



तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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SERVING YOUR GODBROTHERS

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Regarding serving your godbrothers, this is a very good practice. The spiritual master is never without his followers, so to serve the spiritual master also means to be the servant of his disciples. When you want to serve the king, you must also serve his minister, secretary, and everyone who serves him. And to serve his servants may please him more than to serve the king personally. So the spiritual master is not alone. He is always with his entourage. We are not impersonalists. We take care of every part of the whole, as much as one should take care of his hat as well as his shoes. Both are equally important for the upkeep of the body. I hope that you will understand this rightly. (Letter to Sivananda. 23 January 1969.)

It is not so much important the quantity of books that we distribute, but that we serve Krishna as best we can, and depend on him for the results.

Transcendental competition is nice, but it should not come to the point of making us lose our Krishna consciousness. When you have these feelings, do not mistake it for enviousness, but take it to be an indirect appreciation of the service done by your other godbrothers. This is spiritual. In the material world, when someone surpasses us in some way we become angry and plan how to stop him, but in the spiritual world when someone does some better service we think, "Oh! He has done so nicely! Let me help him to execute his service." So we should always endeavor to keep this attitude, and serve Lord Krishna to the best of our ability. That will make one advance in spiritual life. (Letter to Dharma. 22 April 1972.)

Why ___ should have a servant? Godbrothers are not meant for being servants. Without the spiritual master's order, nobody can utilize the service of a godbrother as one's personal servant. We address each other as prabhu, so how can we engage our godbrother as a servant? Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu engaged Govinda Das, who was his godbrother, as his servant. But that was only on the order of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's spiritual master. (Letter to Kirtanananda Swami. 23 November 1974.)

One of the symptoms of a devotee is that he is kind. If our godbrother becomes ill, it is our duty to help him get the proper medicine and treatment so that he can recover ... the devotees see that he gets all facility,

a hospital bed, proper *prasādam*, and personal care and visiting. So there is no question of ill-treating of our own godbrothers simply because they are sick, nor should you allow such neglect to go on. So long we have this material body there will be sickness, but we have to remain on the transcendental platform nevertheless. (Letter to Sukadeva. 5 April 1974.) ❀

SABDA, READING, NAMA, AND DEITY

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

There are two representatives of the Supreme Lord in this world, the transcendental sound vibration of the Lord's holy name and the Lord's deity, who enjoys eternal spiritual pastimes. We cannot see with our eyes, smell with our nose, taste with our tongue, or touch with our body that object that is at present far from us, just as we cannot touch London with any of our senses from this place. None of the above four senses can touch an object situated at such a distance. All we can do is use our sense of hearing to gather knowledge about that object. We can learn about London even while sitting here by hearing about it, perhaps over the telephone. Reading is considered an extension of hearing because printed words are simply visualized sounds.

The scripture is revealed transcendental sound that has been visualized in the form of writing. We can hear the transcendental sound vibrations through writings – vibrations that were made by *sādhus* thousands of years ago. Therefore, the *śāstra*, the work of saintly persons, is the deity form of transcendental sound vibration.

Mundane sound does not work in the same way. With mundane sound, there is a difference between the name of an object and the object itself. For example, the sound “London” is different from the place London. The sound “water” is different from the substance that is water. In the spiritual world there is no difference between an object's name and the object itself. In Vaikuntha, the sound and the object are synonymous. A name is nondifferent from the person who is called by that name.

The Lord's holy names are not products of matter but have incarnated from Vaikuntha. Maya has no jurisdiction over the transcendental sound vibrations that have descended into this world. Such transcendental sound is directly the Supreme Brahman, who is full of spiritual variegatedness. Therefore, those who constantly hear transcendental sound are constantly in touch with the Supreme Brahman.

Just as a person who lives at a distance from an object gathers information about that object with the help of sound, and upon meeting the object offers prayers, praise, and adoration, thereby attaining proper realization of the object, similarly, in the spiritual sense it is vital to hear transcendental sound vibration if one wishes to understand the Supreme Object. This is true both for the *sādhaka* and the *siddha*. Jagad-guru Sri Chaitanyadev, crest jewel among *ācāryas*, glorified the process of hearing transcendental sound and taught us to engage in the congregational chanting of the Lord's holy name as both our *sādhana* [means] and our *sādhya* [goal].

Chanting becomes useless when the Supreme Lord is not the beneficiary of the chanting but we use it to fulfill some temporary self-interest. If a servant calls the master to eat, or the master's wife and children call him to give him pleasure, would we consider such calling in vain? Rather, to refrain from calling is useless.



Nāma-tattva

RESULTS OF STUDYING ALL THE VEDAS

***Srila Sanatan and Gopal Bhatta Goswamis'*
Śri Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.181-182**

*ṛg-vedo hi yajur-vedaḥ sāmā-vedo 'py atharvaṇaḥ
adhītās tena yenoktaṁ harir ity akṣara-dvayam*

“A person who chants the two syllables ha-ri has already studied the four Vedas — Sāma, Ṛg, Yajur, and Atharva.” (Quoted from *Viṣṇu-dharmottara*.)

*mā ṛco mā yajus tāta mā sāmā paṭha kiñcana
govindeti harer nāma geyan gāyasma nityaśaḥ*

“My dear son, there is no need to study the Ṛg Veda, there is no need to study the Yajur Veda, and there is no need to study the Sāma Veda. Just always chant the holy names of Hari such as Govinda.” (Quoted from the *Skanda Purāna*.)

— Quoted in *Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada's* commentary on *Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur's Śri Caitanya-bhāgavata antya* 8.134. English translation by Bhumipati Das. Edited and published by Pundarik Vidyanidhi Das. Vrajaraj Press. Vrindavan. 2001.





Unknown artist

Mahaprabhu and his associates performing prema-nāma-saṅkirtana

Devotees chant Krishna's holy name simply to give him pleasure, to serve him, and not to fulfill their own sense gratification.

We do not care about those who consider the deity an idol. The Lord's deity form is his merciful incarnation, who enjoys eternal pastimes in Vaikuntha as well as in the material world. The deity is a direct manifestation of the Lord's personal form, and as such is nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The deity is supremely worshipable. Lord Chaitanya said about the deity that He was not an idol but directly the son of Nanda Maharaja.

Vaiṣṇavas are not idol worshipers who simply imagine that the Lord has a material form. Nor do they deny that the Lord has any form at all. Such thoughts are for those endowed with material conceptions. To them, any form reflected in the heart must be an idol. Impersonalists worship matter as the Supreme Lord and they are therefore idol worshipers under the shelter of imaginary formlessness. We see the Lord's spiritual form as *sat-cid-ānanda* and not as lumps of matter. Thus, we worship him with the proper recitation of mantras and devotion-filled hearts. It is only possible to communicate with the Lord

when we are living our spiritual propensity. Only those whose intelligence and current of thoughts have been materially influenced, who have no information about spiritual propensities, consider the deity an idol. The Lord's deity form is worshiped by chanting his holy name. Spirit is served only by spirit. ☪

— From *Amṛta Vani*, collected teachings of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Adapted and translated into English by Bhumipati Das and Isvara Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004. Pages 280-282.

A SOCIETY WITHOUT ENVY

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

This is the society for Krishna consciousness formed by Srila Prabhupada. One who becomes a member of this society gets the opportunity to develop complete Krishna consciousness, to see Krishna everywhere.

Prabhupada wrote about it in his books, "The Krishna consciousness movement aims at creating an atmosphere of non-envy. Of course, it is not possible for everyone to become Krishna conscious, but the Krishna consciousness movement can create an exemplary society wherein there is no envy." One who is envious is not a Krishna conscious person. In other words, he is not a *vaiṣṇava*. A real *vaiṣṇava-sādhū*

sees every jīva as Krishna's. Krishna is the object of his love, so how can he be envious?

Pride is your enemy, crookedness — *kāpaṭya*. If someone is making advancement on the spiritual path, others cannot tolerate it and become envious. Joining together they start attacking him, saying nasty things. In a society of *vaiṣṇavas*, that should not be done. *atra paramo nirmatsarāṇāṁ satāṁ vedyam* — A *vaiṣṇava* is not envious at all. Who can understand *bhāgavata-dharma-tattva*? Only a non-envious *vaiṣṇava*. Others will speculate because they cannot understand. Prabhupada says, “One who is envious of the success of a *vaiṣṇava* is certainly not a *vaiṣṇava* himself, but an ordinary mundane man.” He may be pretending to be a *vaiṣṇava*, but actually he is only an ordinary mundane man.

If the purpose of forming this society fails, how will Srila Prabhupada be happy? This is a most important factor. Here it is said, “Generally when we find someone more qualified than ourselves, we become envious of him.” This is the nature of people who are *avaiṣṇavas* — non-devotees. But a *vaiṣṇava* who is completely Krishna conscious will never become envious. “Instead of being envious of a more qualified man one should be jolly to receive him.” That is a real *vaiṣṇava*, a pure *vaiṣṇava*. This is the purpose for which Srila Prabhupada formed this society for Krishna consciousness. 🙏

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GAURANGA – THE LION AMONG MEN

The medieval poet Jagadananda

narahari nāma antare achu bhāvaha,
habe bhava-sāgare pāra
dhara re śravaṇe narahari nāma sādare,
cintāmaṇi uha sāra

Meditate upon the name “Narahari” (lion among men) belonging to Gauranga. By doing so you will cross over the ocean of birth and death. Hold these names close to your ear with great respect, for it is the essential touchstone of life.

[**Translator’s Note:** The name “Narahari” is also the name of the author’s guru. Therefore, this poem is a simultaneous glorification of Lord Chaitanya as well as his guru.]

yadi kṛta pāpī ādare kabhu mantraka-
rāja śravaṇe kare pāna
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya bale haya tachu durgama,
pāpa-tāpa saha trāṇa

If a sinful person drinks the nectar of this name through his ear, then by the mercy of Sri Chaitanya his sins and miseries will be driven away completely.

karaha gaura-guru- vaiṣṇava āśraya,
laha narahari nāma hāra
samsāre nāma la-i sukṛti ha-iyā,
tare āpāmara durācāra

Taking shelter of Gauranga, guru and the *vaiṣṇavas*, accept the garland of the names of Mahaprabhu. Uttering these names and gaining all good fortune, even the lowest of sinful people get delivered.

ithe kṛta viṣaya tṛṣṇa pahum-nāma,
hārāyo dhāraṇe śrama tāra
ku-tṛṣṇa jagadānanda kṛta-kalmaṣa,
kumati rahala kārāgāra

By accepting the garland of these names, the fatigue and anxiety of material desires will be driven away. Alas! The corrupt-minded sinner named Jagadananda could not take advantage of these names and thus remains trapped in the prison of this world.

[**Translator’s Note:** As shown in the diagram below, the words of this song contain a hidden signature of the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*.] 🙏

— *Vaiṣṇava Padāvalī*, fourth edition, April 2010. Compiled and edited by Hare Krishna Mukhopadhyay. Published by Shishu Sahitya Sansad Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata.



Chart showing how the maha-mantra appears in the above song.