



तव कथामृतं तसजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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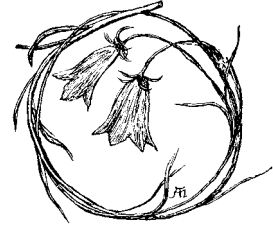
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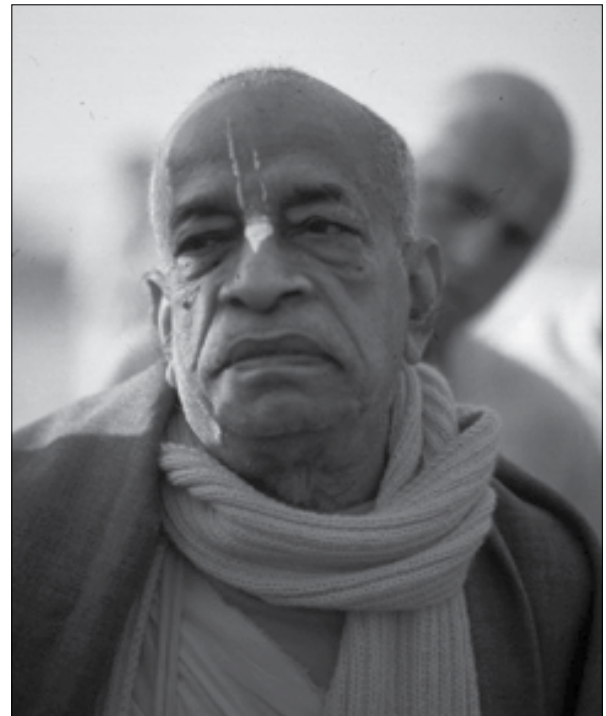
OUR ONLY HOPE

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Since we are all conditioned souls, our demanding that Krishna should accept us is unreasonable. From my personal point of view, I think that I am so sinful that I cannot even approach Krishna to ask him to show me any favor. I have only one hope — my spiritual master. He is very kind, so one way or another he is dragging me towards Krishna. That is the only thing that gives me hope. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* therefore says: Guru and Krishna — by the mercy of the spiritual master and by the mercy of Krishna, one becomes Krishna conscious. Narada Muni is our original spiritual master, and he has dragged so many fallen souls towards Krishna. We are also hoping to be dragged by him through the disciplic succession. Otherwise, if we search for our own qualifications, we will find that there are none. Rather, I have so many disqualifications. ❀

— Letter to Brahmananda, 10 March, 1969.



His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

CRITICIZING DEVOTEES

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta 3.3

Even in the scriptures of moral dharma, criticizing others is a fault. But in considering the comparative seriousness of faults, criticizing the devotee is regarded

in the scriptures dealing with devotion, which is the essence of dharma, to be the most serious offense. Those who commit this offense are deprived of the benefits of *sādhu-saṅga*, and thus cannot advance in devotion.

By criticizing the devotee, gradually devotion will decrease in the heart day by day, like the waning of

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the moon. Though persons may be well established in *varṇāśrama-dharma*, if they are devoid of *sādhu-saṅga* or commit offenses to *sādhus* then the devotional propensity in their heart becomes covered over. It is often seen that by the fault of offending *vaiṣṇavas*, people situated in *varṇāśrama-dharma* gradually fall from their position and become atheistic moralists, and then finally become amoral, living like animals. Therefore, offending *sādhus* must be avoided. ❀

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PERSONAL ASSOCIATION WITH GURU

Srīla Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

Question: Is it essential to associate with and serve the spiritual master directly?

Answer: We should certainly communicate directly with the spiritual master. Those who do not wish to serve and associate with their spiritual master personally are fit to be cheated. Direct communication with the guru is the first step on the path of divine service.

We should serve the manifestations of guru in every entity. If we cannot serve guru, we cannot serve anyone. I must not hear anything until my divine master, Sri Gurudeva, authorizes me to hear it. ❀

— *Amṛta Vani*, p. 35. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004

THE HARE KRISHNA MAHA-MANTRA

Srī Srimad

Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Baladev Vidyabhusana is known as *Vedāntācārya*. In his *Vibhūṣaṇa-bhāṣya* commentary on *Stava-māla*, he wrote: *hare kṛṣṇeti mantra-pratīka-grahaṇam. ṣoḍaśa-nāmātmanā dvātrīṃśad-akṣareṇa man-treṇocair-uccāritena sphuritā kṛta-nṛtyā rasanā jihvā yaśya sah.*

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

In the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra* there are sixteen names and thirty-two letters. This mantra is given in the Vedas and is accepted by all bonafide *ācāryas*. There is no difference between the name of the Lord and the Lord himself. *kali-kāle nāma-rūpe kṛṣṇa-avatāra*— In *Kali-yuga*, Krishna has incarnated himself as his own

name, *nāma-avatāra*. [Cc. ādi 17.22] No other incarnation is there in *Kali-yuga*. It is only *nāma-avatāra*. That same Krishna, as Sriman Mahaprabhu, came and expressed this. Krishna dances on the tongue of one who chants this *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is Krishna himself. He is non-different from Krishna, but he came as a *bhakta*, a devotee, *ācārya*, to teach how to surrender to Krishna, how to surrender to his holy name.

Baladev Vidyabhusana Prabhu comes in the disciplic succession, *gauḍīya-paramparā*, that begins from Sriman Mahaprabhu. Baladev says that he on whose tongue this *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra* dances is the most fortunate person. Therefore he has cautioned us not to chant any other name. Only chant this:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

He has cautioned us. Don't chant any name manufactured by unscrupulous persons.

Elsewhere in *śāstra*, in the *Ananta-saṁhitā*, the *mahā-mantra* is also given. It states:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

*ṣoḍaśaitāni nāmāni dvātrīṃśad varṇakāni hi
kalau yuge mahā-mantraḥ sammato jīva-tāraṇe*

*varjayitvā tu nāmaitad durjanaiḥ parikalpitam
chando-baddham susiddhānta-vimuddham nabhyaset padam*

*tāraṇam brahma-nāmaitad brahmaṇā guruṇādinā
kalisantaraṇādyaśu śruti-svadhigatam hareḥ*

*prāptam śrī-brahma-śiṣyeṇa śrī-nāradena dhimatā
nāmaitad-uttamam śrauta-pāramparyeṇa brahmaṇaḥ*

*utsrjyāitan-mahā-mantram ye tvanyat kalpitam padam
mahānāmeti gāyanti te śāstra-guru laṅghinaḥ*

*tattva-virodha-samprkṛtam tādyam daurjanam matam
sarvathā parihāryam syād ātma-hitārthinā sadā*

This *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*, consisting of sixteen names and thirty-two letters, is the *mahā-mantra*. It is the *jīva-tāraṇa-mantra*, the mantra that will deliver all living entities in *Kali-yuga*.

The *Ananta-saṁhitā* uses the word *durjana*, meaning “wicked persons, rascals”. *durjanaiḥ parikalpitam* — Unscrupulous persons, rascals, manufacture their own mantra. One who is intelligent, wise, *varjayitvā*, will not accept such concoctions. He will reject them because they are not supported



Unknown artist

Gaura Kirtan

by *śāstra*. Their concocted mantras are not *jīva-tāraṇa* mantra in *Kali-yuga*. This *nitai gour rādhe śyāma śrī rādhe govinda* is not the mantra to deliver the souls in *Kali-yuga*.

Chando-baddham susiddhānta viruddham — Those imaginative mantras manufactured by such persons are not supported by *śāstra* and there are defects in them. “*Siddhānta-gata*” means that they are defective in terms of *siddhānta*, philosophical truth, and *rasa-vicāra*, considerations of the loving sentiments exchanged between the Lord and his associates.

Tārakaṁ brahma-nāmatad brahmaṇā guruṇādīnā — This *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare* is the *tāraka-brahma-nāma* in *Kali-yuga*. In every *yuga* there is a *tāraka-brahma-nāma* that will deliver one. *Ananta-saṁhitā* says the *tāraka-brahma-nāma* in *Kali-yuga* is the *hare kṛṣṇa* mantra.

The topmost portion of the Vedas is the *Upaniṣads*. This *mahā-mantra* is found in the *Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad*. Also, in *Byhan Nārādīya Purāṇa* this *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra* is given. It is received through bonafide disciplic succession. *brahmaṇā guruṇādīnā; prāp-taṁ śrī brahma-śiṣyeṇa śrī nāradena dhīmatā* —

Brahma received it and gave it to Narada. Then Narada gave it to his disciple — in this way it comes. *nāmaitad-uttamaṁ śrauta-pāramparyeṇa* — This *mahā-mantra* comes through *śrauta-pāramparya*, through the hearing process in bona fide disciplic succession.

utsṛjyānta-mahā-mantraṁ ye tvanyat kalpitāṁ padam mahānāmeti gāyanti te śāstra-guru laṅghinaḥ

Unscrupulous persons who don't chant this *mahā-mantra* and manufacture their own mantra transgress *śāstra* and guru and commit *aparādha*.

This *mantra*, *bhaja nitai gaura rādhe śyāma hare kṛṣṇa hare rāma* was started by Radharaman Charandas Babaji. He said that in a dream Mahaprabhu told him that this *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra* is very long. So, to make it short, Mahaprabhu told him this mantra. He manufactured it. How can Mahaprabhu say something that is not in *śāstra*? Whatever Mahaprabhu said is in *śāstra*. The Vedas come from Krishna, from Mahaprabhu. Can Mahaprabhu transgress the Vedas? No. Whatever Mahaprabhu has said is all in the Vedas. Mahaprabhu will never say such thing. Mahaprabhu would quote from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

Mahaprabhu's opinion is that *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is the spotless authority on everything, and pure love of God is the ultimate goal of life. How will Mahaprabhu make something up which is not in *śāstra*? It is all concocted. Therefore *Ananta-śainhitā* says, *kalpitanī padam śāstra-guru laṅghinaḥ*. They are transgressing their guru and *śāstra* and thereby they commit offenses to the holy name. They commit *śruti-śāstra-nindā*, blaspheming *śāstra* and blaspheming guru. Did Charandas Babaji receive this mantra from his guru? No. Thereby he transgressed his guru by manufacturing something new, and at the same time he transgressed *śāstra*.

Sravathā parihāryaṁ syād ātma-hitārthinā sadā— One who is an intelligent, wise, learned person should not accept all these things. He only accepts what is based on *śāstra-siddhānta* and what is accepted by bonafide *ācāryas*— this mantra:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

A devotee was recently saying that Mahaprabhu was not chanting *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare*



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Krishna in Vraja

Unknown artist. Kangra painting. C. 1790. Brooklyn Museum of Art

hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare. But it is not true. In *Caitanya-bhāgavata (madhya 23.76-78)* Mahaprabhu said:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
prabhu bale — kahilāna ei mahā-mantra
ihā japa' giyā sabe kariyā nirbandha
ihā haite sarva-siddhi ha-ibe sabāra
sarva-ḥṣaṇa bala' ithe vidhi nāhi āra*

Sriman Mahaprabhu said, Thus I spoke this *hare kṛṣṇa maha-mantra*, which is the most effective means of bestowing divine benefit on the *jīva* souls. Go home and chant this holy mantra with all devotion. Everyone will attain all perfection by the grace of this magnanimous mantra. Therefore, chant and remember it all the time regardless of any rules and regulations.

How can you say that Mahaprabhu doesn't chant this mantra? Mahaprabhu said that these sixteen names, thirty-two letters, are the mahā-mantra. Chant this. This is the mantra to be chanted. This is the mantra for *kīrtana*. This is everything. One should chant this, one should do *kīrtana*, one should also do *smaraṇa*, thinking of this mantra. This is the only thing, *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*. There is nothing else! *ihā haite sarva-siddhi ha-ibe sabāra*— You will achieve all sorts of perfection by this. The name will give you everything, *sarva-ḥṣaṇa bala' ithe vidhi nāhi āra*— there are no other rules. In any place, at any time, in any circumstances, this should be chanted. This will be your *kīrtana*. ❀

—Lecture, Bhubaneswar, 5 September 1991.

