



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

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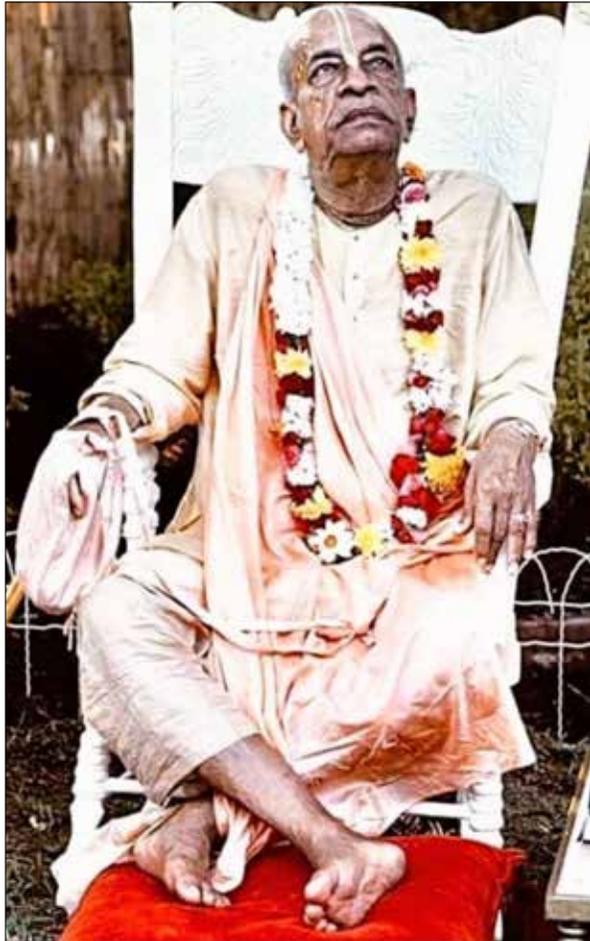
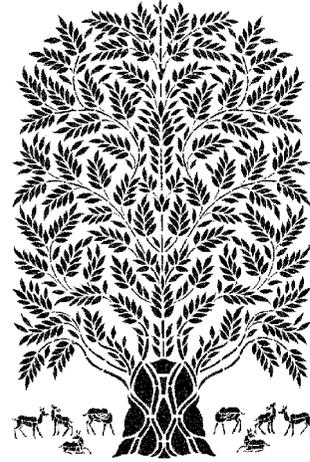
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HELPLESS CHANTING

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

It is said in the śāstras that by once uttering the holy name of the Lord, the sinner gets rid of a quantity of sins that he is unable to commit. Such is the power of uttering the holy name of the Lord. There is not the least exaggeration in this statement. Actually, the Lord's holy name has such powerful potency. But there is a quality to such utterances also. It depends on the quality of feeling. A helpless man can feelingly utter the holy name of the Lord, whereas a man who utters the same holy name in great material satisfaction cannot be so sincere. A materially puffed up person may utter the holy name of the Lord occasionally, but he is incapable of uttering the name in quality. (Purport to Bhāg. 1.8.26.)

You know the story, that Gajendra was attacked by a crocodile in the water. So there was struggle for existence between the two, and after all, the crocodile is the animal in the water. He had great strength. Although the elephant is a very big, powerful animal, he was not an animal of the water. So he was very helpless. At last he began to chant the holy name of the Lord and prayed, so he was saved. And because the crocodile caught up the leg

of the elephant, he was also saved because he was *vaiṣṇava*. Therefore, *chāḍiyā vaiṣṇava sevā*. He indirectly gave service to the *vaiṣṇava*, and he also became delivered. (Lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, Mayapur, 1 March 1977.)



Painting by Kshitindranath Majumdar

THE HIGHEST SADHANA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Question: Is chanting the Lord’s name the crest jewel of *sādhana*’s?

Answer: Chanting the holy name is certainly the topmost *sādhana* in this age of Kali. Actually, it is the only process of *sādhana* in this age. The chanting of the holy name awards all perfection. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (ādi 17.21-25) states:

*harer nāma harer nāma, harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva, nāsty eva gatiṁ anyathā*

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

*dārḍhya lāgi’ ‘harer nāma’-ukti tina-vāra,
jaḍa loka bujhāite puna 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*

In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way. In this age of Kali, the holy name of the Lord, the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, is the incarnation of Lord Krishna. Simply by chanting the holy name, one associates with the Lord directly. Anyone who does this

is certainly delivered. This verse repeats the word *eva* [certainly] three times for emphasis, and it also three times repeats *harer nāma* [the holy name of the Lord], just to make common people understand. The use of the word *kevalam* [only] prohibits all other processes, such as the cultivation of knowledge, practice of mystic yoga, or performance of austerities and fruitive activities. This verse clearly states that no one who accepts another path can be delivered. This is why “nothing else” is repeated three times: it emphasizes the real process for self-realization.

Elsewhere in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, (ādi 7.74) it is stated:

*nāma vinu kali-kāle nāhi āra dharma
sarva-mantra-sāra nāma, ei śāstra-marma*

In this Age of Kali there is no religious principle other than the chanting of the holy name, which is the essence of all Vedic hymns. This is the purport of all scriptures:

*bhajanera madhye śreṣṭha nava-vidhā bhakti,
‘kṛṣṇa-prema’, ‘kṛṣṇa’ dite dhare mahā-sakti
tāra madhye sarva-śreṣṭha nāma-saṅkīrtana,
niraparādhe nāma laile pāya prema-dhana*

Among the ways of executing devotional service, the nine prescribed methods are the best, for these processes have great potency to deliver Krishna and ecstatic love for him. Of the nine processes of devotional service, the most important is to always chant the holy name of the Lord. If one does so, avoiding the ten kinds of offenses, one very easily obtains the most valuable love of Godhead. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, antya 4.70 – 71)

Among the sixty-four limbs of devotional service, chanting is topmost. Simply by congregationally chanting the holy name one achieves all perfection. The nine types of devotional service are included in chanting the holy name. Sri Gaurangadeva’s internal mood teaches that chanting Krishna’s holy name is the only process for attaining the goal of life. One who chants the holy name attains all auspiciousness.

Who can chant the holy name? First one must hear about the name. Congregational chanting is the crest jewel of all *sādhana*’s. By serving the name, a living entity attains perfection. Our only business is to chant the holy name in *vaiṣṇava* association. Chanting the holy name is the ultimate goal enjoined by *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. The liberated souls have no duty other than to chant the Lord’s name. A chanter of the holy name completely surrenders himself at the feet of the name. The day a living entity attains perfection in chanting, the holy name begins to dance on the tip of his tongue.

— From Srila Bhaktisiddhanta’s 108 essential instructions, as presented in *Amṛta Vani*, a collection of statements from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Originally compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Translated into English by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004.



Unknown artist

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu does kirtana in Mathura

KIRTANA WITHOUT STANDARDS

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur

We saw many people performing *kirtana* with *mṛdaṅga* and *karatāla*, giving up their leather shoes, yet we did not find any *tulasī* beads on their neck. If even some people do have *tulasī* beads, they are new ones. This creates some doubts.

Many people have not decorated their bodies with twelve marks of *tilaka*. In order to hear *kirtana* in the Mahajana's way, we went to Neemtala Ghat one day, Joda Sanko another day, and Jhama Pukura on yet another day, but we could not find any such things. We were extremely pained to hear *kirtana* performed by Nyadas, Bauls, and other unauthorized people in the tune of theater songs. But our pain was somewhat diminished by hearing the eternal names of Hari, Krishna and Rama uttered by them in the course of their singing.

Those who possess love and devotion in their hearts love to hear *kirtana* in the old and ancient tune. They do not like to hear or sing useless topics. They sing and hear the pure holy names of Hari in the old tune. Due to a lack of good association, the residents of this metropolitan city do not easily realize the characteristics of pure devotional service. Therefore, they follow their own concocted process. Anyhow, our Sri Gauranga is most merciful.

Since he has mercifully allowed the residents of Calcutta to perform *kirtana*, we hope that he will gradually reveal pure devotional service in their hearts. 🙏

— *Sajjana-toṣaṇī* 11.3, quoted in *Śrī Bhaktivinoda Vāṇī Vaibhava*, Chapter 55. Compiled by and with questions from Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode. Translated by Sri Bhumipati Das. Published by Sri Iswara Das and Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.

NITAI — THE INTOXICATED DANCER

The Medieval Gaudiya Poet Gati Govinda

(*Pāhiḍā-rāga*)

Gati Govinda, sometimes called Govinda Gati, was the youngest son of Srila Srinivas Acharya. Some say that he was initiated by his father, other say that he was initiated by Virabhadra Prabhu, the son of Lord Nityananda.

*nāce pahurī nityānanda, bhuvana-ānanda-kanda
vṛndāvana guṇa śuniyā
bāhu-yuga-tuli, saghane bale hari
calata mohana bhāṭiyā*

Nityananda Prabhu dances on hearing the divine qualities of Vrindavan. He is the root of all bliss in the universe. Raising his hands in the air, he loudly calls out the name of Hari and walks about in an enchanting manner.

*kibā se mādhurī, vacana-cāturī
rahata gadādhara heriyā
mādhava gaurīdāsa, mukunda śrīvāsa
gāuta samaya bujhiyā*

What sweetness he has! Amazing are his quick-witted words! He is always gazing at Gadadhar. Madhava, Gauridas, Mukunda and Shrivasa sing songs according to the time of day.

*nāce nityānanda cānda re
preme gadagada, cāle ādha pada
dhariyā gadādharma hāta re (refrain)*

My Nityananda Chandra dances! Intoxicated in divine love, he walks half a step at a time while holding the hand of Gadadhar.

*u cānda-vadane, hāsa ghane ghane
aruṇa locana bhariyā
kusuma-hāra, hṛdi dolata
sughara sahacara saṅgiyā*

From his moonlike face comes roaring laughter. His reddish eyes are filled with tears. A garland of flowers sways on his graceful body.

*rātula-carāṇe, mañjira bājata
raṅgera nāhika ura
manera ānande, śrīnivāsa sūta
e gati govinda bhora*

The ankle bells on his reddish feet make a beautiful sound. There is no end to his colorful pastimes. The son of Srinivasa named Gati Govinda is absorbed in ecstasy. 🐾

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

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Slokāmṛta

FIXED DESTINY

A compilation of verses from the Mahābhārata
Śānti-parva chapter 28

*prādurbhāvaś ca bhūtānām deha-tyāgas tathaiva ca
prāptir vyāyāma-yogaś ca sarvam etat pratiṣṭhitam*

The birth, death, profit and loss for every living entity is fixed according to previous destiny. (text 19)

*kule janma tathā vīryam ārogyaṁ rūpam eva ca
saubhāgyam upabhogaś ca bhavitavyena labhyate*

Birth in a particular family, bodily strength and capability, health, beauty, good fortune and enjoyment — these all are attained according to one's fixed destiny. (23)

*santi putrāḥ subahavo daridrāṅām anicchatām
nāsti putrah samṛddhānām vicitraṁ vidhi-ceṣṭitam*

Poverty-struck individuals are sometimes blessed with many children, even though they may not desire them, whereas the fabulously rich are sometimes unable to have even a single child [despite immense desires]. Surprising indeed are the ways of destiny! (24)

*vyādhir agnir jalaṁ śastraṁ bubhukṣās cāpado viṣam
jvaraś ca maraṇaṁ jantor uccāc ca patanaṁ tathā
nirmāṇe yasya yad diṣṭam tena gacchati setunā
dṛśyate nāpy atikrāman na niṣkrānto 'thavā punaḥ*

Disease, fire, water, weapons, hunger, disaster, poison, fever and falling from heights — these are the causes of the death of an individual. Whatever among these is fixed at the time of birth of an individual becomes the bridge by which the individual crosses over from this life to the next. In general, no one is able to avoid this bridge of death in any way. (25 - 26)

— Translated from *Mahābhāratam* with the commentary of Nilakantha. Edited by Pandit Ramchandra Shastri Kinjawadekar. Printed at Chitrashala Press, Sadashiv Peth, Pune, India. 1929 A.D.

