



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्  
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

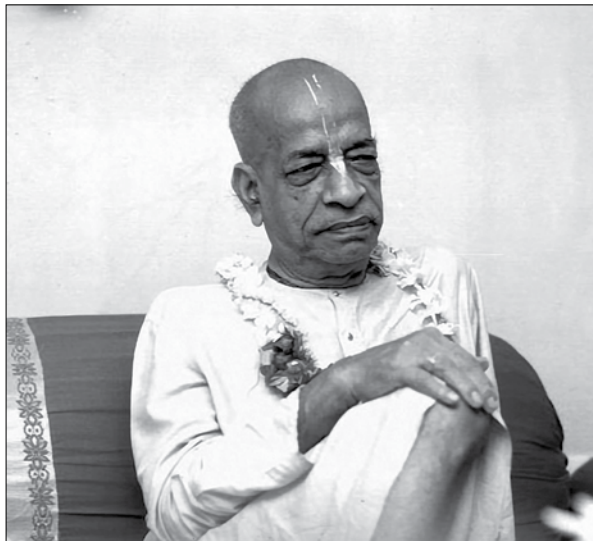
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## CHANTING AND REMEMBERING PASTIMES

*His Divine Grace*  
**A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada**

Generally it is the process to simply chant and hear, but if Krishna's *līlā* comes into remembrance, that is very good. It should come automatically. Not that you are remembering artificially. (Letter to Prahladananda, 17 June 1971.)

One should always remember that Krishna is within his heart and think of him. This is the proper system of meditation. If we always chant the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, we will always remember

Krishna, and immediately the form of Krishna will be awakened within our hearts. (*Teachings of Lord Kapiladev* purport to verse 31.)

A devotee always thinks of the Lord continuously. While chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, the words Krishna and Hare immediately remind him of all the Lord's activities. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 5.1.6.)

*Nāmābhāsa* awakens the supreme remembrance of Lord Vishnu. When one remembers Lord Vishnu, he becomes free from material enjoyment. Thus he gradually comes forward toward the transcendental service of the Lord and becomes eligible to chant the holy name of the Lord in the transcendental position. (Purport to *Cc. ādi* 17.200.)

... one should always remember Krishna and never forget him. This is possible when one chants the Hare Krishna mantra. Therefore one must strictly chant the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* twenty-four hours daily. (Purport to *Cc. madhya* 22.113.)

## NO NEED FOR ARTIFICIAL REMEMBRANCE

**Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada**

[Haridas] Thakur Mahasaya, who is *jagad-guru*, *vaiṣṇava ācārya*, and best of the liberated souls, has taught people in general the process of remembering the pastimes of Krishna while personally chanting and hearing the holy names of Krishna in the course of realizing that Krishna is non-different from his names, forms, qualities, associates, paraphernalia, and pastimes. Those who give up hearing

and loud chanting of the holy names received from the mouths of devotees free from *nāma-aparādha*, and in order to gratify their senses display artificial imitation of remembering the pastimes of the Lord in their impure, enjoyment-prone hearts — their attempts to imitate remembrance of the Lord's pastimes in this way is simply thirst for material enjoyment born from aversion to the Lord. (Purport to *Caitanya-bhāgavata ādi* 16.172.)

*kīrtana-prabhāve, smaraṇa svabhāve* — “The transcendental power of *kīrtana* automatically wakens contemplation of the Lord.” (*Vaiṣṇava ke*, text 19.)

By chanting the holy name all *anarthas* will be removed. Then automatically *rūpa-guṇa-līlā* (the Lord's form, qualities, and pastimes) will be revealed. There is no point in making a separate effort to artificially remember the Lord's form, qualities, and pastimes. The Lord and his name are one and the same. This will be understood lucidly when the coverings in our hearts are removed. By chanting without offenses you will personally experience that all perfection comes from the holy name.

Through chanting, the distinction that exists between the self and the gross and subtle body is gradually effaced, and thus one realizes his own spiritual form. Once aware of his spiritual body, as one continues to chant he sees the transcendental nature of the Lord's form. Only the holy name can reveal the spiritual form of the living being and cause him to be attracted to Krishna's form, qualities, and pastimes. (Letter, 27 October 1915. *Patrāvalī* 1.4-5.)

We should constantly pray to the holy name for his mercy. A person still filled with *anarthas* should not engage in *smaraṇa* (remembrance) of *aṣṭa-kāliya-līlā*. When we learn to hear as we chant, the opportunity to remember will automatically arise. At that time *aṣṭa-kāliya-līlā-smaraṇa* will become possible. There is no need to artificially try for it. (Letter, 18 December 1932. *Patrāvalī* 2.118-19.)

*Smaraṇa* is possible by the power of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. The completely manifested name is *aṣṭa-kāliya nitya-līlā*. Realization of the name and service are not attained without *smaraṇa* based on *nāma*. *Nāmāparādha-kīrtana* is not *nāma-kīrtana*. As the bud of the holy name begins to sprout just a little, the supra-mundane forms of Krishna and his associates become manifest, and when it reaches the flowering stage, the fragrance of Krishna's sixty-four qualities is experienced. When the lotus of the holy name fully expands, Krishna's

*aṣṭa-kāliya nitya-līlā*, although beyond material nature, manifests within this world. (*Gauḍīya* 13.213.)

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## THE PROCESS TO REALIZE ONE'S SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

### Śrīla Thakur Bhaktivinode

Note: In *Bhajana-rahasya*, *Thakur Bhaktivinode* has described that the hare *kr̥ṣṇa mahā-mantra*, consisting of sixteen names joined in eight pairs, has been explained by *Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu* in the eight verses of his *Śikṣāṣṭaka*. *Bhaktivinode* says that each verse of *Śikṣāṣṭaka* corresponds with a level of advancement in *bhajan* and *bhakti*, culminating in the realization of one's eternal spiritual form.

*chaya śloka bhajite anartha dūre gela  
tabe jāna siddha-dehe adhikāra haila*

*adhikāra nā labhiyā siddha-deha bhāve  
viparyaya buddhi janme śaktira abhāve*

By the time one reaches the level of the sixth verse [of the *Śikṣāṣṭaka* prayers, which *Bhaktivinode* describes as relating to the platform of *bhāva*], one's contaminations have mostly disappeared, and one therefore has the right to worship in one's *siddha-deha*. If anyone tries to meditate on his spiritual body without having this qualification, his intelligence will be turned upside-down due to his lack of strength. (*Śrī Bhajana-rahasya* 1.10.9-10.)

*śraddhā kari nāma bhaje sādhu-kr̥pā pāñā  
itare virāga nitya svarūpa bujhiyā*

*ihāke-i bali bhakti-yoga anuttama  
bhakti-yoge-sarva-siddhi yadi dhare krama*

One who engages faithfully in the worship of the holy name and thus attains the mercy of a *sadhu* becomes indifferent to other things and comes to understand his eternal identity (*nitya svarūpa*). This is called *bhakti-yoga* in its highest form. One can attain all perfections if one follows the process in its proper sequence. (*Śrī Bhajana-rahasya* 2.14.1-2.)

*ataeva nāma mātra vaiṣṇavera dharma  
name prasphuṭita haya rūpa, guṇa, karma*

The holy name is the only *dharma* accepted by *vaiṣṇavas*. From the holy name blossoms form, qualities and activities. (*Śrī Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi* 1.30.)

*premera kalikā nāma, abhuta rasera dhāma,  
hena bala karaye prakāśa  
īṣat vikaśi' punaḥ, dekhāya nija-rūpa-guṇa,  
citta hari' laya kr̥ṣṇa-pāśa*



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After taking *sannyāsa*, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu comforts Sachi Mata at the home of Adwaita Acharya

*pūrṇa vikaśita hañā, braje more jāya lañā,  
dekhāya more svarūpa-vilāsa  
more siddha deha diyā, kṛṣṇa-pāśe rākhe giyā,  
e dehera kare sarva-nāśa*

The holy name is the bud of the flower of divine love, and is the very abode of astonishing mellows. Such is the power he manifests that when his holy name starts to blossom a little further it then reveals his own divine form and qualities. Thus my heart is abducted and taken directly to Krishna.

Blossoming fully, the flower of the holy name takes me to Vraja and reveals to me his own love-dalliance. This name gives to me my own eternal spiritual body, keeps me right by Krishna's side, and completely destroys everything related to this mortal frame of mine. (*Śaraṇāgati, Śrī Nāma-māhātmya*. Also cited in *Jaiva Dharma*, chapter twenty-five.) 🌸

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## REALIZING ONE'S ETERNAL IDENTITY

In *Bhāgavatam* 12.3.50, Sukadev Goswami tells Maharaja Parikshit:

*mriyamāṇair abhidhyeyo bhagavān parameśvaraḥ  
ātma-bhāvaṁ nayaty aṅga sarvātmā sarva-saṁśrayaḥ*

O King! The Supreme Lord, the ultimate controller, the soul of all beings, and the supreme shelter of all beings, when meditated upon by dying persons gives them *prema* for the Lord.

In his *Sārārtha-darśini* commentary on this verse, Śrīla Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur writes:

*yato mriyamāṇo hy ajāmilādi-sadrśo 'pi janaḥ, avahitaḥ na vidyate  
vahitam avahitam avadhānaṁ yasya tathā-bhūto 'pi, tataḥ keśavaḥ  
yathā- kathañcid api smṛtāt abhidhyeyaḥ dhyātūṁ śakyaś cet tadā  
ātma-bhāvam ātmani premāṇaṁ nayati tān prāpayati. nanu tat-  
samaye bhagavad-dhyānaṁ teṣāṁ katham jñeyam syāt, tatrāha  
— sarvātmā lokā na jānantu nāma, sa tu jānāty evety arthaḥ. nanu  
katham sakṛd dhyāna-mātrād eva premāṇaṁ dadāti? tatrāha —  
sarveṣāṁ sādhyānāṁ sādhanānāṁ ca sambhavo yasmāt saḥ |  
mahodārasya tasya kim etac citram iti bhāvaḥ.*

People who are about to die, even if they are like Ajamila and do not have a focused intelligence on the Lord, still if after somehow having remembered that Lord Keshava they are able to fix their minds on him, then he leads such souls to his own *prema*.

[Question:] How does concentration upon the Lord occur for them at that time? In reply to this the verse says that the Lord is *sarvātmā*, the soul of all. Let people not know him, but he definitely knows everyone. [Question:] How can he give *prema* only by a single meditation? In reply to this the verse says that he is *sarva-saṁśrayaḥ* i.e. the origin and shelter of all means and goals. What is surprising in the case of a greatly magnanimous personality such as him?

What is the process to remember Krishna? The two verses in the *Bhāgavatam* following the above *śloka* explain:

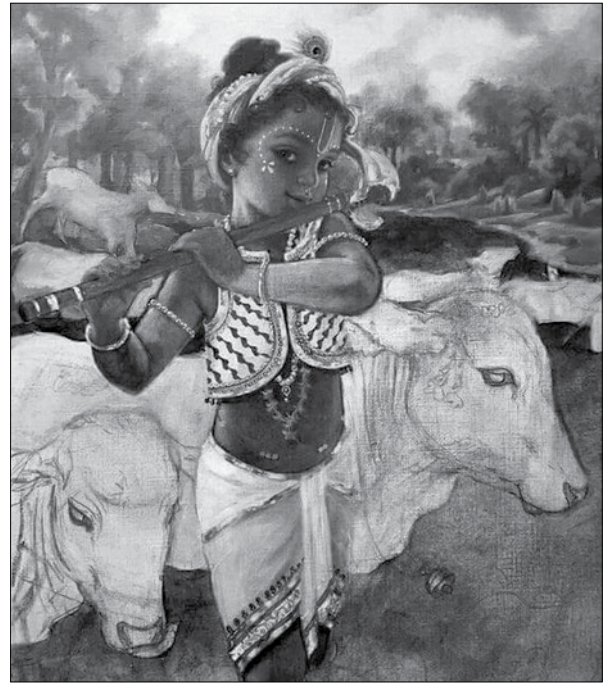
*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājan asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ  
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgaḥ paraṁ vrajet*

O King! Although *Kali-yuga* is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. Simply by chanting about Krishna one can become free from material bondage and attain *prema*. (*Bhāg.* 12.3.51)

*kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇuṁ tretāyām yajato makhaiḥ  
dvāpare paricaryāyām kalau tad dhari-kīrtanāt*

Whatever result was obtained in *Satya-yuga* by meditating on Vishnu, in *Tretā-yuga* by performing sacrifices, and in *Dvāpara-yuga* by deity worship, can be obtained in *Kali-yuga* simply by chanting about the Lord. (*Bhāg.* 12.3.52)

In his commentary on *Bhāgavatam* 2.8.4, Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur writes:



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*śravaṇa-kīrtanādhinam eva smaraṇam iti* — “Smarana (remembrance) is dependent on hearing and chanting.”

Krishna speaks to Arjuna in the *Ādi Purāṇa*, (quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11.464) about the powerful effects of chanting the holy name:

*śraddhayā helayā nāma raṭanti mama jantavaḥ  
teṣāṁ nāma sadā pārtha vartate hṛdaye mama*

“In my heart I always chant the names of those who with faith or contempt chant my name.”

It is for this reason that our *ācāryas* repeatedly cite the following verse from *Vaiṣṇava-cintāmaṇi* spoken by Lord Siva to his wife Uma:

*agha-cchit smaraṇaṁ viṣṇor bahv-āyāsena sādhyate  
oṣṭha-spandana-mātreṇa kīrtanaṁ tu tato varam*

Although capable of destroying all sins, the remembrance of Lord Vishnu is achieved only with extraordinary effort. On the other hand, one may perform *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* simply by moving one’s lips, and thus this process is superior. [Quoted in Srila Sanatan Goswami’s *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11.453, Srila Jiva Goswami’s *Bhakti-sandarbha* 273, Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur’s *Bhajana-rahasya* 1.5, and *Jaiva Dharma* chapter 23.]

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