venu-gita-  
sammohitāya-caritaṇa na calet tri-lokyam  
trailokyā-saubhagam idaṁ ca nirikṣhya rūpam  
yad go-dvija-druma-mṛgaḥ pulakany abibhran  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.29.40)

61kasyānubhāvo 'sya na deva vidmahe  
tavāṅghri-reṇu-sparaśādhikāraḥ

"Indeed, how sweet is this Form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa?! O His Face, how to express?! It surpasses all conceptions of beauty and the sweet fragrance flowing from His Body is exceptionally bewitching. His sweet and gentle smile is marvellously fascinating and abundantly sweet."<sup>62</sup>

From what has been so far explained above, it goes without saying that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is unparalleled in Beauty. Even Cupid feels alarmed at such a matchless complexion. This Enchanter of Vṛndāvana is always in the charming dawn of eternal Youth. He is ever in the charming Youth as is seen in the commencement of the fifteenth year. Each limb of His is capable of performing the function of all other limbs, and the most fascinating 'Triple Bent Stature' of His, with His Flute of marvellous Powers, is His Eternal Form.<sup>63</sup>

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as we have already understood, distinguishes Himself as superior to all of His other Manifestations with

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yad-vāñchayā śrīr lalanācarat tapo  
vihāya kāmān su-ciraṁ dhṛta-vratā

āpana-mādhurye hare āpanāra mana  
āpanā āpani cāhe karite āliṅgana  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 8.147-148)

62madhuraṁ madhuraṁ vapur asya vibhor  
madhuraṁ madhuraṁ vadanam madhuraṁ  
madhu gandhi mṛdu smitam etad aho  
madhuraṁ madhuraṁ madhuraṁ madhuraṁ  
(śrī kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta 92)

63advaitam acyutam anādim ananta rūpam  
ādyam purāṇa puruṣam nava yauvanam ca  
vedeṣu durlabham adurlabham ātma bhaktau  
govindam ādi puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi  
(brahma-samhitā 5.33)

ālola candraka lasad vanamālya vaṁśī  
ratnāṅgadam praṇaya keli kalā vilāsam  
śyāmaṁ tri bhaṅga lalitāṁ niyata prakāśam  
govindam ādi puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi  
(brahma-samhitā 5.31)

respect to the four special qualifications described above. These four qualifications are absent in all other Descents of the Lord that are so far made known to us.

Who would not be tempted to behold with his eyes such a charming Figure? Certainly every man and woman may long for it. But how? He is not visible to the material eyes which are running hither and thither to enjoy the various forms of this world. **His beauty can be experienced by a fortunate person who possesses a pair of eyes saturated with loving devotion.**

"I worship Govinda - the Primeval Lord, Who is Śyāmasundara - Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself with inconceivable innumerable Attributes, Whom the pure devotees see in their hearts with the eyes of devotion tinged with the salve of love."<sup>64</sup>

In addition, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is an embodiment of all the mellow qualities (Rasas) which are described as twelve in number.<sup>65</sup> Of these, five are the important ones, and the remaining seven are the secondary ones. The unique position of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is such that any devotee with any of the above Rasas can worship Him to His entire satisfaction. The other Manifestations of the Lord do not possess this capacity. They can be approached only with specific and limited types of these Rasas. Śrī Rāmacandra too, is accessible to be worshipped by more Rasas in excess of these qualities in respect of other Manifestations of the Lord. But in the forms of worship of all these Descents of the Lord, the one feeling that predominantly works throughout is awe and reverence. As such, the perfect and well developed form of worship actuated by spontaneous love or Prema is unobserved in the case of the service of other Avatāras. **The solitary exception of this**

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64premāñjana cchurita bhakti vilocanena

santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti  
yaṁ śyāmasundaram acintya guṇa svarūpaṁ  
govindam ādi puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi  
(brahma-samhitā 5.38)

65mukhyas tu pañcadhā śāntaḥ prītaḥ preyāṁś ca vatsalaḥ  
madhuraś cety amī jñeyā yathā-pūrvam anuttamāḥ

hāsyo 'dbhutas tathā vīraḥ karuṇo raudra ity api  
bhayānakaḥ sa bibhatsa iti gauṇas ca saptadhā  
(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.115-116)

**loving service can be noticed only in the Personality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In Him we notice a rare and marvellous combination of all Attributes and Rasas.**

"When Śrī Kṛṣṇa with His elder Brother Balarāma entered into the arena of Kāṁsa, though He was of extremely tender age, obviously having a very delicate Body and an inexpressibly sweet complexion, He appeared as a thunderbolt to the two wrestlers Muṣṭika and Cāṇura, both of whom possessed bodies like mountains, with incontestable Herculean strength and intensely hard limbs; to all the persons assembled there, especially of Mathurā, He appeared as the Gem amongst men; the young womenfolk viewed Him as the veritable Cupid Himself in visible Form; to the cowherds or Gopas He appeared as their Kith and Kin; as an uncompromising Chastiser to the wicked rulers, who are the oppressors of good-natured, innocent and devoted persons; as a Child, an object of compassion to His parents like Nanda, Vasudeva, Devakī, etc., as the cruel death itself to Kāṁsa; as an ordinary human being to the ignorant and offenders, like the faithful servants, priests, etc. of the wicked Kāṁsa; as the Supreme Reality to sages like Sanaka, etc., and as the Absolute Godhead, the veritable Object of their worship to the people of the Vṛṣṇi race."<sup>66</sup>

Mankind with their limited capacity and understanding are absolutely at a loss to gauge His innumerable Glories which are enigmatic puzzles even to great gods and sages.

"I offer my innumerable prostrations to the Supreme Lord, Whom Brahmā, Varuṇa, Indra, Rudra, Marutas extol by singing His Divine praises, Whom the Vedas with Upaniṣads and other complementary texts always eulogise, Whose excellences are sung by the followers of Sāma Veda, Whom the Yogīs behold in their minds lost in complete contemplation, and the limit and extent of whose Glories are incomprehensible even to gods and Asuras."<sup>67</sup>

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66mallānām aśanir nṛṇām nara-varaḥ strīṇām smaro mūrtimān  
gopānām sva-jano 'satām kṣiti-bhujām śāstā sva-pitroḥ śiśuḥ  
mṛtyur bhoja-pater virāḍ aviduṣām tattvaṁ paraṁ yoginām  
vṛṣṇīnām para-devateti vidito raṅgaṁ gataḥ sāgrajaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.43.17)

67yaṁ brahmā varuṇendra-rudra-marutaḥ stuvanti divyaiḥ stavair  
vedaiḥ sāṅga-pada-kramopaniṣadair gāyanti yaṁ sāma-gāḥ  
dhyānāvasthita-tad-gatena manasā paśyanti yaṁ yogino

"I offer my prostrated obeisances to Śrī Kṛṣṇa of the most wonderful and incomprehensible sportive energy, by Whose mere Will a vast ocean turns into a tract of land and a piece of ordinary land to an ocean, atomic and microscopic particles of dust metamorphose into a huge mountain and mountains to atoms, a weak blade of grass to a mighty thunderbolt and a thunderbolt to a light blade of grass, a blazing fire as cooling as that of a frozen block of ice and cold ice gains the capacity of burning objects."<sup>68</sup>

"On the strength of these six virtues, such as (1) filial affection, (2) affording shelter to the helpless, (3) saving the distressed, (4) extreme munificence, (5) the capacity to destroy sins, and (6) offering innumerable other auspicious attainments, that Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone, the Supreme Lord of all the worlds, ought to be worshipped by us, as the great devotees like Prahlāda, Vibhīṣaṇa, Gajendra, Draupadī, Ahalyā, and Dhruva furnish testimony by their individual instances."<sup>69</sup>

"What wonder is there, if the importance of the sacred river Ganges—the great renowned ancient pilgrimage and the Feetwash of Bhagavān, is rendered insignificant by the growing marvellous Glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the greatest of the Holy Personages, Who, now appearing in the clan of the Yadus, is shining with unprecedented brilliance. Because of this, the importance of the sacred places of pilgrimages and Shrines has been greatly lowered. It is a wonder of wonders that both His foes like Kāṁsa, etc., and His most favourite loving devotees like Vraja-Devīs, attained His Real Self; the

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yasyāntaṁ na viduḥ surāsura-gaṇā devāya tasmai namaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.13.1)

68ambhobhiḥ sthala-tām sthalaṁ jaladhitām dhūlilavaḥ śailatām  
śaili mṛt-kaṇatām tṛṇaṁ kulīśatām vajraṁ tṛṇa-kṣīnatām  
vahnīḥ śītalatām himaṁ vahanatām āyāti yasyecchayā  
līlā-durlalitādbhuta-vyasaninaṁ kṛṣṇāya tasmai namaḥ  
(padyāvali 6)

69vātsalyād abhaya-pradāna-samayād ārtārti-nirvāpaṇād  
audāryād agha-śoṣaṇād agaṇita-śreyah-pada-prāpaṇāt  
sevyah śrī-patir eva sarva-jagatām ete yataḥ sāksīṇah  
prahlādaś ca vibhīṣaṇaś ca karirāt pāñcalya-halyā dhruvaḥ  
(padyāvali 7)

former by merging in His glow and the latter by enjoying the company of His Ravishing Svarūpa. What a shocking surprise is that the great Lakṣmī, for attaining a particle of whose grace even gods like Brahma, etc. make repeated efforts, failed to enjoy the company of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, like the Gopīs in getting access to the celebrated Rāsa dance? What a marvellous achievement! Yes, the two syllables 'Kṛ' and 'Ṣṇa' are far superior to the Names of His Partial Manifestations like Nārāyaṇa, etc., and perform wonders over their recorded efficacies—the very hearing or chanting of Which saves mankind from all that is inauspicious, and Which excels all other Names in Its capacity to impart the most sublime munificence—Kṛṣṇa Prema. The establishment of respective duties in the various clans of Rṣis, which delivers mankind all over the earth from all the evils and maintains the entire universe also, is solely credited to none else than Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone. Hence, is it any wonder then for Him to destroy the burden of sins of the earth by His weapon, the wheel of time? Not at all. Ridding the earth of her load of sins, by which people are astonished, for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is no feat at all. It is a mere child's play to Him. <sup>70</sup>

Even the sands on the sea-beach or the stars in the galaxy may possibly be counted; but certainly it is impossible to recount the innumerable Glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The great Anantadeva with His thousand mouths speaking for countless number of years frankly accepts His defeat to do full justice in touching even a portion of His Deeds. When such is the case, how could we, human beings, victims of countless inabilities and shortcomings, groping in darkness and lying in the midst of all unfavourable surroundings, beset with endless obstacles, speak of the Divine Excellences of Śrī Kṛṣṇa? It is His Mercy alone that enables us to speak even this much about Him. Our knowledge about Him mainly depends upon the degree of Mercy that we have attained from Him. Just as different birds flying in the vast sky feel satisfied in the belief that they have reached the highest position, even so, human beings too feel

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70tirthaṁ cakre nr̥ponaṁ yad ajani yaduṣu svaḥ-sarit pāda-śaucam  
vidviṭ-snigdhaḥ svarūpaṁ yayur ajita-para śrīr yad-arthe  
'nya-yatnaḥ

yan-nāmāmaṅgala-ghnaṁ śrutam atha gaditaṁ yat-kṛto  
gotra-dharmaḥ

kṛṣṇasyaitan na citraṁ kṣiti-bhara-haraṇaṁ kāla-cakrāyudhasya  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.90.47)



contented, while giving vent to certain expressions on Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His unfathomable Excellences according to their limited capacity.

### 516. Śrī Kṛṣṇa - The Name excels all other Names

Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa stands distinguished in matters of Beauty, Sweetness, Revealing Capacity, Depth of Love, and Sportive Deeds, even so, His name occupies a higher position over all other Names of the Lord. The Names of Bhagavān are infinite in number. None can limit the same. Yet, by His Mercy, the 'thousand Names' are manifested in this world. In the words of the great Śiva: "One single Name 'Rāma' is equivalent to the utterance of one thousand other Names of Śrī Viṣṇu. Then again, **a single utterance of the word 'Kṛṣṇa' once, grandly accomplishes the result for which the sacred thousand Names (Sahastra-nāma) have to be repeated thrice.**"<sup>71</sup>

"'Kṛ' and 'ṣṇa' these two syllables, ah! What a marvellous fountain of ineffable joy! Really it is a vain attempt to measure the fund of incomparable Bliss It contains. How can I express Its astounding experiences? Its inexpressible sweetness; It is unimaginable! When It dances wildly on the tongue, It suddenly creates a longing to possess an infinite number of tongues at one time; when It just enters into the cavities of the ears, lo! It brings in automatically a burning desire to have thousands of ears. No sooner it becomes the bosom companion on the arena of consciousness, then It overcomes the actions of all the senses and impels them all in Its Own service. It is beyond my comprehension to gauge what

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71śrīrāma rāma rāmeti rame rāme manorame

sahasranāma bhiṣṭulyaṁ rāma nāma varānane

(padma purāṇa; śrī rāma-aṣṭottara-śata-nāma 9;

viśvāmitra-saṁhitā)

sahasra-nāmnāṁ puṇyānāṁ trir-āvṛtyā tu yat phalam

ekāvṛtyā tu kṛṣṇasya nāmaikam tat prayaccati

(brahmāṇḍa purāṇa, śrī kṛṣṇa-aṣṭottara-śata-nāma; śrī

hari-bhakti-vilāsa

2.11.488)

kind of intensely mysterious sweetness the twin syllables 'Kṛ-ṣṇa' are imbibed with!"<sup>72</sup>

"How blessed is the Sahasrākṣa (Indra) to have been gifted with thousand eyes to enjoy the Divine Beauty of Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Cursed be that Brahma for giving man only two eyes and that too with eyelashes, which bar his continuous vision of Him. How fortunate he would have been, if all his sense-organs had been endowed with the power of vision?! Lo! What ecstatic states of mind people are driven to in their yearning to have His fullest vision?!"<sup>73</sup>

"Let me have hundreds of millions eyes to enjoy Your Beauty, a like number of ears to hear Your melodious voice, an equal number of noses to inhale the floods of Your fragrance, millions and millions of tongues to relish Your innate sweetness and billions and billions of hearts to hug You."<sup>74</sup>

From the above facts relating to the Svarūpa of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the sublime position He occupies, and the special capacity of His Name, particularly 'Kṛṣṇa',<sup>75</sup> I hope much of

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72tuṇḍe tāṇḍavini ratim vitanute tuṇḍāvali-labdhaye

karna-kroda-kaḍambini ghaṭayate karṇārbudebhyaḥ sprhām  
cetaḥ-prāṅgaṇa-saṅgini vijayate sarvendriyānām kṛtīm  
no jāne janitā kiyabdhir amṛtaiḥ kṛṣṇeti varṇa-dvayi  
(vidagdha-mādhava 1.15)

73yad-darśane pakṣma-kṛtaṁ śapanti

vidhiṁ sahasrākṣam api stuvanti  
vañchanti drkṭvaṁ sakalendriyānām  
kāṁ kāṁ daśāṁ vā na bhajanti lokāḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.5.110)

74netrārbudasyaiva bhavantu karna-

nāsā-rasajñā-hṛdayārbudaṁ vā  
saundarya-sausvarya-sugandha-pūra-  
mādhurya-saṁśleṣa-rasānubhūtyai  
(śrī anurāga-valli 7)

75kaḥ pareta-nagarī-purandaraḥ ko

bhaved atha tadīya-kiṅkaraḥ  
kṛṣṇa-nāma jagad-eka-maṅgalaṁ  
kaṇṭha-pīṭha murārī karoti cet  
(padyāvali 21)

our doubts of Māyādevī's acceptance of Śrī  
Kṛṣṇa-Nāma-Mantra are answered.

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brahmāṇḍānāṁ koṭi-saṅkhyādhikānām  
aiśvaryaṁ yac cetanā vā yad aṁśaḥ  
āvirbhūtaṁ tan-mahaḥ kṛṣṇa-nāma  
tan me sādhyam sādhanam jīvanam ca  
(padyāvalī 23)

## 6 SPIRITUAL MASTER AND SELF-SURRENDER

THE Advent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu into this world is a most marked event even to great celestials. Gods like Brahma, Śiva, etc. and sages of repute like Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, Sanatkumāra, etc. greedy of tasting the highest and rarest Transcendental Bliss are born in the material world and **having been blessed with the Divine Name, they dance, sing and lose themselves on the wavelets of Divine Bliss.** Exalted devotees like Nārada, Prahlāda, etc. are no exception. Assuming human forms, they too are drinking the ambrosia flowing from the never-ending fountain of the Transcendental Name. Lakṣmī and other consorts of Śrī Viṣṇu too, were born in this mortal world in human forms, tempted by the same desire and are having a taste of it. **What to speak of all other persons? Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself is enjoying the sweetness of His Name!** As such, why wonder at the request of Māyādevī?

### 61. *Guru and his function*

There are many who preach against the idea of accepting a spiritual guide. These people go round in different parts of the country and deliver vehement speeches criticising the whole principle. The duty of a Guru is to enlighten the ignorant people, by removing their misunderstandings in spiritual matters and throw sufficient light so that they may not be misled by pseudo-propagandist. The Guru by his special mercy and influence helps the worthy disciple to change his aversion to Godhead into active conversion towards Him and His service.

A few, who are liberal amongst them and of a slightly milder nature, style themselves as moderate and come forward with different views. These people agree to the principles of service of the Supreme Lord. They, with all emphasis protest

against the idea of submitting to another. They do not subscribe to the thoughts of another person, however great he may be in this world, to take control of their modes of life and dictate terms to them. They opine that there is no other suggestion more humiliating to a man than asking him to submit unconditionally to another man whom they believe to be of their stuff.

## 62. *Spiritual preceptor - Indispensable*

There is nothing in this world, spiritual or material, which a human being can understand without the help of a guide. The importance of a guide is conspicuously felt in every field of knowledge. The imperative need of such a person can never be overlooked, even in acquiring the knowledge of those objects that are opened to the analytic and synthetic researches of human ability, not to speak of God, who is far above the reach of human intelligence. When the very understanding of the secrets about objects lying within the inspection of tangible senses, is utterly impossible, without the expert guidance of external help, how can we succeed in getting a conception of One, Who is declared 'Transcendental' by the best of the brains and our sacred Śāstras, without any help?

Let us try to follow what Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has mentioned in the Gītā, "Learn that Divine Truth with a submissive spirit, sincere inquiries and obedient services from those great persons who are not only erudite scholars, but Absolute-realised souls."<sup>76</sup>

## 63. *Personality of Guru*

The Position of both the Guru and disciple is explicitly expressed in this Śloka. The Guru, as some of the arrogant elements of society take, is not an ordinary man like any of us, not even a mere bookworm or a scholar of certain Sanskrit work, an adept in verbal jugglery. He is an Absolute-realised person who is competent enough to make others to realise the Eternal Truth. He who has not realised it cannot be a spiritual preceptor. He is the one well-wisher without a second to the fallen humanity, who helps us to concentrate our diverse activities towards the Supreme Godhead. He is an embodiment of kindness who, with his prevailing spiritual

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76*tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā*

*upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

*(Bhagavad-gītā 4.34)*

influence, dispels all the darkness, which is the result of extreme ignorance on this relative plane, and opens our eyes by imparting to us genuine Divine Knowledge. He is an honest and perfect guide on our spiritual voyage, who leads us like an expert helmsman to the ever safe heaven on Transcendental Bliss, free from the onslaughts of any mighty rough wind or gale. He is a true messenger of the All-Loving-Godhead, yes. His transcendental mediator who is eager to establish a real tie of loving relationship between the Lord and those fortunate human souls who sincerely seek it. He is a pioneer of true love, a loving agent, an establisher of all relations of love, a trustworthy and expert destroyer of all our non-loving principles. If we can cultivate a devotional aptitude towards this representative of the All-Merciful Lord, we are definitely sure to reach our final goal. He saves us from all our changing views and wrong mentalities. The status that a real Guru occupies is too high; none holds such a lofty position as he. He is greater than Godhead in this respect as he can impart the Lord and His service to any one whom he favours. The Sāstras even declare that "the displeasure of Godhead when directed towards any individual is not harmful provided he is backed by the divine master, whereas, one who is denounced by the spiritual preceptor finds no shelter in the infinite number of worlds."<sup>77</sup> Bhagavān remains silent and adamant to such a Person who disregards the spiritual preceptor, His loving agent. Without the mercy of an eternally liberated person, a conditioned soul can never free himself from the fettered state. One, who is already in fetters, cannot help another similarly fettered person. A free person could set another bound one free. Bhagavān while conversing to His old classmate and friend Sudāmā at Dvārakā said thus: "O friend! I am the Supreme Lord and I reside in the heart of every person as the Indwelling Witness. I am not so much pleased with the performance of the daily obligatory sacrifices of Brahmacārīs, the procreation, maintenance and the observance of prescribed duties by the householders, severe austerities of the

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<sup>77</sup>harau ruṣṭe gurustrātā gurau ruṣṭe na kaścana  
tasmāt sarvaprāyatnena gurumeva prasādayet  
(ādiya purāṇa)

Vānaprasthīs and the practices of The Sannyāsīs in solitude, as with the loving services rendered to a spiritual preceptor."<sup>78</sup>

Bhagavān mentions in another place, "One must worship the Guru first before he starts with My worship: such a person alone succeeds in this efforts. Any violation of this procedure results in utter failure."<sup>79</sup> The Supreme Lord favours the individual Jīva through His medium, the Guru. Guru or spiritual masters are of three types.(1) Dikṣā Guru (one who imparts the initiation or Mantra), (2) Śikṣā Guru (one who imparts spiritual enlightenment), and (3) Caitya Guru (indwelling guide, who inspires and directs from within).

"O Lord! The great sages who are blessed with the benefits of your various favours, can never feel themselves convinced of adequately discharging their deep indebtedness to Thee, even if they are provided with a long life as that of Brahma. In Manifold ways Thou hast extended Thy Mercy to them. Thou dost destroy all their evil propensities and worldly attachments, as the spiritual preceptor in living form, appearing as Dikṣā and Śikṣā Gurus, and as Caitya Guru, guide from within and lead to the attainment of Divine Love."<sup>80</sup>

All these three Gurus belong to the same category. They are all transcendental personages. They are always engaged in the uninterrupted realisations of the Transcendental Activities of the Lord. Amongst the two visible forms of Guru, one becomes our Dikṣā Guru. He imparts Mantras and initiation to us. Dikṣā Guru is always one, but Śikṣā Guru may be one or more. Father is one, but uncles can be many. To certain

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78nāham iḥyā-prayātibhyāṁ tapasopāśamena vā  
tuṣyeyam sarva-bhūtātma guru-śūśrūṣayā yathā  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.80.34)

79prathamam tu guruṁ pūjya tataś caiva mamārcanam  
kurvaṇ siddhim avāpnoti hy anyathā niṣphalam bhavet  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 1.4.344)

80naivopayanty apacitiṁ kavayas taveśa  
brahmāyusāpi kṛtam ṛddha-mudaḥ smarantaḥ  
yo 'ntar bahis tanu-bhṛtām aśubham vidhunvann  
ācārya-caitya-vapuṣā sva-gatiṁ vyanakti  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.29.6)

individuals, both Dikṣā Guru and Śikṣā Guru may be one and the same.

"Hence, those persons who are interested in the attainment of their eternal welfare, must submissively approach a Guru who is an erudite scholar in all the ultimate lore of Śāstras and who is favoured with the full realisations of the Absolute, and seek enlightenment from him."<sup>81</sup>

"Fully believing in the transcendental nature of the spiritual preceptor as eternally identical with the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari and accepting him as one's eternal benefactor, he should constantly and with single-minded devotion please him and receive from him enlightenment on the details of Bhāgavata Dharma, by observing which Bhagavān is so pleased as to give Himself up to the devotee."<sup>82</sup>

The real import of the Śāstras, in spite of vast literary achievements, remains a hidden truth. "The Śāstras unfold their real meaning only to those persons who have equal devotion to the Supreme Lord and His representative, the spiritual preceptor."<sup>83</sup>

From all these valuable instructions of the Śāstras, a wise person can feel the imperative necessity of accepting the spiritual preceptor and rendering whole-hearted services to him. Those who ignore the spiritual preceptor are under the evil dictations of their deceptive minds. Their condition is vividly described in Śrīmad Bhāgavata thus: - "O Lord! Those unfortunate persons, who, avoiding taking shelter at the feet of the spiritual master, make a vainglorious attempt to control their restless mind, mad like an unbridled horse, which appears impossible even to great Yogīs, who have a perfect control over their senses and breathing functions, meet with a disappointing failure. They find themselves helplessly placed

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81 *tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*  
*śabde pare ca niṣṇātaṁ brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.3.21)

82 *tatra bhāgavatān dharmān śikṣed gurv-ātma-daivataḥ*  
*amāyayānuvṛtṭyā yais tuṣyed ātmātma-do hariḥ*  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.3.22)

83 *yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau*  
*tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanah*  
(śvetāśvatara upaniṣada 6.23)



in the midst of a series of difficulties and obstacles. Their condition is like that of those merchants who start their voyage without a pilot and who are caught in the deep rough sea, their vessel being mercilessly tossed by a strong gale."<sup>84</sup>

#### 64. *True disciple - His qualifications*

The above are some of the ideas about the genuine Guru according to the Sāstras. Here are some about the disciple. The disciple should not, at any cost, be like a modern student who attends an educational institution either for securing a mere degree or diploma with the object of drawing salaries in three digits or four, after getting through the departmental competitive tests or to gather some general knowledge to carry on one's family trade, or to have some status in society, etc. He must be a sincere seeker after Truth prepared to undergo any amount of hardships and sacrifices for achieving his goal. If the would-be disciple is an easy-going careless and indifferent person, his attempt to meet a spiritual master and the further developments on their meeting, would be met by a severe disappointment. As already stated a worthy disciple should approach a true spiritual preceptor with due submission. In the mundane world too, none tolerates a haughty approach. A haughty man fails to enlist the sympathy even of his co-workers, not to speak of superiors. An appeal from an arrogant heart is never met with success. For favour of spiritual enlightenment, a disciple must approach an Absolute-realised person fully equipped with three qualifications viz. (1) Complete surrender. The disciple must unconditionally resign all his material ego arising from birth, age, wealth or popularity, material learning and pride or personal appearance. He should never make attempts to measure the spiritual master after accepting him. (2) Sincere inquiry after Truth. Unnecessary questions, either for showing of one's intelligence or for testing the ability of the master are to be always avoided. Questions even for satisfying one's curiosity are also most certainly to be dropped. Questions that are of vital importance and immediate benefit for one's

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84*vijita-hṛṣīka-vāyubhir adānta-manas tura-gaṁ*

*ya iha yatanti yantum ati-lolam upāya-khidah  
vyasana-śatānvitāḥ samavahāya guroś caraṇaṁ  
vaṇija ivāja santy akṛta-karṇa-dharā jaladhau  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.87.23)*

spiritual uplift, are alone to be placed before the master. A disciple should under no circumstances argue with his spiritual master, and try to conquer him with one's own imperfect notions and views, gathered from this defective world through the assistance of the deceptive senses; on the contrary, he should wait with eagerness and submission for his Guru's spontaneous expositions. His explanations are entirely based on his continuous and undisturbed realisations of Godhead and His various Pastimes. And (3) Loving services. Without the least hesitation, a disciple should be prepared to render loving services of any nature, be it menial or dignified. The inspiring examples of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rāma, etc. and the ideal lives of world teachers are living monuments that illustrate the above ideal.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His Divine Descents like Rāma, etc. do not require the least outside help in any matter. In fact, no one could have the fitness to be a preceptor to Them; yet, for the benefit on the world, to enlighten the fallen humanity, they set ideals before the people. Did not Śrī Kṛṣṇa go to the forest with an axe in His Hand, cut firewood, make them into bundles and carry them on His Own head for the service of the great Sāṅdīpani whom He accepted as His preceptor? Did not Śrī Rāma and Śrī Lakṣmaṇa spend sleepless nights with bows and arrows in Their Hands, sometimes sitting on piled heaps of rocks and sometimes resting on bare earth for satisfying Their master? Are we to read those soul-stirring events as mere stories that do not concern us? Do we not require to grasp the meaning underlying such actions and translate the same in our lives too?

## 65. *The act of submission*

Śaraṇāgati or the act of self-surrender to the Supreme Lord is an essential requisite that an aspirant in the path of religious pursuit can never ignore. The Proud man, urged by his false ego, ignores the fundamental principles of human life, viz., a virtuous life, full of faith and love to his ever loving lord. But, providentially a day will come, when he must feel the necessity of this fundamental principle, realising the utter vanity of the worldly pleasures. The unfortunate man, falling a victim to evil influences of the sense-ridden ego, may revolt against his own Lord, the only benefactor of humanity; he may conquer worlds, he may be the architect of nations, he may build vast empires or he may do many other wonders which no ordinary man can ever even imagine; yet he is utterly helpless in crossing this unfathomable ocean of worldliness. At

every moment, he is being violently tossed by the roaring waves of this ocean of never-ending sufferings. All his false hopes are frustrated, his confidence in the efficacy of his own actions betrays him finally. He sees all around him threatening temptations, horrors and sweeping currents of cares, calamities, anxieties, and worries. He feels his helplessness and sincerely longs to come out of this terrible predicament. He gains more experiences in this transitory world of fleeting pleasures; he becomes wiser than ever before. He recollects wise saying and comes round to the above fundamental principle. He surrenders himself to the Supreme Lord. Did not Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in unambiguous words, emphasise the imperative necessity of surrender?

"Discard all human element in religion addressed to embodied Atman, such as social duties, like Nitya, Naimittika and Kāmya Karma; your confidence in your physical strength, your mental eligibility, your moral achievements, your social duties, reliance on your elders, wealth, properties, etc., and surrender to Me. I am here to shoulder all your responsibilities. I can save you from all your sins consequent on your nonobservance of edicts addressed to embodied souls. You need not worry even for a fraction of a moment. None else can do this deed for you. I assure you, I am the Supreme Lord; I am the only Saviour of humanity. Why do you depend upon others and other courses? They cannot help you. They too are in the same plight as you are. As such, how can they lend their helping hands to you? Why do you hope to cross an ocean by catching hold a dog's tail? This is a tumultuous ocean of roaring waves, infested by various ferocious animals who are waiting with wide open jaws. They will swallow you within no time. Your efforts, however well designed, and however equipped they may be, in your light, can never lead you safely to the other shore. If you disobey Me and enter into its rough waters, you will be caught in a short while in its terrible eddies, surrounded by wild beasts that can easily swallow even elephants. Hence, the safest course for you is to come to Me. I am here with My boat. You need not have any fear whatsoever. You are once and for all saved for eternity. You do not repent for the failures in fulfilling the different duties you had to perform. All those duties are intended only to please Me finally. If I am favourably disposed to you, there is nothing else that you should gain in the infinite number of worlds. You can be sure that you have achieved everything. This is the final attainment of all fortunate souls-My Love. Go on, do not waste

time, make haste and be free from all the worries that you are subject to, from time immemorial."<sup>85</sup>

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85sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja  
aham tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ  
(bhagavad-gītā 18.66)

nanu tad-dhyānādikaṁ yat karomi tat kiṁ  
svāśrama-dharmānuṣṭhāna-pūrvakaṁ vā, kevalaṁ vā ? tatrāha  
sarva-dharmān varṇāśrama-dharmān sarvān eva parityajya ekaṁ mām eva  
śaraṇaṁ vraja | parityajya sanṁnyasyeti na vyākhyeyam arjunasya  
kṣatriyatvena sanṁnyāsādhikārāt na cārjunaṁ  
lakṣīkṛtyānya-jana-samudāyam evopadideśa bhagavān iti vācyaṁ |  
lakṣyabhūtaṁ arjunaṁ prati upadeśaṁ yojayitum aucitye saty  
evānyasyāpi upadeṣṭavyatvaṁ sambhaven na, tv anyathā na ca parityajyety  
asya phala-tyāga eva tātparyam iti vyākhyeyam asya vākyaṣya –

devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇāṁ pitṛṇāṁ na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇi ca rājan  
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇaṁ śaraṇyaṁ gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya  
kartam

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.41)

martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me  
tadāmṛtatvaṁ pratipadyamāno mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.29.34)

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvata  
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.20.9)

ājñāyaiva guṇān doṣān mayādiṣṭān api svakān  
dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān mām bhajet sa ca sattamaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.11.37)

ity ādibhir bhagavad-vākyaishasahaikārthasyāvaśya-vyākhyeyatvāt  
| atra ca pari-śabda-prayogāc | ata ekaṁ mām śaraṇaṁ vraja, na tu  
dharma-jñāna-yoga-devatāntarādikam ity arthaḥ | pūrvam hi  
mad-anya-bhaktau sarva-śreṣṭhāyām tavādhikāro nāstīty atas tvām yat  
karoṣi yad aśnāsītyādi-bruvāṇena mayā karma-miśrāyām bhaktau  
tavādhikāra uktaḥ | samprati tv atikṛpayā tubhyam ananya-bhaktau

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evādhikāras tasyā ananya-bhakter

yādṛcchika-mad-aikāntika-bhakta-kṛpaika-labhyatva-lakṣaṇaṁ niyamaṁ  
sva-kṛtaṁ api bhīṣma-yuddhe sva-pratijñāṁ ivāpaṇīya datta iti bhāvaḥ ।  
na ca mad-ājñayā nitya-naimittika-karma-tyāge tava prayavāya-śaṅkā  
sambhavet । veda-rūpeṇa mayaiva nitya-karmānuṣṭhānam ādiṣṭam  
adhunā tu svarūpeṇaiva tat-tyāga ādiśyate ity atah katham te  
nitya-karmākaraṇe pāpāni sambhavanti ? pratyuta atah param  
nitya-karmaṇi kṛta eva pāpāni bhaviṣyanti sāksān mad-ājñā-laṅghanād ity  
avadheyam ।

nanu yo hi yac-charaṇo bhavati, sa hi mūlya-kṛtaḥ paśur iva  
tad-adhīnaḥ । sa taṁ yat kārayati, tad eva karoti । yatra sthāpayati tatraiva  
tiṣṭhati । yad bhojayati, tad eva bhuṅkte iti śaraṇāpatti-lakṣaṇasya  
dharmasya tattvam । yad uktaṁ vāyu-purāṇe –

ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanaṁ  
rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso gopṭṛtve varaṇaṁ tathā  
niḥkṣepanam akārpaṇyaṁ ṣaḍ-vidhā śaraṇāgatih ॥ iti ।

bhakti-śāstra-vihitā svābhīṣṭa-devāya rocamānā pravṛttir  
ānukūlyaṁ tad-viparītaṁ prātikūlyam । gopṭṛtve iti sa eva mama rakṣako  
nānya iti yat । rakṣiṣyatīti sva-rakṣaṇa-prātikūlya-vastuṣūpasthiteṣv api sa  
mām rakṣiṣyaty eveti draupadi-gajendrādīnām iva viśvāsaḥ ।  
niḥkṣepanam svīya-sthūla-sūkṣma-deha-sahitasya eva svasya śrī-kṛṣṇārtha  
eva viniyogaḥ । akārpaṇyaṁ nānyatra kvāpi sva-dainya-jñāpanam iti  
ṣaṇṇām vastūnām vidhātr-anuṣṭhānaṁ yasyām sā śaraṇāgatir iti ।

tad adyārabhya yady ahaṁ tvām śaraṇaṁ gata eva varte tarhi  
tva-uktaṁ bhadram abhadraṁ vā yad bhavet tad eva mama kartavyam ।  
tatra yadi tvam mām dharmam eva kārayasi tadā na kācic cintā । yadi tv  
īśvaratvāt svairācāras tvam mām adharmaṁ eva kārayasi, tadā kā gatis  
tatrāha ahaṁ iti । prācīnārvācīnāni yāvanti vartante yāvanti vā ahaṁ  
kārayiṣyāmi tebhyaḥ sarvebhya eva pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi । nāham  
anya-śaraṇa iva tatrāsamartha iti bhāvaḥ ।

tvām alambyaiva śāstram idaṁ loka-mātram evopadiṣṭavān asmi ।  
mā śucaḥ svārthaṁ parārthaṁ vā śokaṁ mā kārṣiḥ । yuṣmad-ādikaṁ  
sarva eva lokaḥ sva-para-dharmān sarvān eva parityajya

"Should the duties like meditation, etc. that I am performing, conform to the duties enjoined according to the code for one's own Āśrama of be exclusively by themselves? The answer is this :- **"Discarding all codes of conduct, prescribed for the Varnas (classes), as enjoined by the Varṇāśrama Dharmas, take absolute shelter in Me alone."** The word 'Parityajya', should not be interpreted as "discarding the worldly ties and attachments to become a hermit "; because Arjuna being a Kṣatriya, is debarred from being a Śannyāsī. This should not also be taken to mean that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, having Arjuna in view intended to convey His directive to the rest of the people. When it was proper for Him to give advice to Arjuna only, others could adjunctively be included but not vice versa. The word 'Parityajya' should not be taken to mean "discarding only the fruits of one's actions" This is illustrated thus:—**"O king! That person who, discarding his duties enjoined by the Varṇāśrama Dharma, takes sole refuge in Śrī Mukunda - the Fittest Person amongst all yielding protection, is neither a slave nor a debtor to his ancestors, well-wishers, other animate beings, the sages, or the other gods."** When a mortal, who has cast aside all his worldly duties and dedicated his self to Me, in his desire to seek Me, attains immortality, then indeed he becomes fit to realise **Me-the Self-Produced One.**" "Man should continue to perform his worldly duties, so long as he does not free himself, from the attachment thereof, nor is able to develop an attachment to the hearing, etc., of My Narratives." **"That person who, knowing the merits and demerits of My directives, though given by Me, solely serves Me, leaving aside all the moral and religious codes of his own Dharma, is the most virtuous of the virtuous."** All these words of Śrī

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mac-cintanādi-paro mām śaraṇam āpadya sukhenaiva vartatām | tasya  
pāpa-mocana-bhāraḥ saṁsāra-mocana-bhāro'pi mayāṅgīkṛta eva |

ananyāś cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate  
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 9.22)

hanta etāvaṁ bhāro mayā sva-prabhau nikṣipta ity api śokaṁ  
mākārṣī bhakta-vatsalasya mama na tatrāyāsa-leśo'piti nātaḥ param  
adhikam upadeṣṭavyam astīti śāstraṁ samāptīkṛtam  
(sarartha varśini)

Kṛṣṇa convey the same meaning, because of the prefix 'pari' meaning 'all-around', "Hence, the words 'take refuge in Me alone', imperatively means that you should not take recourse to Dharma, knowledge, Yoga, worship of their gods, etc. " In the beginning, I told you that you are entitled to devotion blended with religious rites, thinking that you have no claim to the highest form of My Bhakti—Ananya Bhakti (whole and sole devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and no one else), as the sole resort. Now out of My sheer unlimited kindness to you, you have attained the right to My highest form of Bhakti—Ananyā Bhakti, which accidentally and inexplicably (yaadicchikayaa), is obtainable only by the grace of My ardent devotees, who have solely dedicated themselves to Me alone, the peculiarity of which (Ananyā Bhakti), is that I break My Own vows to fulfil those of My Bhaktas as will be indicated to you by the breaking of My own vow to fulfil Bhīṣma's at the time of your battle with him. By My commands, you should not entertain any fear of obstacles that might befall you for the relinquishment of these daily routine religious rites. These daily routine rites were directed to be practised by Me alone, assuming the form of Vedas; **but its discardment also, is ordered by My Own Self, i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.** *Hence, how can there be any possibility of a sin arising for not performing these routine rites? On the contrary, if you still persist in performing your daily routine religious rites, you would be committing sins, for disobeying the direct commands given (in Person) by My Own Self.* *Verily, he, who has totally dedicated himself to any protector, becomes entirely dependent on the latter like a beast, purchased for a price, doing what he is impelled to do, standing where he is asked to stand, and eating whatever he is provided with. These are all the principles of the codes of self-dedication.* It is said in Vāyu Purāṇa :- **"(1) Full acceptance of all that is favourable, (2) total rejection (abstinence) of everything that is unfavourable, (3) a firm faith that he will be protected, (4) the choice of the Lord, (5) consigning everything to His care, and (6) giving up of meanness are the six ways of Śaraṇāgati.** The word 'Anukulyam' means, the conduct that is one of continued advance agreeable to one's chosen God or Deity, befitting the devotional code; 'Pralikulyam' is the exact opposite of that; 'Bhātritra' is the implicit faith that He alone is my Protector and no one else," 'Visvas' (faith) is that unflinching faith that He will protect me even in the midst of adverse circumstances as those of Draupadī, Gajendra, etc., 'Nikshepanam' is the utility of everything belonging both to the mortal frame and the subtle body only in the service of one's own Śrī Kṛṣṇa;

'Akarpanyam' (or the giving up of meanness) is the non-display of one's meanness elsewhere; these six qualities constitute Śaraṇāgati, or complete self-surrender to the Supreme Creator. Therefore, from now onwards I take absolute refuge in you. Hence, as befitting You, I must do my duty allotted to me, whether good or bad (auspicious or inauspicious). If you ask me to do only the routine religious rites, there will be no anxiety; but because of Your Self-Willed Nature, arising from Your Overlordship, if You compel me to practise unrighteousness (Adharma), then what will be my fate? The answer to this (doubt) is given in the line 'Ahamtvam sarvapapebhyo mokshayishyami ma suchah'. I shall liberate you from all, both ancient (all existing accumulated sins of all past births), and future sins (those I may cause you to perform according to you). The sense is that I shall not be wanting in My ability to protect you like other protectors. It is on your account alone, that I am teaching these scriptural injunctions to the shale world. Grieve not. Do not grieve either for your own interest (Benefit) or for the benefits of another. **May all people like you, by completely discarding all their own codes of conduct and those of other Dharmas meditating, performing Kīrtana, etc., and taking absolute shelter in Me, live happily, because I have, an oath, shouldered the full responsibility of liberating them, from all their sins, of freeing them from their worldly bondage, and the charge of their attaining Me. What more?"I have taken upon myself even to feed them. It is already said, "I bear the responsibility of looking to the welfare of those, who, being fully engrossed in Me alone, and without seeking any other protector, worship Me wholeheartedly and zealously."** Do not grieve saying, "Alas! I have thrust so many burdens on my own Lord." Meditation on the Lord, Who is kind to His devotees, and faithful to His word, can be easily (without any effort) accomplished. Is there anything further and higher than this that yet remains to be told?<sup>8677.1</sup>

"O Uddhava! For the reason already explained to you, **take absolute shelter in Me-Śrī Kṛṣṇa** (*pointing to Himself with*

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86dharmān anyān parityajya mām ekaṁ bhaja viśvasan

yādṛśī yādṛśī śraddhā siddhir bhavati tādṛśī

kurvan nirantaram karma loko 'yam anuvartate

tenaiva karmaṇā dhyāyan mām parām bhaktim icchati

(brahma-samhitā 5.61)



*His Own Finger*) alone-the Soul of all beings, with your heart and soul, discarding everything that the Śrutis and Smṛtis expect one to perform and to reject, and giving up the attachment to and the discontinuance of worldly affairs and clean forgetting everything that you have so far heard, and giving up entirely any inclination to hear whatever yet remains to be heard. Be fearless as I am your Protector.<sup>1187</sup>

Surrender to Bhagavān is the safest path. All our Śāstras repeatedly insist on this course. Any observance devoid of the spirit of surrender fails to invoke Divine Mercy. Surrender, pure and genuine moves the Heart of the Supreme Lord. It melts Him and He flies to the rescue of a surrendered devotee. How Many illustrations are there in the lives of many great saints that establish this fact with all emphasis! The incidents of Gajendra, Draupadī, and the lives of a host of devotees, ancient and modern are glorious examples that prove this idea in facts and figures. Words cannot adequately express the astounding effects of surrender.

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87 *tasmāt tvam uddhavotsrjya 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  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.12.14-15)*

codanām vidhiṁ praticodanām pratiṣedhaṁ ca | vihitam karma  
niṣiddham ca karma tyaktvā ity arthaḥ | tarhi kiṁ sannyāsaṁ kurve ? na,  
pravṛttaṁ gṛhasthānām dharmam ca nivṛttaṁ sannyāsinām dharmam ca  
tyaktvā tatrāpi śrotavyaṁ śrutam ca tyaktvā iti bhāvi-dharma-śravaṇam  
anākāṅkṣya bhūta-śravaṇam ca vismṛtyety arthaḥ | sarvātma-bhāvena  
sarvopāya ātmano manaso bhāvo dāsyasakhyādis tenaikam eva mām  
ālambanīkṛtya śaraṇam yāhi | mayaiva akutobhayaḥ syā iti | tava nāsti  
karmādhikāro nāpi jñānādhikāras tad api tam tam ātmany āropya  
pratyavāya-bhayaṁ saṁsāra-bhayaṁ ca manyase cet tadā  
tad-bhaya-dvayāt trātā ahaṁ vidyamāna evāsmīty arthaḥ  
(sarartha darśini)

## 66. Activities favourable to devotional progress

The course of Śaraṇāgati has got six-fold features as its special characteristics.<sup>88</sup> The scripture explains it thus: A strong resolve to accept those activities that are congenial to the growth of Bhakti. An aspirant who is sincerely longing for advancement in the devotional path should practise with utmost care only such observances as are favourable to his rapid progress. The extremely turbulent senses, with all their evil propensities and madness, are to be engaged in the service of the Lord. Each activity of the aspirant of devotion, such as taking food, association, movements, etc., should be regulated fully under this principle. Such activities are of six kinds.<sup>89</sup>

1. A genuine enthusiasm in observing the devotional activities is one of the invariable virtues necessary to strengthen our devotion towards Bhagavān. One who is indifferent to his real uplift and hence reluctant to practise all that is conducive to the rise of Bhakti, meets with hordes of tremendous difficulties in his path. Enthusiasm in the observance of prescribed religious practices is a very congenial factor in building up Bhakti towards the Lord. In the absence of genuine enthusiasm, lethargy, indifference, desperation and such other despicable qualities dominate over us. Laziness is the worst enemy to religious progress. If an aspirant allows this evil the slightest scope, it will take undue advantage of him and ruin him totally. Reluctance and lack of endeavour in observing devotional practices make us victims to this evil agent. 'Oak is not felled with one blow', is a very wise proverb. Lack of confidence in himself, and consequently, his efforts create desperation in him. An aspirant in the path of devotion should never fail a victim to this discouraging factor.

He must rise above this. "Persons who are given to various desires are asked to follow the path of Karma by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Those who have a spirit of renunciation in the daily,

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88ānukūlyasya saṅkalpāḥ prātikūlyasya-varjanam  
rakṣiṣyātīti viśvāso goptṛtve varaṇam tathā  
ātma-nikṣepa-kārpaṇye śaḍ-vidhā śaraṇāgatih  
(vaiṣṇava-tantra śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.676)

89utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt  
saṅga-tyāgāt sato vṛtteḥ śaḍbhir bhaktiḥ prasidhyati  
(upadeśāmṛta 3)

and occasional activities prescribed by the Śāstras, should necessarily follow the path of knowledge. Due to some unknown divine virtues, in the past, those persons, who have ingrained in them a strong faith in the Glories and Deeds of Bhagavān, should invariably follow the path of devotion or Bhakti.<sup>90</sup> They too may be indifferent to the observance of the daily and occasional duties, but they adopt those principles that are favourable to the growth of devotion. Those who are eligible for the path of Bhakti, are not extremely attached to the fruits of their actions. Without the physical body the practice of devotional activities in the mortal plane is impossibility. As such, however unwelcome they may be, a certain amount of activity is unavoidable in the material world. Sincere aspirants after devotion should work for their livelihood, though with reluctance, and worship the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa with intense Bhakti to Him. They are extremely unattached to the various types of worldly actions, and with passage of time, become more devoted to the devotional practices of the Lord. The Merciful Lord, manifesting Himself in their hearts, destroys all their evil propensities. By the continuous remembrance of the Lord, their hearts become purified. They are freed for ever from the evil consequences of bondage. Their doubts too are removed. They become eligible to realise the Supreme Lord. Other efforts are not successful in bringing their results, if the votaries of those methods lack in the quality of dependence on the Supreme Lord. Their inability to destroy the terrible consequences of Karma must not dissuade them from their efforts. Hence, from the very beginning of an aspirant's devotional activities, keen enthusiasm should be preserved even at the cost of all comforts, and this is the very life of firm faith, a prerequisite for obtaining Bhakti.

2. Those treading the path of devotion must have settled convictions regarding the path they are pursuing and the final attainment. Till we are confident of the method and the results it would offer, we are under the influence of doubts. If an aspirant falls a prey to doubts, he is lost.

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<sup>90</sup>*nirviṇṇānām jñāna-yogo nyāsinām iha karmasu*

*teṣv anirviṇṇa-cittānām karma-yogas tu kāmīnām*

*yadṛcchayā mat-kathādau jāta-śraddhas tu yaḥ pumān  
na nirviṇṇo nāti-sakto bhakti-yogo 'sya siddhi-daḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.20.7-8)*

"He who is ignorant of the true knowledge of relationship and lacks badly in faith for the performance of Niṣkāma Karma, is overcome by the feeling of hesitation, and meets with destruction. To a sceptic, there is no shining future. He never succeeds in attaining happiness either in this world or in the next."<sup>91</sup> Hence, strong belief in the statement of the scriptures, without the least possible doubt in it, is indispensably necessary for the growth of devotion.

3. Patience is another essential and favourable quality that is needed for every aspirant after devotion. 'Patience and perseverance will overcome mountains'. We are severely disappointed and non-plussed due to want of patience. Those who lack this quality are undone; they do not prosper in any line. By the influence of patience, an aspirant for devotion gains perfect control over himself, and finally the entire world bows to him.

Souls under the thralldom of Māyā are the slaves of six-fold passions. Those who can effectively succeed in conquering all these six passions can master the whole world.<sup>92</sup> These impulses are (1) an uncontrollable tendency for idle gossip, (2) various undesirable speculations of the wavering mind, (3) proneness to uncontrollable anger, (4) unusual desire for satisfying the tongue with delicious varieties of food, (5) longing for excessive eating, and (6) sexual appetite. These six impulses are highly detrimental to the development of devotion. Hence, with utmost patience, they are to be abandoned in the daily life of one aspiring after Bhakti. As long as the human body continues to exist till death, a sincere aspirant should make all earnest efforts to check the inimical incitements by engaging them in the service of the Lord.

All aspirants in the various religious paths are after some gains. Those who are observing the fruitive activities,

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91 *ajñāś cāsraddadhānaś ca saṁśayātmā vinaśyati*

*nāyaṁ loko 'sti na paro na sukhaṁ saṁśayātmanaḥ*  
(*bhagavad-gītā* 4.40)

92 *vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam*

*jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam*  
*etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ*  
*sarvām apīmāṁ prthivīm sa śiṣyāt*  
(*upadeśāmṛta* 1)

long for the attainment of paradise and its varieties of pleasures unavailable in the same measure in this world.

People who are following the path of knowledge, do so tempted by a strong desire for eternal liberation for themselves. Similarly, those who are pursuing the path of Bhakti or devotion, constantly covet to render full satisfaction to the senses of the Lord. Delay in the achievement of one's goal, often causes ground for utter despair resulting finally in a downfall from his cherished goal. In order to avoid this evil consequence, an aspirant in devotional path, must be wholly wedded to this quality of patience. The Supreme Lord is an Ocean of Mercy. Either this day or some other day in this very life, if not, certainly in some other birth, He will shower His Mercy upon him. He never forsakes him who solely depends upon Him. "I will cling to His Lotus Feet with all hopes and never give Him up under any severe test." Such a firm determination helps the aspirant to achieve a glorious success. 'Patience is the best remedy for grief'. It is the plaster for all sores. Therefore, in all sincerity one must cultivate this virtue of 'Patience' in him.

4. In observing the prescribed devotional acts the Śāstras lay down a series of activities for awakening and promoting devotional feelings in us. These activities must occupy the highest place in our daily performances. The sixty-four principles (see footnote 159) on Sādhana Bhakti are all favourable activities that help us in our goal. Śrī Kṛṣṇa advises Uddhava in the eleventh canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavata thus: "Faith in listening to My Nectarine Narratives, constantly repeating them, great attachment in performing My worship, singing hymns in My praise with a devotional fervour, natural regard for rendering service to Me, prostrated obeisances with all the Indriyas, special liking for the service of My devotees, feeling My presence in each and every created being, engaging fully one's Indriyas in My service, singing My Glories, dedicating one's heart to me, renunciation of all desires, sacrificing one's wealth, comforts, and pleasures for My service, consecration of all things that are worth desiring, performances of religious sacrifices, muttering of Mantras, observance of religious vows, and practice of austerities for My pleasure. O Uddhava! By observing these, loving devotion to Me, is kindled in the hearts of those souls who have surrendered themselves unconditionally to Me."<sup>93</sup>

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93śraddhāmṛta-kathāyām me śaśvan mad-anukīrtanam  
pariniṣṭhā ca pūjāyām stutibhiḥ stavanam mama

5. All evil associations must be strictly eschewed. 'Man is known by the company he keeps'. Association exerts a tremendous influence on the building up of one's character, both in material and spiritual fields. Association is twofold- (1) Company of others, and (2) having attachment to other objects or persons. The first one is again of a twofold nature, (a) keeping company with non-devotees and persons addicted to women, and (b) having association with women. The second, too, is twofold, (a) attachment to bad instincts, and (b) attachment to wealth, properties, house, ornaments, relations, etc. All these associations, either in the form of company or in the nature of attachments, are detrimental towards devotional progress. Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains their evil consequences in Gītā thus:-

"Association with the objects of the world awakens passions in man; passions when obstructed give birth to anger; anger leads to delusion; delusion is followed by loss of memory; when a man is deprived of sound memory, he loses his intelligence which consequently brings total destruction to him."<sup>94</sup>

Fallen souls are weaklings in all respects. If they are left at the mercy of their material senses; their destruction is

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*ādarah paricaryāyām sarvāṅgair abhivandanam  
mad-bhakta-pūjābhynchikā sarva-bhūteṣu man-matiḥ*

*mad-artheṣv aṅga-ceṣṭā ca vacasā mad-guṇeraṇam  
mayy arpaṇam ca manasaḥ sarva-kāma-vivarjanam*

*mad-arthe 'rtha-parityāgo bhogasya ca sukhasya ca  
iṣṭam dattam hutam japtam mad-artham yad vratam tapaḥ*

*evam dharmair manuṣyāṇām uddhavātma-nivedinām  
mayi sañjāyate bhaktiḥ ko 'nyo 'rtho 'syāvaśiṣyate  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.19.20-24)*

<sup>94</sup>*dhyāyato viśayān puṁsaḥ saṅgas teṣūpajāyate  
saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmāḥ kāmāt krodho 'bhijāyate*

*krodhād bhavati saṁmohaḥ saṁmohāt smṛti-vibhramaḥ  
smṛti-bhramśād buddhi-nāśo buddhi-nāśāt praṇaśyati  
(bhagavad-gītā 2.62-63)*

inevitable. 'Birds of the same feather flock together'. Material senses will slowly drag the man to similar sense-objects. Their association, gradually gives birth to attachment with those objects. The more he gets attached to these objects, the less he becomes interested in his spiritual goal. Thus in course of a short span of time, his condition gets deplorable and at the end he meets with a lamentable downfall. Householder devotees, who practise devotion, while leading a household life according to the injunctions of the Śāstras, must associate with their wedded wives, in accordance with the rules and regulations laid-out in the scriptures. Both the husband and wife with the assistance of the other members of the family, such as daughters, sons, brothers, sisters, etc., must make sincere efforts to engage themselves fully in the service of the Lord. In such a family life, there would not be any fear of evil association or formation of worldly attachments. For householders or renounced persons, association with undesirable people, is unwholesome and objectionable. Attachment or addiction to one's previous evil instincts is to be totally abandoned. By its association with us for the last so many births, it becomes, more or less our inherent nature. It does considerable harm to our eternal welfare.

Attachment to material objects and persons, such as wealth, properties, houses, lands, ornaments, clothings, children, wives, brothers, sisters, their persons, etc., is like a highwayman who robs us of our spiritual wealth gathered while on the royal path to devotion. Addiction to intoxicants and stimulants too come under the same category. Eating objectionable foods like flesh, fish, egg, etc., are also not favourable to our goal. Humanity is saved from all these evils by the marvellous efficacy of 'Sādhū Saṅga' or association with Bhaktas.

6. Following the course practised by the devotees is the well-known effective and favourable way that helps the striver in his efforts for developing Bhakti. Sādhus, whose mode of conduct we are expected to follow for our spiritual benefit, are of two kinds. (1) Householder devotees who lead an exemplary life while living in the family fold, and (2) those who give up all their family connections and exclusively devote themselves to the service of Godhead. Because of the difference in the station of life and responsibilities, certain traits of the two classes of devotees show slight variation. Yet, there are common principles as well. Scriptures describe a series of rules for regulating our conduct. The main object of all these rules and regulations laid-out in the Śāstras, is to bring us

back to a perfect life of faith in and love for Godhead from an uncivilised, and irreligious barbaric living. Those who lead a householder's life, are expected to earn their livelihood and maintain their families by virtuous means, engaging themselves in the service of Bhagavān, Bhaktas and the chanting of the Holy Name. Entertaining guests is an important duty that every householder should unfailingly and ungrudgingly practise. They must be frank in their behaviour and sympathetic in their attitude. They should never be given to foul ways of earning their livelihood and barbarous living. They should be kind even to subhuman beings. Avoiding all pseudo-types of asceticism, they must lead the life of a genuine devotee. Pseudo-asceticism consists in abandoning all objects of the world intended for the service of the Lord, with a feeling of contempt, imposing material attributes on them. Whereas, genuine asceticism is that which utilises, every objects of the world in the service of the Lord, without having the least attachment to any of them. A follower of genuine asceticism leads a well regulated life, earns by virtuous ways means for meeting his legitimate necessities. He is neither for excessive enjoyment nor for renunciation. He is the upholder of the idea of proper utility of all objects. He never runs mad after selfish and unnatural wants. Though in the midst of family surroundings, he is a true devotee in spirit engaged in the service of the Lord.

That striver who has given up all his family connections for exclusively engaging himself in the service of the Lord, i.e. Sannyāsī must lead a very simple life. Constantly chanting the Holy Name forms an important item of his daily duty. Avoiding all worldly gossips at all times, delicious varieties of food, and showy dress he must, in all humility, utter the Holy Name. He should maintain his body and meet its bare necessities by alms from those who are faithful to Godhead and Śāstras. Discarding all sense of pride and wandering from place to place undergoing all suffering in this ocean of worldliness he must render the maximum help to other souls, who are averse to Godhead.

### **67. *Unfavourable acts that arrest devotional progress***

All should discard harmful activities that stand in the way of attaining Bhakti. Souls imprisoned in the physical and subtle bodies and guided by selfish desires are wandering in this world from time immemorial. They take births in different species according to their actions. They gather a variety of experiences in this world, both good and bad. If these



experiences make them wise and persuade them to give up their leanings for enjoyment or freedom in any form-well-they have succeeded in their life's mission. The purpose of their human birth is fulfilled. If not, they are to rotate along with the world of worldliness ceaselessly. These latter displease the Lord and hence His love is not had. Without the least hesitation, we must refrain from these acts that are detrimental to the progress of devotion. Such undesirable agents are grouped under six heads.<sup>95</sup>

1. A tendency to hoard anything more than the legitimate necessity is an impediment that we must all sincerely avoid in our daily activity. The enjoyment of the world through the sense-organs, i.e. eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and the skin, plays an important role in which every fettered soul is hopelessly engrossed in this world. Without a certain amount of indulgence in the workings of the senses, it is impossible for human beings to survive here. Devoid of these activities human life something that cannot exist. As soon as we give up all activities of the senses, we cease to exist. Activities are the inherent nature of man. Man cannot continue in this world without performing actions. Actionless life is nothing but death itself. When these actions are done with selfish purposes, independent of any devotion to Bhagavān, they are the cause of our bondage and the repeated cycle of births and deaths. Those very actions when done with a motive of pleasing the Lord, save us from the cyclic effects of this world. As such, all our daily activities are to be regulated in a favourably co-ordinated way, so that we may attain the Lord while performing them properly.

2. Over-zealousness in trifling acquirements is a weakness of many aspirants to devotion, who fall a prey to this false zeal. They put in innumerable tireless efforts in gathering knowledge, fame, etc. Unalloyed devotion to the Supreme Lord is the wealth of all wealths. Unconditional surrender and loyalty in words, deeds, and thoughts to Bhagavān form an important characteristic of Bhakti. These are ingrained in the inherent nature of unalloyed souls, as such, Bhakti is the natural function of all Jīvas. No doubt, in our conditioned state, a certain amount of practice is unavoidable in awakening these dormant sterling qualities. All efforts other than those

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95 *atyāhāraḥ prayāsaś ca prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ*

*jana-saṅgaś ca laulyaṁ ca śaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati*  
(*upadeśāmṛta* 2)

needed for awakening Bhakti, are impediments to the realisation of our highest goal. These efforts are commonly made in gaining more knowledge and benefits in fruitive activities. The zeal for gathering knowledge makes one go mad after the realisation of the Attributeless Brahman and finally getting absorbed in it.

"The Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa though unconquerable in all the three worlds, is won over by those who discard all their vainglorious attempts to realise the Divine Nature, Attributes, etc., of the Lord, through empiric knowledge, submit to his Feet and survive by hearing the glorious Narratives of Lord, spontaneously coming out from the mouths of great saints living in places sanctified by them, receiving and revering the same with body, mind, and words."<sup>96</sup>

3. Idle gossip is another uncongenial factor that stands in the way of persons who are desirous of realising Bhakti. This is sure to bring disappointment in the long run. This ugly habit, if not nipped in time, brings in its trail so many difficulties. Unfortunately, as the Kali progresses, this habit has become a serious disease amongst the people, which starting as a sporadic one, slowly grows into endemic, then develops into an epidemic, embracing a whole region, and finally becomes pandemic, spreading throughout the world. Unnecessary indulgence in gossiping, fruitless verbal jugglery, speaking ill of others, indulging in quarrels, scrutinising the conducts and deeds of others, speaking falsehood, disparaging holy persons, discussing worldly topics with excessive zeal, etc., are all actions of the same category. These evil habits must be totally eschewed.

4. Undue addiction to the observance of the rules of the Śāstras or its total neglect must be avoided . The entire teachings of the scriptures come under two heads. (1) Commandments, (Positive assertions) and (2) Prohibitions (negative assertions). The Śāstras try to regulate our lives by all these methods, directly and indirectly, and inspire genuine devotion in us.

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96jñāne prayāsam udapāśya namanta eva

jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām

sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vāñ-manobhir

ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyaṁ

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.3)

The highest stage of spiritual realisation is attained after a series of graduated stages. In each of these stages, it is imperatively necessary for the aspirant to practise certain observance pertaining to that particular station in life. The strict performance of these prescribed duties, makes him eligible for the next immediate stage. Failure in these observances, brings him a downfall from the spiritual path. Addition to the duties of a stage which is already passed by the aspirant also stops his progress. Hence each Sādhaka should perform the duties allotted to the particular phase of his development with sincerity and never be indifferent to it.

5. Evil company or association with persons who have not an iota of Bhakti in them is another serious obstacle that brings ruin to an aspirant of devotion. Mere conversation or sitting side by side, are not acts of association. Any transaction or dealing with such persons in a spirit of too much cordiality and interest result in the form of association.

The Śāstras though they forbid us to associate with evil persons, in any way, never encourage us to speak ill of any one including these evil person, at any time. By speaking ill of others we degrade ourselves. The Śāstras recommend even imprisonment in a room surrounded by flames as better than living with evil persons.

6. Fickle-mindedness and greed cause the downfall of the aspirant and deter him from the pursuit of his goal. This waywardness is effected in two ways by the unsteady position of the heart, and that of intelligence. The affinity of the mind towards sense objects, creates in the heart both attachment, and hatred. These changes in the mind and heart disturb the tranquillity of an aspirant. Just as, a strong wind tosses a boat in the sea, even so, these disturbances of the mind distract the aspirant from his practices.

### **68. *Firm confidence in the Lord***

A firm confidence that the Supreme Lord will protect us in all circumstances is needed. In fact, who is saving us from all the dangers and calamities that are hovering around us every moment? In time of a severe trial, all of our acquisitions or the nearest of relations fail. There is no power anywhere in this universe that would do any harm to a person whose Protector is the Supreme Lord. On the contrary, the entire population and resources of the whole universe, cannot save him, if he is disowned by the Lord. This firmness in his belief makes him steady ever the more. This spirit of confidence saves him from the unsteady nature of the mind. It laughs in time of dangers. It

strengthens his weak enthusiasm. It enables him to overcome his enemies within. It makes the life of a striver light and easy, and his journey remarkably smooth and pleasant.

"The very Lord Śrī Hari Who is solely responsible for the creation, sustenance and dissolution of this world and Who is the Origin of all, Whose Yoga Māyā cannot be conceived even by the great masters of Yoga and Who is Lord of all triple qualities, the same Lord of Pure Existence will come to our rescue. Why should we unnecessarily worry over the same?"<sup>97</sup>

### 69. *Choosing the Lord as protector*

Those who are averse to the Lord, depend on their material resources as the sole support of their life. They have their hopes well established in their bank deposits, insurance premiums, debentures, gold, silver, properties, animals, provident fund, pension, etc. How long can they rely on these perishables? It is definitely sure that these would show their real nature one day. They have never saved a single person, so far, from the various worries he is subject to. In future also they will be incapable of doing what they cannot do at present. They are dead matter; how can they help human souls? Surrender to Bhagavān must be complete in words, deeds, and thoughts. A surrendered person feels extremely delighted by the effects of such an act. By words he expresses it to the Lord, by the mind he feels what he speaks and with the body, he takes shelter in holy places sanctified by the various pastimes of the Lord. Success in our efforts in the devotional path, depends on this act of self-surrender. Variation in the results of spiritual practices is mainly due to the difference in the degree of surrender. Those who have fulfilled all the six qualifications of Śaraṇāgati, perfectly in their lives, get immediate response from the Lord. Failure in achieving our goal even after making various efforts, is due to the absence of absolute Śaraṇāgati, without any reservations. This indeed, is the very life of Śaraṇāgati. It is the one vital force that makes all other qualities of Śaraṇāgati fully energetic. If we have real confidence in Him as our Saviour, the rest of the duties automatically accompany.

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97 *viśvasya yah sthiti-layodbhava-hetur ādya*

*yogeśvarair api duratyaya-yogamāyah*

*kṣemam vidhāsyati sa no bhagavāns tryadhīśa*

*tatrāsmadīya-vimṛśēna kiyān ihārthaḥ*

*(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.16.37)*

If this substantial principle is absent, the remaining functions are lifeless. This is like the main trunk of a tree to which the other five principles are depending branches. This noble idea is exemplified in the following Ślokas:-

"O Protector of cows! O Ocean of Mercy! O Lord of Lakṣmī! O Destroyer of Kāṁsa! O Embodiment of compassion with regard to Gajendra! O Mādhava! O younger brother of Balarāma! O Preceptor of the three worlds! O Lotus-eyed! O Lord of the Gopīs! Protect me, I know nobody besides Thee."<sup>98</sup>

"O Supreme Lord! For the innumerable Jīvas living in the infinite number of worlds Thou art alone the Father; Thou art alone the Mother; Thou art alone the Beloved Son; Thou art alone the real Friend; Thou art alone the real Benefactor; Thou art along the preceptor; and thou are the Sole Refuge for all. I too belong to Thee, I am Thy servant, and Thou art my Goal. I offer myself at Thy feet. It is evidently certain that I too am to be protected by Thee alone."<sup>99</sup>

### 610. *Self-dedication to the Lord*

All the activities of a self-surrendered soul are guided by the Lord Himself. Service of the Lord is his motto. A surrendered Sādhaka feels that he is neither the regulator, guide, nor the dictator of his own life and activities. He loyally attributes these functions to the Supreme Lord. He is thoroughly confident that the Lord is the Guiding Agent behind each and every action of his. He becomes wholly subservient to the wishes of Bhagavān. His individual ego is completely surrendered at the Feet of the Lord. He has firm belief in all the wonderful powers of the Almighty Lord. Being

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98he gopālaka he kṛpā-jalanidhe he sindhu-kanyā-pate  
he kāmśāntaka he gajendra-karuṇā-pārīṇa he mādhaba  
he rāmānuja he jagat-traya-guro he puṇḍarikākṣa mām  
he gopījana-nātha pālaya param jānāmi na tvām vinā  
(śrī mukunda-mālā-stotra 44)

99pitā tvam mātā tvam dayita-tanayas tvam priya-suhṛt  
tvameva tvam mitram gurur api gatiś cāsi jagatām  
tvadīyas tad-bhṛtyas tava parijanas tad-gatir aham  
prapannaś caivam sa tv aham api tavaivāsmi hi bhavāḥ  
(stotra-ratna 57)

independent of the Lord is the cause of the Jīvas being immersed in sins. Submission to Him is the only remedy for it.

"Lord Keśava is never far from those who are totally free from mundane vanities. But He is separated from those under the tutelage of irrepressible arrogance by a multitude of mountains."<sup>100</sup>

When Vibhīṣaṇa from the opposite camp came to take shelter at the Feet of Śrī Rāmacandra, Sugrīva informed Him, that the former should not be welcomed, to which Śrī Rāmacandra replied as under:- "If anyone (let him be even My enemy) having approached Me, says even once, "O Lord! I am Thine", I always give him assurance of eternal protection, because this is My avowed practice (creed), which even I cannot transgress."<sup>101</sup>

### 611. *Prayers with repentance*

One practising surrender, while observing this last stage, is thoroughly convinced of all his inabilities and shortcomings. Recollections of the past deeds roll in his heart like waves on an ocean. He sees before him a picture of a series of his unworthy acts. He sincerely repents for all his past sinful deeds and evil propensities. He prays from the bottom of his heart. He weeps continuously before the Lord. This qualification of surrender is thus explained by a great saint in one of his devotional songs.

"My life is ever given to the commitment of sins. There is not even an iota of piety in it. There is no estimate of my misdeeds towards others. I have wounded their feelings oftentimes. I was an object of regular worry to others and have given them considerable pains. I was never afraid of committing the worst of sins for my own comforts. I was ever unkind and selfish in my attitude. It was a regular torture to me to see others in happy circumstances. I freely spoke lies and it was a pleasure to me to see others in sufferings. My heart was a repository of all evil desires. I was always given to anger

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100 *ahaṅkāra-nivṛttānāṁ keśavo na hi dūragah*

*ahaṅkāra-yutānāṁ hi madhye parvata rāśayaḥ*  
(*brahma-vaivarta purāṇa*)

101 *sakṛd eva prapanno yas tavāsmīti ca yācate*

*abhayaṁ sarvadā tasmai dadāmy-etaḥ vrataṁ mama*  
(*śrī rāmāyaṇa laṅka-kāṇḍa 18.33*)

and pride. Infatuated by worldliness, I was full of all the various vanities. Malice and pride were my ornaments which I frequently wore. Being a prey to sleep and laziness, I was devoid of any virtuous deeds, but over-zealous in evil deeds. All my actions were for winning fame in the world; full of duplicity and actuated by greed, I was a slave to lustful passions. I am a sinner who is abandoned by all virtuous souls and a worst criminal, terribly disposed to committing crimes constantly. There is not even a single virtuous deed to my credit and I am miserably disposed to evil activities. As such I fell a deplorable prey to multifarious sufferings. Now, old age has overcome me. I find not any help coming forth from any quarter. My pride is humbled, all my hopes are shattered. I am utterly helpless. O my Beloved Lord! I submit all my grievances at Your Lotus Feet."<sup>102</sup>

### **612. Submission and total self-surrender**

Submission differs from total self-surrender slightly, though usually taken to be in the same category. Śaraṇāgati leads us to the realisation of liberation and finally Divine Love. The various secrets and specialities in the vast field of Divine Love, such as Sneha, Māna, Praṇaya, Rāga, Anurāga, Bhāva, Mahābhāva, Dāsyā, Sakhya, Vāṭsalya and Mādhurya are realised only by Ātma Nivedana. Śaraṇāgati has no access to these specific realisations lying deep down the lowest depths of the Ocean of Divine Love.

Ātma Nivedana is complete surrender of one's body, mind, words, deeds, thoughts, Ātmā, and all other things that he feels or claims as his own with the knowledge of relationship and guided by predominant feeling of rendering whole-hearted service to the Lord. Ātma Nivedana has twofold characteristic, i.e. (1) Complete indifference to making any effort for one's own necessities of life, and (2) absolute dependence upon the Lord.

Śaraṇāgati is a mental attitude whereas, 'Ātma Nivedana' is complete surrender of even the soul at the Feet of the Lord. It is not attained by the study of the Śāstras or discussing philosophical problems frequently. It is effected only by the Grace of the Lord's internal potency or Svarūpa Śakti. To impress upon a huge audience the indispensable necessity of surrender, quoting innumerable striking examples

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102āmāra jīvana sadā pāpe rata nāhika pūṇyera leśa

(śaraṇāgati 5)

from different Śāstras is an easy achievement. To dilate on its marvellous benefits too is possible; but to feel its necessity in the heart of hearts, and to live up to it, constitute the most difficult problem that faces every man. Unless a man gains sufficient experience in course of his worldly sojourn, and is thoroughly convinced of his utter helplessness and the futility of his dependence on earthly objects, his pitiable condition continues to remain so for ever. As such, an inborn conviction that no other person except the Supreme Lord, is capable of saving him from the endless sufferings, he is at every moment subject to, is a favourable disposition in attaining this virtue. Automatically, he gives up all other types of worship which he was hitherto pursuing and takes complete shelter in the Supreme Lord alone.

"The Kirātas, the Hūṇas, the Āndhras, the Pulindas, the Pulkaśas, the Ābhīras, the Kaṅkas, the Yavanas, the Khasas, and such others born of sinful races, and others who by nature are given to the commitment of sins, are all delivered of their previous sins by taking shelter at the feet of those who depend upon the Lord. We offer our prostrated obeisances at the Feet of such an All-Powerful Lord!"<sup>103</sup>

"O what a wonder! Even the wicked Pūtanā, sister of the demon Baka, who, prompted by a desire to kill Śrī Kṛṣṇa, suckled Him with the most deadly poisonous breast-milk and got in return from Him attainment of the position of a foster-mother. Hence, is there anyone else more merciful than Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Whom we can offer ourselves for protection."<sup>104</sup>

"How could physical, mental, and other troubles arising from a divine source or human medium or even from that of

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103kirāta-hūṇāndhra-pulinda-pulkaśā

ābhīra-śumbhā yavanāḥ khasādayaḥ  
ye 'nye ca pāpā yad-apāśrayāśrayāḥ  
śudhyanti tasmai prabhaviṣṇave namaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 2.4.18)

104aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ

jighāṁsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī  
lebhe gatiṁ dhātry-ucitāṁ tato 'nyam  
kaṁ vā dayālum śaraṇam vrajema  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.2.23)



other inimical beings afflict one who has taken refuge in Śrī Hari.<sup>"105</sup>

"For those self-controlled men, ever addicted to Truth and who unconditionally surrender themselves at the Feet of Bhagavān Śrī Hari, Which destroy all the worldly sorrows, there is nothing that yet remains to be attained in this world."<sup>106</sup>

"To those who have taken resort to the Boat of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's tender Lotus Feet, of ever-sanctifying excellences which even great gods and saints from time immemorial have adopted as their Sole Support, the Vast sea of worldly existence appears as insignificant as a calf's footmark of water. They cross this with the least difficulty. To them the attainment of their Final Goal Vaikuṇṭha, is always free from any obstacles."<sup>107</sup>

"O Lord! Those who have taken shelter under the Dust of Your Lotus Feet, never covet from You any reward, such as kingdom of heaven, sovereignty over the earth, the high position of Brahmā, rulership of the uppermost heavens, attainment of supernatural Yogic powers, or even Mokṣa itself which puts an end to the repeated cycle of births and deaths."<sup>108</sup>

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105śārīrā mānasā divyā vaiyāse ye ca mānuṣāḥ

bhautikāś ca katham kleśā bādhante hari-saṁśrayam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.22.37)

106kim durāpādanam teṣāṁ puṁsām uddāma-cetasām

yair āśritas tīrtha-padaś caraṇo vyaśnātyayaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.23.42)

107samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavam

mahat-padam puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ  
bhavām budhir vatsa-padam param padam  
padam padam yad vipadām na teṣām  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.58)

108na nāka-prṣṭham na ca sārva-bhaumam

na pārameṣṭhyam na rasādhipatyam  
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavam vā  
vañchanti yat-pāda-rajah-prapannāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.16.37)

"O Lord! Truly You are the Beloved of devotees, ever truthful friendly, and extremely grateful for the services rendered. Which wise man, ignoring You (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) would take protection under any other god or goddess? If anyone at any time has rendered any insignificant service to You, You in exchange of such services grant all his desires. Even with that You are not satisfied, You give away even Yourself Who are eternally free from growth and decay."<sup>109</sup>

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109 *kaḥ paṇḍitas tvad aparāṁ śaraṇaṁ samīyād  
bhakta-priyād ṛta-giraḥ suhṛdaḥ kṛta-jñāt  
sarvān dadāti suhṛdo bhajato 'bhikāmān  
ātmānam apy upacayāpacayau na yasya  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.48.26)*

## 7 Haridāsa Ṭhākura AND THE KAZI

FOR sometime Ṭhākura Haridāsa lived at Fulia, a village situated on the banks of the river Ganges, midway between Ranaghat and Śāntipura, in the district of Nadia, West Bengal. Fulia was very near to Śāntipura, where Śrī Advaita Ācārya was residing. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was delighted beyond measure to have the company of Advaita Ācārya. Saturated with ineffable joy, he spent his days in chanting the Name of the Lord. Unattached to the mundane objects and undisturbed by the ups and downs of the transitory world, he was swimming in the Ocean of Transcendental Bliss.

### 71. *Ṭhākura and the inhabitants of Fulia*

Loudly uttering the Name 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa', Haridāsa Ṭhākura frequently roamed on the banks of the river Ganges with great joy. Having no attachment to the fleeting pleasures of the world, he was the best of the ascetics. He never refrained from uttering the Holy Name, even for a moment. By the influence of the higher qualities of Bhakti, he experienced various moods. He danced, sang, wept, laughed, rolled on the ground; in short, he had all over his body signs of spiritual perturbations of Divine Rapture, that a highly advanced devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa would experience. The moment Haridāsa Ṭhākura started dancing, all the above signs of loving devotion made their appearance on his body. O! What a wonderful overflow of spiritual bliss! It drenched every limb of his, the sight of which transported even the worst of atheists with joy. These wonderful and uncommon signs of devotion that were visible on the charming person of Haridāsa Ṭhākura impressed beyond measure even great gods like Śiva and Brahmā, not to speak of others. All the Brāhmaṇa inhabitants of the village were highly impressed by his marvellous achievements in the field of devotion. Most of them accepted him as a great saint. Haridāsa Ṭhākura continued to stay there. After taking his bath in the Ganges and incessantly chanting the holy Name loudly, he roamed about freely in all the surrounding places near about.

This action of Ṭhākura Haridāsa was not well appreciated by a certain section of the Brāhmaṇas and more especially the Muslim population there. They joined in opposition and took exception even to this most harmless and highly beneficial action of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. To the Hindus and the Muslim opponents, it was a grave violation of the social custom. All these people regarded religion as a bundle of narrow dogmas and queer restrictions.

## 72. *Complaint against Ṭhākura*

On the western side of Bhāgīrathī (Ganges) lay the township of Ambua. A Nawab (Governor), a Powerful royal officer-in-charge of the administration of the town and surrounding villages was having his headquarters there. The Brāhmaṇa opponents of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who had in them a deep rooted enmity towards the devotees of the Lord, conspired with the local Muslims and came to a unanimous agreement to punish Haridāsa Ṭhākura for creating social disorder. The matter was reported to the Kazi, the Muslim priest as well as the local administrator, who after making a thorough investigation of the whole case, decided to bring the matter to the notice of his superior officer, the Governor at Ambua. Accordingly, the Kazi himself went to the Governor and apprised him of the whole case and requested him to punish Haridāsa Ṭhākura in a fitting manner for his guilt of changing his religion from Islam to Hinduism.

The Governor too was not a broad-minded man. He was also a cruel-hearted person. Forthwith he issued orders to arrest Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Within a short period, Haridāsa Ṭhākura was produced before him. By the causeless Mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Haridāsa Ṭhākura was not afraid of death even, not to speak of the Muslim Governor and his wicked advisers. The virtuous and devoted inhabitants of Fulia felt immoderate sorrow at this most unwise action of the Government authorities in imprisoning a great saint, such as Haridāsa Ṭhākura and depriving them of his happy and inspiring company.

## 73. *Ṭhākura and the convicts*

Without the least hesitation, the cruel Governor cast him into a prison like an ordinary felon. There were at that

time many others imprisoned. As soon as the arrest of Ṭhākura Haridāsa reached their ears, they experienced a great joy from the bottom of their hearts. They thought, that since Haridāsa Ṭhākura being a devotee of the highest order, his mere glimpse would bring to an end the miseries of their present prisoner's life. Hence, all of them requested their warders to afford them an opportunity to have a glance of the great devotee when he passed their quarters. After a short period he came to the very place where all of them were eagerly expecting him. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was greatly moved in his heart to see them all in such earnestness. His soft and compassionate heart yielded to those convicts. He silently showered his blessings on them. The personality of Haridāsa Ṭhākura impressed them deeply. His hands extended as far as his knees, a rare sign in any ordinary mortal; his moonlike face with eyes similar to lotus petals added to the charm of his matchless appearance. The very sight of the most handsome and revered personality of Ṭhākura Haridāsa made all the prisoners present there to bow down with a natural impulse of regard and devotion. Their feelings had their consequent results. Sincere longings even of a momentary nature can never be a failure. The sweet wishes of Haridāsa Ṭhākura were not in vain. All of them felt in their hearts a flash of unparalleled joy which brought in them a great change in the form of loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Haridāsa Ṭhākura noticing the circumstances in the midst of which they were for the moment, blessed them smilingly thus:—"God bless you! May you all continue to remain forever as you are at present." Those poor prisoners felt utterly disappointed at the words of Haridāsa Ṭhākura from whom they were expecting a blessing that would surely save them from the fetters of prison life. Yes, they totally failed to grasp his kind intentions. They could not catch the meaning underlying the expression of his. Finding that all of them were disheartened by misunderstanding his words, he made haste to explain the hidden meaning of his expressions. He said, "I suppose you all feel miserably disappointed over my words of blessings which I used just now. You have utterly misunderstood the real meaning of my words. I never bless anybody in a way that would bring mishap to him. If you just try to think deeper, you will surely be convinced of my intention. Do not feel sorry over my words. Let the minds of all of you remain absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa as is your state at present. This attitude that you are fortunate to have in you now, is highly beneficial to you. May you all from this moment jointly chant the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and think of Him constantly. At

present, the minds of all of you are entirely free from any evil thought of malice, oppression to other fellow beings and such other vices. Meditate on Śrī Kṛṣṇa incessantly, taking His Name in all humility. If you plunge into the material world once again, you are sure to forget Him by the influence of evil company. True love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is unattainable by one who is deeply absorbed in worldliness or who is in the company of the worldly-minded. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is farther than the farthest star in the heavens to one who is madly hunting after life's transitory pleasures. But to one who has completely surrendered his all to Him and who seeks earnestly to love Him, 'He is closer to him than his very breath, nearer than hands and feet'. A mind that is engrossed in enjoying mundane objects is the worst impediment towards God-realisation. As long as there is present in you an iota of desire to satisfy the cravings of your material senses, so long the chances of attaining devotion to the Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa remain slender.

The service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and that of the objects of sense-enjoyments are the extreme opposite poles. A 'forgotten soul', who has in him no leanings towards the service of the Supreme Lord, wastes his valuable time on worldly topics. 'Time and tide wait for no man'. With an unimaginable speed, time fleets fast. If by the causeless Mercy of the Supreme Lord, one is fortunate enough to get the company of pure devotees at this stage, he will be extricated from this whirlpool of worldliness, and a tendency to the service of Bhagavān will be infused in him. "All those offences from which you are free at present, will once again make you a target for their attacks when you mix with the people of this world. That is the invariable nature of the world and its relationship. Understand this as the substance of all that I wished to convey to you. You could not grasp it, and you misunderstood me. I never desired that you should continue to remain in this prison for life, nor did I bless you to that purpose. Forget this transitory world and its fleeting pleasures and constantly utter the Sweet Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. May you all be blessed with unflinching devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa." After delivering a soul-stirring sermon and showering his blessings on all those prisoners present there, Haridāsa Ṭhākura reached the Governor.

## 74. *Ṭhākura and the Governor*

The Governor had taken Haridāsa Ṭhākura to be an ordinary man; but when he saw his impressive figure and striking personality, he had to change his view. He offered him a seat with great respect. The Governor asked him in a familiar tone, "Brother! What is wrong with you? How are you given to this peculiar disposition? It goes without saying that of all the communities in the world, the Muslim community is the best, you are extremely fortunate to have taken birth in a noble community. Why then are you given to the practices of Hindus who are socially our inferiors? You have transgressed the religion of your race and adopted other methods of conduct in your life. By such improper behaviour in the present life, how can you expect deliverance in the next world? For the misdeeds you have already committed out of ignorance, you are guilty of grave sins. 'It is no use crying over spilt milk'. Try to free yourself from the sin that you have incurred. I shall give you a bit of advice that would save you from your present critical situation. Utter the 'Kalma' of our noble faith and get reinitiated into our religion and that will be the end of the whole trouble. I am of the firm opinion that it is the only solution to meet the situation."

## 75. *Ṭhākura's exposition of religious principles*

On hearing the words of the Governor, infatuated by the deluding energy (Māyā) of Godhead, Haridāsa Ṭhākura could not suppress laughter. He was greatly astonished over the wonderful skill of Māyā in deluding unlucky souls about the true knowledge of the Lord and His eternal religion. He burst out amidst laughter: "Wonderful is the illusory power of Śrī Viṣṇu!" And continued in sweet words, "Listen, dear sir! God is One for all. He is the One Eternal Object of worship without a second, for all, Hindus or Muslims. For young and old, Hindu and non-Hindu, for man and woman, He and He alone is the Supreme Godhead. Those ignorant Hindus and Muslims, who have no knowledge about the true nature of Godhead, are solely responsible for these unpleasant rivalries in religion. They create separate gods, lay the foundation for unnecessary foolish quarrels, which lead to unfortunate developments of bitterness amongst the members of both the sections. If you can forget all these petty, narrow, bigoted, and fanatic feelings for a while and try to understand with an

impartial mind, the real Truth, by holding both the Purāṇas of the Hindus and the Koran of the Muslims as sound authorities in judging such matters, then and then alone we will be in a position to understand that they speak of the same Truth. Both the Purāṇas and the Koran remarkably agree on this issue. It is the self-same eternal entity, the Embodiment of Perfection, the Indivisible Truth, the Supreme Lord, the Indestructible by nature that resides in the hearts of one and all. The inhabitants of all the worlds function in accordance with the guidance which the same Supreme Lord instils in their minds. "O Arjuna! The Supreme Lord is directing all Jīvas like toys wire-pulled by a machine from behind, by His external potency Māyā and dwells as the Indwelling Monitor in the hearts of all jīvas."<sup>110</sup>

The Name and Glories of the same Lord are sung by all people in every part of the world according to the declaration of their respective scriptures. But, the same Godhead accepts the inner motives underlying the actions of all persons. Any act of contempt against any of His creatures is verily a contempt shown against Himself. Hence, it is not advisable to show any hatred towards any of the creations of the Almighty Lord. By forcibly making one denounce his natural feelings and thrusting upon him the narrow views of another, great injustice is done to all other religions of the world which, again, is a gross contempt of the Supreme Lord, the One Object of worship of all these different schools of thoughts. Often we confuse the words 'service' and 'contempt' of the Lord. People, forgetting the love of Godhead, become the slaves to many creeds and practices in this world. Arresting their present courses of action, which are really detrimental to their everlasting good, is not to be confused as contempt for any religion or disregard to Godhead Himself. On the contrary, if instead of enlightening them with proper religious Truths and turning their mental disposition towards the Eternal Service of the Lord, any work is offered to them that engrosses them all the more in material environments and finally ends in their total perdition, it is not a sign of any kindness to them. In fact, it is a great injustice done to them. Such actions, though they outwardly appear as kindness and sympathy, are to be completely avoided.

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110īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṃ hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati

bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā

(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 18.61)



Hence, I am acting in the way, the Lord has been pleased to guide my mind. The progress of a soul in the service of the Lord, entirely depends upon the causeless Mercy of the Lord Himself. We advance only to that extent, to which He permits us to proceed. "Those who worship Me with a loving heart, and are ever intent on communion with Me, are endowed by Me with such unmixed love, born of pure intelligence, as enables them to attain My Blissful Abode."<sup>111</sup> If a Brāhmaṇa, discarding his religion, embraces the faith of Islam, how do you account for it? How can you check these happenings? The deeds of every person are his own concern. Influenced by certain instincts, beings perform actions in this world. Those actions themselves, pay them in their own coin since actions have always their reactions accompanying them. There is no further necessity, of imposing special punishment on them. What is the good of killing one, who has already committed suicide? 'As you sow, so you must reap'. Good sir! Please judge my case now. If you still feel that I am guilty of any offence, you can punish me.

## 76. *Religious rivalry - Its basis*

There was a big gathering present to hear this peculiar case. All the Muslims gathered there, were highly satisfied by the genuine words of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. All religions of the world, have many ideas common in them, that can impress the followers of any religion. When we undergo a careful study of all religions, we come across two important aspects in them, viz., the 'generic' and the 'specific'. The generic teachings of all religions of the world are more or less of a similar nature. But, the entire difference and rivalry arise when we expound religion in the 'specific way'. The specific study of any religion, clearly deals with all the intrinsic, and subtle problems in a profound sense. As Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not go deeply into the specific aspects of the belief he was following, he could easily impress the common Truths of religion even upon the Muslim audience.

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111teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam

dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te

(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 10.10)

## 77. *Sanātana Dharma - All-embracing religion*

In fact, our noble religion 'Sanātana Dharma', inculcated by the Supreme Lord Himself, on the strong foundations of the infallible scriptures, has marvellous features in it. All the religions of the world, can be easily and beautifully accommodated into it. The various view of the different schools of thoughts, do find a meeting ground, in this eternal religion, known as 'Hinduism'. It is splendidly rich in philosophical achievements, and highly advanced theological realisations, which are reinforced with inspiring rules of social and moral principles, in the day to day life of mankind. This religion claims its origin in the Eternal Lord Himself. "It is not founded by Ṛṣis or Yogīs, Jñānīs or Karmīs - no, not even by celestial beings. **Bhagavān Himself is its Founder.**"<sup>112</sup> He expresses in the Gītā, "I am the One to be known in the Vedas and It is I Who am the Author of the Vedānta and the Knower of it as well."<sup>113</sup> As it originates from Bhagavān, it is known by the name 'Bhāgavata Dharma'. Its jurisdiction is very vast. It is a veritable repository of different creeds. As such, it claims the widest range, beginning from the lowest stage, of dedication of all actions, to the highest attainments of Transcendental Love. It also provides its followers with realisations of all the different aspects of the Absolute Reality.

## 78. *Kaṣi's reaction on Ṭhākura's exposition*

Though Haridāsa Ṭhākura, could win the hearts of all the persons present there by his lucid exposition of Truth, he could not convince the sinful Kaṣi. He possessed an adamant heart, with no particle of human kindness in it. He

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112dharmam tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītaṁ  
na vai vidur ṛṣayo nāpi devāḥ  
na siddhamukhyā asurā manuṣyāḥ  
kuto nu vidyādhara-cāraṇādayaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.3.19)

113vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo  
vedānta-kṛd veda-vid eva cāham  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 15.15)

said to the Governor, "Let him be punished. This wicked person will mislead many others, and ruin their lives. Denouncing our noble religion, the ideal that he has now set up, i.e., establishing the prominence of Hindu religion, will unfailingly pave the path for many others in the near future to follow in his footsteps. This will bring total discredit upon the Muslim race. Hence, in order to remove such a slur on our society, Haridāsa must be severely punished. If not, let Haridāsa Ṭhākura repent for his sinful deeds, accept his guilt, and follow the sublime Muslim scriptures." Kazi is a religious authority, and hence, his words could not be ignored. So, once again on the appeal of the Kazi, the Governor spoke to Haridāsa Ṭhākura. "Dear brother! Give up the practices of Hindus, and come back once again to our fold, recite our own scriptures, and be relieved of all these unnecessary worries. This is the only alternative for you now, if not, all the Kazis together, will impose heavy punishment upon you. Once again I warn you. In the long run, you will have to repeat our scriptures. Why should you suffer unnecessarily?"

### 79. *Ṭhākura's firm determination*

Haridāsa Ṭhākura was more firm in his faith and convictions than all of them put together in theirs. Neither the suggestions, nor the threatening attempts of the Governor, or the Kazis could make any change in the firm attitude of Ṭhākura Haridāsa. He said, "None can go against the wishes of the Almighty Lord. Whatever the Lord wills one to do, he does the same. There is no power on the infinite number of worlds, that can revolt against God's Will. Be rest assured, that the fruits of one's actions, are befittingly rewarded by the ever just hands of God. The punishment for the various offences committed by ourselves are awarded by the same Almighty Lord. 'Thy will be done'. 'Even if my body is cut to pieces, and my soul leaves the body, I will not give up chanting of Śrī Hari Nāma.'"<sup>114</sup>

What a brilliant example of firm determination, and a noble ideal of extraordinary will power! For every aspirant marching towards God-realisation, this example of Haridāsa

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114khaṇḍa khaṇḍa hai deha yāya yadi prāṇa  
 tabu āmi vadane nā chāḍi hari-nāma  
 (śrī caitanya-bhāgavata ādi 16.94)

Ṭhākura, is like a guiding star. Anything that is genuine tending to our eternal good, is often beset with obstacles of obstinate nature. Unless the aspirant is firmly disposed to meet every hindrance, that occurs in his path, his progress becomes impeded, and disappointment only is in store for him. He must be prepared to face, any of these emergencies, with a cool brain. A firm determination, coupled with patience, that stands any test, can stem all the onslaughts, that are aimed, against our attempts. There is a wise proverb, which is worth recollecting always, 'Patience and perseverance will overcome mountains'. These two qualifications aid his cause to a degree that is beyond words. One of the four qualifications, mentioned by Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, for the constant chanting of the Holy Name is endurance greater than that of a tree. Let these words of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, ring always in his ears. Let them be branded on his brain. Let them make deep and permanent impressions in his weak heart, so that by following in his footsteps, and through his causeless mercy, he also can get strength to face all such obstacles on his religious path, with courage, and attain success in reaching his goal.

### 710. *The cruel judgement*

The words of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, were like piercing shafts, released from a powerful bow. Everyone, there, was taken by great surprise. The Governor felt frustrated in dissuading Ṭhākura Haridāsa. Noticing, the strong resolve of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, he asked the Kazis, "What is your next move?" The wicked Kazis replied, "Let him be whipped in all the twenty-two streets of the town. That alone would open his eyes. He will understand the result of his sin, committed by taking the Name of Hindu God. Take out his life and have no consideration for him. If he continues to survive even after severe whippings, in all the twenty-two streets, then we shall believe the statement of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. If he succumbs to the whippings we are satisfied that he is severely punished for his grave offence."

On the advice of the Kazis, the Governor ordered his men in a loud voice. "Whip him in all the twenty-two streets of the town. Execute your work, in such a way, that he should not survive. Being born as a Muslim, he practises Hinduism. Deliverance from such a sin, is possible only, at the heavy cost of his life itself." By the orders of the Kazis, and the Governor, a group of wicked men - nay brutes - caught hold of Haridāsa

Ṭhākura. They whipped him mercilessly, from street to street. Haridāsa Ṭhākura meditated, on the blessed Name 'Kṛṣṇa' continuously.

Deeply absorbed in the incomparable joy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma, Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not feel, what was happening to him. He never felt any physical pain at all. The good and pious people of the town, were shocked at the sight of this heinous work. They felt greatly grieved at heart. But, what could they do? Some said, "The whole country is doomed, on account of this crime of torturing a saint, like Haridāsa Ṭhākura." Some fired a round of curses on the Ruler, whereas, some did not hesitate to organise even a regular riot. Some fell at the feet, of those wicked ruffians, in charge of whipping Haridāsa Ṭhākura, and offered tempting bribes, thinking that, such offers might soften their hearts, and make them desist from such severe beatings. These actions of the people, did not melt the stony-hearts of those cruel servants, of the wicked Governor. Without the least pity, they executed the order entrusted to them. They appeared as it were a separate creation, in whom the softness of the human hearts was utterly absent. By the continued executions of such orders, they were rendered absolutely devoid of any feelings in them. Above all, the strict orders of their master, urged them still more to the work. By the causeless Mercy or Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not feel the slightest pain, in spite of such inhuman punishment.

Just as in the days of yore, the various tortures perpetrated by the Asuras, under the orders of Hiranyakaśipu, on the person of the great Prahlāda, proved an utter failure, even so, the continuous and pernicious whipping of those wicked ruffians, did not do any harm to Ṭhākura Haridāsa. This extraordinary endurance is the innate virtue of genuine Bhaktas. They remain so much intoxicated in the eternal service of the Supreme Lord, that they never feel the pains and sorrows of the various harassments inflicted on them by the demoniac elements of the material world. As one of the qualifications, for constantly chanting Śrī Hari-Nāma, we have already seen, that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has asked us to be more enduring than even a tree. If the devotees in daily life, get easily upset, and intolerant by the external events, their progress towards the goal is hampered. Often we see in this world, that the sincere exponents of Truth, are persecuted for no faults of their own. They have to face oppositions from a quantitative majority.

## 711. *Ṭhākura's compassion on the persecutors*

It is not that only Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not feel any mortal agony; but even those who remember with faith the great saint in such straits, can overcome their sufferings and calamities. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was feeling sorry, for those innocent persons, who were involved in this terrible crime. He repeatedly prayed to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to shower His blessings on those innocent Jīvas, and pardon them for all their offences. Such wishes, for the welfare of even one's enemies, could never come out from a selfish man of this world. None, except the magnanimous devotees of the Lord, who are free from any prejudice can cherish such a wish. Men of the world are addicted to selfish pursuits. They always try to keep the other Jīvas, in subjection to themselves, by exercising brute force over them. To achieve their selfish purposes, even the worst of the tyrants, do not change their cruel disposition. Even those, who appear to be apparently liberal, are keeping appearances, for their own purposes, and for earning a reputation in society.

All these people beat him severely, from street to street. They whipped him with all the force they could muster to end his life. But to their extreme surprise, there was not even the least change in Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He was oblivious of what was happening to his physical body, as he remained lost in Divine Bliss. He looked as lively and cheerful as he was ever. They wondered over this fact again and again. They could not get a satisfactory clue to it. They thought with great astonishment amongst themselves. "Is it possible for any human being to stand such heavy beatings? Usually by the beating in two or three streets, men are killed. Whereas, we have beaten him with extreme severity, in all the twenty - two streets of the town. Let alone the idea of bringing death to him; it is wonderful that he laughs very often. As the people remark, is he actually some Pīra (Muslim saint)?" Thus thinking, these wicked men said to Haridāsa Ṭhākura. "Well, Haridāsa! You will be the cause of our destruction. It is indeed strange, that even such continuous, and vehement whippings, have not resulted in your death! We have beaten you to our utmost capacity. We are now completely exhausted, and there is not more strength left in us. Still, we are threatened with a heavy punishment, if our beatings do not cause your death. Our superior authorities would not trust us. Kazis will

certainly get enraged, and put us to death for our negligence in executing their orders."

On hearing these pitiable expressions of those people, Haridāsa Ṭhākura said with a smile. "If by my survival any ill-luck befalls you even after your continuous beating me for long, I am the last person to wish it. Hence, in order to prevent such a calamity, and in your best interest, I shall give up my life now itself. You need not have the least doubt about it; you may witness it now." So saying, Haridāsa Ṭhākura engaged himself in deep concentration of the Supreme Lord. It did not take much time for him to lose world-consciousness. Within the next few moments, the great Haridāsa Ṭhākura became absolutely motionless. There was no sign of life on any part of the body. Those ruffians were greatly surprised at this sudden change in Haridāsa Ṭhākura. How could those unlucky sinners know about the superhuman powers of Haridāsa Ṭhākura? They took him to be dead. They bore his body and laid it down at the door-steps of the Governor's residence. The Governor immediately ordered them to remove his body for burial.

Even to this order, as to the disposal of the body, the cruel Kazi had his own opposition. He had his own explanation, which was purely based on his religious belief. He said, "If his body is buried after death, he is sure to attain salvation. In spite of his birth in a high family, and in a superior faith he was used to mean acts. Hence, he must be properly made to pay for the unpardonable sin he has committed." According to the religious belief of this brute of a Kazi, if the body of such a person is buried, he attains everlasting good, whereas, if it is thrown in the Ganges, he will suffer endless miseries.

This evil-minded Kazi, who was supposed to be an authority in matters concerning religion, had now exposed his heart to a greater extent than before. He was determined to wreak vengeance on Haridāsa Ṭhākura even after his death. He wished him to take birth continuously amongst the Hindus, and to suffer heavily in all his births, as a penalty for taking the Name of Hindu God.

On the instructions of the Kazi, his employees lifted the body of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, to be thrown into the Ganges. During this time Haridāsa Ṭhākura, was deeply absorbed in the meditation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and tasting the ineffable joy arising from it. His body became so heavy that they could not move it, in spite of their great efforts. The Divine Lord, in Whose contemplation Haridāsa Ṭhākura remained thus absorbed,

made a special Descent into his body. The appearance of the All-Powerful Lord, the Upholder of the infinite number of worlds, into the body of Ṭhākura Haridāsa, made it unbearably heavy. Haridāsa Ṭhākura himself was floating in the eddies of the Nectarine Ocean of Divine Bliss. He was totally absorbed in his meditation, and as such, he was free from any gross feelings. He did not know where he was, whether he was in the air, on the bare earth, or in the flowing waters of the sacred Ganges. The devotion exhibited by the great Prahlāda in days of hoary antiquity, by meditation on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the only illustration that can be adduced with reference to this particular incident. Śrīmad Bhāgavata states that Prahlāda had in him a natural instinct for devotion to Bhagavān Śrī Vāsudeva. He never used to waste his time in boyish games, as other boys of his age. By giving up all such useless sports, he used to engage himself single-mindedly in the meditation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. By the effect of such meditation, he became saturated with the incessant flow of the Lord's contemplation, and as a result was absolutely unconscious of the physical world. His routine work, such as taking food, walking, sleeping, drinking water, etc. went on undisturbed like the movements of an automation.<sup>115</sup> A similar incident from the Rāmāyaṇa can be narrated here. When Indrajita, the son of Rāvaṇa, could not catch Hanumān, he aimed the infallible Brahmāstra at the latter by which he (Hanumān) fell down stunned and submitted himself to the blow to show his due respect to it.<sup>116</sup>

In the same manner, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, too, received the whippings of these wicked people, for setting a living example of the highest order of tolerance before the world.

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115sa tat-kara-sparśa-dhutākhlāśubhaḥ

sapady abhivyakta-parātma-darśanaḥ  
tat-pāda-padmaṁ hṛdi nirvṛto dadhau  
hṛṣyat-tanuḥ klinna-hṛd-aśru-locanaḥ

astauṣīd dharim ekāgra manasā susamāhitaḥ  
prema-gadgadayā vācā tan-nyasta-hṛdayekṣaṇaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.9.6-7)

116brahma astra te hi sāmīdhā kapi mana kīṇha vicārā

jām na brahma sara māṇauṁ mahimā mihai apāra  
(śrī rāma-carita-mānasa, pr.533, su. ka., dro. 9)



Haridāsa Ṭhākura proves in action what he has already once spoken to the Governor and Kazi with great emphasis. "If I am to face Himalayan hardships and if my body is chopped off, and if life itself departs from my body, yet, I will not give up the chanting of Śrī Hari's Name." The firm faith and the constant chanting of the Holy Name in the face of all risks, sacrifices, and hardships are the important teachings that Haridāsa Ṭhākura, out of his overflowing kindness, leaves to the world. Otherwise, is it possible for any one, in all the worlds, even in dream, to harm Haridāsa Ṭhākura, whose Protector is none else than Govinda, the Supreme Lord Himself? All the suffering of humanity come to an end by mere recollection of Ṭhākura Haridāsa. Hence, how can anyone think of offending him?

Even after a regular struggle to lift the body of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, by the strongest of the employees, they could not succeed. Later on, the Lord willed Haridāsa Ṭhākura to allow himself to be thrown by them in the sacred Ganges. He floated in the flowing stream. By the Divine Will, he regained his consciousness soon. Saturated with incomparable joy, he came ashore, and chanting loudly as usual the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he came to Fuliā once again.

All the Muslim inhabitants of the place were highly impressed by the marvellous powers of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. They realised his greatness. They were freed from all malice. Their hearts were purified. They regarded him as a great Pīra. They bowed down to him in all humility. By the unaccountable mercy of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, all the Muslims there got deliverance.

## **712. *Enemies of Ṭhākura humbled***

Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who was all along in a mood of divine rapture, got back to his external consciousness in a short while. On receipt of information from the local public, the Governor himself hastened to the presence of Haridāsa Ṭhākura to have his sight. The merciful and great Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not look down upon the Governor and he had no idea to avenge himself for all the atrocities perpetrated by the Governor. He received the Governor with a merciful and smiling glance. This charming and uncommon behaviour of Haridāsa Ṭhākura penetrated deep into the innermost chamber of the Governor's heart. It left a permanent impression on him, unchangeable for lives to come. With all

sense of reverence and with folded hands, the Governor humbly uttered thus: -"Verily, indeed, I am now thoroughly convinced that you are a Pīra. You have really realised the knowledge of the One and it is well proved beyond any doubt. The large host of Yogīs and Jñānīs only made a false claim by their high sounding words, but you have firmly attained it through incomparable joy of Lord's meditation. I have come over here to obtain a sight of you. O high-souled one! Forget and forgive all my offences. Everyone is equal in your view; you have neither a friend nor a foe. There is none in all the three worlds who can understand you in your essential nature. You may freely move anywhere at your sweet will. You are at perfect liberty to do so. You may continue to stay at your solitary cell on the banks of the Ganges. Have your own choice, stay wherever you like, and do whatever that pleases you. Nothing worldly can bind you."

The glory of Haridāsa Ṭhākura is indescribable. Not to speak of those good natured inhabitants, the hard-hearted and prejudiced Muslims themselves forgot all their bitter feelings towards him by his mere sight. What a miraculous change? With burning wrath they brought him to the Governor to take out his very life, but lo! The marvel of marvels! His extraordinary patience and implicit faith in Godhead brought about a wonderful change in them, particularly in the Governor. He saw in Haridāsa Ṭhākura a true messenger of Godhead. The wicked man repented for all his offences and without the least hesitation requested pardon for all his evil deeds. All fell at his feet, recognising him as a great Pīra. In spite of the severe persecution, the magnanimous Ṭhākura Haridāsa blessed all those Muslims.

### 713. *Ṭhākura on his persecution*

Ṭhākura Haridāsa now returned peacefully to Fulia. Loudly chanting the Name of Śrī Hari, he arrived at the assembly of the Brāhmaṇas. They gave him a hearty reception. They were extremely joyful to have once again Ṭhākura Haridāsa in their midst. They greeted the occasion with loud shouting of Śrī Hari-Nāma with inexpressible delight. Haridāsa Ṭhākura danced with indescribable delight. Marvellous signs of spiritual perturbations manifested on his body. Tears, shivering, laughter, swooning, hair standing on end, etc., were distinctly visible on him. Intoxicated with Divine Love he now and then fell and rolled on the ground.

Witnessing these wonderful signs of Transcendental Love, all those assembled there were lost in an ocean of unbounded joy. After a while Haridāsa Ṭhākura slowly composed himself and took up his seat. All the Brāhmaṇas sat around him with eagerness. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was overcome by a feeling of utter humility for which he justly repented and said thus:—"O Brāhmaṇas! Please listen. I have reaped the consequences of my evil actions, in the form of hearing the blasphemies against the Lord, Who out of His causeless Mercy, punished me very lightly. I must consider myself very fortunate indeed to be thus pardoned by Him with a very mild punishment. One who hears the vilification of Śrī Viṣṇu has to undergo endless sufferings in the infernal hell known as the 'Kumbhīpāka'. I have with my sinful ears heard much of impious talks. I have borne enough of mental tortures as Punishment, lest I should repeat such conduct in future."

By thus giving instructive piece of advice, Haridāsa Ṭhākura consoled all the Brāhmaṇas present there, and performed with great joy the chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma in their company. All those wicked people who had persecuted him were ruined in a short time with all their families.

### 714. *Ṭhākura and the venomous serpent*

Haridāsa Ṭhākura lived in a solitary cell, on the banks of the river Ganges, constantly uttering Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', he chanted three lacs of the Holy Name daily. The cave was a veritable Vaikuṇṭha itself to him. A huge serpent also lived in the same cave. All the visitors to the cave suspected its presence by the unusual burning sensation prevailing there. No living being could stand the burning sensation, created by its poison. Haridāsa Ṭhākura had a good many visitors every day. None of them could bear the influence of this poison, and remain there even for a short while. But to their great surprise, they noticed Haridāsa Ṭhākura quite ignorant of this. All the Brāhmaṇas put together their heads and discussed among themselves. "Why is there so much of burning sensation in this cave of Haridāsa Ṭhākura?" There lived at Fulia many physicians who were adepts in the treatment of snakebites. On receiving information from others, they came and diagnosed the real cause of the burning sensation. Till the arrival of these physicians, none was in a position to locate definitely, the origin of such a burning sensation. One of them said, "Just beneath this cave there is an extremely poisonous serpent. I am

sure, it is its burning poisonous breath that is making impossible for any being to live in the cave. May Haridāsa Ṭhākura forthwith shift from here to some other place. It is never advisable, to live in the company of a serpent, which is always cruel by nature. Let us all go to him and earnestly request him, to leave the cave without any further delay." As suggested by the physicians, all of them approached Haridāsa Ṭhākura, apprised him of all the facts, and appealed to him to abandon it, and move to some other safer place.

On hearing the suggestions and requests of the Brāhmaṇas, and the expert physicians, Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied, "I have been here for many days. So far I have neither felt in the cave, the presence of any poisonous nor burning sensation. But I feel sorry that you feel it and its unbearable burning. So I shall leave this place tomorrow, to some other place according to your suggestion. To be frank with you, I personally do not feel the least inconvenience. But since all of you are very interested in my safety, I must certainly satisfy you. If really there dwells in the cave a huge venomous serpent, as narrated by you all, and if it does not leave the place by tomorrow, then by all means, I shall quit this cave. It is sure that, either I, or the serpent, should leave this place tomorrow. Anyhow you need not be anxious. Avoid all these fears and let us have our discourses on Śrī Kṛṣṇa. "Let all the Brāhmaṇas met here, as well as the goddess Gaṅgā herself take me to be a devotee, with my mind fixed on the Supreme Lord. Let the cheat of a Takṣaka bite me at his will, to fulfil the curse of Śṛiṅgi. I only request you to sing the Divine Glories and Excellences of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa."<sup>117</sup>

As they were thus engaged in discourses on the Transcendental Sports and Qualities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, a most wonderful event took place there. On hearing the words that Haridāsa Ṭhākura would leave the place, a huge serpent came out of its hole. In the presence of all others, it slowly went away elsewhere. All who sat there uttered the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa out of great fear. On the departure of this dreadful serpent, all of them were filled with boundless joy. They were

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117taṁ mopayātaṁ pratiyantu viprā

gaṅgā ca devī dhṛta-cittam īśe

dvijopasṛṣṭaḥ kuhakas takṣako vā

daśatv alāṁ gāyata viṣṇu-gāthāḥ

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.19.15)

now completely relieved of all their anxieties and fears due to the presence of the serpent there. The people assembled there could not at all feel any burning sensation. Overwhelmed with wonder at the marvellous power of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the Brāhmaṇas there, became very much devoted to him. People who are wicked by nature and who feel great pleasure in harming other beings, are apt to fall victims to the cruelty of snakes, etc., or the ferocious nature of other wild animals. But even serpents, cruel by nature, do not harm Mahābhāgavatas like Haridāsa Ṭhākura; why, they even readily obey all their orders. This incident is an excellent example that illustrates our case. This is actually a very insignificant proof of the powers present in Haridāsa Ṭhākura. By his mere kind glance the bondage of ignorance leaves the soul. Even the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa never opposes the words of Haridāsa Ṭhākura

## 8 Haridāsa Ṭhākura AND THE SNAKE-CHARMER

### 81. *Ṭhākura under divine rapture*

ON another occasion the King of the serpents (Nāgarāja) spoke about the glories of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Once, a certain healer of snake-bites, was giving an entertainment of a musical dance at the house of a wealthy man of that village. At that time Ṭhākura Haridāsa happened to arrive on the scene and avoiding the huge crowd, he stood on one side and watched the dance. By the efficacy of a Mantra, the King of serpents entered into the body of the dancer. In truth it was the King of serpents who danced, possessing the body of the snake-charmer, he was playing his part pretty well. The dance that was performed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the lake of Kālīya, was the subject of the pathetic song sung at a high pitch. By hearing the Glories of his Lord, by the influence of the enhancing excitant (Uddīpana), Haridāsa Ṭhākura, transported with Divine Ecstasy, fell down unconscious. There was not the least sign of life anywhere on his body. Within a short time he got back his consciousness. He thundered with incomparable joy and danced in ecstasy in manifold ways. This attracted the attention of the dancing snake-charmer. He suddenly stopped his dance, moved to one side and stood quietly allowing the great Haridāsa Ṭhākura, to have his ecstatic dance undisturbed. Haridāsa Ṭhākura rolled on the ground; all the eight spiritual perturbations, such as tears, shivering, hair standing on end, etc., manifested profusely on his body. On hearing of the incomparable display of mercy by his Beloved Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, on the cruel and wicked serpent Kālīya and on recollecting it he became saturated with His presence; he wept ceaselessly. All the spectators surrounding him, sang the Glories of the Lord. All this while, the snake-charmer witnessed the dance of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, with folded hands and with all reverence. This divine spell of inspiration of

Haridāsa Ṭhākura lasted for a short time. On its completion, the original dancer once again continued his programme as usual. All the people, gathered there to attend the performance, were highly impressed and extremely delighted by witnessing the divine trance of Ṭhākura Haridāsa. They, with excessive joy besmeared their bodies with the holy feet-dust of Haridāsa Ṭhākura.

## 82. *Artificial display of trance*

A hypocritical and ambitious Brāhmaṇa from amongst the spectators, thought that he, being a Hindu, by imitating Ṭhākura Haridāsa, would command greater respect than the latter. So he started his silly game of dancing in a mock fit of frenzy and fell down as if senseless, the snake-charmer, noticing this cheat of a devotee, approached him and mercilessly thrashed him. Unable to bear the severe beatings, the Brāhmaṇa ran for his life and was not seen again. The snake-charmer restarted his joyous dance to the astonishment of all the spectators, who humbly requested him to explain to them the cause of his strange behaviour.

## 83. *Ṭhākura eulogised*

On hearing the words of the spectators, the serpent through the mouth of the snake-charmer replied thus - "You were all moved by the devotional fervour of Ṭhākura Haridāsa and began to admire this ardent devotee. This hypocrite of a Brāhmaṇa, to gain the admiration of all of you as a devotee, started aping Ṭhākura Haridāsa, till I adequately punished him, when he ran away to save his skin." Such sort of shameless deceivers have no devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. One may attain devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa only when he is completely freed from all such insincere desires. The dance of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, which all of you have just now witnessed, is capable of bringing to an end all worldly bondage. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself dances, when Haridāsa Ṭhākura dances and the entire universe is sanctified by beholding his dance. He is worthy of his name 'Haridāsa - the servant of Śrī Hari'. Really the Beloved Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is constantly sporting in his heart. He is ever-merciful to all living beings, and a true benefactor of one and all. He appears with the Lord in every Manifestation of His. He is an eternal associate of the Lord.

Being an eternal associate, he is ever free from all offences towards Bhagavān or His Bhaktas. He does follow the wrong path even in his unguarded moments. If anyone as a result of the accumulated heaps of meritorious deeds performed in previous births, is fortunate enough to get his company even for a short while, he undoubtedly attains eternal shelter at the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Even the great gods like Brahmā, Śiva, etc., derive extreme delight in the company of such devotees and always desire their association. In order to prove the utter uselessness of caste, creed, lineage, etc., in the performance of the devotional services of Bhagavān, he has taken birth in a family of low lineage, being directed by the Lord to that effect. All the scriptures unanimously declare that a devotee of the Lord, even if born in a family of a low caste, is still an object of worship. Conversely, if even after being born of high lineage, one fails to worship the Supreme Lord, he is unworthy of any attention being bestowed upon him. His high birth leads him only to the vortex of hell.<sup>118</sup>

Like Prahlāda in the clan of demons, and Hanumān amongst the monkeys, Ṭhākura Haridāsa took his birth amongst the Muslims. Ordinarily men are always eager to get themselves purified by offerings to gods as well as by having a dip in the sacred water of the river Ganges. But, even those gods themselves long for the touch of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. The holy Ganges herself desires that Haridāsa Ṭhākura should bathe in her sacred water. Why a touch? The mere sight of Haridāsa destroys one's eternal bondage. By the sight of even those who have taken shelter in Haridāsa too, the bondage of worldliness is rooted out. You are all fortunate to enjoy the company of the glorious Haridāsa. What I told you now, is only a minute fraction of his greatness. I assure you in all sincerity that he who utters the name of Haridāsa even once will definitely attain the eternal realm of Śrī Kṛṣṇa." So saying the King of serpents concluded his narration; he became silent. All those assembled there, were highly satisfied on hearing this speech. Thus, the great serpent, a real devotee of Bhagavān Śrī Viṣṇu, proclaimed to the world the glories of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. The audience was convinced beyond a shadow of doubt about the high position of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. They loved him more than ever.

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118ya eṣāṁ puruṣāṁ sāksād ātma-prabhavam iśvaram  
na bhajanty avajānanti sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.3)



## 84. *Navadvīpa and its religious bankruptcy*

Ṭhākura Haridāsa passed his days in chanting the Name of the Lord. Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu was still silent and had not yet manifested the purpose of His Advent to the world. The world was badly in need of a religious awakening. Nowhere could one see devotion to Śrī Viṣṇu. There was a small group of devotees living at Navadvīpa. These devotees were the targets of so many unpleasant taunts and criticisms from the utterly fallen materialists. In short, conditions all around, were pathetic and pitiable. Noticing the lamentable plight of the people and their utter indifference towards the path of devotion to Śrī Viṣṇu, the magnanimous Haridāsa Ṭhākura was immoderately pained at heart. He chanted the Name of the Lord loudly. Even to this, there was opposition from the atheistic neighbours. These sinners could not bear the Name of Śrī Hari, chanted by others. The very ideal itself kindled burning wrath in them. A certain wicked Brāhmaṇa belonging to the village Harinadī in the district of Jessore in East Bengal, took serious objection to the procedure of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He lost his temper and angrily asked Haridāsa Ṭhākura. "Haridāsa! Why do you behave like this? What makes you to utter the Name so loudly? Our religion advocates only low muttering of the Name. What is your scriptural authority to chant the Name so loudly? Who taught you to shout the Name of the Lord like this? Well, here is an assembly of Paṇḍitas (scholars in Śāstras). Let them judge your say on this matter."

## 85. *The efficacies of loud chanting*

"Well my friends! Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied, "It needs no mention that you all know the marvellous Efficacy and Glory of the Divine Name. I have never read the Śāstras with the object of collecting materials for arguing with others. I have been only recapitulating what I have heard, from all Sādhus like you, who have taken recourse to the Chanting of the Name and I would, at any cost, continue the same in future as well. By taking the Name aloud, the effect is increased a hundredfold. The Śāstras do not condemn it; on the contrary, they all emphatically praise the benefits accruing from such a course. **"By loud chanting the effect is enhanced a hundredfold."** Meditation will succeed only when performed by one alone and in a lonely place, whereas,

**Saṅkīrtana can be performed either in solitude, alone or in the company of multitudes."**<sup>119</sup>

To this statement of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the Brāhmaṇa retorted. "Why should loud chanting of the Holy Name increase merit hundredfold? How do you account for this?" Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied, "Hear me, sir: The Śāstras, such as the Vedas, Śrīmad Bhāgavata, etc., have answered this fact unambiguously." Haridāsa Ṭhākura was not a layman. He had an extraordinary command over all the Śāstras. Absorbed in spiritual ecstasy, he gave an inspiring exposition on the above theme. "Listen, O Brāhmaṇa! **By hearing once the Holy Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, subhuman being - birds, insects, etc., attain the sacred realm Vaikuṇṭha.**" "For he who utters Your Name purifies forthwith not only himself, but even all others who listen to him. Hence, what doubt is there that he who is blessed by the touch of your Lotus Feet can in all respects liberate others?"<sup>120</sup>

"Beasts, birds, insects, etc., are not endowed with the power of speech. They too are the creations of the Supreme Lord. In them also there exists a soul just as in the case of us, human beings. They can be helped only by making them hear the Holy Name. They attain final liberation only by this process. They are not accessible to any other course of religious training. The muttering or the inaudible repetition

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119uccaiḥ sata-guṇaṁ bhavet

(śrī caitanya-bhāgavata ādi 16.274)

nāmā saṅkīrtana cedamuccaireva praśastam

(krama-sandarbhā)

ekākīṭvena tu dhyānaṁ vivikte khalu sidhyati

saṅkīrtanaṁ vivikte'pi bahūnāṁ saṅgato'pi ca

(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.157)

dhyānantu ekākīṭvena tatra vivikte nirjanapradāśa eva siddhyati  
khalviti evameva siddhyennānyatheti niścinoṭi | evaṁ  
bahuvighnasattayā tattadabhāve sati tasyā siddhiruktā kīrtanantu  
sadaiva siddhyatītyāhuḥ saṅkīrtanamiti

120yan-nāma grhṇann akhilān śrotṛṇ ātmānam eva ca

sadyaḥ punāti kiṁ bhūyas tasya sprṣṭaḥ padā hi te

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.34.17)

of the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa helps to attain one's own spiritual progress, whereas, loud chanting helps the good of many others who happen to hear such utterance from a genuine Bhakta. Hence, the Śāstras declare the effect to the hundredfold and advocate and praise loud chanting of the Name.

"It is proper that chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma aloud, should be hundred times better than repeating It inaudibly, as the latter sanctifies the reciters themselves, whereas, the former sanctifies all others who hear It."<sup>121</sup>

"Purāṇas praise a loud chanter of the Name a hundred times better than the low mutterer. If one, who mutters the Holy Name within himself, living in any lonely place, happens to hear other material sounds, he is likely to be led away from his cherished goal and its ultimate realisation may be put off. Being ignorant of the doctrine of name, dim reflection of the Name (Nāmābhāsa), and offensive repetition of the Name (Nāmāparādha) and their respective positions, a low mutterer of the Name is always apt to commit a grave offence and thereby deprive himself of all the real benefits of the chanting of the Name. Please hear with rapt attention the real cause of this difference between both the types of aspirants. The inaudible chanting of the Name, as I have already mentioned, helps that particular individual alone, whereas, by the loud performance of the Saṅkīrtana of Śrī Govinda, all the beings, human as well as subhuman, are delivered from the clutches of Māyā. Some are selfish in maintaining only themselves, whereas, a few help thousands of others in addition to themselves and their near ones to survive in this world. Of these two sections of people whom do you prefer most? You know yourselves. The same is applicable to the answer to your query." **From the above example we can understand that one who loudly chants the Name of the Lord is not only unselfish, but at the same time, a positively selfless and generous-hearted person. So it is obvious that the loud chanting of the Holy Name is hundred times better than muttering the same.**

**"The performance of the chant of the Name of Śrī Hari with a loud voice is alone the highest form of doing good to others. Selfish persons adopt the method of mental recitations,**

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121japato harināmāni sthāne śata guṇādhikāḥ

ātmānañca punātyuccair japan śrotrṇ punāti ca

(nāradiya purāṇa; śrī caitanya-bhāgavata, ādi 16.283)

meditations, control of the breath, etc. The supreme goal of the individual soul is not realised by such mundane endeavours. The all round good of the Jīva can be achieved by the chant of the Holy Name and discourse on Śrī Hari incessantly - without stopping for a single moment."

The above reply of Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not satisfy this stiff-necked Brāhmaṇa to the slightest extent. It only provoked his anger. He burst out in all fury. "Now, this Haridāsa has become the maker of our philosophy. In India, we are having six famous philosophies founded by six different great personalities, such as (1) Sāṅkhya by Kapila, (2) Yoga by Patañjali, (3) Vaiśeṣika by Kaṇāda, (4) Nyāya by Gautama, (5) Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā by Jaiminī, and (6) Uttara-Mīmāṃsā or Vedānta Darśana by Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa. This is an addition - the seventh one. Strange are the ways of Kali! With the passage of time our Vedic religion will come to an end when exponents like Haridāsa spring up. Who knows how many more such philosophies we may have in future? The prediction of the Sāstras that the Śūdras will expound Veda towards the end of this dark age, has even now come true. We shall not have to wait for such a long time as the end of the Yuga".<sup>122</sup>

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122"In this dark age, wealth is the criterion to judge the position of birth or ancestry, moral character and qualities of a person, and in settling principles of righteousness and justice, physical might would be the deciding factor." Bh.12.2.2

"By external marks alone, humanity would distinguish persons who belong to the Āśramas like Brahmacarya, Sannyāsa, etc., and even the change from one particular Āśrama to the other too, is effected by the same process of outer signs and dress; paying respects on occasions of mutual meetings too, are based on the same standard. Financial bankruptcy would bring utter failure in deciding matters of justice, and a flow of words is considered as a sign of wisdom and learning." Bh.12.2.4

"Poverty alone is taken to judge a man, a vicious one, while an arrogant pretender passes off as virtuous; marriages are conducted on mere verbal agreements, and a mere bath is regarded as sanctify and piety in a man." Bh.12.2.5

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"The act of visiting any source of water situated at a long distance, would be treated as pilgrimage to a holy water, rather than visiting spiritual preceptors; careful hair dressing in fashionable ways is considered grace, filling one's own belly is regarded as the sole purpose of life, audacious and vociferous expressions are accepted as sayings, maintenance of one's family is hailed as great skill truthful in action, and the purpose of performing religious functions would be necessary only for attaining name and fame in the world." Bh.12.2.6

"Void of righteousness and any sense of honesty, businessmen, all born with loathsome mentalities, carry out their transaction. Humanity even when there is no alarming or calamitous conditions, take resort to courses of living highly condemned by the righteous, taking them to be appropriate." Bh.12.3.35

"Even the best of masters, who are repositories of all virtues, are deserted by their servants, when such masters are financially depressed. Masters too, mercilessly abandon their good old servants of longstanding service and of good heredity, if they become invalid or disabled or otherwise are in difficulty; likewise people discard supporting their old cows, when they cease to yield milk." Bh.12.3.36

"In the age of Kali men will be so lamentably degraded as to become slaves of women. They will discard their parents, brothers, well-wishers, and agnates on the advice of their sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, due to centring their affection on these relations of the women, contributing to their sexual pleasures." Bh.12.3.37

"In this age of Kali people pickup unpleasant quarrels even for a single pie, forsaking all friendliness, and never hesitate even to risk their own precious and most affectionate lives, or to kill the nearest kith and kin." Bh.12.3.41

"People guided by selfish motives of gratifying their own sensual passions and voracious appetites, unscrupulously desert their old parents, their wives of noble ancestry, and their own children, and never care to protect them." Bh.12.3.42

"By expounding the Śāstras thus, you go about from house to house eating delicious food. If your explanation is not consonant with the Śāstras, I shall see that your nose and ears are cut off immediately." Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not respond to this expression of irrepressible arrogance. He received it with a smile uttering the Name of Śrī Hari. Forthwith he left the scene loudly singing the Holy Name and without giving any reply to this rank materialist, a pervert of the first magnitude. The people of the assembly there, were also of the same fibre as of the wicked Brāhmaṇa - a group of worst sinners. In a couple of days after this incident, this wretched Brāhmaṇa had to reap the bitter consequences of his action in the form of an attack of virulent small-pox which took away his nose.

The soft-hearted and merciful Haridāsa Ṭhākura felt deeply pained at heart while brooding over the condition of the world. Frequently uttering the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' he heaved deep sighs of grief. He lost all his liking to live in the midst of

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"In this Kali Yuga, misguided by the false representations of disbelievers, and deprived of proper understanding, men do not offer worship to the most glorious Primeval Lord Śrī Hari, Whose Lotus Feet are the object of devotion and reverence, to gods like Brahma, Siva, etc."

Bh.12.3.43

"People in this age, would never worship the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, Whose Name even if unconsciously uttered by a man, at his last moments of life, when he is bedridden, extremely afflicted, deprived of strength, and unable to move the limbs even, makes one attain the highest goal, completely rid of all evil bonds of Karma." Bh.12.3.44

"The Supreme Lord Śrī Puruṣottama by making His appearance in the devotional heart of one who meditates on Him, completely wipes out all evils, born during the courses of religious performances, due to defects of substance, place, and body arising by the working of Kali." Bh.12.3.45

"Men are freed from all their sins, committed in innumerable births by taking resort to listening, singing, meditating, worshipping, and reversing the glorious and omnipresent Lord and his Transcendental Deeds. It is Śrī Hari present in everyone's heart that destroys all these sins."

Bh.12.3.46

such a decaying society, and longed ardently the company of some sincere devotee, and left for Navadvīpa.

Devotion to Bhagavān has become a disappointing subject which most people dislike. Men and women appear artificial and lose themselves totally, in what we call 'creature-comforts'. The nobler qualities of humanity are not to be seen anywhere. They are replaced by irreligious living, irreligious ideologies, selfishness, hatred, narrow sectarian bias, etc.

In this dark age, many of the Āsurika persons, will be taking birth in Brāhmaṇa houses, to bring chaos and destruction to the divine social order, and to disturb the peace and happiness the really good few are enjoying. "The demons under the protection of Kali age, taking birth in Brāhmaṇa societies, would harass the few who are really versed in the scriptures."<sup>123</sup>

The above statement of the Śāstras is not an exaggeration in the least sense. What we experience in our noble land at present, is already recorded earlier. If Brāhmaṇas, the highest according to the fourfold division of caste, and hence guides of the other three castes, are to meet with such a deplorable fall from the high status of morality, devotion, celibacy, religious sacrifices, etc., what would be the condition of those who depend upon them? If roots get rotten how can a tree survive? In fact, according to the Śāstras, these are the real untouchables. All the Dharma Śāstras strictly forbid us to have any relationship with them. Those who are very proud of their seminal birth, and cherish in them an inborn hatred to Bhaktas and Bhagavān, do not deserve any relationship whatsoever. If one meets such a person, he should forthwith try to avoid them by all means. Even to have a touch of such persons, will not only pollute one, but will pave the way to unending miseries. In our present fettered state, we are more prone to the influence of evil company than those of virtuous and holy saints. When a mere touch of those persons, involves us in unhappy consequences, what to speak of bowing down to them or to have exchange of ideas with them?

"Why should I speak any further on this subject? One should never have any contact or discourse even by mistake

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123rākṣasāḥ kalim āsṛitya jāyaṇte brahma-yoniṣu

utpannā brāhmaṇa-kule bādhante śrotṛiṇāṁ kṛśān

(varāha purāṇa; śrī caitanya-bhāgavata, ādi 16.301)

with those Brāhmaṇas, who are averse to Bhagavān Śrī Viṣṇu."<sup>124</sup>

"Just as one avoids the company of a Caṇḍāla (living upon the flesh of dogs), one must not even glance at a Brāhmaṇa who has no devotion to Śrī Viṣṇu. **A devotee of Śrī Viṣṇu even if he is outside the Varnas, sanctifies the three worlds.**"<sup>125</sup>

In this phenomenal world, there is a twofold process of creation. The difference in process corresponds to a variation of aptitude in the created beings. Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā says thus:-

"In this world there are two kinds of created entities, viz., Daiva, and Asura."<sup>126</sup> Śrī Vyāsadeva supports the same statement in Padma Purāṇa with another equal version. There are two distinct classes of entities in the phenomenal world, viz., Daiva, and Āsura. The devotees of Śrī Viṣṇu are Daiva, while the Āsuras have the opposite disposition.

One kind of creation concerns itself with Devas. There is a second variety, which is constitutionally opposed to the Devas, who are possessed of an enlightened disposition and polished behaviour. The functions represented by the spiritual classification in Society, according to the dispositions and activities (Varṇāśrama), are in conformity with the Daiva nature. These twofold creations have been prevailing since time immemorial. Hiranyakaśipu and Hiranyākṣa, who lived in Satya Yuga, are designated as Asuras by reason of their hostility to Śrī Viṣṇu and Vaiṣṇavas. These two brothers were the sons of Kaśyapa Ṛṣi, who was a Brāhmaṇa. Although he was sprung from a Brāhmaṇa family, Hiranyakaśipu degenerated into an Asura, by reason of his hostility to Śrī Viṣṇu and Vaiṣṇavas. On the other hand a Vaiṣṇava or devotee of Śrī Viṣṇu may manifest his birth in an Asura family. The

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124kim atra bahunoktena brāhmaṇā ye hy avaiṣṇavāḥ  
teṣāṁ sambhāṣaṇaṁ sparśaṁ pramādenāpi varjjayet  
(padma purāṇa; śrī caitanya-bhāgavata, ādi 16.303)

125śvapākam iva nekṣeta loke vipram avaiṣṇavam  
vaiṣṇavo varṇa bāhyo 'pi punāti bhuvana-trayam  
(padma purāṇa; śrī caitanya-bhāgavata, ādi 16.304)

126dvau bhūta-sargau loke 'smin daiva āsura eva ca  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 16.6)



great Prahlaḍa, the son of Hiranyaśipu, is a vivid example of this. Viśravā, in Tretā Yuga, was an eminent Brāhmaṇa Ṛṣi. But, his son Rāvaṇa was a well-known Asura. By reason of his antagonism to Śrī Rāmacandra, he turned out to be an Asura.

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the following regulation is stated as underlying the institution of the Daiva classification by disposition and condition in life. "The characteristics by which the status of a person in theistic society is indicated have been already stated. If those characteristics are found in a person, belonging by birth to a different class, he is to be spoken of as one of the class that corresponds to his natural disposition. Mere birth alone is not sufficient for one to come under a particular class; conduct also is necessary."<sup>127</sup> Śrī Srīdhara Svāmī while commenting on this Śloka mentions thus:—"In the classification, Brāhmaṇa, etc., the possession of corresponding qualities, like equanimity, self-control, etc., is important and not birth alone."

In other words, a person should be spoken of, as belonging to a particular class of his individual disposition. This is the basic principle of regulation of the institution of theistic society (Daiva Varṇāśrama). Birth is not the only determining principle of caste. The determination of the respective classes, by the more important test of disposition, is the real Vedic regulation. Even if a person born in any class other than Brāhmaṇa, is found to possess qualities worthy of a genuine Brāhmaṇa, it is incumbent on the Brāhmaṇas to admit that person, without any reservation, as a Brāhmaṇa, by the test of disposition. If this is not done such abstention is sinful. Any connection with a person of atheistical disposition, destroys all the merits, that one has so far gathered by various good deeds.

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127yasya yal lakṣaṇaṁ proktaṁ puṁso varṇābhivyañjakam  
yad anyatrāpi dṛśyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiśet  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.11.35)

## 9 Haridāsa Ṭhākura AT NAVADVĪPa

Haridāsa Ṭhākura had a cordial reception at Navadvīpa. The group of devotees there, were extremely delighted to have him in their midst. They rejoiced in his company beyond expression. The joy of Advaita Ācārya outweighed that of all the rest. He treated Haridāsa Ṭhākura as more than his own self. All other devotees too had a special attraction for Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He also, in return was very obedient and devotional to them. In the sweet company of all these devotees, mutually discussing on the Excellences of the Supreme Lord daily, Haridāsa Ṭhākura resided at Navadvīpa as a favourite guest of Advaita Ācārya. While at Śāntipura, Haridāsa Ṭhākura used to pay occasional visits to Navadvīpa, situated seventy miles to the north of Calcutta on the banks of the river Bhāgīrathī. During the time of Ṭhākura Haridāsa, it was a progressive town, especially eminent in learning. It was here that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Embodiment of Transcendental Bliss, the Greatest Exponent of Prema Bhakti and Nāma-Saṅkīrtana manifested his Advent towards the concluding years of the 15th century.

### 91. *The then condition of Navadvīpa*

During the time of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the conditions prevailing in Navadvīpa, that vast centre of education, were utterly disappointing. There was a lamentable deterioration of religious ideas and ideals there. Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura in his celebrated work 'Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata' describes the then condition thus:—"The world was utterly bereft on any sign of religion. People appeared to be extremely busy in satisfying the baser instincts of humanity. Even those who expounded Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā and Śrīmad Bhāgavata, never observed or made mention of Bhakti or

Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, nor did they ask their faithful followers to practise them in their lives.”<sup>128</sup>

No sacred book of the Hindus is as popular as Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā. It is regarded as a standard book of religion not only by the Hindus in India but even non-Hindus throughout the length and breadth of the globe. Emanating directly from the Holy Mouth of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it is a synthesis of all the existing religious truths of the world, a reconciliation of all the conflicting theories, true essence of all the Upaniṣads, a benevolent guide and a loving companion to the travellers of life eternal. It is a veritable reservoir of inspiring religious truths of practical value. **Unconditional surrender and love to Bhagavān form the substance of the entire scripture.** It is a pity - nay, utter ill-luck on the part of the expounders of this book to twist precious Ślokaś to suit mere empiric sense and thereby misguide the ignorant public.

Who has not in India heard about Śrīmad Bhāgavata? It is accepted as the greatest devotional work by all the sincere devotees of the Lord. It is the most splendid and authoritative commentary of the Brahma Sūtras from the pen of the author himself the great sage Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa, an explanatory meaning of the great epic Mahābhārata, a marvellous exposition of the sacred Gāyatrī **and an epitomised quintessence of all the revealed scriptures.** This great book has exercised an enormous influence, on the life of numerous persons in India, who pine for the development in them of unalloyed devotion or Prema Bhakti in Bhagavān. This work is a perennial ocean of loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is equally disappointing, that the dry intellectual exponents of Navadvīpa, did not spare this favourite book of the loving devotees also, from their far-fetched habitual twisting of words into peculiar ways giving forth queer meanings. We must thank them, however, that they did not totally destroy it from the face of the earth, for promoting their materialistic views.

The Bhaktas of Navadvīpa gathered in solitary places, and performed Kīrtana by clapping their hands. Even this

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128ati paramārtha-śūnya sakala saṁsāra

tuccha-rasa viṣaye se ādara sabāra

gītā bhāgavata vā paḍāya ye-ye-jana

tā'rā o nā bale, nā balaya kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana

(śrī caitanya-bhāgavata ādi 16.7-8)

unostentatious performance could not escape the scathing criticism of the anti-Godly elements of the town. They abused the devotees indiscriminately. "Why do these people bawl out like this? I am Brahma, that ever pure, eternal existence. Why should they make this difference as servant and master? For the purpose of securing alms, they have adopted this method as the most convenient procedure. Come on, let us break their houses and throw them out." From the few sentences stated above, one can have a vivid picture of the disposition of most of the inhabitants of Navadvīpa during the time of Ṭhākura Haridāsa. They were in the terrible grip of a dangerous type of atheism. The theoretical philosophy that they favoured, denounced religion and its ideals as the worst possible hindrance to social unity. Every activity was viewed from the point of economic value and satisfaction of the material senses. Those few innocent devotees, the real benefactors of humanity, were unfortunately the target of all their attacks and humiliations.

## 92. *Contemporary world*

The state of affairs that is prevailing in our country at present, is not much better than what it was in Navadvīpa a few centuries ago. A mild but incomplete and superficial survey of the conditions then prevailing, may be helpful to us to realise at firsthand, the current shaping of events in our contemporary world. Though we boast in every field that we are living in a far superior and civilised world, the fundamental problems of life remain unsolved. Never before in the history of the world was humanity so badly in need of peace as today. We have totally forgotten the noble ideals of ancient heritage, and hence are being violently tossed about by the waves of materialistic ideas and ideals, and are about to meet, with the worst possible destruction. Our native-land which was once a veritable granary, of all the noble qualities of humanity, is now converted into a hotbed of all ugly vices. How to save ourselves from this deplorable plight? Unless we make a desperate attempt to revive with full force our cultural civilisation, our spiritual heritage, and take absolute shelter in the infallible Truths of our noble religion, there is little hope of surviving this terrible catastrophe that is facing us today. The glory of our motherland, India, lies not in its high mountains or abysmal valleys, panoramic views or the splendidly rich plantations. No, not even in the snowclad lofty peaks, vast

plateaus or the evergreen plains, neither in its industrial output nor in its economic advancements, neither in its political freedom nor in a network of well laid cement concrete roads, but in its unrivalled and inexhaustible spiritual treasures. In this sacred land Bhāratavarṣa, every true Hindu claims religion as his heritage, the alpha and omega of his life. Did not our elders fulfil this virtue in their everyday life? The soil itself in India has got a special feature. Yes, it is impregnated with a religious instinct.

"Religion, what treasure untold  
Resides in that heavenly word  
More precious than silver and gold  
Or all that this earth can afford."

How impressive is the above poem! How inspiring! **Religion is an essential - nay, indispensable factor, a *sine qua non* of human progress. It is the back-bone of man.** He cannot escape it. The innumerable complicated problems facing man at every moment is found satisfactorily answered by religion alone. Man does not find help and solace in any sphere of life other than religion. Man without religion or belief in God is like a seed upon the wind, driven this way and that, finding no place of lodgement for germinating. The various calamities that are threatening us with destruction, moral and material and above all spiritual, can easily be tackled by a religious renaissance.

"Materialistic outlook and the worship of mammon and the neglect of God, are supposed to usher in this era when the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and pride of life degrade man." "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? (Matthew, Gospel 1, ch. 16, 26)". The above two statements from the Christian Scriptures too, reinforce the views that we have pursued so far.

The cause of all the sufferings that humanity is subject to at present, is due to his aversion to God. Someone has properly put it as follows:—"From irreligion is the real nature of everything perverted. Sorrow springs from irreligion only. When irreligion stalks the land, the seasons, the rains, the air, the earth, and plant-life all become vitiated. Then and then only do floods and droughts, pestilence and disease, rapine and bloodshed, sweep the unfortunate land and leave it a prey to disaster and destruction."<sup>129</sup>

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129adharmā mūlāṁ vaigunyaṁ vāyvādīnāṁ prajāyate

adharmāddhi bhavec choṣo jalānāṁ nānyathā kvacit

### 93. *Is service of God a necessity?*

The service of God is the inherent and natural function of every pure soul inseparable from its very constitution. The dislike to the service of God is due to our close association with worldliness which clouds our natural disposition to serve our Maker. We are dynamic beings; stagnancy is alien to us. **Our true inclination is always Godward, towards the realisation of the divine consciousness, within and without. It is only this experience of the divine consciousness that enhances the irresistible urge or bent of our mind, that long-standing desire for Transcendental Bliss.** If we follow this true inward urge of the Jīvātmā, we become happy and perfect, failing which we get caught in the whirlpool of worldliness, worries, and woes, from which there is no escape. **Service to God is the only noble virtue that unites us, all beings together, inspiring in us the presence of the Divinity. It reveals to us the true vision of life and enables us to experience the manifestations of the divine mystery.** We also realise the true nature of all things around us, our own self, and its relation with all of them. The want of this virtue converts us to isolated beings, guided by selfishness, impelled by uncontrollable lust for power, which lashes out its bitterness leading to utter destruction. The one contagion that has eaten up the vitals of the present day world, is due to its aversion to the service of God, which is the backbone of every well regulated society and the bedrock of human solidarity.

### 94. *Why does God create us?*

**Man is said to be an imperfect image of his Maker. The human souls in their real nature, are infinitesimal parts of the Supreme God - emanations of the Lord's marginal energy,** like the rays of the sun, which owe their existence entirely to the latter. But the sun never owes its existence to the rays. A father finds expressions of delight, playfulness, etc., in the children. He always takes care of their well-being. They contribute towards maintaining a sprightly atmosphere in the

house. They do not challenge his delightful ways and fancies; on the contrary, they submit and render whole-hearted services to him. **Similarly He removes the boredom of the world by mixing alternately in our lives, happiness and sorrow, to bring out the beauty of happiness against the background of the latter. Or else, all would get tired of even enjoying happiness continuously. He thus maintains the harmony and sprightliness in this world.**

### 95. *Is God so heartless?*

This is a baseless charge on the over Merciful Lord. If it were so, the condition of the world would be unimaginable and inhabitable. The cyclic occurrences of the seasons, supply of ample provisions for meeting the legitimate needs of humanity, unity, justice, etc., and over and above **the appearance of innumerable venerable saints, the favourites of the Lord to show proper light to us - fallen children groping in darkness and to lead us to life and light eternal, are nothing but genuine expressions of His true compassion to us. It is He, Who out of sheer Mercy, preserves us - ungrateful creatures, who audaciously question His right to do as He thinks best. The infallible scriptures too, that speak of the Eternal Truth and the appearance of His Advent, as Plenary and Partial Aspects, are nothing but the true expressions of His boundless Mercy to us. The Mercy of the Divine Lord manifests Itself in many ways. If we deeply and with an unbiased mind, study the world and its everyday occurrences, we surely do feel the Merciful Hand of our Maker, Who guides us - His children blind with lust of every kind. He tends us, as no mother ever does, with the Milk of His Divine Mercy and whenever we show signs of our dare-devilry, He mixes it with small doses of bitter sufferings to remove our incurable malady, and to redeem our erring souls. It is but quite natural that He should be partial to His ardent devotees or Bhaktas, like the father who likes his well-behaved children better than the erring ones, who even receive punishment from him for their betterment. If the children are not punished in time, the father will have to bear the opprobrium for the neglect of his children and dereliction of duty towards them. 'Spare the rod and spoil the child,' is a well known saying. He never fails to reward them when they are reformed. The father never punishes his children just to satisfy his sadistic or perverted tendencies. He is solely guided by the necessity to reform them and their**

welfare. Similarly, the Lord too punishes us and will desist from doing so the moment we show the signs of reformation. On a careful scrutiny, a wise person will take the events as the best display of impartial justice and fairplay. He has endowed us with discretion. We make or mar our own destinies. **The Lord is always impartial. We cannot impute any ulterior motives to His actions, which are guided solely by a spirit of fair play.** 'As we sow, so we reap.'

## 96. *Where does God hide?*

There are no hardships or restrictions too great to those who genuinely feel in them an incessant and uncontrollable craving to the realisation of the Lord. The obstructions on the onward march of certain aspirants are due to their extreme attachment to transitory pleasures, and transient objects of this world. As such, the Lord never imposes any restrictions, on any particular group of people, nor relaxes them in the case of others. The severity of the restrictions, and hardships felt by the aspirant, depends upon the degree of his attachment, to transient pleasures and worldly objects. Through the purificatory process of hardships and restrictions we are rendered fully eligible to experience the thrilling joy of seeing the Godhead, provided we sincerely practise loving devotion to Him. He never hides anywhere. We live in a maze of doubts and insincerity. We hide ourselves under a thick cloak of falsehood, like the ostrich that burrows its head in the desert sand. **We have to practise loving devotion to Him and incessantly chant His Name and He is as good as purchased.** He has said in unequivocal words thus:—"I neither stay in **Vaikuṇṭha** nor in the hearts of **Yogīs**; but wherever My devotees chant My Names, there I am, O **Nārada**!"

## 97. *Ṭhākura joins the banner of Mahāprabhu*

"Now we will revert to Haridāsa Ṭhākura at Navadvīpa. When he paid occasional visits to Navadvīpa from Śāntipura, he halted in the 'Toḻ' (a school) of Śrī Advaita Ācārya situated in the neighbourhood of the house of Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, a great devotee of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. There, Haridāsa Ṭhākura got into touch with Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita and others, and in their company he used to spend his time performing Kīrtana. At this time, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was only a small Boy - a most wayward Boy, busy in his boyish games and funs. The



purpose of His Advent was dormant deeply in Him. He had not shown any sign of manifesting charm and extraordinary features were unaccountably astounding and inspiring to the whole group of devotees - yes, even to the great Advaita Ācārya. In course of time, when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu after receiving His initiation at Gayā, changed altogether His whole outlook for a new one - the field of devotional ecstasy, the devoted residents of Navadvīpa including Advaita Ācārya and Haridāsa Thākura felt highly encouraged and greatly delighted. Within a short period, the whole group found in Him their Saviour, and came under His banner, accepting Him as their accredited Leader. The new cult of Saṅkīrtana that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu inculcated among His devotees in the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita daily, met with tremendous opposition from a section of the community. They employed all their resources in stopping this, what seemed to them a novel religion, which they thought was against the traditions of the Hindu faith, and in harassing the devotees as well. With increasing vigour they started agitations and planned secret plots to destroy the whole movement out and out. They used filthy language and hurled abuses on the devotees; they even threatened these innocent devotees with dire consequences, including physical violence.

Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu felt the gravity of the situation. He pitied the deplorable decadence of the religious and moral principles in them, and the rapid turn of events from bad to worse. He wished to help humanity by popularising His Saṅkīrtana principles throughout the length and breadth of His vast native town. He wanted to organise regular preaching from door to door and selected for this purpose from amongst His large list of followers, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Haridāsa Thākura. He wanted them to convey His Message, **"Say Kṛṣṇa, serve Kṛṣṇa and practise Kṛṣṇa"**<sup>130</sup> at every door and it was executed by them faithfully. Haridāsa Thākura had gained the special favour of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He was now one of the most favourite followers of Śrīman Mahāprabhu

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130      pratighare ghare giyā kara ei bhikṣā  
             bala kṛṣṇa, bhaja kṛṣṇa, kara kṛṣṇa śikṣā  
             (śrī caitanya-bhāgavata, m. 13.9)

## 98. *Ṭhākura - The noted Bhakta of Mahāprabhu*

When Śrīman Mahāprabhu at another time started a crusade against the District Magistrate of Navadvīpa, Sirājuddina Maulānā Chand Kazi, and avowed opponent of Saṅkīrtana, by taking out a huge procession through the various streets of Navadvīpa, Haridāsa Ṭhākura played a prominent part. The whole procession consisting of hundreds of thousands of people was divided into groups, and every group was having a party of Saṅkīrtana to lead. Ṭhākura Haridāsa was a leader of one of those Saṅkīrtana parties, and he by his devotional dances and holy presence inspired every one of his followers beyond words. In all important activities of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu during His stay at Navadvīpa till His acceptance of Sannyāsa, there are not many incidents where we miss Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He had a significant role to play in almost all events.

## 99. *Mahāprabhu on Ṭhākura*

On the day of the 'Grand Revelation' by Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu at the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself in the presence of all other devotees proclaimed the glory of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He said, "Haridāsa! Look here. You are dearer to Me than My Own Body. I emphatically declare that there is no categorical difference between your caste and Mine. People under the influence of extreme ignorance may view things from merely the social aspect. They may attribute superiority to My Brāhmaṇa Body over your Muslim one. I say, they are utterly under the grip of sheer delusion. I assure you that there is not the least difference between ourselves. The atheistical section of the Hindus, at present consider their bodies as superior to those of Muslims. As a result of this, the Hindus are puffed up with the pride of a superior caste, which results in condemning even great devotees, who have taken birth in lower communities as inferior. These people, unfortunately, are under an erroneous notion. To a materialistic outlook, there would not be any difference between the holy body of a devotee who is exclusively engaged in the loving services of the Supreme Lord, and that of an ordinary man engrossed in material pursuits. This is, without doubt, an offensive attitude! Attributing superiority or inferiority to any, on grounds of

seminal birth alone, is not the proper method of deciding such issues."

"Just as bell-metal is converted into gold by the occult potency of the touch-stone, even so, by the special influence of Bhakti, a material body is completely spiritualised. In order to establish the unparalleled glory of Bhakti, Bhagavān by His inconceivable potency, brings about the destruction of the material body of a Bhakta and blesses him with a spiritual body, and this is unnoticed by the materially minded people of the world. But, since the process is a hidden secret to the materialists, intellectualists, etc., they still hold the opinion that the devotees belong to a particular caste possessing human bodies like them and subject to various reaction of their own actions."<sup>131</sup>

"By recollecting all those atrocities inflicted upon you by those sinners, My heart breaks. When I saw you being whipped in the streets mercilessly by the employees of that wicked Kazi, I forthwith came down with My Disc with the intention of chopping them off. But what could I do? I was completely helpless, you prayed repeatedly for pardoning them. Even at the risk of your own life and the worst physical mortifications, you longed for the welfare of all those villains, your enemies. How could I refuse your prayer? I was forced to withdraw My disc. In order to relieve you from the severe pains of those whippings, I myself received them on My Body. Here they are, Even now you can see those marks of the beatings on My Body. I am not merely bluffing you. Your sorrows have made Me to hurry up to your rescue. Advaita Ācārya has truly recognised your greatness. He has made Me a captive by his loving services."

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131 yathā kāñcanatām yāti kāmśyaṁ rasa vidhānataḥ  
tathā dīkṣā vidhānena dvijatvaṁ jāyate nṛṇāṁ  
(tattva-sāgara; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 1.2.12)

dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa  
sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 4.192)

kṛṣṇa-bhakti-sudhā-pānād deha-daihika-vismṛteḥ  
teṣāṁ bhautika-dehe'pi sac-cid-ānanda-rūpatā  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 1.3.61)

## 910. *Ṭhākura sings the glories of the Lord*

By hearing those words from the Holy Lips of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, transported with unbounded joy, fell down unconscious. He remained thus senseless, for awhile lost in an ocean of incomparable delight. Śrīman Mahāprabhu woke him up from his spiritual swoon. He asked Haridāsa Ṭhākura to witness His Revelation to his heart's entire satisfaction. Haridāsa Ṭhākura could not see anything, he wept profusely. He had all the signs of spiritual perturbations on his body. He rolled on the ground; he heaved deep sighs; he swooned; why, he was overcome with divine ecstasy. His feelings had become uncontrollable. Composing himself in a short while, in all humility, and with folded hands, he praised Śrīman Mahāprabhu thus:-

"O Lord! O Master of the universe! O Saviour and protector of the infinite number of worlds! Have mercy upon this sinner. You are my Sole Support. Bereft of any qualities, a fallen outcaste as I am, how can I speak of Your infinite Excellences? By my mere sight, people turned out sinners and after my touch, a complete bath was indispensable. It is Your solemn promise that You do not neglect even the lowest and smallest of Your creations, who remember Your Holy Feet and do not spare even sovereigns if they prove arrogant and ungodly. Out of Your causeless Mercy You afford shelter to all those souls who remember You. But, how unfortunate I am! I have not in me even that quality. Words fail me to express the wonderful effect of remembering You. What a marvellous potency It possesses! What a tremendous force It carries! Did You not rescue Draupadī from the terrible grip of the villain Duḥśāsana, who, under the orders of his wicked brother, the arrogant Duryodhana, dragged her to a huge assembly of many eminent men, heroes, princes, ministers, etc., and made a shameless and boastful attempt to remove her clothes? Ah! How promptly and cleverly You dressed her in clothes when she wailed aloud piteously and surrendered unconditionally! Lo! In spite of all his efforts to undress her, he did not succeed in his efforts. Out of sheer exhaustion and shame he was compelled to leave the assembly, hanging his head down. "Hiraṇyakaśipu did everything to kill his great son Prahlaḍa. He was poisoned, thrown in the midst of huge and extremely venomous serpents, cast into burning fire, and into the sea that he might get drowned, but what was the result? Who amongst us does not know the final fate of Hiraṇyakaśipu? By the

efficacy of Your remembrance, the great Prahlaḍa could stand all these atrocities perpetrated on him, without the least suffering.

"When once, in the midst of the wild forest, Yudhiṣṭhira remembered You, for saving them from the wrath of the sage Durvāsā and his large retinue, You suddenly manifested Yourself there and saved the Pāṇḍavas by Your Mercy. You assured Yudhiṣṭhira that You would feed all the Ṛṣis headed by Durvāsā. Finally, by taking a small particle of some leafy vegetable from the vessel already kept washed, You freed Pāṇḍavas from all fear. The Ṛṣis had to leave the place without a word, soon after their bath. They found their stomachs full, even swelling beyond capacity.

"Innumerable are Your Glories and their astounding effects! Constantly remembering You with unflinching love, is the highest of religious methods that is accessible to one and all. There is no wonder that by sporting in multifarious ways, You redeem all from the sufferings of the world.

"The life of Ajāmila of yore, is another inspiring illustration that adds to the Glory of Your remembrance. Due to some unfortunate circumstances, Ajāmila, giving up all his virtuous traditions, turned out a great sinner. He had not a single good deed to his credit, but, on the contrary, he was a repository of all sinful acts. During the concluding moments of his life, when the fearful messengers of death arrived to wrest his soul from his material body for carrying it to the hideous hell, he uttered the name of his last and affectionate son 'Nārāyaṇa'; the whole scene changed to a new one; and by the causeless efficacy of Your remembrance he was saved from death. All his sufferings of that birth and for births to come, came to an end. There is nothing surprising in this action of Yours. All devotees are really eligible for the great treasure of Your remembrance. In spite of knowing all these wonderful effects of Your remembrance, I am such an unlucky and wretched person, that I am utterly destitute of this great wealth. But my Lord! You are an Ocean of Mercy, Overlooking all my defects, You are gracious to accept this insignificant servant. Therein lies the real nature of Your unparalleled magnanimity undeserving as I am in all respect, I have only one humble prayer at Your Feet." Before he could conclude all his words, Śrīman Mahāprabhu assured him that He would do the maximum in granting all his prayers. Śrīman Mahāprabhu was immensely satisfied on hearing the devotional expressions of Haridāsa Ṭhākura on the Glory of His remembrance and was looking ahead to confer upon him suitable boons. Ṭhākura

Haridāsa continued his prayer. "My Lord! I am an unfortunate wretch, but my demand is too high. It is like that of a dwarf aspiring after the moon. May I be blessed with the sacred remnants of those who serve You with their - body, heart, mind, and soul. May in every birth of mine, the same may be the objects of my devotion. May the idea of accepting their leavings be my duty - My religion. I have no desire for salvation or any other type of attainment of fruits. But, let not my mind even for an insignificant fraction of a moment, deviate from the above prayer of mine, i.e., for the sacred remnants of all Your favourite servants. Let this sinful life of mine bereft of your remembrance be sanctified by the holy leavings of Your genuine devotees. In all the infinite number of worlds there is no higher position than that of becoming a servant of all Thy servants. I am highly ambitious, hence I prayed for the highest position which I do not, in fact deserve. It is such a lofty position that even great gods are aspirants for it. Perhaps, my prayer may be an offensive one, owing to my ineligibility for achieving such a high attainment. O Lord! O Saviour of fallen souls! Please have the mercy to forgive and forget all the offences of this ignorant and unworthy servant committed consciously or unconsciously. O the Darling of Śacī! O my Lord! Grant me this favour, make me a dog and keep me at the house of Your devotee."

### 911. *Mahāprabhu confers boons on Ṭhākura*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was highly impressed and moved by this prayer of matchless humility. He said, "Listen, listen to Me, My dear Haridāsa! You are a jewel amongst the devotees. He who has gained your company even for a single day or, with whom you had conversation even for a fraction of a moment, would undoubtedly attain Me. I promise you this. Whosoever respects you, respects Me as well. I always remain in your body. It is My pride to have a servant of your mettle. You have for all time to come imprisoned Me in your loving heart. I assure you that you need not be afraid of any offence. Exempted from any offence either towards Me or towards My devotees, you are free to carry your devotional practices."

The boon conferred on Haridāsa Ṭhākura was received by all other devotees with great pleasure. Who can estimate the fortune of Haridāsa Ṭhākura? Neither high caste, nor birth in a great family nor the performance of noble deeds, nor even the possession of enormous wealth, would help a person to the

attainment of the Lord. It is only an earnest longing, a burning appetite for the inexhaustible wealth of Divine Love that will enable one to have access to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

**"If the talent to be engrossed in the essence of devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa can be had anywhere, then purchase it by all means. For the price, too, is nothing but excessive passion for it, which cannot be had even by pious deeds in crores of births."**<sup>132</sup>

"O Kṛṣṇa! People who are puffed up with the vanities of high lineage, prosperity, scholasticism, and personal complexion are unfit to chant Your Name; it is possible only to Your sincere devotees who never identify themselves with any of the acquisitions in the world."<sup>133</sup>

"O beautiful one! We have nothing of our own and we are always the beloved of the people who claim nothing for themselves as theirs. As such wealthy persons generally never render any service to Me."<sup>134</sup>

"In course of this human life, if a person is not puffed up with pride due to the acquisitions of birth in noble ancestry, actions, age, personal complexion, learning, position, wealth, and such other laudable qualifications, it is to be understood as due to My Grace."<sup>135</sup>

It is immaterial to worry about the birth of a devotee in any family. He is above all such limitations. The Śāstras

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132     **kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā-matīḥ kriyatām yadi kuto'pi labhyate  
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalaṁ janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na  
labhyate  
(padyāvalī 14)**

133     janmaīśvarya-śruta-śrībhīr edhamāna-madaḥ pumān  
naivārhaty abhidhātum vai tvām akiñcana-gocaram  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.8.26)

134     niṣkiñcanā vayaṁ śaśvan niṣkiñcana-jana-priyāḥ  
tasmāt prāyeṇa na hy āḍhyā māṁ bhajanti su-madhyame  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.60.14)

135     janma-karma-vayo-rūpa vidyaiśvarya-dhanādibhiḥ  
yady asya na bhavet stambhas tatrāyaṁ mad-anugrahaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 8.22.26)

without a single exception declare it. "O Bhagavān! By listening to your Name and uttering Them by bowing down to You or even by remembering You, a Śvapaca becomes eligible to perform a Soma sacrifice. As such, what doubt is there regarding the attainment of one's goal who is favoured with Your Darśana (Presence)."<sup>136</sup>

"O what a wonder! There are no words that can adequately describe the importance of a person who chants the Name of the Lord. He is an object of veneration to all, on the tip of whose tongue Your Name has appeared even once, be he a Svapach. Those who utter Your Name, have performed in previous births all the rites befitting Brāhmaṇas, such as all types of penance, sacrifices, bath in sacred rivers, the study of Vedas, rules of right conduct and as they, observing them completely, now in this birth, have taken resort to uttering Your Name."<sup>137</sup>

"O Bhagavān! There is nothing surprising in the statement that Your Darśana frees mankind from all their sins; when by hearing Your Name, even once even a Caṇḍāla is delivered from the bondage of worldliness."<sup>138</sup>

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136yan-nāmadheya-śravaṇānukīrtanād

yat-prahvaṇād yat-smaraṇād api kvacit  
śvādo 'pi sadyaḥ savanāya kalpate  
kutaḥ punas te bhagavan nu darśanāt  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.33.6)

137 aho bata śva-paco 'to garīyān  
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam  
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā  
brahmānūcur nāma grṇanti ye te  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.33.7)

138 na hi bhagavann aghaṭitam idaṁ  
tvad-darśanān nṛṇām akhila-pāpa-kṣayaḥ  
yan-nāma sakṛc chravaṇāt  
pukkaśo 'pi vimucyate saṁsārāt  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.16.44)



"I, the Soul of all souls and the Most Beloved of all saints, am attainable only by single-minded devotion, born of firm faith. Unflinching devotion to Me, purifies even the Caṇḍālas from their low births."<sup>139</sup>

"O Lord! I feel that the various qualifications, such as wealth, noble ancestry, beautiful complexion, severe austerities, vast learning, efficiency of the sense-organs, celibacy, popularity, physical strength, prowess, sharp intelligence, control of the external and internal senses, or even the practice of the eight-fold principles of Yoga are utterly incompetent to render satisfaction to the Supreme Lord."<sup>140</sup>

Prahlāda was born as the son of demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, Hanumān took his birth amongst sub-human beings - monkeys, and not in a civilised human society. But, both of them are revered as great devotees. Similarly, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, born in a Muslim community too deserves the same adoration from all. Ṭhākura Haridāsa preached the Holy Name of Śrī Hari, in different parts of Bengal. He halted at various places with different devotees. He has left in all these places deep impressions, the influence of which, one can experience even to this day.

After the acceptance of Sannyāsa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu visited Śāntipura and halted at the residence of Advaita Ācārya for a few days. There, on consultation with all devotees and finally with the permission of His mother Śacīdevī, He determined to settle at Jagannātha Purī for the rest of His career. Haridāsa Ṭhākura did not receive the news heartily. He wept bitterly, as diverse thoughts came to his mind. He anticipated gloomy days awaiting him and said piteously, "You are leaving for Nīlācala. What about this unfortunate servant? How can I go over there? I am unfit for the same. This wretch is utterly deprived of your Darśana. Without seeing you, how can this sinner survive?" Śrīman

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139 bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyaḥ śraddhayātmā priyaḥ satām  
bhaktiḥ punāti man-niṣṭhā śva-pākān api sambhavāt  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.14.21)

140 manye dhanābhijana-rūpa-tapaḥ-śrutaujas-  
tejaḥ-prabhāva-bala-pauruṣa-buddhi-yogāḥ  
nārādhānāya hi bhavanti parasya puṁso  
bhaktyā tutoṣa bhagavān gaja-yūtha-pāya  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.9.9)

Mahāprabhu consoled Haridāsa Ṭhākura with the most pleasing words. He said, "Haridāsa! Your unparalleled humility moves My heart passionately. I shall certainly plead before Śrī Jagannātha on your behalf. I am sure, Śrī Jagannātha will favour Me, and you will be taken there shortly."

Haridāsa Ṭhākura had full belief in temples and the modes of worship followed there. Śrīman Mahāprabhu's decision to leave Navadvīpa, had created a great fear in him. Devotees do not break the rules and regulations laid out by Śāstras, nor even social customs. No non-Hindu was allowed to enter into the temple precincts. Hence, if Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu decides to reside inside the temple area, he thought he was undone. He would not have even a glance of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. On account of this his condition was for some time, like that of a fish out of water or that of a bird with wings clipped off. Subsequently, when he came to know that there was no such objection for a member of any caste to reside in a certain sandy area, situated a little away from the said temple limits, he felt relieved of a great anxiety, he had his hopes revived. Soon after he received the news that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had decided to stay at the residence of Śrī Kāśī Misra, the joy of Haridāsa Ṭhākura knew no bounds.

## 10 Haridāsa Ṭhākura AT PURĪ

### 101. *Ṭhākura - the inspiring ideal of humility*

WITHIN a short period after Śrīman Mahāprabhu settled at Nīlācala, Haridāsa Ṭhākura reached that place in the company of other devotees from Bengal. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had Strong affection for Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He was extremely delighted to hear the news of the arrival of Haridāsa Ṭhākura and other devotees. All devotees except Haridāsa Ṭhākura proceeded directly to Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He received them all. But, Haridāsa Ṭhākura was conspicuous by his absence. Śrīman Mahāprabhu was very eager to meet Haridāsa Ṭhākura and on inquiry, He received the surprising news that Haridāsa Ṭhākura was lying prostrate at a long distance on the road itself. Śrīman Mahāprabhu immediately sent for him, but Haridāsa Ṭhākura preferred to remain aloof. He said, "I am of a low caste, a most unworthy person. I do not deserve to go to the temple limits. If I am favoured with a small space somewhere inside the garden close by, I could lead a lonely happy life by remaining there. I need not touch the Sevakas of Śrī Jagannātha and pollute them, and thereby stand in their way of service of the Lord. Hence, I prefer to remain aloof; this is my humble desire."

### 102. *Temple and ritualistic worship*

Śrīman Mahāprabhu was very happy to hear this decision of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Though there was none to stand in the way of Haridāsa Ṭhākura going to the temple or to any other sacred place, he was never a supporter of entering the temple by his own initiative or by force, disregarding all the social barriers. Such entry into the premises of the temple is a deliberate denial of the importance of the temple as a place of religious worship, and hence of its very sanctity itself. Such entry, would not improve a man morally or spiritually. Temple is not a place where every individual can exercise his

whimsical fads or idiosyncratic rights. It is not a place of exhibition or amusement or secular entertainment. It is neither a place for satisfying the political or social ambitions of men. It is invariably a place of religious worship that stands solely for the spiritual amelioration of mankind, a place from where thousands and thousands get spiritual inspiration. One should approach such a holy place with real submissiveness, united to a God-fearing temperament and faith in Divine Objects for purposes of prayer or worship and not for the satisfaction of one's turbulent material senses or with a challenging claim to social right.

### *103. A few words on temple entry*

Entry into the temple is allowable only to those who seek the same for religious worship. Forcing entrance into the temple either at the points of bayonets or by offering bribe to those people who are unenlightened in the principles and conduct of even proper behaviour in the temple precincts, is a grave crime against the very institution. Those who are utterly ignorant of the importance of the temple, the sanctity of the worship and the real nature of the Object worshipped there, fail to receive any benefit even after entering into the temple. Thieves, who somehow manage to force their entry into the temple precincts, do not become spiritual persons, unless they are favoured by the Lord's Mercy. Similarly, the various employees, who have made temple as their residence too, remain in the same ignorant stage. By entering into the temple alone, men do not become broad-minded, cultured, or God-realised. 'Nearer the Church, farther from God', is a wise saying. To those who believe in the inspiring position of the temple, it is a place of great sanctity where the Arcā (Holy Image) is worshipped with ritualistic principles as laid down in the Śāstras. The Holy Image or Arcā that is worshipped in the temple is not a product of matter designed by the imaginative brain of a mortal and carved out by any ordinary sculptor of the same category. It is not any ordinary piece of stone, wood, metal, marble, or any other lifeless object of this world as many of us think. It is the Visible Manifestation of the Lord in this mortal plane. There are hundreds of instances that illustrate the Divine Nature of the Holy Images and the wonderful deeds that They have performed in different places in relation to different devotees. If we patiently study the history of certain temples we are sure to have a marvellous

revelation on certain hidden secrets and Glories of These Holy Images. In many places, Their origin is untraceable, and hence is a great mystery even today. They have manifested Themselves under peculiar circumstances. Though They appear to be lifeless and immovable Images to a completely materialised vision, They reveal Their Real Nature to the spiritual and unalloyed loving vision of true devotees. They talk with them, They move in their company, They accept their loving services and offerings, and They make repeated demands of them.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself came to meet Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He was engaged in performing his usual Kīrtana with overflowing love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Noticing Śrīman Mahāprabhu, he fell prostrate at His Feet. Śrīman Mahāprabhu, raising Haridāsa Ṭhākura from the ground, embraced him with boundless joy, though the latter, out of his characteristic humility tried to prevent Śrīman Mahāprabhu from touching Him. He said, "O my Lord! Pray do not touch this untouchable, this meanest of the beings." For sometimes, both of them were lost in spiritual rapture, and tears of ineffable joy flowed from their eyes.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu too properly retorted. "I touch you for My Own purification. I am not favoured with the power to purify others as you are. At all times you are having bath in all the sacred rivers and you are ever performing all the sacrifices, penance, and charity. Always you are studying the Vedas and you are purer than and superior to all the so called Brāhmaṇas or Sannyāsīs." "O Lord! What a Marvellous feat! Even a Śvapaca (one who lives upon the flesh of dogs) becomes highly venerable, on the tip of whose tongue Your Name exists. Not even this much, those who utter Your Name have indeed practised all austerities and penance, performed all the great religious sacrifices, had their bath in all the sacred rivers and have even studied all the Vedas."<sup>141</sup>

### 104. *Ṭhākura settles at Siddha Bakula*

So saying Śrīman Mahāprabhu conducted him to the flower garden situated close by and offered a solitary place for his residence, which Śrīman Mahāprabhu had reserved specially for him earlier and advised him thus:—"Make

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141See footnote 128.

yourself comfortable here and carry on your devotional practices undisturbed. I shall certainly meet you daily. Bow down to the disc of the temple of Śrī Jagannātha from here. I shall make necessary arrangements to send for you Mahaprasāda daily here." Haridāsa Ṭhākura carried out the advice of Śrīman Mahāprabhu to the letter.

On another occasion Śrīman Mahāprabhu invited Haridāsa Ṭhākura for taking Mahaprasāda in the company of the other devotees and insisted on his presence. But, the latter, a living embodiment of humility, preferred to remain at a long distance. Śrīman Mahāprabhu used to feel inexpressible joy, on the high sense of humility which adorned Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who stayed in the solitary hut and performed Nāma-Kīrtana peacefully. That particular spot inside the flower garden of Kāśī Miśra is now known to the public by the name 'Siddha Bakula'. An ancient Bakula tree, the stem of which is mostly hollow, is the only sacred remnant that one can witness there. This tree is supposed to be there even long before Haridāsa Ṭhākura, and later on was fortunate enough to offer shade and shelter to the great Haridāsa Ṭhākura. While staying there, he purposely avoided the main streets, lest he might, by accident, touch some Pūjārī of Śrī Jagannātha and thereby disturb him in the performance of Pūjā. Whenever he moved out of his residence, he was always very particular in observing these rules as strictly as possible.

### 105. *Ṭhākura and Sanātana Gosvāmī*

Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, one of the most zealous followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and prominent amongst the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, visited Purī, and halted with Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, the most prominent amongst all the followers of Śrīman Mahāprabhu too, when he came to visit Śrī Jagannātha, remained quite close to the hut of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who had the good fortune of witnessing the close association of Śrīman Mahāprabhu with Sanātana Gosvāmī and listening to His personal instructions to him. One day Haridāsa Ṭhākura said thus to Sanātana Gosvāmī:—"I fail to find adequate words to describe your immense luck. Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself declared your body as His Own property. What an enviable fortune! Truly, no other devotee is as fortunate as you are. Those functions which Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself could not carry out, were entrusted to you for proper execution and that too in the sacred Vṛndāvana,

the crest-jewel of all the pilgrim spots and the most favourite playground of our Beloved Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa." Out of immoderate humility Haridāsa Ṭhākura continued; "This unfortunate body of mine has not served any purpose. I could not utilise this in the service of our Beloved Lord. It is a matter of utter regret that having taken a human form in this sacred land—Bhāratavarṣa, the gift of this precious human body has been sheerly wasted."

### 106. *Sanātana Gosvāmī on Ṭhākura*

On hearing the praise from Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Sanātana Gosvāmī said, "You are the most fortunate and specially noted amongst the followers of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. I do not find an equal to you. Śrīman Mahāprabhu took His Advent into this world to relish and thereby spread the Glory of the Divine Name adjunctively. He spread the glory of the Name through you<sup>142</sup>. Daily you utter three lacs of Names of the Lord. You speak the Glories of the Divine Name before all."<sup>143</sup>"To have a beautiful blending of both preaching and practice in religion in one and the same person is the rarest of the rare achievements. We see some practise certain teachings of the Śāstras and refrain from any preaching. We also notice some who speak much of the Śāstras in impressive language with the least practice of the same in their own life. A real preacher is he, who puts all the teachings of the Śāstras into the practical living. He is an 'Ācārya'. He alone is fit for preaching religion in public. **In you, I see both. You are a living and vivid expression of both practice and preaching in one single personality. You are truly the teaching in one single personality. You are truly the teacher of all.** You deserve the

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142sanātana kahe, — "tomā-sama kebā āche āna  
mahāprabhura gaṇe tumi — mahā-bhāgyavān!

avatāra-kārya prabhura — nāma-pracāre  
sei nija-kārya prabhu karena tomāra dvāre  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 4.99-100)

143pratyaha kara tina-lakṣa nāma-saṅkīrtana  
sabāra āge kara nāmēra mahimā kathana  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 4.101)

highest veneration from the whole world."<sup>144</sup> Thus Sanātana Gosvāmī spoke out the rare excellences of Haridāsa Ṭhākura - the great Ācārya of the Holy Name.

### *107. Mahāprabhu's Sermon to Ṭhākura and Sanātana Gosvāmī*

Another day Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave an inspiring sermon to both Sanātana Gosvāmī and Haridāsa Ṭhākura for the benefit of the world. He said, "It is sheer foolishness to disregard a devotee in this world by means of his social status, birth, etc., or even on the ground of his physical health, beauty, and the like. The body of a true Vaiṣṇava is perfectly transcendental by nature. It is not of a stuff of the material world. It is formed of transcendental ingredients of eternal existence, eternal intelligence, and eternal bliss. Jīvas by their real nature are the eternal servants of the Lord. It is his aversion to the Supreme Lord and the abuse of the freedom of will - a special endowment conferred on the Jīvas, that brings the souls imprisoned in various bodies into this material world. Even in this forgotten state, our merciful Lord never forsakes us. He works for our uplift and helps us to accumulate spiritual merits by enabling us to render service, though unaware, to His favourite associates, which again, in the long run brings us into contact with spiritual masters, who are all-time servants of the Supreme Lord. The fortunate Jīva receives his training under this master. He understands his position in the material world and his relationship with the Supreme Lord and with all other objects, animate and inanimate. He realises his helpless position and the folly that had made him come down as a prisoner in this gross body. He simultaneously feels an urge to surrender unconditionally to his spiritual preceptor; he does so and the preceptor initiates him into the spiritual practice. He is no longer the same old person engrossed in material thoughts.

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144āpane ācare keha, nā kare pracāra

pracāra karena keha, nā karena ācāra

'ācāra', 'pracāra', — nāmera karaha 'dui' kārya

tumi — sarva-guru, tumi jagatera ārya

(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 4.102-103)



He now becomes a perfectly spiritualised individual, free from any touch of worldly blemish in him. His body together with all his senses has become the object of the transcendental realm to be utilised in the exclusive service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa - the Transcendental Alchemist. They are no longer objects of this perishable and imperfect world. He is engaged for eternity in the Transcendental Services of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the specific devotional activities that are allotted to him by the spiritual preceptor, a chief representative of the Lord Himself and enjoys the perennial flow of incomparable bliss emanating from such eternal service."

### ***108. Ṭhākura's ideal life - An eye-opener to Sādhakas***

One day as usual with great joy Govinda, the personal attendant of Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to Haridāsa Ṭhākura with Mahaprasāda from Śrī Jagannātha temple. To the surprise of Govinda, Haridāsa Ṭhākura lay still on his bed, a rare thing at that time of the day. He was chanting the Holy Name in a low voice and speed too. Govinda said, "Kindly get up and have your prasāda." Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied that he would observe a fast on that day as he could not complete his usual quota of Nāma. He could not also disregard the Mahaprasāda. So he got up, bowed down to it, and honoured the same by partaking a small quantity of it.

Haridāsa Ṭhākura, by his exemplary life lasting up to even ripe old age left deep impressions as to the spiritual conduct a sincere Sādhaka should necessarily pursue. It is essential that he must perform his practice of chanting the Holy Name by keeping a regular number under any circumstances; even at the sacrifice of food, rest, sleep, etc., he must unfailingly stick to the chanting of the Name till he completes his fixed quota of Names daily. Keeping an unfinished portion of the number of Names for the succeeding day on some lame excuse or other is totally forbidden. Irregular chanting of the Name fixing varying numbers for different dates is also to be given up. At the time of receiving the Name from the proper spiritual preceptor, the disciple will be told the minimum number that he should everyday utter. The disciple has not the choice in selecting a number according to his convenience. Strict observance of such regular chanting only, will awaken in us a steadfast addiction to the Divine Name. Without having any attachment to the Name and the

process of Its chanting, the aspirants cannot become eligible for the Mercy of the Holy Name.

Once, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, on hearing the news about the sincere renunciation of a great devotee of His, was extremely pleased and expressed the following remarks for the edification of the fallen humanity. "Persons who have renounced the world, their hearths and homes, and their favourite relations, must engage themselves in the constant chanting of the Holy Name. They must maintain their existence by securing alms. Such persons, who depend upon other worldly-minded people for their maintenance, are sure to fail in their spiritual attempts. They do not succeed in their goal. Śrī Kṛṣṇa also never favours them; He passes them by. Those of the mendicants who run mad after satisfying the various tastes of their tongue, sustain a deplorable fall from their high spiritual living and become slaves to the evil influences of the palate. Constantly chanting the Name, the recluses must live upon harmless food, such as fruits, roots, leafy vegetables, etc. Prompted by the evil temptations of the tongue, those of the recluses, who run after delicious varieties hither and thither, are only gluttons. They do not attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa."<sup>145</sup> "O King! Those whose quota of meritorious deeds is insignificant, will neither have faith in Śrī Govinda, His Divine Name, His Mahaprasāda nor His devotees."<sup>146</sup>

Another day, Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to meet His favourite devotee, the great Haridāsa Ṭhākura and inquired, "How do you feel Haridāsa?"

Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied, "My Lord! Physically I am fit, but mentally and intellectually I am rather feeling weak."

Mahāprabhu insisted on him, "What is the trouble with you? Speak frankly."

Haridāsa Ṭhākura, "I am unable to complete my regular quota of Names."

Mahāprabhu, "Haridāsa! You are pretty old now. Why don't you reduce the quota of Names? You are a realised soul.

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145jīhvāra lālase yei iti-uti dhāya

śīśnodara-parāyaṇa kṛṣṇa nāhi pāya

(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 6.227)

146mahā prasāde govinde nāma brahmani vaiṣṇave

svalpa puṇya-vatām rājan viśvāso naiva jāyate

(padma purāṇa)

Why should you now insist on completing your daily set quota of Names? You have taken your advent for redeeming the world. You have tasted the sweetness of Name enough; you have also spread the Glory of the Divine Name in the world. Now reducing your daily quota of Names, perform the Sāṅkīrtana."

Haridāsa Ṭhākura, "Pray, hear the humble request of this unworthy servant. I have taken birth in a mean community and with a most censurable body. The whole of my life is wasted in loathsome activities, the most unlucky and fallen wretch. You have delivered such a person, utterly unworthy of even being seen by others, and a right specimen of an untouchable, from the unfathomable depths of the worst hell and lifted him to the most coveted land of incomparable bliss, Vaikuṇṭha. You are the Supreme Lord Whose Will is Law. The infinite universes move by Your Free Will and move at Your bidding. By Your inconceivable Powers You perform unimaginable marvels. You convert in no time a crow into the King of birds. By Your causeless Mercy You made me dance in various ways. By Your Grace, I, though an untouchable by caste, could eat the food prepared by the most orthodox of Brāhmaṇas on Śrāddha-day. Since long I am having a great premonition in me. Somehow, I know not why, it appears to me that You may conclude Your role in this world soon. O my Lord! Be merciful to save me from that most heart-rending scene. I shall not be able to bear it. Let me be permitted to breathe my last before You conclude Your Līlā. **Holding Your Lotus Feet on my breast, my eyes gazing on Your moonlike Face and my tongue uttering your Name, - Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, I yearn to give up my life**<sup>147</sup>, if you are gracious to me, O Embodiment of Kindness! Have the Mercy to grant me this favour. Let this blameable body of mine fall before You. Be pleased to fulfil the long cherished desire of this insignificant servant." On hearing this humble, devotional, and touching words of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīman Mahāprabhu replied thus:—"Haridāsa! Śrī Kṛṣṇa is an Ocean of Mercy. Certainly He will fulfil your desire. What about Me? All My happiness is in

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147hrdaye dharimu tomāra kamala caraṇa

nayane dekhimu tomāra cāṇḍa vadana

jihvāya uccārimu tomāra 'kṛṣṇa-caitanya'-nāma

ei-mata mora icchā, — chāḍimu parāṇa

(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 11.33-34)

your company. Hence, is it proper on your part to leave Me and go away?"

### 109. *Ṭhākura's last request to Mahāprabhu*

At this pathetic expression of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Haridāsa Ṭhākura caught hold of His Feet and prayed, "My Lord! Kindly do not deceive me. Be pleased not to have any more attachment to this trifling being. Undoubtedly You will grant me this prayer of mine. There are innumerable devotees of great eminence who are always present here to assist You in Your Pastimes. How does it matter if a worm like me leaves You? Does Mother Earth feel the loss of an ant in any way? You are Ever-Merciful to Your devotees. I am a humble reflection of a true devotee of Yours. Have Mercy to fulfil my prayer."

On hearing these repeated entreaties of Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīman Mahāprabhu assuring him that He would meet him the next day, embraced him and departed for performing His noon-ablutions to the sea.

The next morning after paying respects to Śrī Jagannātha, Śrīman Mahāprabhu visited Haridāsa Ṭhākura early in the morning, accompanied by all His devotees. Haridāsa Ṭhākura worshipped the Feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and all other devotees.

Mahāprabhu asked, "Haridāsa! What is the news?"

Haridāsa Ṭhākura, "My Lord! As you command."

Forthwith Śrīman Mahāprabhu asked His devotees to perform Saṅkīrtana. Prominent devotees like Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Vakreśvara Paṇḍita, Śrī Rai Rāmānanda, Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, etc., joined the Saṅkīrtana. Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself sang the glories of Haridāsa Ṭhākura in a most impressive way and seemed totally lost in them. His words moved the heart of every devotee present there.

Haridāsa Ṭhākura was now convinced that the Merciful Lord granted his prayer and that he must avail himself of this best opportunity for fulfilling his long cherished desire. Haridāsa Ṭhākura, accordingly requested Śrīman Mahāprabhu to take His seat exactly in front of him. How can the Merciful Lord ever devoted to His Bhaktas disappoint a favourite devotee like Haridāsa Ṭhākura? Did He not commit Himself to many still greater deeds to satisfy His devotees? How fascinating is His attachment and love for His devotees! Did He not swallow fire for the sake of His Vrajavāsīs? Did He not

hold the reins of the horses to work as a Charioteer of Arjuna on the great battlefield of Kurukṣetra causing even His Own soft Body to be pierced by the never-ending shafts of the Kaurava opponents? How many times He broke His Own vows for fulfilling those of His devotees? Was He ever reluctant to act as an Ambassador to the Pāṇḍavas before the wicked Kaurava chiefs or as a gate-keeper at the palace of Mahābalī?

### *1010. Ṭhākura's prayer granted*

Yes, Śrīman Mahāprabhu sat in front of His devotee. Haridāsa Ṭhākura fixed his eyes on the Face of Śrīman Mahāprabhu like bees on a lotus. He clasped both the Feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu to his bosom, took the feet dust of all other devotees on his head, **repeatedly uttering the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, drinking the Nectarine Beauty of His moonlike Face. With the holy Name in His mouth, the great Nāmācārya breathed his last.** The departure of Haridāsa Ṭhākura at his sweet will, reminds us of the passing away of the great Bhīma of yore.

### *1011. Ṭhākura's Samādhi*

Loud Saṅkīrtana rent the sky. Śrīman Mahāprabhu transported with spiritual ecstasy, became extremely uncontrollable. He lifted up the body of Haridāsa Ṭhākura and danced in spiritual rapture. Every other devotee present there, could experience an irresistible inspiration. All of them were dancing and singing the Name of the Lord in the company of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, saturated with unbounded joy. After performing Saṅkīrtana for some time, they placed the body of Haridāsa Ṭhākura in a specially decorated palanquin, and took out a great procession amidst loud chanting of the Holy Name. Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself led the procession, dancing ahead. The procession marched directly to the sea. There, the body of Haridāsa Ṭhākura was given a bath, while doing so Śrīman Mahāprabhu declared, "The sea has become a great Tīrtha from today". Since then, that bathing Ghat of Haridāsa Ṭhākura is considered to be a holy spot in the sea at Purī. Thousands of pilgrims from different parts of India perform their bath daily at this particular spot. Every devotee took the feet-wash of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. They applied to his body the

sandal paste brought for the occasion from the temple of Śrī Jagannātha, and with all customary observances, his body was placed in the earth amidst loud Saṅkīrtana by all the devotees. Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself placed the sand first on his body. A beautiful 'Samādhi' was constructed and even today it is a place of great importance at Purī. Haridāsa Ṭhākura's Samādhi is visited by thousands of people throughout the year. Regular worship too is carried out there daily.

The party of devotees headed by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, after performing Saṅkīrtana for some time, circumambulated the Samādhi and came to the 'Sinhadvāra', i.e., the gate of Śrī Jagannātha temple. Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself, spreading His own cloth, begged alms of Mahaprasāda. Everyone dealing with Mahaprasāda parted wholeheartedly whatever quantity they could afford to part with. Within a short interval, a huge quantity of Mahaprasāda was collected and a grand feast was given. Śrīman Mahāprabhu with His Own hands served Mahaprasāda sumptuously to one and all. On completion of honouring Mahaprasāda, He presented to all devotees garlands and sandal paste and showered boons on all those who partook in the function. He assured them all the attainment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa soon, as the proper result of the Darśana of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He said, "Śrī Kṛṣṇa by His causeless Mercy favoured Me with his company. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Will is independent. He has deprived Me today of Haridāsa's company. When Haridāsa willed that he must leave the world, how could I retain him here? By his sweet will he left the world as the great Bhīṣma of hallowed memory. Haridāsa was the crest-jewel of the world. By his departure, the earth is devoid of her treasure." With these words Śrīman Mahāprabhu danced uttering the words, "All glory to Haridāsa." All the other devotees followed Śrīman Mahāprabhu. They too repeated, "Glory to the great Haridāsa who proclaimed the Transcendental Glories of the Holy Name." Thus, the most glorious, inspiring, and exemplary career of Haridāsa Ṭhākura as the great 'Nāmācārya', to our utter ill-luck, is closed from the view of the people of this world. No material words, however rich they may be, are adequate enough to express the glories of this great saint, one of the most favourite eternal associates of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

## 1012. *Descent and ascent of Bhaktas*

The appearance and disappearance of the eternal associates of the Supreme Lord, are not to be confused with the births and deaths of ordinary mortals. The devotees of the Lord who make their appearance into this world, do so according to the sweet Divine Will. They do not come here on any compulsion of Karma as in our case. They are not under the influence of the divine illusory energy (Māyā) even when they are here. Māyā cannot exercise any power on the true devotees of her Lord. They are not under her control. Hence, their appearance is not actuated by the compulsion of Māyā, to reap the reactions of their past actions (Prārabdha). Neither have they any bondage for any of their actions in this world. Actions themselves are not dangerous if they are properly utilised. Actions are harmful to the core and are the very cause of this repeated cycle of births and deaths, only when they are done without the least desire of pleasing the Supreme Lord. Actions when performed for the pleasure of the Lord result in Bhakti. Acts of Bhakti not the cause of Saṁsāra as godless and selfish actions are. Hence, a devotee, whose very existence itself is to render the maximum pleasure to the Supreme Lord, is not responsible for his various actions in this world. He is an unconditionally surrendered person, who is invariably under the direct guidance of the Supreme Lord. He has no option independent of the Lord, his only Object of Worship. Every action of his, however insignificant it may be, is in full accordance with the Divine Will. As such, there is no Karma Bandha or bondage of actions for him.

The sanctity that follows the Advent day of Bhagavān, is also equally shared by the birthday of His devotees. Just as Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Śatrughna, etc., accompany the Lord whenever He makes His Manifestation in this world, the devotees too, take births according to the Lord's desires. They only follow the Lord in all His Manifestations and retire to the eternal realm along with Him when the purpose of their birth is fully accomplished. The devotees are not bound by any of their actions here.<sup>148</sup>

The appearance of a devotee of the Supreme Lord is as much an important and eternal even as the Advent of Bhagavān Himself. The devotees of the Lord, are not separate entities entirely different from Him. They appear along with Bhagavān for fulfilling various purposes of His, sometimes in advance, and some of them by the Will of the Lord, appear even after His departure from this world. The same is the process in their disappearance as well. The devotees make their appearance fully retaining all their spiritual powers and save us from all the awful sufferings. The career of Ṭhākura Haridāsa is a glorious and living example of all these infallible facts. If we fail to understand these basic truths on the real position of devotees, our failure to understand it is in itself the proof of our aversion to Godhead, the vital cause of our imprisonment into these material bodies.

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ye rūpe pradyumna aniruddha saṅkarṣaṇa  
yei rūpa lakṣmaṇa bharata śatrughna

tām hārā ye rūpa prabhu-saṅge avatare  
vaiṣṇavere sei rūpa prabhu ajñā kare

ataeva vaiṣṇavera janma-mṛtyu nāi  
saṅge āisena saṅge yāye na tathāi

dharma karma janma vaiṣṇavera kabhu nahe  
padma purāṇete ihā vyakta kari 'kahe  
(śrī caitanya-bhāgavata, antya 8.171-174)

yathā saumitri-bharatau yathā saṅkarṣaṇādayaḥ  
tathā tenaiva jāyante martya-lokāṁ yadṛcchayā

punas tenaiva yāsyanti tad viṣṇoḥ śāśvataṁ padam  
na karma bandhanaṁ janma vaiṣṇavānāṁ ca vidyate  
(padma purāṇa, u. 247.57-58)



# 11 MAHĀPRABHU'S DISCOURSE

## ON NĀMA

AFTER the acceptance of Sannyāsa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu toured all over India for a period of six years sanctifying all the places on His way and converting lacs and lacs of people to His unique religion of Transcendental Love by spreading the Divine Dispensation of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana. He conquered the whole of India, from the great Himalayas to Cape Comorin by this most efficacious, catholic, and simple method. This new process is profound and easy at once. It has got the dual capacity of satisfying a profound scholar well-versed in the Śāstras and gifted with the art of debate, and an ordinary unlettered man of the street. This marvellous combination in bringing together persons, diametrically opposite, under a single banner was never before experienced by anyone in the religious history of the world. Such a unique and sublime religion accessible to the classes and masses was never popularised to the inhabitants of India or the world by any of the Prophets, Messiahs, Ācāryas, Saints, Philosophers, or even the Descents (Avatāras) of the Supreme Lord prior to the Advent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This is an undisputed fact. Making full use of this wonderful weapon of the highest potency, He did marvels which human language cannot adequately express. The tremendous influence of the Nāma-Saṅkīrtana has pierced through all our adamant coatings, the result of the worst type of the accumulated heaps of sins of many births, and left Its impressions of firm faith and love to the Beloved Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Why? Even the very haters of Hindu religion, also could feel the inexpressible glory, the universal and all round efficacy of the Name. That a good many of them have lately adopted this cult, is the solid proof of Its efficacy and popularity. Even the wild animals were no exceptions; inspired by the Divine Influence of the Holy Name, they forgot their ferocious nature - the worst animal instincts in them - they danced; they kissed each other, they rubbed their faces; they shouted with extreme joy; they

rolled on the ground and what other wonderful actions they did, can be adequately expressed only by an eyewitness.

### 111. *Mahāprabhu at Benares*

After visiting many places in the South, Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to Benares on His way to Vṛndāvana. The inhabitants of Benares, and especially the huge Sannyāsī section, headed by Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, proved for Him a hard nut to crack. Sufficiently reinforced with the highly intellectual, barren, and abstruse philosophical arguments of monism, for which Benares was the greatest stronghold, these Sannyāsīs and particularly their leader were at their wit's end to strike at the every root of this Universal Religion inculcated by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Who had done wonders in other parts of India. But for these dry intellectualists, His religion appealed to be a failure. Elsewhere He has mentioned thus: -"Bhagavān is always kind to people who have in them the virtue of humility, but, to those who are extremely proud of their learning, ancestry, lineage, wealth, etc., the Mercy of Bhagavān continues to be unattainable."<sup>149</sup>

"Me thinks that a Śvapaca, who has dedicated his body, mind, soul, word, wealth, and all his activities to the service of the Supreme Lord Bhagavān, is far superior to a Brāhmaṇa of high lineage and esteem, with a dozen merits, but averse to the worship of the Lotus Feet of Śrī Viṣṇu. The former purifies himself with his entire clan, whereas, the latter does not."<sup>150</sup> Their position takes as still more dangerous turn than ever before, when such arrogant persons become mendicants. Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī was of this disposition then. The very sound 'devotion' or Bhakti to Bhagavān was nauseating to him. Intellectual disputations and verbal juggleries were conceived

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149dīnere adhika dayā kare bhagavān

kulīna, paṇḍita, dhanīra baḍa abhimāna  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 4.68)

150viprād dvi-ṣaḍ-guṇa-yutād aravinda-nābha-  
pādāravinda-vimukhāt śvapacāṁ varīṣṭham  
manye tad-arpita-mano-vacanehitārtha-  
prāṇaṁ punāti sa kulāṁ na tu bhūrimānaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.9.10)

by him as the fundamental principles of religion and the pinnacle of its achievement. When Śrīman Mahāprabhu was at Kāśī, i.e., Benares, a fortunate Marathi Brāhmaṇa, who happened to meet Him, was highly impressed by Him. While Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī was expounding Vedānta Sūtras before his disciples, this Brāhmaṇa apprised him of all the news about Śrīman Mahāprabhu thus:—

### **112. *Marāṭhā Brāhmaṇa impressed by Mahāprabhu***

"A Sannyāsī has come here from Jagannātha Purī. His Glories and mystic Powers defy description. He is of extraordinary Features and Deeds. He is a marvellous example of beauty having a colour similar to that of molten gold and well developed limbs, with all accompanying signs unusual in an ordinary human being. He is shining with all signs of Godhead and His sight kindles in one the belief that He is the veritable Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself. Those who look at Him, automatically chant the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' again and again. All the signs of Mahābhāgavata described in Śrīmad Bhāgavata can be seen fully displayed in His Person. He constantly utters the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' and tears roll down on His cheeks like the flowing waters of the river Ganges. Sometimes He dances, sometimes He laughs, He sings, He weeps incessantly on some occasions, sometimes He thunders like the roar of a lion. This great Personage, by name Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, is the Real Benefactor of the entire world. His Name, Form, Qualities, Activities - are all unparalleled. A first-hand experience of His sight will convince one beyond any doubt."

### **113. *Prakāśānanda's remarks***

Prakāśānanda took this description of Śrīman Mahāprabhu from the Marathi Brāhmaṇa in a very slighting way. He laughed at it with utter scorn and said, "Yes, yes, I have heard about Him, that Sannyāsī of Bengal - a great sentimentalist, a disciple of Keśava Bhāratī, and a notorious deceiver of the public. His name is Caitanya, and with His group of similar sentimentalists, He roams in different parts of the country, even in villages, dancing all along. He, who sees Him, takes Him to be Īśvara. Such is His capacity to delude the people; all those who see Him feel the spell of His magic. Leave aside others, even the eminent Vedantic scholar

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya has fallen a prey to His great spell. I came to know of late, that Bhaṭṭācārya has become mad after this Caitanya. He is a Sannyāsī only by name; but He is a great wizard. In this city of Kāśī, his emotional exhibits would not fetch Him anything; He would not succeed here. Do not go to Him again, but listen to Vedantic discourses. The company of such unrestrained people will spoil your life here and hereafter."

The Marathi Brāhmaṇa was a fortunate person. He was not convinced by Prakāśānanda's words; on the contrary, he felt too much wounded at heart by the remarks of the Sannyāsī leader. He silently left the place and reported all these criticisms to Śrīman Mahāprabhu and requested Him to save him and the other devotees from the attacks of these people. Śrīman Mahāprabhu patiently heard his grievances. His merciful heart longed to do something to redress the sorrows of His true devotees. He waited for a proper opportunity. He did not do anything on that occasion. He proceeded to Vṛndāvana. While returning from Vṛndāvana, He halted at Kāśī for a considerable time. By the repeated requests of His devotees, He decided to try the remedy at His disposal at Kāśī as well. This is not a big feat for Him to do.

#### ***114. Mahāprabhu accepts Marāṭhā Brāhmaṇa's invitation***

One day the Marathi Brāhmaṇa invited all the Sannyāsīs for taking alms of food at his place. Śrīman Mahāprabhu too, was specially invited. All the invitees gathered. The extraordinary features, the unusual brilliance and the charming Personality of Śrīman Mahāprabhu were noticed with great wonder and respect by one and all present there. Everyone, including Prakāśānanda felt an urge to show Him respect. The Sannyāsī leader wished to cultivate his friendship. He approached Śrīman Mahāprabhu and led Him to his side and offered a seat quite close to him. Prakāśānanda was eager to know why Śrīman Mahāprabhu had given up the study of Vedānta, the duty of Sannyāsīs and had taken to this emotional life of chanting the Name, dancing, singing, etc., - a very low type of religious practice.

## 115. *Mahāprabhu expounds the Divine Name*

Śrīman Mahāprabhu had accepted the invitation of this Marathi Brāhmaṇa purposely to teach a lesson to Prakāśānanda and his group. He replied, "Well, my revered sir! Kindly hear my answer to your query. My spiritual preceptor found out that I was a dull-witted person. You know fairly well that such persons are not eligible for the study of Vedānta. My master informed Me kindly that I did not deserve that course and suggested to Me to chant the Mantra 'Kṛṣṇa' constantly, as this Mantra is the essence of all the Mantras. **By the effect of uttering 'Kṛṣṇa Mantra', one is delivered from the bondage of Saṁsāra; but, by the efficacy of singing the Name 'Kṛṣṇa', one attains to His Lotus Feet. In this Kali Yuga, no other practice, except the practice of Nāma is effective, as Nāma is the essence of all Mantras and Śāstras.**<sup>151</sup> So saying, My master taught Me an important Śloka and I got the same studied by heart. According to the instructions of My master I started repeating the Name constantly, with the result that in a short time My mind became dazed. All My patience was lost. Yes, I turned out definitely frantic. I laughed, I wept, I danced, sang songs, like one who is out of his senses. After a while I composed Myself and thought seriously on this peculiar change in My disposition. I concluded beyond doubt that I have become utterly mad as a result of the-practice of chanting the Name. Yes, I am lost to Myself, having lost all self-control. I was eager to find out an immediate remedy for it. I approached My spiritual master and placed all My grievances before him. "What Mantra My lord hast thou imparted to Me? What power It has! By continuing to recite It

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151prabhu kahe — śuna, śrīpāda, ihāra kārāṇa  
guru more mūrkhā dekhi' karila śāsana

mūrkhā tumi, tomāra nāhika vedāntādhikāra  
'kṛṣṇa-mantra' japa sadā, — ei mantra-sāra

kṛṣṇa-mantra haite habe saṁsāra-mocana  
kṛṣṇa-nāma haite pābe kṛṣṇera caraṇa

nāma vinu kali-kāle nāhi āra dharma  
sarva-mantra-sāra nāma, ei śāstra-marma  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 7.71-74)

mentally the Mantra has made Me mad. It makes Me laugh, dance, and cry. "This indeed is the nature of the Mahā Mantra of the Nāma 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa' that whoever recites It, experiences a loving attachment to Śrī Kṛṣṇa."<sup>152</sup>

"After hearing My words, he replied, **"This is the real nature of chanting the Name 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa'. It awakens 'Prema to Śrī Kṛṣṇa', in the devotee, who performs Its utterance sincerely. Love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *summum bonum* of human existence.** In comparison to this attainment, which is otherwise called the fifth achievement of humanity, i.e., Pañcama Puruṣārtha, all the other four attainments, viz., Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa are insignificant like a blade of grass. **Prema or this fifth attainment of humanity is like a vast and unfathomable ocean of nectarine bliss,** whereas the happiness derived from the realisation of the Attributeless Brahman of the Upaniṣads is not even a drop in the ocean. **The real fruit of chanting the Name 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa' is the attainment**

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152eta bali' eka śloka śikhāila more

kaṇthe kari' ei śloka kariha vicāre

harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam  
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā

ei ājñā pāñā nāma la-i anukṣaṇa  
nāma laite laite mora bhrānta haila mana

dhairya dharite nāri, hailāma unmatta  
hāsi, kāndi, nāci, gāi, yaiche madamatta

tabe dhairya dhari' mane kariluṅ vicāra  
kṛṣṇa-nāme jñānācchanna ha-ila āmāra

pāgala ha-ilān āmi, dhairya nāhi mane  
eta cinti' nivediluṅ gurura caraṇe

kibā mantra dilā, gosāñi, kibā tāra bala  
japite japite mantra karila pāgala

hāsāya, nācāya, more karāya krandana  
eta śuni' guru hāsi balilā vacana  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 7.75-82)

**of this highest goal - His unalloyed Love.** This is the unanimous verdict of all the Śāstras. The signs of dancing, etc., are the accompanying characteristic developments of this sublime achievement of Prema. I am immensely pleased to learn that You have attained this result in a short period. Now, You sing, dance and perform Saṅkīrtana in the company of devotees and deliver the people of the world by imparting them the Name 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa'.<sup>153</sup>

"Thus advising Me, he taught Me a Śloka from Śrīmad Bhāgavata which forms the gist of that holy book, the

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153kṛṣṇa-nāma-mahā-mantrera ei ta' svabhāva

yei jape, tāra kṛṣṇe upajaye bhāva

kṛṣṇa-viṣayaka premā — parama puruṣārtha

yāra āge ṭṭa-tulya cāri puruṣārtha

pañcama puruṣārtha — premānandāmṛta-sindhu

mokṣādi ānanda yāra nahe eka bindu

kṛṣṇa-nāmera phala — 'premā', sarva-śāstre kaya

bhāgye sei premā tomāya karila udaya

premāra svabhāve kare citta-tanu kṣobha

kṛṣṇera caraṇa-prāptye upajāya lobha

premāra svabhāve bhakta hāse, kānde, gāya

unmatta ha-iyā nāce, iti-uti dhāya

sveda, kampa, romāñcāśru, gadgada, vaivarṇya

unmāda, viṣāda, dhairya, garva, haṛṣa, dainya

eta bhāve premā bhaktaganere nācāya

kṛṣṇera ānandāmṛta-sāgare bhāsāya

bhāla haila, pāile tumi parama-puruṣārtha

tomāra premete āmi hailāñ kṛtārtha

nāca, gāo, bhakta-saṅge kara saṅkīrtana

kṛṣṇa-nāma upadeśi' tāra' sarva-jana

(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 7.83-92)

crest-jewel of all the Śāstras.<sup>154</sup> As I have complete confidence in these words of My master, I constantly perform this Saṅkīrtana of the Name 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa'.<sup>155</sup> **It is this grand Name and Its unaccountable Mercy that makes Me often sing or dance in spite of Myself. I do not betray these signs or deeds wilfully with any purpose. The ever-increasing ocean of bliss that one can enjoy by the chanting of the Name 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa', is very great in comparison with the joy that one can experience by realising the Undifferentiated Brahman of the Jñānīs or even merging into it.** The former is vast like an unfathomable surging ocean, while the latter is like a cow's hoof-mark filled with water."<sup>156</sup>

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's reply was most instructive and highly impressive to the assembly of Sannyāsīs. To convince them further, He gave a splendid discourse on Śrīmad Bhāgavata at great length. This exposition revolutionised the entire audience. All of them felt deeply inspired with the teaching of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and being overcome with deep feelings of respect, addressed Him thus:—"We realise You as the veritable Śrī Nārāyaṇa. Our ears are indeed blessed by hearing Your most illuminating discourse. We are charmed by the sweetness of Your all-alluring complexion. We are all overwhelmed by Your grandeur. What You say is quite true."<sup>157</sup>

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154See footnote 22

155ei tāṇra vākye āmi ḍṛḍha viśvāsa dhari'  
nirantara kṛṣṇa-nāma saṅkīrtana kari  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 7.95)

156sei kṛṣṇa-nāma kabhu gāoyāya, nācāya  
gāhi, nāci nāhi āmi āpana-icchāya  
  
kṛṣṇa-nāme ye ānanda-sindhu-āsvādana  
brahmānanda tāra āge khātodaka-sama  
  
tvat-sākṣāt-karaṇāhlāda-viśuddhābdhi-sthitasya me  
sukhāni goṣpadāyante brāhmāṇy api jagad-guro  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 7.96-7.98)

157ihā śuni' bale sarva sannyāsīra gaṇa  
tomāke dekhiye yaiche sākṣāt nārāyaṇa



Another day, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, visited Śrī Bindu Mādhava and was engrossed in Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana and ecstatic dance in the company of His devotees. Soon thousands of people joined the Kīrtana. They slowly wended their way through the streets of Kāśī. Eventually, they reached near Prakāśānanda's residence. The loud chanting of the name attracted his attention. He came out with his disciples to witness what it was. He witnessed the impressive Personality of Śrīman Mahāprabhu surrounded by a huge crowd dancing in ecstasy. What a wonder! He could not resist the Divine Influence. Prakāśānanda with a vast number of his disciples, felt the magnetic urge of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana. They loudly uttered the Name 'Śrī Hari', and joined the crowd. The inhabitants of Kāśī were astounded with incomparable joy. Prakāśānanda did not waste his time any further. He worshipped the Holy Feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Kāśī, with all its impenetrable intellectual fortifications was carried away by the unconquerable Divine force of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, reinforced and commanded by the All-Loving Personality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.<sup>158</sup>

Kāśī is a blessed city. All the opponents yielded to the Divine Śrī Hari Nāma. There was Saṅkīrtana everywhere in the town. Sannyāsīs and scholars giving up all their intellectual jugglery and discourses on Vedānta, took to the study of Śrīmad Bhāgavatā. What a magical conversion overnight! All Glory to the Divine Name! Let Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu be glorified!

For all sincere souls aiming at the realisation of the ultimate goal of human existence, the above incident is of invaluable significance. Sincere and unbiased aspirants, searching after the Absolute Truth, can take those expressions as the final authority since they come out from the Holy Mouth

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tomāra vacana śuni' juḍāya śravaṇa  
tomāra mādhuri dekhi' juḍāya nayana

tomāra prabhāve sabāra ānandita mana  
kabhu asaṅgata nahe tomāra vacana  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 7.103-105)

158saba kāśī-vāsī kare nāma-saṅkīrtana  
preme hāse, kāṇde, gāya, karaye nartana  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 25.165)

of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He, out of His causeless Mercy, has explained the whole process of His all-embracing cult of 'Nāma-Saṅkīrtana' as simply as possible. Beginning from the lowest stage of spiritual life; till the attainment of the final goal, the royal path is clearly and vividly described for the benefit of any unsophisticated and unbigotted aspirant who intends to proceed on such a course.

## 116. *Nāma and Mantra*

"The Mantra is composed of three, four or five Sanskrit words beginning with what is called the Seed Word with the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and a dedicatory word attached to it. The Seed Word is the Seed of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Love. It awakens in the heart spiritual passion. This Seed Word, if mentally repeated with intense concentration, bursts open the shell of the Sound-Form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa - His Name, which contains the Nectar of Absolute Love. The word 'Sanskrit' means pure, refined. The Sanskrit language is the language of the pure, undefiled voice of Nature. Hence, it is called 'the language of gods' who are representatives of nature's attributes. These attributes are blendings of forces. Each force has a name (sound), a form, and a quality. A man in intense pain expresses it in such sounds, like "Oh-h" or "Ah-h". This "Oh-h", or "Ah-h" may be called the sound (voice) of pain, contortions of the face the expression of its form, and the feeling it produces is its quality. The quality is the substance of the force called pain and its sound and sign (form) are its expressions. If there were a microscope powerful enough to reveal to our view the figures which sound vibrations create on Ether, we would then find that the above mentioned sound expressions of Pain create forms in Ether much like the combined letters "Oh-h" or "Ah-h". This means that it is from the impressions of sound vibration on Ether that characters of all languages have been formed; the pictures reflecting themselves on the inventor's mind through the medium of its subtle force called inspiration."<sup>159</sup>

"The characters (Sanskrit 'Caritra') of the Sanskrit language, the parent language of all languages, are born with creation. They are entities in Nature, form-expressions of her forces. They are eternal and indestructible – Akṣara, as

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<sup>159</sup>Extracts from 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa – the Lord of Love'

characters are called. The vowels are the masculine forces. The masculine characters (vowels) are independent, the feminine characters (consonants) are dependent. The vowels can be pronounced by themselves, the consonant can be only pronounced when united with the vowels. The vowels are the expressions of the Essence of the Deity (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), the consonants are the expressions of the Will-force of the Deity (Prakṛti that which procreates), Nature is born of sound, the attribute of Ether (Ākāśa) which was the first manifestation of creation. The first sound was 'AUM' misspelled and mispronounced in English as 'OM'. The vowel 'A' (pronounced AU in Sanskrit), the initial letter of the word 'AUM' is the parent of all letters and languages. This 'AUM' in sound, represents the distant vibrations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Flute, the music of Love, while its character-form in Sanskrit resembles the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa playing on His Flute. This is the mystery of what Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself says in the Gītā, "I am the Word 'AUM'."

"The different combinations of the other Sanskrit characters (form of natural forces), called words, represent, similarly pictures of sound forms of different attributes and objects. Sanskrit words, in fact, are sound-shells which hold within them essences of the attributes they represent and the object they signify. **The letters 'K, R, Ṣ, N, A', joined together form the word 'Kṛṣṇa', Which is the Sound-shell of the Essence of Love, Nature's Absolute Attribute, produced by the fusion of the forces of which the composing characters are sound-forms. When frequently repeated together with the Love-Passion Seed-Word, its vibrations, after purifying the atmosphere of the mind, illumine in time its inner chamber, the heart, which is the door of the soul, and fills it with the ecstasy of Bliss.**"<sup>160</sup>

The Mantra that comes from the holy mouth of the Guru and imparted to the disciple is not an ordinary formula composed of material alphabets. It is a special formula consisting of the Names of the Lord in which special power is infused. It saves us from the mental hallucinations. The material mind is always busy in its twofold functions of forming ideas, and dissolving them the next moment. Without the help of these Mantras, the conditioned souls remain helpless dupes under the terrible influence of the materialised mind.

In Mukundamālā Stotra the Glory of the Mantra is stated thus:—"O my tongue! You want to prattle always and waste the precious time for nothing. You do not remember even for a single moment that the time once spent, can never come back at any cost. There is no power on earth that can give back the lost time. You waste this precious time without understanding that death is fast approaching. Like frogs on the banks of tanks, lakes, or rivers who by their usual croakings, invite their own death in the form of snakes who make them their easy prey, you too, by your idle gossips shamelessly waste the valuable time unmindful of the fast approaching death with its wide open jaws. You do considerable havoc to a human being by your prattles and by your uncontrolled eating. Do not waste the time any more like this, be wise. Go on repeating the Divine Kṛṣṇa Mantra constantly, which has the capacity to destroy all your enemies, both internal and external, the One that is specially worshipped by all the Upaniṣads, the One that eradicates the very root cause of our repeated cycle of births and deaths, the Mantra that dispels the accumulated heaps of nescience, the One that is the very source of all noble and high achievements, the Mantra that marvellously saves us from the virulent poisonous influence of the powerful sense-objects and their fleeting pleasures of this world and the blessed Mantra that fulfils the very purpose of this precious human birth."<sup>161</sup>

'Mantra' and 'Nāma' are not quite different; yet there is a difference in results. The Mantra of Śrī Kṛṣṇa saves us from the evil grips of the materialised mind, and delivers us from the thralldom of Māyā. Mantra is formed of the Names alone; but with a suffix indicating self-dedication of the disciple at the Feet of the Lord. **Whereas the Name is addressed directly in the vocative case as in, "O Hari-Nāma! I take absolute shelter**

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161śatru-cchedaika-mantraṁ sakalāṁ upaniṣad-vākya-sampūjya-mantraṁ  
 saṁsāroccheda-mantraṁ samucita-tamasah  
 saṅgha-niryāṇa-mantram  
 sarvaiśvaraika-mantraṁ  
 vyasana-bhujaga-sandaṣṭa-santrāṇa-mantraṁ  
 jihve śrī-kṛṣṇa-mantraṁ japa japa satataṁ  
 janma-sāphalya-mantram  
 (śrī-mukunda-mālā-stotra 31)

**in You, Who are ever being resorted to by the eternally liberated souls."**<sup>162</sup>

"And man drew Love from the Name, for the Name the potency of love contained, even as the seed the tree doth hold or the bud the fruit of the tree enfolds."

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu continuously stayed at Purī for eighteen years. Devotees from Bengal used to visit Purī every year, greatly eager for His Darśana, on the occasion of the Ratha-Yātrā (chariot-celebrations). While returning after the festival, they used to get many of their spiritual problems solved by receiving enlightenment directly from Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Once, some important devotees of a village by name 'Kulinagrāma', on the eve of their departure, requested Śrīman Mahāprabhu to enlighten them with the nature of duty that should be performed by householders.

### *117. Mahāprabhu's advice to householders*

Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, the author of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's celebrated biography, 'Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta' describes the incident in Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu's Own Words, as follows:—"Serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His devotees and constantly perform the Saṅkīrtana of the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."<sup>163</sup>"By the single Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa all your sins are destroyed and it helps the appearance of nine-fold devotion, viz., (1) hearing the Glories of the Lord, (2) utterance of the Name, (3) remembrance, (4) showing respect by touching the Feet, (5) ritualistic worship, (6) offering prostrations, (7) serving like a faithful servant, (8) friendship, and (9) absolute self-surrender. The Name is independent and All-Powerful. Hence, It does not require the assistance of any other process for the fulfilment of Its Efficacies. It does not even wait for initiation or such other ritualistic observances. No sooner the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' appears on the tongue, than It redeems all persons, irrespective of their

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162ayi mukta-kulair upāsyamānaṁ

paritas-tvām hari-nāma saṁśrayāmi

(stava-mālā; śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭakam 1)

163prabhu kahena, — 'kṛṣṇa-sevā', 'vaiṣṇava-sevana'

'nirantara kara kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana'

(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 15.104)

status, right from the Caṇḍāla upwards. As a secondary effect, It destroys our earthly bondage and its cyclic effect and as the primary result, It attracts our mind to the Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and confers unflinching Love for Him.'""This Mahā Mantra formed of the Names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which attracts the hearts of all pure souls who have to their credit an abundance of accumulated heaps of religious merits, which strikes effectively at the very root of the worst type of sins, which is easily accessible to all human beings endowed with the power of speech, beginning with a Caṇḍāla (a low caste outside the pale of the fourfold classification of society), and which enables us to the attainment of the great wealth 'liberation', bestows Its result the moment It comes in touch with the tongue.<sup>164</sup> It never waits or depends upon initiation (Dikṣā),<sup>165</sup> or any other forms of preparatory ritualistic observances (Puraścaraṇa),<sup>166</sup> and such other holy performance for the

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164śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam  
arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam

iti puṁsārpitā viṣṇau bhaktiś cen nava-lakṣaṇā  
kriyeta bhagavatya addhā tan manye 'dhītam uttamam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.5.23-24)

eka kṛṣṇa-nāme kare sarva-pāpa kṣaya  
nava-vidhā bhakti pūrṇa nāma haite haya

dikṣā-puraścaryā-vidhi apekṣā nā kare  
jihvā-sparśe ā-caṇḍāla sabāre uddhāre

anuṣaṅga-phale kare saṁsārera kṣaya  
citta ākarṣiyā karāya kṛṣṇe premodaya  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 15.107-109)

165divyaṁ jñānaṁ yato dadyāt kuryāt pāpasya saṅkṣayam  
tasmād dikṣeti sā proktā deśikais tattva-kovidaiḥ  
(viṣṇu-yāmala; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 1.2.9)

166pūjā traikālikī nityaṁ japas tarpaṇam eva ca  
homo brāhmaṇa-bhuktiś ca puraścaraṇam ucyate  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.17.11)

success of this Mantra."<sup>167</sup> Dikṣā is a purificatory process by which the disciple is completely freed from all his sins and spiritual knowledge is imparted to him by the spiritual preceptor. Puraścaraṇa, is for the attainment of success of the Mantra, the Śāstras recommend a preparatory ritualistic course consisting of fivefold religious practices to be observed daily. They are (1) worship of the Lord on the three special junctures of the day, i.e., early morning, midday, and evening, (2) repetition of the Mantra received from one's Guru, (3) daily libations, (4) religious sacrifices with oblations, and (5) daily feeding of Brāhmaṇas. These fivefold observances are unavoidably necessary for achieving success in the chanting of Mantras. But in the case of uttering the Name, such observances are not necessary or essential.

### 118. *Vaidhī Bhakti*

On another occasion, Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave the following bit of precious advice to Sanātana Gosvāmī, when the latter visited Purī from Vṛndāvana.<sup>168</sup> When compared with the practice of the various forms of devotional observances mentioned in our Purāṇas, the nine-fold<sup>169</sup> ways of devotion declared in Śrīmad Bhagavata, occupy a very high

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167ākṛṣṭiḥ kṛta-cetasām su-manasām uccāṭanam cāmhasām  
 ācaṇḍālam amūka-loka-sulabho vaśyaś ca mukti-śriyaḥ  
 no dikṣām na ca sat-kriyām na ca puraścaryām manāg ikṣate  
 mantra 'yam rasanā-sprṅ eva phalati śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmātmakaḥ  
 (padyāvalī 29)

168bhajanera madhye śreṣṭha nava-vidhā bhakti  
 'kṛṣṇa-prema', 'kṛṣṇa' dite dhare mahā-śakti  
 tāra madhye sarva-śreṣṭha nāma-saṅkīrtana  
 niraparādhe nāma laile pāya prema-dhana  
 (śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 4.70-71)

169See footnote 153

position. Purāṇas have described about sixty-four methods of devotional practices.<sup>170</sup>

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170guru-pādāśrayas tasmāt kṛṣṇa-dīkṣādi-śikṣaṇam  
viśrambheṇa guroḥ sevā sādhu-varmānu-vartanam  
(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.74-95/1.2.97-237)

1. śrī guru pāda āśrayaḥ Accepting shelter at the feet of the spiritual preceptor, 2. śrī kṛṣṇa dīkṣā ādi śikṣaṇam Receiving initiation and enlightenment on spiritual truths from the Guru, 3. viśrambheṇa guroḥ seva Serving the spiritual master faithfully, 4. sādhu varma anu vartanam Following the examples laid out by saints, 5. sat dharmapṛcchā Enquiry into the details of true religion, 6. kṛṣṇa ārthe bhoga ādi tyagaḥ Renunciation of enjoyment of material luxuries for the sake of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 7. dvārakā ādi nivāsaḥ Dwelling in sacred places of pilgrimage or shrines like Dvaraka, etc., or on the banks of the Ganges, Yamuna, etc., 8. yāvat arthā anurve vātaitā Accepting means, etc., just enough to meet one's bare necessities of life, 9. hari vāsara sammānaḥ Observing fasts on every Ekadasi day, 10. dhātry akṣatyādi gauravam Showing respect to the sacred trees like Dhatri, Pipal, Tulasī, and to cows, Brāhmaṇas and Vaisnavas, 11. bhagavad vimukha jana saṅga Avoiding the company of those who are averse to Godhead, 12,13,14. śiṣyā dina anubandhitva aditrayam Refraining from enlisting unfit disciples, the study of various books, and the arts of unnecessary controversy on the meanings of Śāstras, 15. vyavahāre api akārpaṇyam Giving up of meanness in one's day to day dealings, 16. śokadi avaśa vartitā Remaining undisturbed on account of sorrows, 17. anya devān avajñā non-disparagement of other Gods, 18. bhūtān udvega dāyitā Never wound the heart of other beings, human or subhuman, by words, deeds or thoughts, 19. sevā nāma aparādhānām vrajanam Giving up all type of offences against the service of the Lord and His Name, 20. bhagavān ninda ādi asahiṣṇutā Intolerant in listening blasphemies on Bhagavān, His Bhaktas etc., 21. vaiṣṇava cihna dhṛtiḥ Wearing the external signs of Vaishnav such as Tulasī beads, beads made of lotus seeds, etc., putting perpendicular signs, specially prescribed, on the forehead and other parts of the body imposed by the Śāstras, etc., 22. nāma akṣaradṛtiḥ Writing the Names of the Lord on the body by 'Gopi-Chandan' or sandal paste, 23. nirmālya dhṛtiḥ Accepting and wearing the previous day's offering to the Lord, such as garlands, scents, clothing, etc., 24. agretāṇḍavan Dancing



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before the Lord with devotion, 25. dandavat nnatih Prostrated obeisances, 26. abhi uthanam Respecting the Lord and His devotees by welcoming them by getting up from one's seat the moment he happens to see them coming in palanquins, chariots or on any other such vehicles or arrangements, 27. anu vrajya To accompany the Lord or His Bhaktas on such occasions as mentioned in the previous one on either sides, in front or rear, according to the situation, and as necessity of service arises on the spot, 28. bhagavat sthane gatih Visiting temples of the Lord and other holy places of pilgrimage, 29. parikramah Circumambulation of holy places, 30. arcanam Ritualistic worship, 31. paricarya Servitude, 32. gitam Singing devotional songs, 33. sankirtanam Loud recital of Lord's Name, Form, Qualities or Activities, 34. japah Muttering of Mantras or Names, 35. vijñaptih Accepting one's insignificant and helpless position before the Lord by different types of supplications, 36. stava pāṭhah Uttering various hymns on the Lord, 37. naivedya asvādaḥ Honouring the sacred offerings like Mahaprasāda, Tulasī, etc., 38. pādya asvādaḥ Taking the holy Feet-wash, 39. dhūpa sa aurabhyam Smelling the consecrated incense, 40. śrī mūrteḥ sparśanam Touching the Holy Image, 41. śrī mūrter darśanam Beholding the Holy Image, 42. ārātrika darśanam Witnessing the waving of lights and other rituals, 43. śravanam Listening to excellences, 44. tat kṛpa ikṣam Solely depending upon His Mercy, 45. smṛtiḥ Remembrance, 46. dhyānam Meditation, 47. dāsyam Accepting the servitude of the Lord, 48. sakhyam Friendship, 49. ātma nivedanam Complete self-surrender, 50. nijā priyaupaharaṇam Offering the best of articles liked by one, 51. tad arthe akhila ceṣṭitam To please the Lord is the be-all and end-all of all the activities, 52. śaraṇa apattiḥ Submissive attitude in every activity in words, deeds and thoughts, 53-56. tadiyanam sevanam Service of Bhaktas, Tulasī, Śrīmad Bhagavata and Mathura, Vrindavan, etc, 57. yatha vaibhava mahotsavaḥ Celebrations on important occasions like the appearance and disappearance of great Bhaktas, Acharyas, Advent Days of the Avatars in the company of Bhaktas, 58. kartika vrata Observance of Kartikavrata, Damodaravrata or Urjavrata in accordance with the rules of Śāstras, 59. śrī janma dina yatra Celebrating 'Janmashtami' - the Advent Day of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 60. śrī murtera aghri sevane pritiḥ Special liking for the worship of the Lord, 61. śrī bhagavata artha asvadaḥ Listening to and relishing the reading and exposition of Śrīmad Bhagavata in the company of Bhaktas of a higher order, 62. sādhu sangah Association of Bhaktas, 63. nāma sankirtanam The

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loud chanting of the Lord's Name, 64. śrī mathurā maṇḍale sthitiḥ Residing  
at the holy places

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## 20 NINEFOLD DEVOTION

WHEN compared to the sixty-four modes of devotional practices, the nine-fold ways<sup>171</sup> of devotion are highly powerful. In fact, all the above ideas are included in the nine-fold ways of devotion. Each method in this subsequent group is independently potent enough to procure us the loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and even Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.

"Those who constantly listen to your Glorious Topics again and again, sing Them with spontaneous love, utter Them before others, contemplate on Them, and rejoice with great delight when spoken by others, alone behold Your Lotus Feet that put an end to the repeated cycle of births and deaths, before long."<sup>172</sup> "Therefore, O descendant of Bharata! He who is desirous of attaining the eternal fearless state, the abode of perpetual happiness, should listen to, recite, and meditate upon the Transcendental Glories of the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, the Lord of all Jīvas, the Sole Shelter of the entire universe."<sup>173</sup>

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171See footnote 153

172śṛṇvanti gāyanti gṛṇanty abhikṣṇaśaḥ  
 smaranti nandanti tavehitam janāḥ  
 ta eva paśyanty acireṇa tāvakam  
 bhava-pravāhoparamam padāmbujam  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.8.36)

173tasmād bhārata sarvātmā bhagavān īśvaro hariḥ  
 śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca smartavyaś cecchatābhayam  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 2.1.5)

## 201. Śravaṇa

Śravaṇa means the act of listening the Names, Divine Pastimes, Attributes, etc., of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The scrupulous observance of any one form of the nine-fold ways of devotion brings success to its aspirant. Yet, for the purification of one's heart, it is desirable to follow the laid-out course. Accordingly the first procedure is to hear the Holy Name. On hearing the marvels of the Name, when the mind is purified, the next stage of hearing the topics relating to the Transcendental Form of the Lord is to be followed. This renders the aspirant eligible to realise the nature of the Form of the Lord. When he is fortunate enough to have a full realisation of the Form, he is spontaneously favoured with the experience of the various Transcendental Qualities. Similarly, the other effects of hearing in succession bring gradually the realisations of the Entourage and finally the Transcendental Pastimes. This is the proper order for hearing. The same course is effective and prescribed for Kīrtana, and Smaraṇa as well. If the exposition of the Śāstras on the Name, Form, Qualities, Pastimes, and Entourage of the Lord is heard from a genuine Bhakta, it is far more effective than having the same from a Sādhaka. Hearing from one who is a disbeliever and who does the same, influenced by various worldly desires, often brings a detrimental effect. Lifeless and mercenary explanations may be no doubt, charming, learned, humorous, and even sometimes, rationally convincing, but they fail to stir up the dormant feelings in the hearers and awaken in them any sense of detachment from the worldly objects or devotion to Godhead. Their words do not touch the heart or leave any permanent impression there, since they do not originate from the depth of their hearts. These expositions of Śāstras can only attract the admirations of the public towards these mercenary speakers, and that too, of a superficial nature, resulting in their sympathetic outlook and lavish presents.

Śāstras caution us to hear only such spiritual topics as are narrated, composed, or approved by great realised Bhaktas, ancient or modern (Mahat Kīrtita or Mahat Prakaṭita). Any composition - may be on Godhead - from the pen of worldly-minded people, does not provide us with the desired result. They shape things in their mental mould, and give often an entirely new form or even wrong shapes. As such, it is beneficial, preferable - nay, compulsory - to hear spiritual discourses from persons who have realised what they preach

and whose lives are living examples of the same valuable teachings.

Of all kinds sacred books prescribed for the purpose of hearing (Śravaṇa), the act of listening to Śrīmad Bhāgavata is spoken of as the best. In it we get the combination of both the aforesaid qualifications. It is composed by the great Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa, one of Lord's Manifestations, and narrated by great Bhaktas like Śukadeva, etc. In addition, it contains the quintessence of all the Śāstras of the world. "O Rasikas (devotees belonging to any of the five important spiritual Rasas of Santa, Dāsyā, Sakhyā, Vātsalyā, and Madhura), and Bhāvukas (in whom the spontaneous love for Bhagavān has made its manifestation)! Drink deep this Nectarine Rasa till you are completely saturated with the ocean-like Everlasting Bliss. Śrīmad Bhāgavata is the fully ripened fruit of the wish-yielding tree-like Vedas. This fruit has dropped down from the tree to the earth from the holy mouth of the great sage Śukadeva and this fruit is unlike other fruits, in that, this is free from any waste substance, such as the skin, fibre, seed, etc., and is condensed Rasa itself (the most marvellous and captivating Transcendental Pastimes of the Name, Qualities, etc., from the nectarine contents of this Incomparable fruit)."<sup>174</sup>

It is imperatively necessary to verify the authenticity of what we have heard and get fully convinced of it. Before starting with any course of spiritual procedure, we must be thorough with its theoretical side. Hence, Śravaṇa occupies the first place in the list of devotional practices. The act of listening is prayed for by many devotees even after realising Bhagavān. They have prayed to Bhagavān to bless them incessantly with the benefits of hearing His Transcendental Glories. Some of the Bhaktas, like Pṛthu Mahārāja, etc., went a step further in their demands influenced by this burning ardour for hearing. They have accepted the inadequacy of having only two ears and appealed to the Lord to provide them with a thousand ears to do full justice to the act of listening the Divine Topics, wherever They are told.

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174nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalaṁ

śuka-mukhād amṛta-drava-saṁyutam

pibata bhāgavatam rasam ālayam

muhur aho rasikā bhuvi bhāvukāḥ

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.1.3)

"Those who are desirous of crossing this terrible ocean of triple afflictions extremely difficult to cross over, have no other vessel than hearing, i.e., enjoying the Nectarine Narratives of the Glorious Deeds of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa."<sup>175</sup> "Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Eternal Benefactor of those Sādhus, the hearing and chanting of Whose Name are great purifying factors, manifesting in the hearts of those who listen with rapt attention His Transcendental Glories, uproots the evil propensities of their hearts as their Indwelling Guide."<sup>176</sup> "Those who drink in the narration of the nectar-like Glorious Deeds of the Lord, Who is the Delight of the devotees, poured into the cavities of their ears by the Bhaktas, purify their hearts which are awfully contaminated by the thoughts of the senses and sense-objects and attain his Lotus Feet."<sup>177</sup> "The Elixir of Thy Narratives is life itself to those who are distressed by the pangs of Thy separation. Great devotees like Prahlāda, Dhruva, etc., too sing Thy Glories, the best remedy to strike at the very root of all sins, most auspicious to hear, capable of imparting all prosperity and above all the sublime gift of Divine Love. As

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175samsāra-sindhum ati-dustaram uttitiṣor

nānyaḥ plavo bhagavataḥ puruṣottamasya

līlā-kathā-rasa-niṣevanam antareṇa

pumso bhaved vividha-duḥkha-davārditasya

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.4.40)

176śṛṇvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ

hṛdy antaḥ stho hy abhadrāṇi vidhunoti suhṛt-satām

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.2.17)

177pibanti ye bhagavata ātmanaḥ satām

kathāmṛtaṁ śravaṇa-puṭeṣu sambhṛtam

punanti te viśaya-vidūṣitāśayaṁ

vrajanti tac-caraṇa-saroruhāntikam

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 2.2.37)

śravaṇe na iva maṅgalaṁ nāmadheyaṁ yasya

(bhāvārtha-dīpikā 2.7.15)

such he who spreads it in this world is the best and the most munificent of all the generous-hearted persons."<sup>178</sup>

## 202. *Kīrtana*

Chanting aloud the Names, Form, Qualities, Entourage, Līlās, etc.<sup>179</sup> All the instructions that we have so far heard in Śravaṇa are equally applicable to Kīrtana. The order of performing Kīrtana also is the same. "After hearing the blissful and auspicious Glories relating to the Divine Births and Deeds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested in the world, one must chant Them unabashed, moving in the world undisturbed by the ups and downs, and unattached to the sense objects and its evil temptations."<sup>180</sup> Anyone who has fallen into this stormy ocean of worldliness and is caught in its eddies of births and deaths, can get deliverance from it in no time, by uttering His Name, even helplessly, of whom even Mahākālā, the personification of fear itself, is awfully afraid.<sup>181</sup>

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178 tava kathāmrtaṁ tapta-jīvanam  
kavibhir iḍitaṁ kalmaṣāpaham  
śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ  
bhuvi grṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.31.9)

179 nāma līlā guṇādīnām uccair bhāṣā tu kīrtanam  
(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.145)

180 śṛṇvan su-bhadrāṇi rathāṅga-pāṇer  
janmāni karmāṇi ca yāni loke  
gītāni nāmāni tad-arthakāni  
gāyan vilajjo vicared asaṅgaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.2.39)

181 āpannaḥ saṁsṛtiṁ ghorāṁ  
yan-nāma vivaśo grṇan  
tataḥ sadyo vimucyeta  
yad bibheti svayaṁ bhayam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.1.14)



## 203. *Smaraṇa*

Remembering the Name, Form, Qualities, and Sportive Activities of the Supreme Lord is known as Smaraṇa. Smaraṇa is fivefold, according to its stages of development:—(1) The primary stage of Smaraṇa<sup>182</sup> consists in recalling to one's mind the Holy Name, Form, Attributes, etc., of the Lord, as in a flash, the chief aim being the purification of the heart. As this is inferior to Kīrtana, no specific instances are quoted. (2) Dhāraṇā<sup>183</sup> - This is a hard stage reached after regular struggle by the striver. A regular tug-of-war between him on one side and his mind with all its senses as the other is in progress. The mind running mad like a mad horse escaping from its keeper, is to be restricted from its wanderings. Withdrawing the mind from all its diverse objectives, and fixing it in remembering the Lord is the meaning of this state of mental pursuit. (3) Dhyāna<sup>184</sup> - Special concentration of the mind on the Form, Activities, etc., of the Lord is meant by Dhyāna. In this, the striver has succeeded in his attempts to control the mind. Free from outside distractions and the mad influence of the fickle mind, he can concentrate it upon the Lord. (4) Dhruvānusmṛti<sup>185</sup> - The incessant flow of the mind (like a continuous stream of nectar towards the Lord like the unbroken flow of oil - to bring the simile nearer to us). (5) Samādhi<sup>186</sup> - The spontaneous manifestation of the Lord in the heart. This stage of Samādhi is different from the one that is attained by the Jñānīs generally known by the

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182yat kiñcid anu sandhānam

(śrī-bhakti-sandarbhah 278)

183sarvataś cittam ākarṣya sāmānyākāreṇa mano-dhāraṇam

(śrī-bhakti-sandarbhah 278)

184viśeṣato rūpādi cintanam

(śrī-bhakti-sandarbhah 278)

185amṛta dhārāvāt aviñcchīm tat

(śrī-bhakti-sandarbhah 278)

186dhyeyamātra sphuraṇam

(śrī-bhakti-sandarbhah 278)

Asam-Prajñāta-Samādhi or Brahma-Samādhi. In the case of Bhaktas, they get an uninterrupted realisation of the Transcendental Sports of the Supreme Lord. Their heart is converted into a stadium for the Lord to play and the various alluring sports take place in their hearts like the surging waves of a rough sea.

There is also the act of remembrance both in the process of chanting the Name (Name Smṛti), and in muttering the Mantra (Mantra Smṛti). The remembrance that automatically materialises while chanting the Divine Name, keeping the number on a rosary of Tulasī beads is known as Nāma Smṛti. The remembrance that takes place while muttering the Mantra keeping its number on one's finger, is the process of Mantra Smṛti. "Just as we do not dream when we attain the waking state, even so, by the mere entrance of the Supreme Lord into the heart by His inconceivable power, all the illusions displayed by the Āsurika forces are completely dispelled. Because remembrance of the Lord is the remedy for all our calamities."<sup>187</sup> "O Lord! I am extremely fortunate to behold Your Lotus Feet today. The purpose of my birth is fulfilled by beholding Your Feet that are being constantly meditated on in their hearts by Brahmā and others of incomprehensible learning; Your Feet are highly blissful and are the eternal resort of all devoted souls, and the only recourse to those fallen souls struggling in the deep well of worldly sufferings. Have mercy upon me so that the memory of Your Lotus Feet may remain incessantly in me and I may be able to roam about in this world, constantly meditating upon Them."<sup>188</sup> "O Nalinanābha (Śrī Kṛṣṇa)! Your Lotus Feet are being constantly meditated on in their hearts by Brahma and other masters of Yoga and vast

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187tasmin praviṣṭe 'sura-kūṭa-karmajā  
māyā vineśur mahinā mahīyasaḥ  
svapno yathā hi pratibodha āgate  
hari-smṛtiḥ sarva-vipad-vimokṣaṇam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 8.10.55)

188dṛṣṭaṁ tavāṅghri-yugalaṁ janatāpavargaṁ  
brahmādibhir hṛdi vicintya agādha-bodhaiḥ  
saṁsāra-kūpa-patitottaraṇāvalambāṁ  
dhyāyāṁś carāmy anugṛhāṇa yathā smṛtiḥ syāt  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.69.18)

learning. They are the only support for deliverance of all Jīvas from the depths of this well of worldly existence. May the remembrance of Your Lotus Feet continuously manifest in our hearts, enmeshed, as we are, in domestic life."<sup>189</sup>

## 204. *Pāda-sevana*

This mode of devotion is the act of seeing, touching, circumambulating the Holy Image and the sacred temple, sacred abodes like Vṛndāvana, Mathurā, Jagannātha, Dvārakā, Ayodhyā, etc., going on pilgrimages, bathing in the holy rivers like the Ganges, Yamunā, etc. Taking shelter in any of the sacred abodes of the Lord, or a holy temple for life, also comes under the category of Pāda-sevana. The service of the sacred Tulasī, the most favourite of Bhagavān Śrī Hari is also included in this mode of devotion.

"Discarding the performance of daily routine religious rites enjoined by the Varṇāśrama Dharma, those who serve the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, need not in the least be afraid of any evil befalling them, even if they meet with a fall from their devotional practices or with a premature death, owing to the inborn indifference to past fruitive activities. In whatever circumstances they are placed or in whichever species of births they are born, no evil shall befall those who are devoted to the Lord. Because of their natural inclination to render service to the Lord, they never experience any failure. Whereas, those who regularly perform their daily routine religious rites, but lack in devotion to the Lord, achieve nothing substantial."<sup>190</sup>"O Lotus-eyed Lord! The wise ever fix their mind in deep contemplation of You, the Abode of all goodness. Following in

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189āhuś ca te nalina-nābha padāravindam  
yogeśvarair hṛdi vicintyam agādha-bodhaiḥ  
saṁsāra-kūpa-patitottaraṇāvalambam  
geham juṣām api manasy udiyāt sadā naḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.82.48)

190tyaktvā sva-dharmam caraṇāmbujam harer  
bhajann apakvo'tha patet tato yadi  
yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kim  
ko vārtha āpto'bhajatām sva-dharmataḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.5.17)

the footsteps of the great sages of yore, they have adopted Your Lotus Feet as an ever safe boat and find this vast ocean of worldly existence as a mere small pit of water made by the hoof of a calf."<sup>191</sup> "O Kṛṣṇa (Primeval Being)! If a mortal, inhabiting this mundane world, being scared by the serpent of death and after roaming about in all the worlds including that of Brahma and finding no safe shelter free from fear, fortunately and through the blessings of saints, happens to take shelter at Your Lotus Feet, he then rests in peace. Death itself runs away from him."<sup>192</sup> "O God! O Bhagavān! One who is fortunate enough to receive even particle of Grace from your Twin Lotus Feet, alone knows the Truth of Your inconceivable Glories. No one else is capable of realising It even if he devotes his whole time and energy till eternity."<sup>193</sup>

## 205. *Arcana*

Ritualistic worship of the Lord is Arcana. Every householder is expected to follow this process. This ultimately leads him to the Lord. **"Just as watering the root of a tree nourishes its branches, and twigs, so also the worship of Śrī Viṣṇu results in the satisfaction of all souls including**

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191tvayy ambujākṣākhila-sattva-dhāmni  
samādhināveśita-cetasaike  
tvat-pāda-potena mahat-kṛtena  
kurvanti govatsa-padam bhavābhim  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.2.30)

192martyo mṛtyu-vyāla-bhītaḥ palāyan  
lokān sarvān nirbhayaṁ nādhyagacchat  
tvat pādābjaṁ prāpya yadṛcchayādyā  
susthaḥ śete mṛtyur asmād apaiti  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.3.27)

193athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-  
prasāda-leśānugṛhīta eva hi  
jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno  
na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvan  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.29)

him."<sup>194</sup>"Just as watering the root of a tree, nourishes its trunk, branches, sub-branches, leaves, flowers, seeds, and all its other parts and by feeding the body alone (by taking food), all its other parts including all the organs of senses are nourished, so also by worshipping Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone, all the other gods are as good as worshipped, without their being actually worshipped, either individually or jointly. The analogy lies in the fact that, we have to take the food through the mouth alone and not through other parts like the eyes, ears, nose, etc., which means that all the other parts of the body require to be fed through the proper channel of the mouth only. **Similarly, if Śrī Kṛṣṇa is served, all the lesser gods are definitely served.**"<sup>195</sup>"When a sincere person, with a clean heart, who pours water at Your Lotus Feet and performs Their worship by offering even tender blades of Dūrvā grass, attains the sublimest goal; how can this Bali who with a cheerful mind and loving heart dedicated the three worlds to Your Lotus Feet, come to any grief?"<sup>196</sup>"Wise men, viewing through the medium of the Śāstras on the eternal welfare of all human beings, have declared this worship of Śrī Viṣṇu as the best method of attaining mental peace and the righteous course that invariably brings deliverance from the thralldom of miseries and complete satisfaction of the Ātma."<sup>197</sup>"He who

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194yathā hi skandha-śākhānām taror mūlāvasēcanam  
evam ārādhanaṁ viṣṇoḥ sarveṣāṁ ātmanaś ca hi  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 8.5.49)

195yathā taror mūla-niṣēcanena  
tṛpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopasākhāḥ  
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇām  
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 4.31.14)

196yat-pādayor aśaṭha-dhīḥ salilam pradāya  
dūrvāṅkurair api vidhāya satīm saparyām  
apy uttamām gatim asau bhajate tri-lokīm  
dāśvān aviklava-manāḥ katham ārtim ṛcchet  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 8.22.23)

197cittasyopasāmo 'yaṁ vai kavibhiḥ śāstra-cakṣusā  
darśitaḥ su-gamo yogo dharmaś cātma-mud-āvahaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.84.36)

worships Me thus adopting the regulated processes prescribed by the Vedas and Tantra texts, receives from Me rewards in fulfilment of all his desires here and hereafter."<sup>198</sup>

## 206. *Vandana*

Vandana, though it forms an item in Arcana, is spoken of as an independent process too. The sense of extreme humility on hearing the unparalleled Glories of the Lord is the main basis of this method. The word Namaskāra indicates the giving up of all types of material ego. Sāṣṭāṅga Namaskāra means bowing down to the Lord as a mark of respect and in utter humility, utilising all the indriyas, viz., (1) the arms, (2) the legs, (3) the knees, (4) the breast, (5) the head, (6) the eyes, (7) mind, and (8) words.<sup>199</sup> One must bow down to the Lord with his heart and soul, with the eyes slightly opened and earnestly feeling and uttering. "O Lord! I am Thine with my body, mind, and soul." Besides this there is the other method known as the Pañcāṅga Namaskāra, which means prostrating oneself before the Lord with (1) the knees, (2) the hands, (3) the head, (4) with words and (5) mind dedicated to Him.<sup>200</sup>

"Therefore, he who bearing all the consequences of his previous actions, anticipating Thy Mercy with eagerness, and surrendering himself to Thee unconditionally in body, mind, and words, lives by offering salutations to Thee, richly deserves to attain Thee (Mukti-pādam - Śrī Kṛṣṇa himself)."<sup>201</sup>"Today, all my evils have left me, the very purpose

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198evam kriyā-yoga-pathaiḥ pumān vaidika-tāntrikaiḥ  
arcann ubhayataḥ siddhiṁ matto vindaty abhīpsitām  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.27.49)

199dorabhyām padbhyām ca jānubhyām urasā śirasā dṛṣā  
manasā vacasā ceti praṇāmo 'ṣṭāṅga īritāḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 1.8.360)

200jānubhyām caiva bāhubhyām śirasā vacasā dhiyā  
pañcāṅgakah praṇāmaḥ syāt pūjāsu pravarāv imau  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 1.8.361)

201tat te 'nukampām su-samīkṣamāṇo  
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam

of my birth is fulfilled; because I offer my prostrated obeisances at the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which are always meditated upon by Yogīs."<sup>202</sup> "With single-minded devotion, one should bow down to all movable and immovable objects, such as the sky, air, fire, water, earth, stars, planets like the moon, etc., all living beings, the cardinal points, trees and the like, rivers, ocean, etc., as the limbs of Bhagavān Śrī Hari."<sup>203</sup> "He who has fallen in a well, a ditch, or a pit, etc., or has slipped from a staircase, and is afflicted in manifold ways, and utters even once loudly "I bow down to Thee - Śrī Hari", is freed from all his sins."<sup>204</sup>

## 207. *Dāśya*

A sincere feeling that one is the servant of the Lord and the accompanying acts of servitude are the signs of Dāśya mode of devotion. Let alone the various efforts of the votary of this method in the worship of the Lord, the very feeling itself is alone capable of leading him to the realisation of the Supreme Lord. A servant of the Lord occupies a position second to none. In all forms of devotion this feeling of rendering service to the Supreme Lord plays the most important role. In this connection our Śāstras, in a single voice, emphatically declare

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hṛd-vāg-vapurbbhir vidadhan namas te  
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.8)

202mamādyāmaṅgalāṁ naṣṭaṁ phalavānś caiva me bhavaḥ  
yan namasye bhagavato yogi-dhyeyāṅghri-paṅkajam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.38.6)

203khaṁ vāyum agniṁ salilaṁ mahīm ca  
jyotīṁśi sattvāni diśo drumādīn  
sarit-samudrānś ca hareḥ śarīraṁ  
yat kiṁ ca bhūtaṁ praṇamed ananyaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.2.41)

204patitaḥ skhalitaś cārtaḥksuttvā vā vivaśo grhaṇ  
haraye nama ity uccair mucyate sarva-pātakāt  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.12.47)

the incomparable glories of the servants of the Lord. To attain the position of a servant of the Lord needs Herculean efforts. "Is there in all the worlds anything yet to be attained on the part of the servants of the most auspicious Feet of the Supreme Lord, by the mere hearing of Whose Name, the fallen Jīvas get rid of all their sins?"<sup>205</sup> "O Kṛṣṇa! As long as man does not become Your servant, so long alone love, etc, act as thieves (as they deprive us of our inherent knowledge and bliss), the house becomes a prison (owing to the existence of endless sufferings), and delusion as fetters on legs."<sup>206</sup> "Whatever man does, guided either by the rules and regulations of the sacred scriptures, or inspired by natural instincts, through the medium of his physical body, words, mind, senses, intellect, or even by inherited habits, he should dedicate them all to the Supreme Lord Śrī Nārāyaṇa."<sup>207</sup> "O Acyuta! O the Benefactor of the universe! Though great gods like Brahma prostrate themselves with their splendid crowns, the tops of which brush against Your Footstool, You, in Your Descent as Śrī Raghurāma, accepted the alliance of friendship of the monkeys. Hence, what wonder is there, that You exhibit Your extreme addiction and subservience to Your great servants who have taken absolute shelter in You alone and none else."<sup>208</sup>

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205yan-nāma-śruti-mātreṇa pumān bhavati nirmalaḥ  
 tasya tīrtha-padaḥ kiṁ vā dāsānām avaśiṣyate  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 9.5.16)

206tāvad rāgādayaḥ stenās tāvat kārā-grhaṁ grhaṁ  
 tāvan moho 'ṅghri-nigaḍo yāvat kṛṣṇa na te janāḥ  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.36)

207kāyena vācā manasendriyair vā  
 buddhyātmanā vānusṛta-svabhāvāt  
 karoti yad yat sakalāṁ parasmai  
 nārāyaṇāyeti samarpayet tat  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.2.36)

208kiṁ citram acyuta tavaitad aśeṣa-bandho  
 dāseṣv ananya-śaraṇeṣu yad ātma-sāttvam  
 yo 'rocyat saha mrgaiḥ svayam īśvarāṇāṁ  
 śrīmat-kirīṭa-taṭa-pīḍita-pāda-pīṭhaḥ  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.29.4)



## 208. *Sakhya*

Great confidence and friendly relationship form the features of Sakhya devotion. Attending to the various comforts and timely service of the Lord in a Friendly way, is the characteristic of a Bhakta of this order. Just as a sincere friend in the world, is always eager for the welfare of his companion, so too a genuine devotee of this order, puts in all his loving efforts in the interest of the Lord. This feeling of friendship is twofold:—(1) Mixed with reverence (Gaurava), and (2) undiluted friendship (Viśrambha). "Lo! How incomparable is their fortune! It is simply impossible to measure the luck of Śrī Nanda Mahārāja and other Vrajavāsīs, whose Dear Friend is the Eternal Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa - the very Embodiment of Bliss!"<sup>209</sup>

## 209. *Ātmanivedana*

Complete self-surrender is the essence of this form of Bhakti. This consists of surrendering unconditionally one's body, mind, words, soul, and all that one feels as his own to the Lord. A devotee of this order is utterly indifferent to make efforts even for his own purposes. But, he never abstains from rendering services to the Lord. Even the very idea of maintaining himself, does not cross his mind, as he ever remains busy in the service of his Lord. Service to the Lord is the very essence of his existence. Their condition is like that of a beast that has been sold. When once it is sold to a new customer, the entire responsibility of maintaining it rests on the shoulders of the new master. The beast too, is out of his hand and never renders any service to its erstwhile master. Even so, after complete self-surrender, the surrendered soul feels that he is the property of the Lord and he has nothing that he can claim as his. Accordingly, such a devotee never worries for his daily necessities, such as food, clothing, etc., or even medicine during all sorts of illness. Ātmanivedana distinguishes itself from Śaraṇāgati in respect of certain special characteristics. In a word, Ātmanivedana is the fully developed condition of śaraṇāgati.

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209aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyam nanda-gopa-vrajaukasām  
yan-mitraṁ paramānandaṁ pūrṇam brahma sanātanam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.32)

"He engaged his mind in meditating on the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, his words in glorifying the excellences of the Lord, his hands in cleaning the temples and performing such other necessary services there and his ears in listening the Holy Narrations of Lord Acyuta."<sup>210</sup> "His eyes were engaged in beholding the Holy Images of Śrī Mukunda, sacred Abodes like Mathurā, Purī, etc., and in seeing great devotees, the organ of touch in close embrace of the devotees, the sense of smell in experiencing the sweet perfume of the sacred Tulasī and other flowers offered at the Feet of the Lord and his tongue in tasting what is offered to the Lord."<sup>211</sup> "His feet were employed in circumambulating sacred places and temples of Śrī Hari, and his head in offering prostrated obeisances at the Feet of Śrī Hṛṣīkeṣa (the Lord of the senses). He did all these, prompted solely by his love for the service of the Lord alone and not for the attainment of any of the worldly prosperities. The practice of such actions enables one to derive great delight in the association of genuine devotees of the Lord or to have attachment to the Lord similar to that of His favourite devotees."<sup>212</sup>

As long as we are afflicted with worldliness, so long we do not feel any relish to speak of the Glories of Godhead. Because of the fact that we have not been able to develop a taste for such objects, are we to give it up completely? No, not

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210sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor  
 vacāṁsi vaikunṭha-guṇānuvarṇane  
 karau harer mandira-mārjanādiṣu  
 śrutiṁ cakārācyuta-sat-kathodaye  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 9.4.18)

211mukunda-liṅgālaya-darśane dṛṣau  
 tad-bhṛtya-gātra-sparśe 'ṅga-saṅgamam  
 ghrāṇaṁ ca tat-pāda-saroja-saurabhe  
 śrīmat-tulasyā rasanāṁ tad-arpite  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 9.4.19)

212pādaḥ hareḥ kṣetra-padānusarpaṇe  
 śīro hṛṣīkeṣa-padābhivandane  
 kāmāṁ ca dāsyē na tu kāma-kāmyayā  
 yathottamaśloka-janāśrayā ratiḥ  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 9.4.20)

at all. That is the only course for us to attain our eternal good. If we give up the spiritual course of action, our next alternative is to indulge grossly, once again, in extreme worldliness. Just as to a patient of biles, a piece of sugarcandy tastes bitter, so also to one who is completely lost in transitory pleasures of this transient world, the Glorious Excellences and Charming Deeds of Bhagavān are insipid tales. Yet, the procedure is to be continued with firm endeavour, having full faith in its results. In the chanting of the Holy Name, these two qualifications are unavoidable factors: (1) a constant endeavour, and (2) firm faith in Its marvellous results. If an adequate longing to be in the incessant service of the Lord with one's heart and soul is in the Sādhaka, the Name will be perceptible to his sense-organs automatically. The third Śloka in 'Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka' composed by Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu throws sufficient light on the eligibilities necessary for chanting the Name. For experiencing the immediate effects of the Kīrtana of Lord's Name, it is essential that we should equip ourselves with these qualifications. "He who feels himself humbler than a blade of grass, is more forbearing than a tree and without coveting any respect for himself duly respects others, should chant the Holy Name constantly."<sup>213</sup> Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in His above Śloka has prescribed four qualifications as compulsory prerequisites for constant chanting of the Holy Name.

## *2010. Humility*

The first qualification is 'humility', i.e., feeling oneself humbler than a blade of grass, as 'humility is the foundation of all virtues'. A blade of grass has got its own utility in this world. It allows itself even to be trod upon without raising any protest. As such, amongst the created objects of the world, grass is taken as an emblem of humility. As long as we are bent upon satisfying the needs of our physical body and the subtle mind, the virtue of humility lies farther than the farthest star in the heavens. Our present condition is undisputedly one of soul in bondage. It identifies itself, sometimes, with its physical body and at other times with its subtle covering, but in no case with its real and uncontaminated status. All our egoistic

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213 त्रिणादपि सुनिकेना तारोऽपि साक्षिणुना

amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ

(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 3)

outbursts are due to the misidentification of the soul with the gross body and its surroundings. This is the worst part of human nature. How wise is the saying, 'pride goeth before fall'? For enabling us to utter the Name of the Lord continuously, we are to free ourselves from this unpleasant and uncongenial trait. How to overcome this false ego? A relief from these false pretensions is possible by the understanding of one's true self and its relationship. In fact, the real 'I' that is working in us, the one that is vital in us, due to the presence of which we function in all fields of activities, is altogether a different entity having nothing whatsoever material in it. Unfortunately, we have erred in making a misuse of the freedom of will, a special gift to us by the Supreme Lord and this misuse has brought about this deplorable condition to us, the children of the Immortal Lord, free from false ego that is at the root of our undoing. Denouncing boldly all our egoism and its basis - the false misidentification - we can experience the charming sentiments expressed by Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in another composition of His. "I am neither a Brāhmaṇa, nor a Kṣatriya, nor a Vaiśya, nor even a Śūdra. I am neither a Brahmacārī, a householder, a Vānaprasthī nor a Sannyāsī. I am a humble servant of the servants who serve the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Beloved of the Gopīs, the most sublime and the Embodiment of an Ocean of Eternal Bliss."<sup>214</sup> Thus, Śrīman Mahāprabhu has marvellously impressed us with our real nature. This should be our worthy feeling, diametrically opposed to the false one. This is the true nature of our 'self'. All our identifications other than this, are thrust upon us by the divine illusion as a penalty for our foolish misuse of our will-power. By the Mercy of the Lord, when any soul is blessed with the knowledge of his true relationship with Him that fortunate man becomes very meek. He is humbler than a blade of grass and hence a worthy aspirant for constantly chanting Śrī Hari Nāma. He has attained the virtue of humility, free from any tinge of material ego arising from high or noble birth, age, prosperity, etc. "O Killer of the demon Madhu and Kaiṭabha! O Lord of the Universe! May this be the true result of

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214nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśyo na śūdro

nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gṛha-patir no vanastho yatir vā  
 kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-pūrṇāmṛtābher  
 gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ  
 (padyaṅvalī 74)

all my births, the real fruit of my long coveted desire, my only prayer and this alone be Thy favour to me, that Thou wouldst remember me as the servant of Thy servant's servant, in the long line of Thy servants ever engaged in Thy service."<sup>215</sup> Let the essence of these expressions and their real spirit be the ideal motto of everyone of us, desiring to march along the path of constant chanting of the Name inculcated upon the people by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

### *2011. Forbearance*

The second qualification is 'forbearance', greater than that of a tree. Even when the tree is cut to pieces, not only it tolerates all our ingratitude, but it extends help to us with every part of its trunk or branches. Exposed to all extreme climates, it never asks for any help from anyone.<sup>216</sup> A religious career in this world, in contrast to the worldly course, is often beset with utterly discouraging events. A new convert has to face vehement oppositions in multitudes. The way to God-realisation is not strewn with soft and sweet smelling roses, but it is a path laid with great barriers and insurmountable difficulties. Hard tests from all corners, from the society, from relations, friends, from gods, and even by one's own body and mind, form but few of the major problems for the aspirant to tackle calmly. Merciless persecutions on one side, piercing words on the other side, inhuman behaviour still to add to these, one has to experience in this world the moment he selects this noble path. If the sight of these threatening external barriers, surrounding the perennial spring of everlasting happiness, kindles fear and disappointment in him, he is totally undone. If he yields to doubts and despair and falls back from his original enthusiasm, he will be

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215maj-janmanah phalam idam madhu-kaitabhāre  
mat-prārthanīya-mad-anugraha eṣa eva  
tvad-bhṛtya-bhṛtya-paricāraka-bhṛtya-bhṛtya-  
bhṛtyasya bhṛtya iti mām smara loka-nātha  
(śrī-mukunda-mālā-stotra 25)

216vrkṣa yena kātileha kichu nā bolaya  
śukāñā maileha kāre pānī nā māgaya  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, antya 20.23)

forthwith hurled down to the vortex of utter disappointments. This failure in the life of the aspirant may sometimes bring to him a grave doubt even in the existence of our Beloved Lord. He may accuse Him of cruelty, partiality, etc., and sometimes he may find fault with himself for adopting such a path. He may fall a prey to innumerable drawbacks of this nature, if he is found wanting in the one virtue, 'forbearance'. 'Patience and perseverance will overcome mountains', is a wise and appropriate saying. How inspiring is the example of Haridāsa Ṭhākura! What a glorious illustration of this sublime ideal! Let his words echo and re-echo in the heart of every aspirant who intends to chant the Name of the Lord!

All these extraneous factors, however disappointing they may be apparently, are to be treated as sympathetic expressions of kindness from so many well-wishers, for our rectification arranged by the Lord Himself. With this belief, one must cast away the least sense of revenge or retaliation. He should remember the wise words, 'not by hatred is hatred stilled, but by love alone, is hatred killed'. What did the great Haridāsa Ṭhākura do? Did he ever try to wreak vengeance on his persecutors? Never, never. On the contrary, he prayed to the Lord to forgive them. One should never be a burden to anyone in the world, but at the same time, by rendering the maximum service even at the risk of his comforts, he must contribute to the eternal benefit of mankind.

### *2012. Absence of pride*

The third qualification is 'to give up all desire for getting fame or respect'. One may be a living example of ever so many virtues, but he should be free from any pride, because 'pride goeth before a fall'. Even a slight tendency in any form for worldly gains, undoubtedly brings him a fall from his spiritual path. "If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, so that, thou mayest conserve humility within thee."<sup>217</sup>

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217Imitation of Christ, ch. 7

## 2013. Honouring others

The fourth and the last one is 'to give due respect to one and all'. Feeling the presence of the Lord in every being helps us to practise this ideal. This belief must not be guided by a verbal loyalty or a mere philosophical understanding alone. It must have its basis well rooted in our vital constitution itself. Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu assures immediate success to all those who chant the Name constantly, fully equipped with the above described four qualifications. Rarely, we meet a soul in this world endowed with all these qualifications in him. Does this mean that people must give up the chanting of the Name before attaining these qualifications? No, not at all, they are at full liberty to utter the Name of the Lord. Everyone is humbly requested to take the Name of the Lord, but the real fruit of such performance is assured on the attainment of these qualifications.

## 2014. Names - Specific and Generic

The Names of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa are grouped under two heads: (1) 'Specific', and (2) 'Generic'. **Calling Him by His 'Specific' Names, attracts Him and brings automatically in the mind His awareness, Form, Attributes, Līlās, etc.** These Names are "Kṛṣṇa, Hari, Govinda, Gopāla, Nandakīśora, Rādhā-ramaṇa, Murāri, Mukunda, etc."<sup>218</sup> The Śāstras and sages insist upon the aspirants to call Him by His 'Specific' Names only, which attract Him surely and quickly. He has no attraction for His 'Generic' Names, such as 'Brahman, Paramātmā, Bhagavān, Īśvara, Jagadīśa, Vibhu, Prabhu, etc.', denoting His Transcendental Powers, though the Latter are applicable in Their fullest significance to Him alone,

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218śrī-kṛṣṇa gopāla hare mukunda govinda he nanda-kīśora kṛṣṇa  
hā śrī-yaśodā-tanaya prasīda śrī-ballavī-jīvana rādhikeśa  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.4.7)

kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa, gopīnātha gokula-nandana  
vṛndāvana candra, vrajaramaṇī jīvana  
"kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa" sāranāma-e dui akṣara  
eka kṛṣṇa nāme haya koṭi grantha phala  
(kṛṣṇa-prema-taraṅginī)

in preference to His Partial Manifestations. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is enamoured and ensnared by His 'Specific' Names only.



# 1 SAFEGUARD AGAINST NĀMāPARĀDHAS

AS we have already heard, the nine ways of devotion are comparatively far mote powerful than the rest of the sixty-four ways of practicing devotion. Even, amongst the ninefold ways of devotion 'Nāma-Saṅkīrtana'<sup>219</sup> tops the list. It is the cream churned out of all the devotional activities. No other course is so potent as this one. This course of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, as the verse expresses is to be performed free from all the offences. Nāma-Saṅkīrtana of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is capable of bringing to us the thrilling experiences of Divine Love. The following verse speaks about the efficacies of one single utterance of the Name of the Lord. All the accumulated heaps of our sins committed in the present, as well as previous births are destroyed by the power of a single utterance of the Name and awakens ardent devotion, the cause of Prema. By the appearance of Prema, he is favoured with all the accompanying experience of incessant flow of tears, shivering, hair standing on end, etc. He is not in the least affected by worldliness and is blessed with the eternal loving service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. A single utterance of the Name has got so much power in It. Even after uttering such a highly potential Name again and again, if one fails to achieve the spiritual experience of unalloyed love for the Lord, it may be only on account of the existence of too many offences in him. The seed of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Nāma never sprouts in the heart of one who commits offences against the Name. **But Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Who are quite independent, are very munificent and do not at all take into consideration the aspirant's offences. If one utters Śrī Kṛṣṇa Nāma, They immediately and invariably impart to him loving devotion, which causes floods of tears to gush out of his eyes. If one does not adopt Both of Them as his Sole**

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219See footnote 157

Resort, there is no salvation for him.<sup>220</sup> According to Padma

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220'kṛṣṇa-nāma' kare aparādhēra vicāra

kṛṣṇa balile aparādhīra nā haya vikāra

tad aśma-sāraṁ hṛdayaṁ batedaṁ

yad gr̥hyamāṇair hari-nāmadheyaiḥ

na vikriyetātha yadā vikāro

netre jalaṁ gātra-ruheṣu harṣaḥ (ś. bhā. 2.3.24)

'eka' kṛṣṇa-nāme kare sarva-pāpa nāśa  
premera kāraṇa bhakti karena prakāśa

premera udaye haya premera vikāra  
sveda-kampa-pulakādi gadgadāśrudhāra

anāyāse bhava-kṣaya, kṛṣṇera sevana  
eka kṛṣṇa-nāmera phale pāi eta dhana

hena kṛṣṇa-nāma yadi laya bahu-bāra  
tabu yadi prema nahe, nahe aśrudhāra

tabe jāni, aparādhā tāhāte pracura  
kṛṣṇa-nāma-bija tāhe nā kare aṅkura

caitanya-nityānande nāhi esaba vicāra  
nāma laite prema dena, vahe aśrudhāra

svatantra īśvara prabhu atyanta udāra  
tāhre nā bhajile kabhu nā haya nistāra  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 8.24-32)

Purāṇa, there are ten offences<sup>221</sup> that an aspirant is likely to commit against the Name. **These offences, if not nipped in the bud, will postpone the realisation of the fruit of Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, which is Kṛṣṇa Prema. Aspirants indulging in such offences will not taste the incomparable Bliss flowing from the Eternal Fount of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Nāma. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in spite of all the liberal sanctions He had made in favour of the Holy Name, insisted on all to take the Name without committing any offence against It. (See footnote 157)**

## 11. *First Offence*

To disparage Sādhus or Absolute-realised souls.<sup>222</sup> Speaking ill of sādhus, publishing false scandals about them, causing harm or injury to their persons, or adopting other violent methods, like disrespecting them, speaking harsh and impolite words to them, form an offence against the Name.

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221satām nindā nāmnāḥ paramam aparādhāṁ vitanute  
yataḥ khyātiṁ yātaṁ katham u sahate tad vigarhām  
śivasya śrī viṣṇor ya iha guṇa nāmādi sakalāṁ  
dhiyā bhinnāṁ paśyet sa khalu hari nāmāhita karaḥ

guror avajñā śruti śāstra nindanaṁ  
tathārtha vādo hari nāmni kalpanam  
nāmno balād yasya hi pāpa buddhir  
na vidyate tasya yamair hi śuddhiḥ

dharma vrata tyāga hutādi sarva  
śubha kriyā sāmāyāṁ api pramādaḥ  
āsraddadhāne vimukhe'py aśṛṇvati  
yaś copadeśaḥ śiva nāmāparādhāḥ

śrute'pi nāma mātmye yaḥ prīti rahito 'dhamāḥ  
aham mamādi paramo nāmni so 'py aparādha kṛt  
(padma purāṇa, brahma khaṇḍa 3. a., 25.15-18;

śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.521-524)

222satām nindā

Treating a genuine Sādhū on the same level as that of a non devotee, also comes under the same category of offence. Most people are ignorant of the meaning of the word 'Sādhū'. They take it in a very light and general way; but, really the word 'Sādhū' indicates a Bhakta of Śrī Hari, who, like the Lord, is a living embodiment of eternal qualities, viz., existence, knowledge and bliss.

On a careful scrutiny of the religious trends in India, we come across with two different groups of people. From time immemorial, they are pursuing two different courses of approach to realise the Absolute Truth. One group follows an indirect course of ascending process, depending entirely on their own efficiency and reasonings, mostly based on empiric foundations. They give a good deal of lip-loyalty to some of the selected Śāstras which they interpret to suit their purpose. According to them, the Absolute is void of any specialities, Name, Form, Quality, Activity, or Entourage. It is designated as the undifferentiated and unqualified Brahman, Who is indescribable in positive terms and hence explained in the Śāstras in negative terms. Whereas, the other group, adopt a direct course of descending process and through complete surrender and love to the Supreme Lord, they proceed. They are fully confident of their utter helplessness in realising the Godhead by dint of their researches and efficiency. Forgetting their ego and depending solely upon His Mercy they realise Him as a Transcendental Person abundantly rich with all auspicious qualifications, possessing an Eternal Form - a Miracle of Beauty - with sweet Names. They assert with all emphasis that He by His causeless Mercy manifests Himself in the uncontaminated life of a fortunate individual and makes him fit for positively describing Him in a language that is intelligible to persons who are not envious of His Transcendental Svarūpa.

A majority of the prominent section of our religious population belongs to the first group. Those few who are following the second group are termed as 'Bhaktas'. To them Bhagavān, Bhakti, and Bhakta are eternal objects. They do not destroy the eternally distinct positions of these three by merging them into one which is none of the three. To place the followers of these two methods having fundamentally opposite views into one class is a grave offence against the Holy Name. **A genuine devotee of the Lord, mentioned in the second category is not an aspirant for wealth, luxuries, or name and fame; no, not even for the realisation of any of the five kinds of liberation. He is exclusively engaged in the**

**constant chant of the Holy Name. The service of the Divine Name is the very essence of his existence. He never expects anything in return from the Lord. 'Love is Its Own reward'.** This offence committed against the Sādhus is of a grave nature because the Glory of the Holy Name comes down to this material world through the medium of these Bhaktas. It is their mercy that helps us to derive the benefit of hearing the Divine Name or even realising Godhead. They are the greatest and real benefactors of humanity who save us from the innumerable sufferings of this world of imperfections. They are the living embodiments of the Mercy of the Supreme Lord; His most favourite associates, dearer than His Own Self. As such, He would not tolerate any wrongs, however insignificant they may be, to these devotees.

"No wonder, that those foolish people who misidentify themselves with their gross body would disparage a Sādhū. All Bhaktas are above malice. They are ever-forgiving of any misdeed committed against them. But, the holy dust of their feet never tolerates such offensive actions of these foolish people. They bring doom upon the offenders. Disparaging great Bhaktas is in the very nature of these sure infidels; because, thereby they dig their own graves."<sup>223</sup> Guided by a malicious propensity, due to the prevalence of excessive Rajas quality in them, they are lustful, cruel-minded like the venomous serpents, irrepressibly arrogant, vainglorious, and awfully disposed to sins; these proud people, the unfortunate victims of the baser elements of humanity, laugh at the devotees of the Lord."<sup>224</sup> Those wicked people puffed up with the vanities of wealth, lordliness, learning, high lineage, charity, personal complexion, physical ability, the performance of Vedic sacrifices, deprived of any wisdom in them

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223nāścaryam etad yad asatsu sarvadā

mahad-vinindā kuṇapātma-vādiṣu

serṣyaṁ mahāpūruṣa-pāda-pāṁsubhir

nirasta-tejaḥsu tad eva śobhanam

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 4.4.13)

224rajasā ghora-saṅkalpāḥ kāmukā ahi-manyavaḥ

dāmbhikā māninaḥ pāpā vihasanty acyuta-priyaṁ

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.7)

indiscriminately slander the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari and His devotees."<sup>225</sup>

## 12. *Second Offence*

To regard Śrī Viṣṇu as absolutely different from His auspicious Names, Form, Qualities, etc., or to treat Him on a par with the other lesser gods,<sup>226</sup> constitutes an offence. **Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Godhead, the Transcendental Autocrat. He is the Prime Cause of all other causes, the God of all gods, and the Origin of all objects and entities. All other gods are powerful owing to the inspiration they receive from Him. They are all delegated with certain powers by Him. Just as even a costly and highly powerful electric bulb is of no use without current from the power-house, even so, deprived of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's energy, all these gods are powerless entities. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Transcendental Power-house from Whom all these gods receive inspiration. Some of the Upaniṣads have impressively illustrated this fact by a certain incident. No doubt, these minor gods are more powerful than the most powerful man in this world; but they too are subject to the influence of time. They do take birth and though they live for more number of years than we all, they are also to leave this world one day. Śrī Hari is free from these transitory influences. He is ever existing above the influence of the time factor, birth, growth, or death. To treat Him as on a par with the other gods who are not independent and who receive strength from Him is an offence against the Holy Name.**"O King! God Śiva is always united with his Śakti (Durgā or Māyā). He is associated with the three Guṇas. The quality of Tamas is his predominant attribute. Being associated with the three Guṇas, viz., Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, he is

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225śrīyā vibhūtyābhijanena vidyayā

tyāgena rūpeṇa balena karmaṇā

jāta-smayenāndha-dhiyaḥ saheśvarān

sato 'vamanyanti hari-priyān khalāḥ

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.9)

226śrī viṣṇu sakāśāt śiva nāmādeḥ svātantry amananam

called 'Tri-liṅga'.<sup>227</sup> On the other hand, Bhagavān Śrī Hari is the Supreme Godhead, beyond Prakṛti and fully free from the material qualities. He is the Omniscient Lord, the Supreme Witness of all hearts. Those who worship Him get freed from the Guṇas and attain His sublime state being void of material attributes.<sup>228</sup>

### 13. *Third Offence*

Disregarding the spiritual preceptor.<sup>229</sup> **He who performs the chant of Śrī Hari-Nāma at all times is the real preceptor. Such a spiritual master has no other function, even for a fraction of a moment, than the chanting of the Name of 'Śrī Hari'. He is the greatest exponent of the Holy Name.** The Guru, though he appears before us, talks to us in our language, dresses like us, takes food like others, and behaves with us like a human being, is not an ordinary mortal, but he is purely a transcendental personage. An aspirant to the chanting of Nāma, and desirous of achieving success in his efforts, should treat the Guru as a merciful converter of all our evil propensities, erroneous notions, and whimsical behaviours. Unhesitatingly and whole-heartedly, we should obey the commands of our Guru. The advice of the Guru should be obeyed unconditionally without any discrimination. Therein lies the duty of the disciple, his real status. Discarding the Guru and his words of advice, no disciple can realise the Absolute Truth. Deprived of the mercy of the divine Guru, a disciple's endeavours do not fructify. The Name of the Lord never manifests on the tongue of one who disregards his Sad-Guru. "O King! The qualities of Rajas and Tamas are to be conquered by means of the quality of Sattva, which again is to be subdued by indifference to mundane affinities. But, by the

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227śiṅgaḥ śakti-yutaḥ śaśvat tri-liṅgo guṇa-saṁvṛtaḥ  
vaikārikas taijasaś ca tāmasaś cety ahaṁ tridhā  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.3)

228harir hi nirguṇaḥ sāksāt puruṣaḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ  
sa sarva-dṛg upadraṣṭā taṁ bhajan nirguṇo bhavet  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.5)

229guror avajñā

grace of the spiritual master, one can easily conquer all these undesirable qualities. He who treats his divine master - a visible manifestation of the Supreme Lord on the mundane plane, and who imparts spiritual knowledge, as an ordinary human being, is doomed for ever. All that he has heard from his Guru or all that he has studied from the Śāstras become utterly futile like an elephant's bath."<sup>230</sup>

#### 14. *Fourth Offence*

Speaking too lightly or contemptuously of the sacred and infallible Śāstras.<sup>231</sup> The Śāstras are not the creations of any mortal. They originate directly from the Supreme Lord Himself; accordingly, they are understood by the wise as self-revealed truths. Śrī Vyāsadeva, one of the Manifestations of the Lord expounded and expanded the same for the enlightenment of the ignorant world. "People who are under the influence of Māyā, have no recollection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa or the knowledge about Him. Hence, for the benefit of those forgotten souls, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has manifested out of His Mercy, the Vedas and Purāṇas."<sup>232</sup> Ignorant souls are always under the influence of numerous erroneous notions. They are utterly ignorant of their eternal welfare and the effective methods to retrieve it. They are mostly indifferent too. Guided by everchanging views, sometimes they whole-heartedly support complete renunciation while at other times, they run mad after material objects and their enjoyments. For saving these fallen souls from such a pitiable condition and to show them proper light as to their duties, responsibilities, real nature, and their

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230rajas tamaś ca sattvena sattvaṁ copaśamena ca  
etat sarvaṁ gurau bhaktyā puruṣo hy añjasā jayet

yasya sākṣād bhagavati jñāna-dīpa-prade gurau  
martyāśad-dhīḥ śrutaṁ tasya sarvaṁ kuñjara-śaucavat  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.15.25-26)

231śruti tadanuyāyi śāstra nindā

232māyā-mugdha jīvera nāhi svataḥ kṛṣṇa-jñāna  
jīvere kṛpāya kailā kṛṣṇa veda-purāṇa  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 20.122)



relationship, the Merciful Lord has manifested by His sweet Will, the great Śāstras. They do not contain any record of the defective and deceptive arguments and conclusions of human brains.

"From the very breath of the Supreme Person, Īśvara, have originated the four Vedas, the great epics, all the Purāṇas, Upaniṣads, Śloka, Sūtras, Anuvyākhyā, etc."<sup>233</sup> "This knowledge of the Brahman, the basis of all other types of learning, was originally taught by Brahma, the primal god, creator, and protector of this world to Atharvan, his first-born son."<sup>234</sup> "When these Transcendental Words giving all the detailed knowledge about My proper Self, were totally lost in course of time during the great deluge, once again at the beginning of the creation I explained the very same Truth to Brahma."<sup>235</sup> Śrīmad Bhāgavata dealing with the Pastimes of the Lord must be specially honoured; but on no account other Śāstras should be treated with contempt."<sup>236</sup> "Thou art the Supreme Origin, the very Life behind all the senses like eyes, ears, etc. Thou art the Self-evident Knowledge. Thou art Its Exponent Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa. Thou art the Source of all the Śāstras and hence, the wise address Thee as the Śāstra-Yoni. Thou art the Propounder of scriptures, the

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233asya mahato bhūtasya niśvasitam etad yad ṛg-vedo  
yajur-vedaḥ sāma-vedo 'tharvāṅgirasasḥ iti hāsa  
purāṇaṁ vidyā upaniṣadaḥ ślokaḥ sūtrāṇy  
anu vyākhyānāni sarvāṇi niḥ śvasitāni  
(bṛhad-āraṇyaka upaniṣada 4.5.11)

234brahmā devānāṁ prathamāḥ sambabhūva  
viśvasya kartā bhuvanasya goptā  
sa brahma-vidyāṁ sarva-vidyā-pratiṣṭhām  
atharvāya jyeṣṭha-putrāya prāha  
(muṇḍaka upaniṣada 1.1.1)

235kālena naṣṭā pralaye vāṇīyaṁ veda-saṁjñitā  
mayā dau brahmaṇe proktā dharmo yasyaṁ mad-ātmakaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.14.3)

236śraddhāṁ bhāgavate śāstre 'nindāṁ anyatra cāpi hi  
mano-vāk-karma-daṇḍaṁ ca satyaṁ śama-damāv api  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.3.26)

veritable Nigama that speaks of both Pravṛtti (path of attachment to worldliness) and Nivṛtti (path of renunciation from worldly pleasures). We offer our prostrations to Thee again and again."<sup>237</sup>

## 15. *Fifth Offence*

To be under the impression that the whole Glory of the Divine Name explained in the Śāstras is merely an exaggeration far from the real facts.<sup>238</sup> Knowers of the truth of this mundane world, such as Manu. etc., are not Mahājans or saints in the spiritual spheres. Their intellect is badly bewildered by the influence of Mahā Māyā. The honeyed flowery words of the three Vedas have benumbed their mentality to such a pitch that it is greatly entangled in the shackles of fruitive actions. They are of opinion that the praises on the efficacy of the Holy Name are simply hyperbolic."<sup>239</sup> Greatly confused and distracted by the flowery words of the Vedas without understanding their hidden meaning, the proud and the greedy do not find any relish in My Topics."<sup>240</sup> O King! Just as a pot polluted by the bad smell of wine is not purified even by the efforts of all the rivers put together, even so, the various expiations mentioned in the Śāstras relating to fruitive works, however great or powerful they may be, cannot purify a fallen soul averse to Śrī

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237namaḥ pramāṇa-mūlāya kavaye śāstra-yonaye  
pravṛttāya nivṛttāya nigamāya namo namaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.16.44)

238hari nāma mahimni artha vādamātra me taditi mananam

239prāyeṇa veda tad idaṁ na mahājano 'yaṁ  
devyā vimohita-matir bata māyayālam  
trayyāṁ jaḍī-kṛta-matir madhu-puṣpitāyāṁ  
vaitānike mahati karmaṇi yujyamānaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.3.25)

240evaṁ puṣpitayā vācā vyākṣipta-manasāṁ nṛṇāṁ  
mānināṁ cāti-lubdhānāṁ mad-vārtāpi na rocate  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.21.34)

Nārāyaṇa."<sup>241</sup>"O Supreme Being! The Lord of my soul! Practice of complete silence, observance of vows, hearing of the scriptures, asceticism, study of the Vedas, practice of daily duties, exposition of the Vedic aphorisms, solitary life, muttering of Mantras and deep absorption in meditation - all these practices of attaining liberation are very often employed as the means of livelihood by those, who are the slaves of their senses, but for arrogant persons it is extremely doubtful whether these will be of any use or not."<sup>242</sup>

## 16. *Sixth Offence*

Taking all the efficacious and incomparable Names of the Lord as imaginary.<sup>243</sup> Most people are given to a belief that Godhead has no Name. They are of opinion that any object with a name or form is the production of Māyā. They are perfectly right in their view as far as objects of the mundane world are concerned. But, their opinion on Transcendental Object is totally mistaken. They make a gross confusion in treating both Transcendental and material on the same level.

## 17. *Seventh Offence*

Committing sins repeatedly and intentionally on the strength of the Name.<sup>244</sup> After listening to the marvellous Glories of the Divine Name, none should continue with their loath-some activities and sinful tendencies, knowingly or

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241prāyaścittāni cīrṇāni nārāyaṇa-parāṇmukham  
na niṣpunanti rājendra surā-kumbham ivāpagāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.1.18)

242mauna-vrata-śruta-tapo 'dhyayana-sva-dharma  
vyākhyā-raho-japa-samādhaya āpavargyāḥ  
prāyaḥ paraṁ puruṣa te tv ajitendriyāṇām  
vārtā bhavanty uta na vātra tu dāmbhikānām  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.9.46)

243tatra prakārāntareṇārtha kalpanam

244nāma valena pāpe pravṛttiḥ

unknowingly. A firm conviction on the efficacy of the Name is highly praise-worthy and most needed by all. The Divine Name, by chanting which Divine Love is achieved, should never be used for destroying one's sins. Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, while at Navadvīpa, converted two rowdies – Jagāi and Mādhāi, overnight into great saints, an incident that revolutionised both men and gods. According to the records of the court of justice, there were no sins that these two did not commit before their conversion. By some accident, these two had to face Śrīman Mahāprabhu. In a couple of minutes, both became His slaves, i.e., were transformed into ideal devotees. They surrendered unconditionally to Him; by His causeless Mercy they were filled with remorse and were ultimately reformed. He promised to them that He would see that they will not even have to bear the consequences of the sins of their crores of births, on condition that they should not commit sins again. He got an assurance from them to that effect. He said, "You must not commit any more sins." They replied, "We would not do it again."<sup>245</sup> From then onwards, they started chanting Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma and became great devotees of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

## 18. Eighth Offence

Regarding the Holy Name in the same category as that of all other religious practices, such as moral duties, religious vows, renunciation, sacrifice, etc.<sup>246</sup> **Chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma is His direct service. Saṅkīrtana should not be compared with other practices. "One utterance of the Name "Kṛṣṇa" is more beneficial than the performance of even crores of horse-sacrifices. Yama - the god of death will punish that infidel, who compares a single utterance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma with even crores of horse-sacrifices."**<sup>247</sup> Altruistic or utilitarian

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245prabhu bale,— "tora āra nā karis pāpa"  
 jagai-mādhai bale,— "āra nāre bāpa"  
 (śrī caitanya-bhāgavata, m. 13.225)

246anya śubhakri yābhir nāmnām sāmya mananam

247koṭi aśvamedha eka kṛṣṇa nāma sama  
 yei kahe, se pāṣaṇḍī, daṇḍe tāre yama  
 (śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 3.79)

activities that are often advertised as the sole purpose of human life, are useful so far as the attainment of material happiness, which is transitory. Not even an iota of spiritual sincerity can be felt in any of those acts, what to speak of pleasing the Lord? Inattentiveness while chanting the Name must be avoided at all costs. **Diligence in uttering Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma will assuredly hasten the achievement of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema.**

## 19. Ninth Offence

Imparting the Holy Name to persons who Have no faith in and are averse to chanting the Holy Name and who are irreligious from their very birth, constitutes an offence.<sup>248</sup> The Holy Name should not be immotives, such as receiving money, earning a name and fame, etc., as that would amount to a misuse of the Holy Name. A person who is ignorant of the true nature of the Divine Name, and is not only of a receptive disposition but also very anxious to hear and practise it, may be enlightened on the Glories of the Holy Name, according to his capacity and all efforts should be made to inspire him with faith in the Name and the necessity for chanting It with faith.

## 110. Tenth Offence

Want of taste for the chanting or hearing of the Name owing to extreme addiction to worldliness even after listening the Excellences of the Name repeatedly is one of the extremely grave offences that we are prone to commit.<sup>249</sup> This attachment to the physical body and the pursuit of worldly pleasures detracts the mind from its true function of devotion to the Name and provokes us to commit offences very often. **The commission of the Nāmāparādhās must under all circumstances, be eschewed by the aspirant. There should be no bargaining with the Holy Name for worldly gains. The Name must be uttered for Its Own Sake. The aspirant should chant the Name in a spirit of self-surrender, invoking at every step the blessings of his spiritual master, and make**

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248aśradadhāne vimukhe ca nāmopadeśaḥ

249śrute 'pi nāmnām mähātmy etatrāpītirhi

**strenuous efforts depending upon the Mercy of the Divine Name to free himself from the aforesaid offences.** At every moment he must be conscious of his insignificant position and from the bottom of his heart, wail aloud for help from the Divine Lord. An ardent longing and a sincere prayer from the depth of his heart can never result in nothing. Bhagavān is an Embodiment of Mercy. He is always moved by the sincere entreaties of a helpless person. He is the Lord of the destitute and forsaken. If the entreaties are from an anguished heart, drenched with genuine tears the Lord will never remain adamant. He saves him from all the offences.

**Constant chanting of the Name is the sole remedy to escape from these offences.**"A person who has stumbled down, makes repeated attempts to get up once again, taking support on the very same earth from where he has once slipped."<sup>250</sup>**"Similarly, the Name is the only refuge for one who has offended It. Hence, chanting the Name incessantly, depending upon Its Mercy, is the surest way that would save an aspirant from the various offences, he has committed against the Name."**<sup>251</sup>"Now even the greatest crime for which there is no atonement, which cannot be forgiven even by Śrī Bhagavān Himself and which does not disappear unless endured, does disappear thus - **"Those who are always engaged in oppressing the saintly personages in this world, become not only blessed and pure by the incessant, loud, and clear chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma but also become the purifiers of others too. By constantly uttering Śrī Hari-Nāma, his sins are not only destroyed, but he also becomes Dhanya, i.e., blessed. He becomes perfectly pure himself and acquires the power to purify others too. He also becomes the fittest recipient of the precious wealth of loving devotion to Godhead.** It is stated in Stotra, etc., that censure of the good and saintly people constitutes the greatest offence against the Name. If such censure means an offence against the Name, then words fail to describe adequately the magnitude of the most heinous crime of incessantly oppressing the Sādhus, who not only never harm anyone, but always do good to all. How

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250bhūmau skhalitapādānām bhūmire vāvalambanam  
tvayi jātā parā dhānām tvam eva śaraṇām prabho

251nāmāparādha-yuktānām nāmāny eva haranty agham  
aviśrānta-prayuktāni tāny evārtha-karāṇi ca  
(padma purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.526)

unpardonably heinous a crime is meant by the words 'Sajjanānām sadā droha-paratā'. The Śāstras say 'Nāmno'pi Sarva-suhṛdaḥ aparādhāt Patatyadhaḥ' i.e., one certainly has to suffer in an infernal hell as an aftermath of an offence against the Name, **Which is the Friend or Well-wisher of all.** Is there then no expiation for such an offender? Certainly there is! **By always resorting to the Name alone, he atones for his offence against the Name.** This shows that he, who is always engaged in the service of the Name, is not prone to commit an offence; on the contrary, he advances further in devotion leading him to the achievement of the special Prema Bhakti or loving devotion. Hence it is aptly said of him that he becomes pre-eminently blessed."<sup>252</sup>

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252sadā droha-paro yas tu sajjanānām mahi-tale

jāyate pāvano dhanyo harer nāmānukīrtanāt

(laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.340)

adhunā niṣprāyaścitto bhagavadakṣamyō bhogaikanāśyō  
mahānāparādhō 'pi nāmamāhātmyato 'payātītyāha-sadeti | nāmno 'nu  
nirantaram kīrtanāt dhanyaḥ pāvanaḥ paramasuddha ityarthah ; yadvā  
na kevalam svayameva tataḥ pavitro bhavediti kintu parānapi pāvayati  
premalakṣaṇabhagavad bhaktidhanayogyaśca bhavatīti | yadyapi  
nāmāparādhastotrādaḥ 'satām nindā nāmnaḥ paramamaparādhām  
vitanute' ityādinā nindāpi nāmāparādhā uktaḥ kimuta sadā  
drohaparateti | \*\*\* tathāpi tatraiva 'nāmāparādhayuktānām nāmānyeva  
harantyaḥ | ityādyukternāmāparāṇām na ko 'pi doṣo ghaṭate pratyuta  
bhaktiviśeṣa evodevīti | ataḥ myagevoktam - 'jāyate pāvano dhanya' iti |

## 2 Nāmābhāsa AND UTTAMA

### BHAKTI

#### 21. *Nāmābhāsa Defined*

WE now take up the subject of the "dim reflection of the Name (Nāmābhāsa)." If we compare the Name to the sun, this dim reflection of the Name or Its Ābhāsa, can well be compared with the dawn, when the earth is lighted by the reflected light of the sun, even before the sun rises above the horizon. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, out of His unaccountable Mercy, has manifested Himself into this world as Śrīman Nāma to deliver the fallen Jīvas and impart to them the highest gift of Divine Love in this Kali Yuga. The unhappy Jīvas imprisoned in various types of bodies, subject to the merciless and ceaseless rotation of the cyclic wheel, compelled by their actions, are not having free access to this Merciful Manifestation of the Lord, owing to the innumerable inabilities they are beset with. They prevent the Jīvas from having a sight of this bright sun. Extreme ignorance, hankering after transitory pleasures, tendency to earn name and fame, etc., form clouds above the unfortunate aspirant and obstruct his vision. Just as clouds, fog, etc., cannot do any harm to the shining sun, so too these inabilities of the aspirant fail to obscure the Manifestation of the Divine Name. It shines with Its full splendour, but the aspirant who is unfortunately a prey to these defects is deprived of Its sight. His vision is obscured.

Similarly before the Name actually manifests Itself on one's tongue he becomes illumined by Its dim reflection through any of the sense-organs or senses. Unintentional or indirect utterance or hearing of the Name, without faith or even with contempt, or uttering or hearing It without being cognisant that It is the Name of the Lord, can be aptly defined as Nāmābhāsa or dim reflection of the Name. The meaning can be clarified further by quoting examples. For instance a Muslim does not take the name of the wild boar and calls it 'Harāma' contemptuously. Here, when he utters Harāma even in contempt, he obtains Mokṣa, as he utters the Name 'Rāma' adjunctively or concomitantly, even though it forms a part of



the contemptuous name of an object which is actually abhorred, let alone the unintentional utterance of the name of god of another faith. Similarly when a tiny toddler utters either 'Kṛṣṇa' or 'Rāma', it cannot have any idea of Godhead or His Name, the question of its faith in Him or It being quite out of question. Similarly when one, who is deeply engrossed in his own work, casually happens to hear, in spite of himself, the Name or Names of the Lord forming part or parts of other words like Kṛṣṇamṛga, Kṛṣṇasarpa, or Rāmanagara, or when a born dumb, deaf, and blind person, who is mentally deficient and quite incapable of learning anything, happens to touch or pass his hand over the written words like 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Rāma', etc., or if the words or Names like 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Rāma', etc., are tattooed on any part of his body, it amounts to his having Nāmābhāsa or the dim reflection of the Divine Name. Nāmābhāsa also includes utterance or hearing of the Divine Name in an unconscious or delirious state, or uttering or hearing It on one's deathbed, even unintentionally as was the case with Ajāmila. When the Divine Name reflects on the human mind as in a flash, or when the human being happens to perceive the Divine Name in any way, at any time or under any circumstances, by any of his sense organs or senses, it unequivocally amounts to his having Nāmābhāsa and the result unfailingly will be his emancipation from worldly bondage.

"Sanatkumāra says to Nārada, "O Nārada! He who somehow happens to utter the Lord's Name during his speech, or when he somehow happens to remember or hear It clearly or otherwise, or with or without impediments between the utterance of the different syllables of the Name, truly crosses this ocean of worldliness; but if It is employed selfishly in the acquisition of wealth, or the acquirement of means of livelihood or as a means in winning name and fame or in acquiring the object of one's greed or amongst the infidels, the realisation of the highest goal which is the primary result of taking the Name, is certainly not immediately accomplished. If one happens to utter the Name under some pretext other than the intentional utterance (of the Name of the Lord), similarly if It somehow flashes on the mind, or It somehow, i.e., even a part of the Name enters the ears whether distinctly or indistinctly or if the utterance or hearing is uninterrupted and undisturbed, i.e., without any interference by words or sounds while uttering the Name in full, i.e., without uttering in parts, interrupted by other words, or in words like 'Halaṁ riktam', the syllables 'Ha-ri' are there or in the words 'Rāja mahiṣi', the

syllables 'Rā-ma' exist; in this way other Names may exist in combination of words, so utterance or hearing without such interruption, or with such interruption, i.e., after one utters a part of the Name, he composes or applies his mind to the unuttered part of the Name, i.e., frequently interrupted by other words between the utterance of the individual syllables of the Name; or when only a part of the Name is uttered and the other part is not uttered at all, i.e., incomplete utterance of the Name; even then the Name or part of the Name does help the utterer to cross this ocean of worldliness; It certainly liberates him from the evil consequences of all his sins and offences. But the primary fruit resulting from the service of the Name is not immediately achieved. Similarly if the service of the Name is utilised for earning one's bread and butter, the achievement of the main goal, i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema, does not readily succeed. Will not the Name achieve Its effects, if It is employed as a means of earning one's livelihood? Yes, certainly It will. But in this world It will not immediately yield the result, i.e., the result will be accomplished only after a good deal of delay."<sup>2530.1</sup>

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2530.1 nāmaikaṁ yasya vāci smaraṇa patha-gataṁ śrotra-mūlaṁ gataṁ  
vā

śuddhaṁ vāśuddha-varṇaṁ vyavahita-rahitaṁ tārayaty eva  
satyam

tac ced deha draviṇa-janatā-lobha-pāṣaṇḍa-madhye  
nikṣiptaṁ syān na phala-janaṁ śīghraṁ evātra vipra  
(padma purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.527)

vāci gataṁ prasaṅgād vāñ-madhye pravṛttam api  
smaraṇa-patha-gataṁ kathañcin manaḥ-sprṣtam api śrotra-mūlaṁ gataṁ  
kiñcit śrutam api śuddha-varṇaṁ vā aśuddha-varṇaṁ api vā vyavahitaṁ  
śabdāntareṇa yad-vyavadhānaṁ vakṣyamāṇa-nārāyaṇa-śabdasya kiñcid  
uccāraṇānantaraṁ prasaṅgād āpatitaṁ śabdāntaraṁ tena rahitaṁ sat;  
yadvā yadyapi 'halaṁ riktam' ity ādy-uktau hakāra-rikārayor vṛttyā  
harīti-nāmāsty eva, tathā 'rāja-mahiṣī' ity atra rāma-nāmāpi, evam anyad  
apy ūhyam; tathāpi tat-tan-nāma-madhye vyavadhāyakam akṣarāntaram  
astīty etādṛśa-vyavadhāna-rahitaṁ ity arthaḥ | yadvā vyavahitaṁ ca  
tad-rahitaṁ cāpi vā tatra vyavahitaṁ nāmnaḥ kiñcid uccāraṇānantaraṁ  
kathañcid āpatitaṁ śabdāntaraṁ samādhāya paścān  
nāmāvaśiṣṭākṣara-grahaṇam ity evaṁ rūpaṁ madhye

"When the Yavana (the Muslim) as was being torn to pieces by the wild boar, with its tusk-like teeth, uttered 'Harāma', 'Harāma'. he got liberation. How astounding would the result be if the Name is uttered with implicit faith?" "When Ajāmila on his deathbed, taking the Name 'Nārāyaṇa' intended to call his son, went to Śrī Viṣṇu's Abode, what would be the result if one takes It with implicit faith?" To prove that those who experience even Nāmābhāsa or the dim reflection of the Name - which forms the initial stage of the other devotional modes like Śravaṇa, Kīrtana, etc., are not under the control of Yama - the god of death, Śrī Vyāsadeva concludes the chapter by quoting the example of Ajāmila. He gives the clear meaning of the Glory of the Name in a single sentence. Ajāmila uttered the Name 'Nārāyaṇa' while on his deathbed without faith; **how amazing would the result be if It is taken with faith?** He took the Name while dying or on his deathbed; **how much more beneficial would the result be if one takes It during his whole lifetime?** He uttered the Name to call his son; **how much more beneficial would the result be if he utters It to call the Lord Himself?** Besides Ajāmila, who was a great sinner, achieved the abode of Śrī Viṣṇu; **how grand would the result be if an extremely guiltless or pure person takes the Name?** The Glory of 'Śrī Hari Nāma' has been expounded by the use of the argument 'a fortiori',<sup>254</sup> or "Kaimutika Nyāyaḥ",

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śabdāntareṇāntaritam ity arthaḥ rahitaṁ paścād

avaśiṣṭākṣara-grahaṇa-varjitaṁ kenacid amśena hīnam ity arthaḥ | tathāpi tārayaty eva sarvebhyaḥ pāpebhyo 'parādhebhyaś ca samsārād apy uddhārayaty eveti satyam eva | kintu nāma-sevanasya mukhyaṁ yat phalaṁ tan na sadyaḥ sampadyate | tathā deha-bharaṇādy-artham api nāma-sevanena mukhyaṁ phalam āśu na sidhyatīty āha tac ced iti | tan nāma ced yadi dehādi-madhye niṁsīptaṁ deha-bharaṇādy-artham eva vinyastam tadāpi phala-janakam na bhavati kim? api tu bhavaty eva kintu atra iha loka śiṅghraṁ na bhavati kintu vilambenaiva bhavatīty arthaḥ | |

254daṁṣṭri-daṁṣṭrāhato mlecco harāmeti punaḥ punaḥ

uktvāpi muktim āpnoti kim punaḥ śraddhayā gṛhaṇ  
(nṛsiṁha purāṇa)

mriyamāṇo harernāma gṛhaṇ putropacāritam  
ajāmilo 'py agād dhāma kim uta śraddhayā gṛhaṇ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.49)

which means a maxim of 'how much more', or 'how much less'. The following Śloka will clarify its significance. "Does it need a special mention that the Kaustubha gem which is more brilliant than a hundred crores of suns, is more effulgent than an ordinary lamp?" "Is it not ridiculous to say that a certain darkness which is thoroughly dispelled even by a small lamp, fails to disappear in the presence of the Kaustubh gem, more resplendent than even a hundred crores of suns?"<sup>255242.1</sup>

Nāmābhāsa according to Śrīmad Bhāgavata are of four types. "(1) Sāṅketya - unintentional and indirect utterance of the Holy Name as in the case of Ajāmila, (2) Pārihāsyā - taking the Name while indifferently cutting jokes with others, (3) Stobha - taking the Name while singing songs, and (4) Helā - inattentive or negligent uttering of the Name. The above four types of the dim reflection of the Holy Name are competent enough to save the soul from the bondage of Māyā."<sup>256</sup> Vidura says to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, "Avoiding all insincerity, with real faith,

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prakaraṇamupasaṁhṛtyāpi punaḥ sarvathā pratītyarthamekenaiiva  
vākyena nāmamāhātmyasiddhāntamāha | mriyamāṇa iti |  
mriyamāṇatvādeva āsraddhayapi gr̥ṇan kiṁ punaḥ śraddhayeti  
mriyamāṇo 'pi kiṁ punarjīvanṇiti putropacāritamapi kiṁ punaḥ  
sākṣādeva ajāmilo mahāpātakyapi kiṁ punarṇiṣpāpa  
ityavadhāraṇacatuṣṭayam | |  
(sārārtha-darśinī)

255nyūne'dhike ca kaimutyam tatra nyūne bhaved yathā  
kaustubhas tu mahā-tejāḥ sūrya-koṭi-śatād api  
ayam kim uta vaktavyam pradīpād dīptimān iti

athādhike yathā dhvāntaiḥ śakyo dīpo 'pi nārditum  
sa tu mārtanḍa-koṭibhiḥ samaḥ kim uta kaustubhaḥ  
(laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta 3.185-186)

yauvanam dhana-saṁpattiḥ prabhutvam avivekitā  
ekaikam apy anarthāya kim uta yatra catuṣṭayam  
(hitopadeśa 11)

256sāṅketyam pārihāsyam vā stobham helanam eva vā  
vaikuṇṭha-nāma-grahaṇam aśeṣāgha-haram viduḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.14)

and steadfast devotion, worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is the Repository of all virtues, of excellent fame, Who is the Purifier of all that is sacred, Whose sun-like Name even by Its dim reflection when It illumines the minutest chamber of one's heart, destroys forthwith all the gloom of the worst forms of sins."<sup>257</sup>"O the Sun of Bhagavān Nāma! Is there any fortunate soul in the infinite number of universes who is competent enough to esteem fully Your Glories? Even Your dim reflection in the hearts of mankind enveloped in the darkness of power, dispels all darkness from their minds, and imparts enlightenment on loving devotion even to the utterly ignorant of the Absolute Truth."<sup>258</sup>"These Vaikuṇṭha Pārśadas, with the intention of protecting those devotees who happen to utter, or hear, or happen to have even a dim reflection of the Lord's Name, even at the time of their death, from the fear of all impediments to devotion, and spreading the pure cult of Bhakti, move about everywhere according to their own desire, as they are the protectors of Bhakti."<sup>259</sup>"One gets liberation,

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257taṁ nirvyājaṁ bhaja guṇa-nidhe pāvanaṁ pāvanānāṁ  
 śraddhā-rajyan-matir atitarāṁ uttamaḥ-śloka-maulim  
 prodyann antaḥ-karaṇa-kuhare hanta yan-nāma-bhānor  
 ābhāso'pi kṣapayati mahā-pātaka-dhvānta-rāśim  
 (śrī-bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.103)

258yad-ābhāso 'py udyan kavalita-bhava-dhvānta-vibhavo  
 dṛśaṁ tattvāndhānāṁ api diśati bhakti-praṇayinīm  
 janas tasyodāttam jagati bhagavan-nāma-taraṇe  
 kṛti te nirvaktum ka iha mahimānaṁ prabhavati  
 (śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 3; stava-mālā)

259ete hi mṛtyu-kāle'pi jihvāgre śrotra-vartma vā  
 kathañcit sakṛd-āptena nāmābhāsenā ca prabhoḥ

bhaktān kṛtsna-bhayāt pāntas tānvanto bhaktim ujjalām  
 sarvatra vicaranty ātme- cchayā bhakty-eka-vallabhāḥ  
 (bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.90-91)

nanu śrīvaikṛṣṇapārśadānāṁ tatra tatra kimartha gamanaṁ  
 tatrāha eta iti dvābhyām | śrīvaikuṇṭhapārśadā hi ātmeccchayaiva natu  
 kenāpyanyapāratantryeṇa sarvatra carantīti dvābhyāmanvayaḥ | kiṁ  
 kurvantaḥ ? apyartho cakāraḥ | prabhoḥ śrīvaikuṇṭhanāthasya

even by the dim reflection of the Lord's Name, or when It is just uttered, or even when It enters his ears. To elucidate the Glory of the devotional cult, emancipation of the Lord's devotees is very easily achieved, by the service of the Lord's Names, or even by the faintest reflection of any one of the Names, howsoever uttered, i.e., uttered jokingly, or even slightly, etc., or if the Name just throbs on the tip of the tongue, or even if the sound of the Name somehow enters the ears. Ajāmila, by calling his son Nārāyaṇa by name, went to Vaikuṇṭha. Varāha Purāṇa says, "A Brāhmaṇa was sitting in water engrossed in meditation. A tiger which came there to eat him, was shot by a hunter. Before it breathed its last, because it heard the Lord's Name uttered by the Brāhmaṇa, it obtained liberation."<sup>260</sup>

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nāmābhāsenāpi tasyaiva bhaktān kṛtsnebhyo bhayebhyo  
bhaktivighnādīrūpebhyaḥ pāntaḥ rakṣantaḥ | kidṛśena ? mṛtyukāle 'pi  
kathañcit pariḥāsāvahanādiprakāreṇāpi sakṛdapi jīhvāyā agramapi  
śrotrasya vartmanikaṭamapi vā āptena labdhena | ataeva ujñvalāṁ  
viśuddhāṁ bhaktiṁ tanvantaḥ savatra pravartayantaḥ | yataḥ  
bhaktirevaikā vallabhā yeṣāṁ te |

260kathañcid bhagavan-nāmā- bhāsasyāpi sa sidhyati  
sakṛd-uccāra-mātreṇa kiṁ vā karṇa-praveśitaḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.2.173)

tathāpi kiṁ tat sādhanamityapekṣāyāṁ  
bhaktimāhātmyanirvacanāyaiva bhagavad bhaktānāmanāyāsenaiva  
mokṣaḥ siddhyatītyāhuḥ | kathañciditi | astu tāvad bhagavannāmnam  
sewayā | bhagavannāmno ya ābhāsaḥ  
prātibimbavadanukārakaśabdestasyāpi kathañcit kenāpi  
pariḥāsāvahanādiprakāreṇāpi sakṛt vāramekamapi uccāraṇamātreṇa  
jīhvāgre karaṇena | kimveti pakṣāntare | tasyaiva kathañcit karṇayoḥ  
praveśāt sa mokṣaḥ siddhyati taduktaṁ ṣaṣṭhaskandhe | " vikṛśya  
putramaghavān yadajāmilo 'pi nārāyaṇeti mriyamāṇa iyāya muktim " iti |  
tathā śrīvārāhapurāṇe | satyatapa upākhyānārambhe kañcijjale magraṁ  
japaparaṁ brāhmaṇaṁ bhakṣayitumāgatasya vyāghrasya tenaiva  
vyādhena hatasyākasmādud gatabhagavannāmaśravaṇenaiva muktirjātetī  
dik ||

## 22. *Love is its own reward*

We have now understood beyond doubt that the primary result of chanting the Divine Name is the attainment of Divine Love for the Lord. Love, being the most sublime attainment and the rarest of rare virtues, is achieved by the uttering the Name lovingly. 'Love is its own reward'. One who practises the chanting of the Holy Name with a longing heart for this Sublime Goal—Prema must necessarily and invariably pray for that and that alone from the Lord. "Millions of tongues chant His Name and sing His praises and millions of souls are flooded with Love, because they looking on His Face utter His Name, Which is as Potent as His Love. For His Name contains Himself, and those, who utter His Name have Him in their hearts and lo! The world to them is complete!" Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in His fourth Śloka of Śikṣāṣṭaka teaches us how we should pray while taking the Name: -

"O Lord! May I approach Your Lotus Feet with a humble prayer? Is this unworthy wretch eligible to approach Your ever pure Lotus Feet? I am not uttering Your Names with any expectation from You; no, not in the least. My Lord! I do not ask from you any relief for the various physical ailments I am often subject to; You are not like a mere physician to me; nor Your Name even. I do not covet material learning, popularity, or reputation. From the worldly point of view, I may not be in affluent circumstances. It matters very little to me. I do not hanker after paradise where greater - yes, far greater luxuries for comparatively many more number of year are offered, a paradise where every inhabitant is free from hunger, thirst, or similar physical necessities, where 'ambrosia' itself forms the food of every individual and where none even dreams of death or decrepitude. Never, do I long to be born in a place, where every tree is a wish-yielding one. By Your Mercy I covet not for any of these achievements. I neither crave for the five types of liberations which You are ready to give to those who approach You nor for supernatural attainments offered to Yogīs. Crores of births in any form I am willing to accept provided You are merciful to grant one favour to this insignificant servant of Yours. Bless me that I may sing Your Names and Glories in all my births! My Lord! You are the very Embodiment of Mercy, an ever-flowing Ocean of Kindness. This is the only prayer I have to ask of You in my life. Let me be blessed with unflinching and selfless devotion to Your Lotus Feet. Let me be saturated incessantly with such loving

devotion to You. Let my determination to serve You materialise in all its fullness, and let there be no end to it. Alas! What amount of attachment I am having to the transitory objects of the material world? Lord! Have Mercy on me; transform this present attachment of mine into one to Your Lotus Feet. O Lord! I pray for no separation between You and me! A day without Your remembrances, without singing Your Names and Glories, is worse than death itself - the most unthinkable disaster in my life! Lord! Let me not fall a prey to this calamity. Let not these circumstances, happy or unhappy, stand in my way of rendering services to You. Let my devotion towards You grow in proportion to Your munificence. My Lord! It matters not if I take birth in any form, anywhere in the infinite number of universes; only I must be blessed with selfless loving devotion to Your Lotus Feet. Be merciful to grant my humble prayer."<sup>261</sup>

"The Prema Bhakta wants nothing from his Lord, no boon, no blessing, material or celestial, not even salvation or Mukti, nothing, nothing save - the blessings of being filled with Love for Him. He prays to his Lord. "O Kṛṣṇa! It matters not what betides my body, my life, or my earthly circumstances, or in what form of life I am reborn, even if it be that of a worm, let my faith and love be fixed in Thee, my Beloved. Whatever is there in all existence compared with the luxury of loving Thee? Thou art the Sum Total of the realisation of all the desires, of all happiness, Thou, the Secret and Object of all our longing!" A Śloka with similar meaning is seen in Śrī Mukundamālā Stotra too. "I have no special belief in the performance of pious activities, nor in worldly riches, nor in the gratification of my sensuous pleasures. May all those things come to pass as they are ordained to, O Lord! according to the nature of my previous actions. But this alone is what I regard as worthy of being prayed for, and what I cherish very much. May I retain unswerving devotion that is inspired by the Divine Lotus Feet, in all my successive births!"<sup>262</sup>

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261na dhanam na janam na sundarim  
kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye  
mama janmani janmanisvare  
bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki tvayi  
(śikṣāṣṭaka 4)

262nāsthā dharme na vasu-nicaye naiva kāmopabhoge  
yad bhāvyaṁ tad bhavatu bhagavan pūrva-karmānurūpaṁ



### 23. *Unalloyed devotion or Uttama Bhakti*

What is the true conception of this unflinching devotion which every sincere aspirant for the Holy Name should aspire after? Religion in its broader sense is nothing but Love for Godhead. No other achievement of humanity is higher than that of this Love. Bhakti or devotion to Lord is the alpha and omega of Life in India. It is the very essence of India and in fact, our sacred India breathes through this noble quality. From days of hoary antiquity till today, India has come across and been blessed with the thrilling lives and experiences of a vast galaxy of Bhaktas. Their ideal lives and teachings have maintained this perennial flow of devotion even today uninterrupted in our land which is itself named 'Bhārata' after the name of a great Bhakta and King who once ruled over our sacred land. Bhakti! Ah! What a marvellous power-house it is! Immense are its potentialities. Who in India has not ever heard the unparalleled and innumerable efficacies and influences of Bhakti or devotion? Who is there in our land who is not moved by the soul-stirring experiences of a regular stream of devotees? Bhakti is not a matter of occasional emotions, but a life of positive living and continuous experiences that can independently claim the highest of achievements which no other course of religious practice can ever dream of.

Bhakti is defined in various ways by its different exponents. The derivation of the word 'Bhakti' is from the verbal root 'Bhaj' which means complete service or Sevā. This service is the special feature of Bhakti. It is this that distinguishes Bhakti from the other cults. This method of service consists in complete submission of one's body, mind, and words in pleasing the Supreme Lord. The word 'service' should not be confused with the various kinds of activities such as the service of the nation, country, society, the poor, etc., with which it is usually being identified. Here, the word, 'service' means the service of the Lord. Activities of a religious nature, very often guided by fear, hatred, etc., or the feeling of identity with the Attributeless Brahman are not styled as Bhakti since the quality of submission is always lacking in such course. Those activities that are current in this world at present

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etat prārthyam mama bahu matam janma-janmāntare 'pi  
tvat-pādāmbhoruha-yuga-gatā niścālā bhaktir astu  
(śrī-mukunda-mālā-stotra 5)

and passing under the names of duty, service of country, etc., as the equivalents of religious activities deserving of our highest esteem, are but of the nature of efforts for the procurement of sensuous enjoyment, each for himself, by the members of atheistic societies. There is absolutely no question of the service of Godhead in any of those functions. On the contrary, there is to be found in them only the desire for exploiting Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His devotees for the gratification of one's senses. The society of atheists who are devoid of any intention of serving the Transcendental Lord are deceiving themselves and others by their mental speculations. Those functions or ideas are located far away from the truth, and will continue to remain so even if the entire population of the world agree to accept them as true. The selfless, uninterrupted, and unalloyed service of the Supreme Lord is the only universal religion of all conditioned souls. In that religion there are no elements of deception in the forms of fruitive activity, empiric knowledge, etc.

"Service of the Lord of the senses (Hṛṣīkeṣa) through all the senses is called 'Bhakti' or devotion, which is free from all obstacles and pure by reason of its being exclusively devoted to Śrī Kṛṣṇa."<sup>263</sup> It is the predominance of knowledge born of our limited material senses and aversion to the service of Godhead that have acted as two sheaths covering us, leaving us in this present state of bondage. The sage Śāṇḍilya explains Bhakti as "the highest kind of attachment to the Lord with unflinching love."<sup>264</sup> Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the crest-jewel of all the Śāstras declares it as the most sublime religion **"the uninterrupted flow of mind towards Bhagavān."**<sup>265</sup> The great Nārada in his Bhakti Sūtras mentions it as **"intense unalloyed love for Bhagavān."**<sup>266</sup> Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī defines it

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263sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ tat-paratvena nirmalam

hṛṣīkeṣa hṛṣīkeṣa-sevanaṁ bhaktir ucyate

(nārada-pañcarātra; śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.12)

264sa parā nurakti śvare

(śāṇḍilya-bhakti-sūtram 1.1.2)

265mano-gatir anvicchinā...

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.29.11)

266sā tva smin parama prema rūpā

(nārada bhakti sūtra 2)

thus:—"The harmonious pursuit of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by being favourably disposed towards Him and free from all other desires and unconditioned by Jñāna, Karma, etc., is known as 'Uttamā Bhakti'<sup>267</sup>. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī while commenting on the above Śloka mentions that the word 'harmonious' (Ānukulyena) means that the pursuit must be favourable or agreeable to minister to the pleasures of Śrī Kṛṣṇa directly. He is the Sole Enjoyer of all services rendered by His devotees. Those who are engaged busily day in and day out, in rendering services that are most pleasing to Him by words, deeds, or thoughts, are known as true devotees. Various prayers that human beings offer to Him are not of this nature. They do not directly please Him. The repeated entreaties of conditioned souls, fallen in the whirlpool of endless sufferings, have no capacity in them to order delight to the Senses of the Lord. They may attract His attention or even redeem them from their difficulties; but they do not render any special gratification to Him or to His Senses. Those who offer such prayers, may get some benefits and thereby satisfaction for themselves, but the Lord Who is the Object of the prayer does not get any. Just as a person in this world, who is luxurious by nature, and esteemed by position, is pleased by his praises and by the supply of objects that would assist or enhance his enjoying facilities, even so, the Supreme Lord, Who is the Sole Enjoyer of all the created objects, feels extremely pleased with our services that would provide enjoyment to Him. Supplying the necessities, that would cater to His taste or doing similar actions that would directly please Him, are to be understood as the loyal pursuit towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Persons given to demoniacal tendencies and always of an inimical disposition towards Bhagavān also rendered some satisfaction to Him. By picking up quarrels with Him and by engaging Him in regular battle, they too have brought out His heroic propensities. This is only an indirect or unfavourable (Pratikūla) approach to Him. These demons only opposed Him in every way and at all times. The very thought of Bhagavān enraged and provoked them to challenge His very Authority. Whereas, for a devotee, a reflection of His recollections makes him float on the rolling waves of an unsurpassable ocean of eternal joy, converts the entire structure of his into a magnificent

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267 anyābhilāṣitā sūnyam jñāna karmādy anāvṛtam

ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam bhaktir uttamā

(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.11)

**power-house of spiritual inspirations enriched with thrilling experiences.** The illustrious and exemplary lives of a host of great devotees, like Nanda Mahārāja, Yaśodā, the milk-maids of Vraja headed by Śrī Rādhikā, etc., are to be strictly followed in this respect.

The meaning of the word 'Anuśīlanam' can be roughly expressed as 'submissive pursuit'. This pursuit is twofold:—(1) Activities guided by the impulse of body, mind, and words (Kriyārūpā), and (2) actuated by spontaneous feelings (Bhāvarūpā). Bhakti is awakened by the causeless Mercy of Bhagavān's bliss yielding potency. It is not attained by human efforts alone. Without the Mercy of Bhagavān or Bhaktas, the attainment of Bhakti is not only difficult, but simply impossible. When by the blessings of a Bhakta, a particular individual is favoured and permitted to the course, his life and activities are infused with devotional tendencies. Each and every sense-organ of his gets the fitness to perform the functions pertaining to Bhakti.

Kriyārūpā Bhakti consists in the practice of the sixty-four principles (footnote 159) guided by the nature of action. The other one, viz., Bhāvarūpā or actuated by spontaneous feelings, is the mental culture of devotional principles, such as attachment to the Lord, Love for Him, etc. It is essential that an aspirant must possess both these qualifications and activities in him. The loyal practice of favourable activities towards the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is of two types: (1) Functions that are of direct relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa,<sup>268</sup> and (2) activities that are done for the sake of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.<sup>269</sup> Both the observances are performed for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The first one is of immediate and direct relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They are actions like that of feeding Him, playing with Him, looking to such other Personal comforts, and necessities. The other one is not in the form of a Personal service, but it accelerates the functions aimed to secure the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, e.g., the various religious rites, charities, etc., observed on the occasion of the Advent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by Nanda Mahārāja, Vasudeva, etc. These practices when observed with a purely devotional motive, glorify the occasion, and hence form one way of rendering loving devotion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

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268śrī kṛṣṇa sambandhyanu śīlanam

269śrī kṛṣṇārthamanu śīlanam

The above twofold ways of devotional activities, are not to be confused, with the pious acts of various charitably-disposed persons, with the object of earning religious merits or name and fame. It is love for one's own sensuous gratification, lurking in the heart, that manifests itself in a variety of forms in the shape of patriotism, feeding the poor, distribution of clothings, starting of charitable hospitals and dispensaries, digging of well and tanks, and various other activities of such nature. The performers of such deeds attain enjoyments of greater degree, fit for the gods as the fruit of their actions. These enjoyments in Svarga have got their own duration. "When one's merits are completely exhausted, the enjoyer of heavenly bliss would revert once again to the earthly condition."<sup>270</sup> The devotees of the Lord are not after such insignificant and transitory results. Hence, they perform these acts with the object of pleasing Bhagavān, contrary to those of the other people of the world, who do the same for self-aggrandisement.

By the usage of the word 'Anyābhilāṣitā', all desires other than that of the direct service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, such as a desire for the enjoyment of the transitory pleasures of the material world (Bhoga Vāsanā), and a desire for liberation (Mokṣa Vāsanā) are prohibited, as they are harmful to the growth of Bhakti, and hence they are unacceptable. Jñāna means the knowledge of the identity of the Attributeless Brahman and Jīva (Nirbheda Brahma-anusandhāna) which is the worst impediment in the path of Bhakti. If this unfortunate idea creeps into the heart of an aspirant, his efforts in the cult of Bhakti are doomed to failure and disappointment. The word 'Karma' refers to the daily, compulsory, and occasional religious duties mentioned in the orthodox Smṛtis. The word 'Karma' does not indicate the various devotional activities performed by the devotees to the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Bhajanīya Paricaryādi), so also the usage of Jñāna. A sincere quest for the Truth in a submissive spirit, and the study of the knowledge about Godhead, congenial to the progress of devotees, are not in any way discouraged. Karma, Jñāna, Vairāgya, and other virtues, such as self-control (Yama), purity (Śuci), etc., are not the proper means for the attainment of Bhakti. These qualifications by themselves are neither Bhakti, nor are they capable of awakening Bhakti in a person. When

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270kṣiṇe puṇye martya-lokaṁ viśanti  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 9.21)

any person is fortunate enough to attain Bhakti, all these virtues automatically lend grace to him.

In the above Śloka, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī describes the negative and positive features of pure devotion. Devotion proper and a show of the same, guided by ulterior motives, though they appear apparently similar, are entirely different with reference to results. Unless there is proper enlightenment, we are apt to be confused while making a choice. To save the humans from such grave dangers is one of the purposes of these divine personages, when they make their appearance in this world. From the negative aspect, unalloyed devotion is absolutely free from hankerings that are averse to or do not contribute to the pleasures of the Supreme Lord. These undesirable hankerings are to be totally avoided by those who yearn for loving devotion to Bhagavān.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu, while expounding unalloyed devotion to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī at Allahabad, makes a mention of these obnoxious and unhealthy temptations as the worst impediments to the growth of devotion of Godhead. The negative nature of Bhakti, strictly eschews all the unfavourable tendencies in the development of devotion. It avoids all activities where religion, mainly devotion to the Lord, is at a discount. An excessive desire for enjoying the transitory pleasures of this world or paradise is an awful impediment to the attainment of Bhakti. A longing to retire even from the service of the Lord and lose oneself completely in the Formless Attributeless Brahman, is a greater evil in the realisation of Bhakti. The positive aspect of Bhakti consists in observing devotional practices in a most loyal way, to the entire satisfaction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It wants to please the Lord in the manner that is most agreeable to Him.

"By merely hearing the discourses or talks regarding My Transcendental Glories from a Bhakta, he experiences a continuous flow of the mind towards Me, the Indwelling Monitor in all the hearts of beings, like that of the stream of the Ganges towards the ocean. This is the distinguishing characteristic of devotion, free from all mundane qualities in it. This devotion to Me, Who am the Supreme Being, is selfless and uninterrupted."<sup>271</sup> My devotees never accept from Me any

reward in exchange for their services, such as residence in My own realm Vaikuṇṭha, having powers similar to Mine, proximity to My presence, a form resembling My Ownself, or complete absorption in Me, though offered by Myself. This is because they are not enamoured of any other gifts except My Transcendental Service."<sup>272</sup> "He, who has completely surrendered himself to Me, never covets for the attainment of high positions like that of Brahma, Indra, sovereignty over all including the nether worlds, supernatural attainments obtainable by Yogic practices, or even the achievement of liberation, except My eternal service."<sup>273</sup> "It is such devotion as described above that is perfect. By means of such devotion, all Jīvas transcend the limits of the triple material qualities and attain the unalloyed love for Me."<sup>274</sup> This devotion or Bhakti is not merely a temporary means of attaining liberation as many misrepresent it. **Bhakti is both the means as well as the end in itself.** Śrīmad Bhāgavata has explained it as the highest religion of all souls. "That function by means of which Bhakti in Adhokṣaja (Transcendental Godhead) is aroused, is the highest Dharma of man. Such devotion possesses two distinguishing features in it, viz., (1) it is Ahaitukī - Selfless, i.e., not guided by any selfish motive except the selfless desire of pleasing the Supreme Lord, and (2) Apratihātā - uninterrupted; since it is spontaneous, nothing can arrest its course. It is beyond the pleasure or pain of the mundane

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lakṣaṇaṁ bhakti-yogasya nirguṇasya hy udāhṛtam  
ahaituky avyavahitā yā bhaktiḥ puruṣottame  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.29.11-12)

272See footnote 28

273na pārameṣṭhyam na mahendra-dhiṣṇyam  
na sārva-bhaumaṁ na rasādhipatyam  
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavaṁ vā  
mayy arpitātmeccati mad vinānyat  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.14.14)

274sa eva bhakti-yogākhyā ātyantika udāhṛtaḥ  
yenātivrajya tri-guṇaṁ mad-bhāvāyopapadyate  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.29.14)

sphere. It is only by such spontaneous devotion, the soul is fully satisfied.<sup>275</sup>

The word 'Adhokṣaja' used in the above passage means 'He Who transcends all knowledge born of senses', 'He, Who exists beyond the scope of human intelligence'. He is no other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa himself. The Love towards the Transcendental Reality, that is produced by the practice of the highest Dharma is known as Bhakti or Sevā. This is not based on any adventitious cause. Therefore, it continues ever uninterrupted. Worship that is ordinarily found based on desires for the acquisition of religious merit (Dharma), worldly prosperity (Artha), sensuous gratification (Kāma), and emancipation (Mokṣa) is not pure devotion (Śuddha Bhakti); and the temporary outbursts of emotions too, subjected by the influence of time, space, and other circumstances are also not genuine expressions of real Bhakti or devotion. **Pure devotion is selfless; it is based on the desire for the exclusive Love of the Transcendental Lord. It is also the natural function of all the Jīvas.** This is the summum bonum of human existence, and hence surpasses all other conceptions of Dharmas, which are called Apar. The uninterrupted happiness which is coveted by all souls is attained only by this method of unalloyed devotion. The word 'soul' that is used in the Śloka does not mean the perishable body made up of the five elements (Pañca Bhūtas), and the ten organs of senses; nor does it mean the mind, the eleventh sense the present ruler of the sense-organs. All efforts of the body or the mind of the Jīva, result only in gratifying his material senses, and hence is not the Love of the Lord. The service of the Transcendental Lord is not certainly for the satisfaction of any of our senses.

**Bhakti, by reason of its being Para Dharma is superior to all other forms of worship. Since it is the natural function of the Jīva, it is entirely selfless,** whereas, all other methods, such as Jñāna, Yoga, Karma, etc., have got their own interests. **True devotion, as we have already dealt with, aims merely at the Supreme pleasures of Bhagavān as its final goal.** Jñāna or knowledge, with its renunciation, aims at the realisation of the Attributeless Brahman and complete absorption in the same for freeing the Jīva from the thralldom of nescience. Yoga with its eightfold practices wants to lose itself in Paramātmā. Karma

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275sa vai puṁsām paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje  
ahaituky apratihataḥ yayātmā suprasidati  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.2.6)



consisting of obedience to scriptural rules and regulations and by dedication of all its fruits to Bhagavān, can only secure a proneness towards the Supreme Lord. All these methods are inferior to exclusive devotion or Kevalā Bhakti, which aims at all costs, only the supreme pleasures of the Lord. To a real Bhakta, true Mokṣa or liberation lies neither in the attainment of the Attributeless Brahman, including complete merging in the same advocated by the Jñānīs, nor in the realisation of Paramātmā of the Yogīs. **To him, Mokṣa means direct vision of the Lord and His realisation in His highest Manifestation as Svayam Bhagavān. This sublime realisation is only possible by undiluted Bhakti alone.**

Hence, it needs no mention that to those fortunate enough to have Bhakti, Jñāna will come by itself. By having the realisation of Bhagavān, one automatically gets into all the secrets of the other imperfect and partial Manifestations of the Lord. Therefore, it is not essential that a person aspiring after Bhakti is to follow the paths of Jñāna or Yoga. "Hence, for those Yogīs who have intense devotion to Me, and whose minds are ever devoted to Me, the efforts for the practice of Jñāna or dispassion are not at all beneficial for the attainment of their real good."<sup>276</sup> "O Lord! The efforts of those, who abandoning the path of pure devotion - the fount of all well-being, aspire after the abstract knowledge or dry wisdom, end in fruitless toil and trouble like the exertions of those who thrash empty husks of corn."<sup>277</sup>

During the conversation of Śrī Vallabhācārya, the founder of Puṣṭi-mārga with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu at Allahabad, the latter gave out His view on Bhakti, in the most unambiguous and illuminating words thus—"A Caṇḍāla of righteous character who is purified from the evil effects of being born in a low caste, by the blazing fire of his devotional fervour, is indeed an object of esteem, even to eminent

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276 tasmān mad-bhakti-yuktasya yogino vai mad-ātmanah  
na jñānam na ca vairāgyam prāyaḥ śreyo bhaved iha  
(śrīmad-bhāgavatā 11.20.31)

277 śreyaḥ-sṛtiṁ bhaktim udasya te vibho  
kliśyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave  
teṣāṁ asau kleśāla eva śiṣyate  
nānyad yathā sthūla-tuṣāvaghātīnām  
(śrīmad-bhāgavatā 10.14.4)

scholars; but likewise an atheist, even if he be an erudite scholar, in all the Vedas, is not honoured. All the high compliments, such as lineage, vast erudition in all the Śāstras, muttering of the Mantras countless times, and severe austerities, in a person devoid of any spirit of devotion to the Supreme Lord, are merely lifeless exhibitions only, leading to the satisfaction of the worldly-minded. They are like the decorating of a corpse with costly articles, such as attractive costumes, fascinating perfumes, and ornaments studded with precious gems.<sup>1278</sup> There are many Ślokas of the same spirit that speak emphatically, unambiguously and in a comparative way, the unique position of Bhakti over all other modes of religious practices.

Even emancipated souls are not fully satisfied with their attainment of Mokṣa, and therefore, engage themselves in the devotional services of Bhagavān. The paths of Jñāna and Yoga lead their respective votaries to the realisation of Brahman and Paramātmā, who are only the incomplete and partial aspects of Bhagavān. The path of Karma, with dedication to Bhagavān is only a gateway to all such practices. It is not a necessary means to the attaining of Bhakti. All these different paths help humanity to wipe out their averseness or Vaimukhya to the Lord, the root cause of all their sufferings they are having at present, and replace it with Sāmmukhya or proneness to the Lord instead. Since human beings are ceaselessly struggling under varying degrees of eligibilities, one single course, however sublime it may be, does not prove effective to suit their individual capacities. Hence, the All-Merciful Lord, through the Śāstras, has prescribed different methods to satisfy the eligibilities of different persons. But, when Bhakti is attained, all other paths appear inferior to Bhakti which is always independent. It grows by itself spontaneously. It does not require the support of either Karma, Jñāna, or Yoga. Whereas, in the case of all other methods, such as Karma, Jñāna, Yoga, Vairāgya, etc., they are to depend chiefly upon the mercy of Bhakti. None of them independently can lead

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278bhagavad-bhakti-hīnasya jātih śāstram japas tapah  
aprāṇasyeva dehasya maṇḍanam loka-rañjanam

śuciḥ sad-bhakti-diptāgni-dagdha-durjāti-kalmaṣaḥ  
śva-pāko 'pi budhaiḥ ślāghyo na veda-jño 'pi nāstikaḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-sudhodaya 3.11-12)

their respective followers to the ultimate goal of realising Transcendental Bliss. Hence, Bhakti, free from all these courses occupies the supreme position over all other religious practices mentioned in the Śāstras. "O Uddhava! A well-developed and unalloyed devotion to Me wins My Heart, and other practices, such as Yoga, Sāṅkhya, the observance of socio-religious duties, study of Vedas, severe austerities, and renunciation are unable to do so."<sup>279</sup>

## 24. *Bhakti - Appeals to all*

Of all the spiritual practices mentioned for realising Bhagavān, nothing is more popular and appealing like Bhakti to the masses as well as classes in India. **Bhakti is so catholic that it is accessible to one and all irrespective of caste, creed, sex or age.** Both the literate and the illiterate are equally placed with regard to it. It is free from rigid restrictions as seen in other practices. **It is intended for all times and can be observed under all conditions, in all places and by all beings. No other mode of worship is so pleasing to Bhagavān as Bhakti itself.**"What were the religious practices that Dharma-Vyādha observed? How old was Dhruva? Did the great Gajendra possess any learning? Was, Kubjā - the servant-maid and the hunchbacked woman ever beautiful enough to attract the Lord? Was the devoted Brāhmaṇa Sudāmā ever wealthy? What was the social status of Vidura? What prowess had Ugrasena, the King of Yādavas? Did not these devotees captivate the Lord? Certainly, they did. By what qualities? **By pure Bhakti and Bhakti alone. The Lord is delighted by Bhakti and Bhakti alone and not by the acquirement of any other virtues.**"<sup>280</sup>

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279na sādhayati mām yogo na sāṅkhyam dharma uddhava  
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo yathā bhaktir mamorjitā  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.14.20)

280vyādhasyācaraṇam dhruvasya ca vayo vidyā gajendrasya kā  
kubjāyāḥ kim u nāma rūpam adhikam kim tat sudāmno dhanam  
vaṁśaḥ ko vidurasya yādavapater ugrasya kim pauraṣam  
bhaktyā tuṣyati kevalam na ca guṇair bhakti-priyo mādhaveḥ  
(padyaṅvali 8)

Bhagavān was extremely pleased with Gajendra on the merits of Bhakti alone. The incomparable glory of Bhakti being such, all the Śāstras, the saints, and the Lord insist on all to practise devotion. It is desirable and preferable for one and all irrespective of his eligibility or status to follow the path of Bhakti in all sincerity. "A wise person guided by innumerable desires in him, whether he is ever intent upon attaining Bhakti alone, or seeking liberation, should worship the Supreme Lord with intense devotion."<sup>281</sup> Bhakti is a very vast subject. Its characteristics are innumerable. A few of the important features, as expounded by the eternal devotees, are elucidated below in order to correct many of the erroneous notions.

## 25. *Bhakti - Its special characteristics*

"Uttama Bhakti is the destroyer of misery, giver of good, inspirer of contempt for Mokṣa (emancipation from worldly bondage), extremely difficult to obtain, the essence of the most highly concentrated bliss, and capable of attracting Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself."<sup>282</sup> 1. Kleśaghñatva - capacity for removing miseries. Various miseries that are mercilessly torturing humanity irrespective of any position are mainly due to (1) sins (Papa), (2) the seed of sin (Pāpabīja), and (3) nescience (Avidyā). Sins that we have committed are twofold: (1) Prārabdha, and (2) Aprārabdha. When the fruits of sins have matured they are called Prārabdha; when they are yet to mature they are known as Aprārabdha. A person who is fortunate enough to obtain Bhakti, is always freed from sinful activities. Even when he attains strong faith which is the qualification for gaining Bhakti, he abstains from the sinful actions. Sinful impulses, 'the seed of sin' also find no place in the heart of those who are sanctified by pure devotion. Error regarding the knowledge of one's own self - the Jīvātmā, is nescience. While making progress towards unalloyed devotion, a Jīva is enabled to

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281akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ  
tīvṛeṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 2.3.10)

282kleśaghñī śubhadā mokṣa-laghutā-kṛt sudurlabhā  
sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā śrī-kṛṣṇākaraṣiṇī ca sā  
(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.17)

understand his true nature. It experiences that it is not an entity of the material world nor has it any permanent relationship with its physical and mental cases in which it is a prisoner at present. Its false ego or misidentification of its own self with the gross or subtle organism, leaves it for ever. It comes to know for certain that it is an eternal servant of the Supreme Lord. The cause of all our suffering is due to the misidentification, resulting from our averseness to Godhead. When the light of unalloyed devotion illuminates the dark chambers of our heart, the root- cause of all such sufferings is completely eradicated leaving no room for any further miseries.

"Just as a blazing fire reduces every piece of fuel to ashes, even so, unflinching devotion to Me, strikes at the root of all sins."<sup>283</sup> "The performance of expiatory acts, such as penance, liberal gifts, observance of religious vows, etc., no doubt delivers a sinner from the various sins he has committed. But these actions are incapable of removing the impurities caused by the practice of irreligious activities guided by the impulse of sin. It is only by the service of the Lord that this impulse of sin can be totally destroyed."<sup>284</sup> "Bhaktas, by meditating with love upon the ever-effulgent Toes of the Lotus Feet of the Supreme Lord gradually destroy the evil knots of Karma easily; but those Yogīs, who have experienced even Nirvikalpa Samādhi, though dispassionate, having control over their flowing senses, could not succeed in their efforts to cut asunder the knots of Karma. Hence, avoiding all those futile attempts for controlling the senses, serve Bhagavān Śrī Vāsudeva with loving devotion."<sup>285</sup>

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283yathāgniḥ su-samṛddhārciḥ karoty edhāmsi bhasmasāt  
tathā mad-viṣayā bhaktir uddhavaināmsi kṛtsnaśaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.14.19)

284tais tāny aghāni pūyante tapo-dāna-vratādibhiḥ  
nādharmajam tad-dhṛdayam tad apīśāṅghri-sevayā  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.17)

285yat-pāda-paṅkaja-palāśa-vilāsa-bhaktiyā  
karmāśayam grathitam udgrathayanti santaḥ  
tadvan na rikta-matayo yatayo 'pi ruddha-

2. Śubhadatva - capacity for bestowing good of all types. By the astounding efficacy of this characteristic, a devotee is loved by one and all in the world. He becomes a living embodiment of various appreciable virtues. He experiences incessant happiness both external and internal, spiritual and material. "All the gods with their excellent qualities reside in him, who is endowed with unflinching devotion to Śrī Hari. But, where is the possibility of those great qualities in one who is void of devotion to Śrī Hari? He remains engrossed in the worldly activities and attachments guided by the evil dictations of his wavering mind."<sup>286</sup> There is nothing in the infinite number of worlds which an intense devotion to Bhagavān would not offer. A true Bhakta never casts a glance at anything other than his coveted goal, i.e., the attainment of love towards the object of his worship. As such, the highest benefit of realising the transcendental bliss is a certainty to him.

3. Mokṣa-laghutā-kāritva - capacity to create contempt for Mokṣa or liberation. Bhakti, when it awakens in a fortunate person, creates in him a contempt for Mokṣa which is always opposed to its progress. Bhakta never covets any attainment, however great it may be, which stands in the way of his eternal relationship with the Lord. The bliss arising out of genuine devotion to Bhagavān has no comparison to the aggregate happiness that all the worlds and the attainment of various other methods can jointly offer. "O my Lord! If my love to You is quite firm, and if by good fortune, Your Divine Adolescent Figure is obtained by me, then Mukti (liberation) itself will entreat me with folded hands to accept her in my service, and Dharma (practice of routine religious rites), Ārtha (earthly wealth), and Kāma (the desired objects) will wait for their turn for me. **When I have Your Love, these four puruṣārthas, i.e., the four ends of human life, are not at all worth anything to**

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sroto-gaṇās tam araṇaṁ bhaja vāsudevam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 4.22.39)

286yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā  
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ  
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā  
manorathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 5.18.12)

me."<sup>287</sup> "O Nanda's Son! Of what use is the salt-water of Nirvana, i.e., total emancipation to us, who are deeply absorbed in the great ocean of Nectarine Pastimes of Your Adolescence? **Those fortunate few, who joyously dally in the floods of Your Nectarine Accounts, treat the four aims of human life quite as insignificant as a blade of straw.**"<sup>288</sup> "I bow down to that Hanumān, who desired nothing except the service of Śrī Viṣṇu - the Son of Daśaratha, even when he got Mokṣa, i.e., liberation, inexplicably by some stroke of luck alone."<sup>289</sup> "I covet not for that liberation which frees one, from the cycle of births and deaths, by attaining which, the present relation between You as my Lord and I as Your humble servant, will cease to exist."<sup>290</sup>

4. Sudurlabhatva - extremely difficult to attain. Bhakti is not a cheap achievement that one can have by a mere wish. Even by encountering endless difficulties, in most cases Bhakti remains far from our reach; since no amount of human efforts independently can succeed in their sublime realisation. "By pursuing the path of Jñāna, salvation in the form of realising Undifferentiated Brahman can surely be attained; heavenly enjoyments are easily gained by pious deeds, such as Yajña, etc., but despite thousands of such efforts unalloyed devotion

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287bhaktis tvayi sthitarārā bhagavan yadi syād  
 daivena naḥ phalati divya-kiśora-mūrtiḥ  
 muktiḥ svayaṁ mukulitāñjaliḥ sevate'smān  
 dharmārtha-kāma-gatayaḥ samaya-pratīkṣāḥ  
 (śrī kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta 107)

288nanda-nandana-kaiśora-līlāmṛta-mahāmbudhau  
 nimagnānām kim asmākaṁ nirvāṇa-lavaṇāmbhasā  
 tvat-kathāmṛta-pāthodhau viharanto mahā-mudāḥ  
 kurvanti kṛtinaḥ keci catur-vargaṁ tṛṇopamam  
 (padyāvalī 42-43)

289yadṛcchayā labdham api viṣṇor daśarathes tu yaḥ  
 naicchan mokṣaṁ vinā dāsyāṁ tasmai hanumate namaḥ  
 (bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 1.4.52)

290bhava-bandha-cchide tasyai spṛhayāmi na muktaye  
 bhavān prabhur ahaṁ dāsa iti yatra vilupyate  
 (padyāvalī 111, bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 1.4.68)

to the Lord is unattainable."<sup>291</sup> Those householders who are the slaves of their passions, and hence extremely addicted to their bodies, and their surroundings, fail to attain devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, either by their individual efforts, by the help of others, or by their combined co-operative attempts. Such householders only go on chewing the chewed and left behind as utterly useless by their predecessors."<sup>292</sup> The goddess of devotion never imparts her blessings so easily as we mistake. She is prepared to offer us any other reward, such as Mokṣa, etc., for all our hardships, except Bhakti. On a minute scrutiny of the sincerity of the longing of one who struggles for Bhakti, she imparts it to him. "O King! Lord Mukunda was a Protector, Spiritual Guide, Object of worship, and the family Guardian for all of you and the Yādava race. Not only this much, but He even acted on certain occasions as your Mediator, Charioteer, etc., too. Over and above all these, He even bestows salvation or Mukti upon those who worship Him; but He never endows Bhakti so readily upon one."<sup>293</sup>

5. *Sāndrānanda-Viśeṣātmatā* - unalloyed devotion is the very essence of the most highly concentrated bliss. "The words 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' are more than enough to destroy the sins of people, as that would amount to the application of drastic remedy for a minor ailment. **A sinner is never able to perpetrate as many sins as the single utterance of the Name 'Hari' is able to destroy.** But if ardent devotion to the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa springs thereby, the whole affluence of the

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291jñānataḥ sulabhā muktir bhuktir yajñādi-puṇyataḥ  
 seyaṁ sādhana-sāhasrair hari-bhaktiḥ sudurlabhā  
 (śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.36)

292matir na kṛṣṇe parataḥ svato vā  
 mitho 'bhipadyeta gṛha-vratānām  
 adānta-gobhir viśatām tamisraṁ  
 punaḥ punaś carvita-carvaṇānām  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.5.30)

293rājan patir gurur alaṁ bhavatām yadūnām  
 daivam priyaḥ kula-patiḥ kva ca kiṅkaro vaḥ  
 astv evaṁ aṅga bhagavān bhajatām mukundo  
 muktim dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 5.6.18)



empire of liberation will come abegging to his feet, looking askance at him. Hence, to use the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' for dispelling one's sins would be a serious insult to the 'Name', and hence a great offence by the aspirant.<sup>294</sup> The bliss that a devotee can enjoy by rendering loving services to the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has no comparison elsewhere. It is this achievement that prompts the devotees to reject any other offer from the Lord, however tempting it may be to others who are the votaries of other paths. The type of bliss that accrues from devotional services, enables the devotee to enjoy a particular mood of compact happiness, infinitely higher than the one that flows from the attainment of the Abstract Brahman. Even if all other types of happiness - material or spiritual, are totalled together and multiplied a billionfold, it does not attain even eligibility to compare with this kind of Transcendental Bliss. Those who are fortunate enough to experience it are alone capable of speaking a few words on it. Invariably it is better realized than expressed. "When the great Sanaka, Sanandana, etc., saw the Lotus-Eyed Lord Nārāyaṇa approaching them, they had the experience of a breeze laden with the sweet perfume of Tulasī leaves coupled with Keśara. This fragrance entering into the deepest chambers of the hearts of those sages who were absorbed in the happiness of the Undifferentiated Brahman, not only created a thrill of joy in their bodies, but caused a flash of great delight in their minds as well."<sup>295</sup>

6. Śrī Kṛṣṇākaraṣaṇatva - unalloyed devotion possesses a special characteristic in it to attract Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Nothing excels this in its power to attract unalloyed devotion to the Lord, who becomes subservient to the devotees. Uttama Bhakti distinguishes itself from all other

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294alam alam iyaṁ eva prāṇināṁ pātakānāṁ  
 nīrasana-viśaye yā kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇeti vāṇī  
 yadi bhavati mukunde bhaktir ānanda-sāndrā  
 viluṭhati caraṇābje mokṣa-sāmrājya-lakṣmīḥ  
 (padyāvalī 12)

295tasyāravinda-nayanasya padāravinda-  
 kiṇjalka-mīśra-tulasī-makaranda-vāyuh  
 antar-gataḥ sva-vivareṇa cakāra teṣāṁ  
 saṅkṣobham akṣara-juṣāṁ api citta-tanvoḥ  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.15.43)

practices in this respect. Followers of the various other cults, even if successful in realising the Lord, never can claim such a sublime achievement. They may see Him, they may receive boons from Him, they may be saved from calamities, they may even be benefited in many other ways, but none except His ardent devotees can bind the Lord with ties of love and affection. Even for the many devotees offering devotional services, guided by feelings of reverence, this experience is very limited. Many of them are denied this special privilege which is reserved for a few of His most loving devotees. Our scriptures give a good many incident to illustrate the above subject. Most of these events are so common and soul-stirring that they are day to day topics even amongst the ignorant masses. People forget themselves while discussing these captivating events. They wonder, how the most powerful, Almighty Lord, the Protector, the Creator, and the Destroyer of the infinite number of universes - the Transcendental Autocrat becomes subdued by the genuine loving services of His beloved devotees.<sup>296</sup>"Indeed, you are the most fortunate in the whole world, because those great sages - the purifiers of all the worlds, often visit your house, where lives the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Himself unrecognised in Human Form."<sup>297</sup>

The above six characteristics of unalloyed devotion are distributed amongst Sādhana Bhakti, Bhāva Bhakti, and Prema Bhakti; the three different stages in unalloyed devotion. While in the stage of Sādhana Bhakti, it claims the first two, and when it develops into Bhāva Bhakti, it gains two more, making the total four, and in the last stage, Prema Bhakti claims the remaining two, as its speciality in addition to the other four, making altogether the six characteristics. "So long as the desire for enjoyment of transitory pleasures and liberation - the two evil spirits, haunts our hearts, how can we expect the joy of

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296see footnote 266

297yūyaṁ nṛ-loke bata bhūri-bhāgā  
lokaṁ punānā munayo 'bhiyanti  
yeṣāṁ grhān āvasatīti sākṣād  
gūḍhaṁ paraṁ brahma manuṣya-liṅgam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 7.10.48)

devotion to grow there."<sup>298</sup> Both enjoyment and liberation are not the goals of human existence. Liberation is only the other side of enjoyment. Both of them can be compared with ugly devils. They cause the Jīvas to fall away from their positive goal. These two are the worst impediments in the path of devotion. Hence, those who are wise and earnest in the realisation of Bhakti never throw themselves on the tender mercy of these loathsome devils, viz., enjoyment, and liberation.

## 26. *Bhakti - Vaidhī and Rāgānugā*

Bhakti as practised by the aspirants, are of two kinds - (1) Vaidhī - regulated by the rules and regulations of the scriptures, and (2) Rāgānugā - spontaneous longing for the loving services of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In both the cases there are the stages of Sādhana or practice. Regarding the details in the practices of Vaidhī Bhakti, we have already dealt with in 10th Chapter, footnote 159. There are sixty-four principles of devotional practices including the ninefold ways of devotion. All these sixty-four devotional activities are summarised in the ninefold ways of devotion. Each one, in these nine modes of devotion is competent enough to bring us the highest realisation. Some of the devotees practised one single mode, whereas some practised all the nine modes. "The great King Parīkṣit is noted for hearing (Śravaṇa) alone, Śrī Śukadeva for narrating the Transcendental Excellence of the Lord (Kīrtana), Prahlāda is noted for remembrance of the Lord (Smarana) amidst all the atrocities inflicted on him by his hostile father, and his group of equally demoniac admirers. Lakṣmīdevī is a typical example for tending the Feet of the Lord (Pāda-sevana), Pṛthu Mahārāja is an ideal in ritualistic worship (Arcana), Akrūra distinguishes himself in the practice of bowing down (Vandana), Hanumān is an inspiring example for servitude (Dāsyā), Arjuna, Uddhava, etc., stand for friendship (Sakhya), and the great ruler Mahābali is often spoken of as a glorious

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298bhukti-mukti-sprhā yāvat piśācī hr̥di vartate

tāvad bhakti-sukhasyātra katham abhyudayo bhavet

(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.22)

ideal of complete self-surrender (Ātma Nivedana)."<sup>299</sup> These devotees are famous in their observance of one form of devotion (Ekāṅga) alone, while the ancient King Ambarīṣa stands reputed in the practice of more than one (Anekāṅga) Bhakti."<sup>300</sup>

Amongst the devotees of the Lord, the inhabitants of Vraja occupy the highest position. The kind of devotion they practised is known by the name 'Rāgātmikā'. The mode of loyally following in the footsteps of these Rāgātmika Bhaktas, is styled as 'Rāgānugā Bhakti'. Raga is the spontaneous, deep and inseparable absorption in one's desired object of love (Iṣṭadeva). In Vaidhī Bhakti, its followers lack a spontaneous inclination in them to the service of the Lord. They are to be regulated and inspired by the injunction of the Śāstras. A feeling of reverence and loyalty to the scriptural rules forms a characteristic of their devotional practices. Rāgānuga Bhaktas are guided by a natural craving to follow in the ways of devotional observances of the Vrajavasīs. This is effected on hearing the Transcendental Glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, His enchanting Pastimes in the company of those favourite devotees of Vraja. The onrush of this sentiment is so great, that it seldom cares for the injunctions of the Śāstras. But, they are not disloyal to the Śāstras, nor cultivate any hostile attitude in them towards the scriptures. This mode of devotion is of two kinds. (1) external and (2) internal. As for their external practice, they engage themselves in hearing and chanting the Glories of the Lord through the medium of their organic bodies. In their internal observances, they accepting their real selves as the eternal servants of a Gopī, render services to Śrī Kṛṣṇa day in and day out, under her guidance, in His most favourite Abode of Vṛndāvana. They lose themselves in total absorption while meditating on the charming Pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vraja. A devotee of this order renders service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in any of the four Rasas permanently existing in the Transcendental Realm, such as servanthood (Dāsyā),

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299śrī-viṣṇoḥ śravaṇe parīkṣid abhavad vaiyāsakīḥ kīrtane

prahlādaḥ smarāṇe tad-aṅghri-bhajane lakṣmīḥ pṛthuḥ pūjane  
akrūras tv abhivandane kapi-patir dāsyē'tha sakhye'rjunah  
sarvasvātma-nivedane balir abhūt kṛṣṇāptir eṣāṁ parā  
(padyāvalī 53; śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.265)

300see footnotes 199, 200, 201

friendship (Sakhya), parenthood (Vātsalya), and consortherhood (Mādhurya). They engage themselves in this eternal service under the expert guidance of their spiritual preceptor, who is a most intimate associate of the Lord, and an adept in any of these Rasas, or, sometimes in all.

## 27. *Bhāva Bhakti*

This stage of Sādhana or practice in this loving devotion, develops into spontaneous loving feeling (Bhāva Bhakti). The characteristics of a Bhakta, who has attained this stage of Bhāva Bhakti<sup>301</sup> is thus explained by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in Śrī Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu:—(1) Kṣānti means extreme forbearance. A devotee of this stage never falls a prey to the innumerable ups and downs in the social world. Even under great provocative circumstances he never loses his patience. Remaining undisturbed by any serious incident, he ever remains calm and steady in his contemplation of the Lord or any other devotional practice he pursues. (2) Avyārtha-kālatvam is special care in the utility of time. By his various experiences, he has understood the precious nature of time. He never wastes even a fraction of a minute, in any activity which has no direct relation with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His services. (3) Virakti means non-attachment. He is dispassionate to the various tempting offers of the world, the enjoyment of the transitory pleasures. The worth of all these sensuous objects is well-known to him, as such these fleeting pleasures have ceased to arouse any charm in him. He is not after any material success. He becomes completely detached from the influence of these mundane objects and their allurements. (4) Māna-śūnyatā is lack of pride. This is an important characteristic of a true devotee. He is never influenced by the least ego. He may be an embodiment of all rare and excellent virtues, still, he considers himself the lowest of all. (5) Āśā-bandha is deep bond of hope. A devotee is fully confident of his success towards the attainment of his final goal, and is

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301kṣāntir avyārtha-kālatvaṁ viraktir māna-śūnyatā

āśā-bandhaḥ samutkaṇṭhā nāma-gāṇe sadā ruciḥ

āśaktis tad-guṇākhyāṇe prītis tad-vasati-sthale  
ity ādayo'nubhāvāḥ syur jāta-bhāvāṅkure jane  
(śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.3.25-26)

convinced beyond any doubt on this issue. At every moment he is hopeful, since he knows that the Lord is an Embodiment of Mercy. (6) Samutkanthā means excessive eagerness. His impatience for seeing the Lord reaches its highest pinnacle. (7) Nāma-gāne-sadā-ruci is a real taste in singing the Name of the Lord constantly. (8) Āsaktis-tad-guṇākhyāne means an uncontrollable attachment in narrating and listening to the Glories of the Lord. And (9) Pritis-tad-vasati-sthale is a fondness for residing in the places which are graced by the residence of the Lord, such as Mathurā, Vraja, etc.

This stage matures into Prema Bhakti which again, in stages of succession, results into still deeper and sweeter feelings of Sneha, Māna, Praṇaya, Rāga, Anurāga, Bhāva, and Mahābhāva. The attainment of Prema to the Lord, and carnal appetites are poles asunder. "The desire for the gratification of one's senses is called 'Kāma' or 'lust'; the desire for the gratification of the Senses of Śrī Kṛṣṇa bears the name of 'Prema' or 'Transcendental Love'."<sup>302</sup> "Goodness or purity is obtained by devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone, as that itself is the highest means of attaining purity. **By practising devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one does attain His Lotus Feet - the highest fruit of**

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302prema iva gopa-rāmānām kāma ity agamat prathām  
ity uddhavādayo 'py etaṁ vāñchanti bhagavat-priyāḥ  
(gautamīya-tantra)

kāma, prema, — doṇhākāra vibhinna lakṣaṇa  
lauha āra hema yaiche svarūpe vilakṣaṇa

ātmendriya-prīti-vāñchā — tāre bali 'kāma'  
kṛṣṇendriya-prīti-icchā dhare 'prema' nāma

kāmera tātparitya — nija-sambhoga kevala  
kṛṣṇa-sukha-tātparitya-mātra prema ta' prabala  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 4.164-166)

ataeva kāma-preme bahuta antara  
kāma — andha-tamaḥ, prema — nirmala bhāskara

ataeva gopī-gaṇera nāhi kāma-gandha  
kṛṣṇa-sukha lāgi mātra, kṛṣṇa se sambandha  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 4.171-172)

**Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhakti.** Is perfect purity attained by the practice of one's own Āśrama Dharmas or by following the Jñāna Mārga? Not in the least. **By devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone, one achieves the highest Sādhutva,** otherwise it will be of the secondary type. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said in the Ambarīṣa Upākhyāna to Durvāsā Muni, "O Brāhmaṇa! I am subservient to My devotees. I am indeed, a Dependent, etc." At the end he says "My devotees are as dear to Me as My Heart, and I am as dear to them as their heart. They do not know anything except Me, i.e., I am their all in all, and I too care not a whit for others except My devotees." In these sentences, He has referred to the good of His Bhaktas only. **Because Bhakti alone is the best means to lead them to His Lotus Feet.** The paths of fruitive actions, knowledge, and renunciation, etc., are treated as a part of secondary importance to Bhakti, before it actually dawns. Hence, the best fruits of devotion which is the highest means to reach His Lotus Feet, are His Lotus Feet only.<sup>303</sup> "The highest fruit of Bhakti is Kṛṣṇa Prema, the true sign of which is want of satisfaction or insatiability; so self-contentedness of the Ātmārāmas (those who seek satisfaction in their self) goes counter to the attainment of

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303kṛṣṇa-bhaktyaiva sādhutvaṁ sādhanaṁ paramaṁ hi sā  
tayā sādhyam tad-aṅghry-abja- yugalaṁ paramaṁ phalam  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.2.202)

nanu svadharmacaraṇajñānasāadhanādiparā api sādhava ucyante  
netyāhuḥ kṛṣṇeti | kṛṣṇasya bhaktayaiva paramaṁ sādhutvaṁ anyathā  
ca gauṇamityarthaḥ | yadvā sādhutvaṁ nāma yat tat kṛṣṇabhaktyaiva na  
tvanyatheti tathā ca navamaskandhe śrīmadambarīṣopākhyāne  
durvāsasaṁ prati "aham bhaktaparādhīno hyasvatantra iva dvija | "  
ityādikamārambhe upasaṁhāre ca | sādhavo hṛdayaṁ mahyaṁ  
sādhūnām hṛdayantvahamityādi vadatā śrībhagavatā svabhaktānāmeva  
sādhutvamabhipretamiti dik | hi yataḥ sā  
bhaktistaccaraṇāravindaprāptau paramaṁ sādhanaṁ ca |  
karmajñānavairāgyādīnām bhaktakyārambhe tadamgatvena  
gauṇatāpekṣayā tasyāḥ paramatvamūhyam | yadvā paramamiti  
svarupamātranirdeśaḥ | atastayā paramasādhanarupayā bhaktyā  
sādhyaṁ tasya śrīkṛṣṇasyaṁdhyarabjayugalaṁ caraṇāravindaddayameva  
paramaṁ phalam | atrāpi paramamiti brahmāpekṣayā  
svarupamātranirdeśenaiva vā ||

Kṛṣṇa Prema. Hence, this self-satisfaction is the most despised one even amongst extraneous or secondary fruits, and must be greatly avoided in the opinion of the ardent devotees."<sup>304</sup>

"May Śrī Kṛṣṇa - the Para Brahman, Whose form is eternal, Who is ever present with Divine Faculties, like Affluence, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, and Omniscience, Who ever exults in His evernew Beauty, Splendour, Luscious Sweetness, Attributes, Pastimes, etc., because of His everlasting Excellences, Who is ever-marked with the insignia of Śrī on His Chest, Who is ever served by His servants and devotees (as is signified by His statement, "O son of Kuntī! Know for certain that in the case of My ardent devotees, everything results in their ultimate good," which shows that by His lasting Grace, the devotees should not at any time entertain the least doubt of ruin; by this the perpetuity of His Pārśadas and other devotees is also assured), Who is eternally served by Bhakti, (this ever-fulfilment of His devotion, refutes the notion that devotional practices, like Śravaṇa, Kīrtana, etc., are the functions of the human sense-organs, and proves that their manifestation in them is solely through His Eternal Fund of Kindness; this point is further elucidated at a later stage; and Whose Abode too is ever present, protect you from impediments, like liberation, etc., to the attainment of devotion to His Lotus Feet."<sup>305</sup> Aiming on the highest goal,

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304bhakteḥ phalaṁ paraṁ prema tr̥pty-abhāva-sva- bhāvakam  
avāntara-phaleṣv etad ati-heyaṁ satāṁ matam  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.2.210)

paraṁ kevalaṁ śreṣṭha vā bhakteḥ phalaṁ premaiva | tasya  
lakṣaṇamāhuḥ | tr̥pteḥ paripūrṇatāyā abhāva eva svabhāvo yasya tat |  
ataḥ ātmārāmatayā tr̥ptyutpatteḥ premasampattau virodhi eva syāditi  
siddham | ato avāntaraphaleṣu madhye etadātmārāmatvaṁ atiheyaṁ  
paramapariharaṇīyamiti satāṁ bhaktirasikānāṁ matam ||

305nityaiśvārya nitya-nānā-viśeṣo  
nitya-śrīko nitya-bhṛtya-prasaṅgaḥ  
nityopāstir nitya-loko'vatu tvām  
nityādvaita-brahma-rūpo 'pi kṛṣṇaḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.2.221)



avoiding all other desires when the Holy Name is uttered, the chanter is fortunate to realise this special gift. This is the highest desired result of the chanting of the Name. Longing for all other types of attainments deprives us from this unique and incomparable attainment.

Sincere prayers aimed simply for the love of the Lord alone, effectively melt His Heart. Prayers guided by motives of getting something in exchange, either of this world or of the next including salvation itself, never touch or move His Heart. Fully equipped with the four essential qualifications (footnote 202), and with a sincere heart, longing ardently for the unflinching love of the Lord, if we proceed with the chanting of the Name, we are offered the true benefits of the course. The results thus achieved are described in the first Śloka of 'Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka' composed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

## 28. *Sevenfold blessings of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana*

"Let the chanting of the Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa be glorified, which in successive stages offers sevenfold blessings to the chanters. It cleans the mirror of the heart which is covered with layers of accumulated dirt gathered in ever so many births. It

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nityam sadaiva | advaitam yad brahma tadeva rūpam  
śrīmūrtirasya | rupavatvādeva ghanatā siddhā | atah  
parabrahmamayavigraha ityarthah | api yadyapi sadā idṛgeva tathāpi  
nityamaisvaryaṁ yasya saḥ | sadā 'pracyutaisvaryatvāt | tathā nityo  
nānā bahuprakāraḥ saundaryakāntimādhuryaguṇalīlādibhedena  
viśeṣo yasya saḥ | sadā 'pracyutabhagavatvāt | etena guṇalīlādīnāmapī  
nityatvamuktam | tathā nityā śrīmahālakṣmīrmaḥiṣīrūpā yasya saḥ |  
sadā lakṣmilakṣitavakṣaḥ sthalatvāt | tathā nityo bhṛtyaiḥ saha  
prakṛṣṭaḥ saṅgo yasya saḥ | nityaisvaryaavatvāt evamagre 'pyūhyam |  
etena śrīvaikuṇṭhapārśadānāmanyēṣāṅca sādhakānām "pratijānihi  
kaunteya na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati" iti śrībhagavadvacanaprāmāṇyena  
nityatat kṛpānuvṛtyā kadācidapi nāśaśamkārahityena nityatvaṁ  
pratipāditam | nityā upāstirbhaktirasya saḥ | evam sadā siddhatvena  
śravaṇakīrtanādibhakterindriyavyāpārarupatvaṁ nirākṛtam | kevalam  
bhagavat prasādatattadindriyavṛttau sphūrtirevābhipreteti jñeyam |  
etaccāgre vistareṇa vyaktambhāvi | nityo lokaḥ śrīvaikuṇṭhākhya yasya  
saḥ | kṛṣṇastvāmavatu mumukṣādibhaktivighnebhya rakṣatu | |

extinguishes thoroughly the wild conflagration of repeated cycle of births and deaths. It is like the shedding of moonlight for the blooming of the lily of eternal good. It is the very life of transcendental learning. It swells in the hearts of the chanters a surging ocean of everlasting bliss. It enables the devotee to experience by every utterance of the Holy Name perfect happiness and finally, It is an all round bath of the body, mind, and soul in the surging ocean of Transcendental Bliss.<sup>306</sup> This process of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is the most liberal course ever introduced by the Lord for the benefit of humanity. All the rigid rules, innumerable restrictions, and never-ending hardships are totally absent in this practice. The Merciful Lord has lifted all bans from this procedure. In the second Śloka of 'Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka' this is impressively illustrated.

"O Supreme Lord! You are an unfathomable Ocean of Mercy. How many ways You have devised to help Your fallen children! You have manifested ever so many Names, Each identical and equipotent with You in all respects. You have relaxed all the hard rules and made it a very simple one, easily accessible to the entire humanity. How can a petty human being estimate the depth of Your Mercy? You have done the maximum favour to humanity. But, what to speak of my utter ill luck! In spite of all Your unimaginable munificence to any human being, my adamant heart remains unchanged. It never shows the slightest inclination towards the chanting of Your Glorious and ever Sweet Name."<sup>307</sup> Conditioned souls have sunk to the deplorable depths of various evil propensities. They are struggling against heavy odds, being surrounded on all sides by innumerable mundane distractions that are

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306ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam  
śreyaḥ-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam  
ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam  
sarvātma-snapanam param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam  
(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 1)

307nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktis  
tatrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālāḥ  
etādṛśī tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi  
durdaivam idṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ  
(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 2)

commonly known as 'Anarthas'.<sup>308</sup> These are fourfolds - (1) weakness of the heart, (2) offences, (3) evil desires and (4) error relating to the true knowledge of the eternal truth. "Though, we at first lack in a real enthusiasm for chanting the Holy Name, yet with utmost care we must proceed with the chanting. A patient affected by bile, never relishes sugar candy. Taking sugar candy is a necessity to arrest the growth of the disease. Hence, the patient, though he finds it bitter in taste, should imperatively take to its use. Even so, one who has not developed a genuine taste for the Holy Name, should ardently and sincerely utter It, which will gradually shower Its Mercy upon him."<sup>309</sup> While at meals, or while taking rest, or while awake, go on incessantly chanting the Holy Name 'Kṛṣṇa' meditating upon Him."<sup>310</sup> The constant chanting of the Name, enables the chanter to realise the true nature of his self, with respect to the Lord.

"O Son of Nanda! I - Your humble servant, am helplessly going down every moment in this terrible ocean of worldliness. Be Merciful to regard me as a particle of dust of Your Lotus Feet and save me."<sup>311</sup> Chanting the Holy Name realising one's true self, as the eternal servant of the Lord, awakens feelings of love to Him. The internal feelings react

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308māyāmugdhasya jīvasya jñeyo 'narthas catur vidhaḥ  
 hṛddaurbalyam cāparādho 'sat-tṛṣṇā tattva-vibhramah  
 (bhajana-rahasya 2.7)

309syāt kṛṣṇa-nāma-caritādi-sitāpy avidyā-  
 pittopatapta-rasanasya na rocikā nu  
 kintv ādarād anudinaṁ khalu saiva juṣṭā  
 svādvī kramād bhavati tad-gada-mūla-hantrī  
 (upadeśāmṛta 7)

310ki śayane ki bhojane kivā jāgaraṇe  
 aharniśa cinta kṛṣṇa balaha vadane  
 (śrī caitanya-bhāgavata, m. 28.28)

311ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaraṁ  
 patitaṁ mām viśame bhavāmbudhau  
 kṛpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-  
 sthita-dhūli-sadrśaṁ vicintaya  
 (śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 5)

externally as well. He experiences a thrill of ecstasy accompanied by different changes on his body, such as shedding tears, hair standing on end, choking of the voice due to emotional upheavals, etc. The sixth Śloka of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka throws proper light in this respect. "O Lord! When will the chanting of Your Name send thrills over my body, making the hair stand on end? When will I experience uncontrollable flow of tears from my eyes and my voice get choked with feelings while uttering Your Name?" <sup>312</sup> His steady progress in devotion leads him to still greater realisations. He experiences unbearable and inexpressible pangs of separation from his Beloved Lord. This stage is explained in the seventh Śloka. "The fearful experiences born of the pangs of separation from my Beloved Govinda break my heart immediately. A single moment without Him appears to me an age; my eyes pour forth tears like the downpours on a rainy day, and the whole world has lost its interest and appears dull to me." <sup>313</sup>

The final and the most sublime stage of unalloyed devotion is the next experience. It has no comparison elsewhere with the achievement of any other votary of devotion. He who is fortunate to reach this state of supreme devotion stands unrivalled in his views since he identifies all his pleasures, comforts, and conveniences fully with those of his Beloved Lord. This is the highest stage - that is reached by the devotees of loving devotion, a stage experienced in extreme rarity by an exceptionally few. The last Śloka of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka by Śrīman Mahāprabhu is an exposition of this unique experience. "It matters very little even if He reduces me - His beloved, devoted to His Lotus Feet, to pulp by His close embrace or crushes my vitals by the pangs of poignant separation from Him. He is free to do as He pleases, as He is the Self-Willed Dissolute. Yet He alone is my Sole Overlord

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312nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā

vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā

pulakair nīcitam vapuḥ kadā

tava nāma-grahane bhaviṣyati

(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 6)

313yugāyitam nimeṣeṇa cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitam

śūnyāyitam jagat sarvaṁ govinda-virahēṇa me

(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 7)

and no one else." <sup>314</sup> "He may be quite ugly or the most charming; He may or may not be endowed with virtues or merits; He may hate me or be an Ocean of Kindness to me; anyway, that Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is today my Sole Resort. "<sup>315301.1</sup>

### 3 SRI NāMA-SAṆKĪRTANA - THE HIGHEST GOAL

IN this dialogue between Śrī Viṣṇu Pārṣadas and Śrī Gopakumāra in 'Śrī Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta' <sup>316\*</sup> by Śrī Sanātana Goṣvāmī - one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana deputed by Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, to prepare a code for the Vaiṣṇava way of living, all the niceties of the different aspects of the ninefold devotion (Navavidhā Bhakti) have been very delicately elucidated, particularly the comparison between Smaraṇa, Dhyāna, and Saṅkīrtana, the exertions involved in the first two and the ease with which the last named practice, viz., Saṅkīrtana, can be accomplished. **It is conclusively proved without a shadow of doubt that Saṅkīrtana is the best form of devotion and that it includes Śravaṇa, Kīrtana, Smaraṇa, Dhyāna, and that it should best be practised with a**

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314āśliṣya vā pāda-ratām pinaṣtu mām  
adarśanān marma-hatām karotu vā  
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampāto  
mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ  
(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 8)

315asundaraḥ sundara śekhara vā  
guṇair vihīno guṇinām varo vā  
dveṣī mayi śyāt karuṇāmbudhir vā  
kṛṣṇaḥ sa evādya gatir mamāyam

316Readers with an appreciative bent of mind are requested to refer to the original work obtainable from Śrī Tadas Mandir, Vṛndāvana (Mathura) U.P. at a nominal cost.

feeling of love-sickness, caused by the separation from the Beloved.

### 31. *Navavidhā Bhakti - Achieves eternal weal*

"O Umāpati's beloved! O Gopanandana! We take you to be one of the devotees of the Lord, because of your practice of His best Mantra." <sup>317</sup> "Your Guru is that famous Māthura Brāhmaṇa, 'Jayanta' by Name, on the banks of the Ganges - Who is the fullest Manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. (From the expression of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, it is inferred that 'Jayanta' is no other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself)." <sup>318</sup> "Know for certain that we have specially come for your sake alone. If you desire Vaikuṇṭha, then giving up everything, including the practice of the Mantra, lovingly practise any one of the ninefold (Navavidhā) Bhakti, for therein lies your eternal weal." <sup>319</sup>

"Follow the Śāstras like Śrīmad Bhāgavata, and daily taste the accounts therein of the Lord's Pastimes, which greatly enchant the mind. No sooner you hear them with love and attachment, than you will attain His (Śrī Kṛṣṇa's) Lotus Feet. One should hear the accounts of His Pastimes, as they very much entice the mind away from the worldly activities and lead him to his real good." For it is said (Bh. 12.4.40 Saṁsāra-sindhum ati-): "If one who is afflicted by the conflagration of varied agonies, both physical and mental, is anxious to cross the ocean of the worldly life, which is most difficult to cross over, then there is no other surer boat for him

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317asmād-iśvara-san-mantro- pāsakomā-pati-priya  
gopa-nandana bhakteṣu bhavantaṁ gaṇayema hi  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.121)

318gauḍe gaṅgā-tate jāto mathurā-brāhmaṇottamaḥ  
jayanta-nāma kṛṣṇasyāvatāras te mahān gururḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.122)

319satyaṁ pratihi vayam atra bhavān nimittam  
evāgataḥ śṛṇu hitaṁ nija-kṛtyam etat  
vaikuṇṭham icchasi yadi parihāya sarvaṁ  
sa-prema-bhaktim anutiṣṭha nava-prakāram  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.123)

than enjoying the sweetness of the accounts of the Pastimes of Śrī Puruṣottama." (Bh. 2.2.37 Pibanti ye): "Tasting the Nectarine Accounts of the Lord, living in the hearts of the virtuous people, and filling their ears with them, purify their hearts, however much corrupted by worldly enjoyments, and lead them to His Lotus Feet."<sup>320</sup> Of the nine forms of devotion, if you practise any one of them, which is far superior to all such other paths, like Jñāna Mārga, Karma Mārga, etc., you will easily attain Vaikuṇṭha Loka - the best amongst enjoyable objects, emancipation, etc. Greater results ensue from greater efforts. It is said in Brahma Purāṇa, "If by the mere initiation of 'Kṛṣṇa', one attains His Lotus Feet, how much more beneficial would the result be, if he always worships Him with unalloyed devotion!" "He Who bestows liberation, is Himself Mokṣa, i.e., Kṛṣṇa. People who even daily remember Janārdana (Kṛṣṇa) craftily, attain His healthful Abode, after discarding this body."<sup>321</sup>

"Bhaktas, who are capable of relishing the niceties of the devotional code, and endowed with the faculty of discerning the best fruits, and the labours involved therein, from others,

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320taj-jñāpakam ca bhaja bhagavatādi-śāstram  
 līlā-kathā bhagavataḥ śṛṇu tatra nityam  
 ta eva karṇa-vivaram praṇayāt praviṣṭāḥ  
 sadyaḥ padaṁ bhagavataḥ prabhavanti dātum  
 (bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.124)

321teṣāṁ nava-prakārāṇāṁ ekenaiva susidhyati  
 sarva-sādhana-varyeṇa vaikuṇṭhaḥ sādhyā-sattamaḥ  
 (bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.125)

nanu tarhi kiṁ navaprakārāṇāmanuṣṭhānena tatrāhuḥ teṣābhiti  
 tribhiḥ | vaikuṇṭho lokaḥ susidhyati sukhena tat prāptirbhavatītyarthaḥ  
 | tatra hetuḥ | sarveṣu jñānakarmādiṣu sādhaneṣu madhye varyeṇa  
 śreṣṭhena | ataḥ sādhyeṣu bhuktimuktyādiṣu sattamaḥ śreṣṭhatamaḥ  
 suṣṭhu sidhyatyevetyarthaḥ | mahatā sādhanena mahataḥ phalasya  
 prāptyupapatteḥ | tathā ca brahmapurāṇe | " dīkṣāmātreṇa kṛṣṇasya  
 narā mokṣaṁ labhanti cai | kiṁ punarye sadā bhaktyā  
 pūjayantyacyutaṁ narāḥ " | mokṣayatīti mokṣaḥ kṛṣṇastam | "  
 śāṭhyenāpi narā nityaṁ ye smaranti janārdanam | te 'pi yānti tanuṁ  
 tyaktvā viṣṇulokamanāmayam " iti | |

though known as equally great, treat Vaikuṇṭha Loka as the best and everything else as insignificant before it."<sup>322</sup>"But the Rasajñas (experts who appreciate the excellence of the charming sweetness) instantly adopt Navavidhā Bhakti alone, because thereby they enjoy a variety of sweetness in this ninefold devotion, like Śravaṇa, Kīrtana, etc., and prefer it as a whole to any one form of it, like Śravaṇa, Kīrtana, etc., which by itself, is capable of achieving Vaikuṇṭha."<sup>323</sup>"Out of these nine kinds, by adopting any one of them with unswerving faith, Love for the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, manifests in him of its own accord."<sup>324</sup>"Even then, he should practise devotion with a loving heart, because thereby, the diseases of the heart, like evil desires, which are definite impediments on the way to Vaikuṇṭha, are destroyed. **When Love begins to sprout, the evil desires for the transient enjoyments of this world, or the next, totally disappear, resulting in his ultimate good, without the least tinge of selfishness in it.**"<sup>325</sup>"If that loving devotion which is full of all sweetness arising from this highest form of bliss of all kinds and which even excels Brahma-sukha, can be achieved here alone, where then would the necessity of Vaikuṇṭha arise? Truly, in Vaikuṇṭha Loka, there is some other speciality not obtainable here. Wherever such selfless loving devotion is practised, certainly that place itself becomes Vaikuṇṭha, and verily the Lord is present there, because He is the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha. Yet, it is said by the Lord Himself, "**O Nārada! I neither stay in Vaikuṇṭha nor in the hearts of**

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322mahattamatayā śrūya- mānā api pare'khilāḥ

phala-vrata-vicāreṇa tucchā mahad-anāḍṛtāḥ

(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.126)

323tathāpi tad-rasajñaiḥ sā bhaktir nava-vidhāñjasā

sampadyate vicitraitad- rasa-mādhurya-labdhaye

(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.127)

324teṣāṁ kasmimś cid ekasmin śraddhayānuṣṭhite sati

svayam āvirbhavet premā śrīmat-kṛṣṇa-padābjayoḥ

(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.128)

325tathāpi kāryā premṇaiva parihārāya hṛd-rujaḥ

phalāntareṣu kāmasya vaikuṇṭhāpti-virodinaḥ

(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.129)



**Yogīs; but wherever My devotees chant, there I am.**"<sup>326</sup> Even then, Vaikuṇṭha is certainly desired by the devotees, because the Lord is not ever present elsewhere, in all His Glory of Beauty, Attributes, and the enchanting sweetness of His Pastimes. These can only be experienced in person in Vaikuṇṭha alone. Because, Vaikuṇṭha is not under the control of the Time Factor (Kāla), this kind of the Lord's Pastimes can be enjoyed to one's heart's content, in the company of innumerable other Bhaktas, who too with their transcendental bodies, are engrossed in relishing the Divine sweetness of the Lord's Name, Attributes, and the sweetness of His Pastimes that is not obtainable elsewhere."<sup>327</sup>

"Do not treat this devotion as being of this transitory world, as a subject perceptible to the human sense-organs and the mind, and obtainable through human efforts. It is Transcendental in Nature, Non-perishable, Ever-true, and the Embodiment of Bliss Itself, and above human ken."<sup>328</sup> But by the sheer Grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Bhakti manifests in the pure Jīvātmās, composed of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, in the form of Śravaṇa (hearing), Kīrtana (uttering), Smaraṇa (recollection), etc., of the Divine Name, Attributes, Pastimes, etc., primarily for the appeasement of its votaries in various ways."<sup>329</sup> When the Jīvātmā is thus refined, through its power

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**326yadyapy etādṛśī bhaktir yatra yatropapadyate**

**tat-tat-sthānaṁ hi vaikuṇṭhas tatra tatraiva sa prabhuḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.130)**

327tathāpi sarvadā sāksād anyatra bhagavāms tathā  
na dṛśyeteti vaikuṇṭho'vaśyaṁ bhaktair apekṣyate  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.131)

sarva-prakārikā bhaktis tādṛśī ca sadānyataḥ  
na sampadyeta nirvighnā tan-niṣṭhair bahubhiḥ saha  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.132)

328nijendriya-maṇaḥ-kāya- ceṣṭa-rūpaṁ na vidhi tam  
nitya-satya-ghanānanda- rūpa sa hi guṇātigā  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.133)

329nirguṇe sac-cid-ānandāt- mani kṛṣṇa-prasādataḥ  
sphuranti vilasaty ātma- bhaktānāṁ bahudhā mude  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.134)

of discernment, and knows its innate and true relation and function with respect to Śrī Hari, i.e., when man rises above his transient functions of this mortal frame, and realises that his real function is the service of his Maker, then alone he becomes fit to enjoy the Transcendental Vaikuṇṭha Loka, and Bhakti, with all its retinue, will down on him."<sup>330</sup> Otherwise they, i.e., the nine aspects of devotion, appear as the function of these transient sense-organs. When the soul realises its true nature, then alone it can understand that, unlike the other transitory functions of the sense-organs, the adoption by man of the various modes of devotion is above the perception of his sense-organs and cannot be associated with them."<sup>331</sup>

"If the soul is divorced from the devotional practices to God, how can it attain Vaikuṇṭha Loka? If it does so, it deserves emancipation on account of its refinement through detachment, and not Vaikuṇṭha Loka, for which the Jīva must

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nanu tarhi katham kutra tat prāptiḥ syāttatrāhuḥ nirguṇa iti |  
 kṛṣṇaprasādāt guṇātite saccidānandarūpe ātmāni śṛddhajīvatatve  
 sphurantī prakāśamānā bahudhā śravaṇakīrtanādirupeṇa vilasati kṛḍati  
 saccidānandadhanatvenaika-rupāyā api bahudhā sphuraṇe hetuḥ  
 ātmabhaktānām svasevakānām mude vaicitryenaivānandaviśeṣaḥ  
 sampadyata iti prāgutkamevāgre 'pi vakṣyate | |

330viśuddhe tu vivekena satyātmani hareḥ padam  
 gate'py aprakṛtiṁ bhakti-vidhayo vilasanti hi  
 (bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.135)

evaṁ sāmānyenoktamaprākṛtatvaṁ viśeṣato  
 hetubhiraṇvavyatirekābhyāmupapādayanti viśuddha iti | vivekena "  
 indriyāṇindriyārtheṣu vartanta iti dhārayan " nityevaṁ prakāra-kavicāreṇa  
 ātmāni jīvatatve viśuddhadehendriyādisambandhato vivikte sati | tathā  
 aprākṛtaṁ prakṛtisambandharahitaṁ hareḥ padam śrīvaikuṇṭhalokaṁ  
 gate 'pyātmani hi yato bhaktavidhyaḥ sarve 'pi prakārā vilasanti | |

331anyathetara-karmāṇi- vaite'pi syūr na saṅgatāḥ  
 kāyendriyātma-ceṣṭāto jñānenātmani śodhite  
 (bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.136)

perform its true function of devotion."<sup>332</sup> Devotional practices should not be considered to stand in the same category as the other worldly actions; on a few occasions Bhakti may be said only apparently to be of the type of Karma (action) of this mundane world; but when its true nature is considered, it is clearly found to be a function of the transcendental plane, in the same way as the bodies of the Vaiṣṇava devotees. Bhakti is the function of the spiritual body, though outwardly it appeals as the function of this mortal frame, and is transcendental in nature, as the transcendental bodies of the inhabitants of Vaiṣṇava Loka."<sup>333</sup> The bodies of the devotees of the Lord, either in Vaiṣṇava or elsewhere assume Sac-cid-ānanda-rūpa by themselves, befitting the

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332 anyebhya iva karmebhyo bhagavad-bhakti-karmataḥ  
viviktaḥ san katham yātu vaiṣṇavaṁ muktim arhati  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.137)

333 na hy anya-karma-vad bhaktir api karmeti manyatām  
bahir-dṛṣṭyaiva jalpyeta bhakta-dehādi-vat kvacit  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.138)

svadharmācāraṇādīnyapi karmāṇi bhaktirapi karmetyevam  
karmatvena sāmyāpatteḥ karmabhya iva tasyā api  
sakāśādviviktatāyuktairityabhiprāyeṇa paramatamevāśritya  
bhaktikarmata ityatra karmaśabdaḥ prayukta idānīm  
prākṛtendriyādivyāpārarupatvābhāvena bhakteḥ karmatvaṁ vārayanti  
nahīti dvābhyām | nanu cittaśodhakānām sarvasat karmaṇām madhye  
bhagavad bhaktiḥ śreṣṭheti mīmāṃsāparaiḥ sadbhirucyate | taduktaṁ  
tatrāhuḥ bahiriti | kvacit kadācit prasaṅgasaṅgatyā bhaktirapi karmeti  
jalpyeta tacca bahirdṛṣṭyaiva na tu tatvattvavicāreṇa tatra dṛṣṭāntaḥ  
bhaktānām vaiṣṇavāsinām dehavaditi | yathā ekenaiva dehaśabdena  
teṣām saccidānandavigrahānāmanyekāṅka prākṛtapāṅka  
bhautikaśarīrāṇām deha ucyate | 'ādi' śabdena manyādi yathā caikenaiva  
maṇiśadena cintāmaṇiḥ kācamaṇiśca yathā caikenaiva satvaśabdena  
trayāṇām prakṛtiḥ guṇānām ekatamo guṇastathā parabrahma ca  
sarvasatvattvāddhanatvena sarvasādhutvaghanatvena ca " satvaṁ na  
ceddhātariḍaṁ nijaṁ bhaved " ityādāvucyate | tathā ekenaiva  
karmaśabdena svadharmācāraṇādikaṁ bhaktibahirdṛṣṭyaiva  
karmetyucyate iti | |

Existence-Knowledge-Bliss form of Bhakti or through the Grace of the Lord. When devotion takes hold of this mortal body, even this body, with all its limbs, sense-organs (Jñānendriyas and Karmendriyas), etc., transforms itself into a transcendental or spiritual one." <sup>334</sup> "We, the dwellers of Vaikuṇṭha, untouched by anything of the transient world, and incessantly practising and spreading the cult of devotion, like Śravaṇa, Kīrtana, etc., are ourselves the proof of this." <sup>335</sup>

### 32. *Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is Bhakti's purest form*

"For the appeasement and the continuous advance of a devotee who has newly taken to this cult, devotion to God, behaves as if it is a function of the sense-organs mainly for his advancement in it; because when the aspirant feels that he meditates, utters, hears God's Epithets, etc., he becomes inspired and elated and acquires greater and sounder faith in Them. Otherwise there is a chance of his despairing that all his efforts are not sustaining in their results." <sup>336</sup> "Those great

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334bhaktānām sac-cid-ānanda- rūpeṣv aṅgendriyātmasu  
ghaṭate svānurūpeṣu vaikuṇṭhe'nyatra ca svataḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.139)

335vayam atra pramāṇaṁ smo'niśaṁ vaikuṇṭha-pārśadāḥ  
tānvanto bahudhā bhaktim asprṣṭāḥ prakṛtair guṇaiḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.140)

336navīna-sevakānām tu prītyā samyāk-pravṛttaye  
nijendriyādi-vyāpāra- tayaiva pratibhāti sā  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.141)

nanu itaravārtādivannijavāgindrayādivṛttirupameva bhagavat  
kīrtanādikamapi sāksādetadanubhūyamānamasti  
kathamānubhavāpalāpaḥ kriyate tatrāhuḥ navīneti dvābhyām | sā  
bhaktirnijendriyādivyāpāratayaiva navīnasevakānām bhaktau  
prathamapravartamānānām pratibhāti | kimarthaṁ prītyā samyak  
pravṛttaye aho mama kaṇṇajihvādīnīmāni bhagavannāmāni gṛṇanti santīti  
harṣeṇa tatra niṣṭhāsampattaye anyathā svaprayāśasādhyatvābhāvena  
tatra tatraudāsīnyāpatteḥ | |

personages having implicit faith in devotion know for certain that it springs through the sheer Grace of the Lord, and never think that it is either a function of their sense-organs or subjective to them."<sup>337</sup>"If you have a vehement yearning to see **Vaikuṇṭha Loka** very early, then go to the famous blissful **Vraja** - which will most munificently, very quickly, and perfectly fulfil all your desires."<sup>338</sup>**Then with your heart and soul, intent on the Lotus Feet of the Lord, practise mostly 'Nāma-Saṅkīrtana'- the purest form of devotion (unadulterated with the least tinge of Jñāna or Karma)."**<sup>339</sup>**"By this Nāma-Saṅkīrtana a wealth of devotional love will be generated in you, by which you will easily have a full vision of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vaikuṇṭha."**<sup>340</sup>

### 33. *Smaraṇa -vs- Kīrtana*

"Some think that recollection and not chanting aloud (Smaraṇa and not Kīrtana) is the most beloved and the best means to attain Divine Love; because Kīrtana manifests itself quickly and without much effort on the sense organ - tongue, devoid of the faculty of thinking or intelligence. Consequently, the results too, will be in proportion to the efforts involved."<sup>341</sup>"Mind - the most important and fickle of all the

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337mahadbhir bhakti-niṣṭhaiś ca na svādhīneti manyate  
mahā-prasāda-rūpeyaṁ prabhor ity anubhūyate  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.142)

338tvarā ced vidyate śrīmad-vaikuṇṭhālokane tava  
sarvābhīṣṭa-prada-śreṣṭhaṁ taṁ śrī-vraja-bhuvam vraja  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.143)

339param śrīmat-padāmbhoja- sadā-saṅgaty-apekṣayā  
nāma-saṅkīrtana-prāyaṁ viśuddhām bhaktim ācara  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.144)

340tayāśu tādṛśī prema- sampad utpādayiṣyate  
yayā sukhaṁ te bhavitā vaikuṇṭhe kṛṣṇa-darśanam  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.145)

341premṇo'ntaraṅgaṁ kila sādhanottamaṁ  
manyeta kaiścit smaraṇaṁ na kīrtanam

senses, is conquered by being brought under control only with great difficulty, and that too when it is purified. Then only, the excellent form of devotion known as 'recollection or remembrance', can be achieved. Hence, this is the best mode of devotion, because of the great exertions involved therein."<sup>342</sup>

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ekendriye vāci vicetane sukhaṁ  
bhaktiḥ sphuraty āśu hi kīrtanātmikā  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.146)

nanu sarveṣvapi bhaktiprakāreṣu smaraṇameva mukhyatamamiti  
tapolokavāsibhīryogīndrairuktaṁ satyamiti premṇa iti smaraṇameva  
premṇo 'ntaraṅgaṁsādhanaottamaṁ kaiścit pippalāyanādibhirmanyeta na  
kīrtanaṁ tatra hetuḥ eketi sārddhena | hi yasmāt kīrtanātmikā kīrtanarupā  
bhaktirekasminnevendriye vāci vāgarupe ato vicetane jñānahīne  
karmendriyatvāt | sukhamanāyāsena tatra cāśu śīghrameva sphurati  
evamalpāyāsādisiddhatvenālpataiva paryavasyatiti bhāvaḥ | |

342bhaktiḥ prakṛṣṭā smaraṇātmikāsmiṁ  
sarvendriyānām adhiḥpe vilole  
ghore baliṣṭhe manasi prayāsair  
nīte vaśaṁ bhāti viśodhite yā  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.147)

tattamāttasyāḥ sakāśāditi vā | prakṛṣṭatve hetuḥ yā smaraṇātmikā  
bhaktirasmiṁ durvaśatvena savaimrevānubhūyamāne manasi  
prayāsairvaśaṁ nīte viśodhite eva bhāti sphurati | kīdr̥ṣe  
sarvendriyānām adhiḥpe ataḥ kīrtanādikamapi tadvṛttāvevāntarbhavatīti  
bhāvaḥ | kiñca vilole paramacañcale tatra ca ghore bhayānake sadya  
evānārthaśatot pādanāt tatrāpi baliṣṭhe paramadurva śatvāt | ataeva  
bhikṣuṇā gītamekādaśaskandhe | " mano vaśe 'nye hyabhavan sma devā  
manaśca nānyasya vaśaṁ sameti | bhīṣmo hi devaḥ sahasaḥ sahīyān  
yuñjyādvaśe taṁ sa hi devadeva " iti | tathā " dānaṁ svadharmo niyamo  
yamaśca śrūtañca karmāṇi ca sadvratāni | sarve manonigrahalakṣaṇāntāḥ  
paro hi yoge manasaḥ samādhir " iti ca | evametādṛśya vaśikaraṇena  
yadvastu siddhaṁ syattadeva śreṣṭhāmiti bhāvaḥ | |

### 34. *Kīrtana superior to Smaraṇa*

"We, however, think that Kīrtana is far superior to recollection, which flashes only in the mind that is too fickle; but Kīrtana when it manifests on the tongue - the sense-organ of speech, simultaneously illumines the mind, because unless it first flashes on the mind it will not throb either on the tongue, or as a matter of fact on other sense organs. The sound of the Kīrtana not only benefits the performer's own ears by entering them, but also those of others too, who have the good fortune of hearing it. This is not accomplished by 'Recollection'. Recollection too cannot be aptly done, because absolute control of the mind can be only successful when its fickleness is removed or destroyed. This is the whole secret of it. It is also not the general rule that the results in any undertaking are always in proportion to the efforts put in. It is already said by Śrī Parāśara, "One who is devoted to Śrī Acyuta, does not go to hell; if He is reflected upon, he goes to heaven; if he concentrates his mind on Him, even the Brahma Loka obtainable with great difficulty, appears as worse than insignificant; that Immutable Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by staying in the hearts of pure souls, gives Himself up to them (see footnote 306). What wonder is there if all the sins of the person who utters the Name of Śrī Acyuta (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) are completely destroyed? That a sinner like Ajāmila by taking the Name 'Nārāyaṇa' attained emancipation is no wonder at all. **Thus by this exposition, the superiority of Kīrtana over remembrance is described by the argument 'a fortiori', i.e., how much more superior would the Kīrtana be over remembrance?** Besides, what is obtained by meditation in Kṛta Yuga, by the performance of sacrifices in Tretā Yuga, and worship in Dvāpara Yuga, is all attained by Śrī Hari-Kīrtana, indicating thereby that all the benefits accruing from the practice of the first three Yuga Dharmas, are included in Śrī Hari-Kīrtana and can be easily accomplished too. And what is declared, does come true."<sup>343</sup>

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343 manyāmahe kīrtanam eva sattamaṁ

lolātmakaika-sva-hṛdi smarat smṛteḥ

vāci sva-yukte manasi śrutau tathā

divyāt parān apy apakurvad ātmya-vat

(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.148)

"Illustrating and accepting the opinion of meditationists of the Lord, who take Kīrtana as the result of recollection only, their arguments are refuted by the skill of discernment in these two Śloka thus: The external organs, like the eyes, ears, etc., and the internal ones, like the mind, etc., i.e., all the sense-organs and senses, are moved to action by the tongue, because it is in their very nature to get excited by the action of the tongue, i.e., by its speech. By observing silence or **chanting the Name of the Lord aloud, the tongue can be brought under control**; then alone the mind becomes steady and can be employed in 'Smṛti'. In that case, Smṛti arises from Kīrtana. So it is proved that Smṛti is the result of Kīrtana. Hence, the statement made above and emphasised in Śāstras (see footnote 328) that the fruit of meditation is included in Saṅkīrtana in Kali Yuga, should be taken as due to the requirements of the age. **If it is said that the most atrocious sin of Kali Yuga is**

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evam paramatamanūdyā svamataṁ nirdiśanti manyāmaha iti ।  
lolātmake cañcalasvabhāve ekasminneva antare smaraṇāt hṛdi  
manasyeva sphurantyāḥ smṛteḥ smaraṇāt sakāśāt sattamaṁ śreṣṭhataraṁ  
kīrtanameva vyaṁ manyāmahe । tatra hetuḥ vāci vāgindriye dīvyat  
parisphurat । tathā manāsi ca dīvyat । kathaṁ svayukte svayameva  
vāgindriyeṇa saha sayukte sūkṣmarupeṇa  
sarvendriyaviśayakasahajamānasasamīyogavṛtteḥ । anyathā  
viśayāgrahaṇāsambhavāt । tatā śrutau śravaṇendriye ca dīvyat  
kīrtanadhvaneḥ svata eva karmayoḥ praveśāt । tathā ātmavat  
nijasevakamiva parān śrotṛrpyupakurvāt । na tu smaraṇādevaṁ sidhyati  
। atha ca manasaścañcalasvabhāvāpanayanena vaśīkaraṇānupapatteḥ  
smaraṇamapi na samyak sidhyatīti gūḍho'bhiprāyaḥ ।  
prayāsāprayāsasādhyatvenādhikyanyūnate ca vastusvabhāvavicārato  
nāpekṣyete eveti dik । evameva parāśareṇokte "yasminnayastamatirna  
yāti narakam svargo'pi yaccintane । vighno yatra niveśitātmamanaso  
brāhmo'pi loko'lpakaḥ । muktiṁ cetasi yaḥ sthito'maladhiyām puṁsām  
dadātyavyayaḥ । kiṁ citraṁ tadaghaḥ prayāti vilayaṁ tatrācyute kīrtite  
। । "ityatra aghaḥ ajāmilādītulyaḥ pāpātmā vilayaṁ muktiṁ prāpnotīti  
kiṁ citramityevaṁ vyākhyayā kaimutikanyāyenoktaḥ smaraṇādadhikaḥ  
kīrtanasya mahimā saṅgaccheta । kiñca dhyāyan kṛte yajan  
yajñaistretāyām dvāpare'rcayan yadāpnoti tadāpnoti kalau saṅkīrtya  
keśavamityādivacanairdhyānayāgapūjāphalaṁ sarva  
kīrtanaphale'ntarbhavatīti yadabhihitam tacca ghaṭeta । ।



destroyed by the great prowess of Kīrtana alone, and by nothing else like meditation, etc., then it must be admitted on all grounds the superiority of Kīrtana over Dhyāna (meditation). So the potency of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana over meditation in destroying even the vilest sins of Kali Yuga is not at all denied; the expedient that the sins of Kali Yuga will not be destroyed by meditation alone is not also there, by which it could be the practice or commandment (Vidhi) of Kali Yuga. If the meditationists of the Lord persist in their opinion that only through recourse to remembrance of the Lord, howsoever accomplished, the destruction, etc., of all the sins always succeeds, and that hundreds of statements throwing light on this view are to be found, and hence meditation alone is the best, then their view needs further elucidation. Dhyāna (meditation) is the Lord's manifestation, in toto, from top to bottom, culminating in the maturing experience of the Lord's Personal Attributes, like Beauty, Sweetness, etc., by the mind, as if in person before Him; whereas, Smṛti (remembrance) is the mental recollection of the aspirant's relation to the Lord as His servant, as in a flash." <sup>344</sup> "We think that meditation will be superior to

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344bahiṃyāntarāśeṣa-hṛṣīka-cālakam

vāg-indriyaṃ syād yadi samyataṃ sadā  
cittaṃ sthiraṃ sad-bhagavat-smṛtau  
tadā samyak pravarteta tataḥ smṛtiḥ phalaṃ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.149)

evaṃ prabhor dhyāna-ratair mataṃ ced  
buddhyedṛśaṃ tatra vivecanīyaṃ  
dhyānaṃ parisphurti-viśeṣa-niṣṭhā  
sambandha-mātraṃ manasā smṛtir hi  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.150)

ye kecid bhagavadadhyānasikāḥ kīrtanasyapi phalaṃ  
dhyānameva manyante teṣa | matamevānūdya vivekacāturyeṇāmṅikṛtya  
pariharanti vāhyeti dvābhyām | vāhyāni śravaṇādīti āntarāṇi ca mana  
ādīni aśeṣāṇi hṛṣīkāṇi indriyāṇi cālayati kṣobhayatīti tathā tad vācāṃ  
sarvendriyakṣobhakasvabhāvāt | maunena bhagavat kīrtanena vā sadā  
yadi samyataṃ syāttadā cittaṃ sthiraṃ sat sadā bhagavataḥ smṛtau  
pravarteta tatastasmāt kīrtanena smṛteḥ sādhyatvāt smṛtireva kīrtanasya  
phalaṃ syāt tataśca yad dhyānaphalaṃ kalau saṅkīrtane'ntarbhava

Saṅkīrtana only when it includes in its aspect, the functions of other sense organs, viz., those of utterance, touch, seeing, hearing, etc., by the power of meditation alone."<sup>345</sup>

The wise are of the opinion, that he who can appreciate the excellence of any one of the ninefold devotion, should accept it with earnestness, according to his liking, in which he takes pleasure to practise; that mode alone will be the most important one to him. He must practise it with his heart and soul, as that will quickly achieve for him his desired object."<sup>346</sup> **But we think that Saṅkīrtana enhances the beauty**

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tītyuktaṁ tacca kālāpekṣayaiveti mantavyaṁ yadi ca tatra vaktavyamidam  
ananyasādhāraṇaḥ kalidoṣo mahāprabhāvakīrtanenaiva nirākṛtaḥ syāna  
cānyena dhyānādina kenāpītyevaṁ dhyānāt kīrtanamahimā vaktavya iti |  
tathāpi kalimahāpātakādidoṣanirasanaṁ nāma saṅkīrtanasya  
kinnāmamahatvamastu yena dhyānānmahimānaṁ tallabhatām | kiñca  
dhyānamātreṇa kalidoṣa na naśyanti iti yuktirapi nāsti yayā kalau tasyā  
vidhiḥ syāt | atha ca yathākathaṁcid bhagavat  
smaraṇamātreṇāśeṣapāpakṣayādikaṁ sadā sidhyatīti vacanaśataṁ  
pramāṇaṁ vidyotate tasmād dhyānameva śreṣṭhamityevaṁ  
prabhorbhagavatodhyānaratairanuraktairmataṁ cet tatra tasminmane  
bṛddhyā īdṛśaṁ vivecanīyaṁ kidṛśaṁ tadityāhuḥ hi yataḥ prabhoḥ paritaḥ  
sarvatobhāven sphṛtviśeṣaḥ  
ākeśapādāntatattallāvaṇyamādhuryādiparisphuraṇapūrvikā citte yā  
sākṣādivābhivyaktistasyā niṣṭhā parīpāko dhyānaṁ smṛtiśca manasā  
sambandhamātraṁ īśvaro'stīti bhagavato dāso'smītyādi prakāreṇa  
bhagavataḥ samparkamātrama | |

345ced dhyāna-vegāt khalu citta-vṛttyāv  
antar-bhavantīndriya-vṛttayas tāḥ  
saṅkīrtana-sparśana-darśanādyā  
dhyānaṁ tadā kīrtanato'stu varyam  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.151)

346prītir yato yasya sukhaṁ ca yena  
samyag bhavet tad-rasikasya tasya  
tat-sādhanaṁ śreṣṭhatamaṁ susevyaṁ  
sadbhir mataṁ praty uta sādhyā-rūpam  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.152)

of meditation; and meditation increases the bliss and beauty of Saṅkīrtana and that they mutually aid each other's enhancement (Poṣaka), like fire and fuel (oil) and that both are of equal merits."<sup>347</sup> "Meditation, like Saṅkīrtana, brings happiness, because those who, bent on obtaining any object which they like most, call to their mind, that object and experience it in their mind to their heart's content, get mental peace (satisfaction), like people suffering from fever, by mentally drinking nectar-like cold water, lessen their trouble, arising from thirst and enjoy relief."<sup>348</sup> By conveying one's troubles to an intimate friend, he does experience relief from the load of worries weighing heavily on his mind. Similarly by uttering aloud the Name of his heart's coveted object, he feels peace of mind, provided he can clothe his inner-most feelings with suitable words. But sometimes he cannot give expression to all his mental feelings; or even if he can, he will feel ashamed even to utter them as he likes, even in solitude, because he wants to maintain the utmost secrecy."<sup>349</sup>

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347saṅkīrtanād dhyāna-sukhaṁ vivardhate  
dhyānāc ca saṅkīrtana-mādhurī-sukham  
anyonya-saṁvardhakatānubhūyate  
'smābhis tayas tad dvayam ekam eva tat  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.153)

348dhyānaṁ ca saṅkīrtanavat sukha-pradaṁ  
yad vastuno'bhiṣṭatarasya kasyacit  
cittē'nubhūtyāpi yatheccham udbhavec  
chāntis tad ekāpti-viśakta-cetasām  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.154)

yathā jvāra-ruj-ārtānāṁ śītalāmṛta-pāthasaḥ  
manaḥ pānād api truṭyet tṛd-vailakṣyaṁ sukhaṁ bhavet  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.155)

349tat-tat-saṅkīrtanenāpi tathā syād yadi śakyate  
satām atha vivikte'pi lajjā syāt svair akīrtane  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.156)

### 35. Nāma-Saṅkīrtana -vs- Dhyāna

"Indeed, meditation succeeds only when practised by oneself and that too in a lonely place and not otherwise. So there are so many impediments to its perfect practice and completion. **But Saṅkīrtana can be performed alone in solitude or in public in the company of even multitudes. Hence, what constitute impediments to meditation, are no impediments to Saṅkīrtana at all; on the contrary, they contribute towards its success. Performance of Saṅkīrtana involves no obstacles.**"<sup>350</sup> Amongst the different forms of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Kīrtana, such as uttering His Names, speaking about His Beauty, Attributes, Pastimes, etc., His Nāma-Saṅkīrtana alone is the most important one, because It awakens of Its own accord, in Its performer a wealth of Divine Love (Kṛṣṇa Prema). Hence, it is our confirmed opinion and the opinion of wise men that His Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is far superior to meditation."<sup>351</sup> "Who, indeed, will be able to describe the incomparable blessedness of the person, who longingly, lovingly, and with a relish, ever tastes, with his tongue, of

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350ekākīrtvena tu dhyānaṁ vivikte khalu sidhyati  
saṅkīrtanaṁ vivikte'pi bahūnāṁ saṅgato'pi ca  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.157)

351kṛṣṇasya nānā-vidha-kīrtaneṣu  
tan-nāma-saṅkīrtanam eva mukhyam  
tat-prema-sampaj-janane svayaṁ drāk  
śaktam tataḥ śreṣṭhatamaṁ matam tat  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.158)

tatra ca śrībhagavannāmasaṅkīrtanameva sevyamityāśayenāhuḥ  
kṛṣṇasyeti | nānāvidheṣu vedapurāṇādipāṭhakathāgītastutyādibhedena  
bahuprakārakeṣu kīrtaneṣu madhye tasya kṛṣṇasya  
nāmasaṅkīrtanameva mukhyaṁ kutaḥ drāk avilambenaiva tasmin kṛṣṇe  
premasampado janane āvirbhāvaṁne svayamanyanairapekṣeṇaiva  
śaktam samartha tatastasmāddhetordhyānāditi vā | tat  
śrīkṛṣṇanāmasaṅkīrtanameva śreṣṭhatamaṁ matam sad bhirasmābhirvā  
||

the nectarine sweetness of the Divine Śrī Kṛṣṇa Nāma - near and dear to his own heart?"<sup>352</sup>

36. *Nāma-Saṅkīrtana floods all senses with Mādhurya*

"Even if the greatness of all the Divine Names be equally balanced, still one can easily and in no time accomplish his heart's much coveted object, by resorting to the Name (Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Epithet), which he likes best like the philosopher's stone (Cintāmaṇi) yielding to its possessor all his desires."<sup>353</sup> "People having different tastes, develop a fondness for all the Names. In course of time, they will certainly hold all

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352śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāmṛtam ātma-hṛdyaṁ  
premnā samāsvādana-bhaṅgi-pūrvam  
yat sevyate jihvikayāvirāmaṁ  
tasyātulaṁ jalpatu ko mahattvam  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.159)

evaṁ sāmānyenoktvā viśeṣeṇāhuḥ śrīkṛṣṇeti ātmahṛdyaṁ  
svapriyaṁ samāsvādanaṁ rasagrahaṇaṁ tasya bhagivaicitrī mudrā vā  
tatapūrvakaṁ jihvikayā rasanayā yadavirāmaṁ sevyate tasya  
tādṛśasaṅkīrtanasyetyarthaḥ | atulaṁ nirupamaṁ mahatvaṁ ko jalpatu  
api tu na ko'pi vaktuṁ śaknotītyarthaḥ | |

353sarveṣāṁ bhagavan-nāmnāṁ samāno mahimāpi cet  
tathāpi sva-priyeṇāśu svārtha-siddhiḥ sukhaṁ bhavet  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.160)

nanu bhagavannāmnāṁ mahimani tāratamyaṁ na kenāpi manyeta  
sarveṣāmapi pratyekamaparicchinnamāhātmyokteḥ | satyaṁ tathāpi  
manoratyā śighramanāyāsenārthasādhakatvāt | kalpyetetyāhuḥ  
sarveṣāmiti api cedyadyapi samānastulya eva mahimā ekenaiva  
cintāmaṇinā'śeṣārthāsiddheḥ bihubhistairalabhitivadekasya  
bhagavannāmnāḥ sahatratulyatokyā'nantatāparyavāsānāt | tathāpi  
svasya sevakasya priyeṇa manorameṇa bhagavannāmnā ataeva  
rāmanāmapriyairuktaṁ " sahasranāmaabhistulyaṁ rāmanāma varānana "  
ityādi | |

the Lord's Names dear to them."<sup>354</sup>"When once the Nectarean Name becomes manifest in any one of the sense-organs, It inundates all the other sense-organs too, with Its Luscious Sweetness (Mādhurya Rasas), i.e., It allures other sense-organs too, and impels them in Its Divine Service."<sup>355</sup>"Its important manifestation on the sense-organ of speech, i.e., tongue, causes ecstasy not only to the utterer, but to others (hearers) also, because the Word bursts into Its all-alluring sound Form. Hence, **Nāma-Saṅkīrtana** is far superior to meditation on Him."<sup>356</sup>

### 37. *Kṛṣṇa-Saṅkīrtana yields Kṛṣṇa Prema*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is the most potent, important, and the highest means of attaining Kṛṣṇa Prema like a Mantra, imbued with the power of attraction, attracting desired object, obtainable with great difficulty, even from a great distance. Thus other statements supporting this, should be seen. "Hearing the auspicious Accounts and Deeds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His Descents, an aspirant, unabashed, should move about in this world, alone, singing His Songs, and Names suggestive of His Pastimes." When Kṛṣṇa Prema manifests in him, his condition invariably

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354vicitra-ruci-lokānām kramāt sarveṣu nāmasu

priyatā-sambhavāt tāni sarvāṇi syuḥ priyaṇi hi  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.161)

355ekasminn indriye prādur- bhūtaṁ nāmāmṛtaṁ rasaiḥ

āplāvayati sarvāṇīn- driyāṇi madhurair nijaiḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.162)

356mukhyo vāg-indriye tasyo- dayāḥ sva-para-harṣadaḥ

tat prabhor dhyānato'pi syān nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ varam  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.163)

tathāpi tasya saṅkīrtanameva śraddhayā kāryamityāhuḥ mukhya  
ityāhuḥ | tasya nāmna udayasphūrtirvāgindriya eva mukhyaḥ  
varṇamayatvāt evameva sveṣāṁ svasevakānām pareṣāṇca śrotṛṇaṁ harṣa  
dadātīti tathā saḥ | tattasmāduktanyāyāt pabhordhyānato'pi  
nāmasaṅkīrtanaṁ varam śraṣṭham | |

becomes thus - "That ardent devotee, who thus moves about unabashed, singing aloud His Songs and Names dear to him, gaining intense attachment therein, with his heart melted with Kṛṣṇa Prema, and being oblivious of the society, laughs loudly, a moment later weeps, then shouts, and dances like one possessed with rapturous joy." In this Śloka too the word 'Sva-priya-nāma-kirtyā' occurs to emphasize its importance."<sup>357</sup>

### 38. *Nāma-Saṅkīrtana - Both a Means and an End in Itself*

"Adepts in relishing the beauties and sweetness of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, treat it not only as the best Means of primary importance, but also as the best End in Itself; because when its votary is whole-heartedly engrossed in it, it always, unfailingly and necessarily results in Kṛṣṇa Prema. Verily even if this Prema is taken as the only fruit of all devotional codes of religious performances, when one practises Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, since this Prema arises as its necessary and invariable corollary, Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is taken as the best and highest accomplishment in itself."<sup>358</sup>It

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357nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ proktaṁ kṛṣṇasya prema-sampadi  
baliṣṭhaṁ sādhanam śreṣṭham paramākārṣa-mantra-vat  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.164)

sarvot karṣacaramakāṣṭhāprāptaḥ valaviśeṣaḥ saṅkīrtanādeva  
sidhyatītyuktameva tacchraiṣṭe hetuṁ punaratiharṣeṇābhivyañjayanti  
nāmeti | paramākārṣako mantro tathā durlabhataramarthaṁ dūrādākṛṣya  
ghaṭayati tatheti | evameṣa uktapoṣo draṣṭavyaḥ | ata eva " sṛṇvan  
subhadraṇi rathāṁgapāṇer janmāni karmāni ca yāni loke | gītāni nāmāni  
tad-arthakāni gāyan vilajjo vicared-asaṅga | | " ityuktvāpi  
premasampadāvirbhāve'ntaragatvena | " evaṁ-vrataḥ  
sva-priya-nāma-kirtyā jātānurāgo druta-citta uccaiḥ | hasaty atho roditi  
rauti gayati " tyatra punaḥ svapriyanāmakirtyā ityuktamiti dik | |

358tad eva manyate bhakteḥ phalaṁ tad rasikair janaiḥ  
bhagavat-prema-sampattau sadaivāvyabhicārataḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.165)

is indeed proclaimed by those who appreciate the excellences of Kṛṣṇa Prema, that the performance of Kṛṣṇa-Saṅkīrtana, dear to one's heart, is in itself the best distinctive mark of the inundating influx of Kṛṣṇa-Prema, and incessant loud manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Saṅkīrtana is solely due to the intense and uncontrollable Kṛṣṇa Prema, showing thereby that they, both, are interdependent on each other for their exuberance and luxuriant growth."<sup>359</sup>

### 39. *Nāma-Saṅkīrtana - Practised with a feeling of love-sickness*

"Nāma-Saṅkīrtana should be performed with a deep feeling of intense anguish caused by separation, like the Cātaka bird crying aloud in distress, in torrential rains, because of its separation from the clouds, or like the love-sick Cakravāka bird shrieking, being separated from its beloved during night-time. **Nāma-Saṅkīrtana ought to be performed**

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aho ! kiṁ vaktavyaṁ śreṣṭhaṁ sādhanamiti sādhyamapi tadeva  
kaiścinmanyata ityāhuḥ tadeveti | nāmasaṅkīrtanameva | tatra  
rasikairnāmasaṅkīrtanalampaṭaiḥ | nanu sarveṣāmapī  
sādhanabhaktiprakārāṇāṁ premaiva kalamityabhipretaṁ satyaṁ  
nāmasaṅkīrtane sati premṇo'vaśyambhāvitvādupacāreṇa tadeva phalaṁ  
manyata ityāhuḥ bhagavadīti bhagavati premṇaḥ sampattau  
sampannatāyāṁ sadaiva nāmasaṅkīrtanasyaāvyaabhicārataḥ  
āvaśyakahetutvādityarthaḥ | |

359sal-lakṣaṇaṁ prema-bharasya kṛṣṇe  
kaiścid rasajñair uta kathyate tat  
premṇo bhareṇaiva nijeṣṭa-nāma-  
saṅkīrtanaṁ hi sphurati sphuṭārtiyā  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.166)

eke tu nāmasaṅkīrtanameva premṇaḥ svarupaṁ manyanta  
ityāhuḥ saditi | tat nāmasaṅkīrtanameva kṛṣṇe premabharasya sadut  
kṛṣṭaṁ laṇaṇaṁ kathyate ucyate hi yataḥ sphuṭayā abhivvyaktayā ārtiyā  
yannijeṣṭasya nāmasaṅkīrtanaṁ tat premṇo bhareṇaiva sphurati  
āvirbhavati | evaṁ nāmasaṅkīrtanapremṇo'nyonyaṁ kāryakāraṇatā  
siddhā tato'bhedo'pi siddha iti dik | |



with an intense feeling of love-sickness arising from separation from the Eternal Beloved - Śrī Kṛṣṇa - the Embodiment of Divine Love. The experiences of the realised souls should be the guiding stars to the aspirant in achieving his goal. "<sup>360</sup>

### 310. *Nāma-Saṅkīrtana - An emblem of Lord's Mercy*

"If you think that many obstacles, like public censure, inability, bodily weakness, etc., may arise in the loud performances of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, and that meditation can be easily accomplished unobserved by any one, and hence quite free from hindrances, **we boldly assure you that the variegated sweetness of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is caused by the boundless and inexplicable Grace of the Lord, Who is an unfathomable Ocean of lovely Līlās, beyond human comprehension and the whole success of Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is due to His Mercy alone and can never be attributed to the aspirant's exertions, for there cannot be any impediment in the way of the free flow of God's Mercy.** It should be understood that what holds good in the case of

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360nāmnām tu saṅkīrtanam arti-bhārān  
meghaṁ vinā prāvṛṣi cātakānām  
rātrau viyogāt sva-pate rathāṅgi-  
vargasya cākroṣaṇa-vat pratihi  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.167)

kīntu premaviśeṣeṇaiva nāmasaṅkīrtanaṁ syāditi  
dṛṣṭāntenopapādayanti nāmnāmiti | ārterbhārād gauravāddhetoreva  
nāmnām saṅkīrtana bhavatīti pratihi | kamivi prāvṛṣi varṣāsu meghaṁ  
vinā cātakānāmākroṣaṇaṁ arnasvareṇa priya-priyetyāhvānamiva tathā  
rātrau svapativirahāt kuraṁvargasya cakravākīvargasya cākroṣanavat |  
evaṁ virahajapremṇaiva prāyo nāmasaṅkīrtanaṁ svādityuktaṁ  
virahaddārābhīrbbhavataḥ premṇasca paramavaiśiṣṭyaṁ  
pūrvopākhyānānte prāyeṇoktamevāgre 'pi vakṣyate | evaṁ paramārtya  
vicitramadthuragāpravandhena bhagavannāmasaṅkīrtanaṁ kāryamiti  
tātparya " siddhasya lakṣaṇaṁ yat syāt sādhanam sādhakasya tad " iti  
nyāyāt | |

Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, is also applicable to other forms of Bhakti."<sup>361</sup>

"How is it then that those who have taken solely to Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, endowed with such great powers, are usually seen to suffer grief? The answer is this: The accumulated sins of the aspirant, who has taken resort to Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, are destroyed by Saṅkīrtana only, sorrow being the result of sin. But the meritorious deeds remain to his credit - because of their effect being always auspicious; but such deeds are subject to his sweet will and pleasure. **He who is engrossed in relishing the Transcendental Sweetness of Śrīman Nāma is unaffected by the elevating effect of the latter, as the sole purpose of his life is ever to taste the incessant flow of Nectarine Bliss oozing out from Nāma-Saṅkīrtana.**" Know for certain that the cycle of acts, i.e., undergoing the consequences of acts of previous lives, which is not inviolable even to gods and demons, is already transgressed by the mortals greatly devoted to Me." Excepting these, others have to bear the consequences of their acts in past lives, because for them, these are not destroyed unless endured by them. **Hence, let them at sometime and somehow take to Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, because they will then be free from the consequences of their acts in this life.**"<sup>362</sup>

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361vicitra-lilā-rasa-sāgarasya

prabhor vicitrāt sphuritāt prasādāt  
vicitra-saṅkīrtana-mādhurī sā  
na tu sva-yatnād iti sādhu sidhyet  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.168)

nanu tathā sphuṭakīrtane vighnaśaṅkālōkapujādidoṣo'saktirapi  
śarīradaurbalyādīnā kadācit sambhavati na tu  
kenāpyalakṣamāṇe'nāyāsenāntaścintane tatrāhuḥ vicitreti | sā uktaparakārā  
vicitrā vividhā bhagavannāmasaṅkīrtanasya mādhurī prabhorbhagavato  
vicitryāta prasādādhdetoḥ sphurati āvirbhūtā | na tu svayatnat  
nijapauruṣeṇa | vicitratve hetuḥ | vicitrāṇām lilārasānām sāgarasya ityato  
hetuḥ sādhu samyak vidhyet | bhagavat prasādaprapṛte'rthe  
vighnadoṣādyasambhavāt | etacca navasvapi bhaktiprakāreṣu  
samavetamityūhyamevetyūhyay | |

362icchā-vaśāt pāpam upāsakānām

kṣīyeta bhogonmukham apy amusmāt

### 311. *Lives of Devotees guide our conduct*

"But those magnanimous servants of Śrī Hari Nāma, under the semblance of undergoing the reactions of their own evil actions, like the unusual attachment of Bharata, etc., to the young of a deer, for which he had to be reborn as a deer, show us the grief caused by their own faults, **in their anxiety to conceal the Love of the highest form of wish-yielding devotion which is to be cherished and protected from the public.**"<sup>363</sup>"Through Nāma-Saṅkīrtana alone, all become rid

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prārabdha-mātram bhavatītareṣāṁ  
karmāvaśiṣṭam tad-avaśya-bhogyam  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.169)

nanu iddaśamahāprabhāvakaṁ nāmasaṅkīrtanaṁ kurvatāmapi  
katham duḥkhādikaṁ duśyate tatrāhuḥ icchatī | upāsakānāṁ sadā  
bhagavannāmasevāparāṇāṁ bhogonmukhaṁ prārabdhabhogamapi  
pāpaṁ muṣmānnāmasaṅkīrtanādeva kṣīyate duḥ khaphalatvat ataḥ  
śṛbhaphalatvāt puṇyaṁ tiṣṭhedeveyarthāḥ | kutaḥ icchāvaśāt  
teṣāmevaicchādhīnatvāt upāsakānāmicchayaiva karma  
tiṣṭhennaśyedapītyarthāḥ | yathokathaṁ harībhaktisudhodaye |  
"karmacakrantu yat proktamavilambhyaṁ surāsuraiḥ | mad  
bhaktipraśalairmartyerviddhi laṁghitameva tad" iti | itareṣāṁ  
upāsakavyatiriktānāṁ kadācit kathamapi nāma saṅkīrtayatāmītyarthāḥ  
| prārabdhamātram na tu kūṭādikarma avaśiṣṭam bhavati yatastat  
prārabdhamāvaśyabhogyam bhogenaiva tasya kṣayāt | |

363mahāśayā ye hari-nāma-sevakāḥ

sugopya-tad-bhakti-mahā-nidheḥ svayam  
prakāśa-bhītyā vyavahāra-bhaṅgibhiḥ  
sva-doṣa-duḥkhāny anudarśayanti te  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.170)

nanūpāsakānāmapi bharatādīnāṁ bhogonmukhakarmākṣayo  
daśyate tatrāhuḥ maheti | ye mahāśayāḥ paramagambhīrabhāvāste  
vyavahārāṇāṁ harinabālapoṣaṇādirupāṇāṁ ceṣṭitānāṁ  
bhagibhirvecitṛibhiḥ kṛtvā svasya doṣān duṣṭa saṁgādīn duḥkhāni ca  
kuyoniprāptyādīni svayamevānudarśayanti anṅkurvanti yadvā lokeṣu  
darśayanti | kimartha sugopyā tasya harerbhaktireva mahānidhiḥ

of their griefs and faults, and become devotees of Śrī Hari. Yet a few devotees, overcome by kindness like their Lord, teach the people about virtuous conduct, such as the avoidance of evil company, etc., because continued advance in devotion cannot be achieved, unless one avoids evil company, thoughts, and the commission of evil deeds, and practises virtuous conduct in thought, words, and deeds."189"The evil consequences of evil actions has been taught to us by Bharata, the evil effects of the vice of gambling by devotees like Yudhiṣṭhira, etc., similarly pure souls like Nṛga, Saubhari, etc., have, by their conduct, shown us the way to nearness and dearness of God.<sup>364</sup>"You will certainly overcome the greatest and even the worst of obstacles by recollecting the glory or miraculous power of devotion stated above. And gladly we will come to your succour everywhere."<sup>365</sup>"We have observed

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**sarvārthasādhakatvāt tasya prakāśādyā bhītistayā hetunā  
paramarahasyarupām bhagavad bhaktimācchādayitumityarthaḥ ।।**

364duḥsaṅga-doṣaṁ bharatādayo yathā  
durdūta-doṣaṁ ca yudhiṣṭhirādayāḥ  
brahma-sva-bhītiṁ ca nṛgādayo'malāḥ  
pradarśayan sva-vyavahārato janān  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.172)

tadeva prayañcayanti duḥsaṅgeti । duṣṭasaṅge doṣaṁ  
bharatādayaḥ svasya vyavahārataḥ hariṇapotapoṣaṇāsaktyā  
kuyoniprāptirupeneti tena kṛtvā janān prakarṣeṇa sāksāttayā'darśayan ।  
ādiśabdena saubharyādayaḥ amalāḥ te ca sarve tatvatatattannmalarahitā  
eva ।।

365bhakti-prabhāvena vicāra-jātaiḥ  
sañjāyamānena sadedṛśais tvam  
vigñāti-vigñān kila jeṣyasiha  
sarvatra te hanta vyaṁ sahāyāḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.173)

nanu bahuvigñākulasya me īdṛśī nāmasaṅkīrtananiṣṭhā kutaḥ  
syāttatrāhuḥ bhaktīti । sadā aviratamīdṛśairuktasadrṣairvicārajātaiḥ  
sañjāyamānena bhakteḥ prabhāveṇa prābalyena vigñātivigñān kila  
niścitaṁ tvaṁ jeṣyasi । nanu mahutām kṛpayā vinā na kimapi syāttatrāhuḥ

that you have been copiously blessed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Mercy, which is firm in you, because your yearning to see Śrī Kṛṣṇa in person is still strong, in spite of your being told by the Tapolokvāsīs, like Pippalāyana, to see Him with your mind's eye by meditation. "<sup>366</sup>

### 312. *Lord's Mercy - The greatest need for all*

"It is indeed true that His Form, composed of intense Existence-Knowledge-Bliss combination, and hence spiritual in nature, is perceptible as such by the sense-organs when they attain the fitness to do so. **Yet His Svarūpa does become perceivable by the ordinary eyes, through their natural function, by reason of His unfathomable Grace. He is seen by those before Whom He manifests Himself, for which also His Mercy is essential.** Because perception of the unlimited and undistinguished Form manifesting Itself at Its Own Will, by a limited inanimate, though impossible, becomes possible through His Mercy alone."<sup>367</sup> **Even in those who perceive Him**

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l iha asmin vighnajaye vicārāvīrbhāve vā anyatra sarvatrāpi vayameva  
tava mahāyāḥ hanta harṣe ||

366śrī-kṛṣṇacandrasya mahānukampā-  
smābhīḥ sthīrā tvayy avadhāritāsti  
līnā na sāksād-bhagavad-dīḍṛkṣā  
tvattas tapo-loka-nivāsi-vākyaiḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.174)

tvantu svata eva kṛtārtha iti vadantastapoloke pippalāyanenoktaṁ  
sāksāddarśanasyaāpi citte darśanasya samyak tvamanūdya pariharanti  
śrīkṛṣṇetyaṣṭabhiḥ | tvayī sthīrā acañcalā mahatī anumkampā avadhāritāsti  
| kutaḥ sāksād bhagavati dīḍṛkṣā tapolokanivāsināṁ vākyairapi tvatto  
nalīnā nācchannā ||

367rūpaṁ satyaṁ khalu bhagavataḥ sac-cid-ānanda-sāndraṁ  
yogyair grāhyaṁ bhavati karaṇaiḥ sac-cid-ānanda-rūpaṁ  
māṁsāksībhyaṁ tad api ghaṭate tasya kāruṇya-śaktyā  
sadyo labdhya tad-ucita-gate darśanaṁ svehayā vā  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.175)

through the acquisition of appropriate knowledge alone, a feeling that "I am seeing Him with my own eyes (composed of flesh and blood) is born", demonstrative of the Exalted Glory of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Kindness, which in turn aids in the exuberance of exultations, even though He is beyond the perception of all human senses."<sup>368</sup>

"If one says that Bhagavān can be seen everywhere incessantly and without any impediments with the mind's eye, and that there will not be any fear of separation from Him, and if one sees Him with his natural eyes, with limited power of seeing, there is every likelihood of separation being caused

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tatrādaupippalāyanoktamevānuvadanti rupamiti ddābhyām |  
yogyaistad grahaṇocitaireva karaṇairindriyai argrāhyaṁ bhavatiti  
satyameva | tadapi tathāpi māmsākṣibhyām kṛtvā tasya darśanaṁ ghaṭate  
| katham tasyaiva kārūṇyaśaktyā yā taducitāyāstaddarśanayogyāyāḥ  
gateḥ svarupasya jñānaśaktervā sadyo labdhistayā | vā śabdaḥ pakṣāntare  
| kārūṇyaśaktisamkocāparitoṣāt svasyākṣṇorevayaḥ vyāpāreṇa |  
evamaparicchinnasya svaprakāśasya paricchinnena jaḍena  
grahaṇamaghaṭamānamapi tadyamahākārūṇyaśaktyā  
sambhavedevetyadoṣaḥ | |

368tad-darśane jñāna-dṛśaiva jāya-

māne'pi paśyāmy aham eṣa dṛgbhyām  
mano bhavet kṛṣṇa-kṛpā-prabhāva-  
vijñāpako harṣa-viśeṣa-vṛddhyai  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.176)

evam satyapi

durvitarkyānantakārūṇyasāmarthyamahimātarkaṇād bhagavad rupasya  
māmsākṣidarśanena svaprakāśatādihānimāśamkya ye jñānacakṣuṣaiva  
taddarśanaṁ manyante teṣāṁ mate'pi māmsacakṣurdarśanamanenaiva  
sukhaviśeṣaḥ syānnānyathetyāhuḥ | yadvā svecchayā  
taddarśanamatyantāsambhavaṁ matvā tat prakārameva nirdiśanti taditi  
| dṛgbhyāmevāhameva paśyāmi bhagavantamiti māno'bhimāno bhavet  
| kīdṛśāsa kṛṣṇasya yaḥ kṛpāyāḥ prabhāvaḥ śaktiviśeṣastasya viśeṣeṇa  
jñāpakāḥ | ahoparamadurdarśo'pi mayā ayaṁ sāksād  
dṛśyamāno'stītyevam bodhakaḥ | kimartha harṣaviśeṣasya bṛddhyai  
sarvendriyavṛtyagocarasyāpi svamāmsacakṣuṣā darśanābhimānena  
tadyakārūṇyaviśeṣāvagamāt | |

between him and Bhagavān. That is true. But even through the Glory of the floods of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Mercy or through the greatness of Bhakti, He can indeed be seen even with these very eyes, with their limited power, incessantly and without the least impediments, as with the mind and the whole charm of Person can be ever tasted without experiencing any obstacles."<sup>369</sup> If one says that He cannot be the subject of the limited eyesight, either through His Grace or through the greatness of Bhakti, then He too cannot be the subject of the mind's eye, as He manifests Himself wherever He wants to; and He, because of His overlordship and Self-Willed Nature, is the Controller of all, including the perceiving power of the human mind, which can have no control over Him. If one says that by seeing in the unlimited mind, the joy of seeing Him will also be unlimited, and hence when He becomes a subject of the eyes with limited power of vision, the resulting joy of seeing Him will be consequently limited too in its scope. He, being formed of ecstasy in very concentrated form, will give intense joy or ecstasy to him, who will somehow serve Him with any of the sense-organs, like the eyes, tongue, ears, or the mind, etc."<sup>370</sup>

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369prabhoḥ kṛpā-pūra-balena bhakteḥ  
 prabhāvato vā khalu darśanaṁ syāt  
 ataḥ paricchinna-dṛśāpi siddhyen  
 niranteraṁ tan manaseva samyāk  
 (bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.177)

nanu cakṣurbhyaḥ darśanapakṣe sahasuparicchinnavṛttinā  
 cakṣurindriyeṇa bhagavaddarśane kadācittirodhānavyavadhānādina  
 vicchedo'pi ghaṭeta manasā ca vyāpakena paramasūkṣmavṛttinā  
 sarvatraiva nirvighnasandarśanasukhaṁ sampadyetetyāśāṁkyānuktaṁ  
 pippalāyanamatamevopasaṁhṛtya pariharanti prabhoriti | evaṁ  
 prabhoḥ kṛpāyāḥ pūrasya samūhasya balena śaktyā khalu  
 prabhordarśanaṁ syādityupasaṁhāraḥ | veti pakṣāntaram | prastuta  
 prakāṣaśakṣi yuktabhagavad bhaktimahimadarśanārtham  
 ato'smāduktanyāyāt | tat prabhudarśanaṁ paricchinna dṛśā  
 cakṣurindriyeṇāpi manaseva niranteraṁ nirvighnaṁ samyak  
 sarvāṁgalāvaṇyādigrahaṇapūrvakaṁ sidhyet |

370na cet kathañcin na manasy api syāt  
 svayam-prabhasyekṣaṇam īśvarasya

### 313. *Sākṣāt Darśana -vs- Darśana in Dhyāna*

**"Seeing Him in person is much better than seeing Him in one's imagination and has a special significance over the latter.** It is experienced everywhere, that he enjoys His Grace in full measure, everywhere, as enjoyed by Kardama, Dhruva, etc. The Mercy that Pippalāyana in Tapo Loka obtained in his Samādhi, i.e., profound meditation and concentration of the mind on the Dhyeya - the desired object, in order to see the Lord, and described by Brahma as the Lord's Mercy, may have been a special favour to him alone, and may not be a common one, obtainable and enjoyable by all. **But intense ecstasy, which is far superior to all other kinds of excessive joys, can be experienced only through direct vision of Him with one's eyes for which His Grace is quite essential and one is enabled to see Him in person, through the devotional practices, like Śravaṇa, Kīrtana, Dhyāna, etc.** Hence, the goal of meditational practice - a function of the mind, would also be to see the Lord in Person."<sup>371</sup> Hence, the best fruit of all the

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ghanam sukham sañjanayet kathañcid  
upāsitaḥ sāndra-sukhātmako'sau  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.178)

cedyadi kāruṇyacīṣeṣaśaktyā bhaktiprabhāveṇa vā darśanam  
syāditi na bhavet tadā kathañcidapi manasyapi īkṣaṇam tasya darśanam  
na syāt na sambhavedityarthaḥ | kutaḥ svayaṁ prabhāvasya  
svaprakāśasya manovṛttināmapyaviśayatvāt | kiñca īśvarasva  
paramasvatantṛasya sarvaniyantutvāt | nanvaparicchinne manasi  
darśanena sukhamaparicchinnam paricchinnābhyām  
locanābhyāñcalpakam syāttatrāhuḥ ghanamiti kathañcit kenāpi  
manodhyānasākṣāddarśanādinā prakāreṇa upāsitaḥ sevitaḥ san asau  
bhagavān sukham ghanameva datte yataḥ svayameva  
sāndrasukhasvarupaḥ | |

371dṛgbhyām prabhor darśanato hi sarvatas  
tat-tat-prasādāvali-labdhir īkṣyate  
sarvādhikam sāndra-sukham ca jāyate  
sādhyaṁ tad eva śravaṇādi-bhaktitaḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.179)



devotional practices, is His Manifestation in Person before one's eyes, by Which alone, everything that the delusion (Māyā) comprises including the worst state of forgetting Him, totally disappears."When one sees the Lord in oneself or when one sees one's Lord, or the Lord Who is dearest to the self, his heart's knot of egoism or ignorance disappears; all the doubts are cleared; and his worldly acts come to an end."Then alone the sentiment of Love to Him will grow luxuriantly, because he experiences in person the Beauty, Luscious Sweetness, etc., of His Svarūpa."<sup>372</sup> "Prahāda, like other devotees of the Lord, though he was always seeing Him in his heart, was always yearning to see Him with his own eyes, the reason being that he used to experience a special kind of

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atha ca bhāvanāyā darśanāt sāddarśanasya phalaviśeṣo dṛśyata  
ityāhuḥ dṛgabhyāmiti tribhiḥ | dṛg bhyām darśanādeva tāsām  
suprasiddhānām kardamādighru vādiviṣayakānām prasādāvalīnām  
labdhiḥ prāptiḥ sarvatra ikṣyate sāksādanabhūyate | evaṅca tapoloke  
pippalāyanoktaṁ yat samādhiviṣayakadarśane'pi  
śrībrahmaṇastādṛśaprasādaprapṛtyādikaṁ tacca taṁ pratyeva kadācit na tu  
prāyikamityevaṁ pariharaṇīyam | kiṅca sarvato'dhikaṁ sāndraṁ sukhāṁ  
ca dagabhyām darśanādeva jāyate tad dṛg bhyām darśanameva  
śravaṇādibhirbhaktiprakāraiḥ sādhyam | ādiśabdena kīrtanasmaraṇādi |  
ato mānasikasya dhyānadhāraṇādirupabhaktiprakāraṣyāpi  
sāksāddarśanameva phalamiti bhāvaḥ | |

372sarveṣāṁ sādhanānām tat- sāksāt-kāro hi sat-phalam

tadaivāmūlato māyā naśyet premāpi vardhate

(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.180)

tatra hetumāhaḥ sarveṣāmiti | hi yasmāttasya prabhoḥ sāksāt  
kāra eva sadut kṛṣṭaṁ phalaṁ tadeva sāksāt kāre satyeva āmulataḥ  
mūlaṁ bhagavaddismṛtistat paryantaṁ māyā naśyet | taduktaṁ  
prathamaskandhe | "bhidyate hṛdayagranthiś chidyante sarvasaṁśayāḥ  
kṣīyante cāsyā karmāṇi dṛṣṭa evātmanīśvare" iti atrātmanīti ātmani  
sthitāni karmāṇi saṁśayāgranthiśceti yājyam | kiṁ vā ātmani  
paramapriyatama ityarthaḥ | tadaiva premā  
bhagavaddiṣayakabhāvaviśeṣo'pi vaddate sāksāt  
tatsaundaryamādhuryādyanubhavāt | |

feeling of intense attachment, i.e., Transcendental Love for the Lord.<sup>373</sup>

### 314. *Sanatkumāras meditate in Śrī Viṣṇu's presence*

"Indeed those Sanatkumāras, looking at the blue night-lotus-like Face of Śrī Viṣṇu, beautiful with smiling Kunda-like red Lips, having their heart's desire fulfilled, again looked repeatedly at His Twin Feet decked with lustrous red pearl-like Nails, and being unable to relish the Beauty and charming Sweetness of His Person, went into deep meditation (Bh. 3.15.44). So we hear of the Sanatkumāras meditating on Śrī Viṣṇu, even in His very presence. **But that is not the case in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Goloka. When some people see Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the shutting of their eyes, the flow of tears therefrom, hair standing on end, etc., are not due to meditation, because of the acquisition of the Dhyeya, i.e., the Object of meditation, in one's very presence. The closing of the eyes, flow of plenteous tears, tremors of the body, perspiration, etc., are all due to the emotional perturbations, caused by excess of ecstasy because of the actual obtaining of Śrī Kṛṣṇa - the Transcendental Object contemplated upon. This condition should not be taken as identical with meditation, though**

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373kāyādhavāder hṛdi paśyato'pi  
prabhuṁ sadākṣṇā kila tad-didṛkṣā  
tatra pramāṇaṁ hi tathāvalokād  
anantaraṁ bhava-viśeṣa-lābhaḥ  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.181)

atra satāṁ vyavahāramapi pramāṇayanti kāyeti |  
kāyādhṛrhiranyaakaśīporbhāryā tasyā apatyam  
śrīprahlādaśāderbhaktagaṇasya prabhuṁ hṛdi paśyato'pi akṣaṇā  
cakṣurindriyeṇa | yadvā jātyaikatvaṁ akṣibhyāmyathah | tasya  
prabhordidṛkṣaiva | hi yasmāttatra sākṣādṛśanasya paramopādeyatvāda  
pramāṇam | kileti niścayena sadācārasya pramāṇyaṁ dyotayati tatheti  
samṛccaye | avalokāt sākṣādṛśanādanantameva bhāvaviśeṣasya  
premabharasya lābhaśca tatra pramāṇaṁ etacca samudratīre  
śrībhagavaddarśanādanu śrīprahlādasya premabharāvīrbhāvavṛttaṁ  
haribhaktisudhodayādanusandheyam | |

apparently, the external symptoms appear similar to those of meditation."<sup>374</sup>

### 315. *Nāma dearer to Lord than His Svarūpa*

"Meditation could be aptly practised when the Lord is beyond one's range of sight and not when He is present in Person before one's very eyes. **But Saṅkīrtana can be practised everywhere and at all times, both when He is within or beyond one's ken.** According to the rule that the conclusion should always be sweet, the overwhelming advantages of the Lord's Saṅkīrtana over His meditation, have been thoroughly weighed in the concluding paras. **"In the Rāsa dance, the Gopīs appeared most beautiful when they were singing Him (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) in all splendour, like lightning in a cluster of clouds."** It is also said by Parāśara, **"While Śrī Kṛṣṇa described the autumnal moon, the moonlight, and the collection of night lotuses, Gopīs uttered 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' incessantly."** Śrī Kṛṣṇa sang the Rāsa song in a loud tone, while the Gopīs nodding their heads, uttered 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' in a doubly raised pitch." This clearly shows that even when the Rāsa

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374kṛṣṇasya sākṣād api jāyate yat

keṣāñcid akṣi-dvaya-mīlanādi

dhyānaṁ na tat kintu mudāṁ bhareṇa

kampādi-vat prema-vikāra eṣaḥ

(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.182)

nanu kathantarhi te vā amuṣya vadanāsitapadmakoṣamuddikṣya  
sundaratarādharakundahāsam | labdhaśiṣaḥ punaravekṣya  
tadīyamamghriddandūṁ nakhāruṇamaṇiśrayaṇaṁ nidadhyurityādau  
vaikuṇṭhe sākṣāddarśane'pi sanakādīnāṁ dhyānaṁ śrūyate tatrāhuḥ  
kṛṣṇasyeti | akṣiddayasya mīlanaṁ mudraṇaṁ ādiśabdena  
amgendriyaceṣṭādirāhityaṁ tat dhyānaṁ dhyānalakṣaṇaṁ na bhavati |  
yadvā tattasmādakṣimīlanāderhetordhyānaṁ na mantavyamityarthaḥ |  
dhyeyasyaiva sākṣāt prāpteḥ | 'eṣaḥ' akṣinimīlanādirupaḥ premṇo vikāro  
vāhyalakṣaṇaprakāraḥ kampa ādiryeṣāṁ svadaromāñcāsrupātādīnāṁ  
taddat | ato dhyānasādṛśyād dhyānamityucyate | na tu tatvatastad  
dhyānamiti bhāvaḥ | evaṁ sākṣāddṛśanasyaiva paramaphalatvaṁ  
sādhitam ||

reached its ecstatic climax, the Gopīs never failed to utter 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' loudly, showing verily thereby the incomprehensible grandeur of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Saṅkīrtana, even in His very presence. Saṅkīrtana of Gopīs during Śrī Kṛṣṇa's separation from them is quite well-known in Gopī Gīta.<sup>375</sup> "The Gopīs, with their heart and soul engrossed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa and anxious about His return, gathered together on the sands of the Yamunā and started uttering 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa'. Alas! Alas! He is made to run from place to place as we move after Him in our search. Should we thus cause Him bodily pain by making Him roam about? Besides He is not attainable without His Sweet Will. The Śrutis also say, "He is obtainable by him whom He chooses. His Mercy is needed to see Him and to arouse His Grace, His Saṅkīrtana must be resorted to. As if to prove the truth of this statement, they all went to that place where they had met Him first, and started uttering aloud 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa'." <sup>11376361.1</sup>

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375dhyānam parokṣe yujyeta na tu sākṣān mahā-prabhoḥ  
 aparokṣe parokṣe'pi yuktaṁ saṅkīrtanaṁ sadā  
 (bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.183)

astu tāvat sākṣāt kārato dhyānasya nyūnatā kīrtanādapi sidhyediti  
 prakṛtamupasaṁharantaḥ | pūrvoktamapi  
 bhagannāmasaṅkīrtanamāhātmyaṁ "madhureṇa samāpaye" diti nyāyena  
 sayuktikamāhuḥ dhyānamiti ddābhyāṁ | mahāprabhoḥdhyānaṁ  
 sākṣādaparokṣe na tu yujyeta sarvatra lokarītyanubhavaprāmāṇyāt  
 saṅkīrtanaṁ tu sadaiva yuktaṁ | tathā ca daśamaskandhe rāsakīḍāyāṁ  
 "gāyantyastaṁ taḍita iva tā meghacakre virejur" iti | viṣṇupurāṇe ca |  
 "kṛṣṇaḥ śaraccandramasaṁ kaumudīm kumudākaram | jagau  
 gopījanastvekaṁ kṛṣṇanāma punaḥ punar" iti | tathā "rāsageyaṁ jagau  
 kṛṣṇo yāvattārāyatadhvaniḥ | sādhu kṛṣṇeti kṛṣṇeti kṛṣṇeti tāvattā  
 ddiguṇaṁ jagur" iti | aparokṣe ca kīrtanaṁ suprasiddhameva  
 daśamaskandhāu gopikāgītānugītoddhavyānādiṣu ||

376punaḥ pulinaṁ āgatya kalindiyāḥ kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāḥ  
 samavetā jaguḥ kṛṣṇaṁ tad-āgamana-kāṅkṣitāḥ  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.30.44)

hanta hanta yatra tad-anveṣaṇārthaṁ yāmas tatas tataḥ sa  
 palāyīṣyate | tasmād vana-paryaṭana-kaṣṭaṁ kim ? tasyotpādayiṣyāmas  
 tad-icchāṁ vinā sa na labhyo—yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhya [ka.u. 1.2.23]

### 316. *Mystic powers of Śrīman Nāma*

"Śrīman Nāma of the Lord is dearer to Him than His very Svarūpa or Divine Form. Because it is imbued with excess of all the Excellences of Beauty, Power, Bliss, etc., and manifests Itself at all times, everywhere with all Its grandeur and splendour in all His Names. Hence, It is dearer to Him than his very person. There is nothing dearer to Him, than His Nāma - especially 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma - Which attracts animate and inanimate objects towards It. He told Uddhava thus: "You are dearer to Me than even Brahmā, Śiva, Baladeva, Lakṣmī, and than even My very Soul or Person, because you are My ardent devotee (Bh. 11.14.15)." In this statement He clearly proves that He holds His ardent devotees dearer to Him than His very Person. **But nowhere has He said so with reference to His Name, proving clearly thereby that His Name is dearer to Him than everything else, including His Person.** To explain Its Affluence or Excellence, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī describes Its quality most dear to him thus: It benefits the whole world - one and all, to be perceived in any way by any of the sense-organs, at any time or all times, without any consideration of his or her fitness or qualification to do so. Its munificence, knows no limits. 'Jagaddhitam' is explained by Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī in Śrī Bhagavat Sandarbha as '**Attracting the mind and heart of everything towards Itself or Himself**, i.e., Sarvasyāpi svātmānam prati cittākaraṣaṇam'. It can be practised with ease; by Its mere utterance, or Its entering into the ears, i.e., hearing, It blesses one and all. Its service is quite easy. When It just manifests Itself on the tip of the tongue, Its service is accomplished; because It is in the Form of a Sacred Sweet Sound-Word, It is easy to utter; It is excellent because It is the Source of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, and Divine in Nature; (1) It is also known as 'Sarasa' as It exists always in association with the five feelings and seven sentiments, like the sentiments of Love, etc., with the sentiments of devotion and attachments; (2) similarly 'Rasa' also means Love, i.e., the unalloyed and unflinching Love; It also exists in the states of separation and

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iti śrutiṁ pramāṇī-kurvatyā iva tad-darśane tat-kāruṇyam eva hetus  
tat-kāruṇye ca tat-saṅkīrtanam eva hetur iti siddhāntaṁ prakāśayantya iva  
pūrvaṁ yatra tena saṅgatir āsīt tad eva sthānam ājagmus tam eva jagur ity  
āha ||

(sārārtha darṣiṇī)

union; (3) Rasa means Divine Attachment and Love; it is for this very reason that It achieves unfailingly Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Divine Love or Prema very quickly for Its votary; (4) It also causes attachment in Its servitors or in all people; (5) Rasa also means the sentiments of heroism because of Its possessing the highest Power or (6) Rasa also means Its distinguishing Attribute, viz., that of rescuing all who are humble; (7) Rasa also means the specific bliss, being of the type of Divine Bliss, as It imparts Transcendental Bliss to the utterers; and (8) Rasa also means Its characteristic sweetness or Mādhurya Rasa because It is imbued with Nectarine Sweetness, as is indicated in the first Śloka of this book. Hence, there is nothing that can be compared to It, i.e., It is second to none. It is simply incomparable.<sup>377</sup>

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377śrīman nāma prabhos tasya śrī-mūrter apy ati-priyam  
jagad-dhitam sukhopāśyaṁ sa-rasaṁ tat-samam na hi  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.184)

ataḥ śrīmagavannāmasaṅkīrtanamevāsmābhirnitarāṁ praśasyata  
ityāhuḥ śrīmaditi | sarvaśobhāsampatyatīśayayuktaṁ sadā sarvatra  
sarveṣveva nijamahimabhareṇa prakāśamānatvāt ataḥ  
śrīmūrternijavigrahādapi sakāśāttasya prabhoḥ śrīvaikunṭheśvarasya  
bhagavato'tvantapriyaṁ "na tathā me priyatama ātmayonirna śaṅkarah  
na ca saṅkarṣaṇo na śrīrnaivātmā ca yathā bhavān | bhā. 11.14.15"  
ityādau nijaśrīmūrteḥ sakāśādappanyeṣāṁ śreṣṭhatāpṛatipādanāt na tu  
kutṛāpi nāmnaḥ sakāśāt śrīmatvameva vivṛṇvanto'tipriyatve  
hetumāhurjagato hitam adhikāryanapekṣayā kathāñcit kenāpīndriyeṇa  
sevanata eva sarvalokopakāritvāt yataḥ sukhena upāśyaṁ sevyam  
jihvāgramātreṇaiva sevanāt | yataḥ sarasaṁ komalaṁ  
madhurākṣaramayatvāt saccidānandarasamayatvāddā | yadvāā  
rasairāśeṣaireva saha vartamānaṁ śrīṅgārādinavaraseṣu bhaktirase  
premarase ca tathā virahasamgamayośca parisphuraṇāt | yadvāā raso  
rāgastat sahitaṁ avyabhicāritvenāvaśyamevāśu śrībhagavat  
premasampādanāt | yadvāā svastin svasevakānām sarveṣāṁ vā  
janānāmanurāgaḥ janakatvāt | yadvāā raso vīryaviśeṣaḥ  
paramaśaktimatvāt | yadvāā guṇaviśeṣo'kṣilādīnajanānīstārakatvāt |  
yadvāā sukhaviśeṣaḥ ghanasukhamayatvāt | mādhurya'viśeṣo vā  
paramamadhuratvāditi dik | yathoktaṁ "madhuramadhure" tvādi |  
atastasya nāmna eva samam tattulvamanyat kiñcinnāstīti  
nirupamamityarthaḥ | |

"When the love of the ardent devotee for the Name, develops into a passion, the two syllables 'Kṛṣṇa' perform an uncontrollable, and wild dance on his tongue, when he experiences an intense yearning to have a series of tongues to utter 'Kṛṣṇa'. No sooner they enter the cavities of his ears, than he feels the necessity for billion's of ears to hear Them; as soon as these syllables become the bosom companions of the arena of his mind and heart, They lord over all the other sense-organs and impel them in Their own different forms of service, like the eyes in seeing Their Form, the nose in inhaling Their enchanting fragrance, tongue to utter Them, etc. Words fail to describe in adequate terms the superb Transcendental Sweetness of the twin syllables 'Kṛ-ṣṇa'.<sup>1378</sup> When Śrī Kṛṣṇa happens to hear the syllables 'Rādhā', incidentally uttered by others in the course of their talk, He forgets all the fine arts of amorous Pastimes in which He is engrossed with Śrī Rādhā in Person; and when Śrī Rādhikā similarly hears the syllables 'Kṛṣṇa' in an unbroken sequence, all Her limbs get paralysed and She falls into a deep stupor, caused by emotional perturbations.<sup>379</sup> This indicates the extreme mutual influence of the Names 'Kṛṣṇa' and 'Rādhā' on Them! When

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378tuṇḍe tāṇḍavini ratim vitanute tuṇḍāvali-labdhaye  
 karṇa-kroda-kaḍambini ghaṭayate karṇārbudebhyah sprhām  
 cetah-prāṅgaṇa-saṅgini vijayate sarvendriyānām kṛtim  
 no jāne janitā kiyabdhir amṛtaiḥ kṛṣṇeti varṇa-dvayi  
 (śrī-vidagdha-mādhavaḥ 1.15)

379kvāpy ānuṣaṅgikatayodita-rādhikākhyā-  
 vismāritākhila-vilāsa-kalā-kalāpam  
 kṛṣṇeti-varṇa-yugala-śravaṇānubandha-  
 prādurbhavan-jāḍima-ḍambara-saṁvitāṅgim  
 (stava-mālā; utkalikā-vallarīḥ 14)

kvāpīti | kvāpi samaye ānuṣaṅgikatayoditayoccāritayā  
 rādhikākhvayā vismāritā ākḥilānām vilāsānām kalāpāḥ samūhāḥ yasya  
 tam | kṛṣṇetyetasya varṇayugalasya yaḥ śravaṇānubandhastena  
 prādurbhavan yo jāḍimaḍamvaro jāḍyavistārastena saṁvṛtāni  
 vyāptānyaṅgāni yasyāstām | iti nāmamādhuryeṇa mitho  
 vaśyatāvyaajyate ||  
 (śrī baladeva vidyābhūṣaṇa)

such is the marvellous and mystic Glory of the Divine Names 'Kṛṣṇa', and 'Rādhā' - the Embodiment of His Hlādinī Śakti, that each allures the other, the author cannot but conclude this humble offering to the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with his hearty and endless prostrated obeisances to 'Nāmāvatāra Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu', Who practised Nāma-Saṅkīrtana and relished Its ever new Luscious Sweetness and thereby imparted It along with the Love for It in all Its fullness to all fallen Jīvas, irrespective of their fitness or the want of it, out of His causeless Mercy alone.

kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam  
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam  
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair  
yajanti hi su-medhasah  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.32)

kālān naṣṭam bhakti-yogam nijam yaḥ  
prāduṣkartum kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmā  
āvirbhūtas tasya padāravinde  
gāḍham gāḍham liyate citta-bhr̥ṅgaḥ  
(śrī-caitanya-candrodayam)

hare-nāma-kṛṣṇa-nāma-gāna-dāna-kāriṇīm  
śoka-moha-lobha-tāpa-sarva-vighna-nāśinīm  
pāda-padma-lubdha-bhakta-vṛnda-bhakti-dāyinīm  
gaura-mūrtim-āśu-naumi-nāma-sūtra-dhāriṇīm  
(sārvabhauma-śataka)

yaḥ śyāmo dadhad āsa varṇakam amuṁ śyāmaṁ yuge  
dvāpare

so'yaṁ gaura-vidhur vibhāti kalayan nāmāvatāram kalau  
nāmāvatāraḥ sutarām eka-kāla prabhāvataḥ  
yathā śyāmo'viśat kṛṣṇam bhagavantaṁ purā svayam  
(gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā)

kalau yaṁ vidvāmsaḥ sphuṭam abhiyajante dyuti-bharād  
akṛṣṇāṅgam kṛṣṇam makha-vidhibhir utkīrtanamayaḥ  
upāsyam ca prāhur yam akhila-caturthāśrama-juṣām  
sa devaś caitanyaḥ kṛtīr atitarām naḥ kṛpayatu  
(stava-mālā; śrī-caitanya-devasya dvitīyāṣṭakam 1)

kṛṣṇotkīrtana-gāna-nartana-kalā-pāthojani-bhr̥jita  
sad-bhaktāvali-haṁsa-cakra-madhupa-śreṇī-vihārāspadam  
kaṇṇānandi-kala-dhvanir vahatu me jihvā-maru-prāṅgaṇe  
śrī-caitanya dayā-nidhe tava lasal-līlā-sudhā-svardhunī  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, ādi 2.2)



## 4 POTENTIALITIES OF

### NĀMA-SaṅKīRTANa

A FEW quotations from different Purāṇas, dealing with all the potentialities of Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana have been given below for the benefit of the kind readers with a view that they may feel impelled to relish their sweetness. The primary object of Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is to have Its Āsvādana or relishing Its sweetness and also having 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema'. Though the destruction of all sins results as a secondary effect of even Nāmābhāsa, an aspirant should in all humility avoid the committing of sins and should not wilfully persist in committing them simply because by uttering the Name, all of them, including those sins of past births are destroyed. Though there are the best of medicines to counteract and prevent the infection of many of the worst diseases, no one, except a foolhardy person, would take the risk of catching the contagion just to test the remedy.

#### 41. 1. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana destroys all sins<sup>380</sup>

"Splendid. Indeed, you are extremely pure because of your unshakable faith in the Name of the Lord. Inexpressible is the glory of having faith in Śrī Hari-Kīrtana. Just as the rising of the sun dispels all darkness, even so, by having faith in Śrī Hari-Kīrtana, all the dark sins are completely destroyed."<sup>381</sup> Henceforward none need fear the fire-like sins. The Holy Names of Śrī Govinda are like a formation of rain-bearing clouds. Even a small drop from these clouds will

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380akhila pāponmūlanatvam

381aho su-nirmala yūyam rāgo hi hari-kīrtane  
avidhūya tamaḥ kṛtsnaṁ nṛṇāṁ udeti sūryavat  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.315)

surely destroy the worst conflagration of sins."<sup>382</sup> Even if a man utters the Name of the Lord quite helplessly, he is immediately and totally freed from all his sins even as the deer that has been frightened by a lion."<sup>383</sup> O Maitreya! By performing various religious functions, observing different rites, one may be free from the sins committed, but the instinct in repeating it is not eradicated. **By the performance of Kīrtana of the Lord's Name even this instinct is destroyed, just as, when gold and other metals are melted by fire all the impurities therein, however subtle, are burnt out**"<sup>384</sup>

"What wonder is there, if all our sins are dispelled by the mere Kīrtana of the Immortal and Indestructible Lord! When even His remembrance arrests the way to hell, meditation of Him is so captivating that he who is blessed by its benefits, becomes extremely addicted to It, and hence considers the happiness of heaven as a stumbling block. Dedicating one's mind to His contemplation, even the attainment of the abode of Brahmā appears insignificant. He grants these pure souls the eternal state of salvation by His kind manifestation of Himself in their hearts for ever."<sup>385</sup> By performing the Kīrtana of the God of gods, both in the mornings and evenings regularly, one attains the abode of

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382pāpānalasya diptasya mā kurvantu bhayaṁ narāḥ  
govinda-nāma-meghaughair naśyate nīra-bindubhiḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.316)

383avaśenāpi yan-nāmni kīrtane sarva-pātakaiḥ  
pumān vimucyate sadyaḥ sinḥa-trastair mrgair iva  
(garuḍa purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.317)

384yan-nāma-kīrtanaṁ bhaktyā vilāpanam anuttamam  
maitreyāśeṣa-pāpānāṁ dhātūnām iva pāvakaḥ  
(garuḍa purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.318)

385yasmin nyasta-matir na yāti narakam svargo'pi yac-cintane  
vighno yatra niveśitātma-manaso brāhmo'pi loko'lpakaḥ  
muktim cetasi yaḥ sthito'mala-dhiyāṁ puṁsām dadāty avyayaḥ  
kiṁ citraṁ yad-agmaṁ prayāti vilayaṁ tatrācyute kīrtite  
(garuḍa purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.319)

Heaven duly freed from all sins."<sup>386</sup>"The very Name 'Nārāyaṇa' is a renowned thief in this world. Just as thieves steal away the wealth hoarded with great difficulty, the mere sound of this Name removes all the hoards of sins accumulated in innumerable births."<sup>387</sup>"Just as the blazing fire of the final cataclysm destroys the entire world, even so, the Name of Śrī Govinda when chanted with or without devotion burns away all our sins."<sup>388</sup>

"The Name 'Govinda' destroys thousands of sins committed, even when It is uttered while calling a person bearing that Name."<sup>389</sup>"Just as a tiny spark of fire even if inadvertently touched definitely burns, so also, by the mere appearance of the Name of Śrī Hari on one's lips, all his sins are fully destroyed. Just as the burning property is the natural function of fire, even so, it is in the very nature of the syllables of the Name of the Lord to destroy all the sins."<sup>390</sup>"For human beings, extremely blind by the influence of sense-objects, and possessing an egoistic mind of 'I' and 'mineness', the only way of deliverance from all their sins is the Holy Name of Śrī

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386sāyaṁ prātas tathā kṛtvā deva-devasya kīrtanam  
sarva-pāpa-vinirmuktaḥ svarga-loke mahīyate  
(garuḍa-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.320)

387nārāyaṇo nāma naro narāṇām  
prasiddha-cauraḥ kathitaḥ pṛthivyām  
aneka-janmārjita-pāpa-sañcayam  
haraty aśeṣaṁ śruta-mātra eva  
(vāmana-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.321)

388govindeti tathā proktaṁ bhaktyā vā bhakti-varjitaiḥ  
dahate sarva-pāpāni yugāntāgnir ivotthitaiḥ  
(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.322)

389govinda-nāmnā yaḥ kaścin naro bhavati bhū-tale  
kīrtanād eva tasyāpi pāpaṁ yāti sahasradhā  
(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.323)

390pramādād api saṁsprṣṭo yathānala-kaṇo dahet  
tathauṣṭha-puta-saṁsprṣṭaṁ hari-nāma dahed agham  
(kāśī-khaṇḍa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.324)

Hari.<sup>"391"</sup>Even while on dacoity, if a mortal utters the Name 'Hari', once at least, the way to the womb of his mother is closed to him, i.e., he is saved from the shackles of births and deaths, and he is no more under the jurisdiction of Yama (god of death).<sup>"392"</sup>

"One, who becomes a favourite of Śrī Hari by chanting the Name 'Govinda', easily and forthwith is rid of all his grave sins, like committing thousands of murders of Brāhmaṇas, adultery with the wife of spiritual preceptor even crores of times and innumerable thefts."<sup>"393"</sup>Just as fire never fails to burn things, even if it is touched inadvertently, so also when the Name 'Govinda' is uttered under any pretext, It destroys all our sins."<sup>"394"</sup>Just as darkness is dispelled by the rising of the sun, so also by chanting the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' of incomprehensible splendour, all our sins are totally destroyed."<sup>"395"</sup>O best of the Brāhmaṇas! Apart from the Kīrtana of Śrī Hari, I do not see any potential course for the atonement of all the sins of

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391narāṇām viṣayāndhānām mamatākula-cetasām  
ekam eva harer nāma sarva-pāpa-vināśanam  
(bṛhan-nārādīya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.325)

392hari hari sakṛd uccāritam  
dasyu-cchalena yair manuṣyaiḥ  
jananī-jaṭhara-mārga-luptā  
na mama paṭa-lipiṁ viśanti martyāḥ  
(bṛhan-nārādīya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.326)

393hatyāyutaṁ pāna-sahasram ugram  
gurv-aṅganā-koṭi-niṣevanaṁ ca  
steyāny anekāni hari-priyeṇa  
govinda-nāmnā nihatāni sadyaḥ  
(vaiśākha-māhātmya; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.327)

394anicchayāpi dahati sprṣṭo huta-vaho yathā  
tathā dahati govinda-nāma vyājād apīritam  
(vaiśākha-māhātmya; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.328)

395kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya viṣṇor amita-tejasaḥ  
duritāni viliyante tamāṁsīva dinodaye  
(vaiśākha-māhātmya; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.329)

humanity."<sup>396</sup> Ajāmila, even by unwittingly uttering the Name of Śrī Hari - the storehouse of auspiciousness, has indeed atoned for the sins of crores of births. The utterance of the Name 'Hari' is the only atonement for all the sins, such as theft of gold and other valuables, drinking of liquor and like intoxicants, treachery to friends, murder of Brāhmaṇas, illicit behaviour with the wife of one's own preceptor, murder of women, slaughtering cows, patricide, regicide, and various other sins of a similar character, because the Lord Himself feels for those, who chant His Name even once, as His own, and hence shoulders the responsibility to protect them."<sup>397</sup>

"That perfect purification that sinners obtain by chanting the Name of Śrī Hari, is not in the least, attained by the various expiatory rites, or vows recommended by the social codes of the great Manu, etc., or even by the knowers of Brahman. The chanting of the Names of the Lord never stops with merely destroying the sins alone, but it helps the sinners to experience the glorious Attributes of the Lord."<sup>398</sup> Taking the Name of Vaikuṇṭha even indirectly, under any pretext, while cutting jokes, while singing or even slightly, destroys all the sins committed. If a person even in distress, utters the syllables 'Hari' even helplessly, either while falling down from a high

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396nānyat paśyāmi jantūnām vihāya kari-kīrtanam  
sarva-pāpa-praśamanam prāyaścittam dvijottama  
(vaiśākha-māhātmya; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.330)

397ayaṁ hi kṛta-nirveśo janma-koṭy-amhasām api  
yad vyājahāra vivaśo nāma svasty-ayanaṁ hareḥ

stenaḥ surā-po mitra-dhrug brahma-hā guru-talpa-gaḥ  
strī-rāja-pitṛ-go-hantā ye ca pātakino 'pare

sarveṣām apy aghavatām idam eva suniṣkṛtam  
nāma-vyāharaṇaṁ viṣṇor yatas tad-viṣayā matiḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.7,9,10; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.331-333)

398na niṣkṛtair uditair brahma-vāḍibhis  
tathā viśuddhyaty aghavān vratādibhiḥ  
yathā harer nāma-padair udāhṛtais  
tad uttamaśloka-guṇopalambhakam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.11; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.334)

storied building or a tree, stumbling while walking on the road, with his bones fractured, bitten by a venomous serpent, burnt by fire, or hurt by weapons, he will not have to undergo any more tortures anywhere."<sup>399</sup> Just as a blazing fire burns down to ashes heaps of grass, even so, the utterance of Śrī Hari-Nāma, of excellent renown, consciously or unconsciously, destroys all the sins of those who utter His Name."<sup>400</sup> "Sinners of all kinds including the slayer of Brāhmaṇa, slaughterer of his father, of the cow, of the mother, the killer of the preceptor, one living on the flesh of dogs, and even a Caṇḍāla, will certainly be purified by uttering the Name of Śrī Hari."<sup>401</sup> All sins committed in past and present births and those that may occur in future as well, are soon destroyed by the effect of the fire-like 'Govinda Kīrtana'.<sup>402</sup>

**"Those who are always hostile to the Sādhus, and oppress them in manifold ways, are the worst of offenders. Even the All-merciful Lord too, never pardons them. There are no remedies mentioned in the Śāstras that can save them from the consequences of their grave offences. But, the Glory of the Divine Name is so astounding and efficacious, that It destroys even such unpardonable offences. By constant recourse to the chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma, mankind is not only completely freed from all kinds of offences, but also**

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399sāṅketyaṁ pārihāsyam vā stobham helanam eva vā  
vaikuṇṭha-nāma-grahaṇam aśeṣāgha-haram viduḥ

patitaḥ skhalito bhagnaḥ sandaṣṭas tapta āhataḥ  
harir ity avaśenāha pumān nārhati yātanāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.14-15; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.335-336)

400ajñānād athavā jñānād uttamaśloka-nāma yat  
saṅkīrtitam agham puṁso dahed edho yathānalāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.18; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.337)

401brahma-hā piṭṛ-hā go-ghno mātṛ-hācārya-hāghavān  
śvādaḥ pulkasako vāpi śuddhyeran yasya kīrtanāt  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.13.8; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.338)

402vartamānam tu yat pāpaṁ yad bhūtaṁ yad bhaviṣyati  
tat sarvaṁ nirdahaty āśu govindānala-kīrtanāt  
(laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.339)

**blessed."**<sup>403</sup>"Of all the crores of sanctifying processes existing in the world, none is comparable to the effects of the constant chanting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma."<sup>404</sup>"**No sinner is capable of committing sins to the extent that a single utterance of the Name of the Lord could destroy. The capacity of the Name to destroy the sins is far greater than the sinner's capacity to commit them."**<sup>405</sup>"The capacity of the Divine Name to destroy everything that is inauspicious, is so great, that even a most degraded fellow living upon the flesh of dogs, even by innumerable efforts, will not be able to commit sins."<sup>406</sup>"There are no sins in this terrible Kali Yuga, committed by human beings, either physical, oral, or mental that the chanting of the Name 'Govinda' cannot destroy."<sup>407</sup>"By pouring water, fire is extinguished, by the rising of the sun, darkness is dispelled, even so, in the age of Kali, the singing of Śrī Hari-Nāma is the only atonement for all floods of sins."<sup>408</sup>"When by the efficacy

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403See footnote 240

sadā droha-paro yas tu sajjanānām mahī-tale  
jāyate pāvano dhanyo harer nāmānukīrtanāt  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.340)

404vasanti yāni koṭis tu pāvanāni mahītale  
na tāni tat-tulām yānti kṛṣṇa-nāmānukīrtane  
(kūrma purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.341)

405nāmno'sya yāvatī śaktiḥ pāpa-nirharāṇe hareḥ  
tāvat kartuṁ na śaknoti pātakam pātakī janah  
(bṛhad-viṣṇu-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.342)

406svādo'pi na hi śaknoti kartuṁ pāpāni yatnataḥ  
tāvanti yāvatī śaktir viṣṇor nāmno'subha-kṣaye  
(itihāsa-samucchaya; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.343)

407tan nāsti karmajaṁ loke vāg-jaṁ mānasam eva vā  
yan na kṣapayate pāpaṁ kalau govinda-kīrtanam  
(skanda purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.344)

408śamāyālaṁ jalaṁ vahnes tamaso bhaskarodayaḥ  
śāntyai kaler aghaughasya nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ hareḥ  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.345)

of the chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma, even the worst of sinners, daily engaged in committing sins, are completely freed from their evil effects, and offered deliverance from all the tortures of worldly life, what wonder is there that It would quickly destroy all the wicked influence of Kali?"<sup>409</sup> **The observance of the different kinds of the most drastic expiatory and purificatory rites, will not sanctify a person to that extent as the Saṅkīrtana of the all-clever Śrī Mādhava, with the utterance of 'Govinda', does."**<sup>410</sup>

The above statement of the Purāṇas is fully illustrated by a particular incident in the career of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. During His time, Bengal was ruled by Syed Allaudin Hussain Shah. This Hussain Shah, in his early days was a minor employee under a prominent Hindu chieftain by name Subuddhi Roy. For some faults of his, one day Subuddhi Roy whipped him. Time reversed their status in life. By some providential accident, Hussain Shah, his erstwhile employee ascended the throne of Bengal. One day, the wife of Hussain Shah noticed the marks of beatings on her husband's body. Hussain Shah explained the reason for the marks in detail. His wife insisted on her husband to take away Subuddhi Roy's life for his cruelty. Hussain Shah flatly refused the request as it was an act of great injustice to one who was his protector once. Later on, after discussions, both of them came to a compromise. Hussain Shah agreed to deprive him of his caste by compelling him to drink polluted water, and he carried out the decision.

Subuddhi Roy then no longer desired to live in his society. He forthwith left for Benares. There, he met various scholars and asked them the means of atonement for this sin. They all desired him to drink hot ghee and thereby to put an

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409nāmnām hareḥ kīrtanataḥ prayāti  
saṁsāra-pāraṁ duritaugha-muktaḥ  
naraḥ sa satyaṁ kali-doṣa-janma  
pāpaṁ nihaty āśu kim atra citram  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.346)

410varāka-cāndrāyaṇa-tapta-kṛcchrair  
na dehi-śuddhir bhavatīha tādṛk  
kalau sakṛṇ mādharma-kīrtanena  
govinda-nāmnā bhavatīha yādṛk  
(brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.347)



end to his sinful life. By his luck, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu visited Kāśī at this time. Subuddhi Roy was highly delighted to hear the news. He felt that he may entertain some hopes from Śrīman Mahāprabhu to come out of this tantalising situation. Accordingly, one day Subuddhi Roy explained the whole matter including the Paṇḍitas' suggestion for ending his life, to Śrīman Mahāprabhu. On hearing Subuddhi Roy, Śrīman Mahāprabhu replied, "Go from here to Vṛndāvana and chant Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma constantly. All your sins will surely be washed out by a single dim reflection of the Name (Nāmābhāsa). A second chanting of the Name would enable you to attain to the Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. A further utterance of the Name will establish you as an eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His Own Abode and this is the arrangement of expiation even to the worst of sins."<sup>411</sup>

42. 2. *Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana purifies the chanter's family, associates, etc.*<sup>412</sup>

"Continuous utterance of Śrī Hari-Nāma purifies the hearts of even the worst of sinners and enables them to uplift their society."<sup>413</sup> **Those extremely blessed and purified souls, who sing the Name 'Govinda' with a delighted heart and**

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411prabhu kahe, — ihāñ haite yāha' vṛndāvana  
nirantara kara kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana

eka 'nāmābhāse' tomāra pāpa-doṣa yābe  
āra 'nāma' la-ite kṛṣṇa-caraṇa pāibe

āra kṛṣṇa-nāma laite kṛṣṇa-sthāne sthiti  
mahā-pātakera haya ei prāyaścitti  
(śrī caitanya-caritāmṛta, m. 25.198-200)

412kīrtana-kartr-kula-saṅgy-ādi-pavanatvaṁ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa )

413mahā-pātaka-yukto'pi kīrtayenn anīsaṁ harim  
śuddhāntaḥkaraṇo bhūtvā jāyate paṅkti-pāvanaḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.348)

**single-minded devotion sustain the entire earth."**<sup>414</sup> "The tongue of a Vaiṣṇava is not satisfied by saving merely the speaker alone, but by loudly proclaiming the Name and Glories of the Lord, it sanctifies the whole world."<sup>415</sup> "When a person, merely by singing Your Name sanctifies not only himself, but his listeners as well, is there a need to mention that I am purified by a touch of Your Lotus Feet?"<sup>416</sup> **"O Nṛsiṃha! Those who with a delightful heart loudly utter Your Name are really the Sādhus. They are verily the genuine benefactors of mankind."**<sup>417</sup>

### **43. 3. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana destroys all diseases**<sup>418</sup>

"Frightened by hearing the utterance of the Names, O Acyuta! O Bliss Embodied! O Govinda! All the diseases get cured, I avow this is an invariable truth."<sup>419</sup> **"O Samba! Diseases are not cured by other medicines; but by using this great medicine of Śrī Hari-Nāma, they are definitely**

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414govindeti mudā yuktaḥ kīrtayed yas tv ananya-dhīḥ  
pāvanena ca dhanyena teneyaṁ pṛthivī dhṛtā  
(laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.349)

415na caivam ekaṁ vaktāraṁ jihvā rakṣati vaiṣṇavī  
āśrāvya bhagavat-khyātiṁ jagat kṛtsnam punāti hi  
(hari-bhakti-sudhodaya; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.350)

416See footnote 111

417te santaḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ nirupādhika-bāndhavāḥ  
ye nṛsiṃha bhavan-nāma gāyanty uccair mudānvitāḥ  
(nṛsiṃha purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.352)

418sarva-vyādhi-vināśitvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

419acyutānanda-govinda-nāmoccarāṇa-bhīṣitaḥ  
naśyanti sakalā rogāḥ satyaṁ satyaṁ vadāmy aham  
(bṛhan-nāradiya purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.353)

removed."<sup>420</sup>"I offer my prostrated obeisances to the Infinite Lord, because by remembering Him and singing His Names, all the physical and mental ailments are forthwith rooted out."<sup>421</sup>"A person who is highly afflicted by acute and chronic diseases and oppressed by the ruling powers, is relieved of all his fears and anxieties by the mere chanting of the Name of Śrī Nārāyaṇa"<sup>422</sup>

#### 44. 4. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana dispels all griefs<sup>423</sup>

"Incessant chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma, destroys all diseases and obstacles. This Name is the best remedy for the rooting out of all misfortunes."<sup>424</sup>"Continuous chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma destroys all kinds of sins, removes obstacles, and strikes at the very root of distress of all kinds."<sup>425</sup>"Just as the sun dispels darkness, or a heavy wind drives away formations of clouds, even so, the Infinite Lord manifesting in the hearts of those persons who listen and chant the narrations connected

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420na sām̐ba vyādhijāṁ duḥkhaṁ heyaṁ nānyaūṣadhair api  
hari-nāmaūṣadhaṁ pītvā vyādhis tyājyō na saṁśayaḥ  
(parāśara-saṁhitā; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.354)

421ādhayo vyādhayo yasya smaraṇān nāma-kīrtanāt  
tadaiva vilayaṁ yānti tam anantaṁ namāmy aham  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.355)

422mahā-vyādhi-samācchanno rāja-vadhopāpiditaḥ  
nārāyaṇeti saṅkīrtya nirāṭaṅko bhaven naraḥ  
(agni purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.356)

423sarva-duḥkhopaśamanatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

424sarva-rogoपाśamaṁ sarvopadrava-nāśanam  
śāntidaṁ sarvāriṣṭānāṁ harer nāmānukīrtanam  
(brhad-viṣṇu-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.357)

425sarva-pāpa-praśamaṁ sarvopadrava-nāśanam  
sarva-duḥkha-kṣaya-kāraṁ hari-nāmānukīrtanam  
(brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.358)

with His glorious Deeds, destroys all their miseries."<sup>426</sup> Persons who are perplexed and depressed in spirits, those who are sluggish, those who are awfully frightened, and those who are attacked with virulent diseases, are all totally freed from all their afflictions, both physical and mental, and attain perfect happiness by uttering the word 'Nārāyaṇa.'<sup>427</sup> By the mere chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma, the Lord of incomprehensible prowess, cruel beings like Yakṣas, demons, ghosts, evil spirits, etc., flee away. **Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is an excellent remedy to destroy all evils.**"<sup>428</sup> "There is no doubt that Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, even when uttered in times of hunger, thirst, or when tumbling down, is the best course to wipe out all sufferings."<sup>429</sup> "The blazing flames of infatuation, that is spreading daily, is burning down mankind incessantly. But the fires would never burn, when one, either uttering or listening

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426saṅkīrtiyamāno bhagavān anantaḥ  
śrutanubhāvo vyasanam hi puṁsām  
praviśya cittam vidhunoty aśeṣam  
yathā tamo'rko'bhram ivāti-vātaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.12.48; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.359)

427ārtā viṣaṇṇāḥ śīthilās ca bhītā  
ghoreṣu ca vyādhiṣu vartamānāḥ  
saṅkīrtya nārāyaṇa-śabdān ekam  
vimukta-duḥkhāḥ sukhino bhavanti  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.360)

428kīrtanad deva-devasya viṣṇor amita-tejasah  
yakṣa-rakṣasa-vetala-bhūta-preta-vinayakah

dakinyo vidravanti sma ye tathānye ca himsakah  
sarvānārtha-haram tasya nāma-saṅkīrtanam smṛtam  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.361-362)

429nāma-saṅkīrtanam kṛtvā kṣuṭ-trṭ-praskhalitādiṣu  
viyogaṁ śīghram āpnoti sarvānarthair na saṁśayah  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.363)

Śrī Hari-Nāma, takes shelter in the cooling shadows of rain-bearing clouds of Śrī Hari-Nāma."<sup>430</sup>

**45. 5. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana removes the sufferings  
caused by Kali<sup>431</sup>**

"Hereafter there is no fear of the sharp fangs of the evil serpent of Kali. By the conflagration of 'Govinda-Nāma', not only they are burnt but will be also reduced to ashes."<sup>432</sup> "In this terrible Kali Yuga, those men, who have taken resort to the chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma alone, have fulfilled the noble purpose of their life. Kali can do no harm to them."<sup>433</sup> "The age of Kali is unable to do any harm to those persons who utter daily 'O Keśava! O Hare! O Govinda! O Vasudeva! 'O Infinite One like the universe! And such other Names."<sup>434</sup> "O eminent man! Kali (the personification of the Kali Yuga) does not torment those people who perform the Kīrtana of Śrī Vāsudeva - the Supporter of the universe."<sup>435</sup>

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430mohanalollasaj-jvāla-jvalal-lokeṣu sarvadā

yan-nāmāmbhodhara-cchāyām praviṣṭo naiva dahyate  
(padma purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.364)

431kali-badhapaharitam

(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

432kali-kala-ku-sarpasya tikṣṇa-damṣṭrasya mā bhayam

govinda-nāma-dāvena dagdho yāsyati bhasmatām  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.365)

433hari-nāma-parā ye ca ghore kali-yuge narāḥ

ta eva kṛta-kṛtyāś ca na kalir bādgate hi tān  
(bṛhan-nārādīya purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.366)

434hare keśava govinda vāsudeva jagan-maya

itirayanti te nityam na hi tān bādgate kalih  
(bṛhan-nārādīya purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.367)

435ye'har-niśam jagad-dhātur vāsudevasya kīrtanam

kurvanti tān nara-vyāghra na kalir bādgate narān  
(bhāvārtha-dīpikā; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.368)

46. 6. *Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana redeems persons destined to hell*<sup>436</sup>

"The dwellers of the infernal regions in hell, as they uttered Śrī Hari-Nāma, being instilled with devotion to Śrī Hari, went to Vaikuṇṭha Loka."<sup>437</sup> "By chanting Śrī Hari-Nāma, even the worst of sinners who are being tortured for long in the horrible hell, are completely liberated."<sup>438</sup>

47. 7. *Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana destroys destiny*<sup>439</sup>

"Hence for those who are after the attainment of liberation, there is no other method so competent as the incessant chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma, because Śrī Hari-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana does not harness the human mind into actions (Karma Kāṇḍa) but cuts asunder their restraints; whereas, the expiatory rites once again prompt the mind for impure actions, influenced by the qualities of Rajas and Tamas."<sup>440</sup> "People in this age would never worship the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, Whose Name even if unconsciously

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436nāraky-uddhāratvam

(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

437yathā yathā harer nāma kīrtayanti sma narakāḥ

tathā tathā harau bhaktim udvahanto divaṁ yayuḥ

(ṇṛsiṁha purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.369)

438narake pacyamānānām narāṇām pāpa-karmaṇām

muktiḥ sañjāyate tasmān nāma-saṅkīrtanād dhareḥ

(itihāsa-samucchaya; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.370)

439prārabdha-vināśitvam

(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

440nātaḥ paraṁ karma-nibandha-kṛntanaṁ

mumukṣatām tīrtha-padānukīrtanāt

na yat punaḥ karmasu sajjate mano

rajas-tamobhyām kalilam tato'nyathā

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.2.46; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.371)

uttered by a man at the threshold of death, bedridden, extremely afflicted, deprived of strength, and unable to move the limbs even, attains the highest goal, completely freed from all the evil bonds of Karma."<sup>441</sup> "Even a worm-like person, utterly inferior and insignificant in position, uttering the Name 'Govinda' everyday, having controlled his senses, is totally freed from all the sins, and shines like a god."<sup>442</sup>

48. 8. *Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana destroys all offences* <sup>443</sup>

"There is no doubt whatsoever that I definitely pardon crores of offences of the person who utters My Names with implicit faith."<sup>444</sup>

49. 9. *Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana grandly fulfils all wants*<sup>445</sup>

"Any fault of the Vedic Mantras caused by the defective pronunciation or tune, flaws arising from the irregular performance of Tantric rites, any other defects in the observance due to non-conformity of time, place, articles, or

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441yan-nāma-dheyam mriyamāṇa āturaḥ  
patan skhalan vā vivaśo gṛṇan pumān  
vimukta-karmārgala uttamām gatim  
prāpnoti yakṣyanti na taṁ kalau janāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.3.44; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.372)

442govindeti japan jantuḥ praty-aham niyatendriyaḥ  
sarva-pāpa-vinirmuktaḥ suravad bhāsate naraḥ  
(bṛhan-nāradya purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.374)

443sarvapārādha-bhajanatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

444mama nāmāni loke'smin śraddhayā yas tu kīrtayet  
tasyāparādha-koṭis tu kṣamāmy eva na saṁśayaḥ  
(viṣṇu-yāmala; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.375)

445sarva-sampūrṭi-kāritvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

persons, are completely removed by the effect of Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana."<sup>446</sup>"I offer my prostrated obeisances to the Supreme Lord Acyuta by Whose recollection or by the utterance of whose Name, all the defects in the performance of sacrifices and such other holy rites, are fully remedied."<sup>447</sup>

**410. 10. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is superior to all the Vedas<sup>448</sup>**

"By uttering the two syllables 'Ha-ri' one derives all the benefits arising from the study of all the four Vedas, such as Rig, Yajur, Sāma, and Atharva. **Hence, the exponents of Śāstras emphasize that the effect of uttering the Nāma 'Kṛṣṇa' is far superior to that of the study of Vedas.**"<sup>449</sup>"O my dear! Pray do not peruse the Rig, Yajur, or Sāma Vedas; daily utter 'Govinda', Śrī Hari's Name which is worth singing."<sup>450</sup>"Even each Name of Śrī Viṣṇu is far superior to the

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446mantratas tantrataś chidraṁ deśa-kālārha-vastutaḥ  
sarvaṁ karoti niśchidram anusaṅkīrtanaṁ tava  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.376)

447yasya smṛtyā ca nāmoktyā tapo-yajña-kriyādiṣu  
nyūnaṁ sampūrṇatām eti sadyo vande tam acyutam  
(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.377)

448sarva-vedādhikatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

449rg-vedo hi yajur-vedaḥ sāma-vedo'py atharvaṇaḥ  
adhītas tena yenoktaṁ harir ity akṣara-dvayam  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.378)

450mā ṛco mā yajus tāta mā sāma paṭha kiñcana  
govindeti harer nāma geyam gāyasva nityaśaḥ  
(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.379)



study of all the Vedas; one Name 'Rāma' is equal to one thousand Names of Śrī Viṣṇu."<sup>451</sup>

**411. 11. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is far superior to all pilgrimages<sup>452</sup>**

**"Why should one visit Kurukṣetra, Kāśī, or Puṣkara, if on the tip of his tongue always dance the two syllables 'Ha-ri'"<sup>453</sup> "The effects of constantly chanting the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' is by far superior to that of making crores of pilgrimages."<sup>454</sup> "There are crores of pilgrimages; but when compared with the chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma, the benefit that one can derive from such pilgrimages is not even equal to an infinitesimal fraction of the result arising from the chanting of the Name."<sup>455</sup> "O son! If you are really interested in your deliverance, utter the Name 'Govinda' clearly and repeatedly. Of what avail are the various Śāstras, such as Vedas and Āgamas, and the innumerable pilgrimages?"<sup>456</sup>**

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451viṣṇor ekaika-nāmāpi sarva-vedādhikarīṁ matam  
tadṛṇi-nāma-sahasreṇa rāma-nāma samāṁ smṛtam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.380)

452sarva-tīrthādhikatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

453kurukṣetreṇa kiṁ tasya kiṁ kasya puṣkareṇa vā  
jihvāgre vasate yasya harir ity akṣara-dvayam  
(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.381)

454tīrtha-koṭi-sahasrāṇi tīrtha-koṭi-śatāni ca  
tani sarvāṇy avāpnoti viṣṇor nāmānukīrtanāt  
(padma purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.382)

455viśrutāṇi bahūny eva tīrthāni bahudhāni ca  
koty-amśenāpi tulyāni nāma-kīrtanato hareḥ  
(viśvāmitra-saṁhitā; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.383)

456kiṁ tata vedāgama-śāstra-vistarais  
tīrthair anekair api kiṁ prayojanam  
yady ātmano vāñchasi mukti-kāraṇam

412. 12. *Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana* is far superior to all holy  
acts<sup>457</sup>

"Holy acts, such as presenting a crore of cows on the occasion of the solar eclipse, residing on the banks of the Ganges at Prayāga (Allahabad) for a Kalpa, performing billion sacrifices, and offering gifts of gold in quantities as large as 'Sumeru' are not even a part of a hundredth part of what you gain through the Kīrtana of Śrī Govinda."<sup>458</sup> "The observance of any number of pious deeds, such as constructing wells, starting hospitals, etc., render the ties of worldliness tighter and tighter, resulting finally in inescapable bondage; but Śrī Hari-Nāma alone leads one to the Lotus Feet of Śrī Hari."<sup>459</sup> "O King! If you covet the fruit of performing a thousand Vājapeya sacrifices daily, do chant the Name 'Govinda' on getting up from the bed early at daybreak."<sup>460</sup> "O great King! What benefits would the study of Sāṅkhya principles or Tattvas, which helps towards a discriminative understanding of the soul and matter, afford you? Or even, of what avail would the practice of the eightfold Yogas be to you?

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govinda govinda iti sphutaṁ raṭa  
(laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.384)

457sarva-sat-karmādhikatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

458go-koṭi-dānaṁ grahaṇe khagasya  
prayāga-gaṅgodaka-kalpa-vāsaḥ  
yajñāyutaṁ meru-suvarṇa-dānaṁ  
govinda-kīrter na samaṁ śatāmśaiḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.385)

459iṣṭa-pūrtāni karmāṇi su-bahūni kṛtāny api  
bhava-hetūni tāny eva harer nāma tu muktidam  
(baudhayana-saṁhitā; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.386)

460vājapeya-sahasrāṇāṁ nityaṁ phalam abhīpsasi  
prātar utthāya bhūpāla kuru govinda-kīrtanam  
(garuḍa-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.387)

If you actually aim deliverance, then, do utter the Name 'Govinda'.<sup>461</sup>

**413. 13. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana grants all prayers<sup>462</sup>**

**"The constant chanting of the Name 'Kṛṣṇa', roots out all the evil influence of the six enemies (lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride, and prejudice), is an adept in destroying all other hostile causes and is the root of the spiritual well-being."**<sup>463</sup> "O chief amongst Brāhmaṇas! A hundred desires of a person are fulfilled when he chants Śrī Hari-Nāma through any motives."<sup>464</sup> "The Kīrtana of the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' enables the attainment of all auspicious results, increases longevity, destroys the innumerable diseases, helps gaining both enjoyment and liberation, and the attainment of even Vaikuṇṭha itself."<sup>465</sup> "I bow down repeatedly to all those persons who take the Name 'Viṣṇu', even if they do so in joke or ridicule, as they too are extremely blessed and

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461kiṁ kariṣyati sāṅkhyena kiṁ yogair nara-nāyaka  
muktim icchasi rājendra kuru govinda-kīrtanam  
(garuḍa purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.388)

See footnote 128

462sarvartha-pradatvaṁ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

463etat śad-varga-haraṇaṁ ripu-nigrahaṇaṁ param  
adhyātma-mūlam etad dhi viṣṇor nāmānukīrtanam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.390)

464hr̥di kṛtvā tathā kāmam abhīṣṭaṁ dvija-puṅgavaḥ  
ekaṁ nāma japed yas tu śataṁ kāmān avāpnuyāt  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.391)

465sarva-maṅgala-maṅgalyam āyusyaṁ vyādhi-nāśanam  
bhukti-mukti-pradaṁ divyaṁ vāsudevasya kīrtanam  
(śrī-kṛṣṇāmṛta-stotra; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.392)

fortunate."<sup>466</sup> "Those who utter My Names at all times, are indeed fortunate and blessed. They have indeed achieved everything achievable having taken this birth."<sup>467</sup> "Indeed, he is blessed who utters even once the Name 'Hari', which is extremely rare to sinners in this age of Kali! There is no doubt about it."<sup>468</sup> "Great men who appreciate good qualities and adopt the essence, praise this age, as in this Kali, the uttering of the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' is the only practice that helps one to attain all the achievements of humanity."<sup>469</sup> "The Śaṅkīrtana of Śrī Hari-Nāma is the noblest penance in this age. **As such, to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it is imperatively necessary to practise the chanting of His Name.**"<sup>470</sup>

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466parihāśopahāsādyair viṣṇor grhṇanti nāma te  
kṛtārthās te'pi manujās tebhyo'pīha namo namaḥ  
(śrī-nārāyaṇa-vyūha-stava; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.393)

467te dhanyās te kṛtārthāś ca tair eva sukṛtaṁ kṛtam  
tair āptaṁ janmanaḥ prāpyaṁ ye kāle kīrtayanti mām  
(vārāha purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.394)

468sakṛd uccārayanty etad durlabhaṁ cākṛtātmanām  
kalau yuge harer nāma te kṛtārthā na saṁśayaḥ  
(vārāha purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.395)

469kalim sabhājayanty āryā guṇa-jñāḥ sāra-bhāgiṇaḥ  
yatra saṅkīrtanenaiva sarvaḥ svartho'bhilabhyate  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.36; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.396)

470tathā caivottamaṁ loka tapaḥ śrī-hari-kīrtanam  
kalau yuge viśeṣeṇa viṣṇu-prītyai samācaret  
(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.397)

414. 14. *Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana possesses all kinds of power*<sup>471</sup>

"Those powers by which all sins are dispelled by the observance of holy acts, such as gifts, vows, penances, and pilgrimages, by the service of gods, saints, etc., by the performance of Sacrifices like Aśvamedha, Rājasuya, etc., and by gaining the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, etc., have been attracted from these performances and pursuits by Śrī Hari and imbued in His Own Names. Śrīman Nāma dispels all the most awful sins like a whirlwind that blows up even the heaviest of obstacles in its way or like the sun dispelling pitch-darkness."<sup>472</sup> "For attaining the ultimate goal, it is incumbent upon everyone to employ (utter) the Name which he likes best, of the Wielder of the Disc, the God of gods, Who is All-powerful."<sup>473</sup>

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471sarva-śaktimattvam

(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

472dāna-vrata-tapas-tīrtha-kṣetrādīnām ca yāḥ sthitāḥ

śaktayo deva-mahatām sarva-pāpa-harāḥ śubhāḥ

rāja-sūyāśvamedhānām jñānasyādhyātma-vastunaḥ

ākṛṣya hariṇā sarvāḥ sthāpitāḥ sveṣu nāmasu

vāto'py ato harer nāmna ugrāṇām api duḥsahaḥ

sarveṣām pāpa-rāśīnām yathaiiva tamasām raviḥ

(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.398-400)

473sarvārtha-śakti-yuktasya deva-devasya cakriṇaḥ

yac cābhirucitaṁ nāma tat sarvārtheṣu yojayet

(brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.401)

**415. 15. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana imparts bliss to the whole universe<sup>474</sup>**

"O Hṛṣīkeṣa! By singing Your Glory, the whole universe rejoices and becomes engrossed in It. The demons being awfully afraid, run away helter-skelter in all directions, and a galaxy of Siddhas offer their prostrations to you."<sup>475</sup>

**416. 16. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana makes one universally adorable<sup>476</sup>**

"Those who utter the Names 'Nārāyaṇa', 'Jagannātha', 'Vāsudeva', 'Janārdana' daily, are the most revered persons throughout the universe."<sup>477</sup> "I daily offer my prostrated obeisances to him who utters the Name 'Hari' while in his sleep, taking his food, walking, sitting, getting up, speaking, etc."<sup>478</sup> "My humble repeated prostrations to all those women,

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474 jagad-ānandakatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

475 sthāne hṛṣīkeṣa tava prakīrtiā  
jagat prahr̥ṣyaty anurajyate ca  
rakṣāṁsi bhītāni diśo dravanti  
sarve namasyanti ca siddha-saṅghāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 11.36; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.402)

476 jagad-vandyatā-pādakatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

477 nārāyaṇa jagannātha vāsudeva janārdana  
itirayanti ye nityaṁ te vai sarvatra vanditāḥ  
(bṛhan-nāradya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.403)

478 svapan bhuñjan vrajaṁs tiṣṭhann uttiṣṭhaṁś ca vadaṁs tathā  
ye vadanti harer nāma tebhya nityaṁ namo namaḥ  
(bṛhan-nāradya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.404)

Śudras, and even Caṇḍālas, or others of sinful births, who constantly utter the Name 'Hari' with implicit faith. "<sup>479</sup>

**417. 17. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana singularly rescues even an absolutely helpless one<sup>480</sup>**

"Even those persons having no other resort, on account of their births in sinful sections of society, those who are deplorably engrossed in creature-comforts, who inflict sufferings upon others, are devoid of learning and dispassion, are bereft of any celibacy, and who are totally abandoned by all Dharmas and who only utter the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' all easily attain that rare Resort, unattainable by even all those who practise all their religious rites. "<sup>481</sup>

**418. 18. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana can be practised everywhere and at all times<sup>482</sup>**

"O Lubdhaka! For chanting Śrī Hari-Nāma, there are no restrictions at all of place and time. There is no objection to

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479strī śūdraḥ pukkaśo vāpi ye cānye pāpa-yonayaḥ  
kīrtayanti hariṁ bhaktyā tebhyo'piha namo namaḥ  
(śrī-nārāyaṇa-vyūha-stava; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.405)

480agaty-eka-gatitvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

481ananya-gatayo martyā bhogino'pi parantapāḥ  
jñāna-vairāgya-rahitā brahmacaryādi-varjitāḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.406)

sarva-dharmojjhitā viṣṇor nāma-mātraika-jalpakāḥ  
sukhena yām gatiṁ yānti na tām sarve'pi dhārmikāḥ  
(bṛhat-sahasra-nāma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.407)

482sadā sarvatra sevyaṭvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

utter His Name even with an unclean mouth."<sup>483</sup> Śrī Hari is the Sanctifier of everything; hence, there is no need of observing any taboo, such as pollution, in uttering His Name; It should be uttered always and everywhere."<sup>484</sup> **For uttering the Name no consideration of place, time, or purity, etc., need ever be observed.** The Name alone is quite independent and does fulfil all the desires of Its votaries."<sup>485</sup> The utterance of the 'Rāma' Nāma repeatedly, delivers all from bondage. It never depends upon time or place, or purity and impurity."<sup>486</sup> O King! There is no special rule in selecting place or time for uttering Śrī Hari-Nāma. In acts like gifts, sacrifices, uttering Mantras, etc., these are, no doubt, observed; but never for chanting the Name."<sup>487</sup>

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483na deśa-niyamas tasmin na kāla-niyamas tathā  
nocchiṣṭhādaṁ niṣedho'sti śrī-harer nāmni lubdhaka  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.408)

484cakrāyudhasya nāmāni sadā sarvatra kīrtayet  
nāśaucaṁ kīrtane tasya sa pavitra-karo yataḥ  
(vaiśākha-māhātmya; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.409)

485na deśa-kālāvasthāsu śuddhy-ādikam apekṣate  
kintu svatantram evaitan nāma kāmīta-kāmadam  
(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.410)

486na deśa-kāla-niyamo na śaucāśauca-nirṇayaḥ  
paraṁ saṅkīrtanād eva rāma rāmeti mucyate  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.410)

487na deśa-niyamo rājan na kāla-niyamas tathā  
vidyate nātra sandeho viṣṇor nāmānukīrtane

kālo'sti dāne yajñe ca snāne kālo'sti saj-jape  
viṣṇu-saṅkīrtane kālo nāsty atra pṛthivī-tale  
(vaiṣṇava-cintāmaṇi; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.412-413)

etan nirvidyamānānām icchatām akuto-bhayam  
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītaṁ harer nāmānukīrtanam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavatā 2.1.11; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.414)



**419. 19. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana achieves Śrī Kṛṣṇa  
Himself<sup>488</sup>**

"O earth! He who utters Names like 'Vāsudeva', 'Acyuta', 'Ananta', 'Nārāyaṇa', etc. constantly, devotes himself to Me indeed!"<sup>489</sup> "O King! Of what avails is the study of Sāṅkhya principles, or the practice of Yoga? **If you yearn for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, do shout the Name 'Govinda'.**"<sup>490</sup> He, who utters the two syllables 'Ha-ri' becomes fit to attain Mokṣa, i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as it amounts to his having grandly accomplished all the practices."<sup>491</sup> Even if persons, with distracted and impure mind, always utter Śrī Hari-Nāma, they are freed from all sins and attain the Supreme Resort like Śiṣupāla, the ruler of the Cedi country."<sup>492</sup> He who utters the Name 'Nārāyaṇa' even once, avoiding all laziness, becomes pure-hearted and exclusively devotes himself to the Supreme Lord."<sup>493</sup> Even a person, who keeps illicit connection with others' wives, and

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488mukti-pradatvam

(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

489nārāyaṇācyutānanta vāsudevete yo naraḥ

satataṁ kīrtayed bhūmi yāti mallayatām sa hi

(vārāha-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.415)

490kiṁ kariṣyati sāṅkhyena kiṁ yogair nara-nāyaka

muktim icchasi rājendra kuru govinda-kīrtanam

(gāruḍa-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.416)

491saḥ uccāritaṁ yena harir ity akṣara-dvayam

baddhaḥ parikaras tena mokṣāya gamanaṁ prati

(skanda-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.417)

492apy anya-citto'śuddho vā yaḥ sadā kīrtayed dharim

so'pi doṣa-kṣayān muktim labhec cedi-patir yathā

(brahma-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.418)

493saḥ uccārayed yas tu nārāyaṇam atandritaḥ

śuddhāntaḥkaraṇo bhūtvā nirvāṇam adhigacchati

(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.419)

practises malicious wickedness on others, becomes pure-hearted by the chanting of Śrī Hari-Nāma, and attains Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Lotus Feet."<sup>494</sup>"Even one, who is rid of all religious conducts and addicted to the commission of various sins, attains Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Lotus Feet through Nāma-Kīrtana; there is not the least doubt in it."<sup>495</sup>"Even sinners, howsoever they utter any of the Lord's Names or hear It, are purified and attain the Lord's Lotus Feet."<sup>496</sup>

**"The twin syllables 'Ha-ri' are the provision for the life's journey, the remedy for the disease of worldliness, and the Sweet Resort for the cessation of grief and deep anguish."<sup>497</sup>"Luscious sweetness - ever new at every moment, flows incessantly from Śrī Murāri's Names, and as such are pregnant with the nectar of music. Those who sing Them aloud unabashed and joyously, are truly the liberated souls, while living. There is no doubt about it."<sup>498</sup>"O Lord! Those who in their helpless state, at the time of their death, utter Your Names describing the Attributes, Accounts, etc., of Your**

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494para-dāra-rato vāpi parāpakṛti-kāraḥ  
sa śuddho muktim āpnoti harer nāmānukīrtanāt  
(mātsya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.420)

495sarva-dharma-bahir-bhūtaḥ sarva-pāpa-ratas tathā  
mucyate nātra sandeho viṣṇor nāmānukīrtanāt  
(vaiśampāyana-saṁhitā; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.421)

496yathā kathañcit yan-nāmni kīrtite vā śrute'pi vā  
pāpino'pi viśuddhāḥ syuḥ śuddhā mokṣam avāpnuyuḥ  
(bṛhan-nāradya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.422)

497prāṇa-prayāṇa-pātheyaṁ saṁsāra-vyādhi-bheṣajam  
duḥkha-śoka-paritrāṇaṁ harir ity akṣara-dvayam  
(bhārata-vibhāga; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.423)

498navyaṁ navyaṁ nāma-dheyaṁ murārer  
yad yac caitad geya-pīyūṣa-puṣṭam  
ye gāyanti tyakta-lajjāḥ sa-harṣaṁ  
jīvan-muktāḥ saṁśayo nāsti tatra  
(nāradya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.424)

Descents, destroying the accumulated sins of many births at once, reach You Who are the naked (uncovered) luminous eternal Truth. I take absolute shelter in You."<sup>499</sup> Saṅkīrtana of the Lord's Attributes, Accounts, Names, etc., are more than enough to destroy such sins of people, because the sinful dying Ajāmila by calling his son Nārāyaṇa by his name, attained liberation."<sup>500</sup>

#### 420. 20. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana leads to Vaikuṇṭha<sup>501</sup>

"People who, while moving, standing, sleeping, inhaling, or exhaling, or even with want of faith, utter the Name 'Hari' - the trampler of Kali, i.e., destroyer of its sins, attains his true nature of liberation. Can there be any doubt of his attaining the highest Dhāma, i.e., Goloka, if he does so with devotion?"<sup>502</sup> Even if a Brāhmaṇa has illicit intercourse with a Caṇḍāla woman in menses, or eats food cooked in intoxicating liquors, but utters the Name 'Hari' at the time of his death, abandoning that very day the heap of sins arising from his past sinful actions, and being liberated from the bondage of

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499yasyāvatāra-guṇa-karma-vidāmbanāni

nāmāni ye'su-vigame vivaśā grṇanti

te'naika-janma-śamalaṁ sahasaiva hitvā

saṁyānty apāvṛtāmṛtaṁ tam ajaṁ prapadye

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.9.15; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.426)

500etāvatālam agha-nirharaṇāya pumsām

saṅkīrtanaṁ bhagavato guṇa-karma-nāmnām

vikruśya putram aghavān yad ajānilo'pi

nārāyaṇeti mriyamāṇa iyāya muktim

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 6.3.24; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.427)

501śrī-vaikuṇṭha-loka-prāpakatvam

(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

502vrajaṁs tiṣṭhan svapann aśnan śvasan vākya-prapūraṇe

nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ viṣṇor helayā kali-mardanam

kṛtvā svarūpatāṁ yāti bhakti-yuktaṁ paraṁ vrajet

(līṅga-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.428)

worldliness, attains residence with Him."<sup>503</sup>"He, on the tip of whose tongue the word 'Hari' always exists, i.e. who always utters 'Hari' attains Viṣṇu Loka, being freed from the cycle of rebirths."<sup>504</sup>"He who utters 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' wherever he be, achieves the highest goal of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's loving service, all his sins being destroyed."<sup>505</sup>"The Name 'Keśava' that is uttered, is the highest and purest of auspicious deeds, the sole passport to go to Śrī Govinda's Abode and that alone is the only place of good deeds in this world."<sup>506</sup>"The sinner (the adulterous) Ajāmila uttering the Name of Śrī Hari in the act of calling his son by his name, at the time of his death, went to Śrī Hari's best Dhāma."<sup>507</sup>"Ajāmila - the resort of all sins, uttering 'Nārāyaṇa' under the semblance of calling his son, went to

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503brāhmaṇaḥ śvapacīm bhuñjan viśeṣeṇa rajasvalām  
aśnāti surayā pakvaṁ maraṇe harim uccaran  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.429)

abhakṣyāgamyayor jātaṁ vihāyāghaughā-saṁcayam  
prayāti viṣṇu-sālokyam vimukto bhava-bandhanaiḥ  
(nārāḍya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.430)

504jihvāgre vartate yasya harir ity akṣara-dvayam  
viṣṇor lokam avāpnoti punar āvṛtti-durlabham  
(bṛhan-nārāḍya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.431)

505yatra tatra sthito vāpi kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇeti kīrtayet  
sarva-pāpa-viśuddhātmā sa gacchet paramām gatim  
(pāḍma-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.432)

506tad eva puṇyam paramaṁ pavitraṁ  
govinda-gehe gamanāya patram  
tad eva loka sukṛtaika-satram  
yad ucyate keśava-nāma-mātram  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.433)

507evam saṅgrahaṇī-putrā-bhidhāna-vyājato harim  
samuccāryānta-kāle'gād dhāma tat paramaṁ hareḥ  
(brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.434)

Vaikuṇṭha. **How much better would the result be, if It is uttered with implicit faith?"** <sup>508</sup>

"Those who sing the Names of Śrī Viṣṇu - Who has black bee-like Eyes on His Lotus Face, like the Face of Śrī Lakṣmī, holds the conchshell, lotus, the disc, the bow and arrow, the mace and sword in His Hands, and Who is the Bestower of boons, sure shall go to the Abode of Śrī Madhusūdana."<sup>509</sup>**"That a person who utters 'Kṛṣṇa' out of fear of worldly life and is freed therefrom, attains His Lotus Feet, is quite certain."**<sup>510</sup>Even, he who is given to the habit of committing the worst sins at all times, attains to the Ultimate goal Vaikuṇṭha by Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana"<sup>511</sup>"O great King! If you really aspire after the attainment of the supreme knowledge, and thence the realisation of Eternal Abode, chant constantly with great regard the Name 'Govinda'."<sup>512</sup>

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508nārāyaṇam iti vyājād uccārya kaluṣāśrayaḥ  
ajāmilo'py agād dhāma kim uta śraddhayā gṛhaṇ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.435)

See footnote 24

509ye kīrtayanti varadaṁ vara-padmanābhaṁ  
śaṅkhābja-cakra-śara-cāpa-gadāsi-hastam  
padmālayā-vadana-paṅkaja-ṣaṭ-padākṣaṁ  
nūnaṁ prayānti sadanaṁ madhu-ghātinā te  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.437)

510vāsudeveti manuja uccārya bhava-bhītitaḥ  
tan-muktaḥ padam āpnoti viṣṇor eva na saṁśayaḥ  
(āṅgira-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.438)

511sarvadā sarva-kāleṣu ye'pi kurvanti pātakam  
nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ kṛtvā yānti viṣṇoḥ paraṁ padam  
(nandi-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.439)

See footnote 5

512yad icchasi paraṁ jñānaṁ jñānād yat paramaṁ padam  
tad-ādareṇa rājendra kuru govinda-kīrtanam  
(gāruḍa-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.441)

**421. 21. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana pleases Śrī Kṛṣṇa<sup>513</sup>**

"By chanting the Name 'Vāsudeva', even a patient or a drunkard becomes eternally free and attains the pleasure of Śrī Mahā Viṣṇu."<sup>514</sup>"O Vipras! Śrī Keśava is pleased with him who performs the Saṅkīrtana of Śrī Viṣṇu's Name, even when he is hungry, thirsty, or stumbling."<sup>515</sup>"O blessed one! He who utters the Name 'Viṣṇu' while he is hungry, thirsty, or while stumbling, etc., pleases Śrī Keśava."<sup>516</sup>

**422. 22. Hence Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana wins over Śrī  
Kṛṣṇa<sup>517</sup>**

"The fact Śrī Kṛṣṇā (Draupadī) cried aloud piteously calling Me by My Name 'Govinda', though very far from her, cannot be obliterated from My Heart, I am over head and ears in her debt."<sup>518</sup>"O Arjuna! I swear before you that I become practically purchased by those who sing the Names in My

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513 śrī-bhagavat-prīṇanatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

514 vāsudevasya saṅkīrtiyā surāpo vyādhito'pi vā  
mukto jāyeta niyataṁ mahā-viṣṇuḥ prasīdati  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.442)

515 nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ kṣut-tṛṭ-praskhalitādiṣu  
karoti satataṁ viprās tasya prīto hy adhokṣajāḥ  
(bṛhan-nāradya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.443)

516 nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ kṣut-tṛṭ-praskhalitādiṣu  
yaḥ karoti mahābhāga tasya tuṣyati keśavaḥ  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.444)

517 śrī-bhagavad-vaśīkāritvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

518 ṛṇam etat pravṛddhaṁ me hṛdayān nāpasarpati  
yad govindeti cukrośa kṛṣṇā mām dūra-vāsinam  
(mahābhārata; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.445)

presence and dance, and those who sing My Names and weep before My Śrī Mūrti; I - Janārdana, being unpurchasable by others, become purchased by them."<sup>519</sup> **Truly he, on the tip of whose tongue the twin syllables 'Ha-ri' exist, has allured and attracted the Lord once and for all.**"<sup>520</sup>

**423. 23. Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana Itself is the highest End of human existence**<sup>521</sup>

"The Kīrtana of Śrī Dāmodara is the most auspicious attainment, the earning of the highest wealth (Prema), and the very purpose of human life."<sup>522</sup> "The Kīrtana of Śrī Vāsudeva is the sublime learning, the highest penance and the supreme truth."<sup>523</sup>

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519gītvā ca mama nāmāni nartayen mama sannidhau  
idaṁ bravīmi te satyaṁ krīto'haṁ tena cārjuna

gītvā ca mama nāmāni rudanti mama sannidhau  
teṣaṁ ahaṁ parikrīto nānya-krīto janārdanaḥ  
(ādi-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.446-447)

520jitaṁ tena jitaṁ tena jitaṁ teneti niścitaṁ  
jihvāgre vartate yasya harir ity akṣara-dvayam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.449)

jitaṁ bhagavān vaśīkṛtaḥ  
(śrī sanātana gosvāmī)

521parama-puruṣārthatvam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa)

522idaṁ eva hi māṅgalyam etad eva dhanārjanam  
jīvitasya phalaṁ caitad yad dāmodara-kīrtanam  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.450)

See footnote 1

523etad eva paraṁ jñānam etad eva paraṁ tapaḥ  
etad eva paraṁ tattvaṁ vāsudevasya kīrtanam  
(viṣṇu-rahasya, śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.452)

424. 24. *Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is the highest form of devotion*<sup>524</sup>

"The Smaraṇa (remembrance) of Śrī Viṣṇu, which destroys all the sins, is accomplished with great exertions; **but His Kīrtana (utterance) is completed just by the movement of lips. Hence it is better than remembrance.**"<sup>525</sup> "O Bharata! Hari's Names will manifest Themselves on the tongue of the person who has worshipped Śrī Vāsudeva in hundreds of births."<sup>526</sup> "All the fruits that one derived in Satya Yuga by devotedly worshipping Śrī Hari even by hundreds of sacrifices, is obtained unimpaired by the Kīrtana of Śrī Govinda in Kali Yuga."<sup>527</sup> **"What is obtained by meditation in Kṛta, by offering sacrifices in Tretā, and by worshipping Śrī Viṣṇu in Dvāpara, is all obtained by the Saṅkīrtana of Śrī Keśava in Kali Yuga."**<sup>528</sup>

"The Manifestation of the Supreme Lord in the age of Kali is that of One Who chants constantly the Name of Śrī

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524bhakti-prakāreṣu śreṣṭhyam

525aghacchit-smaraṇam viṣṇor bahv-āyāsena sādhyate  
oṣṭha-spandana-mātreṇa kīrtanam tu tato varam  
(vaiṣṇava-cintāmaṇi, śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.453)

526yena janma-śataih pūrvam vāsudevaḥ samarcitaḥ  
tan-mukhe hari-nāmāni sadā tiṣṭhanti bhārata  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.454)

527yad abhyarcya hariṁ bhaktyā kṛte kratu-śatair api  
phalaṁ prāpnoty avikalāṁ kalau govinda-kīrtanāt  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.455)

528dhyāyan kṛte yajan yajñais tretāyām dvāpare'rcayan  
yad āpnoti tad āpnoti kalau saṅkīrtya keśavam  
(viṣṇu-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.456)

saṅkīrtya samyak uccairuccārya  
(śrī sanātana gosvāmī)

See footnote 4



Kṛṣṇa, but Whose Bodily complexion is the very opposite, i.e., of a molten gold, Who is accompanied by His constant companions, and attendants, and the weapon-like Names of Śrī Hari; Who is worshipped in this age by the Saṅkīrtana-like sacrifices by the really wise men."<sup>529</sup> **Śrī Hari-Nāma alone, Hari-Nāma alone, and Hari-Nāma solely is my very life. There is no other go, there is no other go, no other go than His Saṅkīrtana.**" "Brahma, even if he has a thousand mouths, will not be able to describe the transcendental fruit of the utterance of Śrī Hari-Nāma uttered even once."<sup>530</sup> "O Devi! When I hear any names beginning with the syllable 'Ra', my mind always becomes happy, thinking that It will be 'Rāma-Nāma'."<sup>531</sup> **I am the lord of all the worlds and am a meditator of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma. I tell you the truth and nothing but the truth that Śrī Hari-Nāma is the Sole Resort.**"<sup>532</sup> **Ō Pārtha! There is always a niche in My Heart for all the names of those, who loudly proclaim My Name with or without faith.**"<sup>533</sup>

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529 kṛṣṇa-varṇaṁ tviṣākṛṣṇaṁ sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam  
 yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.32; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.458)

530 harer nāmaiva nāmaiva nāmaiva mama jīvanam  
 kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā  
 (bṛhan-nāradya-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.460)

sakṛd uccārayanty eva harer nāma cid-ātmakam  
 phalaṁ nāsyā kṣamo vaktuṁ sahasra-vadano vidhiḥ  
 (śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.461)

531 ra-kārādīni nāmāni śṛṇvato devi jāyate  
 prītir me manaso nityaṁ rāma-nāma-viśaṅkayā  
 (padma purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.462)

532 īśo'haṁ sarva-jagatām nāmnām viṣṇor hi jāpakāḥ  
 satyaṁ satyaṁ vadāmy eṣa harer nāma gatir nṛṇām  
 (śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.463)

533 śraddhayā helayā nāma raṭanti mama jantavaḥ  
 teṣāṁ nāma sadā pārtha vartate hṛdaye mama  
 (ādi purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.464)

"There is no knowledge, religious vow, meditation, or any other attainment that is equal or superior to the Name. Neither renunciation, control of the mind, any meritorious deed, nor the highest aspiration is equal to or higher than the Name. It is the Name alone that is the highest form of Mukti; the Name alone is the ultimate end in life. Resort to the Name alone yields the highest kind of peace; resort to the Name alone is the abiding welfare; resort to the Name is the highest devotion; recourse to the Name alone is the ultimate end of knowledge. Attachment to the Name alone is the highest Love; recollection of the Name alone is the true remembrance; the Name alone is the Root Cause of all beings and the Name alone is their Sole Master; the Name alone is the highest Object of worship, and the Name alone is the highest amongst all spiritual masters." <sup>534</sup> **"If a person, on seeing devotees engrossed in the chanting of the Name, becomes attached to them, he achieves Goloka of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and rejoices in His company, i.e., with Me. Hence, O Pārtha! Take the Names with a firm determination, as a person who is saturated with the Name is dear to Me; hence O Arjuna! I again implore you to take to the service of the Name."** <sup>535</sup>

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534na nāma sadṛśaṁ jñānaṁ na nāma sadṛśaṁ vratam  
na nāma sadṛśaṁ dhyānaṁ na nāma sadṛśaṁ phalam

na nāma sadṛśas tyāgo na nāma sadṛśaḥ śamaḥ  
na nāma sadṛśaṁ puṇyaṁ na nāma sadṛśī gatiḥ

nāmaiva paramā muktir nāmaiva paramā gatiḥ  
nāmaiva paramā śāntir nāmaiva paramā sthitiḥ

nāmaiva paramā bhaktir nāmaiva paramā matiḥ  
nāmaiva paramā prītir nāmaiva paramā smṛtiḥ

nāmaiva kāraṇaṁ jantor nāmaiva prabhur eva ca  
nāmaiva paramārādhyo nāmaiva paramo guruḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.465-469)

535nāma-yuktān janān dṛṣṭvā snigdho bhavati yo naraḥ  
sa yāti paramaṁ sthānaṁ viṣṇunā saha modate

## 425. *Mahāprabhu's exposition on 'Harer nāma' Śloka*

"The following is the exposition on the 'Harer nāma' Śloka in the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, as recorded by Murāri Gupta in his 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Caritāmṛta', also known as 'Śrī Murāri Gupta's Kaḍacā', which is an account of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu by Śrī Murāri Gupta, who was an eye-witness of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's Career and His Teachings: "On another day, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu - the Divine Illuminator, while deeply engrossed in Śrī Hari-Saṅkīrtana, gave a discourse on the 'Harer nāma, etc.', Śloka at the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita.<sup>536</sup> **Śrī Hari-Nāma, Hari-Nāma, and Hari-Nāma alone is the Sole Resort; there is no other, no other, no other go except Śrī Hari-Nāma in the age of Kali.**<sup>537</sup> **In Kali Yuga the Primeval Lord prevails verily in the Form of Śrī Hari-Nāma, i.e., in His 'Paramākṣarākṛti'.** Accept that His Svarūpa is His Nāma. He is but 'Kevalam', i.e., the Bestower of final emancipation. 'Kevalam' also means 'Kṛṣṇa-prema-rasāsvāda-prāpakam' and hence 'Karuṇāmayam', i.e., the Bestower of 'Sevāsvāda' of the luscious sweetness of loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This shows that Śrī Hari-Nāma is 'Karuṇā-maya', i.e., pulsating with kindness, as it is in Its very nature to show kindness to those who have Its Ābhāsa. It removes the heart and mind that are engrossed in worldliness and employs them in Śrī Hari with

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tasman nāmāni kaunteya bhajasva dṛḍha-mānasah  
nāma-yuktaḥ priyo'smākaṁ nāma-yukto bhavārjuna  
(ādi purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.470-471)

536śrīman viśvambharo devo hari-kīrtana-tat-paraḥ

aparedyuh paṇḍitasya śrīvāsasya pure vasan  
vyākhyāṁ cakāra ślokasya vakṣyamānasya tac chṛṇu  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.2.26-27)

537harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam

kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.2.28)

loving devotion.<sup>538</sup> In the Śloka 'Harer nāma', the indeclinable 'Eva' is used to mean 'Hari-Nāma' alone and nothing else, i.e., unaided or unaccompanied by any feelings of devotion, etc., or the acquisition of Jñāna, Karma, Yoga, etc., on the part of the aspirant, i.e., by Nāmābhāsa alone, all the sins of the Jīva are not only destroyed, but he becomes eligible to receive Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema too.<sup>539</sup> The 'Hari-Nāma' in the Śloka (522) above is repeated thrice to lay emphasis on It or to show the vehemence of Śrī Hari-Nāma to all the aspirants like the Jñānīs, Karmīs, Yogīs, Bhaktas, etc., or others who do not fall under these four heads to acquire a fondness for It. The indeclinable 'Eva' in the second line of the Śloka (522) is repeated thrice, to show that nothing else other than Śrī Hari-Nāma is able to destroy the sins of a Jīva. All the actions like acquisition of knowledge (Jñāna), Karma such as building of hospitals, Dharmaśālās, etc., renunciation (Tyāga), penance, etc., will never destroy one's sins.<sup>540</sup> The word 'Kevalam' is used to indicate that all the 'Tattvas', i.e., all the true or first principles are manifested from or owe their origin to Śrīman Nāma alone, i.e., Nāma is described as 'Mahaḥ' which is explained by Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī as under: Śrīman Nāma discloses everything. All the Vedas, etc., too originate from the Divine Name alone.<sup>541</sup> It is also said by Brahma in the Tāpanī Śruti in

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538harau premṇa mano harati saṁsārācca  
 haratīti prayojana dvayamuktam  
 (sārārtha-varṣiṇī-tikā)

539nā 'pumān ādi-puruṣaḥ kalāv asty eva rūpavān  
 nāma-svarūpiṇaṁ taṁ tu jānihi sa tu kevalam  
 (śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.2.29)

540vāra-trayaṁ harer nāma dṛḍhārthaṁ sarva-dehinām  
 eva-kāraś ca jīvānāṁ pāpānāṁ nāśa-hetave  
 (śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.2.30)

541auriṁ āśya jñānanto nāma cid viviktan  
 mahas te viṣṇo sumatiṁ bhajāmahe

mahaḥ sarva prakāśakam tata eva sarva vedādy  
 āvirbhāvāt tathā coktaṁ śrī brahmaṇā nāma  
 mayāṣṭādaśākṣara mantra prasaṅge  
 (tāpaniya-śrutau 1.28)

connection with the eighteen syllable Mantra full of Names - 'Having manifested the future creation in those syllables'. But the Vedāntis belonging to the monistic school of philosophy hold that 'Kevalam' or 'Kaivalyam' means the final emancipation arising from the extinction of 'Prārabdha-karma'. The word 'Kevalam' is used in Śloka (522) to indicate its full meaning of achieving for the ardent devotee of Śrī Hari-Nāma, the power of having a thorough relish of the loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, i.e., 'Kṛṣṇa-prema-rasāsvāda-prāpakam', in addition to its power of destroying all the sins by Its Ābhāsa and not in the sense of the Vedāntīs, where their 'Kaivalyam' or final emancipation is attained by Bhoga or by enduring their prārabdha.<sup>542</sup> The word 'Kevalam' is used in place of 'Kaivalyam-bhava', i.e., the ultimate result will surely be auspicious; but 'Kevalam' (522) means that which will be conducive to the achievement or attainment of the ability to have a thorough taste of the delightful sweetness of loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The meaning of the root 'Keva' is 'Sevana' and the termination 'la' is used in the sense of 'Vṛṣ' having the meaning to grant or bestow or impart. Hence the word 'Kevala' is taken to mean that which grants 'Āsvādana' or relish of the 'Kṛṣṇa-prema-rasa', i.e., enduring sweetness of Divine Love to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, Śrī Hari-Nāma is the 'means' or the 'Sādhana' to achieve 'Kṛṣṇa-prema-rasāsvāda'. Śrī Hari-Nāma is also the end of human achievements. The termination 'la' means 'consists of', 'constituted of', 'embodiment of', or 'having the constitution of'. Hence, Śrī Hari-Nāma is the very embodiment of 'Kṛṣṇa-prema-rasāsvāda'. So it is both the 'Sādhana' (means) and the 'Sādhya' (end in Itself). Śrī Hari-Nāma by Its very constitution imparts Its 'Āsvādan' to Its adherent and is full of or saturated with kindness or 'Karuṇāmayam', i.e., It does not at all take into consideration the aspirant's fitness or the want of it to receive Its kindness. The Śloka 'Nāma cintāmaṇi'<sup>543</sup>

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'teṣv akṣareṣu bhaviṣyaj-jagad-rūpaṁ prakāśayat' iti  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 1.169)

542sarva-tattva-prakāśārthaṁ kevalam manyate ca hi  
prārabdha-karma-nirvāṇaṁ kathyate' dvaita-vāḍibhiḥ  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.2.31)

543See footnote 8

strengthens the view.<sup>544</sup> **This conclusively proves that Śrī Hari's Svarūpa is Śrī Hari-Nāma.** There is no difference or distinction between the two. For a person who holds the contrary view or says otherwise, there is no salvation or goal. This is quite certain as Śrīman Mahāprabhu has Himself said so."<sup>545</sup> The Ślokas given below from 'Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta Mahākāvya' by Śrī Kavi-karṇapūra, convey the meaning identical with the ideas conveyed in Śrīman Mahāprabhu's discourse on 'Harer nāma' Śloka.<sup>546</sup>

#### 426. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāmāṣṭaka*

"I bow down to Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma. "O Nāma! The Vedic texts say that Mukti (emancipation) which is ever hankered after by the Yogīs, is achieved by Your Ābhāsa or dim reflection. O Lord! Be pleased to shower Your Grace on me to enable me to write my commentary on You; I do not even beg for access of devotion to You." The author begins his praise of the Divine Name: "O Hari-Nāma! I take absolute shelter in You, the tips of Whose nails forming the limits of Your Lotus Feet are illumined by the lustre emanating from the jewel necklace, viz., the Upaniṣads forming the crest of all the Vedas

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544bhaved iti ca bodhārthaṁ kaivalyaṁ kevalaṁ smṛtam  
kṛṣṇa-prema-rasāsvāda-prāpakaṁ karuṇā-mayam  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.2.32)

545tat-svarūpaṁ harer nāma yo'nyad eva vadet pumān  
tasya nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir ity avadat svayam  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.2.33)

546nādyah pumān ayam udeti sadaiva bhūmau  
nāma-svarūpam iti taṁ tu kalau vidantu  
vāra-traye ca punar-uktir athaiva-kāro  
dārḍhyāya sarva-jagato bahu-jāḍya-bhājah

kaivalyam eva tad idaṁ tv iti kevalasya  
śabdasya dārḍhya-manane pratipādanaṁ tat  
yas tv anyathā vadati tasya gatir hi nāsti  
nasty eva niścitam idaṁ punar eva-kārāt  
(śrī-caitanya-caritāmṛta mahā-kāvya 6.4-5)

and Who is ever being served by multitudes of liberated souls, viz., the Yogīs."<sup>547</sup>

"O Hari-Nāma! I unconditionally take absolute resort in You. The Upaniṣads form the crests of Śrutis which are the jewel necklaces, by the lustre of which are illumined the tips of the nails, forming the limits of the Lotus Feet, establishing thereby the identity or oneness of the Nāma and Nāmī, i.e., One Whose Name It is. By the lustre from the jewel necklaces on the heads of the personification of the Vedas, are illumined the nails of Your Lotus Feet. The meaning is that all the Vedas respectfully salute Your Lotus Feet. In conclusion, it is

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547śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭakam ।

śrīkṛṣṇanāmne namaḥ ।

nāmābhāsenāpi te yogimṛgyā muktiḥ

syādityāhurāmnāyavācaḥ ।

tvad vyākhyāne mahyamīśa pradadyāḥ svasminbhaktim nādhikam  
tatprayāce । ।

bhagavannāma stauti-nikhiletyādibhiḥ ।

nikhila-śruti-mauli-ratna-mālā-  
dyuti-nīrājita-pāda-pankajānta  
ayi mukta-kulair upāśyamānam  
paritas tvām harināma saṁśrayāmi  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 1)

nikhileti । he harināma tvāmaha paritaḥ sarvabhāvena saṁśrayāmi  
। nikhilāḥ śrutimaulaya upaniṣadāstā eva ratnamālāstāsām  
dyutibhirnīrājitaḥ pādapankajayoranto naśvarupā sīmā yasyeti vācye na  
sahābhedādidam bodhyam । 'yatra mūrtidharāḥ kalāḥ' iti  
smaraṇānmūrtānām nikhilānām śrutinām vedānām mauliṣu śiraḥ su yā  
ratnamālāstābhirityapare । śrutayaśca sarve vedā yatpadamānatītyādyāḥ ।  
tātparyeṇa pumarthabhāvena tābhiḥ prātipādyeti bhāvaḥ । tvām  
kimbhūtamityāha-muktakulairapyupāśyamānamiti । etatsāma gāyannāste  
'nīvṛttatarṣairupagīyamānāt' ।  
'etannirvidyamānānāmichchatāmakutobhayam । yoginām nṛpa nirṇotaṁ  
harernāmānukīrtanam ।।' ityādi śrutismṛtibhyaḥ । yoginām  
bhagavadयोगabhājām muktānāmityarthaḥ । ।

established that there is no difference between the Nāma and the Nāmī consequent on the use of such terms as 'Feet, Nails, etc' The author describes the qualifications of the Nāma in his direct address to It (Him) by the term 'Mukta-kulair-upāsyamānam'. The Sāma Veda sings thus: "Who else other than the man - the killer of the innocent beasts will desist from the praises, etc., of the Lord, which are the divine panacea for all worldly ills, alluring to the ears and the mind, and which are ever being sung by those whose minds have ceased to have any attraction to the worldly desires." "O King! It has already been decided by the Sāstras that the incessant utterance of Śrī Hari-Nāma is the sole and sure means for the Yogīs, who strive to free themselves from the clutches of worldly desires, and cherish to be free from all fears." Thus the Glory of the Name is described by the Śrutis and Smṛtis, etc. The term 'Yogi' also means those who desire union or intercourse with the Lord."

"To the query how I shall give shelter to you who are full of sins, the second Śloka is the answer: "Victory to You O Nāma! Who have taken the Form of Akṣaras (syllables) for gratifying the people. O You Who are ever being sung by hosts of sages! If You are just uttered even out of want of respect, You wipe out that thick covering of sins."<sup>54832</sup>

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54832 nanu dūritākrāntāya te katham saṁśrayam dāsyāmi tatrāha -

jaya nāma-dheya muni-vṛnda-geya he  
jana-rañjanāya paramākṣarākṛte  
tvam anādarād api manāg udīritam  
nikhilogra-tāpa-paṭalīm vilumpasi  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 2)

jayeti | he nāmadheya he munivṛndageya tvaṁ jaya |  
duritarāśinirdāhakatālakṣaṇam svotkarṣamāviṣkurviti bhāvaḥ | anādarāt  
sāṁketyapārihāsadināpi manāgalpamevodītimuccāritam sa tvaṁ  
nikhilānāmugratāpānām liṅgadehaparyantānām paṭalīm vilumpasi  
nāśayasi | 'sāṁketyam pārihāsyam vā stobham helanameva vā |  
vaikuṇṭhanāmagrahaṇamaśeṣāghaharam viduḥ | |  
parihāsopahāsādyairviṣṇornāma gṛṇanti ye | kṛtārthāste'pi  
manujāstebhyo'piha namo namaḥ | | pramādādapi saṁsprṣṭo  
yathānalakāṇo dahet | tathosṭhapuṭasaṁsprṣṭam harināma dahedagham  
| | ityādi smṛtibhyaḥ | tathā ca svaprabhāvam smṛtvā mām punīhi



"O Nāma! O the One, ever being sung by the sages! Be victorious The idea is that You should display Your greatness which consists in Your capacity to destroy completely all the accumulated sins. 'Anādarāt', i.e., without respect, means that the unintentional taking of the Nāma, etc., as in the case of Ajāmila on his deathbed, or uttering a little of the Name jokingly or out of contempt, destroys the layers of the most heinous sins not of this mortal frame alone, but even of the Liṅga-deha or the subtle body. Footnote Nos. 243, 375 and 451 are in support of this particular contention. So the Smṛtis say about the power of the Nāma to destroy all the sins. Hence, by remembering Your prowess, purify me. The sense is that I am the propagator of Your Glory. You have taken the Form of Transcendental Akṣaras or syllables to entertain Your devotees. This indicates Your kindness. The Transcendental Akṣaras are indicative of 'Pararūpatva' of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, i.e., 'Cit-svarūpa'. The Smṛtis say, 'O Viṣṇu! We take resort to Your Nāma only, being convinced about Its greatness, Its Spiritual Form and Its Transcendental Blissful Nature.' "It is the highest luminous fruit, i.e. Cit-svarūpa of all the Vedic creepers.' This shows that the Svarūpa of the Akṣaras is also Transcendental in the same way as the Forms of the Avatāras, like the Divine Swan, the Divine Boar, of the Transcendental Kṛṣṇa."

"The Nāmābhāsa or the dawning of the Nāma. alter burning out all sins of the person, does not halt there, but it further imparts to him devotion or Bhakti to Its Possessor, i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa. "O Bhagavān! O the Sun of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma! Which Paṇḍita in this world will ever be able to aptly describe Your prowess? By the dawning of Your Ābhāsa, even the pitch-darkness of this mundane existence is swallowed up and a loving devotion to You is simultaneously conferred on him, who is blind to the cardinal principles of Dharma and aim of life." <sup>54933</sup>

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tvadyaśaḥ pracārako'hamiti bhāvaḥ | he janarañjanāya paramakṣarākṛte iti  
 dayālutvaṁ vyajyate | paramakṣaretyatra śakandhvādītvātteḥ  
 pararupatvam | 'auṁ āśya jānanta nāma cid vivikta mahas te viṣṇo  
 sumatiṁ bhajāmahe' iti śruteḥ | 'sakalanigamavallisatphalaṁ cit-svarupam'  
 iti smaraṇācca cidātmakākṣarākāraṁ nāma yathā nāmināḥ kṛṣṇasya  
 cidrūpasya haṁsaśūkarāvīpuścīdrūpameva tadvat | |

54933 na ca nāmābhāsaḥ pāpānyeva dagdhvā nivartate api tu svavācye  
 bhaktiṁ ca prakāśayatītyāha -

"O Kṛṣṇa! O the Sun of Kṛṣṇa-Nāma! Which scholar in this world will ever be able to explain Your most exalted Glory? None at all. Why? Because even Your Ābhāsa in the form of utterance of Your praises, etc., bestows loving devotion on those who are engulfed in the darkness of worldliness. Thus being blind to the very essence of his existence, even a wise and learned person will never be able to fathom the magnitude of Your Glory; at the most he may only be able to guess it, but not to have an exact idea except one who knows the secrets of the truths about you. This idea is clearly elucidated in the words of Śruti "Aum Asya, etc." The prefix 'A' denotes mere or just mention of the Nāma, (even unintentional, jokular, contemptuous, etc.) that imparts a loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

"Thus if absolute shelter is taken in Śrī Hari-Nāma, then It destroys the Prārabdha, without the person having to undergo its influence and which is terminable only after it is endured. "The Vedas proclaim at the top of their voice that Prārabdha, i.e., the accumulated good or bad actions of previous births, which are not destructible even by the constant revelation of Brahman, completely disappears the

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yad-ābhāso'py udyan kavalita-bhava-dhvānta-vibhavo  
dṛśaṁ tattvāndhānām api diśati bhakti-praṇayinīm  
janas tasyodāttaṁ jagati bhagavan-nāma-taraṇe  
kṛti te nirvaktuṁ ka iha mahimānaṁ prabhavati  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 3)

yaditi | he bhāgavannāmatarāṇe kṛṣṇanāmasūrya iha jagati kaḥ  
kṛti paṇḍito janasta udāttamatyuccaṁ mahimānaṁ nirvaktāṁ prabhavati  
| na ko'pīyarthāḥ | kuta iti cettatrāha-yasya tavābhāso'smākaṁ  
stutyādibhiruccāraṇaṁ kalikavalito grasto bhavadhvāntāvibhavaḥ  
saṁsṛtimivasāmpadyena tādṛśaḥ san tattvāndhānām  
tattvadṛṣṭihīnānāmapi bhaktipraṇayinīm kṛṣṇabhaktiviśayāṁ dṛśaṁ  
prajñāṁ diśatvarpayatīti tavedṛśaṁ mahimni vijño'pi vinā  
tvattatavidupadeśādato vinirvaktuṁ na prabhavatīti | etatpadyārthaśca  
'aum āsya' iti śrūtau vikphuṭaḥ | āiṣatsāmketvādibhīrnamabruvatām  
viṣṇuviśayakasumatilābhābhīdhanāt |

moment Śrī Hari-Nāma dawns on the tongue of Its devotee. <sup>55034</sup>

55034 athaikāntikabhāvenopāsitaṁ nāma bhogaikavināśyamapi  
prārabdhaṁ vinaiva bhogādvinaśayatitvāha -

yad brahma-sākṣāt-kṛti-niṣṭhayāpi  
vināśam āyāti vinā na bhogaiḥ  
apaiti nāma sphuraṇena tat te  
prārabdha-karmeti virauti vedaḥ  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 4)

yaditi | yayā brahmaṇaḥ paramātmānaḥ sākṣātkṛtiḥ syāt  
tayāpyavicchinnatāladhārāvātpravūttayā niṣṭhayā brahmacintayā  
yatprārabdhaṁ karma bhogairvinā na vināśamāyāti he nāma tatte  
sphuraṇena jihvādaḥ bhāsanenaivāpaiti dūribhavati viśliṣyatīti vedo  
virauti | gadatītyarthaḥ | brahmavidyayābhyuditayā  
saṁcitakriyamāṇayoḥ puṇyapāpayorvināśāśleṣau bhavataḥ | 'ubhe  
ihaiveṣa ete taratyamṛtaḥ sādhasādhuṇi' iti śruteḥ | phaladānāya pravṛtte  
puṇyapāpe prārabdhaṁ karmocyate | tatttu bhogenaiva kṣīyate na tu  
brahmavidyayā | 'tasya tāvadeva ciraṁ yāvanna vimokṣye' iti śruteḥ |  
evameva nirṇītaṁ bhagavatā sūtrakāreṇa - 'tad-adhigama  
uttara-pūrvāghayor aśleṣa-vināśau tad-vyapadeśāt | itarasyāpy evam  
asaṁśleṣaḥ | pāte tu anārabdha-kārye eva tu pūrve tad-avadheriti |  
eṣāmārthāśca' -tadadhigame brahmānubhave satyuktarapūrvayoḥ  
kriyamāṇasaṁcitayoraghaṇayorāśleṣavināśau staḥ | tad vyapadeśacchṛtau  
tathokteriti | itarasya puṇyasyāpyevamasamśleṣo vināśāśca dehasya  
prārabdharacitasya pāte tu mokṣaḥ syāditi pūrve'nārabdhakārye saṁcite  
pāpapuṇye vidyayā vināśyato na tarabdhakārye ca te | tannāśasya  
bhogāvadhitvāditi | tacca prārabdhaṁ karma nāmoccāraṇādapagacchatīti  
tasyoditi nāma 'sa eṣa sarvebhyaḥ pāpebhya uditi udaiti ha vai sarvebhyaḥ  
pāpabhyo ya evaṁ veda' iti śruteḥ | atroditi bhagavannāmopāsanayā  
sarvapāpāpagamokteḥ prārabdhasyāpyapagamaḥ spaṣṭaḥ |  
itthamabhipretya śātyāyaninaḥ paṭhānti - 'tasya putrā dāyamupayanti  
suhṛdaḥ sādhuḥkṛtyāṁ dviṣantaḥ pāpakṛtyāṁ' iti | kauṣītakinaśca -  
'tatsukṛtaduṣkṛte vidhūnute tasya priyā jñātayaḥ sukutamupayantyapriyā  
duṣkṛtaṁ' iti | evamāha bhagavānsūtrakāraḥ - 'ato'nyāpi  
hyekeṣāmubhayoriti | asyārthaḥ - ekeṣāṁ nāmaikāntināṁ  
paramānurāgiṇāṁ vinaiva bhogāt prārabdhayoḥ sukṛtaduṣkṛtayoraśleṣo

"O Nāma! That Prārabdha Karma, which even by the unbroken meditation on Brahman, practised continuously like unbroken stream of oil, does not reach its end without the person having to suffer from its good or bad consequences, takes to its heels the moment Śrī Hari-Nāma dawns on the tongue of that person; thus the Vedas proclaim at the top of their voice. By the achievement of knowledge of Brahman, the fruits of the meritorious and sinful deeds, which are being accumulated in this birth only, are destroyed. The Śrutis say, "He surmounts both the good and bad consequences of the deeds performed in this life." When the accumulated or sinful deeds of the past births begin to bear fruits, they are called Prārabdha. This Prārabdha diminishes only when its fruits, good or bad, are endured and not even by the acquisition of knowledge of Brahman. The Śrutis say: "They will adhere to him so long as I do not free him from their consequences." Thus it has been decided by the revered author of the aphorisms: "Even when he has experienced the Supreme Spirit, the consequences of the sins which are being committed in this life are destroyed." This is adduced by the Śrutis. Similarly, the reduction and the destruction of the consequences of the other meritorious deeds too, will take place only when the form or body in which one is caused to be born as a result of his Prārabdha, falls and then only his liberation takes place. Thus it is clear that the meritorious and sinful deeds of this birth, which have not commenced to bear fruits, are alone destroyed by Brahma-Vidyā. But those of the previous births which have already commenced to bear fruits, are not destroyed by Brahma-Vidyā, until their good or evil consequences have been undergone. **This Prārabdha Karma, the Śrutis proclaim, melts away by the utterance of Śrīman Nāma alone.** The Śrutis say, "Know that a person who is born out of sins, will have the disposition to practise nothing but wickedness alone." Because it is said that 'all' the sins are destroyed by the utterance of Nāma, it is clear that the word 'all' includes all the sins arising out of Prārabdha also. Having thus described it, the Satyāyana, i.e., an oblation for remedying a wrong in the performance of a rite, is quoted: "His sons receive presents, the doers of good deeds will be their friends, and they will hate the evil doers." Kauṣītakinah say, "When it comes to the

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bhavatīti svikāryam | hi yasmāttasya tāvadeva ciramityādikāyāḥ  
 prārabdham bhoganaśyamiti vadantyāḥ śruteranyā tasya  
 putrādāyamityādikā tadarthikā śrutirasti' iti | |

distribution of their good or evil actions, his dear kinsmen gain the good, and those who are not dear, receive the bad actions." Hence, the venerable author of Sūtras or Aphorisms says thus: "Hence, the 'Anyāpi', i.e., even the sins amongst the two kinds of Sukṛtas and Duṣkṛtas are washed away, i.e., it is to be accepted that the meritorious or sinful deeds, which have begun to show their effects, of persons who have taken absolute resort in Nāma with full loving devotion to It, are completely annihilated without their having to undergo their influence." Because the Śrutis say, "That his Prārabdha will stick to him so long as I do not liberate him from its consequences and that it will disappear only when he suffers its consequences, etc."

"This Nāma is very kind, as in order to give indescribable different kinds of joys to its devotees, It reveals Itself in manifold forms. "O Nāma! O the Son of Nanda! Yours are manifold Forms (Svarūpas) such as Aghadamana, Yaśodānandana, Nandanandana, Kamalanayana (Lotus-eyed), Gopīcandra (the Moon amongst the star-like Gopīs), Vṛndāvanaendra (the Lord of Vṛndāvana), Kṛṣṇa, Praṇata-karuṇa (Merciful to those taking absolute shelter at Your Feet). May my love to You ever grow in intensity and profusion."<sup>55135</sup>

"Your great kindness is quite evident; hence, I take absolute shelter in You alone. "O Nāma! Your two Svarūpas, viz., one that is conveyed (Vācya) and one that conveys (Vācaka) shine. Of the two the Latter is kinder than the Former, because a person who has committed countless offences

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55135

bhaktebhyo vicitrānandānpradātum

bahurupatayāvirbhāvadatikaruṇamidam nāmeti bhāvenāha -

agha-damana-yaśodā-nandanau nanda-sūno

kamala-nayana-gopī-candra-vṛndāvanendrāḥ

praṇata-karuṇa-kṛṣṇāv ity aneka-svarūpe

tvayi mama ratir uccair vardhatām nāma-dheya

(śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 5)

agheti | he nāmadheya evamavitarkyamahimni tvayi mama  
ratirvardhatām | tvayi kīdrśi | he aghadamana he yaśodānandana he  
nandasūno ityevamādividhayānekaśvarūpe'ṣṭottaraśatatām prāpta  
ityarthaḥ ||

against the Vācya Svarūpa, i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa Svarūpa, has all his sins destroyed and even it submerged in the ocean of bliss the moment he serves the Vācaka Svarūpa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma), by mouth by uttering Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma."<sup>552</sup>

"O Nāma! You shine in two Forms as Nāmī and Nāma, i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Svarūpa and Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma. This 'Vācyam' is the all-pervading Svarūpa full of Bliss, as the Supreme Lord. In the 'Vācaka' Form, You assume the Form of Transcendental group of letters (Varṇa-pracaya-rūpa) like 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Govinda', etc. There we take the Latter, i.e., 'Varṇa-pracaya-rūpa' Which is Vācaka as more kind than Your Vācya-Svarūpa. Why? Because, if a person commits nothing but countless offences on every side against Your Vācya-Svarūpa, i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Svarūpa, he by simply serving Your Vācaka-Svarūpa by mouth, i.e., by uttering Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma, gets all his sins destroyed and takes a deep plunge in the ocean of eternal bliss of loving devotion to You." "There is no doubt whatsoever that I forgive that person, who sings My Nāma with implicit faith, of crores of his offences and becomes blessed." **The Nāma and the Nāmī are One and the Same.** The Smṛtis say again, "Nāma

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552 atikaruṇatvaṁ te sphaṭamasti atastvāmeva saṁśrayāmīti bhāvenāha -

vācyo vācakam ity udeti bhavato nāma svarūpa-dvayaṁ  
pūrvasmāt param eva hanta karuṇā tatrāpi jānīmahe  
yas tasmin vihītāparādha-nivahaḥ prāṇī samantād bhaved  
āsyenedam upāsya so'pi hi sadānandāmbudhau maj-jati  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 6)

vācyamīti | he nāma tava vācyam vācakamīti svarupadvayamṛdeti  
cakāsti | vācyam vibhu caitadānandāsmo vīgrahaḥ pareśaḥ | vācakam  
kṛṣṇa-govindetvādiko varṇapracayaḥ | tatra  
pūrvasmādvacyāttādr̥g vīgrahātparameva tādr̥g varṇapracayarupam  
vācakameva vayam karuṇam jānīmahe | kuta iti cettatrāha | yaḥ prāṇī  
tāsmīnvācyasvarupe samantādvihītāparādhanivahaḥ kṛtāpacāravṛndo  
bhavet | so'pīdam vācakasvarūpamāsyenopāsya mukhenoccārya  
vinaṣṭatatrivahaḥ san sadānandāmbudhau bhagavatpremasukhe majjati  
kṛtārtho bhavatīti | 'mama nāmāni loke'smīnśraddhayā yastu kīrtayet |  
tasyāparādhakoṭīstu kṣamāmyeva na saṁśayaḥ | 'iti smaraṇāt |  
nāmanāminoradvaitam tu 'nāma-cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś-caitanya-rasa-vīgrah  
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nityamukto 'bhinnatvān nāma nāmīnoḥ' iti smaraṇāt | |

Cintāmaṇi", i.e., the jewel that fulfils all desires, is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, i.e., Whose Svarūpa (Form) is Caitanya Rāsa, i.e., enlivening, luscious sweetness or Nāma Cintāmaṇi is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Who animated the whole of India with the Divine Consciousness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by His incessant and ecstatic utterance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma. He is the fullest Manifestation, ever pure, ever free, as there is no difference between the Nāma and the Nāmī."

"Verily, if all the thirty-two kinds of offences against the Nāmī. i.e., against Its Svarūpa mentioned in the Purāṇas are destroyed by uttering the thirty-two Names, and ten Nāmāpardhas or offences against the Nāma, such as scandalising the Bhaktas, etc., by the utterance of the ten Names, even then It is the Nāma alone that does the trick, "O Nāma! O Kṛṣṇa! I bow to You Whose lustre (Kānti) is all-pervading and Who are the destroyer of all the offences of those who have taken absolute refuge in You, Whose Svarūpa is delightfully charming, giving intense enlivening and celestial happiness. I bow to You Who are the object of festivity and rejoicing to the whole of Gokula."<sup>55337</sup>

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55337                      nanu nāmnyaparādhā dvātrimśannāmṇā  
vinaśyeyurnāmāparādhāḥ              sādhunindādayo daśakena vinaśyeyuriti  
cette'pi nāmnaiveti              bhāvavānāha -

sūditāśrita-janārti-rāśaye  
ramya-cid-ghana-sukha-svarūpiṇe  
nāma gokula-mahotsavāya te  
kṛṣṇa-pūrṇa-vapuṣe namo namaḥ  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 7)

sūditeti | he nāma he kṛṣṇa te tubhyaṁ namo namaḥ | te  
kīḍṣāyetyāha-sūdito vināśita āśritajanānāmārtirāśirnamāparādhānto yena  
tasmai | 'jāte nāmāparādhhe tu pramādena katham ca na | sadā  
saṅkīrtayannāma tadekaśaraṇo bhavet | | nāmāparādhayuktānām  
nāmānyeva harantyaadham | aviśrāntaprayuktāni tānyevāryakarāṇi yat | |  
iti smaraṇāt | vṛttānaparādhānkaśamaya | tāsām prati kebhyo vinivṛttena  
sarvadā prayuktāni japtānīti bodhyam | 'aparādhavimukto hi nāmni  
yatnam samācaret' iti smaraṇāt | punaste kīḍṣāya | ramyaṁ cidghanam  
yatsukham tatsvarupīṇe | nāmacintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇa ityādeḥ | punaste  
kīḍṣāya | gokulasya mahānūtsavo yasmāttasmai | pūrṇavapuṣe  
vyāpakāya | |

"O Nāma! O Kṛṣṇa! I offer my prostrated obeisance to You, Who remove all kinds of distress arising from the commission of offences against You, by those who whole-heartedly depend upon You. If one commits an offence against the Nāma through inadvertence or howsoever, by clearly and loudly uttering the Nāma always, he should take absolute shelter in It. The Names alone remove the sins of those who commit Nāmāparādhās. **They should take to the uttering the Nāma tirelessly, as They (Names) alone will enable such persons to achieve the highest goal of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema, and the Āsvādāna or relishing the delicious sweetness of Śrī Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, provided they desist from the commission of such offences.** Kindly forgive me for the existing offences. It should be understood from the above Śloka, that the Names are muttered or uttered simultaneously refraining from committing Nāmāparādhās. One should practise the Nāma, being free from the offences at the same time. To Him Whose Svarūpa is of Transcendental ecstasy, as in the Śloka "Nāma Cintāmaṇi, etc." I bow to Him Who causes intense joy to the whole of Gokula and Who is the fullest Manifestation."

Now he (Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī) prays for manifestation of Śrīman Nāma on his own tongue. "O Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma! O the Enlivener of Nārada's lute! O the Causer of the floods of Divine Ecstasy oozing out nectarine waves, kindly dance on my tongue in all Your sweetness to Your heart's content for ever."<sup>55438</sup>

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atha nāmnaḥ svasminsphūrṭi prārthayati-

nārada-viṇoj-jīvana-sudhormi-niryāsa-mādhurī-pūra  
tvaṁ kṛṣṇa-nāma kāmāṁ sphura me rasane rasena sadā  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāṣṭaka 8)

nāradeti | nāradasya viṇāmujjivayati cetayatīti he tādrśa |  
sudhorminiryāsa iva mādhurīpūro yasya | he kṛṣṇanāma tvaṁ  
rasenānurāgeṇa me rasane sphura | kāmāṁ yatheṣṭam | tvadgrahāṇe na  
me sāmārthyam tvameva majjihvāyām virājasvetyarthaḥ |  
mukhyatvātkṛṣṇeti nāmnaḥ sphūrtirante'bhyarthitā | 'nāmnām  
mṛkhyatamaṁ nāma kṛṣṇākhyam me paramtapa' iti vacanāt |  
aṣṭakapāṭhaphalamaṣṭakādeva vyaktam atastannoktam | iti  
śrīnāmāṣṭakam vyākhyātam |



"You are the Enlivener of Nārada's lute; Whose inundation of the sweetness, resembles the exudation of nectarine billows. O Kṛṣṇa-Nāma! Kindly manifest Yourself on my tongue with ardent love to Your heart's content, for I am devoid of any power to grasp You. You Yourself kindly reign supremely on my tongue. **Because of the outstanding qualities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma, the Mahānubhāva (Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī) at the conclusion humbly begs of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma alone to throb on the tongue. This is because Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself says that of all His Names Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma is the most important.** The fruit of reading the Nāmāṣṭaka is made clear in the Aṣṭaka only; hence, it is not separately stated. So ends the commentary on Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka. If Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is an ocean of mercy, had not written 'the Stavamālā' or the collection of praises, the devotees would not have known and enjoyed the sweet qualities of the Son of the Lord of Vraja, His Svarūpa and His Līlās, etc."

## 5 SRI KṚṢṆA SANKIRTAN - THE QUINTESSENCE

THIS concluding chapter is an epitome, as it lays great emphasis on 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Bhakti' and 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana' that is evidently the main subject-matter of this treatise. A special attempt is made in this chapter to point out threadbare, the unique position of unalloyed loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It needs no mention that while making efforts to reinforce the main subject, and to bring out its unparalleled glory, the author never, consciously or unconsciously, wishes to wound the feelings of others, who are the votaries of other gods or other modes of worship. **The subject is based fully and obediently on the authentic scriptures, as expounded by the six renowned Saints of Vṛndāvana, who are the pillars of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's cult of loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Śrī**

**Kṛṣṇa-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana**, and whose works are living monuments of their tireless work in this field. **Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana** is the highest form of devotion for all the Jīvas in this Kali Yuga. It shows clearly how Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Bhakti is superior to all other forms of worship or religious practices. A few examples are also quoted to enable the reader to come to the same conclusion.

King Parīkṣit, while hearing Śrīmad Bhāgavata from the holy mouth of Śrī Śukadeva, puts a salient question to him thus, "How is it that the devotees of Śiva who apparently seems 'Aśiva,' i.e., inauspicious, because of his wearing a necklace of human skulls, smearing his person with the ashes from the burning-Ghat, and carrying serpents on his person, etc., are found to enjoy wealth and worldly enjoyments in plenty, whereas, the devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is ever being served by the Goddess of wealth, i.e., Śrī Lakṣmīdevī, do not become voluptuaries?"<sup>55539</sup>

### 51. *Kṛṣṇa-Prema - The highest spiritual wealth*

Śukadeva replies thus, "You have put the same question to me that your grandfather Yudhiṣṭhira, after the completion of his horse-sacrifice, had put to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I shall quote to you Śrī Kṛṣṇa's answer to him." "I gradually deprive the devotee of his wealth, whom I oblige with My Grace. He who desires to renounce enjoyment of worldly pleasures, gets somehow entangled therein and then grieves. To free such a person from the shackles of worldliness is definitely a favour to him, as in the case of devotees like Dhruva, etc., who were averse to the enjoyment of worldly pleasures; or to be more accurate, by first bestowing prosperity on him according to his desires, gradually at the end of its enjoyment, I create in him a nausea for such transient pleasures and free him with intent to confer on him the highest favour." It is already said by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, "The desires of those whose mind is engrossed in Me, do not tend towards the enjoyments of worldly pleasures, in the same way

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55539 devāsura-manuṣyesu ye bhajanty aśivaṁ śivam  
prāyas te dhanino bhojā na tu lakṣmīyāḥ patiṁ harim

etad veditum icchāmaḥ sandeho 'tra mahān hi naḥ  
viruddha-śīlayoḥ prabhvor viruddhā bhajatām gatīḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.1-2)

as the grains which are parched or boiled cannot be used as seeds for sowing." Hence, his (devotee's) own people forsake him and he becomes doubly grieved; he becomes apathetic for the loss of his wealth in the first instance, and secondly because he is forsaken by his own kith and kin; this grief being caused by the Divine Will, cannot be taken as the fruit of his actions. Similarly for a devotee, his happiness too is neither the result of his actions, nor it is the fruit connected with his devotion. "It is already said that practice of Dharma achieves liberation, and the most insignificant creature-comforts or the enjoyment of worldly pleasures, consequent on the satisfaction of the cravings of the sense-organs or senses, are not the real fruits." In the words of Bhīṣma also, it is established that in the case of devotees, who are addicted to Bhakti alone, all their Prārabdha Karmas, i.e., the accumulated sins of past births, along with their despised seed or the root-cause, are gradually destroyed, like the gradual piercing through or the plucking of the petals of the thousand-petalled lotus. This is the opinion of the devotional code, as also of the Śruti, and Gopāla Tāpanī.

## 52. *Kṛṣṇa's deeds are unfathomable*

"Bhakti is His devotion, which means concentrating the mind in Him, without impediments of any kind, in this world or in the next. This itself is Naiṣkarmya, i.e., freedom from worldly acts; this means fixing the mind in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, unimpeded and without any extraneous desires; this is nothing else than the employment of the sense-organs and senses in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This kind of service alone is Naiṣkarmya, or freedom, or exemption from worldly acts or their consequences. Hence, because of the ultimate similarity (but not identity) of the situations, as the devotees get more and more engrossed and advanced in Bhakti or devotion, their Naiṣkarmya or exemption from all kinds of worldly acts or their consequences results automatically; but this shows that inactivity or idleness is not Naiṣkarmya, unless one engages himself in the service of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The sustenance of the body or the physical well-being of the devotees, is due to the inexplicable power of the Lord, which is conducive to the attainment, or achievement of the fruit of intense devotion. But their happiness or sorrow which are apparently similar to the happiness or sorrow arising as the fruit of Prārabdha, are assigned by the Lord or caused by His Will only, and what the Śruti say as co-existent with 'Śubha'

and 'Aśubha', i.e., auspicious and inauspicious. How does the Lord Who is Bhaktavatsala (or kind to His devotees), cause affliction to His Own devotees? If any one puts this question, the answer to it, is truly in the affirmative, in the same way as the father who, even if he is kind to his sons, causes pain to them by asking them to study and to give up their enjoyments; he alone knows what this Vātsalya or kindness to his children is and not even those very sons, in the heat of the moment realise it. It should not be construed that the Lord is keen in doing what is beneficial to His devotees, favours only a few Bhaktas like Prahlāda, Dhruva, etc., by giving them the means of worldly enjoyments and that He is unfair to His other devotees and causes only grief to them. Even great personages like Yudhiṣṭhira – the crest-jewel amongst the most eminent sages with Bhīma - the expert in the art of the use of the mace, Arjuna - the expert archer with the bow 'Gāṇḍīva', and even having the Divine Friend Śrī Kṛṣṇa, had to undergo untold miseries. Even the great Bhīṣma has uttered the words in grief thus, "O King Yudhiṣṭhira! A person can never understand the actions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in their true perspective, and becomes deluded if he persists in such efforts." The conclusive proof is that He Who is kind to His devotees, alone knows His intention and no one else; this is the true logical conclusion."

### 53. *God-given griefs -vs- those from one's acts*

"Whatever little is inferred therefrom, can be seen there only. Because of the similarity in the enjoyment and suffering of both the kinds of happiness and sorrow, arising as the result of one's own actions (Śva-karmottha) and those caused by the Will of the Lord (Bhagavaduttha), what special peculiarity can one see in these two kinds of happiness and misery? **The seed or the root-cause of the former type of happiness or sorrow arising as a consequence of one's acts (Śva-karmottha) remain even after their enjoyment or suffering; those who have this seed within them, will again have the disposition to commit fresh sins, persistently indulge in them, and go to the infernal hell; and the enjoyment or suffering as a natural sequence to their good or bad actions, will be in proportion to the latter and so this will be the third result of the triad.** But as the root-cause of those that are caused by the Will of the Lord, rests in Him only, their (devotees) enjoyment or suffering, will last so long as the necessity is felt by Him and not beyond that. Yama—the god of death, says to his servants.

"Bring those non-devotees here who do not utter the Name and Attributes of the Lord, nor remember Him, nor bow Śrī Kṛṣṇa with their heads even once, nor do any kind of service to Him." He further says in Nṛsimha Purāṇa, "I have been appointed by the Creator - Who is ever being worshipped by other gods, for maintaining justice amongst the people. I punish those people who do not accept Śrī Hari Himself as their Guru; whereas I bow down to those who take shelter as the Lotus Feet of Śrī Hari as the Guru." Hence, from the words of Yama, it is inferred that devotees of the Lord have not to suffer in the infernal hell; because of their being worthy to receive their Lord's affection, they have not to undergo excess of grief or suffering. There is as much difference in the suffering arising as a consequence of one's actions (Sva-karmottha), and that caused by the Divine Will (Bhagavaduttha) as there exists between the beatings of one's enemy and the punishment by his own mother. There is as much difference between them as there is between a deadly poison and nectar. One should decide for himself how there could ever be a comparison between these two. For the Supreme Lord Who can do and undo anything and everything, can anyone with any modicum of justice say that He teases His devotees without any adequate cause or that He has nothing else to do, except the teasing of His Own devotees and that too without any just purpose? Truly there is some purpose behind it. He is an Ocean of Divine Pastimes. To maintain the secrecy of the loving faith, to prevent the total eradication of other creeds, and to enhance the ardent longing, etc., of the devotees for the Divine Beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa by loving devotion, even causing pain at times to the Bhākta who is always dear to Him, results in the end in his happiness only, like the application of the somewhat irritating collyrium to the eyes. Similarly if the devotees are always happy, there will not arise any occasion for Him to descend on this earth, as stated in the Gītā, "For the protection of the devotees, the destruction of the wicked, and for the maintenance of the Yuga Dharma, I come down on this earth in every age." So if this main reason for His Descent on this earth, as stated in the Gītā, were removed, there would not have been the Descents of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rāma, etc. In that case, how will the devotees enjoy themselves to their heart's content in the Nectarine Ocean of His Divine Pastimes, like the Rāsa-Līlā, etc.? What wrong would it be for Him to come down here without this sound and appropriate cause of yielding protection to the aggrieved? True but O brother! You seem to lack in the sense and quality of appreciating the beauty

underlying therein. You do not seem to be a Rasabhijna! So hear me. The sunrise is appreciated only because of the nights; the sweetness of cold water is experienced only because of the summer or the hot season; hot water is very much liked only in the contrasting cold season; a lamp looks beautiful and is valued and useful only in pitch darkness and not in the sun-light; food tastes sweet only when one is afflicted by extreme hunger; too many instances have already been quoted; so this should be enough."<sup>556</sup>

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556yasyāham anuḡrḥṇāmi hariṣye tad-dhanam śanaiḥ  
tato 'dhanam tyajanty asya svajanā duḥkha-duḥkhitam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.8)

yasyāhamanuḡrḥṇāmīti ayamārthaḥ | yo viṣayān parijihīṣurapi  
kathañcidvidyamāneṣu viṣayeṣu sajjate kliṣyati ca tasya viṣayāpahāra  
evānugraha iti yathā śrutatve dhruvādīnāmaīśvaryavirodhāt athavā  
prathamam vibhūtiḥ kāmānurupā datvā śanairviṣayabhogāvasāne tasya  
nirvedamutpādyā hariṣyāmi paramānugraham kartumiti | taduktiṁ  
bhagavataiva "na mayy āveṣita-dhiyām kāmāḥ kāmāya kalpate | bharjitā  
kvathitā dhānāḥ prāyo bijāya neṣate || bhā. 10.22.26" iti |  
duḥkhaduḥkhitamiti duḥkhādanu punarduḥkhitamiva  
pratiyaṁānamityārthaḥ ||  
(bhāvārtha dipikā; śrī śrīdhara svāmī)

duḥkhāt dhanavigamajanyādapi punarduḥkhitam svajanakarṭṛ  
katyāgāt | duḥkhamidam bhagavaddattatvāttasya na karmaphalam  
sukhamapi bhagavadbhaktānām karmaphalam kintu  
bhakterananusamhitam phalamiti | "dharmasya hy āpavargyasya nārtho  
'rthāyopakalpate | nārthasya dharmaikāntasya kāmo lābhāya hi smṛtaḥ |  
(bhā. 1.2.9)" ityatra bhīṣmuktāvapi pratipāditam bhaktānām bhaktimātre  
pravṛtta evāprārābdhakūṭabijaprārābdhakarmaṇām krameṇa nāśa  
utpalasahasradalabhedavaditi bhaktiśāstramatam | tathāca  
śrutirgopālātāpanī "bhaktir asya bhajanam tad  
ihāmutropādhi-nairāsyenāmuṣmin manaḥ-kalpanam etad eva ca  
naiṣkarmyam" iti | arthaśca upādhinairāsyena kāmānārāhityena namaḥ  
kalpanam kṛṣṇe mana ādisarvendiyavinīyogo yastadeva bhajanam etadeva  
bhajanameva naiṣkarmyamiti bhavati hi tātparyāttacchabdyā mataḥ  
sāmānādhikaraṇyādbhajane pravṛtta eva bhaktānām naiṣkarmyam  
sarvakarmadhvaṁso bhavati | dehashtitistu

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bhajanādhikyatatphalapratipādakabhagavadacintyaśaktereveti | ye tu  
prārabdhe phale iva sukhaduḥkhe dṛśyete te bhagavaddatte eva |  
yaduktaṁ śrutibhiḥ - "bhavadutthaśubhāśubhayo" iti bhaktavatsalo  
bhagavān bhaktebhyaḥ kathaṁ duḥkhaṁ dadāti cen satyaṁ  
putravatsalo'pi pitā putrebhyo bhogaḍūrīkaraṇenādhyayanādikṛcchraṁ  
yaddadāti tadvātsalyaṁ sa eva jānāti natu tadānīṁ tatputrā apīti | na ca  
prahlādaghra vādibhyo mogasampatti - sukhamātradānāt sādhaḥkebhya  
eva hitārthinā bhagavatā duḥkhaṁ diyata iti vācyaṁ siddhaśiromaṇinām  
yudhiṣṭhirādīnāmapi " yatra dharmasuto rāja" ityatra "suhṛt kṛṣṇastato  
vipat" iti | bhīṣmoktau duḥkhaśravaṇāt | tasmāt "na hyasva karhicidrājan  
punām veda vidhitasam" iti bhīṣmoktestasya vidhitasam sa eva  
bhaktavatsalo veda nānya iti siddhāntaḥ | kiñcittatra samāhitaṁ yattadapi  
tatraiva dṛśyaṁ nanu ca svakarmotthayorbhagavadutthayośca  
sukha-duḥkhayorbhogyatvena tulyatvāt ko viśeṣa ucyate karmotthānām  
sukhaduḥkhānām bhogenāpi tadvijāṁ tiṣṭhatyeva tadvatām narakapātaśca  
karmatāratamyavatām sukhaduḥkhātāratamyāñceti tritayaṁ bhavet |  
bhagavadutthānām tu bhagavadicchayaiva bījaṁ sā ca  
prayojanaparyantaiva na taduttarā - "jihvā na vakti  
bhagavad-guṇa-nāmadheyaṁ cetaś ca na smarati tac-caraṇāravindam |  
kṛṣṇāya no namati yac-chira ekadāpi tān ānayadhvam asato  
'kṛta-viṣṇu-kṛtyān | (bhā. 6.3.29)" yathā hi nṛsihi purāṇe  
ahamamaragaṇārcitena dhātṛā yama iti lokahitāhite niyuktaḥ |  
hariguruvimukhān praśāsmi martān haricaraṇapraṇatān namaskaromīti  
yamoktestadvatām na narakapātaḥ bhagavataḥ snehapātratvāt na  
duḥkhātīśayaśceti | svakarmotthabhagavadutthayoḥ  
śatrukutamātrīkṛtatāḍanotthayoriva duḥkhayorviśāmṛtayloriva  
kṛtastulyateti vivecanīyam | nanu ca sarvasamarthasya bhagavato  
bhaktaduḥkhadānaṁ vinā kiṁ tatprayojanaṁ na sidhyat satyaṁ  
līlānidhestasya na sidhyedeva bhaktiyogasya rahasyatvarakṣārthaṁ  
nānānyamatānāmutkhātābhāvārthaṁ bhaktautkaṇṭhyādivardhanārthaṁ  
kvacit priyebhyo duḥkhadānamapi tastukhodarkameva yathā  
nayanābhyām kadutarāñjanadānamiti | tathāhi yadi bhaktāḥ sadā sukhina  
eva kṛtāḥ syustadā "paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām |  
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge | | (gī. 4.8)" iti  
gītoktanimittābhāve sati kṛṣṇarāmādyavatārā api na syuḥ | yadi ca na  
syustadā rāsādīlīlāmṛtasindhau bhaktānām khelanaṁ kathaṁ syādīti |  
nanu ca sādhu duḥkhatrāṇātmakanimittaṁ vināpi tasyāvatāre ko doṣaḥ

"Such a person at the instance of his kith and kin, though still aspiring after wealth, through My uncommon Grace, Which showers Nectarine Bhakti Rasa on him, and when his efforts prove fruitless, again gets disgusted and seeks the company of My devotees and I oblige him as I would oblige Myself."<sup>557</sup> A judicious person, who knows his interests well experiencing the ever-existing, limitless, highest, and indistinct (even to him because of its very nature of) loving devotion to Me, and because of its being Spiritual or Transcendental in Nature, having nothing dross or materialistic in it, attains Me, being freed from worldly bondage. "Hence, such of them as were engrossed in the worldly enjoyments and not keen in achieving Mokṣa, discarding Me, as I am appeased only after intense, very difficult, and selfless devotion, resort to other gods, like Śiva, etc. They consider Me, 'Sudurārādhyā', i.e., very difficult to be pleased or pleased with great difficulty, as I cause their worldly enjoyments to disappear."<sup>558</sup> After obtaining boons to enable them to enjoy the wealth of Kingship from these easy-to-appease gods, they become obstinate, proud, and lascivious (wanton) and forget these gods, who bestowed boons on them and insult them."<sup>559</sup> Śrī Śukadeva says, "O King! Śrī Viṣṇu, Brahma, Śiva, etc., are quite competent to confer

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syāt ? satyaṁ bho bhrātastvaṁ na rasābhijño'si śrūyatām yāminyām  
 satyāmeva sūryodayaḥ śobhate grīṣme satyeva śitalāmbhaḥ sukhadaṁ śīte  
 satyevoṣṇāmbhaḥ tamasyeva dīpaḥ śobhate na tu prakāśe khutpīḍāyām  
 satyāmevānnamati svādu bhavatītyalamativistareṇa । ।  
 (sārārtha-darśinī; śrī viśvanātha cakravartī)

557sa yadā vitathodyogo nirviṇṇaḥ syād dhanehayā  
 mat-paraiḥ kṛta-maitrasya kariṣye mad-anugraham  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.9)

558tad brahma paramaṁ sūkṣmaṁ cin-mātraṁ sad anantakam  
 vijñāyātmatayā dhīraḥ saṁsārāt parimucyate  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.10)

559ato mām su-durārādhyāṁ hitvānyān bhajate janaḥ  
 tatas ta āśu-toṣebhyo labdha-rājya-śriyoddhātāḥ  
 mattāḥ pramattā vara-dān vismayanty avajānate  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.11)



boons or to curse; but Brahma and Śiva become pleased with even a little devotion by their devotees, and confer boons on them immediately. Similarly if they are offended, that very moment they curse the offenders; but that is not the way with Śrī Kṛṣṇa."<sup>560</sup>

#### 54. *Kṛṣṇa Bhakti leads to shelter at His Lotus Feet*

"Besides even if one performs the services of Śrī Kṛṣṇa for the fulfilment of his various worldly desires, **Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives him shelter at His Lotus Feet voluntarily because the fruit of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's service is the attainment of His Lotus Feet.** Teṣāṃ Kṛṣṇa-caraṇa-prāptir eva tad-bhajana phalam ityarthah. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "That fellow is a fool not knowing his own welfare, which consists in taking unconditional and absolute shelter at My Lotus Feet. No doubt he serves Me; but discarding My Nectarine Lotus Feet, he asks for chaff - the most deadly poison of the fulfilment of his worldly desires. How can I allow him to do so? After all he is a fool; he knows not his own interest; but I am Omniscient. So how can I give him what he asks of Me, like a child that asks of its father to give it some cheap eatables that will upset its health and well-being? Hence I certainly give him My Nectarine Lotus Feet, and make him forget his covetousness to drink the poison of worldliness."<sup>561</sup>

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560śāpa-prasādayor īśā brahma-viṣṇu-śivādayaḥ  
sadyaḥ śāpa-prasādo 'ṅga śivo brahmā na cācyutaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.12)

561teṣāṃ kṛṣṇa-caraṇa-prāptir eva tadbhajana phalam ity arthaḥ  
(caitanya-caritāmṛta m. 22.37; śrī viśvanātha cakravartī-tīkā)

anya-kāmi yadi kare kṛṣṇera bhajana  
nā māgiteha kṛṣṇa tāre dena sva-caraṇa

kṛṣṇa kahe, — 'āmā bhaje, māge viṣaya-sukha  
amṛta chāḍi' viṣa māge, — ei baḍa mūrkhā

āmi — vijña, ei mūrkhē 'viṣaya' kene diba?  
sva-caraṇāmṛta diyā 'viṣaya' bhuḷāiba  
(caitanya-caritāmṛta m. 22.37-39)

## 55. *Kṛṣṇa Bhaktas -vs- other devotees*

"Vṛkāsura practised penance and appeased Śiva and obtained from him the boon of reducing those to ashes, on whose head he placed the palm of his hand. Being diffident as to the infallibility of this boon, he wanted to experiment its genuineness on Śiva only, who ran for his life to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and was ultimately saved from Vṛkāsura's experiment."<sup>562</sup> **"Prah̥lāda, Dhruva, Vibhīṣaṇa, Bali, Vyāsa, Ambarīṣa, etc., are devoted to Śrī Viṣṇu, and are dear to Brahmā and Śiva as well, and make the whole universe auspicious, i.e., are venerated by the whole universe;** there is the other class of devotees like Rāvaṇa, Bāṇa, Pauṇḍraka, Vṛka, Krauñca, etc., who are not liked even by him whose devotees they are, i.e., they are neither liked by Brahmā, Śiva, nor Śrī Hari. Hence, they are the enemies of the whole universe, i.e., they are hated by all."<sup>563</sup> "Śiva may be a devotee of Śrī Viṣṇu, or Śrī Viṣṇu may Himself be a follower of Śiva (as He is Bhakta-parādhīna), or Śrī Viṣṇu, Brahma, and Śiva may even be treated on a par with one another. But seeing the practices of the devotees of Brahma and Śiva, and bowing down those two with my head, I take absolute shelter at the Lotus Feet of Śrī Upendra (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) as His servant."<sup>564</sup>

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562atra codāharantīmam itihāsaṁ purāṇanam

vṛkāsuraṁ giriśo varam dattvāpa saṅkaṭam

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.88.13)

563prahlāda dhruva rāvaṇānubali vyāsaṁ varīṣādaya ste

śrī viṣṇu parāyaṇā vidhi bhavapreṣṭhā jaganmaṅgalāḥ

ye 'nya rāvaṇa bāṇa pauṇḍraka vṛka krauñcādayaste svayaṁ

yad bhakta na ca tat priyā na ca haṛe tasmajjagad vairiṇaḥ

(siddhānta-ratna, śrī baladeva vidyabhūṣaṇa)

564śivo bhavatu vaiṣṇavaḥ kim ajito 'pi śaivaḥ svayaṁ

tathā samatayāthavā vidhiharādi mūrti trayam

vilokya bhavavedhasoḥ kim api bhakta varga kramam

praṇamya śirasā hi tau va yam upendra dāsyam śrītāḥ

(siddhānta-ratna, śrī baladeva vidyabhūṣaṇa)

## 56. What Kṛṣṇa bestows on His Bhaktas

The gods say with reference to Śrī Kṛṣṇa thus, "It is true that Śrī Kṛṣṇa confers on them the boons asked of Him; but He does not bestow on them 'Paramārtha' or the highest or the most sublime goal; because as soon as they enjoy the fruit of His boons pertaining to this world, they ask Him again for other worldly gains. Does this mean that He does not give anything to those, who do not ask of Him anything and serve Him selflessly? Śrī Vyāsadeva removes this doubt by emphatically stating, **"He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) of His Own accord, confers on His selfless servitors the Shelter of His tender Lotus Feet Which are the Fulfillers of all their spiritual desires and Which form the cover for their worldly cravings. The selfless devotees are truly blessed. Besides even if one serves Him (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) with some ulterior motives, He out of His causeless Mercy, bestows only the highest and ultimate good. When He is supplicated, He really grants the boon; but He never confers such worldly boons a second time, even if such requests are repeated, because He is the bestower of boons, and worldly enjoyments are disastrous in the end. Then what does He grant? He of His Own accord bestows upon His devotees the highest boon of shelter at His tender Lotus Feet, even if they were never desired by the latter. Because by so doing, he is not troubled any more by worldly desires. Hence, He confers on His Bhakta the highest good, although the latter prayed for 'Anārtha' as it is in His very Nature to favour thus. It is because of this very Nature that a mother who removes earth from the hands or mouth of her children, even if they cry aloud and are unwilling to part with it, gives them sugar candy. In the end, the devotees become attached or devoted to His Lotus Feet, without craving for the earth-like worldly enjoyments."**<sup>565</sup>

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565satyaṁ dīśaty arthitam arthito nṛṇāṁ

naivārthado yat punar arthitā yataḥ

svayaṁ vidhatte bhajatām anicchatām

icchāpidhānaṁ nija-pāda-pallavam

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 5.19.27)

tatrāpi niṣkamaḥ kṛtārthā ityāhuḥ "satyaṁ" iti | prārthitaḥ san  
arthitaṁ dadātīti satyaṁ tathāpi paramārthado na bhavatyeva |  
yadyasmāt yato dattādanantaraṁ punararthitā bhavati | nanu

## 57. Selfless service -vs- selfish service

nārthitaścet kimapi na dadyāt ityāśamkyāhuḥ anicchatām niṣkāmanāntu  
icchānām vidhānam ācchādakam sarvakāmaparipūrakam  
nijapādapallavam svayameva sampādayatīti | |  
(bhāvārtha dīpikā)

yadvā kāmenāpi bhajatām kṛpayā paramahitameva vidhatte  
ityāhuḥ "satyaṁ diśati" iti | arthitaḥ san arthitam dadāti iti satyaṁ  
punararthito daiva dadāti | kutaḥ yataḥ arthadaḥ saḥ vibayāścānarthāḥ |  
tarhi kiṁ dadāti ityapekṣāyāmahuḥ | nijapādapallavamanicchatāmapi  
teṣāṁ svayaṁ vidhatte | yataḥ ko'pi kāmo nodeti | ata eva  
anarthaprārthane paramārthad eva | evaṁ prakṛtirbhagavān | yathā  
mātā bālānām mṛdmapahāya rūdatāmanicchatām śarkarām dadāti |  
jñātaraso'hi vālo mṛdamapahāya śarkarāyamanurajyate | tadvaditi  
bhāvaḥ | |  
(ṭīppanī, cai.ca.ma. 22.40, śrī viśvanātha cakravartī)

śṛddham bhaktim kurvāṇastu sakāmā api kṛtārthā  
niṣkāmabhaktatulyā eva bhavantītyāhuḥ | satyamiti | nṛṇaṁ  
bhajatāmarthitam kāmītaṁ padārtha tairarthitaḥ san diśati dadātīti satya  
kintu yadyathā punararthitā bhogānte yācakatvaṁ syāttathām  
naivārthadaḥ | kathamevamavagatamityata āha | "na jātu kāmāḥ  
kāmanāmupabhogena śāmyati | haviṣā kṛṣṇavartmeva bhūya  
evābhivardhate | | bha. 9.19.14" yataḥ nijapādapallavamanicchatāmapi  
bhajatām svayameva dhruvādīnāmiva icchāpidhānam  
sarvakāmācchādakam tadeva nijapādapallavam vidhatte kṛpayā dadāti  
nijapādapallavam svayameva balādṛtvā icchāyāḥ pidhānamācchādanam  
vidhatte karotīti vā | tataścānabhīpsitāmapi sitaśarkarām pituḥ sakāśāt  
prāpya śīśavo yathā mṛdi spṛhām tyajanti tathaiva kāmānapītyarthaḥ |  
ataeva "akāmāḥ sarvakāmo vā mokṣakāma udāradhīḥ | tivreṇa  
bhaktiyogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param | | bha. 2.3.10" ityādau tivreṇa  
jñānakarmādyamiśreṇa bhaktiyogena yajetetyuktam | atra niṣkāmanāṁ  
sakāmānāṁca bhaktānāmantataḥ pādapallavaprapṭāvapi naiva sarvathā  
aikarupyaṁ bhāvanīyam | na hi jātyaiva śuddham balāt śodhitaṁca  
vastutulyamūlyam bhavatyato dhruvādibhyaḥ  
sakāśāddhavamadādīnāmuktarṣaḥ parama eva dṛṣyata iti | |  
(sārārtha darśinī)

"Those of the devotees who practise pure loving devotion, though for the fulfilment of some desires, become equally blessed like the selfless devotees. When He (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) is served by His devotees and begged to grant certain worldly boons, He does confer such boons on them; but if such supplications are repeated, at the end of the enjoyment of those conferred first, He never confers such mundane favours on them a second time, as the worldly enjoyments are disastrous in the end. How is this understood? "The desires are not satiated by enjoying the objects of such desires; on the contrary, they increase endlessly like the fire that increases in proportion to the ghee added.""Because He of His Own accord and unasked, bestows upon His devotees like Dhruva, etc., who serve Him selflessly, the highest boon of Shelter at His tender Lotus Feet, Which form a cover for the desires, i.e., because He forcibly gives shelter to such devotees at His Lotus Feet and clouds their desires therewith; thereby they are no more troubled by worldly desires. And again like children who give up their desires for earth after obtaining (unasked) a piece of sugar candy from their father, these devotees giving up worldly desires, achieve shelter at His Lotus Feet.""A wise person who is desirous of obtaining Mokṣa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) should serve the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa with intense devotion, with or without ulterior desires." **Here 'Akāmatah' means a devotee who wholly serves Śrī Kṛṣṇa or who firmly believes that his happiness consists solely in pleasing the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Who is the Object of his worship.** 'Tivreṇa' means unalloyed or unadulterated with Jñāna, Karma, etc., like the intensely hot autumnal sun's rays uncovered by the clouds. It should not be understood that there is absolute similarity in the mode of the ultimate achievement of the tender Lotus Feet of the Lord by the selfless devotees and those who have got their desired objects. The mode of the Sakāma devotees is not pure by nature, but is completely refined; an object is assessed or judged on its merits. **Hence, the selfless service of devotees, like Hanumān, is far superior to that of Dhruva, etc."**

## 58. *Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Ecstasy Incarnate and hence accepts only our love and gives love in return too. Worldly pleasures, such as Bhukti, Mukti, etc., are as nothing before Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema. Devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the highest form of Bhakti and Śrī

Kṛṣṇa-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is the most exalted in Navavidhā Bhakti. "ete cāmśa-kalāḥ pumsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam"<sup>56650</sup> says that all these Avatāras already mentioned and those to be mentioned later or further, are all the Partial Manifestations in greater or lesser degree of the Puruṣa - Śrī Mahā-Viṣṇu; but Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān. He is full of Ṣaḍaiśvarya, i.e., the six Divine Attributes in the fullest measure. These reside in Him and emanate from Him only. He does not depend upon others like the Puruṣa for the manifestation of these Śaktis, as the other Manifestations depend on Puruṣa or Mahā-Viṣṇu. It is again said, "Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Himself the Supreme Lord of Trailokya and as He is ever being served by the Sāmrajya Lakṣmī Herself, none of His desires yet remains to be fulfilled; Emperor of gods like Indra and other Kings offer tributes to Him and honour His Footstool by the tips of their crowns."<sup>567</sup> The epithet 'Svayam' is used in the case of Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone and not in the case of any other Avatāras. "I bow that Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Who manifested Himself in all His fullness of the six Divine Qualities as Kṛṣṇa, also known as 'Govinda', the Supreme Being, Who inspired the Avatāras like Rāma, etc., with only the partial and restricted manifestation of His 'Aiśvarya' or Divine Attributes."<sup>568</sup>

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56650 ete cāmśa-kalāḥ pumsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.3.28)

567svayaṁ tv asāmyātiśayas tryadhiśaḥ  
svārājya-lakṣmy-āpta-samasta-kāmaḥ  
baliṁ haradbhiś cira-loka-pālaiḥ  
kirīṭa-koṭy-eḍita-pāda-pīṭhaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 3.2.21)

568rāmādi-mūrtiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan  
nānāvātāram akarod bhuvaneṣu kintu  
kṛṣṇaḥ svayaṁ samabhavat paramaḥ pumān yo  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi  
(brahma-saṁhitā 5.39)

## 59. 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma reigns supreme

"Hence, amongst the various forms of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Kīrtana, like reading Purāṇas, chanting the Vedas, singing His Praises, or describing His Attributes, or hearing His Pastimes, etc., **the Saṅkīrtana or the incessant, clear, and loud chanting of His Names is important, as it quickly kindles in the chanter's heart a craving to love Śrī Kṛṣṇa of its own accord and without having to take resort to other courses like Dhyāna, etc. This then matures into a wealth of Divine Love.**'Tannāma saṅkīrtanameva mukhyam' also means 'Tat Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma-Saṅkīrtanameva śreṣṭhatamam', i.e. His Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma-Saṅkīrtana is the most important one, because that is the Name most dear to Him."<sup>569</sup>"O hero (Arjuna)! Out of all My Names, 'Kṛṣṇa' is the most important Name. It is the sole atonement for all the sins and is also the Best Rescuer."<sup>570</sup>

"The Name 'Kṛṣṇa' was always most dear to all the Gopīs, and so was 'It' to Kṛṣṇa too. Whenever they were separated from Him or even when they were enjoying His very company they used to utter 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', accompanied by the nodding of their heads to indicate their consent and even when the Rāsa dance readied its climax, these Gopīs never forget to utter 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' incessantly. They were so much enamoured and attracted by 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa-varṇah' - the syllables 'Kṛ-ṣṇa', the 'Kṛṣṇa-varṇa' - the colour of the rain-bearing clouds, 'Kṛṣṇa' Śvarūpa, etc., that they always

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569kṛṣṇasya nānā-vidha-kīrtaneṣu

tan-nāma-saṅkīrtanam eva mukhyam  
tat-prema-sampaj-janane svayaṁ drāk  
śaktam tataḥ śreṣṭhatamam matam tat  
(bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.3.158)

tat śrī kṛṣṇa nāma saṅkīrtanam eva śreṣṭhatamam matam  
sadbhiraśmabhirvā

See footnote 336

570nāmnām mukhyataram nāma kṛṣṇākhyam me parantapa  
prāyaścittam aśeṣāṇām pāpānām mocakam param  
(prabhāsa purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.498)

used to think and dream of 'Kṛṣṇa'. Whenever they saw anything black, the peacock, the Kādamba tree, or even the black hair they were reminded of their Divine Lover Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The word 'Kṛṣṇa' had become their very life-breath. This was the name most dear to them. They liked very much to address Him by this particular distinguished Name which charmed them the most. 'Kṛṣṇeti varṇa-yugala-śravaṇānubandha-prādurbhavaj-jaḍima-ḍambara-samvṛtāṅgīm'; when such is the overpowering effect of the Name 'Kṛṣṇa', it is but quite natural that they should call Him by the Primeval and most important Name 'Kṛṣṇa', dear both to Him and to them as well, as these twin syllables 'Kṛ-ṣṇa' embrace all the aspects of His marvellous Form, Attributes, Pastimes, etc., and thus ever dwell in their mind and heart."<sup>571</sup>

The blind devotee, Śrī Bilva-maṅgala was being led by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Vṛndāvana by holding the former's stick. As they neared the place, Śrī Kṛṣṇa told him, "See! here is Vṛndāvana. Please let Me go now." Śrī Bilva-maṅgala, being overwhelmed with the help rendered by the Cowboy, held fast to His Hand out to gratitude and by the Divine Touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he was

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571 punaḥ pulinam āgatya kālindyāḥ kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāḥ  
 samavetā jaguḥ kṛṣṇam tad-āgamana-kāṅkṣitāḥ  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.30.44)

kṛṣṇaḥ śarac-candramasaṁ kaumudī-kumudākaram  
 jagau gopī-janas tv ekaṁ kṛṣṇa-nāma punaḥ punaḥ  
 rāsa-geyaṁ jagau kṛṣṇo yāvattārayat adhvaṇiḥ  
 sādhu kṛṣṇeti kṛṣṇeti tāvat tā dviguṇam jaguḥ  
 (viṣṇu purāṇa)

kṛṣṇeti-varṇa-yugala-śravaṇānubandha-  
 prādurbhavaj-jaḍi maḍ-ambara-samvṛtāṅgīm  
 (stava-mālā; utkalikā-vallarīḥ 14)

he kṛṣṇeti  
 sarva tadīyādbhuta rupa guṇa kṛḍākrodī kārītayā santa taṁ  
 nijāntaḥ sphuratā viśeṣya nāmnā prathamataḥ  
 sambodhanam  
 (vaiṣṇava-tantra)



overcome with ecstasy. He realised that the Cowboy was None Other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. He held fast and still more firmly than before to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Hand and would not leave It, although implored by the Latter. Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa with a jerk of His Hand, got It released from his hold. And Jo! the following words spontaneously came out of his mouth. "O Kṛṣṇa! What wonder is there that You forcibly got Yourself released from the hold of my hand? I shall certainly consider it a great feat of Yours, if You can leave my heart!" **This Śloka aptly describes the most loving challenge thrown to Śrī Kṛṣṇa by one of His greatest devotees to leave his heart and the Latter's Bhakta-parādhīnatā before which the Lord's other powers pale into insignificance. It also shows the unbreakable power of the silken cords of loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa with which He is bound to His devotees. This is quite in keeping with the Lord's words: 'Ye yathā mām prapadyante tāmś tathaiva bhajāmy aham' (Gītā 4.11), i.e., I serve them in the same way as they serve Me. By practising loving devotion, this stage is reached, when he cannot forget the Lord and His Name, even if he wants to, nor the Lord too can obliterate Himself from the devotee's heart and mind, even if requested to do so, as in the above case.**<sup>572</sup>

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's following Śloka describes a stage higher than the above, reached by Śrī Rādhikā. "Look at the irony of things! That pretty Maiden Rādhikā - the Embodiment of innocence, wants to divert Her Mind from 'Kṛṣṇa', for Whose mere glimpse even the sages yearn with their heart and soul, and divert their minds from worldly objects and concentrate on Him. Similarly the Yogīs too try their utmost to have even His slightest glimpse in their hearts as in a flash. But this Śrī Rādhikā, in Her youthful simplicity, wants to rid Her Heart of His memory even, but cannot do so."<sup>573</sup> "For, those in whose hearts a feeling of

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572hastam ākṣipyā yāto'si balāt kṛṣṇa kim adbhutam

hṛdayād api niryāsi pauraṣaṁ gaṇayāmi te

(śrī-kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta; ṛṭīya-śataka 95)

573pratyāhṛtya muniḥ kṣaṇaṁ viṣayato yasmin mano dhitsate

bālāsau viṣayeṣu dhitsati tataḥ pratyāharantī manah

yasya sphūrti-lavāya hanta hṛdaye yogī sumutkaṇṭhate

mugdheyaṁ kila tasya paśya hṛdayān niṣkrāntim ākāṅkṣati

(vidagdha-mādhava 2.17)

selfless love for 'Kṛṣṇa' sprouts, alone realise that separation from Him causes distress more severe than even the acutest suffering caused by the most deadly and fresh poison known as 'Kālakūṭa'; similarly union with Him causes ecstasy which throws the joy caused by the sweetness naturally flowing from Nectar entirely into the background. In the same way those moments when 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma does not appear on the tongue should be more bitter than the worst suffering in hell, and the moment when 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma appears on the tongue or when It is heard by the ears, will cause ecstasy which will surely excel the proverbial sweetness of Nectar, provided there is adequate intensity of love for 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma in the Sevaka."<sup>574</sup>

The following lines show the magic effect of Kṛṣṇa Nāma on Śrī Rādhikā, Who is at a loss to know as to what She should do. So She speaks to Her intimate friends thus:-

**Who hath made Me hear Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma?  
For It has twanged My vitals by Its charm!  
O! My soul is in dire distress!  
How charming is Its sweetness!  
I ask thee in all meekness.  
My mouth can't leave It in any event!  
Muttering It every moment,  
It causes separation's torment.  
All is lost, even My self-control!  
O! Tell Me how I should see Him alone?  
If by the prowess of the Name alone,  
It thus afflicts My Soul and makes Me feel lone,  
O! Tell Me what will not His magic touch cause?  
For thus awhile to think I pause!  
If ever I stay at the place where He stays,  
Family name is sure to be stained in disgrace.  
I'm doing My best to forget Him and yet,  
Quite unable am I Him to forget.  
O! What shall I do or where shall I go?  
It affects My reputation, I can't forego.**

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574pīḍābhir nava-kāla-kūṭa-kaṭutā-garvasya nirvāsano

niḥsyandena mudāṁ sudhā-mādhurīmāhaṅkāra-saṅkocanaḥ  
premā sundari nanda-nandana-paro jāgarti yasyāntare  
jñāyante sphuṭam asya vakra-madhurās tenaiva vikrāntayaḥ  
(vidagdha-mādhava 2.18)

At last it has thus come to pass!

So sings piteously Dvija Caṇḍīdāsa.<sup>5756.3</sup>

When Śrī Rādhikā is too much afflicted by grief caused by the pangs of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, She wails thus:

T'is certain that I shall die, as die I must,  
But with Kṛṣṇa-virtues' treasureland whom to trust?  
My best friends you have been so dear to My Heart!  
Tattoo My Body, if I die, with 'Kṛṣṇa', on your part,  
Lalitā dear, sure shall utter into My ears 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma.  
That on deathbed I may hear My life's Sole P̥salm.  
Nor burn My Body nor consign to Yamunā in a huff,  
But hang It on safely on the lofty Tamāla bough.  
The Tamāla like Kṛṣṇa is in colour of sky-blue hue,  
Let My Body, if you please, in unconsciousness rue.  
My Belov'd whene'er happens to visit Vraja's land,  
Instilled with life I shall, kenning Him stand.  
Unable if I am to see Him for any reason,  
Let separation's fire burn Me this very season.<sup>576</sup>

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5756.3 sakhi, kevā śunāila kṛṣṇa-nāma  
kānera bhitara diyā marama paśila go  
ākula karila mora prāṇa

na jāni kateka madhu śyāma-nāme āche go  
vadana chāḍite nāhi pāre  
japite japite nāma avaśa karila go  
kemanē pāiba sakhi tāre

nāma-paratāpe jāra aichana karila go  
aṅgera paraśe kibā haya  
jekhāne vasati tā'ra nayane dekhiyā go  
yuvati dharama kaiche raya

pāsarite cāhimane pāsarā nā yāya go  
ki kariba ki habe upāya  
kahe dvija-caṇḍīdāse kulavatī kulanāśe  
apanāra yauvana jācāya

576mariba mariba sakhi niścaya mariba  
kṛṣṇa hena guṇanidhi kāre diyā yāba

tomarā yateka sakhi theke majhu saṅge  
maraṇa kāle kṛṣṇa nāma likha mora aṅge

## 510. Call 'Kṛṣṇa' with a feeling of separation

Śrī Mādhavendra Purī - a great devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was always engrossed in calling 'Kṛṣṇa' with an intense feeling of love-sickness. Though he was a Sannyāsī, he was a great Prema Bhakta. He used to lose his body consciousness and transport with divine ecstasy by the mere sight of a rain-bearing cloud or a peacock, being reminded of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His eternal Sports. He is the Param Guru of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and is the first off-shoot of the unique cult of unalloyed loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to sport with him, as a Cowboy. Śrī Mādhavendra Purī was always submerged in the intense feeling of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa Prema, and in the climax of this particular sentiment and mood, he addressed Śrī Kṛṣṇa and calling Him in utter anguish of heart and uttering his own Śloka<sup>577</sup> in his

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**lalitā prānera sakhi mantra dīo kāne  
morā deha paḍe yena kṛṣṇa nāma śune**

**nāpoḍāio mora anganā bhāsāio jale  
marile tuliye rakho tamālera ḍāle**

**sei se tamāla taru kṛṣṇa-varṇa haya  
acetana tanu mora tāhe yena raya**

**kavahum se piyā yadi āse vṛndāvane  
parāṇa pāyaba hāma piyā daraśane**

**puna yadi cānda mukha daraśanā pāva  
viraha anale māha tanu teyāgiba**

577ayi dinadayārdra nātha he  
mathurānātha kadāvalokyase  
hṛdayaṁ tvad-aloka-kātaraṁ  
dayita bhrāmyati kiṁ karomy aham  
(padyāvalī 330)

mahāviraheṇa bhāvaśāvalyodayāt kṛṣṇaṁ prati yadāha tat  
śrīmanmādhavendrapurīpādānaṁ padyenānuvarṇayati ayīti | tatra  
prathamāṁ svāparādhenāsau naiṣyatīti matvā paramadainyodayāt sakāku  
prāha ayīti komalasaṁmbodhane madvidhe dinajane yā dayā

last moments, he concluded his Līlā in this world. "Due to the blazing up of a variety of sentiments consequent on the separation from the Divine Beloved, Śrī Mādhavendra Purī expresses his emotions in his direct appealing address to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as 'Ayi', which is an affectionate and appealing term of address. Pray bless me with Your Sight. You are the Embodiment of infinite sweetness, infinite kindness, and limitless munificence (Mādhurya, Kāruṇya, and Audārya). Whereas, I am lacking in adequate power (Anurūpa Abhiruci) to relish Your sweetness and an adequate craving to plunge myself therein. Out of extreme kindness, You bestow Your sweetness on all who show the least 'Sevonmukhatā',

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nirargalakaruṇā tayaivārdraḥ paramasnigdhaḥ he tādrśa yadyapyaham  
tvayyaparādhinī tathāpi dayādracittatvena dīnāyai mahyam darśanam  
dehīti bhāvaḥ | punaḥ pūtanādivadhasmaraṇena nirdayatvasphūrtyā  
sambodhayati he nātheti | strīvadhādiṣvatinirdayatvena tavāsmākaṁ  
tyāgo na vigīta iti bhāvaḥ | yadvā dakhīnatvasphūrtyāha nātha  
sarvajanarakṣaka tādrśasvabhāvaṁ tvaktvā asmān mārayitum katham  
mathurām gato'si | yadvā pālanādiguṇasphūrtyāha he nātha tvayā  
vayaṁ bahuśo rakhitāḥ kathamadhunā tyaktum yogya iti punardenyam |  
punarīrṣyayā sambodhayati | he madhurānātha mathurānāgaribhirḥ  
tacittatvāt kathām grāmyān asmān ramayitumāgamiṣyasi | yadvā nanu  
yuṣmākamaham sadā pālakaḥ mathurāsthānām yādavādīnām sukhām  
vidhātumaham kati dināni tatra tiṣṭāmīti | tatra sadainyamāha | he  
māthurajanapālaka tvamasmābhiḥ kadāvalokyase | nanu suhrdām  
sukhavidhānānantaramevāgamiṣyāmīti cettatra savaikalyamāha | he  
dayita prāṇatoṣaka tavāloko yadadarśanam tena kātaram sat hṛdayam  
bhrāmyati na svāsthyam prāpnoti ataḥ kimaham karomi dayitatayā tat  
tvameva vadetyarthaḥ | bhāvādīnām lakṣaṇam yathā |  
mahāśaktivilāsātmābhāvo'cintyasvarupabhāk | ratvākhva ityayam yukto  
nahi tarkeṇa bādhitum | śābalatvantu bhāvānām saṁmardaḥ syāt  
parasparam iti | prāyastatraiva mohanodayāt sarva sambhavitumarhatīti |  
tathāca modano'yaṁ praviśeṣadaśāyām mohano bhavet | yasmin  
virahavaivaśyāt sudīptā eva sātvikāḥ | prāyo vṛndāvaneśvaryām  
mohano'yamudañcatīti | samyag vilakṣaṇam yasya kārya sañcāri mohana  
ityādi ||

(śrī vīracandra gosvāmī kṛta-rasika-raṅgadā ṭikā)

irrespective of their fitness to receive your Kindness or not; You drown all those aspirants who show the least 'Sevonmukhatā', i.e., a craving for better service while being in service (Sevāyām sevāyai unmukhatā). You are the Protector of all. So, why not protect me? On many occasions in the past, You have protected me. Why not kindly do so again? Or is it that You are a Tormentor? For You did not hesitate even to kill a woman! You killed Pūtānā without taking her sex into consideration. You are now the Lord of Mathurāvāsīs and have been attracted by townswomen; and that is why You show Your aversion to Vrajavāsīs, who are rustics like me! You are the Lord of Mādhurya Rāsa; so why not give me a taste of It too? When will You ever be seen by me? When shall I have the good fortune to have Your Sight? My heart is distressed without You! O Merciful Lord! My heart is extremely restless for want of a sight of You. I cannot bear the separation from You any longer. My heart becomes unsteady and enters into a stupor. Your separation stupefies me. What shall I do? Where shall I go? To whom but You alone shall I resort? What am I doing here? So saying and in extreme agony of heart and anguish, Śrī Mādhavendra Purī breathed his last. **It is with such extreme feeling of separation and anguish of heart that the Lord must be directly called by His Name 'Kṛṣṇa' by Which He is as good as purchased and is compelled to give His Darśana to His ardent devotee.**<sup>58.1558.1</sup>

### 511. 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma makes Kṛṣṇa subservient

"Any one of the Names pertaining to the Descent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa will grant all the advantages that one obtains by the thrice repetition of the auspicious thousand Names (Śrī Viṣṇu-Sahasra-Nāma)." <sup>578</sup> "Arjuna, with an eye on the Pāśupatāstra, having muttered 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma to the fullest extent, not only got it, but became as dear to Him as His very Soul, Whom he got as his Divine Charioteer."<sup>579</sup> "Why praise

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578sahasra-nāmnām puṇyānām trir-āvr̥ṭtyā tu yat phalam  
ekāvr̥ṭtyā tu kṛṣṇasya nāmaikam tat prayacchati  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.488)

579idaṁ kirīṭi saṁjapya jayī pāśupatāstra-bhāk  
kṛṣṇasya prāṇa-bhūtaḥ saṁ kṛṣṇam sāratham āptavān  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.489)

more? By merely uttering any Name pertaining to 'Kṛṣṇāvatāra' or Kṛṣṇa's Descent constantly, one can obtain excessive joy right from Brahmānanda or Spiritual Bliss leading finally to association with Kṛṣṇa Himself in His eternal service."<sup>580</sup> One who, having killed a Brāhmaṇa with his own hands out of excessive infatuation or lust or having drunk liquor, utters only 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' and nothing else, becomes absolutely pure. The word 'Atyanta' indicates 'Sākṣāt' i.e., in person or with his own hands and in plenty; the participle 'Hanan'. i.e. having killed, shows his desisting from such heinous acts. Similarly 'Surām piban', i.e., having copiously drunk liquor, but has now given up this dirty habit. 'Ahorātram-ekameva Saṅkīrtya' indicates excess of Saṅkīrtana; or even if he having drunk liquor, day in and day out, utters only 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', becomes absolutely auspicious and pure; or even if he drinks liquor day and night, but utters 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', he becomes purified."<sup>581</sup>

"O King! Even crores of the vilest sins of the person are totally destroyed, in whose speech the most auspicious 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma somehow predominantly exists, i.e. the 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma somehow manifests Itself in his mouth, without faith, etc., and unintentionally. His sins are not only immediately destroyed, but his speech too becomes highly propitious. Even if It remains in his mouth as a symbol, without his having any faith, the result is always good, as it is in Its very nature to be very auspicious to all."<sup>582</sup> I lift him who daily remembers even

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580kim idaṁ bahunā śaṁsan mānuṣānanda-nirbharah  
brahmānandam avāpyānte kṛṣṇa-sāyujyam āpnuyāt  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.490)

581hanan brāhmaṇam atyantam kāmato vā surām piban  
kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇety aho-rātram saṅkīrtya śucitām iyāt  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.494)

atyantam sākṣāt svahastena bāhulyenetyarthaḥ | tatra ca hanan  
dhnanniti vartamānanirdeśenānivṛtti bodhayati | evamanyatrāpyuhyam |  
ahorātramekameva saṅkīrtya iti saṅkīrtanasya bāhulyamātramabhipretam  
| yadvā ahorātram surām pibannapīti sambanadhaḥ

582kṛṣṇeti maṅgalaṁ nāma yasya vāci pravartate  
bhaṁsībhavanti rājendra mahā-pātaka-koṭayaḥ  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.495)

once My Name 'Kṛṣṇa', even from the most infernal hell, as I lift the earth at the time of the universal destruction; or like the lotus immersed in water, I lift him who is immersed in the hell of worldliness. He will be untouched or unaffected by worldliness any more, indicating his liberation there from, as is the case with the lotus that has burst forth from the quagmire."<sup>583</sup> A person hearing the Vaiṣṇava Mantra 'Kṛṣṇa' - the Divine Remedy even to him who is lost to himself, being bitten by the serpent-like worldliness will become liberated there from. 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma is the medicine to revive a person who has lost his consciousness, being bitten by the serpent of worldliness. There is no other remedy so sure as this 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma, i.e., It is second to none."<sup>584</sup>

**"O hero! Amongst all My Names, 'Kṛṣṇa' is the most important Name. It is the sole atonement for all sins and is also the Best Rescuer. The word 'Mocaka' means the Giver or Bestower of the highest Mukti, i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself."**<sup>585</sup> He who utters 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', in whatever situation he be placed or wherever he may be, attains the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Goloka."<sup>586</sup> "O Ballavī-kānta (Gopa)! Why should you entertain any idea for practising other courses, so long as the 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma ever exists on your tongue? When the Name 'Kṛṣṇa' throbs on your tongue, even Mahākāla will be afraid of you. What is the earthly good of following Karma-mārga, Jñāna-mārga, Yoga, etc. or even other forms of devotion, like Śravaṇa, i.e., hearing His Pastimes, etc? When 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma

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583kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇeti kṛṣṇeti yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ

jalam bhittvā yathā padmaṁ narakād uddharāmy aham  
(nṛsimha-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.496)

584saṁsāra-sarpa-saṁdaṣṭaṁ naṣṭa-ceṣṭaika-bheṣajam

kṛṣṇeti vaiṣṇavaṁ mantraṁ śrutvā mukto bhaven naraḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.497)

585nāmnām mukhyataram nāma kṛṣṇākhyam me parantapa  
prāyaścittam aśeṣāṇām pāpānām mocakam param  
(prabhāsa-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.498)

586yatra yatra sthito vāpi kṛṣṇa-kṛṣṇeti kīrtayet

sarva-pāpa-viśuddhātmā sa gacchet paramām gatim  
(pādma-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.499)



always manifests on the tongue, It curbs the 'Tri-tāpas' or the three kinds of distress caused by this Samsāra or the course of worldly life, or It makes him averse to liberation as 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma is more full of Transcendental Bliss and is of a higher order than the state of liberation. It makes even Kṛṣṇa subservient to the devotee, in spite of the latter and much against his will."<sup>587</sup>

## 512. 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma is weightier than Nāmī

"I am telling you, O Śambhu nothing but the bare truth, which is to be properly cherished. Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma is the Divine Elixir to restore even death itself or like the life-restoring remedy to the dead."<sup>588</sup> "He who breathes his last, uttering 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa', by the first utterance of the Name Kṛṣṇa', he attains to His Lotus Feet and the 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' uttered a second and a third time, remain ever indebted to the utterer out of a sense or feeling of shame due to Their indebtedness. This shows that 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma ever remains in his mouth, i.e., It will always manifest Itself on his tongue; since the Possessor of the Name is not different from the Nāma, He too, will ever remain indebted to the utterer, indicating that the Lord too, is won over by uttering His Name."<sup>589</sup> **I bow down to those whom the twin syllables**

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587ballavī-kānta kim tais tair upāyaiḥ kṛṣṇa-nāma te

kintu jihvāgragaṁ jāgran nirundhe hi mahā-bhayam  
(viṣṇu-dharma; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.500)

taistaiḥ karmajñānādibhiḥ śravaṇādibhaktiprakāraiśca kim ? jāgat  
sadā prakāśamānaṁ jihvāggamapi san mahābhayaṁ samsāraṁ nirundhe  
vyāvartayati ; yadvā mahadabhayaṁ mokṣastamapi nirundhe tato 'pi  
paramānandarasaviśeṣamayatvāt ||

588satyaṁ bravīmi te śambho gopaṇīyam idaṁ mama

mṛtyu-saṁjīvanīm nāma kṛṣṇākhyāṁ avadhāraya  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.501)

589kṛṣṇaḥ kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa ity anta-kāle

jalpan jantur jīvitaṁ yo jahāti  
ādyah śabdaḥ kalpate tasya muktyai

'Kṛ-ṣṇa' cause to dance out of rapturous joy, as soon as they enter into their ears and the hair on whose bodies to bristle up out of thrills and whose sandals even are quite capable of liberating those stuck in the quagmire of chronic worldliness."<sup>590</sup> Spiritual knowledge has found comparison by the fruits that it accomplishes as in the Śloka 'Sālokya-sārṣṭi-sārūpya', etc.; but it has never been possible to weigh the selfless loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa, Who is actually won over more by loving devotion than by the acquisition of spiritual knowledge. Similarly the 'Aṣṭa Siddhis' or the mystic supernatural powers by practising which, everything belonging to this mundane world can be achieved, except the Lord, are of no consequence and can be compared too with the results that they achieve. But Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma has never been compared, as It is weightier than even Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Svarūpa"<sup>591</sup> Those who taste the sweetness of the ever-blissful Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma, do not care to entertain the least possible longing for liberation in the remotest corner of their hearts. This feeling is described in Śrī Īśvara Purī's Śloka thus, "Let those twice-born, such as Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, etc., who practise 'Yoga, Dhyāna, Dhāraṇā', etc., or follow the teachings of the

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vṛiḍā-namrau tiṣṭhato'nyāvṛṇasthau  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.502)

antakāle maraṇasamaye'pi ādyaḥ prāgukṭiḥ śabdaḥ kṛṣṇanām  
anyau dvau śabdau ṛṇasthau ṛṇinau tiṣṭhatīḥ tadvasyatayā kṛṣṇakṛṣṇeti  
sadā tanmukhādiṣu prādurbhavatīti bhāvaḥ | nāmanāminorabhedena  
nāmna ṛṇasthatvāt nāmīno'pi ṛṇasthatayā bhagavadvaśīkāritvaṁ jñeyam  
||

590tebhyo namo'stu bhava-vāridhi-jīrṇa-paṅka-  
saṁmagna-mokṣaṇa-vicakṣaṇa-pādukebhyaḥ  
kṛṣṇeti varṇa-yugalaṁ śravaṇena yeṣāṁ  
ānandathūrbhāvati nartita-roma-vṛndāḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.504)

591jñānam asti tulitaṁ ca tulāyām  
prema naiva tulitaṁ tu tulāyām  
siddhir eva tulitātra tulāyām  
kṛṣṇa-nāma tulitaṁ na tulāyām  
(padyāvalī 15)

Śrutis or do what they will in a dense lonely forest to achieve concentration of the mind leading up to 'Ātmārāmatva or Brahma-sāksātākāra' and final emancipation, or roam about from one holy place to another in search of the above. But I shall never be vexed even if I have to pass through lacs and lacs of births, while relishing the sweetness of Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma of Syāmasundara, Who has the splendour of the colour of the collection of night lotuses inside the bower amongst the dark Kadamba trees. The conclusion is that those people who practise 'Yoga, Dhyāna, Dhāraṇā, etc.,' have nothing but final emancipation as their ultimate goal; **but the Bhakti-rasajña Bhaktas, who can well appreciate and relish the sweetness of the Divine Name 'Kṛṣṇa', treat that type of liberation as worse than chaff. Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa'-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana to these Rasajñas is both the Sādhana and Sādhya, i.e., It is the ultimate end of human existence.** <sup>592</sup>

"The yearning to enjoy the pleasures of heaven makes all people in their pursuit only very wretched; the desire for liberation only causes intense distress; even the practice of Yoga or abstract meditation is quite insipid; what is the use of such abortive exertions? **So let my tongue giving up all these practices, only shout 'Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!'"** <sup>593 1.2</sup> "This - my inexplicable existence called 'Kṛṣṇa' manifesting in my mouth, doubly enhances its beauty, as the rise of the cool moon brings on the swelling of the ocean of my thirst for Thee." <sup>594</sup> This

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592yoga-śruty-upapatti-nirjana-vana-dhyānādhva-sambhāvita-  
svārjyaṁ pratipadya nirbhayaṁ amī muktā bhavantu dvijāḥ  
asmākaṁ tu kadamba-kuñja-kuhara-pronmīlad-indīvara-  
śreṇī-śyāmala-dhāma-nāma juṣatām janmāstu lakṣāvadhi  
(padyāvalī 18)

5931.2 svargārthīyā vyavasitir asau dīnaty eva lokān  
mokṣāpekṣā janayati janam kevalam kleśabhājam  
yogābhyāsaḥ parama-vīrasas tādṛśaiḥ kiṁ prayāsaiḥ  
sarvaṁ tyaktvā mama tu rasanā kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇeti rautu  
(padyāvalī 27)

594puṣṇānam etat punar-ukta-śobhām  
uṣṇetarāṁśor udayān mukhendoh  
tṛṣṇāmburāśim dviguṇīkaroti  
kṛṣṇāhvayaṁ kiñcana jīvaṁ me  
(śrī-kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛtam 84)

Śloka<sup>595</sup> vividly shows the inexhaustible fund of utter humility of a selfless devotee. "O Yādavendra! O Kṛṣṇa! When I remember Your Name 'Dīna-vatsala', i.e., One Who is kind to or the friend of the fallen or miserable souls, It fills me with ever-fresh hopes that I will receive Your succour, because all Your Names have the meaning easily deducible from Their etymology and it is Your Creed to live up to Them. But when I hear from other devotees about Your other Name 'Bhaktavatsala', i.e., a Friend of the devotees, my heart actually shudders to think if I will ever be eligible to receive Your Kindness, as I am utterly devoid to Bhakti; as such I may not have the good fortune to have even a particle of Your Grace." This true feeling doubly enhances their (devotees) thirst and craving for intense devotion and Śrī Kṛṣṇa too, being the Embodiment of Munificence (Audārya), and Sweetness, instead of quenching the devotional thirst, enhances it fourfold and this process goes on endlessly, without the least feeling of satiation on either side. This is the true nature of Divine Intoxication of Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma<sup>73.1573.1</sup>

Victory to Thee, O God! Victory to Thee!

O Divide Illuminator! Have the better of me!

Thou art Kṛṣṇa! Victory, victory, victory to Thee.

Thou art Nectar to the ears, the mind, and the eyes.<sup>596</sup>

"May Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma, Which is the Reservoir of all that is auspicious, the Destroyer of all the sins of Kali, the Purifier of all that is pure, i.e., the Primeval Source of Purity, the provision or allowance to the sage desirous of final beatitude to secure for him the highest goal of Goloka, the only place of eternal rest, for the words of the wise men like Śrī Vyāsadeva, Śukadeva etc., i.e., whenever the Name is

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595 dīna-bandhur iti nāma te smaran

yādavendra patito'ham utsahe

bhakta-vatsalatayā tvayi śrute

māmakarṇ hṛdayam āsu kampate

(padyāvali 64)

596 jaya jaya jaya deva deva deva

tri-bhuvana-maṅgala divya-nāma-dheya

jaya jaya jaya deva kṛṣṇa deva

śravaṇa-mano-nayanāmṛtāvatāra

(śrī-kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛtam 108)

remembered for the materialisations of their actions, their words, without taking the form of advice to others, culminate in the resplendent glorification of Śrī Nāma Māhātmya, i.e., the grandeur of the Divine Name, and hence the ultimate resting place for the words of the sages, the life-breath of saints who are engrossed in Nāma-Saṅkīrtana, and the seed of the tree of Dharma or religious practices, because all such practices find their origin in Nāma alone, provide in profusion for the welfare of all of you."<sup>597</sup>

### 513. 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma - The wish-yielding Gem

"The Name Itself is 'Cintāmaṇi', i.e., the wish-yielding Gem including the achievement of Śrī Kṛṣṇa because it is not different from Śrī 'Kṛṣṇa' Svarūpa. All the phrases in the Śloka are adjectival clauses to the word 'Kṛṣṇa'. Kṛṣṇa is 'Caitanya-rasa-vigraha', i.e., the Embodiment of luscious sweetness of Divine Consciousness as (1) 'Āsvādyā', that which is to be tasted, (2) 'Āsvādaka', that which imparts taste to others, and (3) 'Āsvādana', the act of tasting itself, because the 'Nāmi', viz., 'Kṛṣṇa' Svarūpa is the same as the Name 'Kṛṣṇa'. Kṛṣṇa is also the Divine Embodiment of all-alluring sweetness as 'Caitanya', i.e., Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Who not only tasted the ever-fresh sweetness of 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma, but also imparted It to one and all, in all possible unimaginable ways that they too should relish Its ravishing sweetness. He is the Embodiment of the 'Rasa' or the relishing of the Supreme Spirit as the essence of all being and source of our sensation. 'Caitanya' is the self-illuminory principle which increases one's craving to taste the 'Kṛṣṇa-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana-Rasa' more and more, once one tastes of It a bit, i.e., one who tastes even a drop of this Transcendental Ocean of 'Kṛṣṇa-Nāma-Saṅkīrtana-Rasa' is sure to be carried away by Its current and would go on relishing It more and more and never like to come out of It, inspite of himself. Hence, He is Kṛṣṇa - the dual manifestation of the 'Saccidānanda-Rasa-Rūpa', i.e., the

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597 kalyāṇānām nidhānam kali-mala-mathanam pāvanam pāvanānām  
 pātheyam yan mumukṣoḥ sapadi parapadaprāptaye procyamānam  
 viśrāma-sthānam ekam kavi-vara-vacasam jīvanam sajjanānām  
 bijam dharma-drumasya prabhavatu bhavatām bhūtaye kṛṣṇa-nāma  
 (padyāvalī 19)

Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Incarnate as 'Nāmī' - the Possessor of the Name, and the 'Nāma' - the Transcendental Name Itself. Hence, It is Purna, i.e., endowed with all His potentialities or powers including those to enable them to taste sweetness. He is Śuddha, i.e., pure without the least tinge of Māyā or His illusory energy and free from any attribute of the material world and its objects. He is Nitya-mukta, i.e., ever-free. **As such those who take absolute recourse to chanting of the Name are also freed, once and for all, from the bondage of worldliness.** There is no categorical difference between the 'Nāmī' and the 'Nāma'.<sup>598</sup>

### 514. *Kṛṣṇa is the Primeval Cause*

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa - the Supreme Lord known as the 'Govinda', Who is the most perfect Embodiment Of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss existing from eternity, is the Source of everything and the Primeval Cause of all causes."<sup>599</sup> It is already said in Śrīmad Bhāgavata that "All these are His Partial Manifestations in various degrees, **but Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān Himself, i.e., the Supreme Lord.**"<sup>600</sup> Hence, He is called 'Paramaḥ', 'Īśvaraḥ', and 'Kṛṣṇa'. In the Śloka Kṛṣṇa is the distinctive 'Noun' or 'Name' and all the other terms are Its Attributes qualifying 'Kṛṣṇa'. "It is also said by sages like Śukadeva that Kṛṣṇa, Who is Vāsudeva, Devakīnandana, etc., proving clearly that '**Kṛṣṇa**' is the **singularly Pre-eminent Name amongst all His Names.**"<sup>60177</sup> At the time of His naming

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598nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś caitanya rasa vigrahaḥ  
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya mukto 'bhinnatvān nāma nāminoḥ  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.503)

599īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ saccidānanda-vigrahaḥ  
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam  
(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1)

600ete cāmśa-kalāḥ pumsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.3.28)

60177 kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya devakī-nandanāya ca  
nanda-gopa-kumārāya govindāya namo namaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 1.8.21)

ceremony too, Śrī Gargamuni said that His Name for that Yuga, would be 'Kṛṣṇa', because of (1) the heavenly blue colour of His complexion, (2) His power of attracting to Himself all - both animate and inanimate creations, (3) because of His assuming upon Himself all the powers of His Partial Manifestations and of all Yugāvatāras too in super-abundance which conclusively proves His authority over all, including the other Avatāras."<sup>602</sup> Because of these, His Name 'Kṛṣṇa' is etymologically significant, i.e., has all the meaning easily deducible from etymology of the Name, 'Kṛṣṇa', and (4) includes the meaning of One Who has the twin syllables (Varṇas) 'Kṛ-ṣṇa' in His Name. It is also said in Prabhāsa Khaṇḍa, 'O hero (Ārjuna)! Out of all My Names, 'Kṛṣṇa' is the most important Name."<sup>603</sup> In Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa it is said, 'All that is obtained by the thrice repetition of Śrī Viṣṇu-Sahasra-Nāma is grandly achieved by the utterance of 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma once."<sup>604</sup> All these facts refer to 'Kṛṣṇa' only as the Supreme Lord. The Epithet 'Govinda' only explains His special aspect of Mastery, Overlordship, or Indratva over all the sense-organs, i.e., 'Gavendratva' and hence It qualifies 'Kṛṣṇa'.

"Hence, by conventional acceptance, the eminence of 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma is proved, the other terms being Its adjectives."<sup>605</sup> It is clearly mentioned thus: "He assumed appropriate Forms befitting the three Yugas with suitable tints of complexion, like white, red and yellow, which are now merged in 'Kṛṣṇa' (sky blue) colour. Hence, He will be known as 'Kṛṣṇa', because that is the tint that predominates in this

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602āsan varṇās trayo hy asya gṛhṇato 'nuyugam tanūḥ  
śuklo raktas tathā pīta idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.8.13)

603nāmnām mukhyataram nāma kṛṣṇākhyam me parantapa  
(prabhāsa-purāṇa; śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.498)

604sahasra-nāmnām puṇyānām trir-āvṛtīyā tu yat phalam  
ekāvṛtīyā tu kṛṣṇasya nāmaikam tat prayacchati  
(śrī hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.11.488)

605ataeva kṛṣṇe kartṛtvāt sarvotkarṣakatvāt kṛṣṇa iti mukhyam  
nāma  
(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭīkā)

Yuga."<sup>606</sup> "He has many Names depicting His characteristic qualities."<sup>607</sup> "The syllable 'Kṛṣ' denotes the property of 'drawing towards oneself or attracting', or 'Existence', and the suffix 'na' denotes 'Bliss'. The culmination of these realities in the Supreme Being is 'Kṛṣṇa', i.e., Who is Eternal Bliss."<sup>608</sup> "The meaning derived etymologically is also the same. A similar Śloka<sup>609</sup> is met within the commentary of the 18-letter Mantra in Gautamīya Tantra. The root 'Bhū' is used to indicate that from which all wishes originate, which has the same meaning as that of 'Kṛṣṇa'. In the Gautamīya Tantra, the root 'Bhū' is used to indicate its quality of 'Existence'. Hence, the root 'Kṛṣ' denotes 'Existence'; the suffix 'na' means 'Bliss'; 'Ātmā' means Bliss. So if the meaning of 'Kṛṣ' is also that of the root 'Bliss' then only all the meanings can be established, because the roots 'Kṛṣ', 'Bhū' and 'Asti' are indicative of all 'Kriyās' or actions. In the Gautamīya Tantra, even if the root 'Bhū' stands for 'Sattā' or existence, its meaning is the same as that of the root 'Kṛṣ'. When it is said that an earthen jar exists, it refers to its own existence and not to that of any other object like cloth, etc. Similarly if the root 'Kṛṣ' is taken to mean 'attraction', the suffix 'na' means bliss or happiness arising therefrom. 'Sāmānyādhikaraṇa' or the state of their relating to the same object is not possible; hence, it is to be taken as the use of identity between the cause and effect, as in the statement 'Āyurghṛtam', i.e., 'ghee is life'. Here though 'ghee' is the 'cause' for the longevity of life, it is taken as 'life' itself. In the same way 'Bliss' is the cause of 'attraction', and the former has been substituted by its effect, i.e., 'attraction' - the effect of 'Bliss' or the effect is identified with the cause. **He, Who through His**

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606See footnote 580

607bahūni santi nāmāni rūpāṇi ca sutasya te

guṇa-karmānurūpāṇi tāny ahaṁ veda no janāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.8.15)

608kṛṣir bhū-vācakaḥ śabdaḥ naś ca nirvṛti-vācakaḥ

tayor aikyaṁ param brahma kṛṣṇa ity abhidhīyate  
(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭīkā)

609kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho naś cānanda-svarūpakaḥ

sukha-rūpo bhaved ātmā bhāvānanda-mayatvataḥ  
(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭīkā)



**Own Bliss causes attraction or attracts, is Himself 'Kṛṣṇa'.** "He is also known as 'Param Brahman' because of the ever-increasing superiority of His attractive power over those of all. He is also known as the Supreme Lord because of His vastness and His Nature to cause others to increase."<sup>610</sup> How He accomplishes this is told in the Śrutis. It is also said in the Brhad Gautamīya Tantra thus: "The root 'Kṛṣ' denotes 'Existence' and the suffix 'ṇa' denotes 'Bliss'. Hence, by their union, the term 'Cit' is attributable to Param Brahman only."<sup>611</sup> **Kṛṣṇa is Bliss endowed with the power of attracting all; because of His Blissful Svarūpa or disposition, the Jīva or Ātmā becomes blissful, being engrossed in Divine Love.**<sup>612</sup> **He is called 'Kṛṣṇa' because He attracts all both movables and immovables.** He is also called 'Kāla' because He is the Controller of all."<sup>613</sup> Uddhava says, "Śrī Kṛṣṇa because of His incomprehensible affluence, is the Master of the three worlds. He, Whose all desires are fulfilled and Whose footstool is ever being respected by the tips of the crowns of all the Kings, offering their due tributes to Him, is also ever being served by the goddess of fortune, prosperity, and beauty."<sup>614</sup> **Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, "I am pervading the whole universe with an aliquot part of My Person."**<sup>615</sup> In the Tāpanī Śruti, it is

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610bṛhattvād bṛmhaṇatvāc ca tad brahma paramaṁ vidur  
(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭikā)

611kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho ṇaś cānanda-svarūpakah  
sattā-svānandayor yogāc cit param brahma cocyate  
(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭikā)

612yasmād evaṁ sarvākarṣaka-sukha-rūpo'sau tasmād  
ātmā jīvaś ca tatra sukha-rūpo bhavet  
(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭikā)

613athavā karṣayet sarvaṁ jagat sthāvara-jaṅgamam  
kāla-rūpeṇa bhagavān tenāyaṁ kṛṣṇa ucyate  
(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭikā)

614See footnote 552

615viṣṭabhyāham idaṁ kṛtsnam ekāṁśena sthito jagat  
(śrīmad-bhagavad-gītā 10.42)

said. "Kṛṣṇa is the Sole Controller and He is solely to be sung and glorified by all."<sup>616</sup> Because of His Overlordship, He is 'Paramaḥ', i.e., He Who is served by Śrī Lakṣmī, i.e., the Goddess of affluence of all Śaktis or regal powers."<sup>617</sup> **That Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the highest God."**<sup>618</sup> In Śrīmad Bhāgavata it is said, "I bow down to the Primeval Puruṣa known as 'Kṛṣṇa."<sup>619</sup> Śrī Śukadeva tells Parīkṣit thus, "Know Him to be Kṛṣṇa, Who is the Soul of all souls, and Who, for the welfare of all, i.e., to attract the minds of all towards Himself wherein lies their eternal welfare, manifests Himself as a Human Being out of sheer kindness."<sup>620</sup> His Pastimes like a Human Being are solely due to His being under the influence of His Kindness. Sūta says, "O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa-sakha, i.e., the Friend of Arjuna! O the most excellent among the Vṛṣṇis! O the Destroyer of spiteful Kings! O Ye of undiminishing prowess! O Govinda, i.e., Controller of all the sense-organs! You Whose Glory is ever being sung by Your servants like Nārada and multitudes of Gopīs! O Ye Who are auspicious to the ears! Protect us by instilling in us selfless devotion to You."<sup>621</sup>

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616eko vaśī sarvagaḥ kṛṣṇa īḍyaḥ

(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭīkā)

617paramaḥ sarvotkṛṣṭā mā lakṣmī-rūpāḥ śaktayo yasmin

(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭīkā)

618kṛṣṇo vai paramaṁ daivatam

(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭīkā)

619puruṣam ṛṣabham ādyaṁ kṛṣṇa-saṁjñam nato'smi

(śrī-brahma-saṁhitā 5.1; śrī-jīva-gosvāmi-ṭīkā)

620kṛṣṇam enam avehi tvam ātmānam akhilātmanām

jagad-dhitāya so 'py atra dehīvābhāti māyayā

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.55)

621śrī-kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa-sakha vṛṣṇy-ṛṣabhāvani-dhruḡ-

rājanya-vamśa-dahanānapavarga-vīrya

govinda gopa-vanītā-vraja-bhṛtya-gīta

tīrtha-śravaḥ śravaṇa-maṅgala pāhi bhṛtyān

(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.11.25)

## 515. *Gaurāṅga - The Nāmāvatār of Kṛṣṇa*

In this Śloka 'Kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam'<sup>622</sup> the Kali Yugāvatāra, after the descent of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa,

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622kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam  
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.32)

śrī-kṛṣṇāvatārānantara-kali-yugāvatāram pūrvavad  
āha—kṛṣṇeti | tviṣā kāntiā yo'kṛṣṇo gauras taṁ sumedhaso yajanti |  
gauratvaṁ cāsyā,

āsan varṇās trayo hy asya gr̥hṇato'nuyugam tanuḥ  
śuklo raktas tathā pīta idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.8.13)

ity atra vāri-śeṣya-pramāṇa-labdham idānīm eva  
tad-avatāra-padatvenābhikhyāte dvāpare kṛṣṇatāṅgata ity ukteḥ,  
śukla-raktayoḥ satya-tretā-gatatvena darśitatvāc ca | atītasyātītatvaṁ  
prācināvatārāpekṣayā atra śrī-kṛṣṇasya paripūrṇa-rūpatvena  
vakṣyamānatvād yugāvatāratvaṁ tasmin sarve'py avatārā antar-bhūtā iti  
tat-tat-prayojanam tasminn ekasminn eva sidhyatīty apekṣayā tad evam  
yad dvāpare śrī-kṛṣṇo'vatarati tadaiva kalau śrī-gauro'py avataratīti  
svāsyā-labdhaḥ śrī-kṛṣṇāvirbhāva-viśeṣa evāyam gaura ity āyāti,  
tad-avyabhicārāt |

tad etad āvirbhāvatvaṁ tasya svayam eva viśeṣaṇa-dvārā  
vyanakti—kṛṣṇa-varṇam kṛṣṇety etau varṇau ca yatra yasmin  
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-deva-nāmni kṛṣṇatvābhivyañjakam kṛṣṇeti  
varṇa-yugalaṁ prayuktam astīty arthaḥ | tṛtīye śrīmad-uddhava-vākye  
samāhṛtā ity ādi padye śrīyaḥ savarṇena [bhā.pu. 3.3.3] ity atra tīkāyām,  
śrīyo rukmiṇyāḥ samāna-varṇa-dvayaṁ vācakaṁ yasya sa śrīyaḥ sa-varṇo  
rukmī ity api dṛśyate |

yad vā, kṛṣṇam varṇayati  
tadṛśa-sva-paramānanda-vilāsa-smaraṇollāsa-vaśatayā svayam gāyati,  
parama-kāruṇikatayā ca sarvebhyo'pi lokebhyaḥ tam evopadiśati yas tam |  
athavā, svayam akṛṣṇam gauram tviṣā sva-śobhayā viśeṣeṇaiva

is referred to as "Who is 'Akṛṣṇa', i.e., is fair and yellowish in colour. Wise people adore the splendour of His complexion as in 'Āsan varṇās trayo hy asya, etc.'" In this Śloka after describing the three colours of His Complexion for the three Yugas, the colour of the residuary Yuga, viz., of Dvāpara adopted by Him is described as 'Kṛṣṇa' - heavenly blue hue. Because the Satya and Tretā Yugas had already elapsed, the 'Pitavarṇa' of the Descent refers to the already past Avatāra.

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kṛṣṇopadeṣṭāraṁ ca yad-darśanenaiva sarveṣāṁ kṛṣṇaḥ sphuratīty arthaḥ  
| kiṁ vā, sarva-loka-draṣṭāraṁ kṛṣṇaṁ gauram api bhakta-viśeṣa-dṛṣṭau  
tviṣā prakāśa-viśeṣeṇa kṛṣṇa-varṇaṁ tādṛśa-śyāmasundaram eva santam  
ity arthaḥ | tasmāt tasmin śrī-kṛṣṇa-rūpasyaiva prakāśāt  
tasyaivāvirbhāva-viśeṣaḥ sa iti bhāvaḥ |

tasya bhagavattvam eva spaṣṭayati—sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārśadam  
aṅgāny eva parama-manoharatvāt, upāṅgāni bhūṣaṇādini  
mahāprabhāvatvāt, tāny evāstrāṇi sarvadaivaikānta-vāsītṛvāt, tāny eva  
pārśadāḥ bahubhir mahānubhāvair asakṛd eva tathā dṛṣṭo'sāv iti  
gauḍa-varendra-suhmotkalādi-deśīyānāṁ mahā-prasiddheḥ | yad vā,  
atyanta-premāspadatvāt tat-tulyā eva pārśadāḥ  
śrīmad-advaitācārya-mahānubhāva-caraṇa-prabhṛtayas taiḥ saha  
vartamānam iti cārthāntareṇa vyaktam |

tad evaṁ-bhūtaṁ kair yajanti ? yajñaiḥ pūjā-sambhāraiḥ, na yatra  
yajñeṣa-makha mahotsavāḥ (śrīmad-bhāgavata 5.19.24) ity ukteḥ | tatra ca  
viśeṣeṇa tam evābhidheyaṁ vyanakti—saṅkīrtanaṁ bahubhir militvā  
tad-gāna-sukhaṁ śrī-kṛṣṇa-gānaṁ tat-pradhānaiḥ | tathā  
saṅkīrtana-prādhānyasya tad-āśriteṣv eva darśanāt, sa evātrābhidheya iti  
spaṣṭam | ata eva sahasra-nāmnī tad-avatāra-sūcakāni nāmāni kathitāni,  
suvarṇa-varṇo hemāṅgo varāṅgaś candanāṅgadī | sannyāsa-kṛc chamaḥ  
śāntaḥ ity ādini darśitaṁ ca | etat parama-vidvac-chiromaṇinā  
śrī-sārvabhauma-bhaṭṭācāryeṇa

kālān naṣṭa bhakti-yogaṁ nijam yaḥ  
prāduṣkartuṁ kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmā  
āvirbhūtas tasya pādāravinde  
gāḍhaṁ gāḍhaṁ liyatām citta-bhṛṅgaḥ  
(krama-sandarbhāḥ)

Here it is said that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Fullest Manifestation, i.e., Svayam Bhagavān, all the other Avatars are merged or included in Him and all the functions of the Yugaavatāras will be accomplished by Him only. **He, Who descends as Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Dvāpara, will certainly descend as 'Gaura' in the following Kali Yuga, indicating thereby that the 'Gaura' Avatāra is the special Descent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself possessing a natural excellence and elegance.** This Descent of 'Gaura' is described by Śrī Vyāsadeva with unflinching accuracy with His Own Epithets like 'Kṛṣṇa-varṇam', etc., i.e., One in Whose Name the two syllables 'Kṛ-ṣṇa' exist as the Name 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya' discloses His Kṛṣṇatva (Svayam Bhagavattvā) of Which the twin syllables 'Kṛṣṇa' connected with His Name are befittingly present; or One Who Himself sings 'Kṛṣṇa' out of excessive joy arising from the recollection of His ecstatic Pastimes and out of sheer uncontainably exuberant kindness to Jīvas, preaches It to all of them; or One Who is 'Akṛṣṇa', i.e., 'Gaura' (yellowish fair complexioned), by the splendour of His complexion alone infuses into the people the feeling to take 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma, or Who by His very presence alone inspires one and all to utter 'Kṛṣṇa'; or the Caretaker of all people; Kṛṣṇa, though He descends as 'Gaura', is realised by His ardent devotees as Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa only by the splendour or Divine illumination which conclusively proves that He, i.e., 'Gaura' is the Descent in toto of Śrī Kṛṣṇa only. His Svayam Bhagavattvā is elucidated by the explanation of the term 'Śāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam', i.e., He Who is ever present with His Attributes, secondary Attributes, which are in themselves His ornaments due to their all-alluring nature and are also His because of their great prowess, and are also His Pārṣadas as His retinue or attendants residing always near Him; thus He has been experienced by a great many personages of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, etc., or Who lives with His Aṅgas, i.e., Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Advaita Ācārya, etc., Who like Him are also the subject of the intense love and esteem of all in a like manner; by the second meaning, the same meaning is arrived at. How is He worshipped? He is worshipped with the necessities of worship to which the words like 'Na yatra yajñeśa-makhā, etc, Bh. 5.19.24' of gods bear testimony. By the adjective 'Saṅkīrtana-prāyaiḥ' qualifying the word 'Yajñaiḥ', Śrī Vyāsadeva indicates the subject-matter, viz., **'Saṅkīrtana', i.e., the loud congregational chanting of 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma in unison and relishing the Bliss thereof.** This shows that Saṅkīrtana was also the subject-matter of His followers. Hence, in Sahasra-Nāma, the

149th Chapter of Mahābhārata in Dāna Dharma, all His Names describing His various Attributes and indicative of Descent as 'Gaura' are met with, of which, the particular Śloka 'Suvarṇa-varṇo hemāṅgo, etc.,' means, "One Who has the splendour of gold, of yellowish complexion, of beautiful Body, Wearer of the most excellent bracelets, a Saṁnyāsī, etc.," Which are applicable to Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. This has been clearly disclosed by the most eminent Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, "O the wasp-like mind! Clasp fast to the Lotus Feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Who descends on this earth to manifest the Glory of His loving devotion, which had disappeared with the lapse of time." "In Prahlāda's words 'Channah kalau yad abhavas tri-yugo 'tha sa tvam, Bh. 7.9.38', He is known as 'Tri Yuga' also, as His real Form is concealed (not disclosed) in Kali Yuga, i.e., One Who assumes His Real Forms in Kṛta, Tretā, and Dvāpara Yugas."<sup>551600</sup>

### 516. *Prayers invoking Gaura-Kṛṣṇa's blessings*

"O Protector of those gone to You for refuge! O Supreme Lord! I bow to Your Lotus Feet Which are always fit to be mediated upon without the least restrictions of time and place, which destroy all impediments like, Karma, Jñāna, Yoga, to the practice of unalloyed devotion to You, Which are the wish-yielders, and holy because of Their being the resort of the holy river Gaṅgā, Which are ever being extolled by Śiva and Brahma, Which are the fittest sanctuary to be sought after by all, Which destroy the acutest distress of their servants and Which are the ship to cross this ocean of worldliness."<sup>623</sup> "O Omnipresent Illuminator! O Lord Who manifest the six divine excellences! He who is indeed favoured even with an iota of Your Grace, alone knows the true significance of Your grandeur, and no one else, even if he hankers after it for a long time, by practising everything other than Your loving

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623dhyeyaṁ sadā paribhava-ghnam abhīṣṭa-dohaṁ  
 tīrthāspadaṁ śiva-virīñci-nutaṁ śaraṇyam  
 bhṛtyārṭi-haṁ praṇata-pāla bhavābdhi-potaṁ  
 vande mahā-puruṣa te caraṇāravindam  
 (śrīmad-bhāgavata 11.5.33)

devotion."<sup>624</sup>"O my Protector! O Divine Fulfiller of all desires! Either in this existence or in any other birth, if it be my good fortune to happen to be counted one amongst Your countless devotees, I shall wholeheartedly serve Your Lotus Feet. Then only such a person would be considered very fortunate and not otherwise."<sup>625</sup>"O Lord! Though none of Your wishes yet remains to be fulfilled, You dearly drank the milk of Vraja's cows and Gopīs in the Form of their calves and sons, although all the sacrifices offered from ages immemorial have not been able to satisfy You. How highly blessed indeed are the cows and the Gopīs of Vraja!"<sup>626</sup>"I shall consider myself as more than highly fortunate, if I am allowed to be born in any species, either as a blade of grass or even as a worm, so that I may have a full and thorough top-to-toe ablution in the feetdust of any of the Vrajavāsīs whose very life-breath is Śrī Mukunda, a particle of Whose Feetdust is even now being sought after by the Śrutis from time immemorial."<sup>627</sup>

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624athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-  
prasāda-leśānugrḥīta eva hi  
jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno  
na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvaṁ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.29)

625tad astu me nātha sa bhūri-bhāgo  
bhava 'tra vānyatra tu vā tiraścām  
yenāham eko 'pi bhavaj-janānām  
bhūtvā niṣeve tava pāda-pallavam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.30)

626aho 'ti-dhanyā vraja-go-ramaṇyaḥ  
stanyāmṛtaṁ pītaṁ atīva te mudā  
yāsāṁ vibho vatsatārātmajātmanā  
yat-tṛptaye 'dyāpi na cālam adhvarāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.31)

627tad bhūri-bhāgyam iha janma kim apy aṭavyāṁ  
yad gokule 'pi katamāṅghri-rajo-'bhiṣekam  
yaj-jīvitāṁ tu nikhilāṁ bhagavān mukundaḥ  
tv adyāpi yat-pada-rajāḥ śruti-mṛgyam eva  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.34)

"O Kṛṣṇa! So long as people do not accept You as their own, i.e., so long as they do not form any relationship like Dāśya, Sakhya, Vātsalya, and Mādhurya, or that of a beloved wife with You, all the peculiarities like passion, love, anger, etc., act as thieves with them, the house becomes a dungeon and the delusion of the mind which makes them think the transient objects and pleasures as eternal bliss and by which they become addicted to the gratification of the senses, fetters their feet. **But as soon as they take absolute shelter in You, even anger conduces to the advancement of their devotion to You. O Kṛṣṇa! The Embodiment of Transcendental Bliss! When people become devoted to You, they naturally treat all the worldly enjoyments, relations, friends, guests, etc., as emblems of Your Grace and all the five passions, like Kāma (desire), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Moha (delusion), and Mada (passion), which in a non-devotee cause his retrogradation, become the supporters of his continued progress of devotion.** If You do not accept them as Your Own, all these feelings become so to say their curses which jointly and severally bring about their downfall."<sup>628</sup>"O Kṛṣṇa! Pray forgive me. You are Omniscient. You are the Supreme Being. You are the Lord of the universe. This whole creation is treated by me as Yours. I am only Your vassal. Hence, without your Grace I am not fit to acquire the good fortune of these blades of grass and other fortunate beings of Vṛndāvana."<sup>629</sup>"Fie upon us all who are averse to You, O Adhokṣaja! Cursed be our births, in spite of our triple purity of birth as Brāhmaṇas, purity attained because of the Gāyatrī Mantra, and the purity because of our performance of the sacrifices (Yajñas)! Cursed be our learning, our Yogic practices and plenty of knowledge too!"<sup>630</sup>"I bow down again and again to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is known as

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628tāvad rāgādayaḥ stenās tāvat kārā-grhaṁ grham  
tāvan moho 'nghri-nigaḍo yāvat kṛṣṇa na te janāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.36)

629anujānihi mām kṛṣṇa sarvaṁ tvaṁ vetsy sarva-dṛk  
tvam eva jagatām nātho jagad etat tavārpitam  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.14.39)

630dhig janma nas tri-vṛd yat tad dhig vrataṁ dhig bahu-jñatām  
dhik kulaṁ dhik kriyā-dākṣyaṁ vimukhā ye tv adhokṣaje  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.23.40)



'Vāsudeva', the Supreme Being 'Hari', and 'Govinda', Who destroys all kinds of distress of those who have taken shelter in Him."<sup>631</sup> "Sages have praised that Your Nectarine Accounts revivify the tormented and sullen souls, that they destroy all kinds of sins, that they are auspicious to the ears, that They are full of Divine Attributes, and that those people who sing Them are indeed very fortunate on the face of the earth."<sup>632</sup> **I bow down to the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Whose Nāma-Saṅkīrtana totally destroys all kinds of sins, i.e., Ādhidaivika, Ādhibhautika, and Ādhyātmika, and only the prostrated obeisances to Whom completely eradicate all kinds of distress."**<sup>633</sup> **I bow down to Him Whose Svarūpa is the Divine Name, to him who babbles the Name, to him who is purified by the Name and to Him Who is full of Names and to Him Who is saturated with the Names."**<sup>634</sup>

Hast thou a heart to cross life's stormy ocean,  
And yearnest thou for luscious Saṅkīrtana's fruition,  
And blessings of Fulsome Bliss of Kṛṣṇa-Prema?  
Then take absolute refuge in Gaura-Kṛṣṇa's Name.

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631kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya haraye paramātmāne  
praṇāta-kleśa-nāśāya govindāya namo namaḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.73.16)

632tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam  
kaviḥkṛtāṁ kalmaṣāpaham  
śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ  
bhuvi grṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 10.31.9)

633nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ yasya sarva-pāpa praṇāśanam  
praṇāmo duḥkha-śamanas taṁ namāmi hariṁ param  
(śrīmad-bhāgavata 12.13.23)

634namo 'stu nāma rupāya namo 'stu nāma jalpine  
namo 'stu nāma śuddhāya namo nāma mayāya ca

## 517. ADDRESS TO MY ERRING SELF

Sing aloud, sing aloud 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma in prayers,  
That cleans mind's mirror of sins' many layers.  
Chant aloud, O chant aloud Kṛṣṇa's sweet Names,  
That rid life's fires and the fury of their flames.  
Drink deep of the Fount of Kṛṣṇa's Name aright,  
That virtue may thrive as water-lily by moonlight.  
Utter 'Kṛṣṇa', utter 'Kṛṣṇa', utter Kṛṣṇa's Name,  
That enlivens the Lores and Vraja's Fairy Dame.  
Delve deep, delve deep in Kṛṣṇa's lovely Name:  
It swells ecstasy's tide and sets all aflame.  
Shout 'Kṛṣṇa', shout Kṛṣṇa' with your might and main;  
Its Nectar sure shall saturate souls innermost grain.  
Cry 'Kṛṣṇa' cry 'Kṛṣṇa', 'Kṛṣṇa' aloud and bold,  
That 'Kṛṣṇa' wins you o'er and holds you in His fold.  
See 'Kṛṣṇa' see 'Kṛṣṇa' - the Enchanter of hearts sore;  
He envelops the soul with Love right up to the core.<sup>635</sup>  
Kṛṣṇa! Your Powers full are imbued in Your Name!  
'Time and clime control not chain of Name' You claim.  
So Mighty Kind You are and I - horridly, incurably blind!  
Misfortunes sorely grind, by Your Love is untouched my  
mind.<sup>636</sup>  
A drooping blade of grass ne'er raises its head,  
Nor grumbles e'en a little, when trod on its bed,  
So let me be humbler than this grass-blade,  
And chant 'Kṛṣṇa' aloud with tears' raid.  
The tree offers all it owns, to one who asks,  
Tho' itself e'er in drought, rain, and sun basks;

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635ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam  
śreyaḥ-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam  
ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsādanam  
sarvātma-snapanam param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam  
(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 1)

636nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktis  
tatrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālāḥ  
etādṛśī tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi  
durdaivam idṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ  
(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 2)

It shelters the traveller from the scorching sun,  
 And asks naught in return for services done.  
 The heartless man plunders it of fruit and flow'r,  
 Of bark and bough: and once for all fells it o'er,  
 To roof his house; he burns it! so odd it sounds!  
 Man's un-ending greed knows no bounds!  
 Yet matchless is the tree in forbearance;  
 Pray give me patience in plenty, for once.  
 Free me of my ego and lust for name and fame,  
 Make me civil and for ever chant Your Name.<sup>637</sup>  
 I covet not the bait of poesy, pelf, and paradise,  
 Yet meekly in Ye I seek selfless devotion likewise;  
 In life after life, I care not for any station,  
 'Twixt Ye and me, I pray for no separation.<sup>638</sup>  
 O Kṛṣṇa! Lift this luckless slave stuck in worldly mire,  
 Grievously tormented am I with countless calamities dire!  
 Pray give me space that a speck of dust would take,  
 On Your Lovely Lotus Feet, if only, for pity's sake!<sup>639</sup>  
 When shall my eyes, while uttering Thy Name,  
 Be flooded with tears and my mortal frame  
 Be bristled with the hair standing on end  
 And to choke my voice, my feelings would tend?<sup>640</sup>

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637ṭṛṇād api su-nīcena taror api sahiṣṇunā  
 amāninā māna-dena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ  
 (śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 3)

638na dhanam na janam na sundarim  
 kavitaṁ vā jagad-īśa kāmaya  
 mama janmani janmanīśvare  
 bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī tvayi  
 (śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 4)

639ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaram  
 patitaṁ mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau  
 kṛpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-  
 sthita-dhūli-sadrśaṁ vicintaya  
 (śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 5)

640nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā  
 vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā  
 pulakair nicitam vapuḥ kadā

O Govinda! A moment metamorphoses into a Deathless age,  
And tears gush out like rivers in rage;  
Separation from Ye has cost me so much harm,  
That the world to me, has lost all its charm.<sup>641</sup>  
Let Him hug me—His belov'd to pulp, if He Will,  
Or crush my vitals or His absence kill.  
Or the Self-Willed Dissolute hold me in fee!  
My Sole Overlord is He! O none else than He!<sup>642</sup>

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tava nāma-grahṇe bhaviṣyati  
(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 6)

641yugāyitaṁ nimeseṇa cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitaṁ  
śūnyaīyitaṁ jagat sarvaṁ govinda-virahṇa me  
(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 7)

642āśliṣya vā pāda-ratāṁ pinaṣtu mām  
adarśanān marma-hatāṁ karotu vā  
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampāto  
mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparah  
(śrī śikṣāṣṭaka 8)

## 518. THE HYMN OF LIFE

Hail Thee 'Hari Nāma! Kali Yuga's Sole Resort!  
For the ship of life, foul weather's safest Port.  
Without Thee there's no other Support to seek;  
With my heart and soul, honestly to Thee I speak.  
O 'Hari' Nāma! In Thee I take refuge with all my heart;  
Tho' in singing Thy Glories. Upaniṣads play their part,  
Yet unable are they to do justice to Thy Greatness.  
Thou art e'er being sung by Yogīs in their sedateness!  
O Akṣara-Form! Victory to Thee! Thou art always sought,  
For Thou appeasest e'en those who in worldliness are caught.  
Thou art e'er being sung by sages with bright prospect,  
As Thou purifiest e'en a sinner, uttering Thee in disrespect.  
O Bhagavān! the Sun of 'Kṛṣṇa' Name!  
Who can aptly describe Thy enduring Fame?  
Thy dim reflection, dispelling Universe's ignorance,  
Confers on all the boon of Kṛṣṇa-Prema's affluence.  
The deeds of past births, which the Vedas call,  
Destiny, remain undestroyed unless endur'd by all;  
Yet, unendur'd. Thy dim reflection destroys them as well,  
Tho' meditation on Brahman fails to save them from their spell.  
Victory to Thee! O 'Kṛṣṇa' Nāma - the Fount of Divine Bliss!  
Meditation's pains and troublesome rituals Thou dost thus dismiss.  
O Harbinger of Kṛṣṇa's Feet! howsoe'er Thou art spoken,  
My Faith in Thee - my Nectar, Life, and Ornament be unshaken!  
Thou art both a Means and an End in Itself to me.  
Make me Thy 'ternal slave till the soul in this body be.  
Without Thy Mercy there's in the world no succour for me!  
If Thou deniest my wish, what would my fate be?  
Except for Thee there's none I can call my own;  
O where should I go, if Thou dost me disown?  
In sins vile, I am sunk o'er head and shoulders.  
And ruefully I am aflame in their smoulders.  
Calling Thee aloud unmotivated,  
My heart by Thy glamour is captivated,  
For diffusest Thou resplendent Love around,  
My soul by Thy Kindness is spell-bound.  
God's Grace is the richest possession of mankind,  
Before which Fate's cruellest blows fail to grind;  
Death, as it must come, comes to all ere long,  
Let Gaura-Hare! Gaura-Kṛṣṇa! be my swan-song.