

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 7

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Text 7

*syāt kṛṣṇa-nāma-caritādi-sitāpy avidyā-
pittopataṭṭa-rasanasya na rocikā nu
kintv ādarād anudinaṁ khalu saiva juṣṭā
svādvī kramād bhavati tad-gada-mūla-hantrī*

The holy name, character, pastimes and activities of Kṛṣṇa are all transcendently sweet like sugar candy. Although the tongue of one afflicted by the jaundice of avidyā [ignorance] cannot taste anything sweet, it is wonderful that simply by carefully chanting these sweet names every day, a natural relish awakens within his tongue, and his disease is gradually destroyed at the root.

I. The Analogy

The holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, His quality, pastimes and so forth are all of the nature of absolute truth, beauty and bliss. Naturally they are very sweet, like sugar candy, which appeals to everyone. Nescience, however, is compared to the disease called jaundice, which is caused by bilious secretions. Attacked by jaundice, the tongue of a diseased person cannot palatably relish sugar candy. Rather, a person with jaundice considers something sweet to taste very bitter. Avidyā (ignorance) similarly perverts the ability to relish the transcendently palatable name, quality, form and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Despite this disease, if one with great care and attention takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, chanting the holy name and hearing Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes, his ignorance will be destroyed and his tongue enabled to taste the sweetness of the transcendental nature of Kṛṣṇa and His paraphernalia. Such a recovery of spiritual health is possible only by the regular cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (NOI 7)

A. Jaundice (Hepatitis)

1. The cause

Jaundice is caused from bilious, dirty conditions

2. The effect

Deadly. Extremely contagious.

3. The cure

Sugar candy. Although it tastes bitter to one with jaundice, it must be taken. Gradually, as one becomes healthy, he will taste its sweetness.

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B. Avidya (*Nescience*)

1. *The cause – attraction to the material world*

When a man in the material world takes more interest in the materialistic way of life than in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he is considered to be in a diseased condition. The normal condition is to remain an eternal servant of the Lord (jīvera 'svarūpa' haya-kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa' [Cc. Madhya 20.108]). This healthy condition is lost when the living entity forgets Kṛṣṇa due to being attracted by the external features of Kṛṣṇa's māyā energy. This world of māyā is called durāśraya, which means "false or bad shelter." One who puts his faith in durāśraya becomes a candidate for hoping against hope. In the material world everyone is trying to become happy, and although their material attempts are baffled in every way, due to their nescience they cannot understand their mistakes. People try to rectify one mistake by making another mistake. This is the way of the struggle for existence in the material world. If one in this condition is advised to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and be happy, he does not accept such instructions. (NOI 7)

The real disease is in the heart. If the mind is cleansed, however, if consciousness is cleansed, a person cannot be harmed by the material disease. To cleanse the mind and heart from all misconceptions, one should take to this chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. This is both easy and beneficial. By chanting the holy name of the Lord, one is immediately freed from the blazing fire of material existence. (NOI 7)

*na yad vacaś citra-padam harer yaśo
jagat-pavitram pragṛṇita karhicit
tad vāyasam tīrtham uśanti mānasā
na yatra hamsā niramanty uśik-kṣayāḥ*

Those words which do not describe the glories of the Lord, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe, are considered by saintly persons to be like unto a place of pilgrimage for crows. Since the all-perfect persons are inhabitants of the transcendental abode, they do not derive any pleasure there.

Crows and swans are not birds of the same feather because of their different mental attitudes. The fruitive workers or passionate men are compared to the crows, whereas the all-perfect saintly persons are compared to the swans. The crows take pleasure in a place where garbage is thrown out, just as the passionate fruitive workers take pleasure in wine and woman and places for gross sense pleasure. The swans do not take pleasure in the places where crows are assembled for conferences and meetings. They are instead seen in the atmosphere of natural scenic beauty where there are transparent reservoirs of water nicely decorated with stems of lotus flowers in variegated colors of natural beauty. That is the difference between the two classes of birds.

Nature has influenced different species of life with different mentalities, and it is not possible to bring them up into the same rank and file.

Similarly, there are different kinds of literature for different types of men of different mentality. Mostly the market literatures which attract men of the crow's categories are literatures containing refused remnants of sensuous topics. They are generally known as mundane talks in relation with the gross body and subtle mind. They are full of subject matter described in decorative language full of mundane similes and metaphorical arrangements. Yet with all that, they do not glorify the Lord. Such poetry and prose, on any subject matter, is considered decoration of a dead body. Spiritually advanced men who are compared to the swans do not take pleasure in such dead literatures, which are sources of pleasure for men who are spiritually dead. These literatures in the modes of passion and ignorance are distributed under different labels, but they can hardly help the spiritual urge of the human being, and thus the swanlike spiritually advanced men have nothing to do with them. Such spiritually advanced men are called also *mānasa* because they always keep up the standard of transcendental voluntary service to the Lord on the spiritual plane. This completely forbids fruitive activities for gross bodily sense satisfaction or subtle speculation of the material egoistic mind.

Social literary men, scientists, mundane poets, theoretical philosophers and politicians who are completely absorbed in the material advancement of sense pleasure are all dolls of the material energy. They take pleasure in a place where rejected subject matters are thrown. According to Svāmī Śrīdhara, this is the pleasure of the prostitute-hunters.

But literatures which describe the glories of the Lord are enjoyed by the *paramahamsas* who have grasped the essence of human activities. (SB 1.5.10)

*tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavaty api
nāmāny anantasya yaśo 'ñkitāni yat
śṛṅvanti gāyanti gṛṅanti sādhaḥ*

On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, etc., of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.

It is a qualification of the great thinkers to pick up the best even from the worst. It is said that the intelligent man should pick up nectar from a stock of poison, should accept gold even from a filthy place, should accept a good and qualified wife even from an obscure family and should accept a good lesson even from a man or from a teacher who comes from the untouchables. These are some of the ethical instructions for everyone in every place without exception. But a saint is far above the level of an ordinary man. He is always absorbed in glorifying the Supreme Lord because by broadcasting the holy name and fame of the Supreme Lord, the polluted atmosphere of the world will change, and as a result of propagating the transcendental literatures like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, people will become sane in their transactions. While preparing this commentation on this particular stanza of *Śrīmad-*

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Bhāgavatam we have a crisis before us. Our neighboring friend China has attacked the border of India with a militaristic spirit. We have practically no business in the political field, yet we see that previously there were both China and India, and they both lived peacefully for centuries without ill feeling. The reason is that they lived those days in an atmosphere of God consciousness, and every country, over the surface of the world, was God-fearing, pure-hearted and simple, and there was no question of political diplomacy. There is no cause of quarrel between the two countries China and India over land which is not very suitable for habitation, and certainly there is no cause for fighting on this issue. But due to the age of quarrel, Kali, which we have discussed, there is always a chance of quarrel on slight provocation. This is due not to the issue in question, but to the polluted atmosphere of this age: systematically there is propaganda by a section of people *to stop glorification of the name and fame of the Supreme Lord*. Therefore, there is a great need for disseminating the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* all over the world. It is the duty of every responsible Indian to broadcast the transcendental message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* throughout the world to do all the supermost good as well as to bring about the desired peace in the world. Because India has failed in her duty by neglecting this responsible work, there is so much quarrel and trouble all over the world. We are confident that if the transcendental message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is received only by the leading men of the world, certainly there will be a change of heart, and naturally the people in general will follow them. The mass of people in general are tools in the hands of the modern politicians and leaders of the people. If there is a change of heart of the leaders only, certainly there will be a radical change in the atmosphere of the world. We know that our honest attempt to present this great literature conveying transcendental messages for reviving the God consciousness of the people in general and respiritualizing the world atmosphere is fraught with many difficulties. Our presenting this matter in adequate language, especially a foreign language, will certainly fail, and there will be so many literary discrepancies despite our honest attempt to present it in the proper way. But we are sure that with all our faults in this connection the seriousness of the subject matter will be taken into consideration, and the leaders of society will still accept this due to its being an honest attempt to glorify the Almighty God. When there is fire in a house, the inmates of the house go out to get help from the neighbors who may be foreigners, and yet without knowing the language the victims of the fire express themselves, and the neighbors understand the need, even though not expressed in the same language. The same spirit of cooperation is needed to broadcast this transcendental message of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* throughout the polluted atmosphere of the world. After all, it is a technical science of spiritual values, and thus we are concerned with the techniques and not with the language. If the techniques of this great literature are understood by the people of the world, there will be success.

When there are too many materialistic activities by the people in general all over the world, there is no wonder that a person or a nation attacks another person or nation on slight provocation. That is the rule of this age of Kali or quarrel. The atmosphere is already polluted with corruption of all description, and everyone knows it well. There are so many unwanted literatures full of materialistic ideas of sense gratification. In many countries there are bodies appointed by the state to detect and censor obscene literature. This means that neither the government nor the responsible leaders of the public want such literature, yet it is in the

marketplace because the people want it for sense gratification. The people in general want to read (that is a natural instinct), but because their minds are polluted they want such literatures. Under the circumstances, transcendental literature like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will not only diminish the activities of the corrupt mind of the people in general, but also it will supply food for their hankering after reading some interesting literature. In the beginning they may not like it because one suffering from jaundice is reluctant to take sugar candy, but we should know that sugar candy is the only remedy for jaundice. Similarly, let there be systematic propaganda for popularizing reading of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which will act like sugar candy for the jaundicelike condition of sense gratification. When men have a taste for this literature, the other literatures, which are catering poison to society, will then automatically cease.

We are sure, therefore, that everyone in human society will welcome *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, even though it is now presented with so many faults, for it is recommended by Śrī Nārada, who has very kindly appeared in this chapter. (SB 1.5.11)

2. The effect

Durāśraya: false, bad shelter

One tries to rectify one mistake by making another

*yadā ca pārtha-prahitaḥ sabhāyām
jagad-gurur yāni jagāda kṛṣṇaḥ
na tāni puṁsām amṛtāyanāni
rājoru mene kṣata-puṇya-leśaḥ*

Lord Kṛṣṇa was sent by Arjuna into the assembly as the spiritual master of the whole world, and although His words were heard by some [like Bhīṣma] as pure nectar, it was not so for the others, who were completely bereft of the last farthing of past pious works. The King [Dhṛtarāṣṭra or Duryodhana] did not take the words of Lord Kṛṣṇa very seriously.

Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the spiritual master of the entire universe, accepted the duty of a messenger, and, deputed by Arjuna, went to the assembly of King Dhṛtarāṣṭra on a peace mission. Kṛṣṇa is everyone's Lord, yet because He was the transcendental friend of Arjuna, He gladly accepted the role of messenger, exactly like an ordinary friend. That is the beauty of the Lord's behavior with His pure devotees. He reached the assembly and spoke about peace, and the message was relished by Bhīṣma and other great leaders because it was spoken by the Lord Himself. But due to the exhaustion of the pious results of their past deeds, Duryodhana, or his father, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, did not take the message very seriously. That is the way of persons who have no credit of pious deeds. By past pious deeds, one may become the king of a country, but because the results of the pious acts of Duryodhana and company were dwindling, it became evident from their actions that they were sure to lose the kingdom to the Pāṇḍavas. The message of Godhead is always like nectar to the devotees, but it is just the opposite to the nondevotees. Sugar candy is always sweet to a healthy man, but it tastes very bitter to persons suffering from jaundice.

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*yadopahūto bhavanam praviṣṭo
mantrāya pṛṣṭaḥ kila pūrvajena
athāha tan mantra-dṛśām varīyān
yan mantriṇo vaidurikaṁ vadanti*

When Vidura was invited by his elder brother [Dhṛtarāṣṭra] for consultation, he entered the house and gave instructions which were exactly to the point. His advice is well known, and instructions by Vidura are approved by expert ministers of state.

*ajāta-śatroḥ pratiyaccha dāyam
titikṣato durviśaham tavāgaḥ
sahānujo yatra vṛkodarāhiḥ
śvasan ruṣā yat tvam alam bibheṣi*

[Vidura said:] You must now return the legitimate share to Yudhiṣṭhira, who has no enemies and who has been forbearing through untold sufferings due to your offenses. He is waiting with his younger brothers, among whom is the revengeful Bhīma, breathing heavily like a snake. Surely you are afraid of him.

*pārthāms tu devo bhagavān mukundo
grhītavān sakṣiti-deva-devaḥ
āste sva-puryām yadu-deva-devo
vinirjitāśeṣa-nṛdeva-devaḥ*

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, has accepted the sons of Pṛthā as His kinsmen, and all the kings of the world are with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is present in His home with all His family members, the kings and princes of the Yadu dynasty, who have conquered an unlimited number of rulers, and He is their Lord.

*sa eṣa doṣaḥ puruṣa-dviḍ āste
grhān praviṣṭo yam apatya-matyā
puṣṇāsi kṛṣṇād vimukho gata-śrīs
tyajāśv aśaivam kula-kausālāya*

You are maintaining offense personified, Duryodhana, as your infallible son, but he is envious of Lord Kṛṣṇa. And because you are thus maintaining a nondevotee of Kṛṣṇa, you are devoid of all auspicious qualities. Relieve yourself of this ill fortune as soon as possible and do good to the whole family!

ity ūcivāms tatra suyodhanena
pravṛddha-kopa-sphuritādhareṇa
asat-kṛtaḥ sat-sṛhaṇīya-sīlaḥ
kṣattā sakarṇānuja-saubalena

While speaking thus, Vidura, whose personal character was esteemed by respectable persons, was insulted by Duryodhana, who was swollen with anger and whose lips were trembling. Duryodhana was in company with Karṇa, his younger brothers and his maternal uncle Śakuni.

ka enam atropajuhāva jihmaṁ
dāsyāḥ sutam yad-balinaiva puṣṭaḥ
tasmin pratīpaḥ parakṛtya āste
nirvāsyatām āsu purāc chvasānaḥ

Who asked him to come here, this son of a kept mistress? He is so crooked that he spies in the interest of the enemy against those on whose support he has grown up. Toss him out of the palace immediately and leave him with only his breath.

svayam dhanur dvāri nidhāya māyām
bhrātuḥ puro marmasu tāḍito 'pi
sa ittham atyulbaṇa-karṇa-bāṇair
gata-vyatho 'yād uru mānayānaḥ

Thus being pierced by arrows through his ears and afflicted to the core of his heart, Vidura placed his bow on the door and quit his brother's palace. He was not sorry, for he considered the acts of the external energy to be supreme. (SB 3.1.9-16)

3. The cure

So this rascaldom, so long the rascaldom is not gone, illicit sex, intoxication... These are called *anartha*. *Anartha*. Unnecessarily they have created this atmosphere, illicit sex, intoxication. What is the use of intoxication? There is no need. Just like in our society there is no intoxication. We don't take tea, we don't smoke. Are we dying for that want of tea or smoke? No. Therefore it is *anartha*; it is unnecessary. So first stage is appreciation, *śraddhā*. Second stage is associating with the devotees. Third stage is to be engaged in devotional service. And if one is actually executing the rules and regulations of devotional service, naturally he'll be freed from this rascaldom. *Anartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt*. Then next stage is *niṣṭhā*, faith. That faith, beginning faith, becomes strong, fixed up. Then *ruci* this *ruci*, taste. Just like immediately, the person suffering from jaundice cannot taste sugar candy as sweet, but the sugar candy is the only medicine for him. He is to be given sugar candy, and in this way, as the disease is cured, he comes to this taste stage, "Oh, it is nice, it is sweet." (aside:) Don't do that. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.16, Los Angeles, August 19, 1972)

Comment [JH1]: Chanting the holy names. It will not taste sweet in the beginning. It will be bitter, but by careful and attentive practice one will become cured in due course of time.

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Prabhupāda: Then fool’s paradise it is called... It is folly to be wise where ignorance is bliss. That is the only conclusion.

Karandhara: That’s what they say about us.

Prabhupāda: Because this world is all full of fools, so it is very difficult to push on. That we know. Therefore we should not go to the *mūḍhas*.

Svarūpa Dāmodara: Birds of a feather flock together.

Prabhupāda: (laughs) Yes.

Ḥṛdayānanda: So they can go to Darwin’s planet, we’ll go to Kṛṣṇa’s planet.

Prabhupāda: Yes. (laughs)

Devotee: But how will we defeat them?

Prabhupāda: *Yānti bhūtejyā bhūtāni.*

Yaśomatīnandana: By giving them *prasādam*.

Prabhupāda: Ah?

Yaśomatīnandana: We’ll defeat them by giving them *prasādam*, right, Prabhupāda?

Prabhupāda: To cure their disease, you have to give them *prasādam*, and give them chance to hear Hare Kṛṣṇa. This is valuable. Just like a man suffering from jaundice, he sees everything yellow, and if you say, “No, it is not yellow. White” “No, I see yellow.” What can be done, then the medicine has to be given. He’ll never say it is white. He’ll say it is yellow, because he is suffering. You have to cure. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness method is curing the disease of jaundice. (Morning Walk, December 4, 1973, Los Angeles)

4. Accumulated Benefits from Chanting the Holy Name (SC chapter 15)

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura provides additional insight into the power of the holy name in his commentary to verses 9 and 10. He writes this commentary in the form a dialogue concerning how one can become free from all sinful reactions simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord:

“Someone may say, ‘It may be accepted that by chanting the holy name of the Lord one becomes freed from all the reactions of sinful life. However, if a person commits sinful acts in full consciousness, not only once but many, many times, he is unable to free himself from the reactions of such sins even after atoning for them for twelve years or more. How is it possible, then, that simply by once chanting the holy name of the Lord one immediately becomes freed from the reactions of such sins?’ ”

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura replies by quoting verses 9 and 10 of this chapter: “ ‘The chanting of the holy name of Lord Viṣṇu is the best process of atonement for one who steals gold or other valuables, for a drunkard, for one who betrays a friend or relative, for one who kills a brāhmaṇa, or for a person who indulges in sex with the wife of his guru or another superior. It is also the best method of atonement for a person who murders his father, the king, or women, for one who slaughters cows, and for all other sinful men. Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Viṣṇu, such sinful persons attract the attention of the Supreme Lord, who then considers, “Because this man has chanted My holy name, My duty is to give him protection.’ ”

“One may atone for sinful life and vanquish all sinful reactions by chanting the holy name, and this is beyond ordinary atonement. Ordinary atonement may temporarily protect a sinful person, but it does not completely cleanse his heart of the deep-rooted desire to commit sinful acts. Therefore atonement is not as powerful as the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. In the śāstras it is said that if a person only once chants the holy name and completely surrenders unto the lotus feet of the Lord, the Lord immediately considers him His ward and is always inclined to give him protection. This is confirmed by Śrīdhara Svāmī. Thus when Ajāmila was in great danger of being carried off by the order-carriers of Yamarāja, the Lord immediately sent His personal order-carriers to protect him, and because Ajāmila was freed from all sinful reactions, the Viṣṇudūtas spoke on his behalf.

“Ajāmila had named his son Nārāyaṇa, and because he loved the boy very much, he would call him again and again. Although he was calling for his son, the name itself was powerful, because the name Nārāyaṇa is not different from Lord Nārāyaṇa. When Ajāmila named his son Nārāyaṇa, all the reactions of his sinful life were neutralized, and as he continued calling his son and thus chanting the holy name of Nārāyaṇa thousands of times, he was actually unconsciously advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

“One may argue, ‘Since Ajāmila was constantly chanting the name of Nārāyaṇa, how was it possible for him to be associating with a prostitute and thinking of wine?’ By his sinful actions he was bringing suffering upon himself again and again, and therefore one may say that only his chanting of the holy name of Nārāyaṇa at the time of death—and not his chanting during his lifetime—was the cause of his being freed. However, his chanting during his life would then have been a nāma-aparādha. Nāmno balād yasya hi pāpa-buddhiḥ: one who continues to act sinfully and tries to neutralize his sins by chanting the holy name of the Lord is a nāma-aparādhi, an offender to the holy name.

“In response it may be said that Ajāmila’s chanting throughout his life was inoffensive because he did not chant the name of Nārāyaṇa with the purpose of counteracting his sins. He was in so much illusion that he did not realize he was addicted to sinful actions, nor did he know that his chanting of the holy name Nārāyaṇa was neutralizing them. Thus during his life he did not commit a nāma-aparādha, and his repeated chanting of the holy name of Nārāyaṇa while calling his son may be called pure chanting.

“Because of this pure chanting, Ajāmila unconsciously accumulated the results of bhakti, devotional service. Indeed, even his first utterance of the holy name was sufficient to nullify all the sinful reactions of his life. To cite a logical example, a fig tree does not immediately yield fruits, but in time the fruits are available. Similarly, Ajāmila’s devotional service grew little by little, and therefore although he committed very sinful acts, the reactions did not affect him. In the śāstras it is said that if one chants the holy name of the Lord even once, the reactions of past, present, or future sinful life do not affect him. To give another example, if one extracts the poison fangs of a serpent, this saves the serpent’s future victims from poisonous effects, even if the serpent bites repeatedly. Similarly, if a devotee chants the holy name even once inoffensively, this protects him eternally. He need only wait for the results of the chanting to mature in due course of time.”

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II. *The Hospital (ISKCON)*

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is being spread all over the world just to remedy this gross ignorance. (NOI 7)

A. **Bad leadership**

People in general are misled by blind leaders. The leaders of human society—the politicians, philosophers and scientists—are blind because they are not Kṛṣṇa conscious. According to Bhagavad-gītā, because they are bereft of all factual knowledge due to their atheistic way of life, they are actually sinful rascals and are the lowest among men.

*na mām duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ
praṇadyante narādhamāḥ
māyayāpahṛta jñānā-
āsuram bhāvam āśritāḥ*

"Those miscreants who are grossly foolish, lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by illusion, and who partake of the atheistic nature of demons, do not surrender unto Me." (Bg. 7.15)

Such people never surrender to Kṛṣṇa, and they oppose the endeavor of those who wish to take Kṛṣṇa's shelter. When such atheists become leaders of society, the entire atmosphere is surcharged with nescience. In such a condition, people do not become very enthusiastic to receive this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, just as a diseased person suffering from jaundice does not relish the taste of sugar candy. However, one must know that for jaundice, sugar candy is the only specific medicine. Similarly, in the present confused state of humanity, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the chanting of the holy name of the Lord—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare—is the only remedy for setting the world aright. Although Kṛṣṇa consciousness may not be very palatable for a diseased person, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī nonetheless advises that if one wants to be cured of the material disease, he must take to it with great care and attention. One begins his treatment by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra because by chanting this holy name of the Lord a person in the material condition will be relieved from all misconceptions (ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam [Cc Antya 20.12]). Avidyā, a misconception about one's spiritual identity, provides the foundation for ahaṅkāra, or false ego within the heart. (NOI 7)

Comment [JH2]:

☞ When such people lead nescience pervades
☞ There is no enthusiasm to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and one may even find opposition.
☞ For jaundice sugar candy is the only medicine. Similarly, for the disease of material life, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā mantra is the only cure. This relieves all misconceptions.

*ceto-darpana-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpanam
śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitaranam vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-varadhanam prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam
sarvātma-snapanam param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*

Comment [JH3]: The real disease is in the heart. If the mind is cleansed, consciousness is cleansed. No material desire can harm one freed from the blazing fire of material existence.

“Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence. That chanting is the waxing moon that spreads the white lotus of good fortune for all living entities. It is the life and soul of all education. The chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life. It gives a cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste full nectar at every step. (Sikṣāstaka 1)

III. Three stages of chanting

There are three stages in chanting the holy name of the Lord—the offensive stage, the stage of lessening offenses, and the pure stage. When a neophyte takes to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, he generally commits many offenses. There are ten basic offenses, and if the devotee avoids these, he can glimpse the next stage, which is situated between offensive chanting and pure chanting. When one attains the pure stage, he is immediately liberated. This is called bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpanam. As soon as one is liberated from the blazing fire of material existence, he can relish the taste of transcendental life. (NOI 7)

A. General quotes

There are three stages in chanting the holy name of the Lord. The first stage is the offensive chanting of the holy name, and the second is the reflective stage of chanting the holy name. The third stage is the offenseless chanting of the holy name of the Lord. In the second stage only, the stage of reflection, between the offensive and offenseless stages, one automatically attains the stage of emancipation. And in the offenseless stage, one actually enters into the kingdom of God, although physically he may apparently be within the material world. To attain the offenseless stage, one must be on guard in the following manner.

When we speak of hearing and chanting, it means that not only should one chant and hear of the holy name of the Lord as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa (or systematically the sixteen names Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare), but one should also read and hear the Bhagavad-gītā and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in the association of devotees. The primary practice of bhakti-yoga will cause the seed already sowed in heart to sprout, and by a regular watering process, as mentioned above, the bhakti-yoga creeper will begin to grow. By systematic nurturing, the creeper will grow to such an extent that it will penetrate the coverings of the universe, as we have heard in the previous verses, reach the effulgent sky, the brahmajyoti, and go farther and farther and reach the spiritual sky, where there are innumerable spiritual planets called Vaikuṅṭhalokas. Above all of them is Kṛṣṇaloka, or Goloka Vṛndāvana, wherein the growing creeper enters and takes repose at the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the original Personality of Godhead. When one

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reaches the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa at Goloka Vṛndāvana, the watering process of hearing and reading, as also chanting of the holy name in the pure devotional stage, fructifies, and the fruits grown there in the form of love of God are tangibly tasted by the devotee, even though he is here in this material world. The ripe fruits of love of God are relished only by the devotees constantly engaged in the watering process as described above. But the working devotee must always be mindful so that the creeper which has so grown will not be cut off. Therefore he should be mindful of the following considerations:

(1) Offense by one at the feet of a pure devotee may be likened to the mad elephant who devastates a very good garden if it enters.

(2) One must be very careful to guard himself against such offenses at the feet of pure devotees, just as one protects a creeper by all-around fencing.

(3) It so happens that by the watering process some weeds are also grown, and unless such weeds are uprooted, the nurturing of the main creeper, or the creeper of bhakti-yoga, may be hampered.

(4) Actually these weeds are material enjoyment, merging of the self in the Absolute without separate individuality, and many other desires in the field of religion, economic development, sense enjoyment and emancipation.

(5) There are many other weeds, like disobedience to the tenets of the revered scriptures, unnecessary engagements, killing animals, and hankering after material gain, prestige and adoration.

(6) If sufficient care is not taken, then the watering process may only help to breed the weeds, stunting the healthy growth of the main creeper and resulting in no fructification of the ultimate requirement: love of God.

(7) The devotee must therefore be very careful to uproot the different weeds in the very beginning. Only then will the healthy growth of the main creeper not be stunted.

(8) And by so doing, the devotee is able to relish the fruit of love of God and thus live practically with Lord Kṛṣṇa, even in this life, and be able to see the Lord in every step.

The highest perfection of life is to enjoy life constantly in the association of the Lord, and one who can relish this does not aspire after any temporary enjoyment of the material world via other media. (SB 2.2.30)

There are three stages of chanting the holy name: chanting with offense, chanting as a liberated person, and chanting with full love of God. These progressive stages of chanting are like the ripening of a mango. An unripe mango tastes sour, but when the fruit is fully ripened, it tastes very sweet. Initially we may be reluctant to chant, but when we become liberated the chanting is so sweet that we cannot give it up. In this regard, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has composed a beautiful verse describing the sweetness of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa:

*tunḍe tāṇḍavinī ratim vitanute tunḍāvalī-labdhaye
karna-kroda-kaḍambinī ghaṭayate karnārbudebhyah sprhām
cetaḥ-prāṅgaṇa-saṅginī vijayate sarvendriyāṇām kṛtim
no jāne janitā kiyadbhir amṛtaiḥ kṛṣṇeti varṇa-dvayī*

“I do not know how much nectar the two syllables Kṛṣṇa have produced. When we chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, it appears to dance within the mouth, and we then desire many, many mouths. When the name of Kṛṣṇa enters the holes of the ears, we desire many millions of ears. And when the holy name dances in the courtyard of the heart, it conquers the activities of the mind, and therefore all the senses become inert.”

These are the symptoms of one who is on the liberated platform of chanting. At that stage, called prema, one has a great relish for chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. But this stage is attainable only if one follows the regulative principles. We have to be cautious. After being cured of a diseased condition, we first enter the convalescent stage. If we do something wrong, the disease may return. It is not that we become liberated and can do anything and everything. At all times we have to stick by the regulative principles of devotional life. (SC 15)

B. Nāmāparādha (*Offensive chanting*)

1. *The ten offenses*

- (1) To blaspheme the devotees who have dedicated their lives for propagating the holy name of the Lord.
- (2) To consider the names of demigods like Lord Śiva or Lord Brahmā to be equal to, or independent of, the name of Lord Viṣṇu.
- (3) To disobey the orders of the spiritual master.
- (4) To blaspheme the Vedic literature or literature in pursuance of the Vedic version.
- (5) To consider the glories of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa to be imagination.
- (6) To give some interpretation on the holy name of the Lord.
- (7) To commit sinful activities on the strength of the holy name of the Lord.
- (8) To consider the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa one of the auspicious ritualistic activities offered in the Vedas as fruitive activities (karma-kāṇḍa).
- (9) To instruct a faithless person about the glories of the holy name.
- (10) To not have complete faith in the chanting of the holy names and to maintain material attachments, even after understanding so many instructions on this matter.

It is also an offense to be inattentive while chanting. Every devotee who claims to be a Vaiṣṇava must guard against these offenses in order to quickly achieve the desired success: *Kṛṣṇa-prema*.

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C. Nāmābhāsa (*The clearing stage*)

The nāmābhāsa stage is between that of *nāma-aparādha*, or chanting of the holy name with offenses, and pure chanting. There are three stages in chanting the holy name of the Lord. In the first stage, one commits ten kinds of offenses while chanting. In the next stage, *nāmābhāsa*, the offenses have almost stopped, and one is coming to the platform of pure chanting. In the third stage, when one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra without offenses, his dormant love for Kṛṣṇa immediately awakens. This is the perfection. (SB 5.24.20)

*haridāsa kahena,—“nāmera ei dui phala naya
nāmera phale kṛṣṇa-pade prema upajaya*

Haridāsa Ṭhākura protested, “These two benedictions are not the true result of chanting the holy name. By actually chanting the holy name without offenses, one awakens his ecstatic love for the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

*evam-vrataḥ sva-priya-nāma-kīrtiyā
jātānurāgo druta-citta uccaiḥ
hasaty atho roditi rauti gāyaty
unmādavan nṛtyati loka-bāhyah*

“When a person is actually advanced and takes pleasure in chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is very dear to him, he is agitated and loudly chants the holy name. He also laughs, cries, becomes agitated and chants just like a madman, not caring for outsiders.’

*ānuṣaṅgika phala nāmera—’mukti’, ’pāpa-nāśa’
tāhāra dṛṣṭānta yaiche sūryera prakāśa*

“Liberation and extinction of the reactions of sinful life are two concomitant by-products of chanting the holy name of the Lord. An example is found in the gleams of morning sunlight.

*amhaḥ saṁharad akhilaṁ sakṛd
udayād eva sakala-lokasya
taraṅir iva timira-jaladhīm
jayati jagan-maṅgalaṁ harer nāma*

“As the rising sun immediately dissipates all the world’s darkness, which is deep like an ocean, so the holy name of the Lord, if chanted once without offenses, can dissipate all the reactions of a living being’s sinful life. All glories to that holy name of the Lord, which is auspicious for the entire world.’ ”

*ei ślokera artha kara paṇḍitera gaṇa”
sabe kahe,—’tumi kaha artha-vivaraṇa’*

After reciting this verse, Haridāsa Ṭhākura said, “O learned scholars, please explain the meaning of this verse.” But the audience requested Haridāsa Ṭhākura, “It is better for you to explain the meaning of this important verse.”

*haridāsa kahena,—“yaiche sūryera udaya
udaya nā haite ārambhe tamera haya kṣaya*

Haridāsa Ṭhākura said, “As the sun begins to rise, even before visible it dissipates the darkness of night.

*caura-preta-rākṣasādira bhaya haya nāśa
udaya haile dharmā-karmā-ādi parakāśa*

“With the first glimpse of sunlight, fear of thieves, ghosts and demons immediately disappears, and when the sun is actually visible, everything is manifest, and everyone begins performing his religious activities and regulative duties.

*aiche nāmodayārambhe pāpa-ādira kṣaya
udaya kaile kṛṣṇa-pade haya premodaya*

“Similarly, the first hint that offenseless chanting of the Lord’s holy name has awakened dissipates the reactions of sinful life immediately. And when one chants the holy name offenselessly, one awakens to service in ecstatic love at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

mukti’ tuccha-phala haya nāmābhāsa haite

“Liberation is the insignificant result derived from a glimpse of awakening of offenseless chanting of the holy name.

*mriyamāṇo harer nāma
gṛṇan putropacāritam
ajāmilo ’py agād dhāma
kim uta śraddhayā gṛṇan*

“While dying, Ajāmila chanted the holy name of the Lord, intending to call his son Nārāyaṇa. Nevertheless, he attained the spiritual world. What then to speak of those who chant the holy name with faith and reverence?”

ye mukti bhakta nā laya, se kṛṣṇa cāhe dite”

“Liberation, which is unacceptable for a pure devotee, is always offered by Kṛṣṇa without difficulty.

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sālokya-sārṣṭi-sārūpya-
sāmīpyaikatvam apy uta
dīyamānaṁ na grhṇanti
vinā mat-sevanam janāḥ

“My devotees do not accept sālokya, sārṣṭi, sārūpya, sāmīpya, or oneness with Me—even if I offer these liberations—in preference to serving Me.’” (Antya 3.178-189)

1. Nāmābhāsa gives liberation

One becomes free from offenses

The one enters the clearing stage

Then one attains *śuddha-nāma* (*bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpanam* takes place)

Then one can taste transcendental life

Therefore we are sending *saṅkīrtana* parties all over the world. “Imitation of a good thing is desired.”

D. Śuddha nāma (*Offenseless chanting*)

tad aśma-sāraṁ hṛdayaṁ batedaṁ
yad grhyamānair hari-nāma-dheyaiḥ
na vikriyētātha yadā vikāro
netre jalam gātra-ruheṣu harṣaḥ

Certainly that heart is steel-framed which, in spite of one’s chanting the holy name of the Lord with concentration, does not change when ecstasy takes place, tears fill the eyes and the hairs stand on end. (SB 2.3.24)

Nāmābhāsa, and *śuddha-nāma*. When one chants *śuddha-nāma*, name, holy name of God, then he is on the platform of loving platform with Kṛṣṇa. That is the perfectional stage. And in *nāmābhāsa* stage, not in pure, marginal, between pure and offensive, that is *mukti*. You become *mukta*, liberated from material bondage. And if we chant offensively, then we remain in the material world. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.16.26-30, Hawaii, January 23, 1974)

IV. The progressive stages in becoming cured

A. Śraddha

The conclusion is that in order to get freed from the material disease, one must take to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is especially meant for creating an atmosphere in which people can take to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. One must begin with faith, and when this faith is increased by chanting, a person can become a member of the Society. We are sending *saṅkīrtana* parties all over the world, and they are experiencing that even in the remotest part of the world, where there is no knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra attracts thousands of men to our camp.

In some areas, people begin to imitate the devotees by shaving their heads and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, only a few days after hearing the mantra. This may be imitative, but imitation of a good thing is desired. Some imitators gradually become interested in being initiated by the spiritual master and offer themselves for initiation. (NOI 7)

B. Sādhu-saṅga

C. Bhajana-kriya

If one is sincere, he is initiated, and this stage is called bhajana-kriyā. One then actually engages in the service of the Lord by regularly chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, sixteen rounds daily, and refraining from illicit sex, intoxicants, meat-eating and gambling. By bhajana-kriyā one attains freedom from the contamination of materialistic life. He no longer goes to a restaurant or hotel to taste so-called palatable dishes made with meat and onions, nor does he care to smoke or drink tea or coffee. He not only refrains from illicit sex, but avoids sex life entirely. Nor is he interested in wasting his time in speculating or gambling. (NOI 7)

D. Anartha-nivṛtti

In this way it is to be understood that one is becoming cleansed of unwanted things (anartha-nivṛtti). The word anartha refers to unwanted things. Anarthas are vanquished when one becomes attached to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. (NOI 7)

E. Nistha

When a person is relieved from unwanted things, he becomes fixed in executing his Kṛṣṇa activities. (NOI 7)

F. Ruci

G. Asākti

H. Bhāva

Indeed, he becomes attached to such activities and experiences ecstasy in executing devotional service. This is called bhāva, the preliminary awakening of dormant love of Godhead. Thus the conditioned soul becomes free from material existence and loses interest in the bodily conception of life, including material opulence, material knowledge and material attraction of all variety. At such a time one can understand who the Supreme Personality of Godhead is and what His maya is.

Although māyā may be present, it cannot disturb a devotee once he attains the bhāva stage. This is because the devotee can see the real position of māyā. Māyā means forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa, and forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa consciousness stand side by side like light and shadow. If one remains in shadow, he cannot enjoy the facilities offered by light, and if one

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remains in light, he cannot be disturbed by the darkness of shadow. By taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one gradually becomes liberated and remains in light. Indeed, he does not even touch the darkness. As confirmed in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.31):

*kṛṣṇa—sūrya-sama; māyā haya andhakāra
yāhāṅ kṛṣṇa, tāhāṅ nāhi māyāra adhikāra*

"Kṛṣṇa is compared to sunshine, and māyā is compared to darkness. Wherever there is sunshine, there cannot be darkness. As soon as one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the darkness of illusion, the influence of the external energy, will immediately vanish." [VTE]

- I. Prema
- J. Conclusion

*kṛṣṇa—sūrya-sama; māyā haya andhakāra
yāhāṅ kṛṣṇa, tāhāṅ nāhi māyāra adhikāra*

“Kṛṣṇa is compared to sunshine, and māyā is compared to darkness. Wherever there is sunshine, there cannot be darkness. As soon as one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the darkness of illusion (the influence of the external energy) will immediately vanish.

*vilajjamānayaḥ yasya
sthātum iksā-pathe ’muyā
vimohitā vikatthante
mamāham iti durdhiyaḥ*

“The external illusory energy of Kṛṣṇa, known as māyā, is always ashamed to stand in front of Kṛṣṇa, just as darkness is ashamed to remain before the sunshine. However, that māyā bewilders unfortunate people who have no intelligence. Thus they simply boast that this material world is theirs and that they are its enjoyers.’

*‘kṛṣṇa, tomāra haṇa’ yadi bale eka-bāra
māyā-bandha haite kṛṣṇa tāre kare pāra*

“One is immediately freed from the clutches of māyā if he seriously and sincerely says, ‘My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, although I have forgotten You for so many long years in the material world, today I am surrendering unto You. I am Your sincere and serious servant. Please engage me in Your service.’

*sakṛd eva prapanno yas
tavāsmīti ca yācate
abhayaṁ sarvadā tasmai
dadāmy etad vrataṁ mama*

“It is My vow that if one only once seriously surrenders unto Me, saying, “My dear Lord, from this day I am Yours,” and prays to Me for courage, I shall immediately award courage to that person, and he will always remain safe from that time on.’

*bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kāmī ‘subuddhi’ yadi haya
gādha-bhakti-yoge tabe kṛṣṇere bhajaya*

“Due to bad association, the living entity desires material happiness, liberation or merging into the impersonal aspect of the Lord, or he engages in mystic yoga for material power. If such a person actually becomes intelligent, he takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness by engaging himself in intense devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*akāmah sarva-kāmo vā
mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena
yajeta puruṣaṁ param*

“Whether one desires everything or nothing, or whether he desires to merge into the existence of the Lord, he is intelligent only if he worships Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by rendering transcendental loving service.’

*anya-kāmī yadi kare kṛṣṇera bhajana
nā māgiteha kṛṣṇa tāre dena sva-caraṇa*

“If those who desire material enjoyment or merging into the existence of the Absolute Truth engage in the Lord’s transcendental loving service, they will immediately attain shelter at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, although they did not ask for it. Kṛṣṇa is therefore very merciful.

*kṛṣṇa kahe,—’āmā bhaje, māge viṣaya-sukha
amṛta chāḍī’ viṣa māge,—ei baḍa mūrkhā*

“Kṛṣṇa says, ‘If one engages in My transcendental loving service but at the same time wants the opulence of material enjoyment, he is very, very foolish. Indeed, he is just like a person who gives up ambrosia to drink poison.

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*āmi—vijña, ei mūrkhē ‘viṣaya’ kene diba?
sva-caraṇāmṛta diyā ‘viṣaya’ bhulāiba*

“‘Since I am very intelligent, why should I give this fool material prosperity? Instead I shall induce him to take the nectar of the shelter of My lotus feet and make him forget illusory material enjoyment.’

*satyaṁ diśaty arthitam arthito nṛṇāṁ
naivārthado yat punar arthitā yataḥ
svayaṁ vidhatte bhajatām anicchatām
icchā-pidhānam nija-pāda-pallavam*

“‘Whenever Kṛṣṇa is requested to fulfill one’s desire, He undoubtedly does so, but He does not award anything which, after being enjoyed, will cause someone to petition Him again and again to fulfill further desires. When one has other desires but engages in the Lord’s service, Kṛṣṇa forcibly gives one shelter at His lotus feet, where one will forget all other desires.’

*kāma lāgi’ kṛṣṇe bhaje, pāya kṛṣṇa-rase
kāma chādi’ ‘dāsa’ haite haya abhilāṣe*

“When someone engages in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s devotional service for the satisfaction of the senses and instead acquires a taste to serve Kṛṣṇa, he gives up his material desires and willingly offers himself as an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.

*sthānābhilāṣi tapasi sthito ‘ham
tvām prāptavān deva-munindra-guhyam
kācaṁ vicinvann api divya-ratnaṁ
svāmin kṛtārtho ‘smi varam na yāce*

[When he was being benedicted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Dhruva Mahārāja said] “‘O my Lord, because I was seeking an opulent material position, I was performing severe types of penance and austerity. Now I have gotten You, who are very difficult for the great demigods, saintly persons and kings to attain. I was searching after a piece of glass, but instead I have found a most valuable jewel. Therefore I am so satisfied that I do not wish to ask any benediction from You.’

*saṁsāra bhramite kona bhāgye keha tare
nadīra pravāhe yena kāṣṭha lāge tīre*

“There are unlimited conditioned souls who are bereft of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s service. Not knowing how to cross the ocean of nescience, they are scattered by waves, time and tide. However, some are fortunate to contact devotees, and by this contact they are delivered from the ocean of nescience, just as a log, floating down a river, accidentally washes upon the bank.

*maivam mamādhamsyāpi
syād evācyuta-darśanam
hriyamāṇaḥ kāla-nadyā
kvacit tarati kaścana*

“Because I am so fallen, I shall never get a chance to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” This was my false apprehension. Rather, by chance a person as fallen as I am may get to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although one is being carried away by the waves of the river of time, one may eventually reach the shore.’ (Madhya 22.31-44)