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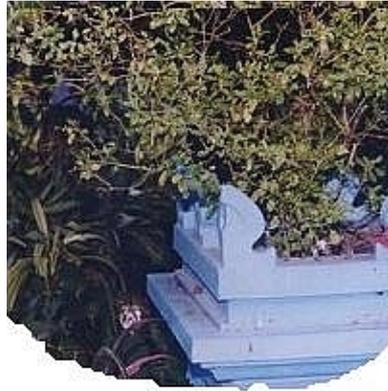
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Sri Namamrta: The Nectar of The Holy Name



Preface

On June 7, 1977, about four months before Srila Prabhupada left this world, I wrote him a long letter. Although I had been his disciple already for a number of years, I had written to him only once before, because I felt very timid about taking his time unnecessarily. At this point, however, I felt an urgent need to write to him, because I wanted to propose an idea that had occurred to me while contemplating the possibility that he might leave us before too long. As Srila Prabhupada's health was very poor at that time, I, like so many of my Godbrothers and Godsisters, felt compelled to deepen my understanding of my relationship with my spiritual master with reference to his anticipated absence. The obvious and compelling question was, "In what form will my relationship with Srila Prabhupada continue after his physical departure?" Taking shelter of sastra, I found this statement in Srila Prabhupada's commentary to Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.28.47:

... The disciple and spiritual master are never separated, because the spiritual master always keeps company with the disciple as long as the disciple follows strictly the instructions of the spiritual master. This is called the association of vani (words). Physical presence is called vapuh. As long as the spiritual master is physically present, the disciple should serve the physical body of the spiritual master, and when the spiritual master is no longer physically existing, the disciple should serve the instructions of the spiritual master.

I could understand, therefore, that if I were to always very seriously attend to his instructions, I would always be able to feel enlivened by Srila Prabhupada's transcendental presence within my heart. This understanding was confirmed when I glanced at Srila Prabhupada's expression of dedication to his spiritual master in the first volume of the Bhagavatam, where he writes, "To Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja, my spiritual master... He lives forever by his divine instructions and the follower lives with him."

Now, where are those instructions? Those instructions are enshrined primarily within his books. As Srila Prabhupada stated upon his return to Vrndavana from London, shortly

before his physical departure, "There is nothing new to be said. Whatever I had to say I have already said in my books. Now you must all try to understand it and continue with your endeavors..." He also stated at around the same time, "If I depart, there is no cause for lamentation. I will always be with you through my books and my orders. I will always remain with you in that way."

It is clear from these instructions, then, that Srila Prabhupada lives on, in full transcendental manifestation in his divine instructions, and that we can contact him and receive his mercy by understanding and by executing those instructions. Anyone who makes even a humble endeavor to research any particular philosophical point within Srila Prabhupada's books will discover a cornucopia of transcendental knowledge and insight. The thought occurred to me, however, that other than attending temple classes on Srimad–Bhagavatam and Bhagavad–gita, few of us, for whatever reasons, undertake a systematic and comprehensive study of Srila Prabhupada's books, even if we have the opportunity to do so. I began, therefore, to reflect on how Srila Prabhupada's disciples and future followers might be provided some system for drawing out instructions on specific subjects from his books in an easy and convenient manner. With this concern in mind, I wrote Srila Prabhupada a letter in which I proposed that some sort of comprehensive, systematic compilation of all of his instructions from his books be executed. I offered to accept that difficult task, even though I felt personally unqualified to do so. Later that month,

I received the following reply from Tamala Krsna Goswami, who was then acting as Srila Prabhupada's secretary:

My dear Subhananda Prabhu, Please accept my humble obeisances. I have been instructed by His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada to reply your letter dated June 7th, 1977.

His Divine Grace was very pleased to hear your proposal for systematically amassing a subject by subject encyclopedic compilation of all of Srila Prabhupada's teachings and instructions as found in his books. Srila Prabhupada said that he knows that you are a scholarly devotee and are just fit for doing this job. He said, "It is a very welcome suggestion."

Although most often preoccupied with other projects since receiving this order from my spiritual master, I have often meditated on how best to fulfill this instruction and have, at different times, discussed the concept of this project with senior Vaisnavas. The basic conclusion of such meditations and discussions has been that the encyclopedia itself should not be merely a quantitative compilation of all of Srila Prabhupada's words on every subject (which would be extremely voluminous), but that it should follow the traditional encyclopedia format. Since the publication of *Preaching Is the Essence* and *The Spiritual Master and the Disciple*, however, many devotees have urged me to produce comprehensive compilations of Srila Prabhupada's instructions on at least the most important subjects of Krsna consciousness, two of which have already been covered in these two publications.

It therefore seemed natural that the next compilation (I hope to produce one every year or so) should be on the chanting of the maha–mantra, because this is the foundation of the practice of Krsna consciousness. I therefore now humbly offer this book, *Sri Namamrta: The Nectar of the Holy Name*, to all of Srila Prabhupada's disciples and granddisciples. All of us should absorb our minds in these nectarean instructions with rapt attention and conscientiously apply their conclusions in our practical spiritual life. By studying Srila Prabhupada's instructions on this most important of subjects, we will become fully convinced of the central importance of offenseless chanting of the holy name of Krsna in our endeavor for spiritual advancement.

Sri Namamrta is divided into five principal parts: Part One reveals the chanting of the holy name, the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, as the yuga–dharma, the principal and universal religion for this age of Kali. Part Two delineates the wonderful, transcendental attributes and effects of the holy name. Part Three offers a wide variety of practical instructions on the practice of the chanting of the holy name, and Part Four deals with the necessity for propagating the holy name throughout human society. Finally, Part Five presents a variety of important instructions on the holy name not included in the other four sections.

With few exceptions, I have not included general references to sankirtana that do not make specific reference to nama–sankirtana, the chanting of the holy name. I have also decided not to include in this book the numerous descriptive narrations of chanting of the holy name in caitanya–lila (as found in *Sri Caitanya–caritamrta*). Such descriptions can be found easily enough through the indexes to the various volumes of *Sri Caitanya–caritamrta*. I have decided, thus, to restrict this compilation to specific instructions about the holy name, as

such.

At the end of the book, one will find two helpful appendixes: The first is a collection of songs written by Srila Bhaktivinoda thakura, Srila Narottama dasa thakura, and Locana dasa thakura on the glories of the holy name. The second appendix lists over sixty of the most important verses from Vedic and Vaisnava literature glorifying the holy name.

A few words of explanation concerning the system of compilation and organization used in this book, as well as about some innovations, are in order here: (1) In going systematically through Srila Prabhupada's books, whenever I come across a purport dealing with the subject at hand, I have the relevant passage typed on an index card, and then I title it. Generally, I include only one central topic per index-card entry. (2) If, within any purport, distinctly different points are made about the subject, separate index-card entries are made, and each is appropriately titled and categorized. (3) In cases where two different but related points are presented in one interwoven discussion, or where one point applies equally to two or more different topic categories, identical entries are prepared and placed within appropriate categories. There is, in other words, a small degree of unavoidable duplication of entries. (In some cases, such duplicate entries will be titled differently, appropriate to their respective categories.) (4) Within any particular subsection, where two or more entries are very similar in content, rather than duplicating exact or near-exact entry titles, I have allowed one entry title to suffice for the consecutive entries. (5) Rather than including Sanskrit or Bengali verse transliterations for every verse cited, transliterations are given only for the most important verses (those included in Appendix II). The transliterations for any other verses can be found in Srila Prabhupada's books. (6) When I have cited verses that appear, in their original textual context, in conversational form, I have indicated who the speaker and hearer are whenever possible. Further, as is often the case in Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, when a traditional scriptural verse is cited in conversation (as, for instance, between Lord Caitanya and Rupa Gosvami), only the original speaker and hearer are given.

In closing, let me say that it is my humble and fervent hope that by carefully studying, absorbing, and implementing the nectarean instructions found within this volume, many, many sincere souls will feel renewed inspiration to take the holy name of Sri Kṛṣṇa as their life and soul.

—Subhananda dasa

Introduction

"I do not know how much nectar the two syllables 'Krs-na' have produced. When the holy name of Krsna is chanted, it appears to dance within the mouth. We then desire many, many mouths. When that name 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 lines, conceived in a state of religious ecstasy, flowed from the pen of Srila Rupa Gosvami, the great Vaisnava theologian and mystic, as he wrote his famous devotional drama *Vidagdha-madhava* in early sixteenth-century India. His equally famous brother, Srila Sanatana Gosvami, exults in his *Brhad-bhagavatamrta*,

All glories to the all-blissful holy name of Sri Krsna, which causes the devotees to give up all conventional religious duties, meditation, and worship. When somehow or other uttered even once by a living entity, the holy name awards him liberation. The holy name of Krsna is the highest nectar. It is my very life and my only treasure.

To the uninitiated, these expressions of enthusiasm for the practice of contemplative recitation of the name of God may appear odd. For how can repeated recitation of mere sounds-linguistic formulations-transform consciousness and invoke ecstasy? Modern secular students of religion, especially those of a reductionistic temperament, seek often to divest such spiritual experiences of their unique metaphysical properties, attributing them to quantifiable psychological (or other) causes. Some even view them as pathological. But mere psychological reductionism can do little to shed light upon the profound religious experiences of those who "taste," in devotional ecstasy, "the nectar of the name." Nor can it explain the profound influence this practice has had on the religious adepts of many

different spiritual traditions, most prominently the Vaisnava religious tradition of India, within which the theology and practice of the holy name have reached their highest development.

According to historically reliable literary accounts, medieval India witnessed a massive religious renaissance centered largely on the popular mysticism of the congregational chanting and singing of the names of God. This litany often took the form of the maha–mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. The great sixteenth–century saint Sri Caitanya, Himself worshiped as an incarnation of Lord Krsna, first turned this public congregational chanting (sankirtana) into a mass movement in Bengal and then spread it to other parts of north India, and later to the south of India, where, according to His biographers, He traveled on foot for six years and converted millions to the religion of the holy name. The chanting of the divine name was no longer to be confined to the retreats of solitary mystics and hermits, but to spread itself widely and assume a central role in the spiritual lives of the common people. Exuberant chanting processions, accompanied by drums and cymbals, swept through the streets of the cities, towns, and villages, inundating countless people in a tidal wave of ecstatic emotion. Not only the common people but some of the most prominent religious intellectuals of the day, having first been inspired by the brilliance and clarity of His teachings, succumbed to the devotional ecstasy of Sri Caitanya's revivalist movement. Not meant to remain confined even to India, Caitanya–style sankirtana has in recent decades appeared on Western shores, where members of the Hare Krsna movement, modern followers of Sri Caitanya, publicly chant in the streets of major cities.

Why the profound effect on human consciousness? How is this process of meditation performed? What are its effects? Why its universal appeal, which appears to transcend all historical and cultural bounds? To gain a deep understanding of these matters, we will need to explore the theological and mystical literature of the Vaisnava tradition. In preparation, because we are dealing with a subject that is not quantitative and empiric but experiential, we will need to suspend our limiting ethnocentric and ideological prejudices and attempt to understand these apparent mysteries with an open and inquisitive mind. To do so, let us assume the reverential attitude of the sincere pilgrim, for this will give us a chance to penetrate the mystery. Now, let us proceed.

The Divine Attributes of the Holy Name

According to Vaisnava wisdom, the holy name of Krsna has extraordinary spiritual potency because the name of God is nondifferent from God Himself. In the material sense, name is different from form. Language is merely representative, symbolic; it does not itself embody the reality it seeks to represent. Recitation of the sound water does not quench our thirst, nor does calling the name of our beloved invoke the full presence of the beloved. In the divine realm, however, symbol embodies reality. Krsna self-manifests within His "sound incarnation," His holy name. In the only literary work ascribed to Sri Caitanya, the eight-verse Siksastaka, Sri Caitanya prays, "My Lord, in Your holy name there is all good fortune for the living entity, and therefore You have many names, such as Krsna and Govinda, by which You expand Yourself. You have invested all Your potencies in those names." That the name of God, being nondifferent from God, manifests all transcendental potencies and attributes is explained in this verse from Padma Purana:

The holy name of Krsna is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Krsna Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Krsna's name is complete, and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Krsna Himself. Since Krsna's name is not contaminated by the material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with maya [illusion]. Krsna's name is always liberated and spiritual; it is never conditioned by the laws of material nature. This is because the name of Krsna and Krsna Himself are identical.

The great seventeenth-century Vaisnava poet Narottama dasa thakura writes, *golokera prema-dhana, hari-nama-sankirtana*: the transcendental sound of the holy name of the Lord has its origin in the spiritual world.

Being the sound incarnation of the Lord, therefore, the holy name is not an ordinary material sound; it is divine, transcendental. But the divine nature of the holy name remains forever a mystery to those whose approach is merely empiric or intellectual. In discussing the theology of the holy name with an assembly of scholars, Srila Haridasa thakura, the great teacher of the name, asserted, "One cannot understand the glories of the holy name merely by logic and argument." The holy name is understood and experienced only by those who have renounced all conceit and pretension and directly embraced the process of chanting with humility, faith, and devotion. As sound transmitted from afar can be heard when received by an appropriate electronic device, so transcendent, spiritual sound can be properly heard and assimilated by one equipped with the proper means to receive it: *bhagavat-prema*, love of God.

The Practice of Chanting the Holy Name

Since the holy name is spiritual, it must be received from spiritual sources. The holy name—and, ultimately, all spiritual wisdom—is preserved and transmitted by generation after generation of realized souls comprising a disciplic succession of spiritual teachers. The mantra, the holy name, which is the seed of spiritual devotion, is planted within the heart of the sincere disciple by the spiritual master at the time of formal spiritual initiation. When uttered in devotion by a fully realized guru, the holy name has great efficacy upon the hearer, who achieves immediate benefit. Having received the holy name from the lips of a spiritual master, the student embarks upon the path of daily chanting, being careful to pronounce the mantra clearly and distinctly and to chant loudly enough to hear himself. The chanter must absorb his consciousness deeply within the divine sound of the mantra, vigilantly protecting the mind from the distraction of trivial or directionless thought.

The chanting of the holy name is not, however, a mechanical process depending merely upon contemplative prowess. It is a devotional art, a form of prayer, and thus one must chant with reverence and devotion. The Hare Krsna mantra is a prayer for protection and deliverance, a prayer to the Lord for His divine presence and for the opportunity to serve Him. Chanting is compared to the helpless cry of a child for its mother. It is a prayer from the core of the repentant heart. It is chanted, therefore, in humility. Once, in a state of devotional ecstasy while in the company of two close followers (Svarupa Damodara Gosvami and Ramananda Raya), Sri Caitanya described the quintessential importance of chanting with the mood of humility. He said, "One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor but is always prepared to give all respect to others can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord." Commenting upon this famous verse, Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami, author of Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, declares, "Everyone please hear me! String this verse on the thread of the holy name and wear it on your neck for continuous remembrance. One must strictly follow the principles given by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu in this verse. If one simply does so, certainly he will achieve the ultimate goal of life, the lotus feet of Sri Krsna."

When and where is chanting appropriate? There is no restriction as to the appropriate time or place for chanting the holy name. The devotee is advised to chant always and everywhere. The process of God realization is not a mere liturgical or social formality to be

restricted to circumscribed times and places. It is a quest that should underlie and pervade all one's activities. In Bhagavad-gita, Krsna describes that great souls (mahatmas) constantly chant His glories (satatam kirtayanto mam [Bg. 9.14]). The final line of Sri Caitanya's prayers mentioned above recommends that one chant the holy name continuously (kirtaniyah sada harih [Cc. adi 17.31]). Srila Haridasa thakura says, nirantara nama lao: "Chant the holy name without stopping."

To experience the full effects of the holy name, one must attain the stage of offenseless chanting. According to Vaisnava scripture, there are three progressive stages in the development of chanting: the offensive stage (nama-aparadha), the stage of lessening offenses (namabhasa), and the offenseless, pure stage. A neophyte commits offenses against the holy name. According to Padma Purana, there are ten offenses, involving misuse of or mundane misconceptions about the holy name and the scriptures and saints who embody and teach the holy name. One who remains at the offensive stage does not attain the ultimate goal of chanting, love of God. Says Krsnadasa Kaviraja, "If one chants the exalted holy name of the Lord again and again and yet his love for the Supreme Lord does not develop and tears do not appear in his eyes, it is evident that because of his offenses in chanting, the seed of the holy name of Krsna does not sprout." In fact, without giving up the offenses in chanting, one does not develop a spontaneous attachment for chanting. Taking the role of a conditioned soul, Sri Caitanya prays, "My dear Lord, although You bestow mercy upon the fallen, conditioned souls by liberally teaching Your holy names, I am so unfortunate that I commit offenses while chanting the holy name, and therefore I do not achieve attachment for chanting."

How can one overcome offenses and develop pure chanting? By more chanting. In his commentary on Srimad-Bhagavatam (Bhagavata-Purana), Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura quotes a verse from Padma Purana stating that even if in the beginning one chants the Hare Krsna mantra with offenses, one can become free from such offenses by repeated chanting. By the immense purificatory power of the holy name, constant chanting frees one from offenses to the holy name and gradually elevates one to the transcendental platform of pure chanting, by which one can attain pure love of God.

Elsewhere it is recommended that one can also overcome offenses by realizing that the holy name is nondifferent from the Lord, by chanting in humility, and by developing an attitude of service to the Lord.

After the offensive stage, as one's offenses cease, one approaches the platform of pure chanting. Finally, with offenseless chanting, one becomes completely enlightened and liberated, and one's dormant love of God fully awakens. In that stage, one actually enters

the kingdom of God, although physically he may apparently be within the material world.

The Transcendental Effects of the Holy Name

The holy name exerts the deepest and most profound influence upon those who invoke it in a mood of reverential devotion.

Freedom from the Reactions to Sin

First, the holy name eradicates the results of sins committed both in the present and in prior lifetimes. According to the law of karma, a human being is responsible for the sinful acts he performs and must suffer for them ("As ye sow, so shall ye reap"). Deeply enmeshed in a complex web of material actions and their reactions, one must suffer the duality of pleasure and pain, lifetime after lifetime. The holy name, however, eradicates all reactions to past sins, both those manifesting themselves at present and those destined to manifest themselves in the future. Simply by chanting the holy name, one attracts the attention of the Supreme Lord, who therefore considers, "Because this person has chanted My holy name, My duty is to give him protection." The power of the holy name to absolve sins is declared emphatically in the scriptures. The Garuḍa Purana tells us, "If one chants the holy name of the Lord, even in helplessness or without desiring to do so, all the reactions of his sinful life depart, just as when a lion roars all the small animals flee in fear." Says the Brhad-ṛṣi Purana, "Simply by chanting the name of Hari, a sinful man can counteract the reactions to more sins than he is able to commit." In the Visnu-dharmottara we read, "This word kṛṣṇa is so auspicious that anyone who chants this holy name rids himself immediately of the reactions of sinful activities from many, many births." But for the chanting of the holy name to exert such a powerful purifying effect, the devotee must chant the holy name in purity, without offense. Having ceased to indulge in sinful actions, he must live a pure and holy life.

Freedom from Desire Due to Illusion

How can one escape the will to sin? By escaping the illusion that supports it—the illusion that the material body is the self. When the embodied soul erroneously identifies himself with the gross material body and its subtle mind, intellect, and false ego, he seeks pleasure in the comfort and gratification of the body. As he wanders throughout the material creation, lifetime after lifetime, trying to dominate and enjoy the resources of the phenomenal world, he goes through myriad temporary, fleeting sensory experiences, which create myriad impressions of the phenomenal world upon his heart and consciousness. In this way, his original, pure consciousness becomes covered by layer after layer of material contamination. Because the self is purely spiritual, no variety or amount of physical or mental gratification can give him real satisfaction. Under the illusion of bodily identification, therefore, he perpetually suffers the unnatural and frustrating condition of material existence.

This illusion and its painful effects, which have haunted and tormented the embodied soul since time immemorial, are destroyed by the transcendental effects of the holy name. Because the divine name and the Lord Himself are identical, when one regularly chants the holy name he develops attraction toward the Lord Himself. That divine, spontaneous attraction cleanses his heart of all desires for lesser, material pleasures. Lord Kṛṣṇa personally aids in that progressive purification, as the great devotee Suta Gosvami explained to the sages assembled at Naimisaranya Forest: "Sri Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramatma [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted." When the heart is fully purified by chanting the holy name, the devotee loses interest in everything unspiritual. He views the entire creation as the Lord's energy and thus gives up the desire to exploit and consume matter. As chanting cleanses the mirror of the heart (*ceto-darpana-marjanam* [Cc. Antya 20.12]), one fully awakens to spiritual reality.

Enlightenment

All knowledge, both spiritual and material, is contained within the ancient writings called the Vedas. The knowledge of the Vedas is said to be eternal and of divine origin; it is not a creation of historical, imperfect human speculation. Long before the Vedic literature was compiled (by Srila Vyāsadeva, the "literary incarnation of God," according to orthodox

Vedic historiography), that Vedic knowledge existed in the form of pure, transcendental sound (sabda–brahma). In the Bhagavad–gita, Lord Krsna, the speaker of the Gita, identifies Himself as the summum bonum of Vedic knowledge: "By all the Vedas, I am to be known" (vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyah [Bg. 15.15]). The holy name of Lord Krsna, being nondifferent from the Lord Himself, is the quintessence of the Vedas, and therefore of all knowledge. Chanting the holy name thus enlightens the soul with complete knowledge—knowledge of his own existential identity, of the material and spiritual worlds, of God, of the soul's eternal relationship with God, and of the means to revive that transcendental relationship. The maha–mantra embodies all knowledge, all wisdom.

Those who worship the Lord by chanting His holy name invoke the mercy of the Lord, who acts as the indwelling teacher (caitya–guru) and supreme friend of the conditioned soul by enlightening the soul from within: "To those who are constantly devoted and who worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me. Out of compassion, I, dwelling within their hearts, destroy with the lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance." Rupa Gosvami compares the holy name to the sun, "for just as a slight appearance of the sun dissipates the darkness of night, so a slight appearance of the holy name of Krsna can drive away all the darkness of ignorance that arises in the heart because of greatly sinful activities performed in previous lives."

Liberation

When through purification and knowledge one no longer identifies himself with the material body and the material world, he ceases to engage in material actions, and thus he is freed from material reactions. Thus freed, he no longer has to take birth again. He is free from samsara, the cycle of repeated birth and death. This is the meaning of moksa, liberation. Spiritual sound (sabda–brahma) has the power to liberate. The Vedanta–sutra speaks of anavrttih sabdat, "liberation by sound."

The ease with which one attains liberation through chanting is affirmed in the Skanda Purana: "By once chanting the holy name of the Lord, which consists of the two syllables ha–ri, one guarantees his path to liberation." As stated in Srimad–Bhagavatam, even unconscious chanting brings results: "Living beings entangled in the complicated meshes of birth and death can be freed immediately by even unconsciously chanting the holy name of Krsna." "Even the faintest rays of the effulgence of the Lord's holy name," says Haridasa thakura, "can grant one liberation."

God Consciousness

Ultimately, the chanting of the holy name produces God consciousness, which culminates in ecstatic devotion to Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa–bhakti). Liberation (mokṣa) is not the ultimate in spiritual perfection. It simply indicates freedom from, or a negation of, material existence. Once liberated from material contamination, the soul must return to its original, constitutional position as a loving servant of the Lord.

As one progresses on the path of bhakti, divine love of God, the chanting of the holy name brings one into closer and closer contact with the Lord. On that path, the holy name invokes remembrance of the Lord, association with the Lord (via His form as sound), attraction to the Lord, the transcendental ("beatific") vision (darsana) of the Lord, and finally divine love of God, wherein the devotee experiences various and intense spiritual ecstasies.

One should note that the efficacy of the process of chanting presupposes the Lord's direct intervention in the devotional life of the spiritual adept. There is, in other words, nothing automatic or mechanical about the process of chanting. Revival of the soul's dormant God consciousness depends not on any ritualized litany but on the causeless mercy of the Lord, who responds to the sincere efforts of His devotee to glorify Him in devotion.

Since the holy name is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the chanting of the holy name invokes remembrance of and association with Kṛṣṇa Himself. Recollection, absorption, meditation, constant remembrance, and trance (samādhi) are the five stages in progressive remembrance of Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa–smarana). In conscious remembrance, the devotee feels the presence of the Lord as a transcendental, mystical fact. When the devotee chants the holy name, all the Lord's transcendental opulences—His divine form, activities, qualities, and so on—become manifest within the devotee's heart. Indeed, Kṛṣṇa Himself appears. "My dear Narada, I do not actually reside in My abode, Vaikuntha, nor within the hearts of the yogis. I reside where My pure devotees chant My holy name and discuss My form, pastimes, and qualities." (Padma Purana) Thus, the devotee's consciousness becomes attracted to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Along with remembrance, association, and attraction, the devotee's attitude of service to the Lord develops, and in an advanced stage the devotee engages directly in the service of the Lord in the spiritual realm, even while situated within the material body. Thus, through pure, devotional chanting of the holy name, the devotee directly realizes the presence of the Lord and enters the deepest mysteries of God consciousness.

Ecstatic Love of God

Absorption in God consciousness culminates in prema–bhakti, pure love of God. Writes Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami, "The holy name of Krsna is so attractive that anyone who chants it ... becomes imbued with love of Krsna. This is the effect of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra." Sri Caitanya similarly instructs Sanatana Gosvami, "Of the nine processes of devotional service, the most important is to chant the holy name of the Lord always. If one does so, avoiding the ten kinds of offenses, one very easily obtains the most valuable love of Godhead."

Pure love for Krsna elicits the most sublime and lofty emotions of the soul. Liberation or spiritual perfection implies not the absence of cognition or emotion, but their ultimate perfection. Within the soul are profound transcendental emotions, which lie dormant as long as the soul sleeps in maya, material illusion. But such sublime emotions awaken with the awakening of pure, spiritual consciousness. The entire range of emotions experienced by a conditioned soul (such as happiness and misery, love and hate, compassion and envy) are merely dim and perverted reflections of their spiritual counterparts, which exist in absolute purity and are experienced by fully realized souls in their eternal relationship with the Lord. When the soul has awakened to pure love of Krsna, he tastes the infinitely sweet flavors of a wide variety of transcendental emotions, emotions that are variegated manifestations of spiritual ecstasy. Such transcendental, ecstatic emotions within the heart and mind of the pure devotee are so powerful that they erupt and spill over into the realm of the physical. In pursuance of the order of His spiritual master, Sri Caitanya entered upon the path of constant chanting of the holy name of Krsna. When such chanting invoked intense spiritual ecstasy, He wondered whether He had lost His sanity. He approached His guru, Isvara Puri, who then explained,

It is a characteristic of love of Godhead that by nature it induces transcendental symptoms in one's body and makes one more and more greedy to achieve the shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord. When one actually develops love of Godhead, he naturally sometimes cries, sometimes laughs, sometimes chants, and sometimes runs here and there just like a madman. Perspiration, trembling, standing of one's bodily hairs, tears, faltering, fading, madness, melancholy, patience, pride, joy, and humility—these are various natural symptoms of ecstatic love of Godhead, which causes a devotee to dance and float in an ocean of transcendental bliss while chanting the Hare Krsna mantra.

Of course, such states of spiritual ecstasy are very rarely achieved. They are experienced only by those who have entered the most intimate, confidential relationship with Lord

Krsna. Such experiences are unavailable even to those who worship the Lord in awe and veneration, viewing the Lord merely in His aspect of greatness, power, and majesty. The divine flavors of such ecstasy are relished by those who, by the grace of the Lord, gaze beyond His majestic feature and deal with Him in spontaneous, intimate affection. As stated in Caitanya-caritamṛta, the pure devotional chanting of Lord Krsna's personal names ushers the devotee into the Lord's personal presence and into the highest bliss: "Dealings in affection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead bring happiness many millions of times greater than dealing with Him in awe and veneration. Simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord, the devotee is merged in transcendental bliss."

Beyond Death

By chanting the holy name in purity and devotion throughout his life, the devotee returns to Krsna at the time of death. Lord Krsna explains in Bhagavad-gīta,

Whoever, at the time of death, quits his body remembering Me alone at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt. Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail... He who meditates on Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his mind constantly engaged in remembering Me, undeviated from the path,... is sure to reach Me.

Thus by chanting at the time of leaving the material body, the devotee who has practiced kṛṣṇa-smāraṇa, remembrance of Krsna, by chanting Krsna's holy names throughout his life can escape the painful cycle of birth and death and return to Krsna in the spiritual realm (Vaikuntha) to render Him intimate, ecstatic, loving service.

The Divine Dispensation

Apart from the holy name's importance as a means toward individual spiritual perfection, a reading of Vaisnava literature reveals the holy name to possess the broadest historical and universal significance as well. Chanting of the holy name is in fact described as the universal and supreme religion in the current epoch, an epoch referred to in traditional Indian texts as Kali-yuga, "the age of Kali," the great Iron Age, an age of materialism, hypocrisy, and quarrel. Kali-yuga is the last of the four Great Ages, each progressively worse than its predecessor, four vast epochs that cycle perpetually. The age of Kali is the

age wherein human society degrades from human to subhuman, in which the people of the world forget their souls, identify with their gross bodies, and become mad competitors for the world's stock of material goods and pleasures. As stated in Srimad–Bhagavatam, the unfortunate inhabitants of the Kali age are "quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky, and, above all, always disturbed."

Because such unfortunate persons have little or no inclination toward spiritual advancement, there is a compelling need for a simple method by which they can wake up from their deathly slumber and receive the opportunity for spiritual emancipation. That Great Dispensation is the holy name. Declares Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami, "In the age of Kali, Lord Krsna has descended in the form of the holy name." The holy name is the one true glory, the one saving grace of this condemned age, as Sukadeva Gosvami tells King Pariksit: "Although Kali–yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. It is that simply by chanting the holy name of Krsna one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom." Various means of spiritual advancement practiced in the previous eras are rendered virtually ineffectual in Kali by the degradation of human beings, individually and collectively. The chanting of the holy name now supersedes all other forms of spiritual discipline: "Whatever result was obtained in Satya–yuga by meditating on Visnu, in Treta–yuga by performing sacrifices, and in Dvapara–yuga by serving the Lord's lotus feet can also be obtained in Kali–yuga simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord." (Srimad–Bhagavatam 12.3.52) The primacy and exclusivity of the practice of the holy name is emphatically declared in this oft–cited verse from the Brhan–naradiya Purana: "In this age of Kali there is no alternative, there is no alternative, there is no alternative for spiritual progress but the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord." Thus the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is the yuga–dharma, the universal and supreme religion of the age, meant to unite all faiths in common, joyful glorification of the one Supreme Lord.

Although the chanting of the holy name has played a role in India's religious history for millennia, it was specifically propagated and popularized as the yuga–dharma by the great Caitanya, whose effulgent presence and fervid ecstasies drew millions into nama–dharma, the Religion of the Name. As the great popularizer of the holy name, Sri Caitanya was regarded and worshiped as the Kali–yuga avatara, the prime avatara (incarnation) for the age of Kali. Further, He was worshiped as the greatest incarnation of the Lord because He liberally bestowed pure krsna–bhakti, ecstatic love of God, upon all persons. The maha–mantra, the chant popularized by Sri Caitanya, is specifically mentioned in the Kalisantarana Upanisad as the exclusive means for escaping the debilitating conditions of the Kali age: "Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—these sixteen names composed of thirty–two syllables are the only

means to counteract the evil effects of Kali–yuga. In all the Vedas it is seen that to cross the ocean of nescience there is no alternative to the chanting of the holy name." Not only does the holy name bestow the highest benefits upon human beings both individually and collectively, but it purifies even lower species of life. Any living being fortunate enough to hear the divine, transcendental sound incarnation of the Lord receives immense spiritual benefit.

Sri Caitanya did not intend the holy name to remain confined to India, but predicted that the holy name would reach "every town and village." Four centuries later, this missionary ideal, based upon a compelling vision of the universality of the holy name, gained momentum through the efforts of Srila Bhaktivinoda thakura, a great follower and ninth–generation disciplic representative of Sri Caitanya. Writing in his religious journal Sajjana–tosani in 1885, he declared prophetically,

Lord Caitanya did not advent Himself to liberate only a few men in India. Rather, His main objective was to emancipate all living entities of all countries throughout the entire universe and preach the Eternal Religion... There is no doubt that this unquestionable order will come to pass... Very soon the unparalleled path of hari–nama–sankirtana will be propagated all over the world... Oh, for that day when the fortunate English, French, Russian, German, and American people will take up banners, mrdangas, and karatalas and raise kirtana through their streets and towns! When will that day come? ... That day will witness the holy transcendental ecstasy of the Vaisnava dharma to be the only dharma, and all the sects and religions will flow like rivers into the ocean of Vaisnava dharma. When will that day come?

Eighty years later, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, a disciple of Bhaktivinoda's son (Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami), left India and traveled to the United States to transform Bhaktivinoda's dream into reality. In 1966 he founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which, for its active propagation of the maha–mantra, came to be popularly known as "the Hare Krsna movement." The chanting and propagation of the holy name are the stated basis and goal of the movement. The Society's founder, Srila Prabhupada, writes, "Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the congregational chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to give everyone a chance to hear Krsna's holy name, for simply by hearing [the holy name] one becomes purified. Therefore our Krsna consciousness movement is chiefly engaged in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra all over the world." "The Krsna consciousness movement," he says, "is based on this principle: chant the Hare Krsna mantra at every moment, as much as possible, both inside and outside of the temple." This movement "is especially meant for creating an atmosphere in which people can take to the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra." The public chanting of the holy

name performed by Srila Prabhupada's followers, clad in traditional Indian dhotis and saris, is now a familiar sight on the streets of most major cities of the world.

The holy name of Krsna, for so long concealed within India, locked away from Western view, has now entered the mainstream of Western society. It has become, so to speak, a "household mantra," available to everyone. But although it is in open, public view, the holy name is not an ordinary commodity one can find and purchase in the market. It is a hidden treasure. One must develop the eyes to see it or, rather, the ears to hear it. If one simply approaches the holy name with reverence and allows the holy name to enter through his ears into his heart, and especially if he accepts the divine name as his very life and soul, he can enter the deepest, most profound, most sublime of all spiritual mysteries.

Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna
Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare
Hare Rama, Hare Rama
Rama Rama, Hare Hare

Part One

The Holy Name: The Universal and Supreme Religion for this Age

1.

The Prime Religious Practice for the Kali–yuga Is the Chanting of the Holy name The chanting of the holy name is the most sublime religion for the Kali–yuga:

The Hare Krsna mantra is specifically mentioned in many Upanisads, such as the Kali–santarana Upanisad, where it is said:

hare krsna hare krsna
krsna krsna hare hare
hare rama hare rama
rama rama hare hare

itisodasakam namnam
kali –kalmasa–nasanam
natah parataropayah
sarva–vedesu drsyate

"After searching through all the Vedic literature one cannot find a method of religion more sublime for this age than the chanting of Hare Krsna."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 3.40

In Kali-yuga, simply by chanting the holy name one can attain the goal of life:

[Karabhajana Rsi to Maharaja Nimi]:

"Those who are advanced and highly qualified and are interested in the essence of life know the good qualities of Kali-yuga. Such people worship the age of Kali because in this age, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one can advance in spiritual knowledge and attain life's goal.' "

This is a quotation from Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.5.36) spoken by the great sage Karabhajana Rsi, one of the nine Yogendras. The sage was informing Maharaja Nimi about the people's duty to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead according to different processes in different yugas.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.347

In Kali-yuga, one can attain liberation and return to the spiritual kingdom by chanting the holy name:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Pariksit]:

"My dear King, although Kali-yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.' "

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 12.3.5

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.344]

Sankirtana is the present yuga-dharma:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"...In the Kali-yuga the occupational duty of the people is to chant congregationally the holy name of Krsna."

In Kali-yuga one worships Lord Krsna by chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna,

Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 20.339

The only religious principle in the age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name:

[Isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

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

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.74

In Kali–yuga, chanting of the holy name is the most feasible means of salvation:

In great jubilation, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "My clear Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya, know from Me that chanting of the holy names is the most feasible means of salvation in this age of Kali."

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 20.8

The universal religious practice for the Kali–yuga is the chanting of the holy name:

The religious practice for the age of Kali is to broadcast the glories of the holy name. Only for this purpose has the Lord, in a yellow color, descended as Lord Caitanya.

In this age of Kali the practical system of religion for everyone is the chanting of the name of Godhead. This was introduced in this age by Lord Caitanya. Bhakti–yoga actually begins with the chanting of the holy name, as confirmed by Madhvacarya in his commentary on the Mundaka Upanisad. He quotes this verse from the Narayana–samhita:

dvapariyair janair visnuh
pancaratrais tu kevalaih
kalau tu nama–matrena
pujyate bhagavan harih

"In the Dvapara–yuga people should worship Lord Visnu only by the regulative principles of the Narada–pancaratra and other such authorized books. In the age of Kali, however, people should simply chant the holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 3.40

The Srimad–Bhagavatam advocates nama–sankirtana as the essence of religion in the age of Kali:

In Srimad–Bhagavatam it is repeatedly and clearly said that the essence of religion in the age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Adi–lila 3.50

Rather than inventing one's own religious process, one should accept the approved method of religion for this age–hari–nama–sankirtana:

[Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya to King Prataparudra]:

Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya replied, "This sweet transcendental sound is a special creation of the Lord known as prema–sankirtana, congregational chanting in love of Godhead. In this age of Kali, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu has descended to preach the religion of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore the chanting of the holy names of Lord Kṛṣṇa is the religious principle for this age. Anyone who worships Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu by congregational chanting should be understood to be very intelligent. One who does not do so must be considered a victim of this age and bereft of all intelligence."

Rascals propose that anyone can invent his own religious process, and this proposition is condemned herein. If one actually wants to become religious, he must take up the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa nama–mantra... Dharma, or religion, cannot be manufactured by a human being. Religion is the law or code of the Lord... Dharma refers to the science of bhakti–yoga, which begins by the novice's chanting the holy name of the Lord (tan–nama–grahanadibhih).

In this age of Kali it is recommended in Caitanya–caritamṛta, kali–kale dharma–kṛṣṇa–nama–sankirtana. In the age of Kali the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is the method of religion approved by all Vedic scriptures.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 11.97–99

Chanting the holy name is the sum and substance of sanatana–dharma:

In this age of Kali, there are no genuine religious principles. There are only the Vaisnava devotees and the Vaisnava devotional scriptures. This is the sum and substance of everything.

In this age a person should not envy Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's movement but should chant the holy names of Hari and Krsna, the maha-mantra. That is the sum and substance of eternal religion, known as sanatana-dharma.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.362

In Kali-yuga Krsna has incarnated as the holy name in order to deliver the sinful, who are suffering greatly:

As the Lord says in Bhagavad-gita (4.7):

yada yada hi dharmasya
glanir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthanam adharmasya
tadatmanam srijamy aham

"Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion—at that time I descend Myself."

In the present age, Kali-yuga, people are very much sinful and are consequently suffering greatly. Therefore Krsna has incarnated in the form of His name, as found in the maha-mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

Because Kali-yuga is such a degraded and miserable age, Lord Caitanya advises everyone simply to chant Hare Krsna:

According to the Vedic conception, there must be men in society who are factually brahmanas, capable of expounding the real truth. If everyone becomes a sudra, the Absolute Truth cannot be understood. It is said that at the present moment in Kali-yuga everyone is a sudra (kalau sudra-sambhavah), and it is very difficult in this age to find qualified brahmanas, for they are very rare. There is practically not a single qualified brahmana in this age.

prayenalpayusah sabhya
kalav asmin yuge janah

mandah sumanda–matayo
manda–bhagya hy upadrutah

"O learned one, in this iron age of Kali men have but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky and, above all, always disturbed."

(S.B. 1.1.10) The people in this age are very short–lived and slow in understanding spiritual life. Actually, human life is meant for understanding spiritual values, but because everyone in this age is a sudra, no one is interested. People have forgotten life's real purpose. The word manda means both slow and bad, and everyone in this age is either bad or slow or a combination of both. People are unfortunate and disturbed by so many things. According to Srimad–Bhagavatam there will eventually be no rain and consequently a scarcity of food. The governments will also levy very heavy taxes. The characteristics of this age predicted by Srimad–Bhagavatam are already being experienced to some degree. Since Kali–yuga is a very miserable age, Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who is Sri Krsna Himself, advises everyone simply to chant Hare Krsna.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"In this age of Kali there is no alternative, there is no alternative, there is no alternative for spiritual progress than the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord."
(Brhan–naradiya Purana)

This process is not Caitanya Mahaprabhu's invention, but is advised by the sastras, the Puranas. The process for this Kali–yuga is very simple. One need only chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

Although God has given us all facilities to live peacefully on this earth, cultivate Krsna consciousness, and finally to come to Him, in this age we're unfortunate. We are short–lived, and there are so many people without food, shelter, married life or defense from the onslaughts of nature. This is due to the influence of this age of Kali. Therefore Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, seeing the dreadful situation in this age, emphasized the

absolute necessity for cultivating spiritual life. And how should we do it? Caitanya Mahaprabhu gives the formula:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"Just always chant Hare Krsna." Never mind whether you are in a factory or in hell, in a shack or in a skyscraper—it doesn't matter. Just go on chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. There is no expense, there is no impediment, there is no caste, there is no creed, there is no color—anyone can do it. Just chant and hear.

~On the Way to Krsna

Everywhere in this age of iron everything is degraded, degraded in this sense: prayenalpayusah sabhya kalav asmin yuge janah [S.B. 1.1.10]. In this age of Kali the duration of life is diminished, and men are not moved to understand self-realization, and if they are, they are invariably misled by so many deceitful leaders. The age is very corrupt. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu's process of chanting Hare Krsna is the best and the simplest method.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"In this age of Kali there is no other religion than glorifying the Lord by utterance of His holy name, and that is the injunction of all the revealed scriptures. There is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way."

This verse appears in the Brhan-naradiya Purana. Harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam. Simply chant Hare Krsna. There is no other alternative. Kalau nasty eva nasty eva nasty eva gatir anyatha. In this age of Kali, there is no other alternative for self-realization. So we have to accept it.

There is another similar verse in the Srimad-Bhagavatam. In the Twelfth Canto, Third Chapter (12.3.51), Pariksit Maharaja was informed by Sukadeva Gosvami of the faults of this age, and now all the symptoms of the age of Kali are apparent. In the conclusive portion, however, Sukadeva Gosvami said, *kaler dosa-nidhe rajann asti hy eko mahan gunah*: "My dear king, this age, Kali, is full of faulty things, but there is one good opportunity." What is that? *Kirtanad eva krsnasya mukta-sangah param vrajet*: "Simply by chanting this Hare Krsna mantra one can become liberated and go back to Godhead."
~The Science of Self-Realization

The lack of religious principles in Kali-yuga is more than compensated by the process of chanting the holy name:

It is said that this age of Kali is three-fourths devoid of religious principles. Hardly one-fourth of the principles of religion are still observed in this age. But by the mercy of Lord Krsna, this vacancy of Kali-yuga has not only been completely filled, but the religious process has been made so easy that simply by rendering transcendental loving service unto Lord Krsna by chanting His holy names, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, one can achieve the highest result of religion, namely, being transferred to the highest planet within the spiritual world, Goloka Vrndavana.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Chanting of the holy names of the Lord is the common platform for the universal religion of mankind in the Kali-yuga:

In this present age quarrels take place even over trifles, and therefore the sastras have recommended for this age a common platform for realization, namely chanting the holy names of the Lord. People can hold meetings to glorify the Lord in their respective languages and with melodious songs, and if such performances are executed in an offenseless manner, it is certain that the participants will gradually attain spiritual perfection without having to undergo more rigorous methods. At such meetings everyone, the learned and the foolish, the rich and the poor, the Hindus and the Muslims, the Englishmen and the Indians, and the candalas and the brahmanas, can all hear the transcendental sounds and thus cleanse the dust of material association from the mirror of the heart. To confirm the Lord's mission, all the people of the world will accept the holy name of the Lord as the common platform for the universal religion of mankind.

In the age of logic, argument and disagreement, the chanting of Hare Krsna is the only means of self–realization:

In three out of the four millenniums (namely Satya–yuga, Treta–yuga and Dvapara–yuga) people had the honor to be able to understand transcendence through the path of disciplic succession. However, in the present age, people have no interest in the disciplic succession. Instead, they have invented many paths of logic and argument. This individual attempt to understand the supreme transcendence (called the ascending process) is not approved by the Vedas. The Absolute Truth must descend from the absolute platform. He is not to be understood by the ascending process. The holy name of the Lord–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare–is a transcendental vibration because it comes from the transcendental platform, the supreme abode of Krsna. Because there is no difference between Krsna and His name, the holy name of Krsna is as pure, perfect and liberated as Krsna Himself. Academic scholars have no entrance by means of logic and other argument into the understanding of the transcendental nature of the holy name of God. The single path in understanding the transcendental nature of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is the chanting of these names with faith and adherence. Such chanting will release one from designated conditions arising from the gross and subtle bodies.

In this age of logic, argument and disagreement, the chanting of Hare Krsna is the only means for self–realization.

ˆTeachings of Lord Caitanya

The Hare Krsna mantra is especially suited to deliver us from the dangers of the Kali–yuga: Only the dvijas (the brahmanas) and the devas (the demigods) can be delivered from material existence by the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Whatever is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is a mantra and is suitable for delivering the conditioned souls from mental speculation. The conditioned souls are engaged in a struggle for existence (manah sasthanindriyani prakrti–sthani karsati [Bg. 15.7]). Deliverance from this struggle constitutes the highest benefit, but unless one gets a mantra from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, deliverance is impossible. The beginning mantra is the Gayatri mantra. Therefore, after purification, when one is qualified to become a brahmana (dvija), he is offered the Gayatri mantra. Simply by chanting the Gayatri mantra, one can be

delivered. This mantra, however, is suitable only for the brahmanas and demigods. In Kali-yuga, we are all in a very difficult position, in which we need a suitable mantra that can deliver us from the dangers of this age. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His incarnation as Lord Caitanya, gives us the Hare Krsna mantra... In His Siksastaka, Lord Caitanya says, param vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam: "All glories to the chanting of sri-krsna-sankirtana!" The maha-mantra-Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare-is directly chanted by the Lord Himself, who gives us this mantra for deliverance.

We cannot invent any means to be delivered from the dangers of material existence... Sparks are beautiful as long as they are in the fire. Similarly, we have to remain in the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and always engage in devotional service, for then we shall always be brilliant and illuminating. As soon as we fall from the service of the Lord, our brilliance and illumination will immediately be extinguished, or at least stopped for some time. When we living entities, who are like sparks of the original fire, the Supreme Lord, fall into a material condition, we must take the mantra from the Supreme Personality of Godhead as it is offered by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. By chanting this Hare Krsna mantra, we shall be delivered from all the difficulties of this material world. ~Srimad-Bhagavatam 8.6.15

2.

In the Kali-yuga, Lord Krsna Is Worshiped by Chanting of the Holy Name
In the Kali-yuga, one can satisfy and worship the Lord simply by chanting His holy name:

Sri Madhvacarya has brought our attention to this quotation from the Narayana-samhita:

dvapariyair janair visnuh
pancaratrais tu kevalaih
kalau tu nama-matrena
pujyate bhagavan harih

"In the Dvapara-yuga one could satisfy Krsna or Visnu only by worshiping opulently according to the pancaratrici system, but in the age of Kali one can satisfy and worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari simply by chanting His holy name."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 7.12

In this age of Kali, real religious propapada should induce people to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra... Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura comments in this regard in his Anubhasya, wherein he quotes a verse from Narayana-samhita:

dvapariyair janair visnuh
pancaratrais tu kevalaih
kalau tu nama-matrena
pujyate bhagavan harih

"In Dvapara-yuga, devotees of Lord Visnu and Krsna rendered devotional service according to the principles of pancaratrika. In this age of Kali, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshiped simply by the chanting of His holy names."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.9

Learned scholars in the age of Kali worship Lord Krsna through nama-sankirtana:

"By performing the sacrifice of congregational chanting of the holy name, learned scholars in the age of Kali worship Lord Krsna..."

~Stava-mala of Rupa Gosvami

[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 3.58]

In Kali-yuga, the process of worshiping Krsna is the sacrifice of chanting the holy name:
[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara & Ramananda Raya]:

"In this age of Kali, the process of worshiping Krsna is to perform sacrifice by chanting the holy name of the Lord. One who does so is certainly very intelligent, and he attains shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.9

3.

The Yuga–dharma Is Personally Introduced by Lord Krsna in His Incarnation as Lord Caitanya

Krsna personally inaugurates the religion of the age–nama–sankirtana–as Lord Caltanya:

[Lord Krsna, thinking to Himself]:

"I shall personally inaugurate the religion of the age–nama–sankirtana, the congregational chanting of the holy name. I shall make the world dance in ecstasy, realizing the four mellows of loving devotional service."

–Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 3.19

The Kali–yuga dharma, chanting the holy name, is introduced by Lord Caitanya:

[Karabhajana Rsi to Maharaja Nimi]:

"Accompanied by His personal devotees, Lord Krsna, assuming a golden color, introduces the hari–nama–sankirtana, the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, in the age of Kali. By this process, He delivers love for Krsna to the general populace. Lord Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, personally introduces the occupational duty of the age of Kali. He personally chants and dances in ecstatic love, and thus the entire world chants congregationally."

–Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 20.340–41

Krsna came again as Lord Caitanya to teach us the path by which to cross the ocean of Kali–yuga:

Just before the beginning of Kali–yuga–or, in other words, at the end of Dvapara–yuga–Lord Sri Krsna appeared and left His instructions in the form of Bhagavad–gita, in which He asked all living entities to surrender unto Him. Since the beginning of Kali–yuga, however, people have practically been unable to surrender to the lotus feet of Krsna, and therefore, after some five thousand years, Krsna came again as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu just to teach the entire world how to surrender unto Him, unto Sri Krsna, and thus be purified...

Kali–yuga is full of contamination. This is described in the Srimad–Bhagavatam (12.3.51):

kaler dosa–nidhe rajann
asti hy eko mahan gunah
kirtanad eva krsnasya
mukta–sangah param vrajet

This age of Kali is full of unlimited faults. Indeed, it is just like an ocean of faults (dosa–nidhi). But there is one chance, one opportunity. Kirtanad eva krsnasya mukta–sangah param vrajet: simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, one can be freed from the contamination of Kali–yuga and, in his original spiritual body, can return home, back to Godhead. This is the opportunity of Kali–yuga.

When Krsna appeared, He gave His orders, and when Krsna Himself appeared as a devotee, as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He showed us the path by which to cross the ocean of Kali–yuga. That is the path of the Hare Krsna movement. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared, He ushered in the era for the sankirtana movement. It is also said that for ten thousand years this era will continue. This means that simply by accepting the sankirtana movement and chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, the fallen souls of this Kali–yuga will be delivered. After the Battle of Kuruksetra, at which Bhagavad–gita was spoken, Kali–yuga continues for 432,000 years, of which only 5,000 years have passed. Thus there is still a balance of 427,000 years to come. Of these 427,000 years, the 10,000 years of the sankirtana movement inaugurated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu 500 years ago provide the opportunity for the fallen souls of Kali–yuga to take to the Krsna consciousness movement, chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra and thus be delivered from the clutches of material existence and return home, back to Godhead.

Chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra is potent always, but it is especially potent in this age of Kali. Therefore Sukadeva Gosvami, while instructing Maharaja Pariksit, stressed this chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra.

kaler dosa–nidhe rajann
asti hy eko mahan gunah
kirtanad eva krsnasya
mukta–sangah param vrajet

"My dear King, although Kali–yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom." (S.B. 12.3.51)

Those who have accepted the task of spreading the Hare Krsna maha–mantra in full Krsna

consciousness should take this opportunity to deliver people very easily from the clutches of material existence. Our duty, therefore, is to follow the instructions of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and preach the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world very sincerely. This is the best welfare activity for the peace and prosperity of human society.
~Srimad–Bhagavatam 8.5.23

The chanting of the holy name is Lord Caitanya's special concession to the animallike human beings of this age:

Love of Krsna is not an easy thing to obtain, because by this love one can purchase Krsna, but Caitanya Mahaprabhu distributed this love of Krsna to anyone and everyone, even to the two drunkards Jagai and Madhai. Narottama dasa thakura has therefore sung:

dina–hina yata chilo hari–name uddharilo,
ta'ra saksi jagai–madhai

"Caitanya Mahaprabhu is so magnanimous that He delivered all kinds of sinful men simply by allowing them to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. The evidence of this is Jagai and Madhai."

At that time, of course, there were two Jagais and Madhais, but at the present moment, by the grace of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His process of teaching, so many Jagais and Madhais are being delivered. If Caitanya Mahaprabhu is pleased, He can give krsna–prema, love of Krsna, to anyone, regardless of that person's qualification. If a person is giving charity, he can select anyone to take it.

Without the mercy of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, understanding Krsna is very, very difficult. Manusyanam sahasresu kascid yatati siddhaye (Bg. 7.3): out of many millions of people, hardly one tries to make his life spiritually successful. People simply work like animals, not knowing how to make a success of human life. One's human life is successful when one understands Krsna; otherwise one remains an animal. Anyone who is not Krsna conscious, who does not know who Krsna is, is no better than an animal. But Caitanya Mahaprabhu

gave this concession to the fallen souls of this age: "Simply chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra and you will be delivered." This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's special concession (kirtanad eva krsnasya mukta-sangah param vrajet, S.B. 12.3.51).

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

Lord Sri Krsna personally came as Lord Caitanya in order to distribute the process of chanting—the easiest means, in this age, to the highest perfection of life:

Out of many thousands of persons who are in self-knowledge as to what and who they are, only one or two may be actually liberated. And out of many thousands who are liberated, only one or two may understand what and who Krsna is. So understanding Krsna is not such an easy job. Thus in this age of Kali, an age characterized by ignorance and chaos, liberation is out of the reach of practically everyone. One has to go through the whole ordeal of becoming civilized, then religious, and then one has to perform charities and sacrifices and come to the platform of knowledge, then to the stage of liberation, and finally, after liberation, to the understanding of what Krsna is... Practically speaking, this process is not very easy in this age of Kali. In Srimad-Bhagavatam a description is given of the people of this age. Their duration of life is said to be very short, they tend to be phlegmatic and slow and to sleep a great deal, and when they're not sleeping, they are busy earning money. At the most they only have two hours a day for spiritual activities, so what is the hope for spiritual understanding? It is also stated that even if one is anxious to make spiritual progress, there are many pseudospiritual societies to take advantage of him. People are also characterized in this age as being unfortunate. They have a great deal of difficulty meeting the primary demands of life—eating, defending, mating, and sleeping—necessities which are met even by the animals. Even if people are meeting these necessities in this age, they are always anxious about war, either defending themselves from aggressors or having to go to war themselves. In addition to this, there are always disturbing diseases and economic problems in Kali-yuga. Therefore Lord Sri Krsna considered that in this age it is impossible for people to come to the perfectional stage of liberation by following the prescribed rules and regulations.

Thus out of His causeless mercy, Sri Krsna came as Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and distributed the means to the highest perfection of life and spiritual ecstasy by the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. This process of chanting is most practical, and it does not depend on whether one is liberated or not, or whether one's condition is conducive to spiritual life or not—whichever takes to this process becomes immediately purified. Therefore it is called pavitram (pure). Furthermore, for one who takes to this Krsna consciousness process, the

seeds of latent reactions to his sinful actions are all nullified. Just as a fire turns whatever we put into it to ashes, this process turns to ashes all the sinful reactions of our past lives.
~Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

4.

In the Kali-yuga, Chanting Yields the Results of Other Religious Practices Performed in Previous Ages

By chanting the holy name in the Kali-yuga, one can obtain the results of various spiritual activities performed in the previous three ages:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Pariksit]:

"Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Visnu, in Treta-yuga by performing sacrifices and in Dvapara-yuga by seeing the Lord's lotus feet can also be obtained in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 12.3.52

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.345]

"Whatever is achieved by meditation in Satya-yuga, by the performance of yajna in Treta-yuga or by the worship of Krsna's lotus feet in Dvapara-yuga is also obtained in the age of Kali simply by chanting and glorifying Lord Kesava." Visnu Purana 6.2.17,

~Padma Purana (Uttara-khanda 72.25),

~and Brhan-naradiya Purana 38.97

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.346]

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"In the other three yugas-Satya, Treta and Dvapara-people perform different types of spiritual activities. Whatever results they achieve in that way, they can achieve in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.343

In this age, hari-kirtana is the only practical means of self-realization: If one actually wants to solve the problems of life in this age, then he has to take to this process of kirtana. That is the recommended process.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

In this age, Kali–yuga, one cannot execute any process of self–realization or perfection of life other than kirtana. Kirtana is essential in this age.

In all Vedic literatures it is confirmed that one must meditate on the Supreme Absolute Truth, Visnu, not on anything else. But there are different processes of meditation recommended for different ages. The process of mystic yogic meditation was possible in Satya–yuga, when men lived for many thousands of years. Now people will not believe this, but in a previous age there were people who lived for one hundred thousand years. That age was called Satya–yuga, and the meditation of mystic yoga was possible at that time. In that age the great yogi Valmiki Muni meditated for sixty thousand years. So that is a long–term process, which is not possible to execute in this age. If one wishes to conduct a farce, that is another matter. But if one actually wants to practice such meditation, it takes an extremely long time to perfect. In the next age, Treta–yuga, the process of realization was to perform the various ritualistic sacrifices recommended in the Vedas. In the next age, Dvapara–yuga, the process was temple worship. In this present age the same result can be achieved by the process of hari–kirtana, glorification of Hari, Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

~The Science of Self–Realization

In the age of quarrel, chanting of the holy name is the only recommended means of self–realization:

The yoga system, as it was recommended in the Satya–yuga, the Golden Age, was to always meditate on Visnu. In the Treta–yuga one could practice yoga by performing great sacrifices, and in the next age, Dvapara–yuga, one could achieve perfection by temple worship. The present age is called Kali–yuga. Kali–yuga means the age of quarrel and disagreement. No one agrees with anyone else. Everyone has his own theory; everyone has his own philosophy. If I don't agree with you, you fight me. This is the symptom of Kali–yuga. The only method recommended in this age is chanting the holy name. Simply by chanting the holy name of God, one can attain that perfect self–realization which was attained by the yoga system in the Satya–yuga, by performance of great sacrifices in the Treta–yuga, and by large–scale temple worship in the Dvapara–yuga. That perfection can

be attained by the simple method of hari–kirtana. Hari means the Supreme Personality of Godhead; kirtana means to glorify.

–Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

5.

Sankirtana–yajna Is the Only Recommended Yajna for this Age General Instructions

Lord Caitanya introduced the sankirtana–yajna for the deliverance of all men in this age of Kali:

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

In the beginning of creation, the Lord of all creatures sent forth generations of men and demigods, along with sacrifices for Visnu, and blessed them by saying, "Be thou happy by this yajna [sacrifice] because its performance will bestow upon you all desirable things."

The Lord created this material world for the conditioned souls to learn how to perform yajnas (sacrifice) for the satisfaction of Visnu, so that while in the material world they can live very comfortably without anxiety. Then after finishing the present material body, they can enter into the kingdom of God. That is the whole program for the conditioned soul. By performance of yajna, the conditioned souls gradually become Krsna conscious and become godly in all respects. In this age of Kali, the sankirtana–yajna (the chanting of the names of God) is recommended by the Vedic scriptures, and this transcendental system was introduced by Lord Caitanya for the deliverance of all men in this age. Sankirtana–yajna and Krsna consciousness go well together. Lord Krsna in His devotional form (as Lord Caitanya) is mentioned in the Srimad–Bhagavatam as follows, with special reference to the sankirtana–yajna:

krsna–varnam tvisakrsnam
sangopangastra–parsadam
yajnaih sankirtana–prayair
yajanti hi sumedhasah

"In this age of Kali, people who are endowed with sufficient intelligence will worship the Lord, who is accompanied by His associates, by performance of sankirtana–yajna." (S.B. 11.5.32)

Other yajnas prescribed in the Vedic literatures are not easy to perform in this age of Kali,

but the sankirtana–yajna is easy and sublime for all purposes.

ˆBhagavad–gita As It Is 3.10

Of all sacrifices, chanting of the holy name is the simplest and purest:

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

... Of sacrifices I am the chanting of the holy names [japa]...

Of all the sacrifices, the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is the purest representation of Krsna.

Sometimes animal sacrifices are recommended, but in the sacrifice of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, there is no question of violence. It is the simplest and the purest.

ˆBhagavad–gita As It Is 10.25

In the age of Kali, the greatest common formula of sacrifice is the sankirtana–yajna:

[King Pariksit to the personality of Kali]:

Therefore, O friend of irreligion, you do not deserve to remain in a place where experts perform sacrifices according to truth and religious principles for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Yajnesvara, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the beneficiary of all kinds of sacrificial ceremonies. Such sacrificial ceremonies are prescribed differently in the scriptures for different ages. In other words, sacrifice means to accept the supremacy of the Lord and thereby perform acts by which the Lord may be satisfied in all respects... In this age of Kali, the greatest common formula of sacrifice is the sankirtana–yajna. That is the opinion of the experts who know how to propagate the process of yajna. Lord Caitanya preached this method of yajna, and it is understood from this verse that the sacrificial method of sankirtana–yajna may be performed anywhere and everywhere in order to drive away the personality of Kali and save human society from falling prey to the influence of the age.

ˆSrimad–Bhagavatam 1.17.33

In the age of Kali, the only fruitful sacrifice is the sacrifice of the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord:

The sacrificial fire kindled by the sages of Naimisaranya was certainly full of smoke and doubts because of so many flaws. The first flaw is that there is an acute scarcity of expert

brahmanas able to carry out such performances successfully in this age of Kali. Any discrepancy in such sacrifices spoils the whole show, and the result is uncertain, like agricultural enterprises. The good result of tilling the paddy field depends on providential rain, and therefore the result is uncertain. Similarly, performance of any kind of sacrifice in this age of Kali is also uncertain. Unscrupulous greedy brahmanas of the age of Kali induce the innocent public to such uncertain sacrificial shows without disclosing the scriptural injunction that in the age of Kali there is no fruitful sacrificial performance but the sacrifice of the congregational chanting of the holy name of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.18.12

Sankirtana-yajna is the proper yajna for the Kali-yuga:

When learned sages and brahmanas assemble to chant Vedic mantras, some of them also engage in arguing about the conclusion of the scriptures. Thus some of the sages and brahmanas were arguing, and some of them were chanting the Vedic mantras, so the entire atmosphere was surcharged with transcendental sound vibration. This transcendental sound vibration has been simplified in the transcendental vibration Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In this age, no one is expected to be highly educated in the Vedic ways of understanding because people are very slow, lazy and unfortunate. Therefore Lord Caitanya has recommended the sound vibration Hare Krsna, and in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.5.32) it is also recommended: yajnaih sankirtana-prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah. At the present moment it is impossible to gather sacrificial necessities because of the poverty of the population and their lack of knowledge in Vedic mantras. Therefore for this age it is recommended that people gather together and chant the Hare Krsna mantra to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is accompanied by His associates. Indirectly this indicates Lord Caitanya, who is accompanied by His associates Nityananda, Advaita and others. That is the process of performing yajna in this age.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.4.6

Because Krsna is everything, one who chants Hare Krsna is performing all kinds of yajnas: [The brahmanas at Daksa's sacrifice to Lord Visnu]:

The brahmanas said: Dear Lord, You are sacrifice personified. You are the offering of clarified butter, You are the fire, You are the chanting of Vedic hymns by which the sacrifice is conducted, You are the fuel, You are the flame, You are the kusa grass, and You are the sacrificial pots. You are the priests who perform the yajna, You are the demigods

headed by Indra, and You are the sacrificial animal. Everything that is sacrificed is You or Your energy.

In this statement Lord Visnu's all-pervasiveness is partially explained. It is said in the Visnu Purana that as a fire situated in one place emanates its heat and illumination everywhere, so whatever we see within the material or spiritual worlds is nothing but a manifestation of different energies emanating from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The brahmanas' statement is that Lord Visnu is everything—the fire, the offering, the clarified butter, the utensils, the place of sacrifice and the kusa. He is everything. It is confirmed herein that the performance of sankirtana-yajna in this age is as good as all other yajnas in all other ages. If one performs sankirtana-yajna by chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, there is no need to arrange elaborate paraphernalia for the prescribed sacrificial ceremonies recommended in the Vedas. In the chant of the holy names, Hare and Krsna, Hare means the energy of Krsna, and Krsna is the visnu-tattva. Combined together they are everything. In this age, persons are harassed by the influence of Kali-yuga and cannot arrange for all the requisite paraphernalia for performing sacrifice as recommended in the Vedas. But if one simply chants Hare Krsna, it is to be understood that he is performing all kinds of yajna because there is nothing within our vision except Hare (the energy of Krsna) and Krsna. ~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.7.45

In this age, sankirtana-yajna, chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is more important than Vedic ritualistic sacrifices:

[Yamaraja to the Yamadutas]:

Because they are bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yajnavalkya, Jaimini and other compilers of the religious scriptures cannot know the secret, confidential religious system of the twelve mahajanas. They cannot understand the transcendental value of performing devotional service or chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. Because their minds are attracted to the ritualistic ceremonies mentioned in the Vedas—especially the Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Rg Veda—their intelligence has become dull. They are busy collecting the ingredients for ritualistic ceremonies that yield only temporary benefits, such as elevation to Svargaloka for material happiness. They are not attracted to the sankirtana movement; instead they are interested in dharma, artha, kama and moksa.

Since one may easily achieve the highest success by chanting the holy name of the Lord, one may ask why there are so many Vedic ritualistic ceremonies and why people are

attracted to them. This verse answers that question. As stated in Bhagavad-gita (15.15), *vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*: the real purpose of studying the Vedas is to approach the lotus feet of Lord Krsna. Unfortunately, unintelligent people bewildered by the grandeur of Vedic yajnas want to see gorgeous sacrifices performed. They want Vedic mantras chanted and huge amounts of money spent for such ceremonies. Sometimes we have to observe the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies to please such unintelligent men. Recently, when we established a large Krsna-Balarama temple in Vrndavana, we were obliged to have Vedic ceremonies enacted by brahmanas because the inhabitants of Vrndavana, especially the smarta-brahmanas, would not accept Europeans and Americans as bona fide brahmanas. Thus we had to engage brahmanas to perform costly yajnas. In spite of these yajnas, the members of our Society performed sankirtana loudly with mrdangas, and I considered the sankirtana more important than the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. Both the ceremonies and the sankirtana were going on simultaneously. The ceremonies were meant for persons interested in Vedic rituals for elevation to heavenly planets (*jadi-krta-matir madhu-puspitayam*), whereas the sankirtana was meant for pure devotees interested in pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. We would simply have performed sankirtana, but then the inhabitants of Vrndavana would not have taken the installation ceremony seriously. As explained here, the Vedic performances are meant for those whose intelligence has been dulled by the flowery language of the Vedas, which describe fruitive activities intended to elevate one to the higher planets.

Especially in this age of Kali, sankirtana alone is sufficient. If the members of our temples in the different parts of the world simply continue sankirtana before the Deity, especially before Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, they will remain perfect. There is no need of any other performances.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.3.25

[Sukracarya to Lord Visnu]:

There may be discrepancies in pronouncing the mantras and observing the regulative principles, and, moreover, there may be discrepancies in regard to time, place, person and paraphernalia. But when Your Lordship's holy name is chanted, everything becomes faultless.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has recommended:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam

kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatih anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"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."
(Brhan–naradiya Purana 38.126)

In this age of Kali, it is extremely difficult to perform Vedic ritualistic ceremonies or sacrifices perfectly. Hardly anyone can chant the Vedic mantras with perfect pronunciation or accumulate the paraphernalia for Vedic performances. Therefore the sacrifice recommended in this age is sankirtana, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord. Yajnah sankirtana–prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah (Srimad–Bhagavatam 11.5.32). Instead of wasting time performing Vedic sacrifices, those who are intelligent, those who possess good brain substance, should take to the chanting of the Lord's holy name and thus perform sacrifice perfectly. I have seen that many religious leaders are addicted to performing yajnas and spending hundreds and thousands of rupees for imperfect sacrificial performances. This is a lesson for those who unnecessarily execute such imperfect sacrifices. We should take the advice of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu (yajnah sankirtana–prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah). Although Sukracarya was a strict brahmana addicted to ritualistic activities, he also admitted, nischidram anusankirtanam tava: "My Lord, constant chanting of the holy name of Your Lordship makes everything perfect." In Kali–yuga the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies cannot be performed as perfectly as before. Therefore Srila Jiva Gosvami has recommended that although one should take care to follow all the principles in every kind of spiritual activity, especially in worship of the Deity, there is still a chance of discrepancies, and one should compensate for this by chanting the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In our Krsna consciousness movement we therefore give special stress to the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra in all activities.

–Srimad–Bhagavatam 8.23.16

Those who are intelligent in this age take to sankirtana yajna rather than karma–kandya–yajnas:

It is said, tretayam yajato makhaih: in Treta–yuga, if one performed yajnas, he would get the results of those yajnas. By performing visnu–yajna specifically, one could even achieve the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Of course, yajna is intended to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead... Yajnas for enjoyment of the senses are called

karma–kandīya–yajnas... Karma–kandīya yajnas are meant for sensuous persons, whereas yajna should actually be performed to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. To please the Supreme Personality of Godhead in Kali–yuga, the sankirtana–yajna is recommended. Yajnaiḥ sankirtana–prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah [SB 11.5.32]. Only those who are very intelligent take to sankirtana–yajna to fulfill all their desires, material and spiritual, whereas those who are lusty for sense enjoyment perform karma–kandīya–yajnas. ˆSrimad–Bhagavatam 9.14.43

Because there are no qualified brahmanas and priests in Kali–yuga to perform Vedic sacrifices and chant Vedic mantras, only the sacrifice of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is recommended:

On the day of extracting the soma juice, King Yudhisthira very respectfully received the special priest who had been engaged to detect any mistake in the formalities of sacrificial procedures. The idea is that the Vedic mantras must be enunciated perfectly and chanted with the proper accent; if the priests who are engaged in this business commit any mistake, the checker or referee priest immediately corrects the procedure, and thus the ritualistic performances are perfectly executed. Unless it is perfectly executed, a sacrifice cannot yield the desired result. In this age of Kali there is no such learned brahmana or priest available; therefore, all such sacrifices are forbidden. The only sacrifice recommended in the sastras is the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

ˆKṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

To perform a sacrifice successfully, at least four expert priests are needed: one who can offer (hota), one who can chant (udgata), one who can kindle the sacrificial fire without the aid of separate fire (adhvaryu), and one who can supervise (brahma). Such sacrifices were conducted from the birth of Brahma, the first living creature, and were carried on till the reign of Maharaja Yudhisthira. But such expert brahmana priests are very rare in this age of corruption and quarrel, and therefore in the present age only the yajna of chanting the holy name of the Lord is recommended.

The scriptures enjoin:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

The whole process of offering sacrifice is under the category of fruitive action, and such activities are extremely scientific. They mainly depend on the process of vibrating sounds with a particular accent. It is a great science, and due to being out of proper use for more than four thousand years, for want of qualified brahmanas, such performances of sacrifice are no longer effective. Nor are they recommended in this fallen age. Any such sacrifice undertaken in this age as a matter of show may simply be a cheating process by the clever priestly order. But such a show of sacrifices cannot be effective at any stage... Since the ultimate aim of life is spiritual realization, the direct way of invoking the holy name of the Lord, as mentioned above, is precisely recommended by Lord Caitanya, and people of the modern age can easily take advantage of this simple process, which is tenable for the condition of the complicated social structure.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.25.25, 26

In the present age of Kali, it is not possible to find expert mantra chanters; therefore all the sacrifices recommended in the Vedas are forbidden in this age. The only sacrifice recommended in this age is the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra because in this age it is not possible to accumulate the needed funds for performing sacrifices, not to speak of finding expert brahmanas who can chant the mantras perfectly...

It is stated here that many thousands of demigods named Rbhus became manifested because of the oblations offered in the fire and the chanting of the hymns from the Yajur Veda. Brahmanas like Bhrgu Muni were so powerful that they could create such powerful demigods simply by chanting the Vedic mantras. Vedic mantras are still available, but the chanters are not. By chanting mantras or chanting the Gayatri or rg-mantra one can attain the results one desires. In the present age of Kali it is recommended by Lord Caitanya that simply by chanting Hare Krsna one can attain all perfection...

The word brahma-tejasa, used in this verse, is significant. In those days, brahmanas were so powerful that simply by desiring and by chanting a Vedic mantra, they could accomplish very wonderful effects. But in the present age of degradation there are no such brahmanas. According to the pancaratika system, in this age the entire population is supposed to consist of sudras because the brahminical culture has been lost. But if anyone displays the signs of understanding Krsna consciousness, he should be accepted, according to Vaisnava smṛti regulations, as a prospective brahmana and should be given all facilities to achieve the highest perfection. The most magnanimous gift of Lord Caitanya's is that the highest perfection of life is available in this fallen age if one simply adopts the process of chanting Hare Krsna, which is able to bring about the fulfillment of all activities in self-realization.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.4.32-34

It is the practice of the brahmanas conversant with the science to pronounce a Vedic mantra in the right accent. The combination of the mantra and Sanskrit words must be chanted with the right pronunciation, otherwise it will not be successful. In this age the brahmanas are neither well versed in the Sanskrit language nor very pure in practical life. But by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra one can attain the highest benefit of sacrificial performances. Even if the Hare Krsna mantra is not chanted properly, it still has so much potency that the chanter gains the effect.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.13.27

A Vedic sacrifice is not an ordinary performance. The demigods used to participate in such sacrifices, and the animals sacrificed in such performances were reincarnated with new life. In this age of Kali there are no powerful brahmanas who can invite the demigods or give renewed life to animals. Formerly, the brahmanas well conversant in Vedic mantras could show the potency of the mantras, but in this age, because there are no such brahmanas, all such sacrifices are forbidden. The sacrifice in which horses were offered was called asvamedha. Sometimes cows were sacrificed (gavalambha), not for eating purposes, but to give them new life in order to show the potency of the mantra. In this age, therefore, the only practical yajna is sankirtanayajna, or chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra twenty–four hours a day.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.13.25

The best purpose of Vedic rituals, Vedanta philosophy and Vedic mysticism is served by chanting the holy name:

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

All purposes that are served by the small pond can at once be served by the great reservoirs of water. Similarly, all the purposes of the Vedas can be served to one who knows the purpose behind them.

The rituals and sacrifices mentioned in the karma–kanda division of the Vedic literature are to encourage gradual development of selfrealization. And the purpose of self–realization is clearly stated in the Fifteenth Chapter of the Bhagavad–gita (15.15): the purpose of studying the Vedas is to know Lord Krsna, the primeval cause of everything. So, self–realization means understanding Krsna and one's eternal relationship with Him. The relationship of the living entities with Krsna is also mentioned in the Fifteenth Chapter of Bhagavad–gita. The living entities are parts and parcels of Krsna; therefore, revival of Krsna consciousness by the individual living entity is the highest perfectional stage of Vedic knowledge. This is confirmed in the Srimad–Bhagavatam (3.33.7) as follows:

aho bata sva-paco 'to gariyan
yaj-jihvagre vartate nama tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuh sasnur arya
brahmanucur nama grnanti ye te

"O my Lord, a person who is chanting Your holy name, although born of a low family like that of a candala [dog-eater], is situated on the highest platform of self-realization. Such a person must have performed all kinds of penances and sacrifices according to Vedic rituals and studied the Vedic literatures many, many times after taking his bath in all the holy places of pilgrimage. Such a person is considered to be the best of the Aryan family."

So one must be intelligent enough to understand the purpose of the Vedas, without being attached to the rituals only, and must not desire to be elevated to the heavenly kingdoms for a better quality of sense gratification. It is not possible for the common man in this age to follow all the rules and regulations of the Vedic rituals and the injunctions of the Vedantas and the Upanisads. It requires much time, energy, knowledge and resources to execute the purposes of the Vedas. This is hardly possible in this age. The best purpose of Vedic culture is served, however, by chanting the holy name of the Lord, as recommended by Lord Caitanya, the deliverer of all fallen souls. When Lord Caitanya was asked by a great Vedic scholar, Prakasananda Sarasvati, why He, the Lord, was chanting the holy name of the Lord like a sentimentalist instead of studying Vedanta philosophy, the Lord replied that His spiritual master found Him to be a great fool, and thus he asked Him to chant the holy name of Lord Krsna. He did so, and became ecstatic like a madman. In this age of Kali, most of the population is foolish and not adequately educated to understand Vedanta philosophy; the best purpose of Vedanta philosophy is served by inoffensively chanting the holy name of the Lord. Vedanta is the last word in Vedic wisdom, and the author and knower of the Vedanta philosophy is Lord Krsna; and the highest Vedantist is the great soul who takes pleasure in chanting the holy name of the Lord. That is the ultimate purpose of all Vedic mysticism.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 2.46

By chanting the holy name, one need not perform any other kind of yajna to free one from indebtedness:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"One who has given up all material duties and taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Mukunda, who gives shelter to all, is not indebted to the demigods, great sages, ordinary

living beings, relatives, friends, mankind or even one's forefathers who have passed away.'" It is said:

adhyapanam brahma–yajnah
pitr–yajnas tu tarpanam
homo daivo balir bhauto
nr–yajno 'tithi–pujanam

"By performing oblations with ghee, the demigods are satisfied. By studying the Vedas, brahma–yajna is performed, and by this the great sages are satisfied. Offering oblations of water before one's forefathers is called pitr–yajna. By offering tabute, bhuta–yajna is performed. By properly receiving guests, nr–yajna is performed."

There are five yajnas and five kinds of indebtedness–indebtedness to the demigods, great sages, forefathers, living entities and common men. Therefore one has to perform five kinds of yajnas, but when one takes to sankirtana–yajna (the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra) one doesn't have to perform any other yajna. In Srimad–Bhagavatam, Narada Muni made a statement about the systematic performance of bhagavata–dharma in connection with statements previously made by the nine Yogendras before Maharaja Nimi. The sage Karabhajana Rsi explained the four incarnations of the four yugas, and at the end, in this verse (text 141), he explained the position of Krsna's pure devotee and how he is absolved of all debts.

~SriCaitanya–caritamrtaMadhya–lila22.141

In Kali–yuga, sacrifice to the demigods is satisfied by sankirtana–yajna:

By worshiping the Supreme Lord, one automatically serves all the demigods because they are parts and parcels of the whole. If one supplies water to the root of a tree, all the parts of the tree, such as the leaves and branches, are automatically satisfied, and if one supplies food to the stomach, all the limbs of the body–the hands, legs, fingers, etc.–are nourished. Thus by worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead one can satisfy all the demigods, but by worshiping all the demigods one does not completely worship the Supreme Lord. Therefore worship of the demigods is irregular, and it is disrespectful to the scriptural injunctions.

In this age of Kali it is practically impossible to perform the deva–yajna, or sacrifices to the demigods. As such, in this age Srimad–Bhagavatam recommends sankirtana–yajna.

Yajnaih sankirtana–prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah (Srimad–Bhagavatam 11.5.32). "In this

age the intelligent person completes the performances of all kinds of yajnas simply by chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare." Tasmin tuste jagat tustam: "When Lord Visnu is satisfied, all the demigods, who are parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord, are satisfied."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.2.35

The performance of yajna is a very difficult task because all the demigods must be invited to participate in the yajna. In this Kali-yuga it is not possible to perform such costly sacrifices, nor is it possible to invite the demigods to participate. Therefore in this age it is recommended, yajnaiḥ sankīrtana-prayair yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.5.32). Those who are intelligent should know that in the Kali-yuga there is no possibility of performing the Vedic sacrifices. But unless one pleases the demigods, there will be no regulated seasonal activities or rainfall. Everything is controlled by the demigods. Under the circumstances, in this age, in order to keep the balance of social peace and prosperity, all intelligent men should execute the performance of sankīrtana-yajna by chanting the holy names Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. One should invite people, chant Hare Krsna, and then distribute prasada. This yajna will satisfy all the demigods, and thus there will be peace and prosperity in the world. Another difficulty in performing the Vedic rituals is that if one fails to satisfy even one demigod out of the many hundreds of thousands of demigods, just as Dakṣa failed to satisfy Lord Siva, there will be disaster. But in this age the performance of sacrifice has been simplified. One can chant Hare Krsna, and by pleasing Krsna one can satisfy all the demigods automatically.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.6.53

Lord Caitanya is the sankīrtana-yajna-purusa

As, in previous ages, Lord Visnu appeared to accept Vedic yajna, in this age, Lord Caitanya has appeared to accept our sankīrtana-yajna:

In the Srimad-Bhagavatam it is clearly stated that in this age of Kali the only successful performance of yajna, or sacrifice, is yajnaiḥ sankīrtana-prayaiḥ: the best type of sacrifice is simply to chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. This yajna is offered before the form of Lord Caitanya, as other yajnas are offered before the form of Lord Visnu. These recommendations are found in the Eleventh Canto of the Srimad-Bhagavatam. Moreover, this yajna performance confirms that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Visnu Himself. As Lord Visnu appeared at the Dakṣa-yajna long, long ago, Lord Caitanya has appeared in this age to accept our

sankirtana–yajna.

˘Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.7.41

By performing sankirtana–yajna and satisfying the yajna–purusa, Lord Caitanya, one can derive all the results derived by great sacrifices in the past:

Yajna means Lord Visnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and sacrifice means working for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this age, however, it is very difficult to find qualified brahmanas who can perform sacrifices as prescribed in the Vedas. Therefore it is recommended in Srimad–Bhagavatam (yajnaih sankirtana–prayaih) that by performing sankirtana–yajna and by satisfying the yajna–purusa, Lord Caitanya, one can derive all the results derived by great sacrifices in the past.

˘Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.19.7

The Supreme Lord, Narayana, is worshiped in His incarnation as Lord Caitanya by sankirtana–yajna, the chanting of the holy names of the Lord:

[The sons of King Pracinarbarhi to Lord Visnu]:

The Supreme Lord, Narayana, is present among devotees who are engaged in hearing and chanting the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Narayana is the ultimate goal of sannyasis, those in the renounced order of life, and Narayana is worshiped through this sankirtana movement by those who are liberated from material contamination. Indeed, they recite the holy name again and again.

The fact is that by performing sankirtana–yajna one can immediately please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then Narayana Himself descends and immediately is present. In this age of Kali, Narayana is immediately present in the form of Lord Caitanya. Concerning Lord Caitanya, Srimad–Bhagavatam (11.5.32) states:

krsna–varnam tvisakrsnam
sangopangastra–parsadam
yajnaih sankirtana–prayair
yajanti hi sumedhasah

"In the age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the name of Krsna. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Krsna Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants,

weapons and confidential companions."

After all, human life is meant for pleasing Narayana, and this can easily be done by performing sankirtana–yajna. Whenever there is congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord, Gaura Narayana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His incarnation as Lord Caitanya, immediately appears and is worshiped by sankirtana–yajna.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.30.36

6.

In this Age, Chanting of the Holy Name Is the Supreme Form of Yoga

The chanting of the maha–mantra is the most practical form of yoga in the present age: The breathing exercises and meditational practices of yoga are very difficult in this age. They were difficult even five thousand years ago, or else Arjuna would not have rejected the proposal of Krsna. This age of Kali is called a fallen age. At the present moment, people in general are short–living and very slow in understanding self–realization, or spiritual life. They are mostly unfortunate, and as such, if someone is a little bit interested in self–realization, he is misguided by so many frauds. The only actual way to realization of the perfect stage of yoga is to follow the principles of the Bhagavad–gita as they were practiced by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. This is the simplest and highest perfection of yoga practice.

Lord Caitanya practically demonstrated Krsna consciousness yoga simply by chanting the holy names of Krsna, as they are mentioned in the Vedanta, the Srimad–Bhagavatam, and many important Puranas. The largest number of Indians follow this yoga practice, and in the United States and other countries also it is gradually growing in many cities. It is very easy and practical for this age, especially for those who are serious about success in yoga. No other process can be successful in this age.

The meditational process in right earnest was possible in the Golden Age, Satya–yuga, because the people at that time lived for a hundred thousand years on the average.

In the present age, however, if you want success in practical yoga, take to the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama,

Hare Hare, and feel for yourself how you are making progress.

~The Science of Self-Realization

All the perfections of the yoga system can be realized through mantra-yoga, the chanting of Hare Krsna:

From authoritative sources we learn that this chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is the embodiment of the perfection of yoga for this age.

Today we have great difficulties living fifty or sixty years. A man may live at the utmost eighty or a hundred years. In addition, these brief years are always fraught with anxiety, with difficulties due to circumstances of war, pestilence, famine and so many other disturbances. We're also not very intelligent, and, at the same time, we're unfortunate. These are the characteristics of man living in Kali-yuga, a degraded age. So properly speaking we can never attain success in this meditational yoga system described by Krsna. At the utmost we can only gratify our personal whims by some pseudoadaptation of this system. Thus people are paying money to attend some classes in gymnastic exercises and deep-breathing, and they're happy if they think they can lengthen their lifetimes by a few years or enjoy better sex life. But we must understand that this is not the actual yoga system. In this age that meditational system cannot be properly executed. Instead, all of the perfections of that system can be realized through bhakti-yoga, the sublime process of Krsna consciousness, specifically mantra-yoga, the glorification of Sri Krsna through the chanting of Hare Krsna. That is recommended in Vedic scriptures and is introduced by great authorities like Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Indeed, the Bhagavad-gita proclaims that the mahatmas, the great souls, are always chanting the glories of the Lord. If one wants to be a mahatma in terms of the Vedic literature, in terms of Bhagavad-gita and in terms of the great authorities, then one has to adopt this process of Krsna consciousness and of chanting Hare Krsna. But if we're content at making a show of meditation by sitting very straight in lotus position and going into a trance like some sort of performer, then that is a different thing. But we should understand that such show-bottle performances have nothing to do with the actual perfection of yoga. The material disease cannot be cured by artificial medicine. We have to take the real cure straight from Krsna.

~The Perfection of Yoga

By chanting, the process of yoga-mind and sense control-becomes perfected:

Yoga means training the mind and the senses to be fixed on the Self. This is not possible by meditating only fifteen minutes a day and then going out and doing whatever the senses dictate. How can the problems of life be solved so cheaply? If we want something precious, we have to pay for it. By the grace of Lord Caitanya, this payment has been made very easy—just chant Hare Krsna. By your chanting, this system of control, this yoga system, becomes perfected. Éha haite sarva siddhi haibe tomara. Thus Lord Caitanya has blessed us. Simply by chanting Hare Krsna, we will achieve the perfection of self-realization. In this age of Kali-yuga, when people are so fallen, other processes will not be successful. This is the only process, and it is easy, sublime, effective, and practical. By it, one can realize oneself.

~The Path of Perfection

Because chanting Hare Krsna fixes the mind on Krsna, success in yoga is immediately attained by chanting:

"For the mind is restless, turbulent, obstinate, and very strong, O Krsna, and to subdue it is, it seems to me, more difficult than controlling the wind." (Bhagavad-gita As It Is 6.34) By chanting Hare Krsna, one captures the mind immediately. Just by saying the name Krsna and hearing it, the mind is automatically fixed on Krsna. This means that the yoga system is immediately attained. The entire yoga system aims at concentration on the form of Visnu, and Krsna is the original personality from whom all these Visnu forms are expanded... Thus one who concentrates his mind on Lord Sri Krsna, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, immediately attains the perfection of yoga.

~The Path of Perfection

Chanting is more effective than the yoga system in this age:

This material world has been likened to a great forest fire. As in the forest, fire may automatically take place, so in this material world, although we may try to live peacefully, there is always a great conflagration. It is not possible to live in peace anywhere in the material world. But for one who is transcendently situated—either by the meditational yoga system or by the empirical philosophical method or by bhakti-yoga—Peace is possible. All forms of yoga are meant for transcendental life, but the method of chanting is especially effective in this age. Kirtana may go on for hours, and one may not feel tired, but it is difficult to sit in lotus position perfectly still for more than a few minutes.

~The Perfection of Yoga

Chanting the holy name is more suitable for spiritual realization in this age than yoga or meditation:

In India the yogis, the transcendentalists or the devotees all leave home and reside in sacred places such as Prayaga, Mathura, Vrndavana, Hrsikesa, and Hardwar and in solitude practice yoga where the sacred rivers like the Yamuna and the Ganges flow. But often this is not possible, especially for Westerners. The so-called yoga societies in big cities may be successful in earning material benefit, but they are not at all suitable for the actual practice of yoga. One who is not self-controlled and whose mind is not undisturbed cannot practice meditation. Therefore, in the Brhan-naradiya Purana it is said that in the Kali-yuga (the present yuga or age) when people in general are short-lived, slow in spiritual realization and always disturbed by various anxieties, the best means of spiritual realization is chanting the holy name of the Lord.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"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."
-Bhagavad-gita As It Is 6.11-12

Chanting the holy name is more important than mechanical, meditational yoga in this age:
[Maitreya to Vidura]:

By thus practicing severe austerities, Maharaja Prthu gradually became steadfast in spiritual life and completely free of all desires for fruitive activities. He also practiced breathing exercises to control his mind and senses, and by such control he became completely free from all desires for fruitive activity.

The word pranayama is very important in this verse because the hatha-yogis and astanga-yogis practice pranayama, but generally they do not know the purpose behind it. The purpose of pranayama, or mystic yoga, is to stop the mind and senses from engaging in fruitive activities. The so-called yogis who practice in Western countries have no idea of this. The aim of pranayama is not to make the body strong and fit for working hard. The

aim is worship of Krsna. In the previous verse it was specifically mentioned that whatever austerity, pranayama and mystic yoga practices Prthu Maharaja performed were performed for the sake of worshipping Krsna. Thus Prthu Maharaja serves as a perfect example for yogis also. Whatever he did, he did to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna.

The minds of those who are addicted to fruitive activity are always filled with unclean desires. Fruitive activities are symptomatic of our polluted desire to dominate material nature. As long as one continues to be subject to polluted desires, he has to accept one material body after another. So-called yogis, without knowledge of the real purpose of yoga, practice it in order to keep the body fit. Thus they engage themselves in fruitive activities, and thus they are bound by desire to accept another body. They are not aware that the ultimate goal of life is to approach Krsna. In order to save such yogis from wandering throughout the different species of life, the sastras warn that in this age such yogic practice is simply a waste of time. The only means of elevation is the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.

King Prthu's activities took place in Satya-yuga, and in this age this practice of yoga is misunderstood by fallen souls who are not capable of practicing anything. Consequently the sastras enjoin: *kalau nasty eva nasty eva nasty eva gatih anyatha*. The conclusion is that unless the karmis, jnanis and yogis come to the point of devotional service to Lord Krsna, their so-called austerities and yoga have no value. *Naradhita*: if Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is not worshiped, there is no point in practicing meditational yoga, performing karma-yoga or culturing empiric knowledge. As far as pranayama is concerned, chanting of the holy name of the Lord and dancing in ecstasy are also considered pranayama... Here the word pranayama does not refer to any ulterior motive. The actual aim is to strengthen the mind and senses in order to engage them in devotional service. In the present age this determination can be very easily acquired simply by chanting the holy names—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.23.8

Because the astanga-yoga system is too difficult to practice in this age, the bhakti-yoga system of chanting Hare Krsna is recommended:

Five thousand years ago, Arjuna had much better facilities than we do now, yet he refused to accept this system of yoga. In fact, we do not find any record in history of his practicing it at any time. Therefore, this system must be considered generally impossible in this age of Kali. Of course, it may be possible for some very few, rare men, but for the people in

general it is an impossible proposal. If this were so five thousand years ago, what of the present day? Those who are imitating this yoga system in different so-called schools and societies, although complacent, are certainly wasting their time. They are completely ignorant of the desired goal.

Since this astanga-yoga system is considered impossible, the bhakti-yoga system is recommended for everyone. Without training or education, one can automatically participate in bhakti-yoga. Even a small child can clap at kirtana. Therefore Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu has proclaimed bhakti-yoga the only system practical for this age.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"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."

Chanting is very simple, and one will feel the results immediately. Pratyaksavagamam dharmyam. If we attempt to practice other yoga systems, we will remain in darkness; we will not know whether or not we are making progress. In bhakti-yoga, one can understand, "Yes, now I am making progress." This is the only yoga system by which one can quickly attain self-realization and liberation in this life. One doesn't have to wait for another lifetime.

~The Path of Perfection

Because in this age it is not always possible to find a secluded place, hari-nama sankirtana is more practical than the yoga system:

In India there are sacred places where yogis go to meditate in solitude, as prescribed in Bhagavad-gita. Traditionally, yoga cannot be executed in a public place, but insofar as kirtana-mantra-yoga, or the yoga of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—is concerned, the more people present, the better. When Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu was performing kirtana in India some five hundred years ago, He organized in each group sixteen persons to lead the chanting, and thousands of persons chanted with them. This participation in kirtana, in the public chanting of the names and glories of God, is very

possible and is actually easy in this age; but as far as the meditational process of yoga is concerned, that is very difficult. It is specifically stated in Bhagavad-gita that to perform meditational yoga one should go to a secluded and holy place. In other words, it is necessary to leave home. In this age of overpopulation it is not always possible to find a secluded place, but this is not necessary in bhakti-yoga.

In the bhakti-yoga system there are nine different processes: hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshiping the Deity in the temple, praying, carrying out orders, serving Krsna as a friend and sacrificing for Him. Out of these, sravanam kirtanam, hearing and chanting, are considered the most important. At a public kirtana one person can chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, while a group listens, and at the end of the mantra, the group can respond, and in this way there is a reciprocation of hearing and chanting. This can easily be performed in one's own home, with a small group of friends or with many people in a large public place. One may attempt to practice meditational yoga in a large city or in a society, but one must understand that this is one's own concoction and is not the method recommended in Bhagavad-gita.

~The Perfection of Yoga

Self-purification is more effectively attained by chanting the maha-mantra than by the yoga system:

[In practicing the yoga system]

one must be always undisturbed. If the mind is agitated, or if there is a great deal of activity going on, one will not be able to concentrate. In meditational yoga one must also be devoid of fear. There is no question of fear when one enters spiritual life. And one must also be brahmachari, completely free from sex life. Nor can there be any demands on one meditating in this way. When there are no demands, and one executes this system properly, then he can control his mind. After one has met all the requirements for meditation, he must transfer his whole thought to Krsna or Visnu. It is not that one is to transfer his thoughts to vacancy. Thus Krsna says that one absorbed in the meditational yoga system is "always thinking of Me."

The yogi obviously has to go through a great deal of difficulty to purify the atma (mind, body and soul), but it is a fact that this can be done most effectively in this age simply by the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Why is this? Because this transcendental sound vibration is nondifferent from Him. When we chant His name with devotion, then Krsna is with us, and

when Krsna is with us, then what is the possibility of remaining impure? Consequently, one absorbed in Krsna consciousness, in chanting the names of Krsna and serving Him always, receives the benefit of the highest form of yoga. The advantage is that he doesn't have to take all the trouble of the meditational process. That is the beauty of Krsna consciousness.
~The Perfection of Yoga

In Kali–yuga, constant chanting of the holy name is more effective than the yoga system for controlling the mind:

The mind is cancala, flickering, and it changes very strongly. Therefore Arjuna admitted that controlling the mind is not at all possible; this would be as difficult as controlling the wind. For example, if one were in a boat moving according to the wind on a river or the sea, and the wind were uncontrollable, the tilting boat would be very much disturbed and extremely difficult to control. It might even capsize. Therefore, in the bhava–samudra, the ocean of mental speculation and transmigration to different types of bodies, one must first control the mind.

By regulative practice one can control the mind, and this is the purpose of the yoga system (abhyasa–yoga–yuktena [Bg. 8.8]). But there is a chance of failure with the yoga system, especially in this age of Kali, because the yoga system uses artificial means. If the mind is engaged in bhakti–yoga, however, by the grace of Krsna one can very easily control it. Therefore Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has recommended, harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam [Adi 17.21]. One should chant the holy name of the Lord constantly, for the holy name of the Lord is nondifferent from Hari, the Supreme Person.

By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra constantly, one can fix the mind on the lotus feet of Krsna (sa vai manah krsna–padaravindayoh), and in this way achieve the perfection of yoga. Otherwise, the flickering mind will hover on the platform of mental speculation for sense enjoyment, and one will have to transmigrate from one type of body to another...
~Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.1.42

"From whatever and wherever the mind wanders due to its flickering and unsteady nature, one must certainly withdraw it and bring it back under the control of the Self." (Bg. 6.26) This is the real yogic process. If you are trying to concentrate your mind on Krsna and the mind is diverted–wandering to some cinema or wherever–you should withdraw the mind, thinking, "Not there, please. Here." This is yoga: not allowing the mind to wander from Krsna.

Very intense training is required to keep the mind fixed on Krsna while sitting in one place. That is very hard work indeed. If one is not so practiced and tries to imitate this process, he will surely be confused. Instead, we always have to engage ourselves in Krsna consciousness, dovetailing everything we do to Krsna. Our usual activities should be so molded that they are rendered for Krsna's sake. In this way the mind will remain fixed on Krsna. As stated before, we should not try to sit down and stare at the tip of our nose. At the present moment, attempts to engage in that type of yoga are artificial. Rather, the recommended method is chanting loudly and hearing Hare Krsna. Then, even if the mind is diverted, it will be forced to concentrate on the sound vibration "Krsna." It isn't necessary to withdraw the mind from everything; it will automatically be withdrawn, because it will be concentrated on the sound vibration. If we hear an automobile pass, our attention is automatically diverted. Similarly, if we constantly chant Hare Krsna, our mind will automatically be fixed on Krsna, although we are accustomed to think of so many other things.

~The Path of Perfection

The expert yogi who has thoroughly practiced the control of the life air by the prescribed method of the yoga system is advised to quit the body as follows. He should plug up the evacuating hole with the heel of the foot and then progressively move the life air on and on to six places: the navel, abdomen, heart, chest, palate, eyebrows and cerebral pit.

Controlling the life air by the prescribed yogic process is mechanical, and the practice is more or less a physical endeavor for spiritual perfection. In olden days such practice was very common for the transcendentalist, for the mode of life and character in those days were favorable. But in modern days, when the influence of Kali Age is so disturbing, practically everyone is untrained in this art of bodily exercise. Concentration of the mind is more easily attained in these days by the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The results are more effective than those derived from the inner exercise of the life air.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.2.19

In the present age, chanting the Hare Krsna mantra is more effective than yogic breathing exercises for controlling the mind:

[Narada Muni to Dhruva]:

After sitting on your seat, practice the three kinds of breathing exercises, and thus gradually control the life air, the mind and the senses. Completely free yourself from all material contamination, and with great patience begin to meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In this verse the entire yoga system is described in summary, and special stress is given to the breathing exercises for stopping the disturbing mind. The mind, by nature, is always oscillating, for it is very fickle, but the breathing exercise is meant to control it. This process of controlling the mind might have been very possible in those days millions of years ago when Dhruva Maharaja took to it, but at the present moment the mind has to be fixed directly on the lotus feet of the Lord by the chanting process. By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra one immediately concentrates on the sound vibration and thinks of the lotus feet of the Lord, and very quickly one is elevated to the position of samadhi, or trance. If one goes on chanting the holy names of the Lord, which are not different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, naturally his mind becomes absorbed in thought of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.8.44

The process of Krsna consciousness is to chant Hare Krsna and to hear the sound attentively so that the mind is fixed upon the transcendental vibration of Krsna's name, which is nondifferent from Krsna the personality. The real purpose of controlling the mind by the prescribed method of clearing the passage of the life air is achieved immediately if one fixes his mind directly on the lotus feet of Krsna. The hatha-yoga system, or breathing system, is especially recommended for those who are very absorbed in the concept of bodily existence, but one who can perform the simple process of chanting Hare Krsna can fix the mind more easily... As stated in Bhagavad-gita, one's mind is his enemy, and one's mind is also his friend; its position varies according to the different dealings of the living entity. If we divert our mind to thoughts of material enjoyment, then our mind becomes an enemy, and if we concentrate our mind on the lotus feet of Krsna, then our mind is a friend... In Bhagavad-gita (8.8) it is said that one must practice the breathing exercise (abhyasa-yoga-yuktena). By virtue of these processes of control, the mind cannot wander to external thoughts (cetasa nanya-gamina). Thus one can fix his mind constantly on the Supreme Personality of Godhead and can attain (yati) Him...

This process of purifying the mind is also recommended by Lord Caitanya; He says that one should chant Hare Krsna. He says further, param vijayate: "All glories to Sri Krsna sankirtana!" All glories are given to the chanting of the holy names of Krsna because as soon as one begins this process of chanting, the mind becomes purified.

Ceto-darpana-marjanam: [Cc. Antya 20.12] by chanting the holy name of Krsna one is cleansed of the dirt that accumulates in the mind.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.28.9,10

The chanting of Hare Krsna is the elevator by which we can come immediately to the

platform of bhakti–yoga:

The general progress of yoga is gradual. First one practices karma–yoga, which refers to ordinary, fruitive activity. Ordinary activities include sinful activities, but karma–yoga excludes such activities. Karma–yoga refers only to good, pious activities, or those actions which are prescribed. After performing karma–yoga, one comes to the platform of jnana–yoga, knowledge. From the platform of knowledge, one attains to this astanga–yoga, the eightfold yoga system–dhyana, dharana, pranayama, asana, etc.–and from astanga–yoga, as one concentrates on Visnu, one comes to the point of bhakti–yoga. Bhakti–yoga is the perfectional stage, and if one practices Krsna consciousness, one attains this stage from the very beginning. That is the direct route.

If one practices jnana–yoga and thinks that he has attained the ultimate, he is mistaken. He has to make further progress. If we are on a staircase and have to reach the top floor, which is the hundredth floor, we are mistaken if we think we have arrived when we are on the thirtieth floor. As stated before, the whole yoga system may be likened to a staircase, connecting or linking us to God. In order to attain the ultimate, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we must go to the highest platform, and that is bhakti–yoga.

But why walk up all these steps if we have a chance to take an elevator? By means of an elevator, we can reach the top in a matter of seconds. Bhakti–yoga is this elevator, the direct process by which we can reach the top in a matter of seconds. We can go step by step, following all the other yoga systems, or we can go directly. Since in this age of Kali–yuga people have short life spans and are always disturbed and anxious, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, by His causeless mercy, has given us the elevator by which we can come immediately to the platform of bhakti–yoga. That direct means is the chanting of Hare Krsna, and that is the special gift of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Therefore Rupa Gosvami offers respects to Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, namo maha–vadanyaya krsna–prema–pradaya te: [Madhya 19.53] "Oh, You are the most munificent incarnation because You are directly giving love of Krsna. To attain pure love of Krsna, one has to pass through so many stages of yoga, but You are giving this love directly. Therefore You are the most munificent."

~The Path of Perfection

7.

Chanting of the Holy Name Yields All Results of Austerity By chanting Hare Krsna one attains the highest perfectional stage, formerly attained only by great austerities:

If one wants to perform austerities and penances in order to attain the supreme goal, one must attain the favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one achieves the favor of the Supreme Lord, it is to be understood that he has finished all kinds of austerities and penances and has attained efficiency in their execution. On the other hand, if one does not attain the perfect stage of devotional service, all austerities and penances actually have no meaning, for without the Supreme Lord no one can attain the highest results derived from performing them. As stated in Bhagavad-gita (5.29), Lord Sri Krsna is the master of all penances and sacrifices. *Bhoktaram yajna-tapasam sarva-loka-mahesvaram*. Thus the desired result of performing austerities may be derived from Lord Krsna... Even if a person is born in a family of candalas—the lowest birth one can get in human society—he is glorious if he chants the holy names of the Lord, for it is to be understood that by such chanting a devotee definitely proves that he underwent all kinds of austerities in his previous life. By the grace of Lord Caitanya, one who chants the maha-mantra (Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare) attains the highest perfectional stage, which had previously been attained by people who entered the ocean and executed austerities for ten thousand years. In this age of Kali, if a person does not take advantage of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, which is offered as a great concession to the fallen human beings of this age, it is to be understood that he is very much bewildered by the illusory energy of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.24.14

In Kali-yuga, one can attain the same results attained in previous ages by severe austerities by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra:

Although Dhruva Maharaja was only a five-year-old boy, he underwent severe austerities by eating simply dry foliage, drinking only water and taking no food. In this way, after six months, he was able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face. When he saw the Lord, he forgot all his austerities and said, *svamin krtartho 'smi*: "My dear Lord, I am very pleased."

Of course, these austerities were performed in the Satya-yuga, Dvapara-yuga and Treta-yuga, but not in this age of Kali. In this Kali-yuga, one can attain the same results simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Because the people of this age are fallen,

the Lord is kind enough to give them the easiest method. Simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, one can attain the same results.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.30.4

Tapasya, austerity, has been made easy by Lord Caitanya in the form of chanting Hare Krsna:

Generally people are interested in things that give immediate pleasure. We want to taste something tasty to the tongue, regardless of whether it is edible or not. Hogs very readily eat stool, and they do so without discrimination. They have no idea of tapasya, penance. When one engages in spiritual realization, one has to undergo tapasya. However, this has been made very easy by Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]. All we have to do is spare a little time and chant Hare Krsna, but we are not even ready for this much tapasya. Krsna is more interested in leading us down the path of liberation than we are in going. He has given us a very simple method: harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam [Adi 17.21]. We need only chant Hare Krsna. To perfect this chanting of Hare Krsna, there is no hard-and-fast rule. Simply by chanting, we will attain perfection.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

In this age, spiritual knowledge is attained not by penances and austerities, but by chanting Hare Krsna:

In former ages people underwent so many penances and austerities to acquire knowledge, but in this age this process is not possible because our lives are very short and we are always disturbed. The process for this age is the process of Krsna consciousness, the chanting of Hare Krsna, which was inaugurated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. If, by this process, we can kindle the fire of knowledge, all of the reactions of our activities will be reduced to ashes, and we will be purified.

na hi jnanena sadrsam
pavitram iha vidyate
tat svayam yoga-samsiddhah
kalenatmani vindati

"In this world, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has achieved this enjoys the

self within himself in due course of time." (Bg. 4.38)

Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

In Kali-yuga, chanting the holy name rather than performing severe austerities is the easiest means for attaining Krsna consciousness:

[Maitreya to Vidura]:

Maharaja Prthu underwent all these severe austerities in order to control his words and his senses, to refrain from discharging his semen and to control the life air within his body. All this he did for the satisfaction of Krsna. He had no other purpose.

In Kali-yuga the following is recommended:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha

[Adi 17.21]

(Brhan-naradiya Purana)

In order to be recognized by Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one should chant the holy name of the Lord continuously, twenty-four hours a day. Unfortunate persons who cannot accept this formula prefer to execute some type of pseudomeditation, without accepting the other processes of austerity. The fact is, however, that one must accept either the severe method of austerity described above to become purified or take to the process of devotional service recommended for pleasing the Supreme Lord, Krsna. The person who is Krsna conscious is most intelligent because in Kali-yuga it is not at all possible to undergo such severe austerities. We need only follow great personalities like Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. In His Siksastaka, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu wrote, param vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam: all glories to the holy names of Lord Krsna, which from the very beginning purify the heart and immediately liberate one. Bhava-mahadavagni-nirvapanam. If the real purpose of all yoga is to please Lord Krsna, then this simple bhakti-yoga system recommended for this age is sufficient.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.23.7

Scripture prescribes the austerity of chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra to become free from material contamination and go back home, back to Godhead:

Human life is meant not for becoming a hog or dog, but for tapo divyam, transcendental austerity. Everyone should be taught to undergo austerity, tapasya. Although it may not be possible to undergo tapasya like that of Prsni and Sutapa, the sastra has given an opportunity for a method of tapasya very easy to perform—the sankirtana movement. One cannot expect to undergo tapasya to get Krsna as one's child, yet simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra (kirtanad eva krsnasya), one can become so pure that one becomes free from all the contamination of this material world (mukta–sangah) and goes back home, back to Godhead (param vrajet). The Krsna consciousness movement, therefore, is teaching people not to adopt artificial means of happiness, but to take the real path of happiness as prescribed in the sastra—the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra—and become perfect in every aspect of material existence.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.3.34–35

8.

Chanting Versus Other Spiritual Practices (Other than Yajna, Yoga, and Austerity)

Although there are other bona fide processes of spiritual realization, no other process is as effective in this age as the constant chanting of the maha–mantra:

We have to accept everything favorable to the circumstances. Rejection of other methods in a particular circumstance does not mean that the rejected ones are not bona fide. But for the time being, taking into consideration the age, time, and object, methods are sometimes rejected even though bona fide. We have to test everything by its practical result. By such a test, in this age the constant chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra undoubtedly proves very effective.

~The Science of Self–Realization

In Kali–yuga, the direct method of attaining perfection in spiritual life is chanting the holy name:

Whether one practices yoga or speculates and does research to find God, one's efforts must be mixed with the process of devotion. Without devotion, nothing can be perfect. The target

of perfection and realization is the Supreme Personality of Godhead... One has to surrender unto the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, Hari, or Kṛṣṇa, in order to achieve real success. Devotional service, or engagement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is the direct method, and all other methods, although recommended, are indirect. In this age of Kali the direct method is especially more feasible than the indirect because people are short-living, their intelligence is poor, and they are poverty-stricken and embarrassed by so many miserable disturbances. Lord Caitanya, therefore, has given the greatest boon: in this age one simply has to chant the holy name of God to attain perfection in spiritual life.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.21.7

The supreme destination can be approached most easily by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, not by any other process of religion:

Any intelligent man should always prefer the process of devotional service to all other paths. In the Narayaniya this is confirmed as follows:

ya vai sadhana-sampattiḥ
purusartha -catustaye
taya vina tad apnoti
naro narayanasrayah

The purport of this verse is that one should not engage in the different processes of fruitive activity or cultivate knowledge by the mental speculative process. One who is devoted to the Supreme Personality can attain all the benefits derived from other yogic processes, speculation, rituals, sacrifices, charities, etc. That is the specific benediction of devotional service.

Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa-Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—a devotee of the Lord can approach the supreme destination easily and happily, but this destination cannot be approached by any other processes of religion.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 12.6-7

The chanting of the holy name is the highest form of spiritual practice:

Srila Sanatana Gosvami has praised the chanting of the holy name as follows in his Brhad-bhagavatamṛta (Chapter One, verse 9):

jayati jayati namananda–rupam murarer
viramita –nija–dharma–dhyana–pujadi–yatnam
katham api sakrd attam mukti–dam praninam yat
paramam amrtam ekam jivanam bhusanam me

"All glories, all glories to the all–blissful holy name of Sri Krsna, which causes the devotee to give up all conventional religious duties, meditation and worship. When somehow or other uttered even once by a living entity, the holy name awards him liberation. The holy name of Krsna is the highest nectar. It is my very life and my only treasure."

–Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 4.71

Congregational chanting of the holy name fulfills the highest religious purpose in this age:
[Karabhajana Muni to King Nimi]:

"In the age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the name of Krsna. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Krsna Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions."

Srila Jiva Gosvami cites a verse from the Vedic literature which says that there is no necessity of performing sacrificial demonstrations or ceremonial functions. He comments that instead of engaging in such external, pompous exhibitions, all people, regardless of caste, color or creed, can assemble together and chant Hare Krsna to worship Lord Caitanya. Krsna–varnam tvisakrsnam [SB 11.5.32] indicates that prominence should be given to the name of Krsna. Lord Caitanya taught Krsna consciousness and chanted the name of Krsna. Therefore, to worship Lord Caitanya, everyone should together chant the maha–mantra–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. To propagate worship in churches, temples or mosques is not possible, because people have lost interest in that. But anywhere and everywhere, people can chant Hare Krsna. Thus worshiping Lord Caitanya, they can perform the highest activity and fulfill the highest religious purpose of satisfying the Supreme Lord.

–Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi 3.52

In Kali–yuga, the chanting of the holy name is especially recommended for success in spiritual life:

It is understood from the authoritative source of Vedic literature that especially in this age; Kali–yuga, people are generally short–living, extremely bad in their habits, and inclined to accept methods of devotional service that are not bona fide. Moreover, they are always disturbed by material conditions, and they are mostly unfortunate. Under the circumstances, the performance of other processes, such as yajna, dana, tapah and kriya–sacrifices, charity and so on–are not at all possible. Therefore it is recommended:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting of the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way."

Simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord, one advances perfectly in spiritual life. This is the best process for success in life. In other ages, the chanting of the holy name is equally powerful, but especially in this age, Kali–yuga, it is most powerful.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.5.23–24

By chanting, one is elevated to the transcendental platform beyond those stages attained by philosophers, religionists, yogis, karmis, etc.:

Lord Caitanya gives His judgment on the authority of sastras that the chanting of the holy names of the Lord is the only means to elevate one to the transcendental platform, and actually we can see it is effective. Each and every one of our students who has seriously taken to this process may be examined individually, and any impartial judge will find it easy to see that they have advanced in their transcendental realization further than any philosophers, religionists, yogis, karmis, etc.

~The Science of Self–Realization

By chanting the maha–mantra, one achieves the results of karma, jnana and yoga automatically:

The importance of chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is very strongly stressed in the Second Canto, First

Chapter, verse 11, of the Srimad–Bhagavatam in the following way: Sukadeva Gosvami tells Maharaja Pariksit: "My dear King, if one is spontaneously attached to the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, it is to be understood that he has attained the highest perfectional stage." It is specifically mentioned that the karmis who are aspiring after the fruitive results of their activities, the salvationists who are aspiring to become one with the Supreme Person, and the yogis who are aspiring after mystic perfections can achieve the results of all perfectional stages simply by chanting the maha–mantra. Sukadeva uses the word nirnitam, which means "it is already decided." He was a liberated soul and therefore could not accept anything which was not conclusive. So Sukadeva Gosvami especially stresses that it is already concluded that one who has come to the stage of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra with determination and steadiness must be considered as having already passed the trials of fruitive activities, mental speculation and mystic yoga.

~The Nectar of Devotion

Chanting the holy name is more effective than karma, jnana, and yoga for becoming free from material bondage:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

Ajamila was a brahmana who because of bad association had given up all brahminical culture and religious principles. Becoming most fallen, he stole, drank and performed other abominable acts. He even kept a prostitute. Thus he was destined to be carried away to hell by the order carriers of Yamaraja, but he was immediately rescued simply by a glimpse of the chanting of the holy name Narayana. Therefore one who desires freedom from material bondage should adopt the process of chanting and glorifying the name, fame, form and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, at whose feet all the holy places stand. One cannot derive the proper benefit from other methods, such as pious atonement, speculative knowledge and meditation in mystic yoga, because even after following such methods one takes to fruitive activities again, unable to control his mind, which is contaminated by the base qualities of nature, namely passion and ignorance.

It has actually been seen that even after achieving so–called perfection, many karmis, jnanis and yogis become attached to material activities again. Many so–called svamis and yogis give up material activities as false (jagan mithya), but after some time they nevertheless resume material activities by opening hospitals and schools or performing other activities for the benefit of the public. Sometimes they participate in politics, although still falsely declaring themselves sannyasis, members of the renounced order. The perfect conclusion, however, is that if one actually desires to get out of the material world, he must take to devotional service, which begins with sravanam kirtanam visnoh: [SB 7.5.23] chanting and

hearing the glories of the Lord. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has actually proved this. In the Western countries, many young boys who were addicted to drugs and who had many other bad habits, which they could not give up, abandoned all those propensities and very seriously engaged in chanting the glories of the Lord as soon as they joined the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. In other words, this process is the perfect method of atonement for actions performed in *rajaḥ* and *tamaḥ* (passion and ignorance). As stated in *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.19):

tada rajas-tamo-bhavaḥ
kama-lobhadayas ca ye
ceta etair anavidhāma
sthitam sattve prasīdati

As a result of *rajaḥ* and *tamaḥ*, one becomes increasingly lusty and greedy, but when one takes to the process of chanting and hearing, one comes to the platform of goodness and becomes happy. As he advances in devotional service, all his doubts are completely eradicated (*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthis chidyante sarva-samsayah*). Thus the knot of his desire for fruitive activities is cut to pieces.

~*Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.2.45-46

Explanation of the "harer nama" verse in the *Bṛhan-narāyaṇa Purāna*:

After this incident the Lord ate raw rice given by *Suklambāra Brahmācārī* and explained very elaborately the import of the "harer nama" [*Adi 17.21*] śloka mentioned in the *Bṛhan-narāyaṇa Purāna*: "In this age of *Kālī* there is no other means, no other means, no other means for self-realization than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of Lord *Hari*." In this age of *Kālī*, the holy name of the Lord, the *Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra*, is the incarnation of Lord *Kṛṣṇa*. 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 nama* [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 cultivation of knowledge, practice of mystic yoga, and performance of austerities and fruitive activities. This verse clearly states that anyone who accepts any other path cannot be delivered. This is the reason for the triple repetition "nothing else, nothing else, nothing else," which emphasizes the real process of self-realization.

To emphasize something to an ordinary person, one may repeat it three times, just as one

might say, "You must do this! You must do this! You must do this!" Thus the Brhan–naradiya Purana repeatedly emphasizes the chanting of the holy name so that people may take it seriously and thus free themselves from the clutches of maya...

Our Krsna consciousness movement stresses the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra only, whereas those who do not know the secret of success for this age of Kali unnecessarily indulge in the cultivation of knowledge, the practice of mystic yoga or the performance of fruitive activities or useless austerities. They are simply wasting their time and misleading their followers. When we point this out very plainly to an audience, members of opposing groups become angry at us. But according to the injunctions of the sastras, we cannot make compromises with these so–called jnanis, yogis, karmis and tapasvis. When they say they are as good as we are, we must say that only we are good and that they are not good. This is not our obstinacy; it is the injunction of the sastras. We must not deviate from the injunctions of the sastras.

–Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 17.20–25

The systems of yoga and jnana are not practicable in this age–only the system of hari–kirtana, chanting the holy name:

Other systems of self–realization, the jnana process or yoga process, are also recognized, but it is not possible to practice them in this age. That is the verdict of the Vedas:

krte yad dhyayato visnum
tretayam yajato makhaih
dvapare paricaryayam
kalau tad dhari–kirtanat

[Srimad–Bhagavatam 12.3.52] In the Satya–yuga, the Golden Age, it was possible to execute the meditation process. For instance, Valmiki Muni meditated for sixty thousand years to get perfection. But where is our old age? Besides that, for the meditation process, as described in the Bhagavad–gita, one has to select a secluded place, he has to execute it alone, he has to sit down in a rigid posture, he has to lead a life of complete celibacy, and so on. There are many rules and regulations. Thus astanga–yoga meditation is not possible. If one is satisfied by imitating, that is a different thing, but if one wants perfection, then he has to execute all the eight stages of astanga–yoga. If this is not possible, then it is a waste of time.

What is the ultimate goal of the yoga process or meditation? Contact with the Supreme, the

Supersoul, the Supreme Lord, is the aim and object of all yoga processes. Similarly, philosophical research, the jnana process, also aims at understanding the Supreme Brahman. These are recognized processes, undoubtedly, but according to authoritative description, they are not practical in this Iron Age of Kali. Therefore one has to take to this process of hari-kirtana. Anyone can practice without prequalification.

~The Science of Self-Realization

The processes of jnana, yoga, meditation and pious activities are not as effective in cleansing the heart as chanting the holy name:

Ceto-darpaṇa-marjanam: [Cc. Antya 20.12] one has to cleanse his heart. There are different processes to cleanse the heart—the jnana process, the yoga process, the meditation process, pious activities. Karma also cleanses the heart. If one acts very piously, his heart will gradually be cleansed. But although these processes are recommended for cleansing the heart, in this age they are all difficult. To follow the path of philosophical knowledge one must become a very learned scholar, one must read so many books, one must go to learned professors and scholars and speculate. One must search out a person who has seen the light. So these are all philosophical processes. Meditation is also a recommended process. One should question, "What am I?" Just consider: Am I this body? No. Am I this finger? No, this is my finger. If you contemplate your leg, you will see, "Oh, this is my leg." Similarly, you will find everything to be "mine." And where is that "I"? Everything is mine, but where is that "I"? When one is searching for that "I," that is meditation. Real meditation means concentrating all the senses in that way. But that meditation process is very difficult. One must control the senses. The senses are dragging one outward, and one has to bring them inward for introspection. Therefore there are eight processes in the yoga system. The first is controlling the senses by regulative principles. Then sitting postures—that will help to concentrate the mind. If one sits leaning over, that will not help; if one sits up straight, that will help. Then controlling the breathing, then meditation, then samadhi. But today these are very, very difficult processes. No one can immediately perform them. The so-called yoga processes are fragmental—only the sitting postures and a few breathing exercises are practiced. But that cannot bring one to the perfectional stage. The actual yoga process, although a recommended Vedic process, is very difficult in this age. Similarly one can try to get knowledge by the speculative philosophical process: "This is Brahman, this is not Brahman, so what is Brahman? What is spirit soul?" Such empiric philosophical discussion is also recommended, but it is useless in this age.

Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu—not only Caitanya Mahaprabhu but also the Vedic literature—says:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

Kalau means "in this age." Nasty eva, nasty eva, nasty eva—three times nasty eva. Eva means "certainly," and nasti means "not." "Certainly not, certainly not, certainly not." What is that "certainly not"? One cannot realize oneself by karma. That is the first "certainly not." One cannot realize oneself by jnana. That is the second "certainly not." One cannot realize oneself by yoga. Certainly not. Kalau. Kalau means "in this age." Kalau nasty eva nasty eva nasty eva gatir anyatha. In this age one certainly cannot achieve success by any of these three methods. Then what is the recommended process? Harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam. Simply chant the Hare Krsna mantra. Kevalam means "only." Simply chant Hare Krsna. It is the easiest and most sublime process. This is recommended, practical, and authorized. So take it. Accept it in any condition of life. Chant. There is no expenditure, there is no loss. We are not chanting a secret. No. It is open. And by chanting you will cleanse your heart.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Chanting the holy name brings the perfection of penance, sacrifice and fruitive activity:

It is said in the Skanda Purana:

yasya smrtya ca namoktya
tapo-yajna-kriyadisu
nunam sampurnatam eti
sadyo vande tam acyutam

"I offer my obeisances unto Him, the infallible, because simply by either remembering Him or vibrating His holy name one can attain the perfection of all penances, sacrifices or fruitive activities, and this process can be universally followed."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.9.36

In Kali-yuga, chanting the holy name is more important than study of Vedanta philosophy:

[Prakasananda Sarasvati to Lord Caitanya]:

"You are a sannyasi. Why then do You indulge in chanting and dancing, engaging in Your sankirtana movement in the company of fanatics? Meditation and the study of Vedanta are the sole duties of a sannyasi. Why do You abandon these to dance with fanatics? You look as brilliant as if You were Narayana Himself. Will You kindly explain the reason that You have adopted the behavior of lower-class people?" Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu replied to Prakasananda Sarasvati: "My dear sir, kindly hear the reason. My spiritual master considered Me a fool, and therefore he chastised Me. 'You are a fool,' he said. 'You are not qualified to study Vedanta philosophy, and therefore You must always chant the holy name of Krsna. This is the essence of all mantras or Vedic hymns.'"

When Prakasananda Sarasvati inquired from Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu why He neither studied Vedanta nor performed meditation, Lord Caitanya presented Himself as a number one fool in order to indicate that the present age, Kali-yuga, is an age of fools and rascals in which it is not possible to obtain perfection simply by reading Vedanta philosophy and meditating. The sastras strongly recommend:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha

[Adi 17.21]

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way."

People in general in Kali-yuga are so fallen that it is not possible for them to obtain perfection simply by studying Vedanta-sutra. One should therefore seriously take to the constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord... Although Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krsna, the spiritual master of the entire universe, He nevertheless took the position of a disciple in order to teach by example how a devotee should strictly follow the orders of a spiritual master in executing the duty of always chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. One who is very much attracted to the study of Vedanta philosophy must take lessons from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. In this age, no one is actually competent to study Vedanta, and therefore it is better that one chant the holy name of the Lord, which is the essence of all Vedic knowledge, as Krsna Himself confirms in Bhagavad-gita,

vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyo
vedanta–krd veda–vid eva caham

"By all the Vedas am I to be known; indeed I am the compiler of Vedanta, and I am the knower of the Vedas." (Bg. 15.15)

One who imperfectly knows Krsna consciousness cannot know Vedanta philosophy. A showy display of Vedanta study without Krsna consciousness is a feature of the external energy, maya, and as long as one is attracted by the inebrieties of this ever–changing material energy, he deviates from devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. An actual follower of Vedanta philosophy is a devotee of Lord Visnu, who is the greatest of the great and the maintainer of the entire universe. Unless one surpasses the field of activities in service to the limited, one cannot reach the unlimited. Knowledge of the unlimited is actual brahma–jnana, or knowledge of the Supreme. Those who are addicted to fruitive activities and speculative knowledge cannot understand the value of the holy name of the Lord, Krsna, who is always completely pure, eternally liberated and full of spiritual bliss. One who has taken shelter of the holy name of the Lord, which is identical with the Lord, does not have to study Vedanta philosophy, for he has already completed all such study.

One who is unfit to chant the holy name of Krsna but thinks that the holy name is different from Krsna and thus takes shelter of Vedanta study in order to understand Him must be considered a number one fool, as confirmed by Caitanya Mahaprabhu by His personal behavior, and philosophical speculators who want to make Vedanta philosophy an academic career are also considered to be within the material energy. A person who always chants the holy name of the Lord, however, is already beyond the ocean of nescience, and thus even a person born in a low family who engages in chanting the holy name of the Lord is considered to be beyond the study of Vedanta philosophy. In this connection the Srimad–Bhagavatam states:

aho bata sva–paco 'to gariyan
yaj–jihvagre vartate nama tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuh sasnur arya
brahmanucur nama grnanti ye te

"If a person born in a family of dog–eaters takes to the chanting of the holy name of Krsna, it is to be understood that in his previous life he must have executed all kinds of austerities and penances and performed all the Vedic yajnas." (S.B. 3.33.7)

Another quotation states:

rg-vedo 'tha yajur-vedah
sama-vedo 'py atharvanah
adhitas tena yenoktam
harir ity aksara-dvayam

"A person who chants the two syllables ha-ri has already studied the four Vedas-Sama, Rg, Yajur and Atharva."

Taking advantage of these verses, there are some sahajiyas who, taking everything very cheaply, consider themselves elevated Vaisnavas but do not care even to touch the Vedanta-sutras or Vedanta philosophy. A real Vaisnava should, however, study Vedanta philosophy, but if after studying the Vedanta one does not adopt the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, he is no better than a Mayavadi. Therefore, one should not be a Mayavadi, yet one should not be unaware of the subject matter of Vedanta philosophy. Indeed, Caitanya Mahaprabhu exhibited His knowledge of Vedanta in His discourses with Prakasananda Sarasvati. Thus it is to be understood that a Vaisnava should be completely conversant with Vedanta philosophy, yet he should not think that studying Vedanta is all in all and therefore be unattached to the chanting of the holy name. A devotee must know the importance of simultaneously understanding Vedanta philosophy and chanting the holy names. If by studying Vedanta one becomes an impersonalist, he has not been able to understand Vedanta. This is confirmed in Bhagavad-gita (15.15). Vedanta means "the end of knowledge." The ultimate end of knowledge is knowledge of Krsna, who is identical with His holy name.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.68-72

In Kali-yuga, chanting the holy name is more important than accepting sannyasa for attaining self-realization:

In this age of Kali-yuga sannyasa is prohibited because persons in this age are all sudras and cannot follow the rules and regulations of sannyasa life. It is very commonly found that so-called sannyasis are addicted to nonsense-even to having private relationships with women. This is the abominable situation in this age. Although they dress themselves as sannyasis, they still cannot free themselves from the four principles of sinful life, namely illicit sex life, meat-eating, intoxication and gambling. Since they are not freed from these four principles, they are cheating the public by posing as svamis.

In Kali-yuga the injunction is that no one should accept sannyasa. Of course, those who actually follow the rules and regulations must take sannyasa. Generally, however, people

are unable to accept sannyasa life, and therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu stressed, kalau nasty eva nasty eva nasty eva gatih anyatha. In this age there is no other alternative, no other alternative, no other alternative than to chant the holy name of the Lord: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare. The main purpose of sannyasa life is to be in constant companionship with the Supreme Lord, either by thinking of Him within the heart or hearing of Him through aural reception. In this age, hearing is more important than thinking because one's thinking may be disturbed by mental agitation, but if one concentrates on hearing, he will be forced to associate with the sound vibration of Krsna. Krsna and the sound vibration "Krsna" are nondifferent, so if one loudly vibrates Hare Krsna, he will be able to think of Krsna immediately. This process of chanting is the best process of self-realization in this age; therefore Lord Caitanya preached it so nicely for the benefit of all humanity.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.24.35

Because yogic celibacy is not possible in this age, Lord Caitanya recommended the chanting of the holy name as the only means of spiritual realization:

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

Persons learned in the Vedas, who utter omkara and who are great sages in the renounced order, enter into Brahman. Desiring such perfection, one practices celibacy...

In the Vedic system of knowledge, students, from the very beginning, are taught to vibrate om and learn of the ultimate impersonal Brahman by living with the spiritual master in complete celibacy. In this way they realize two of Brahman's features. This practice is very essential for the student's advancement in spiritual life, but at the moment such brahmachari (unmarried celibate) life is not at all possible. The social construction of the world has changed so much that there is no possibility of one's practicing celibacy from the beginning of student life. Throughout the world there are many institutions for different departments of knowledge, but there is no recognized institution where students can be educated in the brahmachari principles. Unless one practices celibacy, advancement in spiritual life is very difficult. Therefore Lord Caitanya has announced, according to the scriptural injunctions for this age of Kali, that no process of realizing the Supreme is possible except the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 8.11

Rather than hear the impersonalist conceptions of Sankara, the common man should chant the maha–mantra for self–realization:

Lord Caitanya immediately informed Prakasananda that in the modern age people in general are more or less bereft of all spiritual intellect. When such people come under the influence of Sankaracarya's Mayavadi (impersonalist) philosophy before beginning the most confidential Vedanta–sutras, their natural tendency toward obedience to the Supreme is checked. The supreme source of everything is naturally respected by everyone, but this natural tendency is hampered when one takes to the impersonalist conceptions of Sankara. Thus the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya suggested that it is better that one not study the Sariraka–bhasya of Sankaracarya, for it is very harmful to people in general. Indeed, the common man does not even have the intelligence to penetrate into the jugglery of words. He is better advised to chant the maha–mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In this quarrelsome age of Kali there is no alternative for self–realization.

–Teachings of Lord Caitanya

In Kali–yuga, rather than looking toward the light of mental speculation and atheists, people should take advantage of Lord Caitanya's movement of chanting Hare Krsna: During the rainy season, in the evening, there are many glowworms visible about the tops of trees, hither and thither, and they glitter just like lights. But the luminaries of the sky, the stars and the moons, are not visible. Similarly, in the age of Kali, persons who are atheists or miscreants become very prominently visible, whereas persons who are actually following the Vedic principles for spiritual emancipation are practically obscured. This age, Kali–yuga, is compared to the cloudy season of the living entities. In this age, real knowledge is covered by the influence of material advancement of civilization. The cheap mental speculators, atheists and manufacturers of so–called religious principles become prominent like the glowworms, whereas persons strictly following the Vedic principles or scriptural injunctions become covered by the clouds of this age. People should learn to take advantage of the actual luminaries of the sky, the sun, moon, and stars, instead of the glowworm's light. Actually, the glowworm cannot give any light in the darkness of night. As clouds sometimes clear, even in the rainy season, and sometimes the moon, stars and sun become visible, so even in this Kali–yuga there are sometimes advantages. The Vedic movement of Lord Caitanya's—the distribution of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra—is heard in this way. People seriously anxious to find real life should take advantage of this movement instead of looking toward the light of mental speculators and atheists.

–Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

In this age, worship of the salagrama-sila is not as important as chanting the holy name: It has been a custom since time immemorial that a person born in a brahmana family must worship the salagrama-sila in all circumstances. In our Krsna consciousness society, some of the members are very anxious to introduce the salagrama-sila, but we have purposely refrained from introducing it because most of the members of the Krsna consciousness movement do not originally come from families of the brahmana caste. After some time, when we find that they are actually situated strictly in the line of brahminical behavior, this salagrama-sila will be introduced.

In this age, the worship of the salagrama-sila is not as important as the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. That is the injunction of the sastra.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

Srila Jiva Gosvami's opinion is that by chanting the holy name offenselessly one becomes completely perfect. Nevertheless, just to purify the situation of the mind, worship of the Deity in the temple is also necessary. Therefore when one is advanced in spiritual consciousness or is perfectly situated on a spiritual platform he may take to the worship of the salagrama-sila.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 13.86

9.

Lord Caitanya Introduced the Maha-mantra to Counteract the Philosophy of Impersonalism

Lord Caitanya introduced the maha-mantra to counteract the philosophy of impersonalism:
[Lord Caitanya to Prakasananda Sarasvati]:

"The Mayavada philosophy is so degraded that it has taken the insignificant living entities to be the Lord, the Supreme Truth, thus covering the glory and supremacy of the Absolute

Truth with monism."

Sripada Sankaracarya purposely claimed the jiva-tattva, or living entities, to be equal to the Supreme God. Therefore his entire philosophy is based on a misunderstanding, and it misguides people to become atheists whose mission in life is unfulfilled. The mission of human life, as described in Bhagavad-gita, is to surrender unto the Supreme Lord and become His devotee, but the Mayavada philosophy misleads one to defy the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and pose oneself as the Supreme Lord. Thus it has misguided hundreds and thousands of innocent men...the Mayavada philosophy, misguiding people by claiming the living entity to be the Lord, has created havoc throughout the entire world and led almost everyone to godlessness. By thus covering the glories of the Supreme Lord, the Mayavadi philosophers have done the greatest disservice to human society. It is to counteract these most abominable activities of the Mayavadi philosophers that Lord Caitanya has introduced the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"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."

People should simply engage in the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, for thus they will gradually come to understand that they are not the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as they have been taught by the Mayavadi philosophers, but are eternal servants of the Lord. As soon as one engages himself in the transcendental service of the Lord, he becomes free.

mam ca yo 'vyabhicarena
bhakti-yogena sevate
sa gunan samatityaitan
brahma-bhuyaya kalpate

"One who engages in full devotional service, who does not fall down in any circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman."
(Bg. 14.26)

Therefore the Hare Krsna movement or Krsna consciousness movement is the only light for

the foolish living entities who think either that there is no God or that if God exists He is formless and they themselves are also God. These misconceptions are very dangerous, and the only way to counteract them is to spread the Hare Krsna movement.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.120

10.

In This Age, Chanting of the Holy Name Is More Important than Varnasrama-dharma Because varnasrama-dharma has been lost in this age, Lord Caitanya has introduced the chanting of the maha-mantra:

In Bhagavad-gita (18.46) Sri Krsna says that every man can become perfect by following his qualities of work:

yatah pravrttir bhutanam
yena sarvam idam tatam
sva-karmana tam abhyarcya
siddhim vindati manavah

"By worship of the Lord, who is the source of all beings and who is all-pervading, man can, in the performance of his own duty, attain perfection."

Thus if one executes his duties as a perfect ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, or whatever, Visnu will be pleased. The purpose of work is to please Visnu. Unfortunately, people have forgotten this. Varnasrama-dharma, the Vedic system of society, is therefore very important in that it is meant to give human beings a chance to perfect their lives by pleasing Krsna.

Unfortunately, the varnasrama-dharma has been lost in this age. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu, just to give relief to the rotting, conditioned souls of this age of Kali-yuga, has given us the maha-mantra.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatih anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"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."
(Brhan–naradiya Purana)

Although we may try to revive the perfect varnasrama system, it is not possible in this age. People are fallen, disturbed and unfortunate:

prayenalpayusah sabhya
kalav asmin yuge janah
mandah sumanda–matayo
manda–bhagya hy upadrutah

"O learned one, in this iron age of Kali men have but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky and, above all, always disturbed." (S.B. 1.1.10)

In this age, there will be insufficient rainfall and food, and the government will plunder one's income by heavy taxation. All of these characteristics of Kali–yuga are described in Srimad–Bhagavatam. People will become so disgusted that they will suddenly leave their wife and children and go to the forest. How can the peaceful varnasrama–dharma be revived when people are so harassed in this age? It is virtually impossible. Therefore the system of bhakti–yoga, the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, should be adopted. The whole aim of bhakti–yoga is to satisfy Visnu. Yajnaih sankirtana–prayaih: Visnu, Krsna, came Himself as Caitanya Mahaprabhu to teach us the way of sankirtana.
–Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

For attaining the topmost goal, hearing and chanting about Lord Visnu is more important than varnasrama–dharma:

The chief acarya of the Tattvavada community was very learned in the revealed scriptures. Out of humility, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu questioned him. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "I do not know very well the aim of life and how to achieve it. Please tell me of the best ideal for humanity and how to attain it." The acarya replied, "When the activities of the four castes and the four asramas are dedicated to Krsna, they constitute the best means whereby one can attain the highest goal of life. When one dedicates the duties of varnasrama–dharma to Krsna, he is eligible for five kinds of liberation. Thus he is transferred to the spiritual world in Vaikuntha. This is the highest goal of life and the verdict of all revealed scriptures." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "According to the verdict of the sastras, the process of hearing and chanting is the best means to attain loving service

to Krsna."

According to the Tattvavadis, the best process is to execute the duties of the four varnas and asramas. In the material world, unless one is situated in one of the varnas (brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya and sudra) one cannot manage social affairs properly to attain the ultimate goal. One also has to follow the principles of the asramas (brahmacarya, grhastha, vanaprastha and sannyasa), which are considered essential for the attainment of the highest goal. In this way the Tattvavadis establish that the execution of the principles of varna and asrama for the sake of Krsna is the best way to attain the topmost goal. The Tattvavadis thus established their principles in terms of human society. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, however, differed when He said that the best process is hearing and chanting about Lord Visnu.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.254-58

11.

The Holy Name Counteracts the Effects of the Kali-yuga

The chanting of the maha-mantra is especially meant for counteracting the contaminations of Kali:

In the Kali-santarana Upanisad it is stated:

hare krsna hare krsna
krsna krsna hare hare
hare rama hare rama
rama rama hare hare

iti sodasakam namnam
kali-kalmasa-nasanam
natah parataropayah
sarva-vedesu drsyate

"The sixteen words-Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare-are especially meant for counteracting the contaminations

of Kali. To save oneself from the contamination of Kali, there is no alternative but the chanting of these sixteen words."

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

To counteract the effects of Kali–yuga and cross the ocean of nescience, one must chant the holy name:

The Kali–santarana Upanisad states, "Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—these sixteen names composed of thirty–two syllables are the only means to counteract the evil effects of Kali–yuga. In all the Vedas it is seen that to cross the ocean of nescience there is no alternative to the chanting of the holy name."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.76

Maharaja Pariksit saved his citizens from the clutches of Kali by propagating the holy name:

Even though all nefarious activities of the personality of Kali are present, there is a great advantage in the age of Kali. One can attain salvation simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord. Thus Maharaja Pariksit made an organized effort to propagate the chanting of the Lord's holy name, and thus he saved the citizens from the clutches of Kali. It is for this advantage only that great sages sometimes wish all good for the age of Kali.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.18.7

The constant chanting of the holy names will drive away the personality of Kali from the world:

The Personality of Godhead and His holy name, qualities, etc., are all identical. The personality of Kali was not able to enter the jurisdiction of the earth due to the presence of the Personality of Godhead. And similarly, if there is an arrangement for the constant chanting of the holy names, qualities, etc., of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no chance at all for the personality of Kali to enter. That is the technique of driving away the personality of Kali from the world. In modernized human society there are great advancements of material science, and they have invented the radio to distribute sound in the air. So instead of vibrating some nuisance sound for sense enjoyment, if the state arranges to distribute transcendental sound by resounding the holy name, fame and

activities of the Lord, as they are authorized in the Bhagavad-gita or Srimad-Bhagavatam, then a favorable condition will be created, the principles of religion in the world will be reestablished, and thus the executive heads, who are so anxious to drive away corruption from the world, will be successful.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.18.6

To become immune from the effects of the Kali-yuga, one must chant the holy name of the Lord:

In this age, when everything is polluted by the contamination of Kali, it is instructed in the scriptures and preached by Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu that by chanting the holy name of the Lord, we can at once be free from contamination and gradually rise to the state of transcendence and go back to Godhead. The offenseless chanter of the holy name is as auspicious as the Lord Himself, and the movement of pure devotees of the Lord all over the world can at once change the troublesome face of the world. Only by the propagation of the chanting of the holy name of the Lord can we be immune from all effects of the age of Kali.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.16.32-33

If people in general take to the chanting of the maha-mantra, they will be freed from the contamination of Kali-yuga:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

Lord Ramacandra became King during Treta-yuga, but because of His good government, the age was like Satya-yuga. Everyone was religious and completely happy.

Among the four yugas-Satya, Treta, Dvapara and Kali-the Kali-yuga is the worst, but if the process of varnasrama-dharma is introduced, even in this age of Kali, the situation of Satya-yuga can be invoked. The Hare Krsna movement, or Krsna consciousness movement, is meant for this purpose.

kaler dosa-nidhe rajann
asti hy eko mahan gunah
kirtanad eva krsnasya
mukta-sangah param vrajet

"My dear King, although Kali-yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one can become free from material

bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom." (S.B. 12.3.51)

If people take to this sankirtana movement of chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Rama, they will certainly be freed from the contamination of Kali–yuga, and the people of this age will be happy, as people were in Satya–yuga, the golden age.

Srimad–Bhagavatam 9.10.51

12.

In This Age, Krsna Appears in His Name in Order to Annihilate the Demons and Protect the Devotees

Krsna has now appeared in His holy name through the Hare Krsna movement to annihilate the demons and protect the devotees:

[Vasudeva to Lord Krsna]:

O my Lord, proprietor of all creation, You have now appeared in my house, desiring to protect this world. I am sure that You will kill all the armies that are moving all over the world under the leadership of politicians who are dressed as ksatriya rulers but who are factually demons. They must be killed by You for the protection of the innocent public.

Krsna appears in this world for two purposes, *paritranaya sadhunam vinasaya ca duskrtam*: [Bg. 4.8] to protect the innocent, religious devotees of the Lord and to annihilate all the uneducated, uncultured asuras, who unnecessarily bark like dogs and fight among themselves for political power. It is said, *kali–kale nama–rupe krsna avatara*. The Hare Krsna movement is also an incarnation of Krsna in the form of the holy name (*nama–rupe*). Every one of us who is actually afraid of the asuric rulers and politicians must welcome this incarnation of Krsna: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Then we will surely be protected from the harassment of asuric rulers. At the present moment these rulers are so powerful that by hook or by crook they capture the highest posts in government and harass countless numbers of people on the plea of national security or some emergency. Then again, one asura defeats another asura, but the public continues to suffer. Therefore the entire world is in a precarious condition, and the only hope is this Hare Krsna movement. Lord Nrsimhadeva appeared when Prahlada was excessively harassed by his asuric father. Because of such asuric fathers—that is, the ruling politicians—it is very difficult to press forward the Hare Krsna movement, but

because Krsna has now appeared in His holy name through this movement, we can hope that these asuric fathers will be annihilated and the kingdom of God established all over the world. The entire world is now full of many asuras in the guise of politicians, gurus, sadhus, yogis and incarnations, and they are misleading the general public away from Krsna consciousness, which can offer true benefit to human society.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.3.21

Just as formerly Krsna appeared personally to decrease the military burden on the earth, He has now appeared by His name in the Hare Krsna movement for the same purpose:

In this verse from Srimad-Bhagavatam we find the words *puraiva pumsavadhrto dhara-jvarah*. The word *pumsa* refers to Krsna, who was already aware of how the whole world was suffering because of the increase of demons. Without reference to the supreme power of the Personality of Godhead, the demons assert themselves to be independent kings and presidents, and thus they create a disturbance by increasing their military power. When such disturbances are very prominent, Krsna appears. At present also, various demoniac states all over the world are increasing their military power in many ways, and the whole situation has become distressful. Therefore Krsna has appeared by His name, in the Hare Krsna movement, which will certainly diminish the burden of the world. Philosophers, religionists, and people in general must take to this movement very seriously, for man-made plans and devices will not help bring peace on earth.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.1.22

13.

The Holy Name Destroys the Demoniatic Mentality of the People in General

As Krsna appeared in order to kill the demons, the demoniac mentality of the people in general is killed in this age by the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra:

Whenever there is a burden created by the demons and whenever the innocent devotees are distressed by demoniac rulers, the Lord appears in due course of time to kill the demons with the assistance of His real representatives, who are technically called demigods. In the Upanisads it is stated that the demigods are different parts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As it is the duty of the parts of the body to serve the whole, it is the duty of Krsna's devotees to serve Krsna as He wants. Krsna's business is to kill the demons, and therefore this should be a devotee's business also. Because the people of Kali-yuga are

fallen, however, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, out of kindness for them, did not bring any weapon to kill them. Rather, by spreading Krsna consciousness, love of Krsna, He wanted to kill their nefarious, demoniac activities. This is the purpose of the Krsna consciousness movement. Unless the demoniac activities on the surface of the world are diminished or vanquished, no one can be happy. The program for the conditioned soul is fully described in Bhagavad-gita, and one simply has to follow these instructions to become happy. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has therefore prescribed:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

Let people chant the Hare Krsna mantra constantly. Then their demoniac tendencies will be killed, and they will become first-class devotees, happy in this life and in the next.
-Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.1.64

The Krsna consciousness movement is killing the demoniac mentality of the people by the chanting of the holy name:

Whenever God incarnates He has two missions, as stated in the Bhagavad-gita. There Krsna says, "Whenever I appear, My mission is to deliver the pious devotees and to annihilate the demons." When Krsna appeared, He had to kill many demons. If we see a picture of Visnu we will notice that He has a conchshell, lotus flower, club, and disc. These last two items are meant for killing demons. Within this world there are two classes of men—the demons and the devotees. The devotees are called demigods; they are almost like God because they have godly qualities. Those who are devotees are called godly persons, and those who are nondevotees, atheists, are called demons. So Krsna, or God, comes with two missions: to give protection to the devotees and to destroy the demons. In this age Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission is also like that: to deliver the devotees and annihilate the nondevotees, the demons. But in this age He has a different weapon. That weapon is not a club or disc or lethal weapon—His weapon is the sankirtana movement. He killed the demoniac mentality of the people by introducing the sankirtana movement. That is the specific significance of Lord Caitanya. In this age people are already killing themselves. They have discovered atomic weapons with which to kill themselves, so there is no need for God to kill them. But He appeared to kill their demoniac mentality. That is possible by this

Krsna consciousness movement.
~The Science of Self-Realization

In Kali-yuga, rather than looking toward the light of mental speculation and atheists, people should take advantage of Lord Caitanya's movement of chanting Hare Krsna: During the rainy season, in the evening, there are many glowworms visible about the tops of trees, hither and thither, and they glitter just like lights. But the luminaries of the sky, the stars and the moons, are not visible. Similarly, in the age of Kali, persons who are atheists or miscreants become very prominently visible, whereas persons who are actually following the Vedic principles for spiritual emancipation are practically obscured. This age, Kali-yuga, is compared to the cloudy season of the living entities. In this age, real knowledge is covered by the influence of material advancement of civilization. The cheap mental speculators, atheists and manufacturers of so-called religious principles becomes prominent like the glowworms, whereas persons strictly following the Vedic principles or scriptural injunctions become covered by the clouds of this age. People should learn to take advantage of the actual luminaries of the sky, the sun, moon, and stars, instead of the glowworm's light. Actually, the glowworm cannot give any light in the darkness of night. As clouds sometimes clear, even in the rainy season, and sometimes the moon, stars and sun become visible, so even in this Kali-yuga there are sometimes advantages. The Vedic movement of Lord Caitanya's—the distribution of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra—is heard in this way. People seriously anxious to find real life should take advantage of this movement instead of looking toward the light of mental speculators and atheists.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

In this age, worship of the salagrama-sila is not as important as chanting the holy name: It has been a custom since time immemorial that a person born in a brahmana family must worship the salagrama-sila in all circumstances. In our Krsna consciousness society, some of the members are very anxious to introduce the salagrama-sila, but we have purposely refrained from introducing it because most of the members of the Krsna consciousness movement do not originally come from families of the brahmana caste. After some time, when we find that they are actually situated strictly in the line of brahminical behavior, this salagrama-sila will be introduced.

In this age, the worship of the salagrama-sila is not as important as the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. That is the injunction of the sastra.

harer nama harer nama
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Srila Jiva Gosvami's opinion is that by chanting the holy name offenselessly one becomes completely perfect. Nevertheless, just to purify the situation of the mind, worship of the Deity in the temple is also necessary. Therefore when one is advanced in spiritual consciousness or is perfectly situated on a spiritual platform he may take to the worship of the salagrama-sila.

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Deity in the temple is also necessary. Therefore when one is advanced in spiritual consciousness or is perfectly situated on a spiritual platform he may take to the worship of the salagrama-sila.

˚Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 13.86

14.

The Glories of Namacarya Haridasa thakura Haridasa thakura—the acarya of the holy name:

Sanatana Gosvami replied: "O Haridasa thakura, who is equal to you? You are one of the associates of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Therefore you are the most fortunate. The mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, for which He has descended as an incarnation, is to spread the importance of chanting the holy name of the Lord. Now instead of personally doing so, He is spreading it through you. My dear sir, you are chanting the holy name 300,000 times daily and informing everyone of the importance of such chanting. Some behave very well but do not preach the cult of Krsna consciousness, whereas others preach but do not behave properly. You simultaneously perform both duties in relation to the holy name by your personal behavior and by your preaching. Therefore you are the spiritual master of the entire world, for you are the most advanced devotee in the world."

˚Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 4.99–103

Although born in a Muhammadan family, Haridasa thakura became a regularly initiated brahmana as well as Namacarya by dint of chanting the holy name:

According to external vision, Haridasa thakura belonged to a Muhammadan family. Nevertheless, because he engaged himself in performing the yajna of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, he became a regularly initiated brahmana. As stated in Srimad-Bhagavatam (3.33.6):

yan-namadheya-sravananukirtanad
yat-prahvanad yat-smaranad api kvacit
svado 'pi sadyah savanaya kalpate
kutah punas te bhagavan nu darsanat

Even if a devotee comes from a family of dog-eaters, if he surrenders to the Personality of Godhead he immediately becomes a qualified brahmana and is immediately fit to perform yajna, whereas a person born in a family of brahmanas has to wait until completing the reformatory processes before he may be called samskrta, purified... A person who is not purified by the prescribed process of samskara is called asamskrta, but if one remains kriya-hina even after being purified by initiation—in other words, if one fails to actually apply the principles of purity in his life—he remains an unpurified mleccha or yavana. On the other hand, we find that Haridasa thakura, although born in a mleccha or yavana family, became Namacarya Haridasa thakura because he performed the nama-yajna a minimum of 300,000 times every day.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.124

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu exhibited the glories of the holy name through Haridasa thakura: Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu exhibited the glories of the holy name of the Lord through Haridasa thakura, who was born in a Muhammadan family...

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 5.86

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that He understands the glories of the holy name by the mercy of Haridasa thakura:

[Lord Caitanya to Vallabha Bhatta]:

"Haridasa thakura, the teacher of the holy name, is among the most exalted of all devotees. Every day he chants 300,000 holy names of the Lord. I have learned about the glories of the Lord's holy name from Haridasa thakura, and by his mercy I have understood these glories."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 7.48-49

Namacarya Haridasa thakura was the incarnation of Lord Brahma:

[Lord Caitanya to Haridasa thakura]:

"Your role in this incarnation is to deliver the people in general. You have sufficiently preached the glories of the holy name in this world."

Haridasa thakura is known as namacarya because it is he who preached the glories of chanting hari-nama, the holy name of God. By using the words tomara avatara ("your incarnation"), Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu confirms that Haridasa thakura is the incarnation of

Lord Brahma. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura says that advanced devotees help the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His mission and that such devotees or personal associates incarnate by the will of the Supreme Lord. The Supreme Lord incarnates by His own will, and, by His will, competent devotees also incarnate to help Him in His mission. Haridasa thakura is thus the incarnation of Lord Brahma, and other devotees are likewise incarnations to help in the prosecution of the Lord's mission.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 11.25

Haridasa thakura delivers the prostitute sent by Ramacandra Khan by his chanting of the holy name:

After leaving his home, Haridasa thakura stayed for some time in the forest of Benapola. Haridasa thakura constructed a cottage in a solitary forest. There he planted a tulasi plant, and in front of the tulasi he would chant the holy name of the Lord 300,000 times daily. He chanted throughout the entire day and night. For his bodily maintenance he would go to a brahmana's house and beg some food. He was spiritually so influential that all the neighboring people worshiped him. A landholder named Ramacandra Khan was the zamindar of that district. He was envious of Vaisnavas and was therefore a great atheist. Unable to tolerate that such respect was being offered to Haridasa thakura, Ramacandra Khan planned in various ways to dishonor him. By no means could he find any fault in the character of Haridasa thakura. Therefore he called for local prostitutes and began a plan to discredit His Holiness. Ramacandra Khan said to the prostitutes, "There is a mendicant named Haridasa thakura. All of you devise a way to deviate him from his vows of austerity." Among the prostitutes, one attractive young girl was selected. "I shall attract the mind of Haridasa thakura," she promised, "within three days." Ramacandra Khan said to the prostitute, "My constable will go with you so that as soon as he sees you with Haridasa thakura, immediately he will arrest him and bring both of you to me." The prostitute replied, "First let me have union with him once; then the second time I shall take your constable with me to arrest him." At night the prostitute, after dressing herself most attractively, went to the cottage of Haridasa thakura with great jubilation. After offering obeisances to the tulasi plant, she went to the door of Haridasa thakura, offered him obeisances and stood there. Exposing part of her body to his view, she sat down on the threshold of the door and spoke to him in very sweet words. "My dear thakura, O great preacher, great devotee, you are so beautifully built, and your youth is just beginning. Who is the woman who could control her mind after seeing you? I am eager to be united with you. My mind is greedy for this. If I don't obtain you, I shall not be able to keep my body and soul together." Haridasa thakura replied, "I shall accept you without fail, but you will have to wait until I have finished chanting my regular rounds on my beads. Until that time,

please sit and listen to the chanting of the holy name. As soon as I am finished, I shall fulfill your desire." Hearing this, the prostitute remained sitting there while Haridasa thakura chanted on his beads until the light of morning appeared. When she saw that it was morning, the prostitute stood up and left. Coming before Ramacandra Khan, she informed him of all the news. "Today Haridasa thakura has promised to enjoy with me. Tomorrow certainly I shall have union with him." The next night, when the prostitute came again, Haridasa thakura gave her many assurances. "Last night you were disappointed. Please excuse my offense. I shall certainly accept you. Please sit down and hear the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra until my regular chanting is finished. Then your desire will surely be fulfilled." After offering her obeisances to the tulasi plant and Haridasa thakura, she sat down at the door. Hearing Haridasa thakura chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, she also chanted, "O my Lord Hari, O my Lord Hari." When the night came to an end, the prostitute was restless. Seeing this, Haridasa thakura spoke to her as follows. "I have vowed to chant ten million names in a month. I have taken this vow, but now it is nearing its end. I thought that today I would be able to finish my performance of yajna, my chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra. I tried my best to chant the holy name all night, but I still did not finish. Tomorrow I will surely finish, and my vow will be fulfilled. Then it will be possible for me to enjoy with you in full freedom." The prostitute returned to Ramacandra Khan and informed him of what had happened. The next day she came earlier, at the beginning of the evening, and stayed with Haridasa thakura. After offering obeisances to the tulasi plant and Haridasa thakura, she sat down on the threshold of the room. Thus she began to hear Haridasa thakura's chanting, and she also personally chanted "Hari, Hari," the holy name of the Lord. "Today it will be possible for me to finish my chanting," Haridasa thakura informed her. "Then I shall satisfy all your desires." The night ended while Haridasa thakura was chanting, but by his association the mind of the prostitute had changed. The prostitute, now purified, fell at the lotus feet of Haridasa thakura and confessed that Ramacandra Khan had appointed her to pollute him. "Because I have taken the profession of a prostitute," she said, "I have performed unlimited sinful acts. My lord, be merciful to me. Deliver my fallen soul." Haridasa thakura replied, "I know everything about the conspiracy of Ramacandra Khan. He is nothing but an ignorant fool. Therefore his activities do not make me feel unhappy. On the very day Ramacandra Khan was planning his intrigue against me, I would have left this place immediately, but because you came to me I stayed here for three days to deliver you." The prostitute said, "Kindly act as my spiritual master. Instruct me in my duty by which to get relief from material existence." Haridasa thakura replied, "Immediately go home and distribute to the brahmanas whatever property you have. Then come back to this room and stay here forever in Krsna consciousness. Chant the Hare Krsna mantra continuously and render service to the tulasi plant by watering her and offering prayers to her. In this way you will very soon get the opportunity to be sheltered at the lotus feet of Krsna." After thus instructing the prostitute about the process of chanting

the Hare Krsna mantra, Haridasa thakura stood up and left, continuously chanting "Hari, Hari." Thereafter, the prostitute distributed to the brahmanas whatever household possessions she had, following the order of her spiritual master. The prostitute shaved her head clean in accordance with Vaisnava principles and stayed in that room wearing only one cloth. Following in the footsteps of her spiritual master, she began chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra 300,000 times a day. She chanted throughout the entire day and night. She worshiped the tulasi plant, following in the footsteps of her spiritual master. Instead of eating regularly, she chewed whatever food she received as alms, and if nothing was supplied she would fast. Thus by eating frugally, and fasting she conquered her senses, and as soon as her senses were controlled, symptoms of love of Godhead appeared in her person. Thus the prostitute became a celebrated devotee. She became very advanced in spiritual life, and many stalwart Vaisnavas would come to see her. Seeing the sublime character of the prostitute, everyone was astonished. Everyone glorified the influence of Haridasa thakura and offered him obeisances.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.99-143

Haridasa thakura defeats Maya, in the form of a prostitute, and initiates her in the chanting of the holy name:

There is another incident concerning Haridasa thakura's uncommon behavior. One will be astonished to hear about it. Hear about such incidents without putting forth dry arguments, for these incidents are beyond our material reasoning. One must believe in them with faith. One day Haridasa thakura was sitting in his cave, reciting very loudly the holy name of the Lord. The night was full of moonlight, which made the waves of the Ganges look dazzling. All directions were clear and bright. Thus everyone who saw the beauty of the cave, with the tulasi plant on a clean altar, was astonished and satisfied at heart. At that time, in that beautiful scene, a woman appeared in the courtyard. The beauty of her body was so bright that it tinged the entire place with a hue of yellow. The scent of her body perfumed all directions, and the tinkling of her ornaments startled the ear. After coming there, the woman offered obeisances to the tulasi plant, and after circumambulating the tulasi plant she came to the door of the cave where Haridasa thakura was sitting. With folded hands she offered obeisances at the lotus feet of Haridasa thakura. Sitting at the door, she then spoke in a very sweet voice. "My dear friend," she said, "you are the friend of the entire world. You are so beautiful and qualified. I have come here only for union with you. My dear sir, kindly accept me and be merciful toward me, for it is a characteristic of all saintly persons to be kind toward the poor and fallen." After saying this, she began to manifest various postures, which even the greatest philosopher would lose his patience upon seeing. Haridasa thakura was immovable, for he was deeply determined. He began to speak to her, being very

merciful toward her. "I have been initiated into a vow to perform a great sacrifice by chanting the holy name a certain number of times every day. As long as the vow to chant is unfulfilled, I do not desire anything else. When I finish my chanting, then I have an opportunity to do anything. Sit down at the door and hear the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra. As soon as the chanting is finished, I shall satisfy you as you desire." After saying this, Haridasa thakura continued to chant the holy name of the Lord. Thus the woman sitting before him began to hear the chanting of the holy name. In this way, as he chanted and chanted, the morning approached, and when the woman saw that it was morning, she got up and left. For three days she approached Haridasa thakura in this way, exhibiting various feminine postures that would bewilder the mind of even Lord Brahma. Haridasa thakura was always absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa and the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore the feminine poses the woman exhibited were just like crying in the forest. At the end of the night of the third day, the woman spoke to Haridasa thakura as follows. "My dear sir, for three days you have cheated me by giving me false assurances, for I see that throughout the entire day and night your chanting of the holy name is never finished." Haridasa thakura said, "My dear friend, what can I do? I have made a vow. How, then, can I give it up?" After offering obeisances to Haridasa thakura, the woman said: "I am the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I came here to test you. I have previously captivated the mind of even Brahma, not to speak of others. Your mind alone have I failed to attract. My dear sir, you are the foremost devotee. Simply seeing you and hearing you chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa has purified my consciousness. Now I want to chant the holy name of the Lord. Please be kind to me by instructing me about the ecstasy of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra. There is now a flood of the eternal nectar of love of Godhead due to the incarnation of Lord Caitanya. All living entities are floating in that flood. The entire world is now thankful to the Lord. Anyone who does not float in this inundation is most condemned. Such a person cannot be delivered for millions of kalpas. Formerly I received the holy name of Lord Rama from Lord Siva, but now, due to your association, I am greatly eager to chant the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The holy name of Lord Rama certainly gives liberation, but the holy name of Kṛṣṇa transports one to the other side of the ocean of nescience and at last gives one ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa. Please give me the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and thus make me fortunate, so that I also may float in the flood of love of Godhead inaugurated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu." After speaking in this way, Maya worshiped the lotus feet of Haridasa thakura, who initiated her by saying, "Just perform chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra." After thus being instructed by Haridasa thakura, Maya left with great pleasure. Unfortunately, some people have no faith in these narrations. Therefore I shall explain the reasons why people should have faith. Everyone who hears this will be faithful. During the incarnation of Lord Caitanya to inaugurate the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, even such personalities as Lord Brahma, Lord Siva and the four Kumaras took birth upon this earth, being allured by ecstatic love of Lord Kṛṣṇa. All of

them, including the great sage Narada and devotees like Prahlada, came here as if human beings, chanting the holy names of Lord Krsna together and dancing and floating in the inundation of love of Godhead. The goddess of fortune and others, allured by love of Krsna, also came down in the form of human beings and tasted the holy name of the Lord in love. What to speak of others, even Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, personally descends to taste the nectar of love of Godhead in the form of the chanting of Hare Krsna. What is the wonder if the maidservant of Krsna, His external energy, begs for love of Godhead? Without the mercy of a devotee and without the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, love of Godhead cannot be possible.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.221-66

Haridasa thakura could defeat Maya because he was absorbed in thoughts of Krsna by constantly chanting His holy name:

[Maya to Haridasa thakura]: After offering obeisances to Haridasa thakura, the woman said: "I am the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I came here to test you."

In Bhagavad-gita (7.14) Lord Krsna says:

daivi hy esa guna-mayi
mama maya duratyaya
mam eva ye prapadyante
mayam etam taranti te

"This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it."

This was actually proved by the behavior of Haridasa thakura. Maya enchants the entire world. Indeed, people have forgotten the ultimate goal of life because of the dazzling attractions of the material world. But this dazzling attraction, especially the attractive beauty of a woman, is meant for persons who are not surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord says, mam eva ye prapadyante mayam etam taranti te: [Bg. 7.14] "One who is surrendered unto Me cannot be conquered by the illusory energy." The illusory energy personally came to test Haridasa thakura, but herein she admits her defeat, for she was unable to captivate him. How is this possible? It was because Haridasa thakura, fully surrendered to the lotus feet of Krsna, was always absorbed in thoughts of Krsna by chanting the holy names of the Lord 300,000 times daily as a vow.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.250

15.

The Chanting of Hare Krsna Is Not Limited to the Kali–yuga

The chanting of Hare Krsna is not limited to the Kali–yuga but is applicable to other ages as well:

According to Srimad–Bhagavatam there are different processes for different ages, but the principle of each process remains valid in all ages. It is not that the chanting of Hare Krsna is effective in this age and not in Satya–yuga. Nor is it that people were not chanting the holy names of Krsna in Satya–yuga. In Satya–yuga meditation was the main process, and great munis meditated for periods extending upward of 60,000 years... Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare as a great means of propaganda for spreading love of God. It is not that it is recommended only for Kali–yuga. Actually, it is recommended for every age. There have always been many devotees who have chanted and reached perfection in all ages. That is the beauty of this Krsna consciousness movement. It is not simply for one age, or for one country, or for one class of people. Hare Krsna can be chanted by any man in any social position, in any country and in any age, for Krsna is the Supreme Lord of all people in all social positions, in all countries, in all ages.

–Elevation to Krsna Consciousness

16.

Chanting of the Holy Name Is the Easiest Means for Spiritual Advancement

Chanting Hare Krsna is the easiest means of self–realization:

Krsna says that out of many thousands of people, one may try to make perfection of this life; and out of many millions of such persons on the path of perfection, only one may understand Krsna. So understanding Krsna is not very easy. But it is also the easiest. It is not easy, but at the same time it is the easiest. It is the easiest if you follow the prescribed

forms.

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu has introduced this chanting of Hare Krsna. He has not exactly introduced it; it is in the scriptures. But He has especially propagated this formula. In this age this is the easiest method of self-realization. Simply chant Hare Krsna. It can be done by everyone. In my classroom, I am perhaps the only Indian. My students are all Americans, and they are taking part in the chanting very nicely, chanting and dancing. That means that, in any country, in any place, this can be performed. Therefore it is the easiest. You may not understand the philosophy of the Bhagavad-gita. That is also not very difficult; but still, if you think that you cannot understand, you can still chant very easily: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna.

If we want to understand God, Krsna, this is the beginning. The easiest beginning—simply chanting. Now, there are many students of my ISKCON institution. This institution is open a little over a year; but some of the students, by simply chanting, by the grace of Krsna, have advanced in such a way that they can talk about the science of God, and they will very easily answer those human questions. So, this is the easiest method of transcendental meditation.

Krsna says that out of many millions of people, one may understand Him. But, by chanting of this Hare Krsna, as introduced by Lord Caitanya—chanting and dancing—you can understand Krsna within a very short time.

~The Path of Perfection

In Kali-yuga, chanting of Hare Krsna is the simplest means to perfection: In Satya-yuga meditation was the main process, and great munis meditated for periods extending upward of 60,000 years. In this age, however, perfection by that means of meditation is not possible because we are so short-lived. Consequently in this age it is especially recommended that we all sit down together and chant Hare Krsna. It is very easy, and everyone can take part in it. There is no necessity of education, nor are any previous qualifications required. In this age people are also very slow and unfortunate, and they are contaminated with bad association. Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare as a great means of propaganda for spreading love of God.

~Elevation to Krsna Consciousness

Spiritual perfection is very easily attained through the process of chanting Hare Krsna: The bhakti–yoga process should be completed in this life, because in this life we have all the instruments necessary to become fully Krsna conscious. We have mrdangas and cymbals and tongues with which to chant Hare Krsna. Even if we don't have mrdangas and cymbals, we have a tongue. No one has to purchase a tongue. We also have ears with which to hear the sound that the tongue vibrates. Therefore we have all the instruments we need with us—a tongue and ears. We have only to chant Hare Krsna and use our ears to hear this vibration, and all perfection will be there. We don't have to become highly educated scientists or philosophers. We have only to chant and hear.

~The Path of Perfection

The easiest means of achieving spiritual success is to chant the holy names of the Lord: [Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]: What is the value of a prolonged life which is wasted, inexperienced by years in this world? Better a moment of full consciousness, because that gives one a start in searching after his supreme interest.

Srila Sukadeva Gosvami instructed Maharaja Pariksit about the importance of the chanting of the holy name of the Lord by every progressive gentleman. In order to encourage the King, who had only seven remaining days of life, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami asserted that there is no use in living hundreds of years without any knowledge of the problems of life—better to live for a moment with full consciousness of the supreme interest to be fulfilled. The supreme interest of life is eternal, with full knowledge and bliss. Those who are bewildered by the external features of the material world and are engaged in the animal propensities of the eat–drink–and–be–merry type of life are simply wasting their lives by the unseen passing away of valuable years. We should know in perfect consciousness that human life is bestowed upon the conditioned soul to achieve spiritual success, and the easiest possible procedure to attain this end is to chant the holy name of the Lord... One should, therefore, utilize one's life in glorifying the Lord by all means, without any offense. Such activity of life, even for a moment, is never to be compared to a prolonged life of ignorance, like the lives of the tree and other living entities who may live for thousands of years without prosecuting spiritual advancement.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.1.12

Krsna consciousness is a simple process, based upon chanting the holy name:

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is ... a very simple process. It is not necessary to become a great philosopher, scientist, or whatever. We need only chant the holy name of the Lord, understanding that His personality, His name, and His qualities are all absolute.
~The Science of Self-Realization

If one chants even for one week, he will make solid progress in spiritual life:
If one takes to Caitanya Mahāprabhu's method, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, the first installment of gain will be *ceto-darpaṇa-marjanam*: [Cc. Antya 20.12] all the dirty things will be cleansed from the heart simply by chanting. Chant. There is no expenditure, and there is no loss. If one simply chants for one week, he will see how much he will progress in spiritual knowledge.
~The Science of Self-Realization

Chanting produces immediate effects:

"... Simply by touching the holy name with one's tongue, immediate effects are produced..."

~Padyavali (24), by Rupa Gosvami

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 15.110]

Simply by keeping a picture of Lord Caitanya and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, one can worship God and realize Him:

In the Srimad-Bhagavatam it is said that [Lord Caitanya] is the incarnation of God in this age. And who worships Him? The process is very simple. Just keep a picture of Lord Caitanya with His associates. Lord Caitanya is in the middle, accompanied by His principal associates—Nityananda, Advaita, Gadadhara, and Srivasa. One simply has to keep this picture. One can keep it anywhere. It is not that one has to come to us to see this picture. Anyone can have this picture in his home, chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, and thus worship Lord Caitanya. That is the simple method. But who will capture this simple method? Those who have good brains. Without much bother, if one simply keeps a picture of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu at home and chants Hare Kṛṣṇa, then one will realize God. Anyone can adopt this simple method. There is no expenditure, there is no tax, nor is there any need to build a very big church or temple. Anyone, anywhere, can sit down on the road or beneath a tree and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and worship God. Therefore it is a great opportunity.

From Haridasa thakura's personal example we can understand that becoming highly elevated in Krsna consciousness by chanting the holy name is very simple:

Haridasa thakura constructed a cottage in a solitary forest. There he planted a tulasi plant, and in front of the tulasi he would chant the holy name of the Lord 300,000 times daily. He chanted throughout the entire day and night.

The village of Benapola is situated in the district of Yasohara, which is now in Bangladesh. Benapola is near the Banagano station, which is at the border of Bangladesh and may be reached by the eastern railway from Sealdah Station in Calcutta. Haridasa thakura, being the acarya of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, is called Namacarya Haridasa thakura. From his personal example we can understand that chanting the Hare Krsna mantra and becoming highly elevated in Krsna consciousness is very simple. Without difficulty one can sit down anywhere, especially on the bank of the Ganges, Yamuna or any sacred river, devise a sitting place or cottage, plant a tulasi, and before the tulasi chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra undisturbed.

Haridasa thakura used to chant the holy name on his beads 300,000 times daily. Throughout the entire day and night, he would chant the sixteen names of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. One should not, however, imitate Haridasa thakura, for no one else can chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra 300,000 times a day. Such chanting is for the mukta-purusa, or liberated soul. We can follow his example, however, by chanting sixteen rounds of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra on beads every day and offering respect to the tulasi plant. This is not at all difficult for anyone, and the process of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra with a vow before the tulasi plant has such great spiritual potency that simply by doing this one can become spiritually strong. Therefore we request the members of the Hare Krsna movement to follow Haridasa thakura's example rigidly. Chanting sixteen rounds does not take much time, nor is offering respects to the tulasi plant difficult. The process has immense spiritual potency. One should not miss this opportunity.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.100

17.

Chanting of the Holy Name Is the Foundation of Spiritual Life

Chanting the holy name is the basic principle of spiritual advancement:

[Lord Kapila to Devahuti]:

A devotee should always try to hear about spiritual matters and should always utilize his time in chanting the holy name of the Lord...

It is especially mentioned here, nama–sankirtanac ca: one should chant the holy names of the Lord–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare–either individually or with others. Lord Caitanya has given special stress to chanting of these holy names of the Lord as the basic principle of spiritual advancement. ~Srimad–Bhagavatam 3.29.18

Devotional service begins with chanting of the holy name:

[Yamaraja to the Yamadutas]:

Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society.

The Bhagavatam further says, sa vai pumsam paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhoksaje: [SB 1.2.6] the supreme religion is that which teaches its followers how to love the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is beyond the reach of experimental knowledge. Such a religious system begins with tan–nama–grahana, chanting of the holy name of the Lord (sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam pada–sevanam [SB 7.5.23]). After chanting the holy name of the Lord and dancing in ecstasy, one gradually sees the form of the Lord, the pastimes of the Lord and the transcendental qualities of the Lord. This way one fully understands the situation of the Personality of Godhead.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.3.22

Devotional service begins with hearing the holy name chanted by a pure Vaisnava:

Because the living entities are minute, atomic parts and parcels of the Lord, devotional service is already present within them in a dormant condition. Devotional service begins with sravanam kirtanam, hearing and chanting. When a man is sleeping, he can be awakened by sound vibration; therefore every conditioned soul should be given the chance

to hear the Hare Krsna mantra chanted by a pure Vaisnava. One who hears the Hare Krsna mantra thus vibrated is awakened to spiritual consciousness, or Krsna consciousness. In this way one's mind gradually becomes purified, as stated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu (ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]). When the mind is purified, the senses are also purified. Instead of using the senses for sense gratification, the awakened devotee employs the senses in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. This is the process by which dormant love for Krsna is awakened.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 22.105

Service to Krsna begins with chanting His holy name and tasting His prasada: With our material senses, we cannot see Krsna, nor can we even hear His name. We can begin to perceive Him when we advance in devotional service. That devotional service begins with the tongue, not the legs, eyes or ears. The tongue must be utilized to chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare and take Krsna prasada. Thus the tongue has a dual function, and by utilizing it in this way, we will realize Krsna. We cannot see Krsna with our material eyes, nor hear about Him with material ears, nor touch Him with our hands; but if we engage our tongue in His service, He will reveal Himself, saying, "Here I am."

~Elevation to Krsna Consciousness

Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau means that the service of the Lord begins with the tongue. This refers to chanting. By chanting Hare Krsna, one begins the service of the Lord... The tongue should be engaged in chanting and in eating the Lord's prasada so that the other senses will be controlled. Chanting is the medicine, and prasada is the diet. With these processes one can begin his service, and as the service increases, the Lord reveals more and more to the devotee.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.7.24

If no one knows the Supreme Personality of Godhead, how can He be known? He can be known when the Supreme Lord comes before you and reveals Himself to you. Then you can know. Our senses are imperfect, and they cannot realize the Supreme Truth. When you adopt a submissive attitude and chant, realization begins from the tongue. To eat and to vibrate sound is the business of the tongue. If you can control your tongue for prasada, spiritual food, and make the sound vibration of the holy name, then by surrender of the tongue you can control all the other senses. If you cannot control your tongue, you cannot control your senses. Taste prasada and become spiritually advanced. You can have this process at your home: offer vegetarian foods to Krsna, chant the Hare Krsna mantra and

offer obeisances:

namo brahmanya–devaya
go–brahmana–hitaya ca
jagad–dhitaya krsnaya
govindaya namo namah

Everyone can offer, and then take the food with friends. And chant before the picture of Krsna, and lead a pure life. Just see the result—the whole world will become Vaikuntha, where there is no anxiety.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

Surrender begins with giving up bad habits and chanting the Hare Krsna mantra on beads:

Reporter: Do you think your movement is the only way to know God?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes.

Reporter: How are you assured of that?

Srila Prabhupada: From the authorities and from God, Krsna. Krsna says:

sarva–dharman parityajya
mam ekam saranam vraja
aham tvam sarva–papebhyo
moksaisyami ma sucah

"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear." [Bhagavad–gita 18.66]

Reporter: Does "surrender" mean that someone would have to leave his family?

Srila Prabhupada: No.

Reporter: But suppose I were to become an initiate. Wouldn't I have to come and live in the temple?

Srila Prabhupada: Not necessarily.

Reporter: I can stay at home?

Srila Prabhupada: Oh, yes.

Reporter: What about work? Would I have to give up my job?

Srila Prabhupada: No, you'd simply have to give up your bad habits and chant the Hare

Krsna mantra on these beads—that's all.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Continuous chanting of the holy name as part of the foundation of spiritual life:

[Narada Muni to the reformed hunter]:

"Narada Muni continued, 'Leave your home and go to the river. There you should construct a small cottage, and in front of the cottage you should grow a tulasi plant on a raised platform. After planting the tulasi tree before your house, you should daily circumambulate that tulasi plant, serve her by giving her water and other things, and continuously chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.'"

This is the beginning of spiritual life. After leaving householder life, one may go to a holy place, such as the bank of the Ganges or Yamuna, and erect a small cottage. A small cottage can be constructed without any expenditure. Four logs serving as pillars can be secured by any man from the forest. The roof can be covered with leaves, and one can cleanse the inside. Thus one can live very peacefully. In any condition, any man can live in a small cottage, plant a tulasi tree, water it in the morning, offer it prayers, and continuously chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Thus one can make vigorous spiritual advancement. This is not at all difficult. One simply has to follow the instructions of the spiritual master strictly. Then everything will be successful in due course of time. As far as eating is concerned, there is no problem. If Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, supplies everyone with eatables, why should He not supply His devotee? Sometimes a devotee will not even bother to construct a cottage. He will simply go to live in a mountain cave. One may live in a cave, in a cottage beside a river, in a palace or in a big city like New York or London. In any case, a devotee can follow the instructions of his spiritual master and engage in devotional service by watering the tulasi plant and chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. Taking the advice of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and our spiritual master, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja, one can go to any part of the world and instruct people to become devotees of the Lord by following the regulative principles, worshiping the tulasi plant and continuously chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 24.260-61

By hearing the transcendental vibration of the maha-mantra, a sincere person can make spiritual advancement:

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

Again there are those who, although not conversant in spiritual knowledge, begin to worship the Supreme Person upon hearing about Him from others. Because of their tendency to hear from authorities, they also transcend the path of birth and death.

This verse is particularly applicable to modern society because in modern society there is practically no education in spiritual matters. Some of the people may appear to be atheistic or agnostic or philosophical, but actually there is no knowledge of philosophy. As for the common man, if he is a good soul, then there is a chance for advancement by hearing. This hearing process is very important. Lord Caitanya, who preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the modern world, gave great stress to hearing because if the common man simply hears from authoritative sources, he can progress, especially, according to Lord Caitanya, if he hears the transcendental vibration Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. It is stated, therefore, that all men should take advantage of hearing from realized souls and gradually become able to understand everything. The worship of the Supreme Lord will then undoubtedly take place. Lord Caitanya has said that in this age no one needs to change his position, but one should give up the endeavor to understand the Absolute Truth by speculative reasoning. One should learn to become the servant of those who are in knowledge of the Supreme Lord. If one is fortunate enough to take shelter of a pure devotee, hear from him about self-realization and follow in his footsteps, he will be gradually elevated to the position of a pure devotee. In this verse particularly the process of hearing is strongly recommended, and this is very appropriate. Although the common man is often not as capable as so-called philosophers, faithful hearing from an authoritative person will help one transcend this material existence and go back to Godhead, back to home.

~Bhagavad-gīta As It Is 13.26

By minimizing bodily necessities, the devotee can primarily devote his time to cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness through chanting the holy name:

[Lord Caitanya explains that] a devotee should accept only those things that are favorable to keep his body and soul together and should reject those things that increase the demands of the body. Only the bare necessities for bodily maintenance should be accepted. By minimizing bodily necessities, one can primarily devote his time to the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the chanting of the holy names of God.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Sankirtana and chanting as fundamental principles for the execution of devotional service:
The next important items are as follows: ... 14) Sankirtana. 15) Chanting...
~The Nectar of Devotion

Unless one follows the regulative principles governing chanting and hearing of the holy name, one cannot become a pure devotee:

Unless one follows the spiritual master's instructions and the regulative principles governing chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord, one cannot become a pure devotee.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 19.157

18.

Chanting of the Holy Name Is the Most Important Element of Devotional Service

The most important item in the execution of devotional service is the chanting of the holy name:

Then the Bhattacharya asked Caitanya Mahaprabhu: "Which item is the most important in the execution of devotional service?" The Lord replied that the most important item was the chanting of the holy name of the Lord.

There are nine items to be executed in devotional service. These are enumerated in the following verse from Srimad-Bhagavatam (7.5.23):

sravanam kirtanam visnoh
smaranam pada-sevanam
arcanam vandanam dasyam
sakhyam atma-nivedanam

Hearing the glories of the Lord, chanting, remembering, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering worship in the temple, offering prayers, becoming a servant of the Lord, becoming the Lord's friend, and sarvatma-nivedana, offering oneself fully at the lotus feet of the

Lord—these are the nine devotional processes. In *The Nectar of Devotion*, these are expanded into sixty-four items. When Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya asked the Lord which item was most important, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu immediately answered that the most important item is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Sri Caitanya—caritamṛta Madhya—lila 6.241

Of the nine processes of devotional service, chanting the holy name is the most important:
[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"Among the ways of executing devotional service, the nine prescribed methods are the best, for these processes have great potency to deliver Krsna 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."

Srila Jiva Gosvami Prabhu gives the following directions in his *Bhakti—sandarbha* (270)

iyam ca kirtanakhya bhaktir bhagavato dravya—jati—guna—kriyabhir dina—
janaika—visayapara—karuna—mayiti sruti—puranadi—visrutih. ata eva kalau
svabhavata evatidinesu lokesv avirbhuya tan anayasenaiva tat—tad—yuga—gata—
maha—sadhananam sarvam eva phalam dadana sa krtarthayati. yata eva tayaiva
kalau bhagavato visesatas ca santoso bhavati.

"Chanting the holy name is the chief means of attaining love of Godhead. This chanting or devotional service does not depend on any paraphernalia, nor on one's having taken birth in a good family. By humility and meekness one attracts the attention of Krsna. That is the verdict of all the Vedas. Therefore if one becomes very humble and meek, he can easily attain the lotus feet of Krsna in this age of Kali. That is the fulfillment of all great sacrifices, penances and austerities because when one achieves ecstatic love of Godhead, he attains the complete perfection of life.

Therefore whatever one does in executing devotional service must be accompanied with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord."

~Sri Caitanya—caritamṛta Antya—lila 4.70—71

Of the nine processes of devotional service, hearing and chanting the maha—mantra is the

most important:

In the bhakti–yoga system there are nine different processes: hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshipping the Deity in the temple, praying, carrying out orders, serving Krsna as a friend and sacrificing for Him. Out of these, sravanam kirtanam, hearing and chanting, are considered the most important. At a public kirtana one person can chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, while a group listens, and at the end of the mantra, the group can respond, and in this way there is a reciprocation of hearing and chanting.

~The Perfection of Yoga

Hearing of the holy name of the Lord (sravana) is the basis for understanding the other processes of devotional service:

[Prahlada Maharaja to Hiranyakasipu]:

Prahlada Maharaja said: Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia and pastimes of Lord Visnu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (In other words, serving Him with the body, mind and words)—these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who has dedicated his life to the service of Krsna through these nine methods should be understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge.

Hearing of the holy name of the Lord (sravana) is the beginning of devotional service. Although any one of the nine processes is sufficient, in chronological order the hearing of the holy name of the Lord is the beginning. Indeed, it is essential... Unless one hears about the holy name, form and qualities of the Lord, one cannot clearly understand the other processes of devotional service. Therefore Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu recommends that one chant the holy name of Krsna. Param vijayate sri–krsna–sankirtanam. If one is fortunate enough to hear from the mouth of realized devotees, he is very easily successful on the path of devotional service. Therefore hearing of the holy name, form and qualities of the Lord is essential.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.5.23–24

All processes of devotional service must be preceded and followed by kirtana, which is the

most important process:

[Lord Caitanya to Satyaraja]:

"... One can complete the nine processes of devotional service simply by chanting the holy name."

The nine devotional processes such as sravana and kirtana can all be attained at once if one simply chants the holy name of the Lord offenselessly.

In this regard, Srila Jiva Gosvami states in his book *Bhakti-sandarbha* (173): *yadyapy anya bhaktih kalau kartavya, tada kirtanakhya-bhakti-samyogenaiva*. Out of the nine processes of devotional service, kirtana is very important. Srila Jiva Gosvami therefore instructs that the other processes, such as arcana, vandana, dasya and sakhya, should be executed, but they must be preceded and followed by kirtana, the chanting of the holy name. We have therefore introduced this system in all of our centers. Arcana, arati, bhoga offering, Deity dressing and decoration are all preceded and followed by the chanting of the holy name of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 15.107

Chanting of the holy name is one of the five most important practices of devotional service:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, reside at Mathura and worship the Deity with faith and veneration. These live limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of these five awakens love for Krsna."

In the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*, Srila Rupa Gosvami states:

anganam pancakasyasya
purva-vilikhitasya ca
nikhila-sraisthya-bodhaya
punar apy atra samsanam

"The glorification of these five items [association with devotees, chanting the holy name and so on] is to make known the complete superiority of these five practices of devotional service."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 22.128-29

19.

The Holy Name Is Meant to Be Chanted by All Persons

The entire world should glorify Lord Krsna by the easy process of chanting the maha–mantra:

In the beginning of Srimad–Bhagavatam, Srila Vyasadeva offered his respectful obeisances to the Supreme Truth, Vasudeva, Krsna. After that he taught his son, Sukadeva Gosvami, to preach Srimad–Bhagavatam. It is in this connection that Sukadeva Gosvami glorifies the Lord as jayati. Following in the footsteps of Srila Vyasadeva, Sukadeva Gosvami and all the acaryas in disciplic succession, the whole population of the world should glorify Lord Krsna, and for their best interest they should take to this Krsna consciousness movement. The process is easy and helpful. It is simply to chant the maha–mantra, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.
~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

The chanting of Hare Krsna is universally applicable:

Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare as a great means of propaganda for spreading love of God. It is not that it is recommended only for Kali–yuga. Actually, it is recommended for every age. There have always been many devotees who have chanted and reached perfection in all ages. That is the beauty of this Krsna consciousness movement. It is not simply for one age, or for one country, or for one class of people. Hare Krsna can be chanted by any man in any social position, in any country and in any age, for Krsna is the Supreme Lord of all people in all social positions, in all countries, in all ages.

~Elevation to Krsna Consciousness

Let there be one mantra for the whole world—the maha–mantra:

In this present day, man is very eager to have one scripture, one God, one religion, and one

occupation. So let there be one common scripture for the whole world—Bhagavad—gita. And let there be one God only for the whole world—Sri Krsna. And one mantra only—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. And let there be one work only—the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
~Bhagavad—gita As It Is Intro

Chanting is free and open for everyone:

We are not charging anything, we are not asking for fees and giving the people some secret mantra and promising them that within six months they will become God. No. This is open for everyone—children, women, girls, boys, old people—everyone can chant and see the results.

~The Science of Self—Realization

The holy name is readily available to everyone:

"The holy name of Lord Krsna ... is so powerful that save for the dumb who cannot chant it, it is readily available to everyone, including the lowest type of man, the candala..."

~Padyavali (24), by Rupa Gosvami ~ [cited: Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Madhya—lila 15.110]

Three kinds of men—those who are liberated, those trying to be liberated, and those entangled in sense gratification—take pleasure in chanting the holy name:

In this world there are three kinds of men: those who are liberated, those trying to be liberated, and those entangled in sense enjoyment. Of these three, those who are already liberated chant and hear the holy name of the Lord, knowing perfectly that to glorify the Lord is the only way to keep oneself in a transcendental position. Those who are trying to be liberated, the second class, may regard the chanting and hearing of the Lord's holy name as a process of liberation, and they too will feel the transcendental pleasure of this chanting. As for karmis and persons engaged in sense gratification, they also may take pleasure in hearing the pastimes of the Lord, like His fighting on the Battlefield of Kuruksetra and His dancing in Vrndavana with the gopis... Everyone, therefore, including the mumuksus, the vimuktas and the karmis, should chant and hear the glories of the Lord, and in this way everyone will benefit.

Although the sound vibration of the transcendental qualities of the Lord is equally beneficial to all, for those who are muktas, liberated, it is especially pleasing. As described in Srimad–Bhagavatam, Eighth Canto, Third Chapter, verse twenty, because pure devotees, who no longer have any material desires, surrender fully to the lotus feet of the Lord, they always merge in the ocean of bliss by chanting and hearing the Lord's holy name.

According to this verse, devotees like Narada and other residents of Svetadvipa are seen always engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord because by such chanting they are always externally and internally blissful. The mumuksus, persons desiring to be liberated, do not depend on the pleasures of the senses; instead, they concentrate fully on becoming liberated by chanting the holy name of the Lord. Karmis like to create something pleasing to their ears and hearts, and although they sometimes like to chant or hear the glories of the Lord, they do not do it openly. Devotees, however, always spontaneously hear, chant about and remember the activities of the Lord...

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.1 "Additional Notes"

Sankirtana, chanting of the holy name, is meant both for the poor and the rich:

Lieutenant Mozee: Would you want to start the program in an area of affluence or an area of poverty?

Srila Prabhupada: We do not draw such distinctions. Any place easily available to all kinds of men would be very suitable to hold sankirtana. There is no restriction that only the poor men need the benefit but the rich do not. Everyone needs to be purified. Do you think criminality exists only in the poorer section of society?

Lieutenant Mozee: No. But I meant to ask whether there would be more of a beneficial influence—more of a strengthening of the community—if the program were held in a poorer area rather than an affluent area.

Srila Prabhupada: Our treatment is for the spiritually diseased person. When a person is afflicted with a disease, there are no distinctions between a poor man and a rich man. They are both admitted to the same hospital. Just as the hospital should be in a place where both the poor man and the rich man can easily come, the location of the sankirtana facility should be easily accessible to all. Since everyone is materially infected, everyone should be able to take advantage.

~The Science of Self–Realization

Chanting of the holy name is recommended for not only the devotees, but for karmis and jnanis as well:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]: O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.

In this verse, Sri Sukadeva Gosvami recommends the transcendental chanting of the holy name of the Lord... This process is recommended not only for the successful execution of devotional service, but also even for those who are materially attached. According to Sri Sukadeva Gosvami, this way of attaining success is an established fact, concluded not only by him, but also by all other previous acaryas. Therefore, there is no need of further evidence. The process is recommended not only for the progressive students in different departments of ideological success, but also for those who are already successful in their achievement as fruitive workers, as philosophers or as devotees of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.11

20.

The Holy Name Benefits All Human Society

It creates a spiritual atmosphere in the world

Chanting of the holy name evokes the Vaikuntha atmosphere, freeing the world from material hankering, envy and anxiety:

[Pracetas to Lord Visnu]:

Whenever pure topics of the transcendental world are discussed, the members of the audience forget all kinds of material hankerings, at least for the time being. Not only that, but they are no longer envious of one another, nor do they suffer from anxiety or fear.

Vaikuntha means "without anxiety," and the material world means full of anxiety. As stated by Prahlada Maharaja: sada samudvigna-dhiyam asad-grahat. The living entities who have accepted this material world as a residence are full of anxiety. A place immediately

becomes Vaikuntha whenever the holy topics of the Personality of Godhead are discussed by pure devotees. This is the process of sravanam kirtanam visnoh [SB 7.5.23], chanting and hearing about the Supreme Lord Visnu. As the Supreme Lord Himself confirms:

naham tisthami vaikunthe
yoginam hrdayesu va
tatra tisthami narada
yatra gayanti mad-bhaktah

"My dear Narada, actually I do not reside in My abode, Vaikuntha, nor do I reside within the hearts of the yogis, but I reside in that place where My pure devotees chant My holy name and discuss My form, pastimes and qualities."

Because of the presence of the Lord in the form of the transcendental vibration, the Vaikuntha atmosphere is evoked. This atmosphere is without fear and anxiety. One living entity does not fear another. By hearing the holy names and glories of the Lord, a person executes pious activities. Srvanam sva-kathah krsnah punya-sravana-kirtanah (S.B. 1.2.17). Thus his material hankerings immediately stop. This sankirtana movement started by the Society for Krishna Consciousness is meant for creating Vaikuntha, the transcendental world that is without anxiety, even in this material world. The method is the propagation of the sravanam kirtanam process throughout the world. In the material world everyone is envious of his fellow man. Animalistic envy exists in human society as long as there is no performance of sankirtana-yajna, the chanting of the holy names—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. ~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.30.35

Nama-sankirtana can turn the masses toward spiritual realization and bring peace and friendship:

The Lord's congregational sankirtana movement at Puri was a unique exhibition for the mass of people. That is the way to turn the mass mind towards spiritual realization. The Lord inaugurated this system of mass sankirtana, and leaders of all countries can take advantage of this spiritual movement in order to keep the mass of people in a pure state of peace and friendship with one another. This is now the demand of the present human society all over the world.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam Intro

It brings peace

The formula for world peace is to develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness by the simple process of chanting the holy name of God:

The earth is ... the property of God, but we, the living entities, especially the so-called civilized human beings, are claiming God's property as our own, under both an individual and collective false conception. If you want peace, you have to remove this false conception from your mind and from the world. This false claim of proprietorship by the human race on earth is partly or wholly the cause of all disturbances of peace on earth.

Foolish and so-called civilized men are claiming proprietary rights on the property of God because they have now become godless. You cannot be happy and peaceful in a godless society. In the Bhagavad-gīta Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He is the factual enjoyer of all activities of the living entities, that He is the Supreme Lord of all universes, and that He is the well-wishing friend of all beings. When the people of the world know this as the formula for peace, it is then and there that peace will prevail.

Therefore, if you want peace at all, you will have to change your consciousness into Kṛṣṇa consciousness, both individually and collectively, by the simple process of chanting the holy name of God. This is a standard and recognized process for achieving peace in the world. We therefore recommend that everyone become Kṛṣṇa conscious by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

This is practical, simple, and sublime. Four hundred and eighty years ago this formula was introduced in India by Lord Sri Caitanya, and now it is available in your country. Take to this simple process of chanting as above mentioned, realize your factual position by reading the Bhagavad-gīta As It Is, and reestablish your lost relationship with Kṛṣṇa, God. Peace and prosperity will be the immediate worldwide result.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Chanting can bring peace to the world:

Lord Caitanya recommended that simply by glorifying the Lord's holy name, a tremendous change of heart can take place by which the complete misunderstanding between the human nations created by politicians can at once be extinguished. And after the extinction of the fire of misunderstanding, other profits will follow.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.4.18

Chanting of the holy name eradicates envy, and thus can bring real peace, unity and fraternity to human society:

When one chants or discusses the transcendental activities of the Lord, he immediately becomes nonenvious. In this material world everyone is envious of everyone else, but by vibrating or discussing the holy name of the Lord, one becomes nonenvious and devoid of material hankering. Because of our envy for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we have become envious of all other living entities. When we are no longer envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there will be real peace, unity and fraternity in human society. Without Narayana or sankirtana–yajna there cannot be peace in this material world.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.30.36

If the Lord is pleased by the performance of hari–nama sankirtana, then the entire world will be in a peaceful and happy condition:

My dear Mr. Katidia,

Please accept my greetings. With reference to your letter and your personal interview, I beg to inform you that without pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, no one can become happy. Unfortunately people do not know who God is and how to make Him happy. Our Krsna consciousness movement is therefore meant to present the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly to the people. As stated in the Srimad–Bhagavatam, Seventh Canto, Sixth Chapter: tuste ca tatra kim alabhyam ananta adye/ kim tair guna–vyatikarad iha ye sva–siddhah.

The idea stated in this verse is that by pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we please everyone, and there is no question of scarcity. Because people do not know this secret of success, they are making their own independent plans to be happy. However, it is not possible to achieve happiness in this way. On your letterhead I find many important men in this country who are interested in relieving the sufferings of the people, but they should know for certain that without pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead all their attempts will be futile. A diseased man cannot live simply on the strength of the help of an expert physician and medicine. If this were so, then no rich man would ever die. One must be favored by Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Therefore if you want to perform relief work simply by collecting funds, I think that it will not be successful. You have to please the supreme authority, and that is the way to success. For example, due to the performance of sankirtana here, the rain has begun to fall after a drought of two years. The last time we performed a Hare Krsna Festival in Delhi, there was imminent danger of Pakistan's declaring war, and when a newspaper man approached me for my opinion, I said there must be fighting because the other party was aggressive. However, because of our sankirtana movement, India emerged victorious. Similarly, when we held a festival in Calcutta, the Naxalite [Communist] movement stopped. These are facts. Through the sankirtana movement we can not only get all facilities for living, but also at the end can go back home, back to Godhead. Those who are of a demoniac nature cannot understand this, but it is a fact.

I therefore request you, as leading members of society, to join this movement. There is no loss on anyone's part for chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, but the gain is great. According to Bhagavad-gita [3.21], what is accepted by leading men is also accepted by common men:

yad yad acarati sresthas
yat tad evetaro janah
sa yat pramanam kurute
lokas tad anuvartate

"Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow in his footsteps. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues."

The sankirtana movement of Krsna consciousness is very important. Therefore, through you I wish to appeal to all the leading men of India to accept this movement very seriously and give us all facility to spread this movement throughout the world. Then there will be a very happy condition, not only in India but all over the world.

Hoping this will meet you in good health;

Your ever well-wisher,

-A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

The Science of Self-Realization

The chanting of the holy name is the only remedy for setting the world aright:

This world of maya is called durasraya, which means "false or bad shelter." One who puts his faith in durasraya 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 Krsna consciousness and be happy, he does not accept such instructions.

This Krsna consciousness movement is being spread all over the world just to remedy this gross ignorance. People in general are misled by blind leaders. The leaders of human society—the politicians, philosophers and scientists—are blind because they are not Krsna conscious. According to Bhagavad-gita, 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 mam duskrino mudhah
prapadyante naradhamah
mayayapahrta jnana
asuram bhavam asritah

"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 Krsna, and they oppose the endeavor of those who wish to take Krsna'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 Krsna 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, Krsna consciousness, the chanting of the holy name of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—is the only remedy for setting the world aright.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 7

It brings material prosperity

Scarcity of food in this age can be counteracted by propagation of sankirtana—yajna, chanting of the holy name:

[The personified earth planet to King Prthu]:

Due to being stocked for a very long time, all the grain seeds within me have certainly deteriorated. Therefore you should immediately arrange to take these seeds out by the standard process, which is recommended by the acaryas or sastras.

When there is a scarcity of grain, the government should follow the methods prescribed in the sastra and approved by the acaryas; thus there will be a sufficient production of grains, and food scarcity and famine can be checked. Bhagavad-gita recommends that we perform yajna, sacrifices. By the performance of yajna, sufficient clouds gather in the sky, and when there are sufficient clouds, there is also sufficient rainfall. In this way agricultural matters are taken care of. When there is sufficient grain production, the general populace eats the grains, and animals like cows, goats and other domestic animals eat the grasses and grains also. According to this arrangement, human beings should perform the sacrifices recommended in the sastras, and if they do so there will no longer be food scarcity. In Kali-yuga, the only sacrifice recommended is sankirtana-yajna.

In this verse there are two significant words: yogena, "by the approved method," and drstena, "as exemplified by the former acaryas." One is mistaken if he thinks that by applying modern machines such as tractors, grains can be produced. If one goes to a desert and uses a tractor, there is still no possibility of producing grains. We may adopt various means, but it is essential to know that the planet earth will stop producing grains if sacrifices are not performed. The earth has already explained that because nondevotees are enjoying the production of food, she has reserved food seeds for the performance of sacrifice. Now, of course, atheists will not believe in this spiritual method of producing grains, but whether they believe or not, the fact remains that we are not independent to produce grain by mechanical means. As far as the approved method is concerned, it is enjoined in the sastras that intelligent men in this age will take to the sankirtana movement, and by so doing they shall worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Caitanya, whose bodily complexion is golden and who is always accompanied by His confidential devotees to preach this Krsna consciousness movement all over the world. In its present condition, the world can only be saved by introducing this sankirtana, this Krsna consciousness movement. As we have learned from the previous verse, one who is not in Krsna consciousness is considered a thief. Even though he may be materially very advanced, a thief cannot be placed in a comfortable position. A thief is a thief, and he is punishable. Because people are without Krsna consciousness, they have become thieves, and consequently they are being punished by the laws of material nature. No one can check this, not even by introducing so many relief funds and humanitarian institutions. Unless the people of the world take to Krsna consciousness, there will be a scarcity of food and much suffering.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.18.8

If people in general chant the Hare Krsna mantra, the necessities of life will automatically follow:

"All living bodies subsist on food grains, which are produced from rains. Rains are produced by performance of yajna [sacrifice], and yajna is born of prescribed duties." (Bg. 3.14) When food grains are sufficiently produced, both animals and human beings can be nourished without difficulty for their maintenance. This is nature's arrangement. Prakrteh kriyamanani gunaih karmani sarvasah [Bg. 3.27]. Everyone is acting under the influence of material nature, and only fools think they can improve upon what God has created. The householders are specifically responsible for seeing that the laws of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are maintained, without fighting between men, communities, societies or nations. Human society should properly utilize the gifts of God, especially the food grains that grow because of rain falling from the sky. As stated in Bhagavad-gita, yajnad bhavati parjanya [Bg. 3.14]. So that rainfall will be regulated, humanity should perform yajnas, sacrifices. Yajnas were previously performed with offerings of oblations of ghee and food grains, but in this age, of course, this is no longer possible, for the production of ghee and food grains has diminished because of the sinful life of human society. However, people should take to Krsna consciousness and chant the Hare Krsna mantra, as recommended in the sastras (yajnaih sankirtana-prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah [SB 11.5.32]). If people throughout the world take to the Krsna consciousness movement and chant the easy sound vibration of the transcendental name and fame of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there will be no scarcity of rainfall; consequently food grains, fruits and flowers will be properly produced, and all the necessities of life will be easily obtained. Grhasthas, or householders, should take the responsibility for organizing such natural production. It is therefore said, tasyaiva hetoh prayateta kovidah. An intelligent person should try to spread Krsna consciousness through the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, and all the necessities of life will automatically follow.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.14.7

In this age, people can be freed from drought and scarcity of rain by congregational chanting of the holy name:

When the Hare Krsna mantra is chanted by many men together, the chanting is called sankirtana, and as a result of such a yajna there will be clouds in the sky (yajnad bhavati parjanya [Bg. 3.14]). In these days of drought, people can gain relief from scarcity of rain and food by the simple method of the Hare Krsna yajna. Indeed, this can relieve all of

human society. At present there are droughts throughout Europe and America, and people are suffering, but if people take this Krsna consciousness movement seriously, if they stop their sinful activities and chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, all their problems will be solved without difficulty.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 9.1.17

In order to counteract scarcity in this age, people must perform sankirtana–yajna, chanting of the holy names:

In the present age of Kali there will eventually be a great scarcity of water (anavrsti), for the general populace, due to ignorance and the scarcity of yajna ingredients, will neglect to perform yajnas. Srimad–Bhagavatam therefore advises: yajnaih sankirtana–prayaih yajanti hi sumedhasah. After all, yajna is meant to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this age of Kali, there is great scarcity and ignorance; nonetheless, everyone can perform sankirtana–yajna. Every family in every society can conduct sankirtana–yajna at least every evening. In this way there will be no disturbance or scarcity of rain. It is essential for the people in this age to perform the sankirtana–yajna in order to be materially happy and to advance spiritually.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.4.3

By performance of sankirtana–yajna, the congregational chanting of the holy name, people will be happy economically, politically, socially, religiously and culturally:

Yajna must be performed, for otherwise people will be entangled in sinful activities and will suffer immensely. Therefore the Krsna consciousness movement has taken charge of introducing the chanting of Hare Krsna all over the world. This Hare Krsna movement is also yajna, but without the difficulties involved in securing paraphernalia and qualified brahmanas. This congregational chanting can be performed anywhere and everywhere. If people somehow or other assemble together and are induced to chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, all the purposes of yajna will be fulfilled. The first purpose is that there must be sufficient rain, for without rain there cannot be any produce (annad bhavanti bhutani parjanya anna–sambhavah). All our necessities can be produced simply by rainfall (kamam vavarsa parjanya [SB 1.10.4]), and the earth is the original source of all necessities (sarva–kama–dugha mahi). In conclusion, therefore, in this age of Kali people all over the world should refrain from the four principles of sinful life–illicit sex, meat–eating,

intoxication and gambling—and in a pure state of existence should perform the simple yajna of chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Then the earth will certainly produce all the necessities for life, and people will be happy economically, politically, socially, religiously and culturally. Everything will be in proper order.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 9.20.24–26

The performance of sankirtana–yajna will make the world peaceful and prosperous: Whatever is taken from the earth—either from the mines, from the surface of the globe or from the atmosphere—should always be considered the property of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and should be used for Yajna, Lord Visnu. As soon as the process of yajna is stopped, the earth will withhold all productions—vegetables, trees, plants, fruits, flowers, and other agricultural products and minerals. As confirmed in Bhagavad–gita, the process of yajna was instituted from the beginning of creation. By the regular performance of yajna, the equal distribution of wealth and the restriction of sense gratification, the entire world will be made peaceful and prosperous. As already mentioned, in this age of Kali the simple performance of sankirtana–yajna—the holding of festivals as initiated by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness—should be introduced in every town and village... If human society remains satisfied simply by taking grains from the planet earth as well as other necessities for maintaining the body, society will not be sufficiently prosperous... Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In Kali–yuga, if this Vedic maha–mantra is chanted regularly and heard regularly by the devotional process of sravanam kirtanam, it will purify all societies, and thus humanity will be happy both materially and spiritually.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.18.13–14

The results derived by great sacrifices in the past can be derived by performing sankirtana–yajna:

Unless we are prepared to perform the prescribed sacrifices, our supply of the necessities of life will be checked. Bhagavad–gita confirms that Lord Brahma created human society along with yajna, the performance of sacrifice. Yajna means Lord Visnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and sacrifice means working for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this age, however, it is very difficult to find qualified brahmanas who can perform sacrifices as prescribed in the Vedas. Therefore it is recommended in Srimad–Bhagavatam (yajnaih sankirtana–prayaih) that by performing sankirtana–yajna and by satisfying the yajna–purusa, Lord Caitanya, one can derive all the results derived by

great sacrifices in the past. King Prthu and others derived all the necessities of life from the earthly planet by performing great sacrifices. Now this sankirtana movement has already been started by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. People should take advantage of this great sacrifice and join in the Society's activities; then there will be no scarcity. If sankirtana–yajna is performed, there will be no difficulty, not even for industrial enterprises. Therefore this system should be introduced in all spheres of life—social, political, industrial, commercial, etc. Then everything will run very peacefully and smoothly.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.19.7

The whole world can become peaceful and prosperous through the sankirtana–yajna: The politicians have very little time to think of the welfare of the citizens, whom they oppress with heavy taxes in the form of income tax, sales tax and many other taxes—people sometimes have eighty to ninety percent of their income taken away, and these taxes are lavishly spent for the high salaries drawn by the officers and rulers. Formerly, the taxes accumulated from the citizens were spent for performing great sacrifices as enjoined in the Vedic literature. At the present moment, however, almost all forms of sacrifice are not at all possible; therefore, it is recommended in the sastras that people should perform sankirtana–yajna. Any householder, regardless of his position, can perform this sankirtana–yajna without expenditure. All the family members can sit down together and simply clap their hands and chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Somehow or other, everyone can manage to perform such a yajna and distribute prasada to the people in general. That is quite sufficient for this age of Kali. The Krsna consciousness movement is based on this principle: chant the Hare Krsna mantra at every moment, as much as possible, both inside and outside of the temples, and, as far as possible, distribute prasada. This process can be accelerated with the cooperation of state administrators and those who are producing the country's wealth. Simply by liberal distribution of prasada and sankirtana, the whole world can become peaceful and prosperous.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.12.10

It creates a more auspicious political situation

Through popularizing the chanting of the holy name, brahminical culture and ksatriya government will automatically be revived:

Because the population of the modern world consists mostly of sudras, the brahminical

culture is now lost and is extremely difficult to reestablish in a proper way. Therefore Lord Caitanya has recommended the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, which will revive brahminical culture very easily...

Because of the increment in demoniac population, people have lost brahminical culture. Nor is there a ksatriya government. Instead, the government is a democracy in which any sudra can be voted into taking up the governmental reins and capture the power to rule. Because of the poisonous effects of Kali–yuga, the sastra (S.B. 12.2.13) says, dasyu–prayesu rajasu: the government will adopt the policies of dasyus, or plunderers. Thus there will be no instructions from the brahmanas, and even if there are brahminical instructions, there will be no ksatriya rulers who can follow them. Aside from Satya–yuga, even formerly, in the days when demons were flourishing, Hiranyakasipu planned to destroy the brahminical culture and the ksatriya government and thus create chaos all over the world. Although in Satya–yuga this plan was very difficult to execute, in Kali–yuga, which is full of sudras and demons, the brahminical culture is lost and can be revived only by the chanting of the maha–mantra. Therefore the Krsna consciousness movement, or the Hare Krsna movement, has been inaugurated to revive brahminical culture very easily so that people may become happy and peaceful in this life and prepare for elevation in the next... Through the popularizing of hari–kirtana, or the sankirtana movement, the brahminical culture and ksatriya government will automatically come back, and people will be extremely happy.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.2.11

If we chant the holy name offenselessly, the kingdom of Rama can appear even in this Kali–yuga:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

When Lord Ramacandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was the King of this world, all bodily and mental suffering, disease, old age, bereavement, lamentation, distress, fear and fatigue were completely absent. There was even no death for those who did not want it.

All these facilities existed because of Lord Ramacandra's presence as the King of the entire world. A similar situation could be introduced immediately, even in this age called Kali, the worst of all ages. It is said, kali–kala nama–rupe krsna–avatara: Krsna descends in this Kali–yuga in the form of His holy name–Hare Krsna, Hare Rama. If we chant offenselessly, Rama and Krsna are still present in this age. The kingdom of Rama was immensely popular and beneficial, and the spreading of this Hare Krsna movement can immediately introduce a similar situation, even in this Kali–yuga.

To counteract the unfortunate situation in government, the general populace should chant the maha–mantra:

The protection of the earthly planet is dependent on proper rainfall, and as stated in Bhagavad–gita and other scriptures, sacrifices are performed to please those demigods who are in charge of rainfall...

Thus the proper execution of yajna, sacrifice, is required. As indicated herein, King Prthu alone would induce all the citizens to engage in such sacrificial activities so that there would not be scarcity or distress. In Kali–yuga, however, in the so–called secular state, the executive branch of government is in the charge of so–called kings and presidents who are all fools and rascals, ignorant of the intricacies of nature's causes and ignorant of the principles of sacrifice. Such rascals simply make various plans, which always fail, and the people subsequently suffer disturbances. To counteract this situation, the sastras advise:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatih anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

Thus in order to counteract this unfortunate situation in government, the general populace is advised to chant the maha–mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.16.5

In this age, saintly persons should help the general populace not by political action, but by chanting the maha–mantra:

Saintly persons are not interested in political matters, yet they are always thinking of the welfare of the people in general. Consequently they sometimes have to come down to the political field and take steps to correct the misguided government or royalty. However, in Kali–yuga, saintly persons are not as powerful as they previously were. They used to be able to burn any sinful man to ashes by virtue of their spiritual prowess. Now saintly persons have no such power due to the influence of the age of Kali. Indeed, the brahmanas

do not even have the power to perform sacrifices in which animals are put into a fire to attain a new life. Under these circumstances, instead of actively taking part in politics, saintly persons should engage in chanting the maha–mantra, Hare Krsna. By the grace of Lord Caitanya, by simply chanting this Hare Krsna maha–mantra, the general populace can derive all benefits without political implications.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.14.12

It eradicates crime

Crime can be eradicated by mass sankirtana, which changes the heart:

Lieutenant Mozee: I understand you have some ideas that could help us in our efforts to prevent crime. I'd be very interested to hear them.

Srila Prabhupada: The difference between a pious man and a criminal is that one is pure in heart and the other is dirty. This dirt is like a disease in the form of uncontrollable lust and greed in the heart of the criminal. Today people in general are in this diseased condition, and thus crime is very widespread. When the people become purified of these dirty things, crime will disappear. The simplest process of purification is to assemble in congregation and chant the holy names of God. This is called sankirtana and is the basis of our Krsna consciousness movement. So, if you want to stop crime, then you must gather as many people as possible for mass sankirtana. This congregational chanting of the holy name of God will dissipate all the dirty things in everyone's heart. Then there will be no more crime... The age we live in is called Kali–yuga, the age of forgetting God. It is an age of misunderstanding and quarrel, and the people's hearts are filled with dirty things. But God is so powerful that if we chant His holy name we become purified, just as my disciples have become purified of their bad habits. Our movement is based on this principle of chanting the holy name of God. We give everyone the opportunity, without any distinction. They can come to our temple, chant the Hare Krsna mantra, take a little prasada as refreshment, and gradually become purified. So if the governmental authorities give us some facilities, then we can hold mass sankirtana. Then, without a doubt, the whole society will change...

Lieutenant Mozee: If I could return to my original purpose for coming, might I ask what advice you could give to assist us in reducing crime? I recognize that the first and foremost way would be a return to God, as you say—there's no doubt about that—but is there something that we could immediately do to diminish this spreading criminal mentality?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. As I've already outlined in the beginning of our talk, you should

give us the facility to chant the holy name of God and distribute prasada. Then there will be a tremendous change in the population. I came alone from India, and now I have many followers. What did I do? I asked them to sit down and chant the Hare Krsna mantra, and afterward I distributed a little prasada. If this is done on a mass scale, the entire society will become very pleasing. This is a fact.

Lieutenant Mozee: Would you want to start the program in an area of affluence or an area of poverty?

Srila Prabhupada: We do not draw such distinctions. Any place easily available to all kinds of men would be very suitable to hold sankirtana. There is no restriction that only the poor men need the benefit but the rich do not. Everyone needs to be purified. Do you think criminality exists only in the poorer section of society?

Lieutenant Mozee: No. But I meant to ask whether there would be more of a beneficial influence—more of a strengthening of the community—if the program were held in a poorer area rather than an affluent area.

Srila Prabhupada: Our treatment is for the spiritually diseased person. When a person is afflicted with a disease, there are no distinctions between a poor man and a rich man. They are both admitted to the same hospital. Just as the hospital should be in a place where both the poor man and the rich man can easily come, the location of the sankirtana facility should be easily accessible to all. Since everyone is materially infected, everyone should be able to take advantage.

The difficulty is that the rich man thinks he's perfectly healthy, although he's the most diseased of all. But as a policeman, you well know that there's criminality among rich men and poor men alike. So our chanting process is for everyone, because it cleanses the heart, regardless of the man's opulence or poverty. The only way to permanently change the criminal habit is to change the heart of the criminal. As you well know, many thieves are arrested numerous times and put into jail. Although they know that if they commit theft they will go to jail, still they are forced to steal, because of their unclean hearts. Therefore without cleansing the heart of the criminal, you cannot stop crime simply by more stringent law enforcement. The thief and the murderer already know the law, yet they still commit violent crimes, due to their unclean hearts. So our process is to cleanse the heart. Then all the troubles of this material world will be solved.

Lieutenant Mozee: That's a very difficult task, sir.

Srila Prabhupada: It is not difficult. Simply invite everyone: "Come, chant Hare Krsna, dance, and take sumptuous prasada." What is the difficulty? We are doing this at our centers, and people are coming. But because we have very little money, we can hold sankirtana only on a small scale. We invite everyone, and gradually people are coming to our centers and becoming devotees. If the government would give us a large facility, however, we could expand unlimitedly. And the problem is big; otherwise why are there national news articles asking what to do? No civil state wants this criminality. That's a fact. But the leaders do not know how to stop it. If they listen to us, however, we can give them the answer. Why crime? Because people are godless. And what to do? Chant Hare Krsna and take prasada. If you like, you can adopt this process of sankirtana. Otherwise, we will continue conducting it on a small scale. We are just like a poor medical man with a small private practice who could open a big hospital if he were given the facility. The government is the executor. If they take our advice and adopt the process of sankirtana, then the problem of crime will be solved.

Lieutenant Mozee: There are many Christian organizations in the United States that give the holy communion. Why doesn't this work? Why is this not cleansing the heart?

Srila Prabhupada: To speak frankly, I find it difficult to find even one real Christian. The so-called Christians do not abide by the Bible's order. One of the ten commandments in the Bible is, "Thou shalt not kill." But where is that Christian who does not kill by eating the flesh of the cow? The process of chanting the Lord's holy name and distributing prasada will be effective if carried out by persons who are actually practicing religion. My disciples are trained to strictly follow religious principles, and therefore their chanting of the holy name of God is different from others'. Theirs is not simply a rubber-stamped position. They have realized the purifying power of the holy name through practice.

Lieutenant Mozee: Sir, isn't the difficulty that although a small circle of priests and devotees may follow the religious principles, those on the fringe deviate and cause trouble? For example, assume that the Hare Krsna movement grows to gigantic proportions, as Christianity has. Wouldn't you then have a problem with people on the fringe of the movement who professed to be followers but were actually not?

Srila Prabhupada: That possibility is always there, but all I am saying is that if you are not a true Christian, then your preaching will not be effective. And because we are strictly following religious principles, our preaching will be effective in spreading God consciousness and alleviating the problem of crime.

The Science of Self-Realization

21.

Even the Lowest of Men Can be Elevated by the Holy Name

The holy name is readily available to even the lowest type of man:

"The holy name of Lord Krsna ... is so powerful that save for the dumb who cannot chant it, it is readily available to everyone, including the lowest type of man, the candala..."

~Padyavali (24), by Rupa Gosvami

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 15.110]

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu distributed the nectar of the holy name to everyone:

The most munificent Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Gaurakrsna, distributed to everyone—even the lowest of men—His own confidential treasury in the form of the nectar of love of Himself and the holy name. This was never given to the people at any time before. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 23.1

Regardless of social position, one should chant the holy name to overcome the spell of maya and attain the transcendental platform:

Following the orders of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Govinda, His personal servant, called for all the poor beggars, who were unhappy due to their poverty, and fed them sumptuously. Observing the beggars eating prasada, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu chanted, "Hari bol!" and instructed them to chant the holy name. As soon as the beggars chanted the holy name, "Hari bol," they were immediately absorbed in ecstatic love of Godhead. In this way Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu performed wonderful pastimes.

Krsna conducts the material world under the three modes of material nature, and consequently there are three platforms of life—higher, middle and lower. On whatever platform one may be situated, one is tossed by the waves of material nature. Someone may be rich, someone may be middle class, and someone may be a poor beggar—it doesn't

matter. As long as one is under the spell of the three modes of material nature, he must continue to experience these divisions.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore advised the beggars to chant "Hari bol!" while taking prasada. Chanting means accepting one's self as the eternal servant of Krsna. This is the only solution, regardless of social position. Everyone is suffering under the spell of maya; therefore the best course is to learn how to get out of the clutches of maya...

One can overcome the spell of maya and attain the transcendental platform by agreeing to engage in the devotional service of the Lord. Devotional service begins with sravanam kirtanam; therefore Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu advised the beggars to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra for elevation to the transcendental position. On the transcendental platform, there is no distinction between the rich, the middle class and the poor.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 14.44-46

By chanting the holy name, one can be delivered regardless of caste, creed, color or social position:

Generally brahmanas are puffed up with false prestige because they belong to the aristocracy and perform many Vedic sacrifices. In South India especially, this fastidious position is most prominent. At any rate, this was the case five hundred years ago. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu actually started a revolution against this brahminical system by inaugurating the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra. By this chanting, one can be delivered regardless of caste, creed, color or social position. Whoever chants the Hare Krsna maha-mantra is immediately purified due to the transcendental position of devotional service. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is here hinting to Vallabha Bhattacharya that an exalted brahmana who makes sacrifices and follows the Vedic principles should not neglect a person who is engaged in devotional service by chanting the holy name of the Lord.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 19.69

Even the lowest class of men is delivered from sinful activities simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord:

[King Citraketu to Lord Sankarsana]:

My Lord, it is not impossible for one to be immediately freed from all material contamination by seeing You. Not to speak of seeing You personally, merely by hearing the holy name of Your Lordship only once, even candalas, men of the lowest class, are freed

from all material contamination. Under the circumstances, who will not be freed from material contamination simply by seeing You?

As stated in the Srimad–Bhagavatam (9.5.16), yan–nama–sruti–matrena puman bhavati nirmalah: simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord, one is immediately purified. Therefore, in this age of Kali, when all people are very contaminated, the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is recommended as the only means of improvement.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way." (Brhan–naradiya Purana)

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced this chanting of the holy name five hundred years ago, and now through the Krsna consciousness movement, the Hare Krsna movement, we are actually seeing that men who are considered to belong to the lowest class are being delivered from all sinful activities simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord. Samsara, material existence, is a result of sinful actions. Everyone in this material world is condemned, yet as there are different grades of prisoners, there are different grades of men. All of them, in all statuses of life, are suffering. To stop the suffering of material existence, one must take to the Hare Krsna movement of sankirtana or Krsna conscious life.

Herein it is said, yan–nama sakrc chravanat: the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is so powerful that if once heard without offenses, it can purify the lowest of men (kirata– hunandhra– pulinda– pulkasah). Such men, who are called candalas, are less than sudras, but they also can be purified simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord, not to speak of personally seeing the Lord.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.16.44

Chanting of the holy names delivers one from the effects of sins and of lower–caste birth:

[Suta Gosvami to the sages at Naimisaranya]:

Sri Suta Gosvami said: O God, although we are born in a mixed caste, we are still promoted in birthright simply by serving and following the great who are advanced in knowledge. Even by conversing with such great souls, one can without delay cleanse oneself of all disqualifications resulting from lower births. And what to speak of those who are under the direction of the great devotees, chanting the holy name of the Unlimited, who has unlimited potency? The Personality of Godhead, unlimited in potency and transcendental by attributes, is called the ananta [Unlimited].

The dvija–bandhu, or the less intelligent, uncultured men born of higher castes, put forward many arguments against the lower–caste men becoming brahmanas in this life. They argue that birth in a family of sudras or less than sudras is made possible by one's previous sinful acts and that one therefore has to complete the terms of disadvantages due to lower birth. And to answer these false logicians, Srimad–Bhagavatam asserts that one who chants the holy name of the Lord under the direction of a pure devotee can at once get free from the disadvantages due to a lower–caste birth... Offenseless chanting indicates that one has fully understood the transcendental nature of the holy name and has thus surrendered unto the Lord. Transcendentally the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are identical, being absolute. The holy name of the Lord is as powerful as the Lord. The Lord is the all–powerful Personality of Godhead, and He has innumerable names, which are all nondifferent from Him and are equally powerful also. In the last word of the Bhagavad–gita the Lord asserts that one who surrenders fully unto Him is protected from all sins by the grace of the Lord. Since His name and He Himself are identical, the holy name of the Lord can protect the devotee from all effects of sins. The chanting of the holy name of the Lord can undoubtedly deliver one from the disadvantages of a lower–caste birth. The Lord's unlimited power is extended on and on by the unlimited expansion of the devotees and incarnations, and thus every devotee of the Lord and incarnations also can be equally surcharged with the potency of the Lord. Since the devotee is surcharged with the potency of the Lord, even fractionally, the disqualification due to lower birth cannot stand in the way.

–Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.18.18–19

By chanting the holy name, even a lowborn person's body is changed into that of a brahmana:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

My dear King, a devotee who has taken shelter of the dust from the lotus feet of the Lord

can transcend the influence of the six material whips—namely hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age and death—and he can conquer the mind and five senses. However, this is not very wonderful for a pure devotee of the Lord because even a person beyond the jurisdiction of the four castes—in other words, an untouchable—is immediately relieved of bondage to material existence if he utters the holy name of the Lord even once.

Not to speak of a sanctified devotee, even a candala, an outcaste, who is untouchable, is immediately freed from material bondage if he utters the holy name of the Lord even once. Sometimes caste brahmanas argue that unless one changes his body he cannot be accepted as a brahmana, for since the present body is obtained as a result of past actions, one who has in the past acted as a brahmana takes birth in a brahmana family. Therefore, they contend, without such a brahminical body, one cannot be accepted as a brahmana. Herein it is said, however, that even vidura—vigata, a candala—a fifth-class untouchable—is freed if he utters the holy name even once. Being freed means that he immediately changes his body. Sanatana Gosvami confirms this:

yatha kancanatam
kamsyam rasa—vidhanatah tatha diksa—vidhanena
dvijatvam jayate nram

When a person, even though a candala, is initiated by a pure devotee into chanting the holy name of the Lord, his body changes as he follows the instructions of the spiritual master. Although one cannot see how his body has changed, we must accept, on the grounds of the authoritative statements of the sastras, that he changes his body. This is to be understood without arguments. This verse clearly says, sa jahati bandham: "He gives up his material bondage." The body is a symbolic representation of material bondage according to one's karma. Although sometimes we cannot see the gross body changing, chanting the holy name of the Supreme Lord immediately changes the subtle body, and because the subtle body changes, the living entity is immediately freed from material bondage. After all, changes of the gross body are conducted by the subtle body. After the destruction of the gross body, the subtle body takes the living entity from his present gross body to another. In the subtle body, the mind is predominant, and therefore if one's mind is always absorbed in remembering the activities or the lotus feet of the Lord, he is to be understood to have already changed his present body and become purified.

~Srimad—Bhagavatam 5.1.35

By chanting the holy name offenselessly, even a person of low birth is freed from sinful reactions, becomes qualified as a brahmana, and becomes eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices:

[Devahuti to Lord Kapila]:

To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog-eaters immediately becomes eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even remembers Him.

Herein the spiritual potency of chanting, hearing or remembering the holy name of the Supreme Lord is greatly stressed. Rupa Gosvami has discussed the sequence of sinful activities of the conditioned soul, and he has established, in *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*, that those who engage in devotional service become freed from the reactions of all sinful activities. This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita*. The Lord says that He takes charge of one who surrenders unto Him, and He makes him immune to all reactions to sinful activities. If by chanting the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead one becomes so swiftly cleared of all reactions to sinful activities, then what is to be said of those Persons who see Him face to face?

Another consideration here is that persons who are purified by the process of chanting and hearing become immediately eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices. Generally, only a person who is born in a family of brahmanas, who has been reformed by the ten kinds of purificatory processes and who is learned in Vedic literature is allowed to perform the Vedic sacrifices. But here the word *sadyah*, "immediately," is used, and Sridhara Svami also remarks that one can immediately become eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices. A person born in a family of the low caste which is accustomed to eat dogs is so positioned due to his past sinful activities, but by chanting or hearing once in pureness, or in an offenseless manner, he is immediately relieved of the sinful reaction. Not only is he relieved of the sinful reaction, but he immediately achieves the result of all purificatory processes. Taking birth in the family of a brahmana is certainly due to pious activities in one's past life. But still a child who is born in a family of a brahmana depends for his further reformation upon initiation into acceptance of a sacred thread and many other reformatory processes. But a person who chants the holy name of the Lord, even if born in a family of *candalas*, dog-eaters, does not need reformation. Simply by chanting *Hare Krsna*, he immediately becomes purified and becomes as good as the most learned brahmana.

Sridhara Svami especially remarks in this connection, *anena pujiyatvam laksyate*. Some caste brahmanas remark that by chanting *Hare Krsna*, purification begins. Of course, that

depends on the individual process of chanting, but this remark of Sridhara Svami's is completely applicable if one chants the holy name of the Lord without offense, for he immediately becomes more than a brahmana. As Sridhara Svami says, pujiyatvam: he immediately becomes as respectable as a most learned brahmana and can be allowed to perform Vedic sacrifices.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.33.6

Even a low-class person can become a brahmana and fit to perform Vedic sacrifices by chanting the holy name:

[Devahuti to Lord Kapila]:

"To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog-eaters becomes immediately eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even remembers Him."

This is a quotation from Srimad-Bhagavatam (3.33.6). According to this verse, it doesn't matter what position a person holds. One may be the lowest of the low—a candala, or dog-eater—but if he takes to chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord, he is immediately eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices. This is especially true in this age of Kali... A person born in a brahmana family cannot perform Vedic sacrifices until he is properly purified and has attained his sacred thread. However, according to this verse, it is understood that even a lowborn person can immediately perform sacrifices if he sincerely chants and hears the holy name of the Lord. Sometimes envious people ask how Europeans and Americans in this Krsna consciousness movement can become brahmanas and perform sacrifices. They do not know that the Europeans and Americans have already been purified by chanting the holy name of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. This is the proof. Svado 'pi sadyah savanaya kalpate. One may be born in a family of dog-eaters, but he can perform sacrifices simply by chanting the maha-mantra.

Those who find fault in the Western Vaisnavas should consider this statement from Srimad-Bhagavatam and the commentary on this verse by Srila Jiva Gosvami. In this regard, Srila Jiva Gosvami has stated that to become a brahmana, one has to wait for purification and undergo the sacred thread ceremony, but a chanter of the holy name does not have to wait for the sacred thread ceremony. We do not allow devotees to perform sacrifices until they are properly initiated in the sacred thread ceremony. Yet according to

this verse, an offenseless chanter of the holy name is already fit to perform a fire ceremony, even though he is not doubly initiated by the sacred thread ceremony. This is the verdict given by Lord Kapiladeva in His instructions to His mother, Devahuti.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 16.186

Although born in a Muhammadan family, Haridasa thakura became a regularly initiated brahmana as well as Namacarya by dint of chanting the holy name:

According to external vision, Haridasa thakura belonged to a Muhammadan family.

Nevertheless, because he engaged himself in performing the yajna of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra, he became a regularly initiated brahmana. As stated in Srimad-Bhagavatam (3.33.6):

yan-namadheya-sravananukirtanad
yat-prahvanad yat-smaranad api kvacit
svado 'pi sadyah savanaya kalpate
kutah punas te bhagavan nu darsanat

Even if a devotee comes from a family of dog-eaters, if he surrenders to the Personality of Godhead he immediately becomes a qualified brahmana and is immediately fit to perform yajna, whereas a person born in a family of brahmanas has to wait until completing the reformatory processes before he may be called samskrta, purified... A person who is not purified by the prescribed process of samskara is called asamskrta, but if one remains kriya-hina even after being purified by initiation-in other words, if one fails to actually apply the principles of purity in his life-he remains an unpurified mleccha or yavana. On the other hand, we find that Haridasa thakura, although born in a mleccha or yavana family, became Namacarya Haridasa thakura because he performed the nama-yajna a minimum of 300,000 times every day.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya-līla 3.124

Vallabha Bhattacharya admitted that those who chant the holy name are qualified as brahmanas and Vaisnavas:

Thereafter, Vallabha Bhatta invited Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu for lunch, and the Lord introduced the brothers Rupa and Vallabha to him. From a distance, the brothers Rupa Gosvami and Sri Vallabha fell on the ground and offered obeisances to Vallabha Bhatta

with great humility. When Vallabha Bhattacharya walked toward them, they ran away to a more distant place. Rupa Gosvami said, "I am untouchable and most sinful. Please do not touch me." Vallabha Bhattacharya was very surprised at this. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, however, was very pleased, and He therefore spoke to him this description of Rupa Gosvami. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Don't touch him, for he belongs to a very low caste. You are a follower of Vedic principles and are a well experienced performer of many sacrifices. You also belong to the aristocracy." Hearing the holy name constantly vibrated by the two brothers, Vallabha Bhattacharya could understand the hints of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Vallabha Bhattacharya admitted, "Since these two are constantly chanting the holy name of Krsna, how can they be untouchable? On the contrary, they are most exalted."

Vallabha Bhattacharya's admission of the brothers' exalted position should serve as a lesson to one who is falsely proud of his position as a brahmana. Sometimes so-called brahmanas do not recognize our European and American disciples as devotees or brahmanas, and some brahmanas are so proud that they do not allow them to enter temples. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu herein gives a great lesson. Although Vallabha Bhattacharya was a great authority on brahmanism and a learned scholar, he admitted that those who chant the Lord's holy name are bona fide brahmanas and Vaisnavas and are therefore exalted.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 19.65-71

By the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, even unclean yavanas can become cultured Vaisnavas by chanting the holy name:

Let me offer my respectful obeisances to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, by whose mercy even unclean yavanas become perfectly well-bred gentlemen by chanting the holy name of the Lord. Such is the power of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

There is a persistent misunderstanding between caste brahmanas and advanced Vaisnavas or gosvamis because caste brahmanas, or smartas, are of the opinion that one cannot become a brahmana unless he changes his body. As we have discussed several times, it is to be understood that by the supremely powerful potency of the Lord, as described by Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami, everything is possible. Caitanya Mahaprabhu is as fully independent as Krsna. Therefore no one can interfere with His activities. If He wants, by His mercy He can convert even a yavana, an unclean follower of non-Vedic principles, into a perfectly well-behaved gentleman. This is actually happening in our propagation of the Krsna consciousness movement. The members of the present Krsna consciousness movement were not born in India, nor do they belong to the Vedic culture, but within the short time of four or five years they have become such wonderful devotees, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, that even in India they are well received as perfectly well-behaved Vaisnavas wherever they go.

22.

The Holy Name Benefits Even Lower Species of Life

All living entities, moving and nonmoving, were liberated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's loud chanting of the holy name:

[Lord Caitanya to Haridasa thakura]:

"On this earth there are many living entities," the Lord said, "some moving and some not moving. What will happen to the trees, plants, insects and other living entities? How will they be delivered from material bondage?" Haridasa thakura replied, "My dear Lord, the deliverance of all moving and nonmoving living entities takes place only by Your mercy. You have already granted this mercy and delivered them. You have loudly chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, and everyone, moving or not moving, has benefited by hearing it. My Lord, the moving entities who have heard Your loud sankīrtana have already been delivered from bondage to the material world, and after the nonmoving living entities like trees hear it, there is an echo. Actually, however, it is not an echo; it is the kīrtana of the nonmoving living entities. All this, although inconceivable, is possible by Your mercy. When loud chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is performed all over the world by those who follow in Your footsteps, all living entities, moving and nonmoving, dance in ecstatic devotional love. My dear Lord, all the incidents that took place while You were going to Vṛndavana through the forest known as Jharikhanda have been related to me by Your servant Balabhadra Bhattacharya. When Your devotee Vasudeva Datta submitted his plea at Your lotus feet for the deliverance of all living entities, You accepted that request. My dear Lord, You have accepted the form of a devotee just to deliver all the fallen souls of this world. You have preached the loud chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra and in this way freed all moving and nonmoving living entities from material bondage... By descending as an incarnation at Navadvīpa, You, just like Kṛṣṇa, have already delivered all the living entities of the universe."

Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Antya–lila 3.67–76, 86

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastime of causing the animals of Jharikhanda forest to chant

and dance:

When the Lord passed through the solitary forest chanting the holy name of Krsna, the tigers and elephants, seeing Him, gave way. When the Lord passed through the jungle in great ecstasy, packs of tigers, elephants, rhinoceros and boars came, and the Lord passed right through them. Balabhadra Bhattacharya was very much afraid to see them, but by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's influence, all the animals stood to one side. One day a tiger was lying on the path, and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, walking along the path in ecstatic love, touched the tiger with His feet. The Lord said, "Chant the holy name of Krsna!" The tiger immediately got up and began to dance and chant, "Krsna! Krsna!" Another day, while Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was bathing in a river, a herd of maddened elephants came there to drink water. While the Lord was bathing and murmuring the Gayatri mantra, the elephants came before Him. The Lord immediately splashed some water on the elephants and asked them to chant the name of Krsna. The elephants whose bodies were touched by the water splashed by the Lord began to chant, "Krsna! Krsna!" and dance and sing in ecstasy. Some of the elephants fell to the ground, and some screamed in ecstasy. Seeing this, Balabhadra Bhattacharya was completely astonished. Sometimes Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu chanted very loudly while passing through the jungle. Hearing His sweet voice, all the does came near Him. Hearing the Lord's great vibration, all the does followed Him left and right. While reciting a verse with great curiosity, the Lord patted them. "Blessed are all these foolish deer because they have approached the son of Maharaja Nanda, who is gorgeously dressed and is playing on His flute. Indeed, both the does and the bucks worship the Lord with looks of love and affection." While Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was passing through the jungle, five or seven tigers came. Joining the deer, the tigers began to follow the Lord. Seeing the tigers and deer following Him, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu immediately remembered the land of Vrndavana. He then began to recite a verse describing the transcendental quality of Vrndavana. "Vrndavana is the transcendental abode of the Lord. There is no hunger, anger or thirst there. Though naturally inimical, both human beings and fierce animals live together there in transcendental friendship." When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Chant Krsna! Krsna!" the tigers and deer began to dance and chant, "Krsna!" When all the tigers and does danced and jumped, Balabhadra Bhattacharya saw them and was struck with wonder. Indeed, the tigers and deer began to embrace one another, and, touching mouths, they began to kiss. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu saw all this fun, He began to smile. Finally He left the animals and continued on His way. Various birds, including the peacock, saw Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and began to follow Him, chanting and dancing. They were all maddened by the holy name of Krsna. When the Lord loudly chanted "Hari bol!" the trees and creepers became jubilant to hear Him. Thus all living entities—some moving and some standing still in the forest of Jharikhanda—became maddened by hearing the holy name of Lord Krsna vibrated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Sri Caitanya—caritamṛta Madhya—lila 17.25—46

The loud chanting of the holy name benefits even plants, creepers, and insects: When the Lord loudly chanted "Hari bol!" the trees and creepers became jubilant to hear Him.

The loud chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is so powerful that it can even penetrate the ears of trees and creepers—what to speak of animals and human beings. Sri Caitanya once asked Haridasa thakura how trees and plants could be delivered, and Haridasa thakura replied that the loud chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra would benefit not only trees and plants but insects and all other living beings. One should therefore not be disturbed by the loud chanting of Hare Krsna, for it is beneficial not only to the chanter but to everyone who gets an opportunity to hear.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 17.45

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu caused all moving and nonmoving creatures of Vrndavana to vibrate the holy name:

The Lord's body was restless, and tears, trembling and jubilation were manifest. He said very loudly, "Chant Krsna! Chant Krsna!" All moving and nonmoving creatures then began to vibrate the transcendental sound of Hare Krsna, as if they were echoing the deep sound of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 17.205–6

Not only is the chanter of the holy name purified but all hearers as well, even animals: Not only is the chanter of the maha–mantra purified, but the heart of anyone who happens to hear the transcendental vibration of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is also cleansed. Even the souls embodied in lower animals, insects, trees and other species of life also become purified and prepared to become fully Krsna conscious simply by hearing the transcendental vibration. This was explained by thakura Haridasa when Caitanya Mahaprabhu inquired from him how living entities lower than human beings can be delivered from material bondage. Haridasa thakura said that the chanting of the holy names is so powerful that even if one chants in the remotest parts of the jungle, the trees and animals will advance in Krsna consciousness simply by hearing the vibration.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 4

The loud chanting of the holy name benefits even lower species of life:

Those who are actually servants of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu must seriously distribute this movement all over the world to render the greatest benefit to human society. Of course, animals and other lower species are not capable of understanding this movement, but if even a small number of living beings take it seriously, by their chanting loudly, all living entities, including even trees, animals and other lower species, will be benefited. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu inquired from Haridasa thakura how he was to benefit living entities other than humans, Srila Haridasa thakura replied that the Hare Krsna maha–mantra is so potent that if it is chanted loudly, everyone will benefit, including the lower species of life.
–Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi 9.39

One can show mercy to all living entities (even animals and plants) by loudly chanting the maha–mantra:

[Narada Muni to the Pracetas]:

By showing mercy to all living entities, being satisfied somehow or other and controlling the senses from sense enjoyment, one can very quickly satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Janardana.

The word sarva–bhutesu is significant because it applies not only to human beings but to all the living entities appearing in the 8,400,000 species of life. The devotee can do good not only to humanity but to all living entities as well. Everyone can benefit spiritually by the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. When the transcendental vibration of Hare Krsna is sounded, even the trees, animals and insects benefit. Thus when one chants the Hare Krsna maha–mantra loudly, he actually shows mercy to all living entities.

–Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.31.19

Part Two: The Theology of the Holy Name: Section A:

The Transcendental Attributes of the Holy Name

1.

The Lord Has Innumerable Names (to Indicate Different Functions and Dealings)

Krsna expands Himself into many different names:

[Lord Caitanya to Svartpa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"My Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in Your holy name there is all good fortune for the living entity, and therefore You have many names, such as Krsna and Govinda, by which You expand Yourself..."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.16

God has unlimited names, each of which is God:

Srila Prabhupada: Because God is absolute, His name, His form, and His qualities are also absolute, and they are nondifferent from Him....

Father Emmanuel: But our understanding of the name of God is limited.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, we are limited, but God is unlimited. And because He is unlimited, or absolute, He has unlimited names, each of which is God. We can understand His names as much as our spiritual understanding is developed.

~The Science of Self-Realization

The different names of the Supreme Lord indicate different functions:

There are different names for the Supreme Lord, and these names have different purposes and meanings. For instance, He is known as Paramatma the Supersoul, Brahman the Supreme Absolute, Srstikarta the creator, Narayana the transcendental Lord, Rukminiramana the husband of Rukmini, Gopinatha the enjoyer of the gopis, and Krsna. In this way the Lord has different names, and these names indicate different functions.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

According to people's various desires, Krsna distributes various holy names:

[Lord Caitanya to Svartpa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"Because people vary in their desires, You have distributed various holy names by Your mercy."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.17

God has innumerable names, according to His dealings with innumerable devotees:

Since God is unlimited, His names also must be unlimited. Therefore we cannot settle on one name. For instance, Krsna is sometimes called Yasoda-nandana, the son of mother Yasoda; or Devaki-nandana, the son of Devaki; or Vasudeva-nandana, the son of Vasudeva; or Nanda-nandana, the son of Nanda. Sometimes He is called Partha-sarathi, indicating that He acted as the charioteer of Arjuna, who is sometimes called Partha, the son of Prtha.

God has many dealings with His many devotees, and according to those dealings, He is called certain names. Since He has innumerable devotees, and innumerable relations with them, He also has innumerable names.

~The Science of Self-Realization

One cannot fully realize the Lord merely by understanding the name of the creator:

Because the Lord is on the absolute platform, there is no difference between the holy name of the Lord and the Supreme Lord Himself. There are different names for the Supreme Lord, and these names have different purposes and meanings... The aspect of the Supreme Lord as the creator is different from the aspect of the Lord as Narayana. Some of the names

of the Lord as the creator are conceived by materialistic men. One cannot fully realize the essence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by understanding the name of the creator because this material creation is a function of the external energy of the Supreme Lord.
~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

2.

"Krsna" Is the Principal Name of God

"Krsna" is the principal name of the Supreme Lord:

In his prayer, the author of Srimad–Bhagavatam first proposes that Lord Sri Krsna is the primeval Lord and that if any transcendental nomenclature for the Absolute Personality of Godhead is to be accepted, it should be the name Krsna, the all–attractive.... In Padma Purana it is also stated that of the innumerable names of the Lord, the name of Krsna is the principal one.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

The name "Krsna," indicating the Supreme Lord, is the name of the highest order:

In the Vedic literature the supreme person is properly claimed to be Krsna. The name "Krsna," indicating the Supreme Lord, is the only truly intelligible name of the highest order. He is the controller of both material and antimaterial energies, and the very word "Krsna" signifies that He is the supreme controller.

~Easy Journey to Other Planets

According to Vedic knowledge "Krsna" is the supreme name of God:

When we speak of Krsna we refer to God. There are many names for God throughout the world and throughout the universe, but Krsna is the supreme name according to Vedic knowledge. Therefore Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu recommended the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare as the supreme means for realization in this age.

~Raja–vidya: The King of Knowledge

Because His opulences attract everyone, "Krsna" is the principal name of God: God has many names according to His activities, but because He possesses so many opulences and because with these opulences He attracts everyone, He is called Krsna. The Vedic literature asserts that God has many names, but "Krsna" is the principal name.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Of all the holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the name "Krsna" is the most powerful:

Srila Sukadeva Gosvami has concluded the Nineteenth Chapter of the Tenth Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam by pointing out five particular excellences of Lord Krsna.... The fourth excellence of Lord Krsna's appearance concerns the glories of His name. It is stated in the Vedic literature that by chanting the different names of Lord Visnu a thousand times, one may be bestowed with the same benefits as by thrice chanting the holy name of Lord Rama. And by chanting the holy name of Lord Krsna only once, one receives the same benefit. In other words, of all the holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, including Visnu and Rama, the holy name of Krsna is the most powerful. The Vedic literature therefore specifically stresses the chanting of the holy name of Krsna: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Lord Caitanya introduced this chanting of the holy name of Krsna in this age, thus making liberation more easily obtainable than in other ages. In other words, Lord Krsna is more excellent than His other incarnations, although all of them are equally the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

3.

The Meaning of the Name "Krsna"

The meaning of the name "Krsna":

The name Krsna means "all-attractive." God attracts everyone; that is the definition of "God." We have seen many pictures of Krsna, and we see that He attracts the cows, calves, birds, beasts, trees, plants, and even the water in Vrndavana. He is attractive to the cowherd

boys, to the gopis, to Nanda Maharaja, to the Pandavas, and to all human society. Therefore if any particular name can be given to God, that name is "Krsna."

~The Science of Self-Realization

Etymology of the word "krsna":

"The word "krs" is the attractive feature of the Lord's existence, and "na" means spiritual pleasure. When the verb "krs" is added to the affix "na" it becomes Krsna, which indicates the Absolute Truth."

~Mahabharata (Udyoga-parva, 71.4)

~[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.30]

The etymology of the name "Krsna":

If we analyze the nirukti, or semantic derivation, of the word "Krsna," we find that na signifies that He stops the repetition of birth and death, and krs means sattartha, or "existence." (Krsna is the whole of existence.) Also, krs means "attraction," and na means ananda, or "bliss."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.8.15

The name "Krsna," meaning "all-attractive," can be applied only to God:

Srila Prabhupada: ... Krsna means "all-attractive."

Bob: Oh, I see.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. God has no name, but by His qualities we give Him names. If a man is very beautiful, we call him "beautiful." If a man is very intelligent, we call him "wise." So the name is given according to the quality. Because God is all-attractive, the name Krsna can be applied only to Him. Krsna means "all-attractive." It includes everything.

~Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers

4.

The Meaning of the Name "Rama"

"Rama" means spiritual enjoyment:

Those who are actually yogis truly enjoy, but how do they enjoy? Ramante yogino 'nante—their enjoyment is unlimited, that unlimited enjoyment is real happiness, and such happiness is spiritual, not material. This is the real meaning of Rama, as in the chant Hare Rama. Rama means enjoyment through spiritual life. Spiritual life is all pleasure, and Kṛṣṇa is all pleasure.

~The Perfection of Yoga

"Hare Rama" refers both to Sri Balarama and Lord Ramacandra:

We may mention an incident that took place between two of our sannyasis while we were preaching the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra in Hyderabad. One of them stated that "Hare Rama" refers to Sri Balarama, and the other protested that "Hare Rama" means Lord Rama. Ultimately the controversy came to me, and I gave the decision that if someone says that "Rama" in "Hare Rama" is Lord Ramacandra and someone else says that the "Rama" in "Hare Rama" is Sri Balarama, both are correct because there is no difference between Sri Balarama and Lord Rama.... Those who are aware of the visnu-tattva do not fight over all these details.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adi-lila 5.132

[Lord Kṛṣṇa to Yogamaya]:

The son of Rohini will also be celebrated as Sankarsana because of being sent from the womb of Devaki to the womb of Rohini. He will be called Rama because of His ability to please all the inhabitants of Gokula, and He will be known as Balabhadra because of His extensive physical strength.

These are some of the reasons why Balarama is known as Sankarsana, Balarama or sometimes Rama. In the maha-mantra—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa; Hare Hare/Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—people sometimes object when Rama is accepted as Balarama. But although devotees of Lord Rama may object, they should know that there is no difference between Balarama and Lord Rama. Here Srimad-Bhagavatam clearly states that Balarama is also known as Rama (rameti). Therefore, it is not artificial for us to speak of Lord Balarama as Lord Rama. Jayadeva Gosvami also speaks of three

Ramas: Parasurama, Raghupati Rama and Balarama. All of them are Ramas.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.2.13

The word "Rama" refers both to Lord Balarama and to Lord Nityananda:

In the maha–mantra Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, the word Rama refers to Balarama. Since Nityananda is an expansion of Balarama, Rama also refers to Lord Nityananda. Thus Hare Krsna, Hare Rama addresses not only Krsna and Balarama but Lord Caitanya and Nityananda as well.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila Intro.

5.

The Meaning of the Name "Hare"

"Hare is the vocative form of "Hara," the supreme pleasure energy of the Lord:

The word Hara is the form of addressing the energy of the Lord, and the words Krsna and Rama are forms of addressing the Lord Himself. Both Krsna and Rama mean "the supreme pleasure," and Hara is the supreme pleasure energy of the Lord, changed to Hare in the vocative. The supreme pleasure energy of the Lord helps us to reach the Lord.

~The Science of Self–Realization

Hara is Krsna's internal potency, Srimati Radharani or Laksmi:

When we are chanting the maha–mantra, we are actually addressing God and His energy, Hara. Hara is Krsna's internal potency, Srimati Radharani. Thus the Vaisnavas worship Radha–Krsna, Laksmi–Narayana and Sita–Rama. In the beginning of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra we first address the internal energy of Krsna, Hare. Thus we say, "O Radharani! O Hare! O energy of the Lord!"

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahtti

The Hare Krsna mantra is first addressed to the spiritual energy of the Lord, which enlightens one:

Spiritual enlightenment is possible by the mercy of the spiritual energy of the Lord. The chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is first addressed to the spiritual energy of the Lord, Hare. This spiritual energy acts when a living entity fully surrenders and accepts his position as an eternal servitor. When a person places himself at the disposal or order of the Supreme Lord, that is called *sevonmukha*; at that time the spiritual energy gradually reveals the Lord to him.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.9.6

A Vaisnava worships the energy of the Lord along with the Lord through chanting the *maha-mantra*:

Because Krsna and His energy appeared simultaneously, people have generally formed two groups—the *saktas* and the *Vaisnavas*—and sometimes there is rivalry between them.

Essentially, those who are interested in material enjoyment are *saktas*, and those interested in spiritual salvation and attaining the spiritual kingdom are *Vaisnavas*. Because people are generally interested in material enjoyment, they are interested in worshiping *Mayadevi*, the energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Vaisnavas*, however, are *suddha-saktas*, or pure *bhaktas*, because the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra* indicates worship of the Supreme Lord's energy, *Hara*. A Vaisnava prays to the energy of the Lord for the opportunity to serve the Lord along with His spiritual energy. Thus *Vaisnavas* all worship such Deities as *Radha-Krsna*, *Sita-Rama*, *Laksmi-Narayana* and *Rukmini-Dvarakadhisa*, whereas *durga-saktas* worship the material energy under different names.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.2.11-12

6.

The Relative Potency of the Names "Krsna," "Rama," and "Visnu"

The holy name "Rama" is equal to one thousand holy names of Visnu:

[Siva to Durga]:

"Lord Siva addressed his wife Durga as *Varanana* and explained, 'I chant the holy name of Rama, Rama, Rama and thus enjoy this beautiful sound. This holy name of *Ramacandra* is equal to one thousand names of Lord Visnu.'"

~*Brhad-visnu-sahasra-nama-stotra*, 72.335

~(from *Padma Purana*, *Uttara-khanda*)

~[cited: *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila* 9.32]

The holy name "Krsna" is three times as powerful as the holy name "Rama":

"The pious results derived from chanting the thousand holy names of Visnu three times can be attained by only one repetition of the holy name of Krsna."

This verse from the Brahmanda Purana is found in the Laghu-bhagavatamrta (1.354), by Rupa Gosvami. For every three times one chants the holy name of Rama, one can attain the same results simply by chanting the name of Krsna once.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.33

The relative transcendental value of the names "Visnu," "Rama," and "Krsna":

It is said in the scriptures that one thousand names of Visnu are equal to one name of Rama, and three names of Lord Rama are equal to one name of Krsna.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.19.6

7.

The Lord and His Holy Name Are Nondifferent

The holy name is identical with Krsna:

"The holy name of Krsna ... is identical with Krsna ..."

~Padyavali (24), by Rupa Gosvami

~[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 15.110]

The Hare Krsna mantra is nondifferent from Krsna:

[Lord Sankarsana to King Citraketu]

All living entities, moving and nonmoving, are My expansions and are separate from Me. I am the Supersoul of all living beings, which exist because I manifest them. I am the form of the transcendental vibrations like omkara and Hare Krsna Hare Rama, and I am the Supreme Absolute Truth. These two forms of Mine—namely, the transcendental sound and the eternally blissful spiritual form of the Deity—are My eternal forms; they are not material.

Krsna's name is identical with His form:

"O Lord," the demigods say, "the impersonalists, who are nondevotees, cannot understand that Your name is identical with Your form." Since the Lord is absolute, there is no difference between His name and His actual form. In the material world there is a difference between form and name. The mango fruit is different from the name of the mango. One cannot taste the mango fruit simply by chanting, "Mango, mango, mango." But the devotee who knows that there is no difference between the name and the form of the Lord chants Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, and realizes that he is always in Krsna's company.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.2.36

One must have faith that the holy name is identical with Krsna:

One should accept the holy name of Krsna to be identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Transcendence Himself. The holy name of Krsna is also identical with Krsna and is also cintamani. The name Krsna is the personification of sound perfectly transcendental and eternally liberated from material contamination. One should understand that the name Krsna and Krsna are identical. Having such faith, one must continue to chant the holy name.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 15.106

In this age, Krsna has descended as

Sound vibration—as His holy name

Sometimes Krsna descends personally, and sometimes He descends as sound vibration, and sometimes He descends as a devotee. There are many different categories of avatars. In this present age Krsna has descended in His holy name, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu also confirmed that in this age of Kali, Krsna has descended in the form of sound vibration. Sound is one of the forms which the Lord takes. Therefore it is stated that there is no difference between Krsna and His name.

Today people have forgotten their relationship with God, but this incarnation of Krsna in

the form of His holy names, this chanting of Hare Krsna, will deliver all the people of the world from their forgetfulness.

~Elevation to Krsna Consciousness

Lord Caitanya taught that the holy name of the Lord is nondifferent from the Lord: Lord Caitanya instructed the mass of people in the Sankhya philosophy of *acintya–bhedabheda–tattva*, which maintains that the Supreme Lord is simultaneously one with and different from His creation. Lord Caitanya taught this philosophy through the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. He taught that the holy name of the Lord is the sound incarnation of the Lord and that since the Lord is the absolute whole, there is no difference between His holy name and His transcendental form. Thus by chanting the holy name of the Lord one can directly associate with the Supreme Lord by sound vibration.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Unlike the conditioned soul, there is no distinction between Krsna's name and His person: [Lord Caitanya to a brahmana]:

"The Lord's holy name, His form and His personality are all one and the same. There is no difference between them. Since all of them are absolute, they are transcendently blissful. There is no difference between Krsna's body and Himself or between His name and Himself. As far as the conditioned soul is concerned, everything is different. One's name is different from the body, from one's original form and so on.... The holy name of Krsna, His transcendental qualities and pastimes as well as Lord Krsna Himself are all equal. They are all spiritual and full of bliss."

The name of Krsna and Krsna the person are both spiritual. Everything about Krsna is transcendental, blissful and objective. For a conditioned soul, the body is different from the soul, and the name given by the father is also different from the soul. The conditioned living entity's identification with material objects keeps him from attaining his actual position. Although he is an eternal servant of Krsna, he acts differently. The *svartpa*, or actual identification of the living entity, is described by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu as *jivera 'svarupa' haya–krsnera 'nitya–dasa.'* [Cc. Madhya 20.108]. The conditioned soul has forgotten the real activities of his original position. However, this is not the case with Krsna. Krsna's name and His person are identical. There is no such thing as *maya* Krsna because Krsna is not a product of the material creation. There is no difference between Krsna's body and His soul. Krsna is simultaneously both soul and body. The distinction

between body and soul applies to conditioned souls. The body of the conditioned soul is different from the soul, and the conditioned soul's name is different from his body. One may be named Mr. John, but if we call for Mr. John, Mr. John may never actually appear. However, if we utter the holy name of Krsna, Krsna is immediately present on our tongue. In the Padma Purana, Krsna says, mad-bhakta yatra gayanti tatra tisthami narada: "O Narada, I am present wherever My devotees are chanting." When the devotees chant the holy name of Krsna-Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare-Lord Krsna is immediately present.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 17.131-32,135

Krsna invests all His potencies in His holy name:

[Lord Caitanya to Svartpa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"... You have invested all Your potencies in [Your] names ..."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.16

Being identical with Krsna, the holy name is fully transcendental and no less powerful than He:

"The holy name of Krsna is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Krsna Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Krsna's name is complete, and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Krsna Himself. Since Krsna's name is not contaminated by the material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with maya, Krsna's name is always liberated and spiritual; it is never conditioned by the laws of material nature. This is because the name of Krsna and Krsna Himself are identical."

~Padma Purana

~[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 17.133]

The holy name is as perfect as the Lord Himself in fullness, purity, and eternity:

It is said in the Padma Purana: "There is no difference between the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself. As such the holy name is as perfect as the Lord Himself in fullness, purity and eternity. The holy name is no material sound vibration, nor has it any material contamination."

~The Nectar of Devotion

The name of Krsna is as powerful as Lord Krsna Himself:

[The sages at Naimisaranya to Stta Gosvami]:

Living beings who are entangled in the complicated meshes of birth and death can be freed immediately by even unconsciously chanting the holy name of Krsna, which is feared by fear personified.

The almighty Vasudeva has empowered His name with the powers of His personal Self...
It is stated herein that the name of Krsna is feared even by fear personified.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.1.14

There is no difference between meditating on the eternal forms of Radha-Krsna and chanting the maha-mantra:

After rising from bed, Lord Krsna would wash His mouth, hands and feet and would immediately sit down and meditate on Himself. This does not mean, however, that we should also sit down and meditate on ourselves. We have to meditate upon Krsna, Radha-Krsna. That is real meditation. Krsna is Krsna Himself; therefore He was teaching us that brahma-muhrta should be utilized for meditation on Radha-Krsna. By doing so, Krsna would feel very much satisfied, and similarly we will also feel transcendently pleased and satisfied if we utilize the brahma-muhrta period to meditate on Radha and Krsna and if we think of how Sri Rukminidevi and Krsna acted as ideal householders to teach the whole human society to rise early in the morning and immediately engage in Krsna consciousness. There is no difference between meditating on the etemal forms of Radha-Krsna and chanting the maha-mantra, Hare Krsna.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

When one is free from maya he can understand that the holy name and the Lord are identical:

The holy name and the Lord are identical. One who is completely free from the clutches of maya can understand this fact.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.73

When one is situated on the absolute platform, he can understand the holy name and the Lord Himself to be identical:

The more one is freed from material identification, the more one can realize that the spirit soul is qualitatively as good as the Supreme Soul. At such a time, when one is situated on the absolute platform, he can understand that the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are identical. At that stage of realization, the holy name of the Lord, the Hare Krsna mantra, cannot be identified with any material sound. If one accepts the Hare Krsna maha-mantra as a material vibration, he falls down. One should worship and chant the holy name of the Lord by accepting it as the Lord Himself.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 15.108

Knowing that Sri Krsna is present in His name, pure devotees chant with full respect and veneration:

Devotees of the Personality of Godhead know that Sri Krsna, the son of the King of Vraja, is the Absolute Truth. They do not discriminate between Sri Krsna's name, form, quality and pastimes. One who wants to separate the Lord's absolute name, form and qualities must be understood to be lacking in absolute knowledge. A pure devotee knows that when he chants the transcendental name Krsna, Sri Krsna is present as transcendental sound. He therefore chants with full respect and veneration.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 2.11

Bhava results from understanding that Krsna's person and name are identical:

The transcendental ecstatic attachment for Krsna which results from perfectly understanding that Krsna's person and name are identical is called bhava. One who has attained bhava is certainly not contaminated by material nature. He actually enjoys transcendental pleasure from bhava, and when bhava is intensified, it is called love of Godhead. Lord Caitanya told Prakasananda Sarasvati that the holy name of Krsna, called the maha-mantra (great chanting), enables anyone who chants it to attain the stage of love of Godhead, or intensified bhava.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Mayavadis offend the holy name by differentiating it from the Lord Himself:

A name which represents an object of this material world may be subjected to arguments and experimental knowledge, but in the absolute world a name and its owner, fame and the famous, are identical, and similarly the qualities, pastimes and everything else pertaining to the Absolute are also absolute. Although Mayavadis profess monism, they differentiate between the holy name of the Supreme Lord and the Lord Himself. For this offense of namaparadha they gradually glide down from their exalted position of brahma-jnana, as confirmed in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.2.32):

aruhya krcchrena param padam tatah
patanty adho 'nadrta-yusmad-anghrayah

Although by severe austerities they rise to the exalted position of brahma-jnana, they nevertheless fall down due to imperfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth. Although they profess to understand the Vedic mantra, sarvam khalv idam brahma ("everything is Brahman"), they are unable to understand that the holy name is also Brahman. If they regularly chant the maha-mantra, however, they can be relieved from this misconception. Unless one properly takes shelter of the holy name, he cannot be relieved from the offensive stage in chanting the holy name.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.74

8.

The Holy Name Is All-auspicious

The sankirtana movement of chanting the holy name is the most auspicious activity in the universe:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

Sukadeva Gosvami continued: My dear King; the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is able to uproot even the reactions of the greatest sins. Therefore the chanting of the sankirtana movement is the most auspicious activity in the entire universe. Please try to understand this so that others will take it seriously.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.3.31

The chanting of the holy name spreads all good fortune:

[Aditi to Lord Visnu]:

The goddess Aditi said: O master and enJoyer of all sacrificial ceremonies, O infallible and most famous person, whose name, when chanted, spreads all good fortune! O original Supreme Personality of Godhead, supreme controller, shelter of all holy places, You are the shelter of all poor, suffering living entities, and You have appeared to diminish their suffering. Please be kind to us and spread our good fortune.

The chanting of the holy name of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rarna Rama, Hare Hare—is pleasing to the ear, and it expands good fortune to the audience who hears it chanted.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 8.17.8

The holy name as sravana–mangala and punya–sravana–kirtana:

The Lord's holy name is called sravana–mangala. This means that one receives everything auspicious simply by hearing the holy name. In another place in Srimad–Bhagavatam, His holy name is described as punya–sravana–kirtana. It is a pious act simply to chant and hear all about the Lord.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.7.15

The Hare Krsna mantra is the greatest benediction:

It is said that once a poor brahmana worshiped Lord Siva for a benediction, and Lord Siva advised the devotee to go to Sanatana Gosvami. The devotee went to Sanatana Gosvami and informed him that Lord Siva had advised him to seek out the best benediction from him (Sanatana). Sanatana had a touchstone with him, which he kept with the garbage. On the request of the poor brahmana, Sanatana gave him the touchstone, and the brahmana was very happy to have it. He now could get as much gold as he desired simply by touching the touchstone to iron. But after he left Sanatana, he thought, "If a touchstone is the best benediction, why has Sanatana Gosvami kept it with the garbage?" He therefore returned and asked Sanatana Gosvami, "Sir, if this is the best benediction, why did you keep it with the garbage?" Sanatana Gosvami then informed him, "Actually, this is not the best benediction. But are you prepared to take the best benediction from me?" The brahmana said, "Yes, sir. Lord Siva has sent me to you for the best benediction." Then Sanatana Gosvami asked him to throw the touchstone in the water nearby and then come back. The poor brahmana did so, and when he returned, Sanatana Gosvami initiated him with the Hare Krsna mantra. Thus by the benediction of Lord Siva the brahmana got the association of the

best devotee of Lord Krsna and was thus initiated in the maha–mantra, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.
~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.7.6

By the chanting of Krsna's name, everything becomes white and pure:
When the great sage Narada was chanting the glories of the Lord, the bluish line on the neck of Lord Siva disappeared. Upon seeing this, Gauri, the wife of Lord Siva, suspected Lord Siva of being someone else disguised as her husband, and out of fear she immediately left his company. Upon hearing the chanting of Krsna's name, Lord Balarama saw that His dress had become white, although He was generally accustomed to a bluish dress. And the cowherd girls saw all of the water of the Yamuna River turn into milk, so they began to churn it into butter. In other words, by the spreading of Krsna consciousness, or the glories of Krsna, everything became white and pure.
~The Nectar of Devotion

The chief worshipable object is the holy name of Radha and Krsna:
[Lord Caitanya to Ramananda Raya]:
Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu asked, "Among all worshipable objects, which is the chief?"
Ramananda Raya replies, "The chief worshipable object is the holy name of Radha and Krsna, the Hare Krsna mantra."
~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 8.256

9.

The Holy Name of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Is All–auspicious
A brahmana tells Prakasananda Sarasvati that the name "Krsna Caitanya" is all–auspicious to the world:
"His name, Krsna Caitanya, is all–auspicious to the world. Everything about Him–His name, form, and qualities–is unparalleled."
~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 17.113

Simply by remembering or chanting Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's holy name one can be delivered from material existence:

[The representative of the Orissan government, the maha-patra, thinking to himself!: "It must be Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself who has changed the Muhammadan's mind. Due to His presence and even due to His remembrance, the world is liberated."

[The maha-patra to Lord Caitanya]:

"Simply by hearing Your holy name, a candala, lowest of men, can be purified."

One can be delivered from material existence simply by remembering Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's holy name or by visiting Him. This Krsna consciousness movement is being spread throughout the world, but not even one yavana or mleccha addicted to drinking could have changed and accepted Krsna consciousness without Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's grace. People are often astonished to see many thousands of Westerners converted to Vaisnavism. Generally Westerners are addicted to meat-eating, drinking, gambling and illicit sex; therefore their taking up Krsna consciousness is astonishing. In India, especially, there is much astonishment at this. The answer, however, is given here: darsana-smarane yanra jagat tarila. This change is made possible simply by the remembrance of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. The Western devotees are very sincerely chanting the holy names of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates: sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu-nityananda sri-advaita gadadhara srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda. By the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates, people are being purified and their consciousness directed from maya to Krsna.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 16.175-184

Simply by chanting the holy name of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, people throughout the world are becoming devotees:

Although Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu did not manifest His natural ecstatic love, everyone became a pure devotee simply by seeing and hearing Him.

Srila Rtpa Gosvami has described Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu as maha-vadanya-avatara, the most munificent incarnation. Although Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is not physically present now, simply by chanting His holy name (sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu-nityananda sri-advaita gadadhara srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda) people throughout the world are becoming devotees.

One who chants the mantra "Gauranga" and one who chants the names of Radha and Kṛṣṇa are on the same level:

[Nakula Brahmācari to Sivananda Sena]:

"You are chanting the Gaura–gopala mantra composed of four syllables. Now please give up the doubts that have resided within you."

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura explains the Gaura–gopala mantra in his Amṛta–pravaha–bhāṣya. Worshipers of Sri Gaurasundara accept the four syllables gau–ra–an–ga as the Gaura mantra, but pure worshipers of Radha and Kṛṣṇa accept the four syllables ra–dha kṛṣ–na as the Gaura–gopala mantra. However, Vaiṣṇavas consider Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu nondifferent from Radha–Kṛṣṇa (sri–kṛṣṇa–caitanya radha–kṛṣṇa nahe anya). Therefore one who chants the mantra Gauranga and one who chants the names of Radha and Kṛṣṇa are on the same level.

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Antya–lila 2.31

10.

The Maha–mantra Is a Spiritual Sound Vibration

The names of the Supreme Lord are not material:

[Dakṣa to Lord Viṣṇu]:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is inconceivably opulent, who is devoid of all material names, forms and pastimes, and who is all–pervading, is especially merciful to the devotees who worship His lotus feet. Thus He exhibits transcendental forms and names with His different pastimes. May that Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, be merciful to me.

In regard to the significant word anama–rtpah, Sri Sridhara Svami says, prakṛta–nama–rtpa–rahito 'pi. The word anama, which means "having no name," indicates that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has no material name. Simply by chanting the name of Narayana to call his son, Ajāmila attained salvation. This means that Narayana is not an ordinary mundane name; it is nonmaterial. The word anama, therefore, indicates that

the names of the Supreme Lord do not belong to this material world. The vibration of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra is not a material sound, and similarly the form of the Lord and His appearance and activities are all nonmaterial. To show His causeless mercy to the devotees, as well as to the nondevotees, Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appears in this material world with names, forms and pastimes, all of which are transcendental.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.4.33

The Hare Krsna maha–mantra should not be considered a material vibration:
In the Padma Purana it is said:

arceye visnau sila–dhir gurusu nara–matir vaisnave jati–buddhir
visnor va vaisnavanam kali–mala–mathane pada–tirthe 'mbu–buddhih
sri–visnor namni mantre sakala–kalusa–he sabda–samanya–buddhir
visnau sarvesvarese tad–itara–sama–dhir yasya va naraki sah

No one should consider the Deity in the temple to be made of stone or wood, nor should one consider the spiritual master an ordinary human being. No one should consider a Vaisnava to belong to a particular caste or creed, and no one should consider caranamrta or Ganges water to be like ordinary water. Nor should anyone consider the Hare Krsna maha–mantra to be a material vibration. All these expansions of Krsna in the material world are simply demonstrations of the Lord's mercy and willingness to give facility to His devotees who are engaged in His devotional service within the material world.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 20.217

The holy name is a spiritual sound from the spiritual world:

[The maha–mantra]

is not a material sound like the sounds we hear on the radio. It is a spiritual sound that comes from the spiritual world. Even in the material world we can release a sound from one place, and it can be heard thousands of miles away. A spiritual sound can be released from many trillions of miles away, and it can be heard, provided that one has the machine to capture it. That machine is bhagavata–prema. Those who have developed love of Godhead can hear it.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahitti

The holy name is eternally pure and transcendental:

Since Kṛṣṇa and His holy name are identical, the holy name is eternally pure and beyond material contamination. It is the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a transcendental vibration. The holy name is completely different from material sound, as confirmed by Narottama daśa Thākura. Golokera prema–dhana, hari–nama–sankīrtana: the transcendental vibration of hari–nama–sankīrtana is imported from the spiritual world.
~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Ādi–līla 7.74

The name of the Lord is transcendental:

[Amsuman to Lord Kapila]:

O completely peaceful Lord, although material nature, fruitive activities and their consequent material names and forms are Your creation, You are unaffected by them. Therefore, Your transcendental name is different from material names, and Your form is different from material forms. You assume a form resembling a material body just to give us instructions like those of Bhagavad–gīta, but actually You are the supreme original person. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 9.8.24

The chanting of the maha–mantra is enacted from the spiritual platform:

By practical experience, one can perceive that by chanting this maha–mantra, or the Great Chanting for Deliverance, one can at once feel a transcendental ecstasy coming through from the spiritual stratum. In the material concept of life we are busy in the matter of sense gratification as if we were in the lower, animal stage. A little elevated from this status of sense gratification, one is engaged in mental speculation for the purpose of getting out of the material clutches. A little elevated from this speculative status, when one is intelligent enough, one tries to find out the supreme cause of all causes–within and without. And when one is factually on the plane of spiritual understanding, surpassing the stages of sense, mind, and intelligence, he is then on the transcendental plane. This chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is enacted from the spiritual platform, and thus this sound vibration surpasses all lower strata of consciousness–namely sensual, mental, and intellectual. There is no need, therefore, to understand the language of the mantra, nor is there any need for mental speculation nor any intellectual adjustment for chanting this maha–mantra. It is automatic, from the spiritual platform, and as such, anyone can take part in the chanting without any

previous qualification.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Only the devotee can understand the transcendental nature of Krsna's name:

[The demigods to Lord Krsna in the womb of Devaki]:

O Lord, Your transcendental name and form are not ascertained by those who merely speculate on the path of imagination. Your name, form and attributes can be ascertained only through devotional service.

As stated in the Padma Purana:

atah sri-krsna-namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

~[BRS. atah sri-krsna-namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

"No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Sri Krsna through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him." ~(Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.2.234)1.2.234]

"One cannot understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Sri Krsna through one's materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him."

Since Krsna and His transcendental name, form and activities are all of a transcendental nature, ordinary persons or those who are only slightly advanced cannot understand them.... Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah: Krsna's transcendental name, form, attributes and activities can be revealed only when one engages in His service in full consciousness. This confirms Krsna's own words in Bhagavad-gita (18.55):

bhaktya mam abhijanati
yavan yas casmi tattvatah
tato mam tattvato jnatva
visate tad–anantaram

"One can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of the Supreme Lord by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God."

Only by sevonmukha, by engaging oneself in the Lord's service, can one realize the name, form and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead....

The Lord is also known as Giridhari or Girivara–dhari. Because Krsna, for the sake of His devotees, lifted Govardhana Hill, the devotees appreciate the Lord's inconceivable strength; but nondevotees, in spite of directly perceiving the Lord's inconceivable strength and power, regard the Lord's activities as fictitious. This is the difference between a devotee and a nondevotee. Nondevotees cannot give any nomenclature for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, yet the Lord is known as Syamasundara and Giridhari. Similarly the Lord is known as Devaki–nandana and Yasoda–nandana because He accepted the role of son for mother Devaki and mother Yasoda, and He is known as Gopala because He enjoyed the sport of maintaining the cows and calves. Therefore, although He has no mundane name, He is addressed by devotees as Devaki–nandana, Yasoda–nandana, Gopala and Syamasundara. These are all transcendental names that only devotees can appreciate and nondevotees cannot.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.2.36

11.

The Holy Name Is Ever Fresh

Because the Hare Krsna mantra is spiritual, chanting never becomes hackneyed or tiresome: In the material world we are simply chewing the chewed, throwing it away, picking it up and then chewing it again. Spiritual variety is not like this. Spiritual variety is anandambudhi–vardhanam: it is constantly increasing. It is even greater than the ocean, because the ocean does not increase. The shores of the ocean are set; they have certain limits. However, the ocean of bliss is constantly increasing. The more we enter into that spiritual bliss, the more we become joyful.

The young people in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all the time. If this mantra were material, how long would they chant it? It is not possible to chant a material name for very long because the chanting would become hackneyed and very tiresome. No one could be satisfied simply by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa unless Hare Kṛṣṇa itself were spiritual. We may chant, "Mr. John, Mr. John, Mr. John," but after an hour we will be fed up. However, the more we become spiritually advanced, the more bliss we will derive from chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devaḥṭṭi

God is eternal, and His instructions and followers are also eternal. In Bhagavad-gīta (4.1) Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that millions of years ago He spoke Bhagavad-gīta to the sun-god. Bhagavad-gīta was spoken to Arjuna five thousand years ago, and if we read it today we will still find that it is fresh. Bhagavad-gīta and Kṛṣṇa are never old. Although Kṛṣṇa is the most ancient one, the oldest of all, He remains like a young boy in His teens. He never appears older than twenty. Kṛṣṇa's words are absolute, as well as His form, qualities and activities. They are always fresh and new. If they were not, how could the devotees glorify them day after day with greater enthusiasm? The more one glorifies Kṛṣṇa, the more enthusiastic one becomes in glorifying, glorifying, glorifying. This is the meaning of spiritual. In the material world, if we repeat something once, twice, thrice or four times, it finally becomes hackneyed and disgusting. However, this Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra can be chanted twenty-four hours daily, and one will still feel fresh and enthusiastic. It is not a material sound like the sounds we hear on the radio. It is a spiritual sound that comes from the spiritual world.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devaḥṭṭi

It is said that it is the nature of a devotee to constantly apply his mind, energy, words, ears, etc., in hearing and chanting about Kṛṣṇa. This is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and for one who is rapt in hearing and chanting Kṛṣṇa, the subject matter never becomes hackneyed or old. That is the significance of transcendental subject matter in contrast to material subject matter. Material subject matter becomes stale, and one cannot hear a certain subject for a long time; he wants change. But as far as transcendental subject matter is concerned, it is called nitya-navayamana. This means that one can go on chanting and hearing about the Lord and never feel tired but will remain fresh and eager to hear more and more.

~Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

The devotee does not feel hackneyed or stereotyped, nor does he feel that he is in a stagnant position. In the material world, if one engages in chanting a material name, he will feel tired after chanting a few times. However, one can chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra all day

and night and never feel tired. As chanting is increased, it will come out new and fresh. Srila Rtpa Gosvami said that if he could somehow get millions of ears and tongues, then he could relish spiritual bliss by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.30.20

Our students can chant the Hare Krsna mantra twenty-four hours a day, and they will never get tired. They will continue to dance and chant. And anyone can try it; because it is not material, one will never get tired of chanting Hare Krsna. In the material world, if one chants anything, any favorite name, for three, four, or ten times, he will get tired of it. That is a fact. But because Hare Krsna is not material, if one chants this mantra, he will never get tired. The more one chants, the more his heart will be cleansed of material dirt and the more the problems of his life within this material world will be solved.

~The Science of Self-Realization

In the material world one may become very tired if he works all the time, but if one works in Krsna consciousness, he can chant Hare Krsna and engage in devotional service twenty-four hours a day and never get tired. But if we vibrate some mundane vibration, then we soon become exhausted. There is no question of becoming tired on the spiritual platform. The spiritual platform is absolute.

~The Perfection of Yoga

12.

The Maha-mantra Is a Prayer for Deliverance, Protection, and Engagement in the Lord's Service

The meaning and significance of the maha-mantra:

The word Hara is the form of addressing the energy of the Lord, and the words Krsna and Rama are forms of addressing the Lord Himself. Both Krsna and Rama mean "the supreme pleasure," and Hara is the supreme pleasure energy of the Lord, changed to Hare in the vocative. The supreme pleasure energy of the Lord helps us to reach the Lord.

The material energy, called maya, is also one of the multienergies of the Lord. And we, the living entities, are also the energy, marginal energy, of the Lord. The living entities are described as superior to material energy. When the superior energy is in contact with the inferior energy, an incompatible situation arises; but when the superior marginal energy is

in contact with the superior energy, Hara, it is established in its happy, normal condition.

These three words, namely Hare, Krsna, and Rama, are the transcendental seeds of the maha–mantra. The chanting is a spiritual call for the Lord and His energy to give protection to the conditioned soul. This chanting is exactly like the genuine cry of a child for its mother's presence. Mother Hara helps the devotee achieve the Lord Father's grace, and the Lord reveals Himself to the devotee who chants this mantra sincerely.

~The Science of Self–Realization

The maha–mantra is a form of prayer:

Simply by offering prayers to the Supreme Lord one can become perfect ... one can execute devotional service anywhere and everywhere in the material existence simply by offering prayers unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Hare Krsna maha–mantra is also a prayer, for a prayer addresses the Supreme Personality of Godhead by His name and invokes good fortune by petitioning the Lord to allow one to engage in His devotional service. The Hare Krsna maha–mantra also says, "My dear Lord Krsna, my dear Lord Rama, O energy of the Lord, Hare, kindly engage me in Your service."

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.24.69

The Hare Krsna maha–mantra addresses the Lord and His spiritual potency and is a prayer requesting engagement in Their transcendental loving service:

When we chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra we are saying, "Hare! O energy of the Lord! O my Lord Krsna!" In this way we are simply addressing the Lord and His spiritual potency represented as Radha–Krsna, Sita–Rama, or Laksmi–Narayana. The devotee always prays to the Lord and His internal energy (consort) so that he may engage in Their transcendental loving service. When the conditioned soul attains his real spiritual energy and fully surrenders unto the Lord's lotus feet, he tries to engage in the Lord's service. This is the real constitutional position of the living entity.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 22.16

Caitanya Mahaprabhu teaches us that we should only beg God for His service life after life. This is the actual meaning of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. When we are chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, we are actually addressing God and His energy, Hara. Hara is Krsna's internal potency, Srimati Radharani or Laksmi. Jaya radhe! This is daivi prakrti, and the devotees

take shelter of the daivi prakṛti, Srimatī Rādhārāṇī. Thus the Vaiṣṇavas worship Rādhā–Kṛṣṇa, Lakṣmī–Nārāyaṇa and Sītā–Rāma. In the beginning of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra we first address the internal energy of Kṛṣṇa, Hare. Thus we say, "O Rādhārāṇī! O Hare! O energy of the Lord!" When we address someone in this way, he usually says, "Yes, what do you want?" The answer is, "Please engage me in Your service." This should be our prayer. We should not say, "O energy of the Lord, O Kṛṣṇa, please give me money. Please give me a beautiful wife. Please give me many followers. Please give me some prestigious position. Please give me the presidency." These are all material hankerings, which should be avoided.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devaḥṭṭi

Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is asking the Lord, "Please engage me in Your service." This is the mantra taught by Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself. Hare refers to the energy of the Lord, and Kṛṣṇa and Rāma are names for the Lord Himself. When we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, we are asking Kṛṣṇa to please engage us in His service. This is because our entire material disease is due to our having forgotten to serve God. In illusion, we are thinking, "I am God. What is the other God that I have to serve? I myself am God." Ultimately, that is the only disease, the last snare of illusion. First of all, a person tries to be a prime minister, president, Rockefeller, Ford, this and that, and when one fails or attains such a post and is still unhappy, he wants to become God. That is like becoming an even higher president. When I understand that the presidency does not afford me eternal bliss and knowledge, I demand the highest presidency. I demand to become God. In any case, the demand is there, and this demand is our disease. In illusion, we are demanding to be the highest, but the process of bhakti–yoga is just the opposite. We want to become servants, servants of the servants of the Lord. There is no question of demanding to become the Lord; we just want to serve. That's all.

~The Path of Perfection

Ms. Nixon: Could you explain the meaning of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra?

Srīla Prabhupāda: It is very simple. Hare means, "O energy of the Lord," and Kṛṣṇa means, "O Lord Kṛṣṇa." Just as there are males and females in the material world, similarly, God is the original male (puruṣa), and His energy (prakṛti) is the original female. So, when we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, we are saying, "O Lord Kṛṣṇa, O energy of Kṛṣṇa, kindly engage me in Your service."

~The Science of Self–Realization

The maha–mantra is a prayer for engagement in the service of the spiritual energy: Rama and Krsna are names of God, and Hare is the energy of God. So when we chant the maha–mantra, we address God together with His energy. This energy is of two kinds, the spiritual and the material. At present we are in the clutches of the material energy. Therefore we pray to Krsna that He may kindly deliver us from the service of the material energy and accept us into the service of the spiritual energy. That is our whole philosophy. Hare Krsna means, "O energy of God, O God [Krsna], please engage me in Your service." It is our nature to render service. Somehow or other we have come to the service of material things, but when this service is transformed into the service of the spiritual energy, then our life is perfect.

~The Science of Self–Realization

The Hare Krsna mantra is a prayer for acceptance and deliverance: Hare refers to the energy of the Lord, and Krsna and Rama refer to the Lord Himself. Therefore, when we chant Hare Krsna, we are praying, "O Lord, O energy of the Lord, please accept me." We have no other prayer than "Please accept me." Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu taught us that we should simply cry and pray that the Lord accept us. As Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself prayed,

ayi nanda–tanuja kinkaram
patitam mam visame bhavambudhau
krpaya tava pada–pankaja
sthita–dhtli–sadsam vicintaya

"O Krsna, son of Nanda, somehow or other I have fallen into this ocean of nescience and ignorance. Please pick me up and place me as one of the atoms at Your lotus feet."

If a man has fallen into the ocean, his only hope for survival is that someone comes to pick him up. He only has to be lifted one inch above the water in order to feel immediate relief. Similarly, as soon as we take to Krsna consciousness, we are lifted up, and we feel immediate relief.

~The Path of Perfection

The maha–mantra is a prayer for the Lord's protection:

The chanting is a spiritual call for the Lord and His energy, to give protection to the conditioned soul. This chanting is exactly like the genuine cry of a child for its mother's presence. Mother Hara helps the devotee achieve the Lord Father's grace, and the Lord reveals Himself to the devotee who chants this mantra sincerely.

~The Science of Self-Realization

The Hare Krsna mantra addresses not only Krsna and Balarama but Lord Caitanya and Nityananda as well:

In the Maha-mantra Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, the word Rama refers to Balarama. Since Nityananda is an expansion of Balarama, Rama also refers to Lord Nityananda. Thus Hare Krsna, Hare Rama addresses not only Krsna and Balarama but Lord Caitanya and Nityananda as well.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi Intro.

13.

The Maha-mantra Is the Essence and the Conclusion of All Vedic Knowledge,
Rituals, Hymns, and Mantras

(and Thus One Who Chants the Maha-mantra Is Understood to Have Passed Through All
Vedic Knowledge and Practices in Previous Lives) >

The essence of all Vedic knowledge is included in the maha-mantra:

The Narada-pancaratra praises the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, as follows:

trayo vedah sad-angani
chandamsi vividhah surah
sarvam astaksarantahstham
yac canyad api van-mayam
sarva-vedanta-sararthah
samsararnava-taranah

"The essence of all Vedic knowledge-comprehending the three kinds of Vedic activity [karma-kanda, jnana-kanda and upasana-kanda], the chandah or Vedic hymns, and the

process for satisfying the demigods—is included in the eight syllables Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna. This is the reality of all Vedanta. The chanting of the holy name is the only means to cross the ocean of nescience."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.16

Since the holy name can deliver a conditioned soul, it is the essence of all Vedic hymns: [isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

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

Simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra offenselessly one can be freed from all subtle and gross material conditions.... In the present age the vibration of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra is the only process which is in a transcendental position beyond material contamination. Since the holy name can deliver a conditioned soul, it is explained here to be sarva-mantra-sara, the essence of all Vedic hymns.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.74

The chanting of the holy name of the Lord is the substance of all the Vedic mantras: Srila Jiva Gosvami strongly emphasizes the chanting of the holy name of the Lord as follows:

nanu bhagavan-namatmaka eva mantrah; tatra visesena namah-sabdady-
alankrtah sri-bhagavata srimad-rsibhis cahita-sakti-visesah, sri-bhagavata samam
atma-sambandha-visesa-pratipadakas ca tatra kevalani sri-bhagavan-namany api
nirapeksany eva parama-purusartha-phala-paryanta-dana-samarthani tato
mantresu namato 'py adhika-samarthyeh labdhe katham diksady-apeksa? ucyate-
yadyapi svartpato nasti, tathapi prayah svabhavato dehadi-sambandhena kadarya-
silanam viksipta-cittanam jananam tat-sankoci-karanaya srimad-rsi-prabhrtibhir
atrarcana-marge kvacit kvacit kacit kacin maryada sthapitasti

Srila Jiva Gosvami states that the substance of all the Vedic mantras is the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. Every mantra begins with the prefix nama om and eventually addresses by name the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By the supreme will of the Lord there is a specific potency in each and every mantra chanted by great sages like Narada Muni and other rsis. Chanting the holy name of the Lord immediately renovates the

transcendental relationship of the living being with the Supreme Lord.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Ādi-līlā 7.76

Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the chanting of the maha-mantra, is the essence of the Vedic principle:

In the Nārada-pancarātra it is stated that all the Vedic rituals, mantras, and understanding are compressed into the eight words Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare. Similarly, in the Kālī-santarāna Upaniṣad it is stated that these sixteen words, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, are especially meant for counteracting the degrading and contaminating influence of this materialistic age of Kālī.... The process of chanting is, therefore, not only the sublime method for practical perfection of life, but the authorized Vedic principle inaugurated by the greatest Vedic scholar and devotee, Lord Caitanya (whom we consider an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa). We are simply following in His authorized footsteps.

The scope of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is universal. The process for regaining one's original spiritual status of eternal life, full with bliss and knowledge, is not abstract, dry theorizing. Spiritual life is not described in the Vedas as theoretical, dry, or impersonal. The Vedas aim at the inculcation of pure love of God only, and this harmonious conclusion is practically realized by the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, or by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

As the goal of spiritual realization is only one, love of God, so the Vedas stand as a single comprehensive whole in the matter of transcendental understanding. Only the incomplete views of various parties apart from the bona fide Vedic lines of teaching give a rupturous appearance of the Bhagavad-gīta. The reconciliative factor adjusting all apparently diverse propositions of the Vedas is the essence of the Veda, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness (love of God).

~The Science of Self-Realization

All Vedic literature prescribes the chanting of the name of Kṛṣṇa:

My dear Dr. Staal: ... Regarding convincing you that all scriptures prescribe chanting of the name of Kṛṣṇa, I can simply present the authority of Lord Caitanya. Lord Caitanya recommended, kīrtaniyah sada hariḥ [Cc. ādi 17.31] ["Hari, Kṛṣṇa, is constantly to be praised" (Sikṣastaka 3)]. Similarly, Madhvacārya quotes, vede ramayane caiva hariḥ sarvatra giyate ["Hari is sung about everywhere in the Vedas and Rāmāyana"]. Similarly, in

the Bhagavad-gita [15.15] the Lord says, vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyah ["By all the Vedas, I am to be known"].

In this way we find all the scriptures aiming at the Supreme Person. In the rg-veda [1.22.20] the mantra is om tad visnoh paramam padam sada pasyanti strayah ["The demigods are always looking to that supreme abode of Visnu"]. The whole Vedic process, therefore, is to understand Lord Visnu, and any scripture is directly or indirectly chanting the glories of the Supreme Lord, Visnu.

~The Science of Self-Realization

One who chants the holy names is understood to have passed through all forms of Vedic ritual, sacrifice, austerity, and study:

[Devahtti to Lord Kapila]:

Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your name! Even if born in the families of dog-eaters, such persons are worshipable. Persons who chant the holy name of Your Lordship must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Aryans. To be chanting the holy name of Your Lordship, they must have bathed at holy places of pilgrimage, studied the Vedas and fulfilled everything required.

As it is stated in the previous verse, a person who has once offenselessly chanted the holy name of God becomes immediately eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices. One should not be astonished by this statement of Srimad-Bhagavatam. One should not disbelieve or think, "How by chanting the holy name of the Lord can one become a holy man to be compared to the most elevated brahmana?" To eradicate such doubts in the minds of unbelievers, this verse affirms that the stage of chanting of the holy name of the Lord is not sudden, but that the chanters have already performed all kinds of Vedic rituals and sacrifices. It is not very astounding, for no one in this life can chant the holy name of the Lord unless he has passed all lower stages, such as performing the Vedic ritualistic sacrifices, studying the Vedas and practicing good behavior like that of the Aryans. All this must first have been done. Just as a student in a law class is to be understood to have already graduated from general education, anyone who is engaged in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord-Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare-must have already passed all lower stages. It is said that those who simply chant the holy name with the tip of the tongue are glorious. One does not even have to chant the holy name and understand the whole procedure, namely the offensive stage, offenseless stage and pure stage; if the holy name is sounded on the tip of the tongue, that is also sufficient. It

is said herein that nama, a singular number, one name, Krsna or Rama, is sufficient. It is not that one has to chant all the holy names of the Lord. The holy names of the Lord are innumerable, and one does not have to chant all the names to prove that he has already undergone all the processes of Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. If one chants once only, it is to be understood that he has already passed all the examinations, not to speak of those who are chanting always, twenty-four hours a day....

The holy name has to be chanted to please the Supreme Lord, and not for any sense gratification or professional purpose. If this pure mentality is there, then even though a person is born of a low family, such as a dog-eater's, he is so glorious that not only has he purified himself, but he is quite competent to deliver others. He is competent to speak on the importance of the transcendental name, just as Thakura Haridasa did. He was apparently born in a family of Muhammadans, but because he was chanting the holy name of the Supreme Lord offenselessly, Lord Caitanya empowered him to become the authority, or acarya, of spreading the name. It did not matter that he was born in a family which was not following the Vedic rules and regulations. Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Advaita Prabhu accepted him as an authority because he was offenselessly chanting the name of the Lord. Authorities like Advaita Prabhu and Lord Caitanya immediately accepted that he had already performed all kinds of austerities, studied the Vedas and performed all sacrifices. That is automatically understood. There is a hereditary class of brahmanas called the smarta-brahmanas, however, who are of the opinion that even if such persons who are chanting the holy name of the Lord are accepted as purified, they still have to perform the Vedic rites or await their next birth in a family of brahmanas so that they can perform the Vedic rituals. But actually this is not the case. Such a man does not need to wait for the next birth to become purified. He is at once purified. It is understood that he has already performed all sorts of rites. It is the so-called brahmanas who actually have to undergo different kinds of austerities before reaching that point of purification. There are many other Vedic performances which are not described here. All such Vedic rituals have been already performed by the chanters of the holy name.

The word juhuvuh means that the chanters of the holy name have already performed all kinds of sacrifices. Sasnuh means that they have already traveled to all the holy places of pilgrimage and taken part in purificatory activities at those places. They are called aryah because they already finished all these requirements, and therefore they must be among the Aryans or those who have qualified themselves to become Aryans. "Aryan" refers to those who are civilized, whose manners are regulated according to the Vedic rituals. Any devotee who is chanting the holy name of the Lord is the best kind of Aryan. Unless one studies the Vedas, one cannot become an Aryan, but it is automatically understood that the chanters have already studied all the Vedic literature. The specific word used here is antcuh, which

means that because they have already completed all those recommended acts, they have become qualified to be spiritual masters.

The very word *grnanti*, which is used in this verse, means to be already established in the perfectional stage of ritualistic performances. If one is seated on the bench of a high court and is giving judgment on cases, it means that he has already passed all legal exams and is better than those who are engaged in the study of law or those expecting to study law in the future. In a similar way, persons who are chanting the holy name are transcendental to those who are factually performing the Vedic rituals and those who expect to be qualified (or, in other words, those who are born in families of brahmanas but have not yet undergone the reformatory processes and who therefore expect to study the Vedic rituals and perform the sacrifices in the future).

There are many Vedic statements in different places saying that anyone who chants the holy name of the Lord becomes immediately freed from conditional life and that anyone who hears the holy name of the Lord, even though born of a family of dog-eaters, also becomes liberated from the clutches of material entanglement.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.33.7

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

By virtue of the divine consciousness of his previous life, he automatically becomes attracted to the yogic principles—even without seeking them. Such an inquisitive transcendentalist, striving for yoga, stands always above the ritualistic principles of the scriptures.

Advanced yogis are not very much attracted to the rituals of the scriptures, but they automatically become attracted to the yoga principles, which can elevate them to complete Krsna consciousness, the highest yoga perfection. In the Srimad-Bhagavatam (3.33.7), such disregard of Vedic rituals by the advanced transcendentalists is explained as follows:

aho bata svapaco 'to gariyan
yaj-jihvagre vartate nama tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuh sasnur arya
brahmantcur nama grnanti ye te

"O my Lord! Persons who chant the holy names of Your Lordship are far, far advanced in spiritual life, even if born in families of dogeaters. Such chanters have undoubtedly

performed all kinds of austerities and sacrifices, bathed in all sacred places, and finished all scriptural studies."

The famous example of this was presented by Lord Caitanya, who accepted Thakura Haridasa as one of His most important disciples. Although Thakura Haridasa happened to take his birth in a Muslim family, he was elevated to the post of namacarya by Lord Caitanya due to his rigidly attended principle of chanting three hundred thousand holy names of the Lord daily: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. And because he chanted the holy name of the Lord constantly, it is understood that in his previous life he must have passed through all the ritualistic methods of the Vedas, known as sabda–brahma. Unless, therefore, one is purified, one cannot take to the principle of Krsna consciousness nor become engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord, Hare Krsna.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 6.44

As long as one is within the limited jurisdiction of fruitive activities or is involved in mental speculation, he may perhaps be eligible to study or teach the theoretical knowledge of Vedanta–sttra, but he cannot understand the supreme, eternal, transcendental (completely liberated) vibration of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. One who has achieved perfection in chanting the transcendental Hare Krsna vibration does not have to separately learn the philosophy of Vedanta–sttra. According to the teachings of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the bona fide spiritual master, those who do not understand the transcendental vibration as being nondifferent from the Supreme and who try to become Mayavadi philosophers or experts in Vedanta–sttra are all fools. Studying Vedanta–sttra by one's own efforts (the ascending process of knowledge) is another sign of foolishness. He who has attained a taste for chanting the transcendental vibration, however, actually attains the conclusion of Vedanta. In this connection, there are two verses in Srimad–Bhagavatam which are very instructive. The purport of the first is that even if a low caste person is engaged in chanting the transcendental vibration, it is to be understood that he has performed all types of renunciation, austerities and sacrifice and has studied all the Brahma–sttras. Thus one can be able to chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. The purport of the second verse is that one who chants the two syllables Ha–ri must be considered to have studied all the Vedas: the rg Veda, Atharva Veda, Yajur Veda and Sama Veda.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

As stated in the Fifteenth Chapter, all the rules and regulations of the Vedas are meant for knowing Krsna. If one understands Krsna from the Bhagavad–gita and becomes situated in

Krsna consciousness, engaging himself in devotional service, he has reached the highest perfection of knowledge offered by the Vedic literature. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu made this process very easy: He asked people simply to chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare and to engage in the devotional service of the Lord and eat the remnants of foodstuff offered to the Deity. One who is directly engaged in all these devotional activities is understood as having studied all Vedic literature. He has come to the conclusion perfectly.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 16.24

14.

"Om" and "Hare Krsna" This section includes only those instructions on omkara encountered while gathering references on the maha-mantra. Omkara was not separately researched.note

Omkara is a sound representation of the Supreme Lord:

The principal word in the Vedas, pranava omkara, is the sound representation of the Supreme Lord. Therefore omkara should be considered the supreme sound.... Omkara is the reservoir of all the energies of the Supreme Lord.... In Bhagavad-gita the Lord has in many places given importance to omkara (Bg. 8.13, 9.17, 17.24). Similarly, omkara is given importance in the Atharva Veda and the Mandtkya Upanisad. In his Bhagavat-sandarbha, Srila Jiva Gosvami says: "Omkara is the most confidential sound representation of the Supreme Lord." The sound representation or name of the Supreme Lord is as good as the Supreme Lord Himself. By vibrating the sound of omkara, or of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, one can be delivered from the contamination of this material world. Because such vibrations of transcendental sound can deliver a conditioned soul, they are known as tara, or deliverers.... In the Mandtkya Upanisad it is said that when omkara is chanted, whatever is seen as material is seen perfectly as spiritual. In the spiritual world or in spiritual vision there is nothing but omkara, or the one alternate, om.... As far as the omkara pranava is concerned, it is considered to be the sound incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As such, omkara is eternal, unlimited, transcendental, supreme and indestructible. He (omkara) is the beginning, middle and end, and He is beginningless as well. When one understands omkara as such, he becomes immortal. One should thus know omkara as a representation of the Supreme situated in everyone's heart. One who understands omkara and Visnu as being one and the same and all-pervading never laments in the material

world, nor does he remain a *stdra*.

Although He (*omkara*) has no material form, He is unlimitedly expanded, and He has unlimited form. By understanding *omkara* one can become free from the duality of the material world and attain absolute knowledge. Therefore *omkara* is the most auspicious representation of the Supreme Lord. Such is the description given by *Mandtkya Upanisad*. One should not foolishly interpret an Upanisadic description and say that because the Supreme Personality of Godhead "cannot" appear Himself in this material world in His own form, He sends His sound representation (*omkara*) instead. Due to such a false interpretation, *omkara* comes to be considered something material and consequently *omkara* is misunderstood and praised as being simply an exhibition or symbol of the Lord. Actually *omkara* is as good as any other incarnation of the Supreme Lord.

The Lord has innumerable incarnations, and *omkara* is one of them. As Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gīta*: "Amongst vibrations, I am the syllable *om*." (Bg. 9.17) This means that *omkara* is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa. Impersonalists, however, give more importance to *omkara* than to the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. The fact is, however, that any representational incarnation of the Supreme Lord is nondifferent from Him. Such an incarnation or representation is as good spiritually as the Supreme Lord. *Om* is therefore the ultimate representation of all the Vedas. Indeed, the Vedic mantras or hymns have transcendental value because they are prefixed by the syllable *om*. The Vaiṣṇavas interpret *omkara* as follows: by the letter O, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is indicated; and by the letter M, the eternal servitor of the Supreme Lord, the living entity, is indicated. Śaṅkara has not given such importance to the *omkara*. However, importance is given in the Vedas, the *Ramayana*, and in the *Mahabharata* from beginning to end. Thus the glories of the Supreme Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are declared.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

In the Vedas, the chief transcendental vibration *omkara* is also Kṛṣṇa. *Pranava omkara* is the divine substance of the Vedas. Following the Vedas means chanting the Vedic mantras, and no Vedic mantra is complete without *omkara*. In the *Mandtkya Upanisad*, *omkara* is stated to be the most auspicious sound representation of the Supreme Lord. This is also confirmed again in the *Atharva Veda*. *Om* is the sound representation of the Supreme Lord and is therefore the principal word in the Vedas. In this connection, the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, says, *pranavaḥ sarva-vedesu*: "I am the syllable *om* in all the Vedic mantras." [Bg. 7.8]

~The Science of Self-Realization

The three words "om tat sat" are uttered in conjunction with the holy name of the Supreme Lord:

[The] three words, om tat sat, particularly indicate the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the Vedic hymns, the word om is always found.... The three words om tat sat are uttered in conjunction with the holy name of the Supreme Lord, e.g., om tad visnoh. Whenever a Vedic hymn or the holy name of the Supreme Lord is uttered, om is added. This is the indication of Vedic literature. These three words are taken from Vedic hymns. Om ity etad brahmano nedistam nama indicates the first goal. Then tat tvam asi indicates the second goal. And sad eva saumya indicates the third goal. Combined they become om tat sat. Formerly when Brahma, the first created living entity, performed sacrifices, he spoke these three names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The same principle holds by disciplic succession. So this hymn has great significance.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 17.23

"Om" is Krsna:

When we chant the Vedic mantras which begin with om, we can also remember Krsna. Om, like Hare Krsna, is also an address to God, and om is also Krsna.

~On the Way to Krsna

All sounds are but reflections of the original spiritual sound "om" or "Hare Krsna": Sabdah means sound, and whenever we hear any sound we should know that it is a vibration of the original sound, the pure spiritual sound om or Hare Krsna. Whatever sound we hear in the material world is but a reflection of that original spiritual sound om.

~On the Way to Krsna

The sound "Hare Krsna" contains "om":

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

After being situated in this yoga practice and vibrating the sacred syllable om, the supreme combination of letters, if one thinks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and quits his body, he will certainly reach the spiritual planets.

It is clearly stated here that om, Brahman, and Lord Krsna are not different. The impersonal

sound of Krsna is om, but the sound Hare Krsna contains om. It is clearly recommended in this age that if one quits his body at the end of this life chanting the maha–mantra, Hare Krsna, he will reach the spiritual planets. Similarly, those who are devotees of Krsna enter the Krsna planet or Goloka Vrndavana whereas the impersonalists remain in the brahmajyoti. The personalists also enter many innumerable planets in the spiritual sky known as Vaikunthas.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 8.13

"After being situated in this yoga practice and vibrating the sacred syllable om, the supreme combination of letters, if one thinks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and quits his body, he will certainly reach the spiritual planets." (Bg. 8.13) Om, or omkara, is the concise form, or impersonal form, of the transcendental vibration. The dhyana–yogi should vibrate om while remembering Krsna, or Visnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The impersonal sound of Krsna is om, but the sound Hare Krsna contains om.

~The Path of Perfection

The scriptures recommend the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra rather than omkara in the Kali–yuga:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

In the Satya–yuga, the first millennium, all the Vedic mantras were included in one mantra–pranava, the root of all Vedic mantras....

In Satya–yuga the only mantra was omkara (om tat sat). The same name omkara is manifest in the mantra Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Unless one is a brahmana, one cannot utter omkara and get the desired result. But in Kali–yuga almost everyone is a stdra, unfit for pronouncing the pranava, omkara. Therefore the sastras have recommended the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Omkara is a mantra, or maha–mantra, and Hare Krsna is also a maha–mantra. The purpose of pronouncing omkara is to address the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva (om namo bhagavate vasudevaya). And the purpose of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra is the same. Hare: "O energy of the Lord!" Krsna: "O Lord Krsna!" Hare: "O energy of the Lord!" Rama: "O Supreme Lord, O supreme enjoyer!"

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 9.14.48

Although omkara and the Hare Krsna mantra are the same, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu recommended the chanting of the maha-mantra in this age:

Every Vedic mantra is called brahma because each mantra is preceded by the brahmaksara, aum or omkara. For example, om namo bhagavate vasudevaya. Lord Krsna says in Bhagavad-gita (7.8), pranavah sarva-vedesu: "In all the Vedic mantras, I am represented by pranava, or omkara." Thus chanting of the Vedic mantras beginning with omkara is directly chanting of Krsna's name. There is no difference. Whether one chants omkara or addresses the Lord as Krsna, the meaning is the same, but Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has recommended that in this age one chant the Hare Krsna mantra (harer namaiva kevalam). Although there is no difference between Hare Krsna and the Vedic mantras beginning with omkara, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the leader of the spiritual movement for this age, has recommended that one chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.5.26

Chanting the Hare Krsna mantra is more practical than chanting omkara because one can do so without consideration of time and place:

[Narada Muni to King Yudhisthira]:

My dear King, in a sacred and holy place of pilgrimage one should select a place in which to perform yoga. The place must be level and not too high or low. There one should sit very comfortably, being steady and equipoised, keeping his body straight, and thus begin to chant the Vedic pranava.

Here the chanting of omkara is recommended because in the beginning of transcendental realization, instead of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one may chant omkara (pranava). There is no difference between the Hare Krsna maha-mantra and omkara because both of them are sound representations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Pranavah sarva-vedesu. In all Vedic literatures, the sound vibration omkara is the beginning. Om namo bhagavate vasudevaya. The difference between chanting omkara and chanting the Hare Krsna mantra is that the Hare Krsna mantra may be chanted without consideration of the place or the sitting arrangements recommended in Bhagavad-gita (6.11):

sucāu dese pratisthāpya
sthīram asanam atmanah
naty-ucchritam natinicam
cailājina-kusottaram

"To practice yoga, one should go to a secluded place and should lay kusa grass on the ground and then cover it with a deerskin and a soft cloth. The seat should neither be too high nor too low and should be situated in a sacred place."

The Hare Krsna mantra may be chanted by anyone, without consideration of the place or how one sits. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has openly declared, *niyamitah smarane na kalah*. In chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra there are no particular injunctions regarding one's sitting place. The injunction *niyamitah smarane na kalah* includes *desa, kala* and *patra*—place, time and the individual. Therefore anyone may chant the Hare Krsna mantra, without consideration of the time and place. Especially in this age, *Kali-yuga*, it is very difficult to find a suitable place according to the recommendations of *Bhagavad-gita*. The Hare Krsna maha-mantra, however, may be chanted at any place and any time, and thus will bring results very quickly. Yet even while chanting the Hare Krsna mantra one may observe regulative principles. Thus while sitting and chanting one may keep his body straight, and this will help one in the chanting process; otherwise one may feel sleepy.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.15.31

15.

Definitions: Japa, Kirtana, Sankirtana, and Sravana

The difference between japa and kirtana:

When a mantra or hymn is chanted softly and slowly, that is called japa. The same mantra, when chanted loudly, is called kirtana. For example, the maha-mantra (Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare) when uttered very softly only for one's own hearing is called japa. The same mantra, when chanted loudly for being heard by all others, is called kirtana. The maha-mantra can be used for japa and kirtana also. When japa is practiced it is for the personal benefit of the chanter, but when kirtana is performed it is for the benefit of all others who may hear.

In the *Padma Purana* there is a statement: "For any person who is chanting the holy name either softly or loudly, the paths to liberation and even heavenly happiness are at once open."

~The Nectar of Devotion

The meaning of kirtana and sankirtana:

The chanting process offered by Lord Caitanya for achieving love of God is called sankirtana. Sankirtana is a Sanskrit word. Sam means samyak—"complete." And kirtana means "glorifying" or "describing." So complete description means complete glorification of the Supreme, or the Supreme Complete Whole. It is not that one can describe anything or glorify anything and that will be kirtana. From the grammatical point of view that may be kirtana, but according to the Vedic system, kirtana means describing the supreme authority, the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is called kirtana.

This devotional service begins with the method of sravana. Sravana means "hearing," and kirtana means "describing." One should describe, and another should hear. Or the same man himself can both describe and hear. He does not need anyone else's help. When we chant Hare Krsna, we chant and hear. This is complete. This is a complete method. But what is that chanting and hearing? One must chant and hear about Visnu, Krsna. Not of anything else. Sravanam kirtanam visnoh: [SB 7.5.23] one can understand Visnu, the all-pervading Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by the method of hearing.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Definition of sankirtana:

When a person loudly chants the glories of the Lord's activities, qualities, form, etc., it is called sankirtana. Sankirtana also refers to the congregational chanting of the holy name of the Lord.

~The Nectar of Devotion

Definition of sravana:

The nine processes of devotional service are as follows:

1. [sravana] hearing the name and glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 3

16.

The Name of Christ

The relationship of the names "Krsna" and "Christ":

Srila Prabhupada: What is the meaning of the word Christ?

Father Emmanuel: Christ comes from the Greek word Christos, meaning "the anointed one."

Srila Prabhupada: Christos is the Greek version of the word Krsna.

Father Emmanuel: This is very interesting.

Srila Prabhupada: When an Indian person calls on Krsna, he often says, "Krsta." Krsta is a Sanskrit word meaning "attraction." So when we address God as "Christ," "Krsta," or "Krsna," we indicate the same all-attractive Supreme Personality of Godhead. When Jesus said, "Our Father, who art in heaven, sanctified be Thy name," that name of God was "Krsta" or "Krsna." Do you agree?

Father Emmanuel: I think Jesus, as the son of God, has revealed to us the actual name of God: Christ. We can call God "Father," but if we want to address Him by His actual name, we have to say "Christ."

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. "Christ" is another way of saying Krsta, and "Krsta" is another way of pronouncing Krsna, the name of God. Jesus said that one should glorify the name of God, but yesterday I heard one theologian say that God has no name—that we can call Him only "Father." A son may call his father "Father," but the father also has a specific name. Similarly, "God" is the general name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose specific name is Krsna. Therefore whether you call God "Christ," "Krsta," or "Krsna," ultimately you are addressing the same Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Father Emmanuel: Yes, if we speak of God's actual name, then we must say, "Christos." In our religion, we have the Trinity: the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe we can know the name of God only by revelation from the Son of God. Jesus Christ revealed the name of the father, and therefore we take the name Christ as the revealed name of God.

Srila Prabhupada: Actually, it doesn't matter—Krsna or Christ—the name is the same. The main point is to follow the injunctions of the Vedic scriptures that recommend chanting the name of God in this age.

The Science of Self-Realization

By chanting the holy name of Christ, Christians can attain the spiritual platform:

Father Emmanuel: Krsna cannot give permission to eat animals?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes—in the animal kingdom. But the civilized human being, the religious human being, is not meant to kill and eat animals. If you stop killing animals and chant the holy name Christ, everything will be perfect. I have not come to teach you, but only to request you to please chant the name of God. The Bible also demands this of you. So let's

kindly cooperate and chant, and if you have a prejudice against chanting the name Krsna, then chant "Christos" or "Krsta"—there is no difference. Sri Caitanya said: namnam akari bahudha nija—sarva—saktih. "God has millions and millions of names, and because there is no difference between God's name and Himself, each one of these names has the same potency as God." Therefore, even if you accept designations like "Hindu," "Christian," or "Muhammadan," if you simply chant the name of God found in your own scriptures, you will attain the spiritual platform. Human life is meant for self—realization—to learn how to love God. That is the actual beauty of man. Whether you discharge this duty as a Hindu, a Christian, or a Muhammadan, it doesn't matter—but discharge it!

Father Emmanuel: I agree.

Srila Prabhupada [pointing to a string of 108 meditation beads]: We always have these beads, just as you have your rosary. You are chanting, but why don't the other Christians also chant? Why should they miss this opportunity as human beings? Cats and dogs cannot chant, but we can, because we have a human tongue. If we chant the holy names of God, we cannot lose anything; on the contrary, we gain greatly. My disciples practice chanting Hare Krsna constantly. They could also go to the cinema or do so many other things, but they have given everything up. They eat neither fish nor meat nor eggs, they don't take intoxicants, they don't drink, they don't smoke, they don't partake in gambling, they don't speculate, and they don't maintain illicit sexual connections. But they do chant the holy name of God. If you would like to cooperate with us, then go to the churches and chant, "Christ," "Krsta," or "Krsna." What could be the objection?

Father Emmanuel: There is none For my part, I would be glad to join you....

Srila Prabhupada: I think the Christian priests should cooperate with the Krsna consciousness movement. They should chant the name Christ or Christos and should stop condoning the slaughter of animals. This program follows the teachings of the Bible; it is not my philosophy. Please act accordingly and you will see how the world situation will change.

~The Science of Self—Realization

If one thinks the Hare Krsna mantra to be sectarian (Hindu), he can sing in the Christian church, which is the same process:

Krsna specifically states that this process of Krsna consciousness is susukham, very pleasant and easy to practice. Indeed, the devotional process is very pleasant; we melodiously sing with instruments, and someone will listen and also join (sravanam kirtanam). Of course the music should be in relation with the Supreme Lord, in glorification of Him. Hearing Bhagavad—gita is also part of devotional service, and in addition to hearing it one should be eager to apply it in his life. Krsna consciousness is a science and should not

be accepted blindly. There are nine processes of devotional service recommended (hearing, chanting, remembering, worshiping, praying, serving, engaging as a servitor of the Lord, establishing friendly relations with the Lord, offering everything to the Lord). These are all easy to practice and should be joyfully performed.

Of course if one thinks that Bhagavad-gita and the Hare Krsna mantra are part of the Hindu system and doesn't want to accept them because of this, he can nonetheless attend the Christian church and sing there. There is no difference between this process and that process; the point is whatever process one follows, he must become God conscious. God is neither Muslim nor Hindu nor Christian—He is God. Nor are we to be considered Hindu, Muslim or Christian. These are bodily designations. We are all pure spirit, part and parcel of the Supreme.

~Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

17.

Other Instructions on the Transcendental Attributes of the Holy Name

The holy name is the life and soul of all education:

[Lord Caitanya to Svartpa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"...[chanting of the holy name] is the life and soul of all education..."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.12

The vibration of Krsna's flute is represented by the Hare Krsna maha-mantra:

The vibration of Krsna's flute is always prominent in the ears of the gopis. Naturally they cannot hear anything else. Constant remembrance of the holy sound of Krsna's flute keeps them enlightened and enlivened, and they do not allow any other sound to enter their ears.... This vibration of Krsna's flute is represented by the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 21.144

The maha-mantra is so attractive that people participate when it is chanted publicly:

Although the maha-mantra is in the Sanskrit language and many people do not know its

meaning, it is still so attractive that people participate when it is chanted publicly.

~The Path of Perfection

The holy name is the essence of all bliss:

The Absolute Truth is Sri Krsna, and loving devotion to Sri Krsna exhibited in pure love is achieved through congregational chanting of the holy name, which is the essence of all bliss.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 1.96

The benefits of chanting cannot be taken away:

It is said that the sun is taking away our duration of life—every minute, every hour, every day—but if we engage ourselves in the topics of Uttama-sloka, the topics of the Lord, that time cannot be taken away. The time one devotes in a Krsna consciousness temple cannot be taken away. It is an asset—a plus, not a minus. The duration of life, so far as the body is concerned, may be taken; however one tries to keep it intact, no one can do it. But the spiritual education we receive in Krsna consciousness cannot be taken away by the sun. It becomes a solid asset.

Chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is a very easy thing to do. Time spent chanting cannot be taken away like time pertaining to the body. Fifty years ago I was a young man, but that time has been taken and cannot be returned. The spiritual knowledge I received from my spiritual master, however, cannot be taken away, but will go with me. Even after I quit this body, it will go with me; and if it is perfect in this life, then it will take me to the eternal abode.

~Easy Journey to Other Planets

The Hare Krsna mantra does not require sodhana, or purification of the mantra:

As enjoined in the Hari-bhakti-vilasa (1.215, 219, 220):

na catra satrava dosa

narnasvadi-vicarana

rksarasi-vicaro va

na kartavyo manau priye

natra cintyo 'ri-suddhyadir
nari-mitradi-laksanam
siddha-sadhya-susiddhari
rtpa-natra vicarana

There is sodhana, or purification of the mantra, but there is no such consideration for the Krsna mantra. Balitvat krsna-mantranam samskarapeksanam na hi. "The Krsna mantra is so strong that there is no question of sodhana." (1.235) ~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 24.331

Part 2 B.

The Transcendental Effects of the Holy Name

The Holy Name Revives One's Dormant,
Eternal Krsna Consciousness

1.

The Holy Name Revives One's Dormant, Eternal Krsna Consciousness As a snake-bitten man is brought back to consciousness by the chanting of certain mantras, so one in the unconscious state of material life can be revived by hearing the maha-mantra:

As a snake-bitten man is brought back to consciousness by the chanting of certain mantras, so one in the unconscious state of material life can be revived by hearing the maha-mantra: In the Garuda Purana the stress on hearing is expressed very nicely. It is said there: "The state of conditioned life in the material world is just like a man lying unconscious, having been bitten by a snake. This is because both such unconscious states can be ended by the sound of a mantra." When a man is snake-bitten he does not die immediately, but first becomes unconscious and remains in a comatose condition. Anyone who is in the material world is also sleeping, as he is ignorant of his actual self or his actual duty and his relationship with God. So materialistic life means that one is bitten by the snake of maya, illusion, and thus, without any Krsna consciousness, he is almost dead. Now, the so-called dead man bitten by a snake can be brought back again to life by the chanting of some mantra. There are expert chanters of these mantras who can perform this feat. Similarly, one can be brought back into Krsna consciousness from the deadly unconscious state of material life by hearing of the maha-mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~The Nectar of Devotion

The spiritual consciousness of the sleeping conditioned soul can be relieved by the transcendental sound of the maha–mantra:

Spiritual existence is eternal, whereas the body is not. It is said that the spiritual atmosphere is avyakta, unmanifest. How, then, can it be manifest for us? Making the unmanifest manifest is this very process, of Krsna consciousness. According to Padma Purana,

atah sri–krsna–namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

[BRS. atah sri–krsna–namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

"No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Sri Krsna through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him." (Bhakti–rasamrta–sindhu 1.2.234)1.2.234]

"No one can understand Krsna as He is by the blunt material senses. But He reveals Himself to the devotees, being pleased with them for their transcendental loving service unto Him."

In this verse, the word indriyaih means "the senses." We have five senses for gathering knowledge (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin), and five senses for working (voice, hands, legs, genitals, and anus). These ten senses are under the control of the mind. It is stated in this verse that with these dull material senses, we cannot understand Krsna's name, form, and so forth. Why is this? Krsna is completely spiritual, and He is also absolute. Therefore His name, form, qualities, and paraphernalia are also spiritual. Due to material conditioning, or material bondage, we cannot presently understand what is spiritual, but this ignorance can be removed by chanting Hare Krsna. If a man is sleeping, he can be awakened by sound vibration. You can call him, "Come on, it's time to get up!" Although the person is unconscious, hearing is so prominent that even a sleeping man can be awakened by sound vibration. Similarly, overpowered by this material conditioning, our spiritual consciousness

is presently sleeping, but it can be revived by this transcendental vibration of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.
~The Path of Perfection

By chanting the holy name, one's heart is purified and one's original Krsna consciousness is awakened:

The understanding of Krsna consciousness is innate in every living entity, and it is already developed to some extent when the living entity takes a human body. It is said in Caitanya-caritamṛta (Madhya-līla 22.107):

nitya-siddha krsna-prema 'sadhya' kabhu naya
sravanadi-suddha-citte karaye udaya

"Pure love for Krsna is eternally established in the hearts of living entities. It is not something to be gained from another source. When the heart is purified by hearing and chanting, the living entity naturally awakens."

Since Krsna consciousness is inherent in every living entity, everyone should be given a chance to hear about Krsna. Simply by hearing and chanting-sravanam kirtanam-one's heart is directly purified, and one's original Krsna consciousness is immediately awakened. Krsna consciousness is not artificially imposed upon the heart, it is already there. When one chants the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the heart is cleansed of all material contamination.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 4

Chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra revives one's dormant, eternal Krsna consciousness: The transcendental vibration established by the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is the sublime method for reviving our transcendental consciousness. As living spiritual souls, we are all originally Krsna conscious entities, but due to our association with matter from time immemorial, our consciousness is now adulterated by the material atmosphere. The material atmosphere, in which we are now living, is called maya, or illusion. Maya means "that which is not." And what is this illusion? The illusion is that we are all trying to be lords of material nature, while actually we are under the grip of her stringent laws. When a servant artificially tries to imitate the all-powerful master, he is said to be in illusion. We are trying to exploit the

resources of material nature, but actually we are becoming more and more entangled in her complexities. Therefore, although we are engaged in a hard struggle to conquer nature, we are ever more dependent on her. This illusory struggle against material nature can be stopped at once by revival of our eternal Krsna consciousness.

Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare is the transcendental process for reviving this original, pure consciousness. By chanting this transcendental vibration, we can cleanse away all misgivings within our hearts. The basic principle of all such misgivings is the false consciousness that I am the lord of all I survey.

Krsna consciousness is not an artificial imposition on the mind. This consciousness is the original, natural energy of the living entity. When we hear this transcendental vibration, this consciousness is revived. This simplest method of meditation is recommended for this age... No other means of spiritual realization is as effective in this age of quarrel and hypocrisy as the chanting of the maha-mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. *The Science of Self-Realization*

Ms. Nixon: How does Krsna consciousness develop in the practitioner?

Srila Prabhupada: Krsna consciousness is already there in the core of everyone's heart. But because of our materially conditioned life, we have forgotten it. The process of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—revives the Krsna consciousness we already have. For example, a few months ago these American and European boys and girls did not know about Krsna, but just yesterday we saw how they were chanting Hare Krsna and dancing in ecstasy throughout the whole Ratha-yatra procession [an annual festival sponsored by the Krsna consciousness movement in cities around the world]. Do you think that was artificial? No. Artificially, nobody can chant and dance for hours together. They have actually awakened their Krsna consciousness by following a bona fide process.

The Science of Self-Realization

2.

The Role of the Holy Name in the Progression of Devotional Service

Regulative and spontaneous hearing and chanting in the development of pure devotional service:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"If, by good fortune, a living entity develops faith in Krsna, he begins to associate with devotees. When one is encouraged in devotional service by the association of devotees, one becomes free from all unwanted contamination by following the regulative principles and chanting and hearing. When one is freed from all unwanted contamination, he advances with firm faith. When firm faith in devotional service awakens, a taste for hearing and chanting also awakens. After taste is awakened, a deep attachment arises, and from that attachment the seed of love for Krsna grows in the heart. When that ecstatic emotional stage intensifies, it is called love of Godhead. Such love is life's ultimate goal and the reservoir of all pleasure."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 23.9–13

If, due to some righteous activities which provoke devotional service, one is influenced by the service attitude and takes shelter of the good association of pure devotees, he develops attachment for hearing and chanting. By developing chanting and hearing, one can advance further and further in regulative devotional service to the Supreme Lord. As one so advances, his misgivings about devotional service and his attraction for the material world proportionately diminish. By advancing in hearing and chanting, a devotee becomes more firmly fixed in his faith, and gradually his initial faith develops into a taste for devotional service, and that taste develops into attachment. When attachment becomes pure, it exhibits the two characteristics of bhava and rati. When rati increases, it is called love of Godhead, and love of Godhead is the ultimate goal of human life.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Hearing and chanting of the maha–mantra waters the seed and creeper of devotional service:

Lord Caitanya likens transcendental devotional service to the sowing of a seed in the heart of the living entity. There are innumerable living entities traveling throughout the different planets of the universe, and out of them there are a few who are fortunate enough to meet a pure devotee and get the chance to understand devotional service. This devotional service is just like a seed, and if it is sown in the heart of a living entity, and if he goes on hearing and

chanting, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, that seed fructifies, just as the seed of a tree fructifies with regular watering. The spiritual plant of devotional service gradually grows and grows until it penetrates the covering of the material universe and enters into the brahmajyoti effulgence in the spiritual sky. In the spiritual sky also that plant grows more and more until it reaches the highest planet, which is called Goloka Vrndavana, the supreme planet of Krsna. Ultimately, the plant takes shelter under the lotus feet of Krsna and rests there. Gradually, as a plant grows fruits and flowers, that plant of devotional service also produces fruits, and the watering process in the form of chanting and hearing goes on. This plant of devotional service is fully described in the Caitanya–caritamrta. It is explained there that when the complete plant takes shelter under the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, one becomes fully absorbed in love of God; then he cannot live even for a moment without being in contact with the Supreme Lord, just as a fish cannot live without water. In such a state, the devotee actually attains the transcendental qualities in contact with the Supreme Lord.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 10.9

The progressive development of the chanting of the holy name:

A bona fide spiritual master chants the holy names–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare–and the transcendental sound vibration enters into the ear of the disciple, and if a disciple follows in the footsteps of his spiritual master and chants the holy name with similar respect, he actually comes to worship the transcendental name. When the transcendental name is worshiped by the devotee, the name Himself spreads His glories within the heart of a devotee. When a devotee is perfectly qualified in chanting the transcendental vibration of the holy name, he is quite fit to become a spiritual master and to deliver all the people of the world. The chanting of the holy name is so powerful that it gradually establishes its supremacy above everything in the world. The devotee who chants it becomes transcendently situated in ecstasy and sometimes laughs, cries and dances in his ecstasy.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Simply by chanting, one becomes free from sinful life, steady in devotional service, and elevated to the platform of mahatma:

To cultivate knowledge for worshiping Krsna culminates after many, many births and deaths when one actually becomes wise. When one becomes wise in this way, he surrenders to Krsna, recognizing Him at last to be the cause of all causes and all that is. That sort of

great soul is very rare. So those who have surrendered to Krsna life and soul are rare sudurlabha mahatmas. They are not ordinary mahatmas.

By the grace of Lord Caitanya that highest perfectional status of life is being distributed very freely. The effect is also very encouraging; otherwise, how are boys and girls without any background of Vedic culture quickly occupying the posts of rare mahatmas simply by vibrating this transcendental sound, Hare Krsna? And simply on the basis of this chanting, the majority of them (those who are very sincere) are steady in devotional service and are not falling down to the four principles of material sinful life, namely (1) meat-eating, (2) illicit sexual connection, (3) taking of intoxicants, including coffee, tea, and tobacco, and (4) gambling. And that is the last sutra of the Vedanta-sutra, i.e., anavrttih sabdat ["By sound vibration one becomes liberated"].

One has to learn by the result (phalena pariciyate). Our students are ordered to act like this, and they are not falling down. That they are remaining on the platform of pure spiritual life without hankering to culture the above principles of avidya, or sense gratification, is the test of their proper understanding of the Vedas. They do not come back to the material platform, because they are relishing the nectarean fruit of love of God.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Chanting the Hare Krsna mantra brings one to the point of full surrender to the lotus feet of Krsna:

[Haridasa thakura to the reformed prostitute]:- "Chant the Hare Krsna mantra continuously and render service to the tulasi plant by watering her and offering prayers to her. In this way you will soon get the opportunity to be sheltered at the lotus feet of Krsna."

At least five thousand years ago, Lord Sri Krsna expressed His desire that everyone surrender to Him (sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja [Bg. 18.66]). Why is it that people cannot do this? Krsna assures us, aham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksaisyami ma sucah: "I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear." Everyone is suffering from the results of sinful activities, but Krsna says that if one surrenders unto Him, He will protect one from sinful reactions. Modern civilization, however, is interested neither in Krsna nor in getting relief from sinful acts. Therefore men are suffering. Surrender is the ultimate instruction of Bhagavad-gita, but for one who cannot surrender to the lotus feet of Krsna, it is better to chant the Hare Krsna mantra constantly, under the instruction of Haridasa thakura... Although Krsna wants everyone to surrender to His lotus feet, because of people's sinful activities they cannot do this. Na mam duskrutino mudhah prapadyante

naradhamah: [Bg. 7.15] rascals and fools, the lowest of men, who engage in sinful activities, cannot suddenly surrender to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Nevertheless, if they begin chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and rendering service unto the tulasi plant, they will very soon be able to surrender. One's real duty is to surrender to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, but if one is unable to do so he should adopt this process, as introduced by Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His most confidential servant, Namacārya Śrīla Haridāsa thākura. This is the way to achieve success in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya-līla 3.137

When one revives his loving service to Kṛṣṇa, he automatically advances in spiritual progress by the mercy of the holy name:

Love of Godhead is the original function of the spirit soul, and it is as eternal as the soul and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This eternity is called sanatana. When one revives his loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, it should be understood that he has been successful in achieving the desired goal of his life. At that time everything is automatically done by the mercy of the holy name and the devotee automatically advances in his spiritual progress.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Ādi-līla 7.84

3.

The Holy Name Frees One from the Reactions to Sins

General instructions

The holy name vanquishes the results of all sinful activities:

"The holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa ... is the annihilator of all sinful reactions..."

~Padyavali (29), by Rupa Gosvami [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Mādhya-līla 15.110]

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:

Ajamila has already atoned for all his sinful actions. Indeed, he has atoned not only for sins performed in one life but for those performed in millions of lives, for in a helpless condition he chanted the holy name of Narayana. Even though he did not chant purely, he chanted

without offense, and therefore he is now pure and eligible for liberation.

The Yamadutas had considered only the external situation of Ajamila. Since he was extremely sinful throughout his life, they thought he should be taken to Yamaraja and did not know that he had become free from the reactions of all his sins. The Visnudutas therefore instructed that because he had chanted the four syllables of the name Narayana at the time, of his death, he was freed from all sinful reactions. In this regard Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura quotes the following verses from the smṛti-sastra:

namno hi yavati saktih
papa-nirharane hareh
tavat kartum na saknoti
patakam pataki narah

"Simply by chanting one holy name of Hari, a sinful man can counteract the reactions to more sins that he is able to commit." (Brhad-visnu Purana)

avasenapi yan-namni
kirtite sarva-patakaih
puman vimucyate sadyah
simha-trastair mrgair iva

"If one chants the holy name of the Lord, even in a helpless condition or without desiring to do so, all the reactions of his sinful life depart, just as when a lion roars, all the small animals flee in fear." (Garuda Purana)

sakrd uccaritam yena
harir ity aksara-dvayam
baddha-parikaras tena
moksaya gamanam prati

"By once chanting the holy name of the Lord, which consists of the two syllables ha-ri, one guarantees his path to liberation." (Skanda Purana)

These are some of the reasons why the Visnudutas objected to the Yamadutas' taking Ajamila to the court of Yamaraja.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.7

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:~ Authorities who are learned scholars and sages have

carefully ascertained that one should atone for the heaviest sins by undergoing a heavy process of atonement and one should atone for lighter sins by undergoing lighter atonement. Chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, however, vanquishes all the effects of sinful activities, regardless of whether heavy or light.

One should take shelter of Krsna–Balarama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose protective power is so great that it cannot be equaled in the material world. However powerful the reactions of one's sins, they will immediately be vanquished if one chants the name of Hari, Krsna, Balarama or Narayana.

ˆSrimad–Bhagavatam 6.2.16

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]: ˆAt the time of death, this Ajamila helplessly and very loudly chanted the holy name of the Lord, Narayana. That chanting alone has already freed him from the reactions of all sinful life. Therefore, O servants of Yamaraja, do not try to take him to your master for punishment in hellish conditions.

ˆSrimad–Bhagavatam 6.2.13

[The sages to Lord Indra]: ˆOne who has killed a brahmana, one who has killed a cow or one who has killed his father, mother or spiritual master can be immediately freed from all sinful reactions simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Narayana. Other sinful persons, such as dog–eaters and candalas, who are less than sudras, can also be freed in this way.

ˆIt is said in the Brhad–visnu Purana:

namno hi yavati sa papa–nirharane hareh tavat kartum na saknoti patakam pataki narah

ˆAlso, in the Prema–vivarta by Jagadananda Pandita it is said:

eka krsna–name papira yata papa–ksaya
bahu janme sei papi karite naraya

This means that by once chanting the holy name of the Lord, one can be freed from the reactions of more sins than he can even imagine performing. The holy name is so spiritually potent that simply by chanting the holy name one can be freed from the reactions to all sinful activities. What, then, is to be said of those who chant the holy name regularly or worship the Deity regularly? For such purified devotees, freedom from sinful reaction is certainly assured...

These verses name the performers of various sinful deeds. In the Manu–samhita the following names are given. A son begotten by a brahmana and born from the womb of a

sudra mother is called a parasava or nisada, a hunter accustomed to stealing. A son begotten by a nisada in the womb of a sudra woman is called a pulkasa. A child begotten by a ksatriya in the womb of the daughter of a sudra is called an ugra. A child begotten by a sudra in the womb of the daughter of a ksatriya is called a ksatta. A child begotten by a ksatriya in the womb of a lower-class woman is called a svada, or dog-eater. All such offspring are considered extremely sinful, but the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is so strong that all of them can be purified simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra.

The Hare Krsna movement offers everyone a chance to be purified, regardless of birth or family. As confirmed in Srimad-Bhagavatam (2.4.18):

kirata-hunandhra-pulinda-pulkasa
abhira-sumbha yavanaa khasadayah
ye 'nye ca papa yad-apasrayasrayah
sudhyanti tasmai prabhavisnave namah

"Kiratas, Hunas, Andhras, Pulindas, Pulkasas, Abhiras, Sumbhas, Yavanas, members of the Khasa races, and even others addicted to sinful acts can be purified by taking shelter of devotees of the Lord, for He is the supreme power. I beg to offer my respectful obeisances unto Him."

Even such sinful persons can certainly all be purified if they chant the holy name of the Lord under the direction of a pure devotee.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.13.8-9

[Lord Brahma to Narada Muni]:

The leader of the elephants, whose leg was attacked in a river by a crocodile of superior strength, was much aggrieved. Taking a lotus flower in his trunk, he addressed the Lord, saying, "O original enjoyer, Lord of the universe! O deliverer, as famous as a place of pilgrimage! All are purified simply by hearing Your holy name, which is worthy to be chanted."

The elephant addressed the Lord as tirtha-sravah, or "as famous as a place of pilgrimage." People go to places of pilgrimage in order to be delivered from the reactions of unknown sinful acts. But one can be freed from all sinful reactions simply by remembering His holy name. The Lord is therefore as good as the holy places of pilgrimage. One can be free from

all sinful reactions after reaching a place of pilgrimage, but one can have the same benefit at home or at any place simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.7.15

When Subuddhi Raya consulted the learned brahmanas at Varanasi, asking them how his conversion to Muhammadanism could be counteracted, they advised him to drink hot ghee and give up his life. When Subuddhi Raya consulted some other brahmanas, they told him that he had not committed a grievous fault and that consequently he should not drink hot ghee and give up his life. As a result, Subuddhi Raya was doubtful about what to do. In his state of perplexity, Subuddhi Raya met Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu when the Lord was at Varanasi. Subuddhi Raya explained his position and asked Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu what he should do. The Lord advised him, "Go to Vrndavana and chant the Hare Krsna mantra constantly." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu further advised Subuddhi Raya: "Begin chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, and when your chanting is almost pure, all your sinful reactions will go away. After you chant perfectly, you will get shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna. When you are situated at the lotus feet of Krsna, no sinful reaction can touch you. This is the best solution to all sinful activity."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 25.195–200

By chanting the holy names Krsna and Hari, one is certainly liberated from sinful activities, such as killing cows or insulting brahmanas and Vaisnavas. The karma incurred by such activity is very great, but one can immediately nullify all this karma by surrendering to Lord Krsna and chanting His holy name.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 16.189

Specialized instructions

The chanting of the holy name is the best means to atone for sinful activities because it attracts the attention and protection of the Supreme Lord:

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:

The chanting of the holy name of Lord Visnu is the best process of atonement for a thief of gold or other valuables, for a drunkard, for one who betrays a friend or relative, for one who kills a brahmana, or for one who indulges in sex with the wife of his guru or another superior. It is also the best method of atonement for one who murders women, the king or his father, for one who slaughters cows, and for all other sinful men. Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Visnu, such sinful persons may attract the attention of the Supreme Lord, who therefore considers, "Because this man has chanted My holy name, My duty is to

give him protection."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.9-10

By always chanting the maha-mantra, Krsna will protect us from sinful reactions: One cannot commit sinful activities and at the same time advance in Krsna consciousness. But Krsna says, aham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksaisyami: "Surrender unto Me, and I shall rescue you by giving you liberation from all kinds of sinful reactions."

Every one of us, life after life, is knowingly or unknowingly committing sinful activities. I may knowingly kill an animal, and that is certainly sinful, but even if I do it unknowingly, it is also sinful. While walking on the street we unknowingly kill so many ants, and in the course of our other ordinary dealings-while cooking, while taking water, while using a mortar and pestle to crush spices-we kill so many living beings. Unless we remain Krsna conscious, we are liable to be punished for all these unknowingly committed sinful acts.

If a child unknowingly touches fire, does it mean that the fire will excuse the child and not burn? No. Nature's law is so strict, so stringent, that there is no question of an excuse. Even in ordinary law, ignorance is no excuse. If we go to court and say, "I did not know that this action was criminal," this plea does not mean that we shall be excused. Similarly, ignorance is no excuse for transgressing nature's laws. Therefore, if we actually want to be free from the reactions of sinful life, we must be Krsna conscious, for then Krsna will free us from all sinful reactions. It is therefore recommended, kirtaniyah sada harih [Cc. adi 17.31]-one should always chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare so that Krsna will save us.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

Thinking of Krsna, by chanting His holy name, cleanses one of all sins: In the material planets there are different grades of sinful activities, of which disrespecting a brahmana or Vaisnava is the most sinful. Here it is clearly stated that one can overcome even that grave sin simply by thinking of Visnu, not even favorably but in anger. Thus even if those who are not devotees always think of Visnu, they become free from all sinful activities. Krsna consciousness is the highest form of thought. Lord Visnu is thought of in this age by chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. From the statements of the Bhagavatam it appears that if one thinks of Krsna, even as an enemy, that particular qualification-thinking of Visnu or

Krsna—cleanses one of all sins.

~Srimad—Bhagavatam 3.16.31

A single uttering of "Krsna" wipes away the results of all sinful activities:

In the Visnu—dharma there is a statement glorifying this process of congregational chanting:

"My dear King, this word 'Krsna' is so auspicious that anyone who chants this holy name immediately gets rid of the resultant actions of sinful activities from many, many births."

That is a fact. There is the following statement in Caitanya—caritamṛta: "A person who chants the holy name of Krsna once can counteract the resultant actions of more sinful activities than he is able to perform." A sinful man can perform many, many sinful activities, but he is unable to perform so many that they cannot be wiped out by one single uttering of "Krsna."

~The Nectar of Devotion

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br>By chanting the holy name, one is freed from the sinful reactions of many millions of lives:

[Lord Caitanya to a Muhammadan holy man]:~ Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Please get up. You have chanted the holy name of Krsna; therefore the sinful reactions you have accrued for many millions of lives are now gone. You are now pure."

~Sri Caitanya—caritamṛta Madhya—lila 18.205

Simply by hearing the holy name chanted by a pure devotee, one is purified of all sinful activities and becomes eligible to render devotional service:

[Haridasa thakura to a prostitute]: "Tomorrow I will surely finish, and my vow will be fulfilled. Then it will be possible for me to enjoy with you in full freedom."

Haridasa thakura never wanted to enjoy the prostitute, but he tricked her to deliver her by giving her a chance to hear the holy name of the Lord while he chanted. Pure devotees chant the Hare Krsna mantra, and simply by hearing this chanting from a purified transcendental person, one is purified of all sinful activities, no matter how lowborn or fallen one may be. As soon as one is thus completely free from the reactions of sinful activities, he is eligible to render devotional service to the Lord. This is the process for engaging the fallen souls in devotional service. As Lord Krsna says in Bhagavad—gita

(7.28):

yesam tv anta-gatam papam
jananam punya-karmanam
te dvandva-moha-nirmukta
bhajante mam drdha-vratah

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of delusion, engage themselves in My service with determination."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.126

Chanting frees one from sinful reactions if the chanting is offenseless:

[Lord Caitanya to Satyaraja]: "Simply by chanting the holy name of Krsna, one is relieved from all the reactions of a sinful life..."

One can be freed from all sinful reactions by chanting the holy name without committing offenses.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 15.107

[Chand Kazi to Lord Caitanya]: "After hearing their complaints, in sweet words I told them, 'Please go back home. I shall certainly prohibit Nimai Pandita from continuing His Hare Krsna movement.' I know that Narayana is the Supreme God of the Hindus, and I think that You are the same Narayana. This I feel within my mind." After hearing the Kazi speak so nicely, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu touched him and smilingly spoke as follows. "The chanting of the holy name of Krsna from your mouth has performed a wonder—it has nullified the reactions of all your sinful activities. Now you have become supremely pure. Because you have chanted three holy names of the Lord—Hari, Krsna and Narayana—you are undoubtedly the most fortunate and pious."

Confirming the potency of the sankirtana movement, these words from the very mouth of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu express how people can be purified simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Krsna. The Kazi was a Muhammadan mleccha, or meat-eater, but because he several times uttered the holy name of Lord Krsna, automatically the reactions of his sinful life were vanquished, and he was fully purified of all material contamination...

Here the Supreme Lord, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, confirms that anyone who chants the

holy names Hari, Krsna and Narayana without offense is certainly extremely fortunate, and whether Indian or non-Indian, Hindu or non-Hindu, he immediately comes to the level of the most pious personality.

˚Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Ādi-līla 17.214-18

If one chants the holy name without offenses and without further sinful activities, he is freed from all reactions of sins:

Simply chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra without offenses vanquishes all sinful activities. Thus pure devotional service, which is the cause of love of Godhead, becomes manifest.

One cannot be situated in the devotional service of the Lord unless one is freed from sinful life. This is confirmed in Bhagavad-gīta:

yesam tv anta-gatam papam
jananam punya-karmanam
te dvandva-moha-nirmukta
bhajante mam drdha-vratah

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of delusion, engage themselves in My service with determination."

(Bg. 7.28) A person who is already cleansed of all tinges of sinful life engages without deviation or duality of purpose in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. In this age, although people are greatly sinful, simply chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra can relieve them from the reactions of their sins. Eka kṛṣṇa-name: only by chanting Kṛṣṇa's name is this possible. This is also confirmed in Srimad-Bhagavatam (kīrtanad eva kṛṣṇasya). Caitanya Mahāprabhu has also taught us this. While passing on the road, He used to chant:

kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa he
kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa he
kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa rakṣa mam
kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa paḥi mam
rama raghava rama raghava rama raghava rakṣa mam
kṛṣṇa keṣava kṛṣṇa keṣava kṛṣṇa keṣava paḥi mam

If one always chants the holy name Krsna, gradually one is freed from all reactions of sinful life, provided he chants offenselessly and does not commit more sinful activities on the strength of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. In this way one is purified, and his devotional service causes the arousal of his dormant love of God. Simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra and not committing sinful activities and offenses, one's life is purified, and thus one comes to the fifth stage of perfection, or engagement in the loving service of the Lord (prema pumartho mahan).

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 8.26

Even the lowest class of men is delivered from sinful activities simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord:

[King Citraketu to Lord Sankarsana]: ~My Lord, it is not impossible for one to be immediately freed from all material contamination by seeing You. Not to speak of seeing You personally, merely by hearing the holy name of Your Lordship only once, even candalas, men of the lowest class, are freed from all material contamination. Under the circumstances, who will not be freed from material contamination simply by seeing You?

As stated in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (9.5.16), yan-nama-sruti-matrena puman bhavati nirmalah: simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord, one is immediately purified. Therefore, in this age of Kali, when all people are very contaminated, the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is recommended as the only means of improvement.

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatih anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way." (Brhan-naradiya Purana)

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced this chanting of the holy name five hundred years ago, and now through the Krsna consciousness movement, the Hare Krsna movement, we are actually seeing that men who are considered to belong to the lowest class are being delivered from all sinful activities simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord. Samsara,

material existence, is a result of sinful actions. Everyone in this material world is condemned, yet as there are different grades of prisoners, there are different grades of men. All of them, in all statuses of life, are suffering. To stop the suffering of material existence, one must take to the Hare Krsna movement of sankirtana or Krsna conscious life.

Herein it is said, yan–nama sakrc chravanat: the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is so powerful that if once heard without offenses, it can purify the lowest of men (kirata–hunandhra–pulinda–pulkasah). Such men, who are called candalas, are less than sudras, but they also can be purified simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord, not to speak of personally seeing the Lord.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.16.44

One can become free from all contamination, especially that due to animal killing, by chanting the holy name:

[Narada Muni to the hunter]:

"Narada Muni continued: 'All the animals that you have killed and given unnecessary pain will kill you one after the other in your next life and in life after life.' In this way, through the association of the great sage Narada Muni, the hunter was a little convinced of his sinful activity. He therefore became somewhat afraid due to his offenses."

Those who kill animals and give them unnecessary pain—as people do in slaughterhouses—will be killed in a similar way in the next life and in many lives to come. One can never be excused from such an offense. If one kills many thousands of animals in a professional way so that other people can purchase the meat to eat, one must be ready to be killed in a similar way in his next life and in life after life. There are many rascals who violate their own religious principles. According to Judeo–Christian scriptures, it is clearly said, "Thou shalt not kill." Nonetheless, giving all kinds of excuses, even the heads of religions indulge in killing animals while trying to pass as saintly persons. This mockery and hypocrisy in human society bring about unlimited calamities; therefore occasionally there are great wars. Masses of such people go out onto battlefields and kill themselves. Presently they have discovered the atomic bomb, which is simply awaiting wholesale destruction. If people want to be saved from the killing business life after life, they must take to Krsna consciousness and cease sinful activity. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness recommends that everyone abandon meat–eating, illicit sex, intoxication and gambling. When one gives up these sinful activities, he can understand Krsna and take to this Krsna consciousness movement. We therefore request everyone to abandon sinful activity and chant the Hare Krsna mantra. In this way people can save themselves from

repeated birth and death... This is a chance to become purified by associating with this Krsna consciousness movement and strictly following the rules and regulations. By chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, one can become free from all contamination, especially contamination brought about by the killing of animals. Lord Krsna Himself requested:

sarva–dharman parityajya
mam ekam saranam vraja
aham tvam sarva–papebhyo
moksaisyami ma sucah

"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear." (Bg. 18.66)

We should take this instruction from Krsna and follow in the footsteps of Narada Muni in the disciplic succession. If we simply surrender unto Krsna's lotus feet and take this Krsna consciousness movement seriously, we can be freed from the karma incurred by sin. If we are intelligent enough, we shall engage in the loving service of the Lord. Then our lives will be successful, and we shall not have to suffer like the hunter life after life. By killing animals, not only will we be bereft of the human form but we will have to take an animal form and somehow or other be killed by the same type of animal we have killed. This is the law of nature. The Sanskrit word mamsa means "meat." It is said: mam sah khadatiti mamsah. That is, "I am now eating the flesh of an animal who will some day in the future be eating my flesh."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 24.251–52

A sinful person destined for hell can be delivered by the holy name of the Lord:
[Durvasa Muni to Lord Narayana]:~ O my Lord, O supreme controller, without knowledge of Your unlimited prowess I have offended Your most dear devotee. Very kindly save me from the reaction of this offense. You can do everything, for even if a person is fit for going to hell, You can deliver him simply by awakening within his heart the holy name of Your Lordship.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 9.4.62

Chanting the holy name is more effective than Vedic ritualistic ceremonies for eradicating sin:

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:~ By following the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies or

undergoing atonement, sinful men do not become as purified as by chanting once the holy name of Lord Hari. Although ritualistic atonement may free one from sinful reactions, it does not awaken devotional service, unlike the chanting of the Lord's names, which reminds one of the Lord's fame, qualities, attributes, pastimes and paraphernalia. The ritualistic ceremonies of atonement recommended in the religious scriptures are insufficient to cleanse the heart absolutely because after atonement one's mind again runs toward material activities. Consequently, for one who wants liberation from the fruitive reactions of material activities, the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, or glorification of the name, fame and pastimes of the Lord, is recommended as the most perfect process of atonement because such chanting eradicates the dirt from one's heart completely.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura comments that the chanting of the holy name of the Lord has special significance that distinguishes it from the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies of atonement for severe, more severe or most severe sinful actions. There are twenty types of religious scriptures called dharma-sastras, beginning with the Manu-samhita and Parasara-samhita, but herein it is stressed that although one may become free from the reactions of the most sinful activities by following the religious principles of these scriptures, this cannot promote a sinful man to the stage of loving service to the Lord. On the other hand, chanting the holy name of the Lord even once not only frees one immediately from the reactions of the greatest sins, but also raises one to the platform of rendering loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is described as uttamasloka because He is famous for His glorious activities. Thus one serves the Lord by remembering His form, His attributes and pastimes. Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura explains that this is all possible simply by chanting the Lord's holy name because of the Lord's omnipotence. What cannot be achieved through the performance of Vedic rituals can be easily achieved through the chanting of the Lord's holy name. To chant the holy name and dance in ecstasy is so easy and sublime that one can achieve all the benefits of spiritual life simply by following this process. Therefore Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu declares, param vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam: "All glories to Sri Krsna sankirtana!" The sankirtana movement we have started offers the best process for becoming purified of all sinful reactions and coming immediately to the platform of spiritual life...The statements in this verse have been confirmed previously in Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.17):

srvatam sva-kathah krsnah
punya-sravana-kirtanah
hrdy antah-stho hy abhadrani
vidhunoti suhrt satam

"Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramatma [Supersoul] in everyone's

heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who relishes His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted."

It is the special mercy of the Supreme Lord that as soon as He knows that one is glorifying His name, fame and attributes, He personally helps cleanse the dirt from one's heart. Therefore simply by such glorification one not only becomes purified, but also achieves the results of pious activities (punya–sravana–kirtana). Punya–sravana–kirtana refers to the process of devotional service. Even if one does not understand the meaning of the Lord's name, pastimes or attributes, one is purified simply by hearing or chanting of them. Such purification is called sattva–bhavana.

One's main purpose in human life should be to purify his existence and achieve liberation. As long as one has a material body, one is understood to be impure. In such an impure, material condition, one cannot enjoy a truly blissful life, although everyone seeks it. Therefore Srimad–Bhagavatam (5.5.1) says, *tapo divyam putraka yena sattvam suddhyet*: one must perform tapasya, austerity, to purify his existence, in order to come to the spiritual platform. The tapasya of chanting and glorifying the name, fame and attributes of the Lord is a very easy purifying process by which everyone can be happy. Therefore everyone who desires the ultimate cleansing of his heart must adopt this process. Other processes, such as karma, jnana and yoga, cannot cleanse the heart absolutely.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.2.11–12

The chanting of the maha–mantra is a special concession in the Kali–yuga to save people from the reactions to known or unknown sinful activities:

Anyone in this material world, however careful he may be, must commit some sinful activities, even though he does not want to. For example, one may trample many small ants and other insects while walking on the street and kill many living beings unknowingly. Therefore the Vedic principle of panca–yajna, five kinds of recommended sacrifice, is compulsory. In this age of Kali, however, there is a great concession given to people in general. *Yajnaih sankirtana–prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah*: [SB 11.5.32] we may worship Lord Caitanya, the hidden incarnation of Krsna. *Krsna–varnam tvisakrsnam*: although He is Krsna Himself, He always chants Hare Krsna and preaches Krsna consciousness. One is recommended to worship this incarnation by chanting, the sankirtana–yajna. The performance of sankirtana–yajna is a special concession for human society to save people from being affected by known or unknown sinful activities. We are surrounded by

unlimited sins, and therefore it is compulsory that one take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 9.16.23

br>For one who always chants the holy name, unintentional sins are excused:

[Yamaraja to the Yamadutas]: "Considering all these points, therefore, intelligent men decide to solve all problems by adopting the devotional service of chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart and who is a mine of all auspicious qualities. Such persons are not within my jurisdiction for punishment. Generally they never commit sinful activities, but even if by mistake or because of bewilderment or illusion they sometimes commit sinful acts, they are protected from sinful reactions because they always chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

A pure devotee is one whose intelligence is clear; he is truly thoughtful because he engages in the service of the Lord—not as a matter of show, but with love, with his mind, words and body. Nondevotees may make a show of religion, but it is not very effective because although they ostentatiously attend a temple or church, they are thinking of something else. Such persons are neglecting their religious duty and are punishable by Yamaraja. But a devotee who commits sinful acts, which he may do unwillingly or accidentally because of his former habits, is excused. That is the value of the sankirtana movement.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.3.26

Even a faint light from the holy name eradicates sinful reactions and brings liberation:

[Haridasa thakura to Lord Caitanya]: "Even a faint light from the holy name of the Lord can eradicate all the reactions of sinful life... Because of even the faintest rays of the effulgence of the Lord's holy name, one can attain liberation. We can see this in all the revealed scriptures."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya-līla 3.63-65

In any condition or for any reason, if one chants the holy name of the Lord, he is freed from all sins:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Parikṣit]: "Even if he be distressed or degraded, any person who chants the holy name of the Lord, having heard it from a bona fide spiritual master, is immediately purified. Even if he chants the Lord's name jokingly or by chance, he and

anyone who hears him are freed from all sins.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.25.11

Whether one chants knowingly or unknowingly, the holy name will free one from all reactions to sinful activities:

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:~ As a fire burns dry grass to ashes, so the holy name of the Lord, whether chanted knowingly or unknowingly, burns to ashes, without fail, all the reactions of one's sinful activities. If a person unaware of the effective potency of a certain medicine takes that medicine or is forced to take it, it will act even without his knowledge because its potency does not depend on the patient's understanding. Similarly, even though one does not know the value of chanting the holy name of the Lord, if one chants knowingly or unknowingly, the chanting will be very effective.

Fire will act, regardless of whether handled by an innocent child or by someone well aware of its power. For example, if a field of straw or dry grass is set afire, either by an elderly man who knows the power of fire or by a child who does not, the grass will be burned to ashes. Similarly, one may or may not know the power of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, but if one chants the holy name he will become free from all sinful reactions...

In the Western countries, where the Hare Krsna movement is spreading, learned scholars and other thoughtful men are realizing its effectiveness. For example, Dr. J. Stillson Judah, a learned scholar, has been very much attracted to this movement because he has actually seen that it is turning hippies addicted to drugs into pure Vaisnavas who voluntarily become servants of Krsna and humanity. Even a few years ago, such hippies did not know the Hare Krsna mantra, but now they are chanting it and becoming pure Vaisnavas. Thus they are becoming free from all sinful activities, such as illicit sex, intoxication, meat–eating and gambling. This is practical proof of the effectiveness of the Hare Krsna movement, which is supported in this verse. One may or may not know the value of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, but if one somehow or other chants it, he will immediately be purified, just as one who takes a potent medicine will feel its effects, regardless of whether he takes it knowingly or unknowingly.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.2.18–19

Even chanting that is indirect, frivolous, neglectful, (etc.,) frees one from sin:

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:~ One who chants the holy name of the Lord is

immediately freed from the reactions of unlimited sins, even if he chants indirectly [to indicate something else], jokingly, for musical entertainment, or even neglectfully. This is accepted by all the learned scholars of the scriptures.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.14

Even if the holy name is chanted for the sake of blasphemy, the holy name is so powerful that it frees one from reactions of sinful activities:

[Rupa Gosvami and Sanatana Gosvami to Lord Caitanya]:~ "Jagai and Madhai had but one fault—they were addicted to sinful activity. However, volumes of sinful activity can be burned to ashes simply by a dim reflection of the chanting of Your holy name. Jagai and Madhai uttered Your holy name by way of blaspheming You. Fortunately, that holy name became the cause of their deliverance."

Jagai and Madhai chanted the name of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by way of blasphemy, but because they simply chanted His name, they immediately became free from the reactions of sinful activities. Thus later they were saved.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 1.194-95

Even blasphemers can be freed from sinful activities by chanting the holy name:

Jaya and Vijaya inwardly knew that Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but they purposely became His enemies to be delivered from material life. From the very beginning of their lives they thought of Lord Krsna as an enemy, and even though blaspheming Lord Krsna, they chanted the holy name of Krsna constantly along with their inimical thoughts. Thus they were purified because of chanting the holy name of Krsna. It is to be understood that even a blasphemer can be freed from sinful activities by chanting the holy name of the Lord.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.1.26

A devotee should always appreciate his fortune in having been delivered from sinful activities by the chanting of the holy name:

Ajamila continued: I am a shameless cheater who has killed his brahminical culture. Indeed, I am sin personified. Where am I in comparison to the all-auspicious chanting of the holy name of Lord Narayana? I am such a sinful person, but since I have now gotten this

opportunity, I must completely control my mind, life and senses and always engage in devotional service so that I may not fall again into the deep darkness and ignorance of material life.

Those engaged in broadcasting the holy name of Narayana, Krsna, through the Krsna consciousness movement should always consider what our position was before we came and what it is now. We had fallen into abominable lives as meat-eaters, drunkards and woman hunters who performed all kinds of sinful activities, but now we have been given the opportunity to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. Therefore we should always appreciate this opportunity. By the grace of the Lord we are opening many branches, and we should use this good fortune to chant the holy name of the Lord and serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly. We must be conscious of the difference between our present and past conditions and should always be very careful not to fall from the most exalted life...

Every one of us should have this determination. We have been elevated to an exalted position by the mercy of Krsna and the spiritual master, and if we remember that this is a great opportunity and pray to Krsna that we will not fall again, our lives will be successful.
—Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.34–35

4.

By Chanting the Holy Name, the Mind Becomes Controlled

One should control the mind by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, which engages the mind at the lotus feet of Krsna:

One should not trust his mind, which is so fickle that it can give way to enemies at any moment. The mind is always accompanied by six enemies—namely, kama, krodha, mada, moha, matsarya and bhaya—that is, lust, anger, intoxication, illusion, envy and fear. Although the mind may be merged in spiritual consciousness, one should always be very careful in dealing with it, just as one is careful in dealing with a snake. One should never think that his mind is trained and that he can do whatever he likes. One interested in spiritual life should always engage his mind in the service of the Lord so that the enemies of the mind, who always accompany the mind, will be subdued. If the mind is not engaged in Krsna consciousness at every moment, there is a chance that it will give way to its enemies. In this way we become victims of the mind.

Chanting the Hare Krsna mantra engages the mind at the lotus feet of Krsna constantly; thus the mind's enemies do not have a chance to strike.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 11.10

The chanting of the maha-mantra fixes one's mind upon Krsna:

Narada Muni mentions this sadhana-bhakti in the Srimad-Bhagavatam, Seventh Canto, First Chapter, verse 32. He says there to King Yudhisthira: "My dear King, one has to fix his mind on Krsna by any means." That is called Krsna consciousness. It is the duty of the acarya, the spiritual master, to find the ways and means for his disciple to fix his mind on Krsna. That is the beginning of sadhana-bhakti.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has given us an authorized program for this purpose, centered around the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra. This chanting has so much power that it immediately attaches one to Krsna. That is the beginning of sadhana-bhakti. Somehow or other, one has to fix his mind on Krsna. The great saint Ambarisa Maharaja, although a responsible king, fixed his mind on Krsna, and similarly anyone who tries to fix his mind in this way will very rapidly make progress in successfully reviving his original Krsna consciousness.

~The Nectar of Devotion

The easiest way to control the mind is to chant Hare Krsna in all humility:

[Arjuna to Lord Krsna]:

For the mind is restless, turbulent, obstinate and very strong, O Krsna, and to subdue it is, it seems to me, more difficult than controlling the wind.

The mind is so strong and obstinate that it sometimes overcomes the intelligence, although mind is supposed to be subservient to the intelligence. For a man in the practical world who has to fight so many opposing elements, it is certainly very difficult to control the mind. Artificially, one may establish a mental equilibrium toward both friend and enemy, but ultimately no worldly man can do so, for this is more difficult than controlling the raging wind. In the Vedic literatures it is said:

atmanam rathinam viddhi

sariram ratham eva ca

buddhim tu sarathim viddhi
manah pragraham eva ca

indriyani hayan ahur

visayams tesu gocaran
atmendriya–mano–yukto
bhoktety ahur manisinah

"The individual is the passenger in the car of the material body, and intelligence is the driver. Mind is the driving instrument, and the senses are the horses. The self is thus the enjoyer or sufferer in the association of the mind and senses. So it is understood by great thinkers."

Intelligence is supposed to direct the mind, but the mind is so strong and obstinate that it often overcomes even one's own intelligence. Such a strong mind is supposed to be controlled by the practice of yoga, but such practice is never practical for a worldly person like Arjuna. And what can we say of modern man? The simile used here is appropriate: one cannot capture the blowing wind. And it is even more difficult to capture the turbulent mind. The easiest way to control the mind, as suggested by Lord Caitanya, is chanting "Hare Krsna," the great mantra for deliverance, in all humility. The method prescribed is sa vai manah krsna– padaravindayoh: one must engage one's mind fully in Krsna. Only then will there remain no other engagements to agitate the mind.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 6.34

One can control the mind by fixing it upon the sound of Krsna's name:

The mind is always flying to this and that, but one must always practice concentrating the mind on the form of the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna or on the sound of His name. The mind is naturally restless, going hither and thither, but it can rest in the sound vibration of Krsna. One must thus meditate on paramam purusam, the Supreme Person, and thus attain Him.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is Intro

Chanting Hare Krsna controls the wild horses of the mind:

When the mind is finally trained to the point where it will think of nothing but Krsna, it will attain peace and will become very tranquil.

prasanta–manasam hy enam
yoginam sukham uttamam
upaiti santa–rajasam
brahma–bhutam akalmasam

"The yogi whose mind is fixed on Me verily attains the highest happiness. By virtue of his identity with Brahman, he is liberated; his mind is peaceful, his passions are quieted, and he is freed from sin." (Bg. 6.27)

The mind is always concocting objects for happiness. I am always thinking, "This will make me happy," or "That will make me happy. Happiness is here. Happiness is there." In this way the mind is taking us anywhere and everywhere. It is as though we are riding on a chariot behind an unbridled horse. We have no power over where we are going but can only sit in horror and watch helplessly. As soon as the mind is engaged in the Krsna consciousness process—specifically by chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—then the wild horses of the mind will gradually come under our control.

~On the Way to Krsna

It is only by transcendental vibration (chanting, etc.) that the mind can be stabilized: "When the yogi, by practice of yoga, disciplines his mental activities and becomes situated in Transcendence—devoid of all material desires—he is said to have attained yoga." (Bg. 6.18)

The perfection of yoga means keeping the mind in a state of equilibrium. Materially speaking, this is impossible. After reading a mundane novel once, you will not want to read it again, but you can read Bhagavad–gita four times a day and still not tire of it. You may chant someone's name a half an hour, or sing a mundane song three or four times, but before long this becomes tiresome. Hare Krsna, however, can be chanted day and night, and one will never tire of it. Therefore it is only through transcendental vibration that the mind can be kept in a state of equilibrium. When one's mental activities are thus stabilized, one is said to have attained yoga.

~The Path of Perfection

5.

The Holy Name Protects One from Pride

To avoid pride, one should chant the Hare Krsna mantra incessantly:

When Vasudeva, the leper brahmana, was lamenting due to not being able to see Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Lord immediately returned to that spot and embraced him. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu touched him, both the leprosy and his distress went to a distant place. Indeed, Vasudeva's body became very beautiful, to his great happiness... Being meek and humble, the brahmana Vasudeva worried that he would become proud after being cured by the grace of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. To protect the brahmana, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu advised him to chant the Hare Krsna mantra incessantly. By doing so, he would never become unnecessarily proud.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 7.140-41, 146-47

6.

By Chanting, One Develops Forbearance

By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, the quality of forbearance automatically develops: A devotee engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord should practice forbearance like that of a tree. Even if rebuked or chastised, he should not say anything to others to retaliate. For even if one cuts a tree, it never protests, nor even if it is drying up and dying does it ask anyone for water.

This practice of forbearance (trnad api sunicena) is very difficult, but when one actually engages in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, the quality of forbearance automatically develops. A person advanced in spiritual consciousness through the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra need not practice to develop it separately, for a devotee develops all good qualities simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra regularly.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adi-līla 17.27-28

7.

The Holy Name Eradicates Material Desires and Sinful Activity

By chanting the maha–mantra, one can remove the seeds of desire from the heart: Sukadeva points out that austerity, charity and the performance of ritualistic ceremonies for counteracting sinful activities are recommended processes, but that by performing them one cannot remove the sinful desire–seed from the heart, as was the case with Ajamila in his youth. This sinful desire–seed can be removed only by achieving Krsna consciousness. And this can be accomplished very easily by chanting the maha–mantra, or Hare Krsna mantra, as recommended by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

~The Nectar of Devotion

By associating with the Supreme Lord by chanting His holy name, one becomes free from material desires:

Even those who are obsessed with material desires may also come to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead so steadily that they go back to Godhead. The fact is that if one comes to Krsna consciousness, although he may have many material desires, he becomes increasingly attracted to the lotus feet of Krsna through associating with the Supreme Lord by chanting His holy name. The Supreme Lord and His holy name are identical. Thus he becomes uninterested in attachment to material enjoyment.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.16.39

We must chant Hare Krsna in order to cleanse the heart of lust and greed:

The whole world is revolving due to kama and lobha. Kama means "lustful desire," and lobha means "greed." People cannot have enough sex or money, and because of this, their hearts are filled with contaminations, which have to be cleansed by hearing, repeating and chanting. Human life is meant to get rid of anarthas, unwanted things, but where is the university or college where this science of purification is taught? The only institution is this Krsna consciousness society. Krsna is within the heart, and the contaminations are also there, but Krsna will help us cleanse them. Nasta–prayesa bhadrasya nityam bhagavata–sevaya (S.B. 1.2.18). We must regularly hear Srimad–Bhagavatam and chant

Hare Krsna; these are the two processes recommended by Caitanya Mahaprabhu.
~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

The only method of controlling the agitated senses is to chant and hear the holy name of the Lord:

The human form of life is meant for God realization, but this process, which begins with sraavanam kirtanam visnoh [SB 7.5.23]—hearing and chanting of the holy name of the Lord—is disturbed as long as our senses are materially attracted. Therefore devotional service means purifying the senses. In the conditioned state our senses are covered by material sense gratification, and as long as one is not trained in purifying the senses, one cannot become a devotee. In our Krsna consciousness movement, therefore, we advise from the very beginning that one restrict the activities of the senses, especially the tongue, which is described by Srila Bhaktivinoda thakura as most greedy and unconquerable. To stop this attraction of the tongue, one is authoritatively advised not to accept meat or similar uneatable things nor to allow the tongue to hanker to drink or smoke. Even the drinking of tea and coffee is not permitted. Similarly, the genitals must be restricted from illicit sex. Without such restraint of the senses, one cannot make advancement in Krsna consciousness. The only method of controlling the senses is to chant and hear the holy name of the Lord; otherwise, one will always be disturbed.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.9.40

If one can control the tongue by engaging it in tasting prasada and chanting Hare Krsna, all the other senses can be controlled:

Self–control means that one should not accept anything which is detrimental to the path of spiritual progress. One should become accustomed to this and reject anything which is against the path of spiritual progress. This is real renunciation. The senses are so strong that they are always anxious to have sense gratification. One should not cater to these demands, which are not necessary. The senses should only be gratified to keep the body fit so that one can discharge his duty in advancing in spiritual life. The most important and uncontrollable sense is the tongue. If one can control the tongue, then there is every possibility of controlling the other senses. The function of the tongue is to taste and to vibrate. Therefore, by systematic regulation, the tongue should always be engaged in tasting the remnants of foodstuffs offered to Krsna and chanting Hare Krsna.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 13.8–12

Those who have tasted the nectar of chanting the holy name do not care for any other spiritual bliss or for material comforts:

The personified Vedas said:]

"The most intelligent devotees do not take to any means of self-realization except devotional service and constant engagement in the nine different processes of devotional life, especially hearing and chanting. When hearing and chanting about Your transcendental pastimes, Your devotees do not care even for the transcendental bliss derived from liberation or from merging into the existence of the Supreme. Such devotees are not interested even in so-called liberation, and certainly they have no interest in material activities for elevation to the heavenly planets for sense gratification. Pure devotees seek only the association of paramahamsas, or great liberated devotees, so that they can continually hear and chant about Your glories. For this purpose the pure devotees are prepared to sacrifice all comforts of life, even giving up the material comforts of family life and so-called society, friendship and love. Those who have tasted the nectar of devotion by relishing the transcendental vibration of chanting Your glories, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, do not care for any other spiritual bliss or for material comforts, which appear to the pure devotee to be less important than the straw in the street."

Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

By remaining fixed in chanting the holy name, one may protect himself from the sensual allurements of this age:

While traveling along the public way, Ajamila came upon a fourth-class man and a prostitute, who are vividly described here. Drunkenness was sometimes manifest even in bygone ages, although not very frequently. In this age of Kali, however, such sin is to be seen everywhere, for people all over the world have become shameless. Long ago, when he saw the scene of the drunken sudra and the prostitute, Ajamila, who was a perfect brahmacari, was affected. Nowadays such sin is visible in so many places, and we must consider the position of a brahmacari student who sees such behavior. For such a brahmacari to remain steady is very difficult unless he is extremely strong in following the regulative principles. Nevertheless, if one takes to Krsna consciousness very seriously, he can withstand the provocation created by sin. In our Krsna consciousness movement we prohibit illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling. In Kali-yuga, a drunk, half-naked woman embracing a drunk man is a very common sight, especially in the

Western countries, and restraining oneself after seeing such things is very difficult. Nevertheless, if by the grace of Kṛṣṇa one adheres to the regulative principles and chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, Kṛṣṇa will certainly protect him. Indeed, Kṛṣṇa says that His devotee is never vanquished (kaunteya pratijanihi na me bhaktah pranasyati). Therefore all the disciples practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness should obediently follow the regulative principles and remain fixed in chanting the holy name of the Lord. Then there need be no fear. Otherwise one's position is very dangerous, especially in this Kali-yuga.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.1.58-60

The test of the real change of heart from chanting the holy name is one's detachment from material enjoyment:

[Saunaka Rsi to Suta Gosvami]:

"If one's heart does not change, tears do not flow from his eyes, his body does not shiver, nor his hairs stand on end as he chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra, it should be understood that his heart is as hard as iron. This is due to his offenses at the lotus feet of the Lord's holy name."

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura, commenting on this verse, which is a quotation from Srimad-Bhagavatam (2.3.24), remarks that sometimes a maha-bhagavata, or very advanced devotee, does not manifest such transcendental symptoms as tears in the eyes, although sometimes a kanistha-adhikari, neophyte devotee, displays them artificially. This does not mean, however, that the neophyte is more advanced than the maha-bhagavata devotee. The test of the real change of heart that takes place when one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra is that one becomes detached from material enjoyment. This is the real change. Bhaktih paresanubhavo viraktir anyatra ca [SB 11.2.42]. If one is actually advancing in spiritual life, he must become very much detached from material enjoyment. If it is sometimes found that a kanistha-adhikari (neophyte devotee) shows artificial tears in his eyes while chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra but is still completely attached to material things, his heart has not really changed. The change must be manifested in terms of one's real activities.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adi-lila 8.25

By chanting the maha-mantra offenselessly, one may be saved from the allurements of women:

A grhastha, vanaprastha, sannyasi, and brahmacari should be very careful when associating

with women. One is forbidden to sit down in a solitary place even with one's mother, sister or daughter. In our Krsna consciousness movement it has been very difficult to disassociate ourselves from women in our society, especially in Western countries. We are therefore sometimes criticized, but nonetheless we are trying to give everyone a chance to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra and thus advance spiritually. If we stick to the principle of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra offenselessly, then, by the grace of Srila Haridasa thakura, we may be saved from the allurements of women. However, if we are not very strict in chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, we may at any time fall victim to women.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.6.3

By chanting, one gives up sinful activities:

If one is sincere, he is initiated, and this stage is called bhajana-kriya. One then actually engages in the service of the Lord by regularly chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, sixteen rounds daily, and refraining from illicit sex, intoxicants, meat-eating and gambling. By bhajana-kriya 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. In this way it is to be understood that one is becoming cleansed of unwanted things (anartha-nivrtti). The word anartha refers to unwanted things. Anarthas are vanquished when one becomes attached to the Krsna consciousness movement.

The Nectar of Instruction Text 7

By chanting Hare Krsna constantly, Srila Prabhupada's disciples are able to give up all sinful sense gratification:

If we chant the holy names of God, we cannot lose anything; on the contrary, we gain greatly. My disciples practice chanting Hare Krsna constantly. They could also go to the cinema, or do so many other things, but they have given everything up. They eat neither fish nor meat nor eggs, they don't take intoxicants, they don't drink, they don't smoke, they don't partake in gambling, they don't speculate, and they don't maintain illicit sexual connections. But they do chant the holy name of God.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Even if one cannot give up sinful life immediately, by chanting the maha–mantra with faith and devotion he will be freed from sinful activities:

Anyone, anywhere, can easily take to this Hare Krsna movement; one need only chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, observe the rules and regulations, and stay free from the contamination of sinful life. Even if one is sinful and cannot give up sinful life immediately, if he chants the Hare Krsna maha–mantra with devotion and faith he will certainly be freed from all sinful activities, and his life will be successful.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 9.10.51

Chanting of the holy name frees one from all undesirable habits:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Krsna, one can be freed from all undesirable habits. This is the means of awakening all good fortune and initiating the flow of waves of love for Krsna."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 20.11

8.

The Holy Name Cleanses the Heart and Frees One from Material Contamination

The holy name cleanses the mirror of the heart:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:~ "Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna, which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence..."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 20.12

One is purified by hearing the holy name of the Lord:

[Durvasa Muni to King Ambarisa]: ~What is impossible for the servants of the Lord? By the very hearing of His holy name one is purified.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 9.5.16

For internal cleanliness, one should chant the holy name:

One should always be careful to keep his body clean by bathing, brushing teeth, changing clothes, etc. As far as internal cleanliness is concerned, one should always remember the holy names of God and chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 16.7

Cleanliness is essential for making advancement in spiritual life. There are two kinds of cleanliness: external and internal. External cleanliness means taking a bath, but for internal cleanliness, one has to think of Krsna always and chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. This process cleans the accumulated dust of past karma from the mind.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 13.8-12

One can directly perceive the results of chanting—transcendental pleasure and purification: It is said that the execution of devotional service is so perfect that one can perceive the results directly. This direct result is actually perceived, and we have practical experience that any person who is chanting the holy names of Krsna (Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare) in course of time feels some transcendental pleasure and very quickly becomes purified of all material contamination. This is actually seen.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 9.2

Whether pure or impure, one should begin the chanting process which elevates one to purity:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu further advised Subuddhi Raya: "Begin chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, and when your chanting is almost pure, all your sinful reactions will go away. After you chant perfectly, you will get shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna."

The chanter has to purify himself so that the holy names will be perfectly effective. Chanting the holy name of the Lord inoffensively will help one get immediate shelter at Krsna's lotus feet. This means that by chanting purely, one will immediately be situated on the transcendental platform. We should note, however, that according to Sri Caitanya

Mahaprabhu's instructions, one should not wait to purify himself before chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. Whatever our condition may be, we should begin chanting immediately. By the power of the Hare Krsna mantra, we will gradually be relieved from all material contamination and will get shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna, the ultimate goal of life.
~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.199

Whether one has pious credit or not, by chanting Hare Krsna, he will immediately be purified:

Krsna is present in the form of His transcendental name, and we can contact Him immediately by hearing His name. Simply by hearing the name Krsna we immediately become freed from material contamination.

As stated in the Seventh Chapter of Bhagavad-gita (7.28),

yesam tv anta-gatam papam
jananam punya-karmanam
te dvandva-moha-nirmukta
bhajante mam drdha-vratah

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated, and who are freed from the duality of delusion, engage themselves in My service with determination."

It is herein stressed that one must be completely fixed in Krsna consciousness, devoid of duality, and must execute only pious activities. Because the mind is flickering, dualities will always come. One is always wondering, "Shall I become Krsna conscious, or should I engage in another consciousness," These problems are always there, but if one is advanced by virtue of pious activities executed in a previous life, his consciousness will be steadily fixed, and he will resolve, "I will be Krsna conscious."

Whether we acted piously in this life or a previous life really doesn't matter. This chanting of Hare Krsna is so potent that through it we will immediately be purified.

~The Path of Perfection

The holy name removes the darkness covering the heart:

It is due to a lack of knowledge that people say that God is dead, that there is no God, and that we have no relationship with God. These thoughts have been compared to the thoughts of a man haunted by a ghost. Just as a haunted man speaks all nonsense, when we become covered by the illusory energy of God we say that God is dead. But this is not a fact. Therefore, we need this chanting process to cleanse our heart. Take to this simple process of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. In that way, in your family life, in your club, in your home, on the road—everywhere—chant Hare Krsna, and this darkness covering your heart, covering your real position, will be removed. Then you'll understand your real constitutional position.

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu recommended:

ceto—darpana—marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]. Marjana means "cleanse," and darpana means "mirror." The heart is a mirror. It is like a camera. Just as a camera takes all kinds of pictures of days and nights, so also our heart takes pictures and keeps them in an unconscious state. Psychologists know this. The heart takes so many pictures, and therefore it becomes covered. We do not know when it has begun, but it is a fact that because there is a material contact, our real identity is covered. Therefore ceto—darpana—marjanam: one has to cleanse his heart... Simply chant Hare Krsna. It is the easiest and most sublime process. This is recommended, practical, and authorized. So take it. Accept it in any condition of life. Chant. There is no expenditure, there is no loss. We are not chanting a secret. No. It is open. And by chanting you will cleanse your heart.

~The Science of Self—Realization

By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra offenselessly in the association of devotees one becomes pure in heart and loses interest in everything external:

[Lord Siva to Lord Visnu]: ~The devotee whose heart has been completely cleansed by the process of devotional service and who is favored by Bhaktidevi does not become bewildered by the external energy, which is just like a dark well. Being completely cleansed of all material contamination in this way, a devotee is able to understand very happily Your name, fame, form, activities, etc.

As stated in Srimad—Bhagavatam (3.25.25):

satam prasangan mama virya—samvido
bhavanti hrt—karna—rasayanah kathah
taj—josanad asv apavarga—vartmani
sraddha ratir bhaktir anakramisyati

Simply by the association of pure devotees one can understand the transcendental name, fame, quality and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has repeatedly said:

'sadhu-sanga': 'sadhu-sanga'-sarva-sastre kaya
lava-matra sadhu-sange sarva-siddhi haya

(Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 22.54)

Simply by associating with a pure devotee, one becomes wonderfully advanced in Krsna consciousness. Sadhu-sanga, or association with a devotee, means always engaging in Krsna consciousness by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra and by acting for Krsna. Specifically, chanting the Hare Krsna mantra purifies one, and this chanting is therefore recommended by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Ceto-darpana-marjanam: [Cc. Antya 20.12] by chanting the names of Krsna, the mirror of the heart is cleansed, and the devotee loses interest in everything external. When one is influenced by the external energy of the Lord, his heart is impure. When one's heart is not pure, he cannot see how things are related to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Idam hi visvam bhagavan ivetarah (S.B. 1.5.20). He whose heart is purified can see that the whole cosmic manifestation is but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but he whose heart is contaminated sees things differently. Therefore by sat-sanga, or association with devotees, one becomes perfectly pure in heart.

One who is pure in heart is never attracted by the external energy, which urges the individual soul to try to dominate material nature. The pure heart of a devotee is never disturbed when he executes devotional service in the form of hearing, chanting, remembering, etc. In all, there are nine processes one can follow in the execution of devotional service. In any case, a purehearted devotee is never disturbed. The bhakti-yoga process must be carried out by avoiding the ten offenses one can commit while chanting the maha-mantra and the sixty-four offenses one can commit while worshiping the Deity. When a devotee strictly follows the rules and regulations, Bhaktidevi becomes very much satisfied with him, and at that time he is never disturbed by anything external... The conclusion is that when one's heart is purified by the association of devotees and by the avoidance of the offenses committed when chanting and worshiping the Lord, the transcendental name, form and activities of the Lord are revealed by the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.24.59

Lord Caitanya introduced the congregational chanting of Hare Krsna so that the minds of the people in general may be cleansed:

Material existence is caused by dirty things within the mind. If one can cleanse his mind, he immediately comes to his original position of Krsna consciousness, and thus his life becomes successful. Therefore all the great saints in the devotional line very strongly recommend the process of hearing. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the congregational chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to give everyone a chance to hear Krsna's holy name, for simply by hearing Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, one becomes purified (ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]).

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.18.11

In order to cleanse the heart of all contaminations (such as karma, jnana and yoga) and enthrone the Supreme Personality of Godhead there, one must chant the holy name: Outside the gateway of the temple, all the roads were also cleansed, and no one could tell exactly how this was done.

In commenting on the cleansing of the Gundica temple, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura says that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was personally giving instructions on how one should receive Lord Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, within one's cleansed and pacified heart. If one wants to see Krsna seated in his heart, he must first cleanse the heart, as prescribed by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in His Siksastaka (ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]). In this age, everyone's heart is unclean, as confirmed in Srimad–Bhagavatam (hrdy antah–stho hy abhadrani) To wash all dirty things accumulated within the heart, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu advised everyone to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. The first result will be that the heart is cleansed (ceto–darpana–marjanam). Similarly, Srimad–Bhagavatam (1.2.17) also confirms this statement:

srvatam sva–kathah krsnah
punya–sravana–kirtanah
hrdy antah–stho hy abhadrani
vidhunoti suhrt satam

"Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramatma [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who relishes His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when

properly heard and chanted."

If the devotee at all wants to cleanse his heart, he must chant and hear the glories of the Lord, Sri Kṛṣṇa (sr̥vatam sva-kathah kṛṣṇah [SB 1.2.17]). This is a simple process. Kṛṣṇa Himself will help cleanse the heart because He is already seated there. Kṛṣṇa wants to continue living within the heart, and the Lord wants to give directions, but one has to keep his heart as clean as Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu kept the Gundica temple. The devotee therefore has to cleanse his heart just as the Lord cleansed the Gundica temple. In this way one can be pacified and enriched in devotional service. If the heart is filled with straw, grains of sand, weeds or dust (in other words, anyābhilāsa-pūrṇa), one cannot enthrone the Supreme Personality of Godhead there. The heart must be cleansed of all material motives brought about through fruitive work, speculative knowledge, the mystic yoga system and so many other forms of so-called meditation. The heart must be cleansed without ulterior motive. As Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says:

anyābhilāsita-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam [Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu
anyābhilāsita-sūnyam
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
anukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-
silānam bhaktir uttama

"One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service." Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu 1.1.111.1.11]. In other words, there should not be any external motive. One should not attempt material upliftment, understanding the Supreme by speculative knowledge, fruitive activity, severe austerity and penance, and so on. All these activities are against the natural growth of spontaneous love of Godhead. As soon as these are present within the heart, the heart should be understood to be unclean and therefore unfit to serve as Kṛṣṇa's sitting place. We cannot perceive the Lord's presence in our hearts unless our hearts are cleansed.

A material desire is explained as a desire to enjoy the material world to its fullest extent. In modern language, this is called economic development. An inordinate desire for economic development is considered to be like straws and grains of sand within the heart. If one is overly engaged in material activity, the heart will always remain disturbed. As stated by Narottama dāsa thākura:

samsāra viśāle, diva-niśi hīya jvāle,
judaite na kainu upāya

In other words, endeavor for material opulence is against the principle of devotional service. Material enjoyment includes activities such as great sacrifices for auspicious activity, charity, austerity, elevation to the higher planetary system, and even living happily within the material world.

Modernized material benefits are like the dust of material contamination. When this dust is agitated by the whirlwind of fruitive activity, it overcomes the heart. Thus the mirror of the heart is covered with dust. There are many desires to perform auspicious and inauspicious activities, but people do not know how life after life they are keeping their hearts unclean. One who cannot give up the desire for fruitive activity is understood to be covered by the dust of material contamination. Karmis generally think that the interaction of fruitive activities can be counteracted by another karma, or fruitive activity. This is certainly a mistaken conception. If one is deluded by such a conception, he is cheated by his own activity. Such activities have been compared to an elephant's bathing. An elephant may bathe very thoroughly, but as soon as it comes out of the river, it immediately takes some sand from the land and throws it all over its body. If one suffers due to his past fruitive activities, he cannot counteract his suffering by performing auspicious activities. The sufferings of human society cannot be counteracted by material plans. The only way suffering can be mitigated is by Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and engages himself in the devotional service of the Lord—beginning with chanting and hearing the glories of the Lord—the cleansing of the heart begins.

Impersonal speculation, monism (merging into the existence of the Supreme), speculative knowledge, mystical yoga and meditation are all compared to grains of sand. They simply cause irritation to the heart. No one can satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead by such activities, nor do we give the Lord a chance to sit in our hearts peacefully. Rather, the Lord is simply disturbed by them. Sometimes yogis and jñanis in the beginning take to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra as a way to begin their various practices. However, when they falsely think that they have attained release from the bondage of material existence, they give up chanting. They do not consider that the ultimate goal is the form of the Lord or the name of the Lord. Such unfortunate creatures are never favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for they do not know what devotional service is. They are described in Bhagavad-gīta in this way:

tan aham dvisatah kruran
samsaresu naradhamaṁ
ksipamy ajasram asubhaṁ
asurīsv eva yonīsu

"Those who are envious and mischievous, who are the lowest among men, are cast by Me into the ocean of material existence, into various demoniac species of life." (Bg. 16.19)

The demons are always envious of the Lord and are therefore most mischievous. By His practical example, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has shown us that all the grains of sand must be picked up thoroughly and thrown outside. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu also cleansed the outside of the temple, fearing that the grains of sand would again come within.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura explains that even though one may become free from the desire for fruitive activity, sometimes the subtle desire for fruitive activity comes into being within the heart. One often thinks of conducting business to improve devotional activity. However, the contamination is so strong that it may later develop into misunderstanding, described as kuti–nati (faultfinding) and pratisthasa (the desire for name and fame and for high position), jiva–himsa (envy of other living entities), nisiddhacara (accepting things forbidden in the sastra), kama (desire for material gain) and puja (hankering for popularity). The word kuti–nati means duplicity. As an example, one may attempt to imitate Srila Haridasa thakura by living in a solitary place. One's real desire may be for name and fame—in other words, one thinks that fools will accept one to be as good as Haridasa thakura just because one lives in a solitary place. These are all material desires. A neophyte devotee is certain to be attacked by other material desires as well—women and money. In this way the heart is again filled with dirty things and becomes harder and harder, like that of a materialist. Gradually one desires to become a reputed devotee or an avatara (incarnation).

The word jiva–himsa (envy of other living entities) actually means stopping the preaching of Krsna consciousness. Preaching work is described as paropakara, welfare activity for others. Those who are ignorant of the benefits of devotional service must be educated by preaching. If one stops preaching and simply sits down in a solitary place, he is engaging in material activity. If one desires to make a compromise with the Mayavadis, he is also engaged in material activity. A devotee should never make compromises with nondevotees. By acting as a professional guru, mystic yogi or miracle man, one may cheat and bluff the general public and gain fame as a wonderful mystic, but all this is considered to be dust, straw and grains of sand within the heart. In addition, one should follow the regulative principles and not desire illicit sex, gambling, intoxicants and meat.

To give us practical instructions, Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu cleansed the temple twice. His second cleansing was more thorough. The idea was to throw away all the stumbling blocks on the path of devotional service. He cleansed the temple with firm conviction, as is

evident from His using His own personal garments for cleaning. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu wanted to see personally that the temple was thoroughly cleansed as clean as marble. Clean marble gives a cooling effect. Devotional service means attaining peace from all disturbances caused by material contamination. In other words, it is the process by which the mind is cooled. The mind can be peaceful and thoroughly cleansed when one no longer desires anything but devotional service.

Even though all dirty things may be cleansed away, sometimes subtle desires remain in the mind for impersonalism, monism, success and the four principles of religious activity (dharma, artha, kama and moksa). All these are like spots on clean cloth. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu also wanted to cleanse all these away.

By His practical activity, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu informed us how to cleanse our hearts. Once the heart is cleansed, we should invite Lord Sri Krsna to sit down, and we should observe the festival by distributing prasada and chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu used to teach every devotee by His personal behavior. Everyone who spreads the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu accepts a similar responsibility. The Lord was personally chastising and praising individuals in the course of the cleaning, and those who are engaged as acaryas must learn from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu how to train devotees by personal example. The Lord was very pleased with those who could cleanse the temple by taking out undesirable things accumulated within. This is called anartha-nivrtti, cleansing the heart of all unwanted things. Thus the cleansing of the Gundica-mandira was conducted by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to let us know how the heart should be cleansed and soothed to receive Lord Sri Krsna and enable Him to sit within the heart without disturbance.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 12.135

The easiest way to cleanse the mind of material contamination in this age is to chant the Hare Krsna mantra:

When the mind is completely washed of all material contamination, the pure consciousness acts. The sound vibration from the spiritual sky can automatically cleanse all material contaminations, as confirmed by Caitanya Mahaprabhu: ceto-darpana-marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]. We need only take the advice of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and chant the Hare Krsna mantra to cleanse the mind of all material contamination ... As soon as the whole material contamination is washed away by this process of chanting, all desires and reactions to material activities become immediately vanquished, and real life, peaceful existence, begins. In this age of Kali it is very difficult to adopt the yogic process mentioned in this verse. Unless one is very expert in such yoga, the best course is to adopt

the ways and means of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, sri-krsna-sankirtanam. Thus one can gloriously become freed from all material contamination by the simple process of chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Just as life in this material world has its beginning in material sound, similarly spiritual life has its beginning in this spiritual sound vibration.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.23.17

Chanting the Hare Krsna mantra cleanses one of all material contamination: Ceto-darpana-marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]. This is the process of devotional service. Anyone can be purified by following the principles of devotional service in Krsna consciousness, for Krsna consciousness is so powerful that it can purify even the dirtiest class of men and transform them into the topmost Vaisnavas. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's movement aims at this purpose. Narottama dasa thakura says:

vrajendra-nandana jei, saci-suta hoilo sei,
balarama hoilo nitai
dina-hina yata chilo, hari-name uddharilo,
ta'ra saksi jagai-madhai

The appearance of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in this Kali-yuga is especially meant to deliver the fallen souls, who are always planning something for material enjoyment. He gave the people of this age the advantage of being able to chant the Hare Krsna mantra and thus become fully pure, free from all material contamination. Once one becomes a pure Vaisnava, he transcends all material conceptions of life.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.18.43

No one can be more pure than devotees. Anyone who once utters the name of Visnu immediately becomes purified, inside and outside (yah smaret pundarikaksam). Since a devotee constantly chants the Hare Krsna mantra, no contamination of the material world can touch him. He is, therefore, actually purified. Muci haya suci haya yadi krsna bhaje. It is said that even a cobbler or person born in the family of a cobbler can be elevated to the position of a brahmana (suci) if he takes to Krsna consciousness. Any person who is purely Krsna conscious and who engages in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra is the purest in the whole universe.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.12.37

After [the prostitute offered] her obeisances to the tulasi plant and Haridasa thakura, she sat

down at the door. Hearing Haridasa thakura chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, she also chanted, "O my Lord Hari, O my Lord Hari."

Herein one can clearly see how a Vaisnava delivers a fallen soul by a transcendental trick. The prostitute came to pollute Haridasa thakura, but he took it as his duty to deliver the prostitute. As clearly demonstrated here, the process of deliverance is very simple. With faith and reverence the prostitute associated with Haridasa thakura, who personally treated her material disease by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Although the prostitute had an ulterior motive, somehow or other she got the association of a Vaisnava and satisfied him by occasionally chanting in imitation, "O my Lord Hari, O my Lord Hari." The conclusion is that associating with a Vaisnava, chanting the holy name of the Lord and offering obeisances to the tulasi plant or a Vaisnava all lead one to become a transcendental devotee who is completely cleansed of all material contamination.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 3.122

By chanting the maha–mantra, one is purified of material contamination and becomes eligible to engage in devotional service:

Because the people of this age are so fallen, they can simply chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. In this way they can rid themselves of the bodily conception of life and become eligible to engage in the Lord's devotional service. One cannot engage in the devotional service of the Lord without being purified of all contamination. This is confirmed in Bhagavad–gita:

yesam tv anta–gatam papam
jananam punya–karmanam
te dvandva–moha–nirmukta
bhajante mam drdha–vratah

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of delusion engage themselves in My service with determination." (Bg. 7.28)

Sometimes people are surprised to see young men and women take so seriously to the Krsna consciousness movement. By giving up sinful activity–illicit sex, meat–eating, intoxication and gambling–and strictly following the injunctions given by the spiritual master, they have become purified of all contamination. They can therefore fully engage in the devotional service of the Lord.

9.

The Holy Name Brings Faith in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

Faith in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is attained by chanting the holy name:

[Lord Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna]:

In this world, there is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge. Such knowledge is the mature fruit of all mysticism. And one who has achieved this enjoys the self within himself in due course of time. A faithful man who is absorbed in transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace.

Such knowledge in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be achieved by a faithful person who believes firmly in Kṛṣṇa. One is called a faithful man who thinks that, simply by acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he can attain the highest perfection. This faith is attained by the discharge of devotional service, and by chanting "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare," which cleanses one's heart of all material dirt. Over and above this, one should control the senses. A person who is faithful to Kṛṣṇa and who controls the senses can easily attain perfection in the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness without delay.

~Bhagavad–gīta As It Is 4.38–39

10.

The Holy Name Liberates One from the Miseries of Material Existence

To escape the ocean of material miseries and illusion, we must chant the maha–mantra: We are all pure spirit, part and parcel of the Supreme. God is pavitram, pure, and we are also pure. Somehow or other, however, we have fallen into this material ocean, and as the waves toss, we suffer. Actually we have nothing to do with the tossing waves of material

miseries. We must simply pray, "Krsna, please pick me up." As soon as we forget Krsna, the ocean of illusion is there, and it at once captures us. The chanting of Hare Krsna is most important in order to escape from this ocean.

~Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

Chanting the holy name is the universal remedy for all the miseries of materialistic life: Chanting the holy name and glorifying the Supreme Lord are the universal remedy for all the miseries of materialistic life. Persons who desire to be freed from this material world are called mumukshu. Such persons can understand the miseries of materialistic life, and by glorifying the activities of the Lord they can be released from all these miseries. The transcendental sound vibrations concerning the Lord's name, fame, form, qualities and paraphernalia are all nondifferent from the Lord. Therefore the very sound vibration of the Lord's glorification and name are pleasing to the ears, and by understanding the absolute nature of the Lord's name, form and qualities the devotee becomes joyful.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.1 "Additional notes"

The holy name eradicates the miseries of material existence:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna, which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence..."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.12

The only remedy for burning in the fire of material existence is chanting the maha-mantra: Material affairs have been compared to an ocean of poison. They have been described in a similar way by Srila Narottama dasa thakura in one of his songs:

samsara-visanale, diva-nisi hiya jvale,
judaite na kainu upaya

"My heart is always burning in the fire of material existence, and I have made no provisions for getting out of it."

golokera prema-dhana, hari-nama-sankirtana,

rati na janmila kene taya

"The only remedy is hari–nama–sankirtana, the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, which is imported from the spiritual world, Goloka Vrndavana. How unfortunate I am that I have no attraction for this."

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.1.2

Chanting extinguishes the blazing fire of material miseries:

Due to our manipulation of material activities, a great deal of dust has collected over our mind's clear mirror, and as a consequence we are unable to see things in perspective. This vibration of transcendental sound (the Hare Krsna mantra) will cleanse away this dust and enable us to see clearly our real constitutional position. As soon as we come to understand "I am not this body; I am spirit soul, and my symptom is consciousness," we will be able to establish ourselves in real happiness. As our consciousness is purified by this process of chanting Hare Krsna, all our material miseries will disappear. There is a fire that is always blazing over this material world, and everyone is trying to extinguish it, but there is no possibility of extinguishing this fire of the miseries of material nature unless we are situated in our pure consciousness, in our spiritual life.

~On the Way to Krsna

How the chanting of the maha–mantra extinguishes the blazing fire of material existence: Maharaja Yudhisthira was asked by Yamaraja, "What is the most wonderful thing in this world? Can you explain?" So Maharaja Yudhisthira answered, "Yes. The most wonderful thing is that at every moment one can see that his friends, his fathers, and his relatives have died, but he is thinking, 'I shall live forever.'" He never thinks that he will die, just as an animal never thinks that at the next moment he may be slaughtered. He is satisfied with the grass, that's all. He is satisfied with the sense gratification. He does not know that he is also going to die.

My father has died, my mother has died, he has died, she has died. So I will also have to die. Then what is after death? I do not know. This is the problem. People do not take this problem seriously, but the Bhagavad–gita indicates that that is real education. Real education is to inquire why, although we do not want to die, death comes. That is real inquiry. We do not want to become old men. Why does old age come upon us? We have many problems, but this is the sum and substance of all of them.

In order to solve this problem, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu prescribes the chanting of Hare Krsna. As soon as our heart is cleansed by chanting this Hare Krsna mantra, the blazing fire of our problematic material existence is extinguished. How is it extinguished? When we cleanse our heart we will realize that we do not belong to this material world. Because people are identifying with this material world, they are thinking, "I am an Indian, I am an Englishman, I am this, I am that." But if one chants the Hare Krsna mantra, he will realize that he is not this material body. "I do not belong to this material body or this material world. I am a spirit soul, part and parcel of the Supreme. I am eternally related with Him, and I have nothing to do with the material world." This is called liberation, knowledge. If I don't have anything to do with this material world, then I am liberated. And that knowledge is called brahma-bhuta.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Chanting the holy name is the ultimate solution to the perplexities of material existence: In his state of perplexity, Subuddhi Raya met Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu when the Lord was at Varanasi. Subuddhi Raya explained his position and asked Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu what he should do. The Lord advised him, "Go to Vrndavana and chant the Hare Krsna mantra constantly."

This is a solution to all sinful activities. In this age of Kali everyone is perplexed by so many inconveniences—social, political and religious—and naturally no one is happy. Due to the contamination of this age, everyone has a very short life. There are many fools and rascals who advise people to adopt this way of life or that way of life, but real liberation from life's perplexities means preparation for the next life. *Tatha dehantara-praptir dhiras tatra na muhyati* [Bg. 2.13]. One should be situated in his spiritual identity and return home, back to Godhead. The simplest method for this is recommended herein by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. We should constantly chant the holy names of the Lord, the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Following in the footsteps of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, this Krsna consciousness movement is recommending this process all over the world. We are saying, "Chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, be freed from all the complexities of life and realize Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Engage in His devotional service and perfect your life so that you can return home, back to Godhead."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.197-98

To become free of the pangs of material existence, one must chant the maha–mantra: Srila Narottama dasa thakura says, samsara–visanale, diva–nisi hiya jvale, judaite na kainu upaya: "We are always suffering from material pangs, and our hearts are burning, but we cannot find any way out of it." The materialistic person can also be called a tapasvi, which means someone who is always suffering from material pains. One can get rid of all these material pains only when he takes shelter of the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra... all persons in this material world are suffering from material pains, and if one wants to get rid of them, he must associate with saintly persons, pure devotees of the Lord, and chant the maha–mantra, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. That is the only auspicious way for materialistic persons.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.22.15

The Hare Krsna maha–mantra is the medicine to cure the disease of material life: As Murari Gupta treated his patients, by his mercy both their bodily and spiritual diseases subsided.

Murari Gupta could treat both bodily and spiritual disease because he was a physician by profession and a great devotee of the Lord in terms of spiritual advancement. This is an example of service to humanity. Everyone should know that there are two kinds of diseases in human society. One disease, which is called adhyatmika, or material disease, pertains to the body, but the main disease is spiritual. The living entity is eternal, but somehow or other, when in contact with the material energy, he is subjected to the repetition of birth, death, old age and disease. The physicians of the modern day should learn from Murari Gupta. Although modern philanthropic physicians open gigantic hospitals, there are no hospitals to cure the material disease of the spirit soul. The Krsna consciousness movement has taken up the mission of curing this disease, but people are not very appreciative because they do not know what this disease is. A diseased person needs both proper medicine and a proper diet, and therefore the Krsna consciousness movement supplies materially stricken people with the medicine of the chanting of the holy name, or the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, and the diet of prasada. There are many hospitals and medical clinics to cure bodily diseases, but there are no such hospitals to cure the material disease of the spirit soul. The centers of the Krsna consciousness movement are the only established hospitals that can cure man of birth, death, old age and disease.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 10.51

Chanting the Hare Krsna mantra frees one from the disease of material life:

The holy name, character, pastimes and activities of Krsna are all transcendently sweet like sugar candy. Although the tongue of one afflicted by the jaundice of avidya [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.

When a man in the material world takes more interest in the materialistic way of life than in Krsna consciousness, he is considered to be in a diseased condition. The normal condition is to remain an eternal servant of the Lord (jivera 'svarupa' haya–krsnera 'nitya–dasa' [Cc. Madhya 20.108]). This healthy condition is lost when the living entity forgets Krsna due to being attracted by the external features of Krsna's maya energy... Although Krsna consciousness may not be very palatable for a diseased person, Srila Rupa Gosvami 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 Krsna maha–mantra because by chanting this holy name of the Lord a person in the material condition will be relieved from all misconceptions (ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]). Avidya, a misconception about one's spiritual identity, provides the foundation for ahankara, or false ego within the heart.

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 Krsna maha–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...The conclusion is that in order to get freed from the material disease, one must take to the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 7

By constantly chanting the holy name of the Lord, one transcends the distresses of the world of duality and thus becomes happy:

The distinctions between happiness and distress in the material world of duality are simply mental concoctions, for the so–called happiness and distress are actually one and the same. They are like the happiness and distress in dreams. A sleeping man creates his happiness and distress by dreaming, although actually they have no existence... In this connection there is a statement by Prabodhananda Sarasvati: visvam purna–sukhayate. Everyone in this material world is distressed by miserable conditions, but Srila Prabodhananda Sarasvati says that this world is full of happiness. How is this possible? He answers,

yat–karunya–kataksa–vaibhavavatam tam gauram eva stumah. A devotee accepts the distress of this material world as happiness only due to the causeless mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. By His personal behavior, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu showed that He was never distressed but always happy in chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. One should follow in the footsteps of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and engage constantly in chanting the maha–mantra–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Then he will never feel the distresses of the world of duality. In any condition of life one will be happy if he chants the holy name of the Lord.

–Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.17.30

By constantly chanting Hare Krsna, one can be forever freed from the cycle of birth and death:

[The child in the womb to Lord Visnu]: –Therefore, without being agitated any more, I shall deliver myself from the darkness of nescience with the help of my friend, clear consciousness. Simply by keeping the lotus feet of Lord Visnu in my mind, I shall be saved from entering into the wombs of many mothers for repeated birth and death.

The miseries of material existence begin from the very day when the spirit soul takes shelter in the ovum and sperm of the mother and father, they continue after he is born from the womb, and then they are further prolonged. We do not know where the suffering ends. It does not end, however, by one's changing his body. The change of body is taking place at every moment, but that does not mean that we are improving from the fetal condition of life to a more comfortable condition. The best thing is, therefore, to develop Krsna consciousness. Here it is stated, upasadita–visnu–padah. This means realization of Krsna consciousness. One who is intelligent by the grace of the Lord, and develops Krsna consciousness, is successful in his life because simply by keeping himself in Krsna consciousness, he will be saved from the repetition of birth and death... In Bhagavad–gita it is said that one's intelligence is his friend, and the same intelligence can also be his enemy. Here also the same idea is repeated: suhrdatmanaiva, friendly intelligence. Absorption of intelligence in the personal service of Krsna and full consciousness of Krsna always are the path of self–realization and liberation. Without being unnecessarily agitated, if we take to the process of Krsna consciousness by constantly chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, the cycle of birth and death can be stopped for good.

–Srimad–Bhagavatam 3.31.21

Chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra frees one from the miseries of birth, death, old age, and disease:

[Lord Caitanya]: "Distribute this Krsna consciousness movement all over the world. Let people eat these fruits and ultimately become free from old age and death."

The Krsna consciousness movement introduced by Lord Caitanya is extremely important because one who takes to it becomes eternal, being freed from birth, death and old age. People do not recognize that the real distresses in life are the four principles of birth, death, old age and disease. They are so foolish that they resign themselves to these four miseries, not knowing the transcendental remedy of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, one can become free from all miseries, but because they are enchanted by the illusory energy, people do not take this movement seriously. Therefore those who are actually servants of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu must seriously distribute this movement all over the world to render the greatest benefit to human society. Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 9.39

The Hare Krsna mantra is especially suited to deliver us from material existence in the Kali–yuga:

Only the dvijas (the brahmanas) and the devas (the demigods) can be delivered from material existence by the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Whatever is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is a mantra and is suitable for delivering the conditioned souls from mental speculation. The conditioned souls are engaged in a struggle for existence (manah sasthanindriyani prakrti–sthani karsati [Bg. 15.7]). Deliverance from this struggle constitutes the highest benefit, but unless one gets a mantra from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, deliverance is impossible. The beginning mantra is the Gayatri mantra. Therefore, after purification, when one is qualified to become a brahmana (dvija), he is offered the Gayatri mantra. Simply by chanting the Gayatri mantra, one can be delivered. This mantra, however, is suitable only for the brahmanas and demigods. In Kali–yuga, we are all in a very difficult position, in which we need a suitable mantra that can deliver us from the dangers of this age. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His incarnation as Lord Caitanya, gives us the Hare Krsna mantra... In His Siksastaka, Lord Caitanya says, param vijayate sri–krsna–sankirtanam: "All glories to the chanting of sri–krsna–sankirtana!" The maha–mantra–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare–is directly chanted by the Lord Himself, who gives us this mantra for deliverance.

We cannot invent any means to be delivered from the dangers of material existence... Sparks are beautiful as long as they are in the fire. Similarly, we have to remain in the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and always engage in devotional service, for then we shall always be brilliant and illuminating. As soon as we fall from the service of the Lord, our brilliance and illumination will immediately be extinguished, or at least stopped for some time. When we living entities, who are like sparks of the original fire, the Supreme Lord, fall into a material condition, we must take the mantra from the Supreme Personality of Godhead as it is offered by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. By chanting this Hare Krsna mantra, we shall be delivered from all the difficulties of this material world.

~ Srimad-Bhagavatam 8.6.15

The fallen souls of Kali-yuga will be delivered by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra: Just before the beginning of Kali-yuga-or, in other words, at the end of Dvapara-yuga-Lord Sri Krsna appeared and left His instructions in the form of Bhagavad-gita, in which He asked all living entities to surrender unto Him. Since the beginning of Kali-yuga, however, people have practically been unable to surrender to the lotus feet of Krsna, and therefore, after some five thousand years, Krsna came again as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu just to teach the entire world how to surrender unto Him, unto Sri Krsna, and thus be purified...

Kali-yuga is full of contamination. This is described in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (12.3.51):

kaler dosa-nidhe rajann
asti hy eko mahan gunah
kirtanad eva krsnasya
mukta-sangah param vrajet

This age of Kali is full of unlimited faults. Indeed, it is just like an ocean of faults (dosa-nidhi). But there is one chance, one opportunity. Kirtanad eva krsnasya mukta-sangah param vrajet: simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, one can be freed from the contamination of Kali-yuga and, in his original spiritual body, can return home, back to Godhead. This is the opportunity of Kali-yuga.

When Krsna appeared, He gave His orders, and when Krsna Himself appeared as a devotee, as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He showed us the path by which to cross the ocean of Kali-yuga. That is the path of the Hare Krsna movement. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared, He ushered in the era for the sankirtana movement. It is also said that for ten

thousand years this era will continue. This means that simply by accepting the sankirtana movement and chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, the fallen souls of this Kali–yuga will be delivered. After the Battle of Kuruksetra, at which Bhagavad–gita was spoken, Kali–yuga continues for 432,000 years, of which only 5,000 years have passed. Thus there is still a balance of 427,000 years to come. Of these 427,000 years, the 10,000 years of the sankirtana movement inaugurated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu 500 years ago provide the opportunity for the fallen souls of Kali–yuga to take to the Krsna consciousness movement, chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra and thus be delivered from the clutches of material existence and return home, back to Godhead.

Chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra is potent always, but it is especially potent in this age of Kali. Therefore Sukadeva Gosvami, while instructing Maharaja Pariksit, stressed this chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra.

kaler dosa–nidhe rajann
asti hy eko mahan gunah
kirtanad eva krsnasya
mukta–sangah param vrajet

"My dear King, although Kali–yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom." (S.B. 12.3.51)

Those who have accepted the task of spreading the Hare Krsna maha–mantra in full Krsna consciousness should take this opportunity to deliver people very easily from the clutches of material existence. Our duty, therefore, is to follow the instructions of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and preach the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world very sincerely. This is the best welfare activity for the peace and prosperity of human society.
– Srimad–Bhagavatam 8.5.23

The transcendental sound of Hare Krsna can end material entanglement:

It is stated in the Vedanta–sutra that sound is the origin of all objects of material possession and that by sound one can also dissolve this material existence. Anavrttih sabdat means "liberation by sound." The entire material manifestation began from sound, and sound can also end material entanglement, if it has a particular potency. The particular sound capable of doing this is the transcendental vibration Hare Krsna. Our entanglement in material affairs has begun from material sound. Now we must purify that sound in spiritual

understanding. There is sound in the spiritual world also. If we approach that sound, then our spiritual life begins, and the other requirements for spiritual advancement can be supplied. We have to understand very clearly that sound is the beginning of the creation of all material objects for our sense gratification. Similarly, if sound is purified, our spiritual necessities also are produced from sound.

Srimad–Bhagavatam 3.26.32

The holy name brings liberation:

"The holy name of Krsna is the controller of the opulence of liberation..."

–Padyavali (29), by Rupa Gosvami [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 15.110]

For one who chants the holy name, the paths to liberation and heavenly happiness are at once open:

In the Padma Purana there is a statement: "For any person who is chanting the holy name either softly or loudly, the paths to liberation and even heavenly happiness are at once open."

The Nectar of Devotion

Even if uttered once, the holy name awards liberation:

Srila Sanatana Gosvami has praised the chanting of the holy name as follows in his Brhad–bhagavatamrta (Chapter One, verse 9):

jayati jayati namananda–rupam murarer
viramita–nija–dharma–dhyana–pujadi–yatnam
katham api sakrd–attam muktidam praninam yat
paramam amrtam ekam jivanam bhusanam me

"All glories, all glories to the all–blissful holy name of Sri Krsna, which causes the devotee to give up all conventional religious duties, meditation and worship. When somehow or other uttered even once by a living entity, the holy name awards him liberation. The holy

name of Krsna is the highest nectar. It is my very life and my only treasure."

Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya-līla 4.71

By chanting the holy name, one attains the perfection of nirvana, liberation from material existence:

The bhakti-yoga system is the topmost yoga system, and in this system the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is the foremost performance of devotional service. By chanting the holy name one can attain the perfection of nirvana, or liberation from material existence, and so increase one's blissful life of spiritual existence as described by Lord Caitanya (anandambudhi-varḍhanam). When one is situated in that position, he no longer has any interest in material opulence or even a royal throne and sovereignty over the whole planet. This situation is called viraktir anyatra ca. It is the result of devotional service.

Srīmad-Bhagavatam 4.13.8-9

The devotee attains liberation by chanting the holy name:

Bhakti is in a far higher position than mukti because a person's endeavor to get liberation from the material engagement is automatically served in devotional service... A devotee does not have to try separately to attain liberation. That very service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the process of his liberation because to engage oneself in the service of the Lord is to liberate oneself from material entanglement...

For a devotee, liberation is no problem at all. Liberation takes place without separate endeavor. Bhakti, therefore, is far better than mukti or the impersonalist position. The impersonalists undergo severe penances and austerities to attain mukti, but the bhakta, simply by engaging himself in the bhakti process, especially in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, immediately develops control over the tongue by engaging it in chanting, and accepting the remnants of foodstuff offered to the Personality of Godhead. As soon as the tongue is controlled, naturally all other senses are controlled automatically. Sense control is the perfection of the yoga principle, and one's liberation begins immediately as soon as he engages himself in the service of the Lord.

Srīmad-Bhagavatam 3.25.33

The only way of liberation from material existence is chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord:

In the process of evolution from the lower to the higher grade of living, the human form of life is a great boon. But maya is so strong that in spite of achieving this great boon of the human form of life, we are influenced by temporary material happiness, and we forget our goal of life. We are attracted by things which will cease to exist. The beginning of such attraction is the temporary body. In this horrible condition of life there is only one way of liberation—to engage in the activities of transcendental chanting and hearing of the holy name of the Supreme Lord: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare... The illusion is that the conditioned soul does not try to understand his spiritual identity. He is more interested in his external body, which is only a flash and which will be finished as soon as the time is designated. The whole atmosphere will change when the living entity has to transmigrate from one body to another. Under the spell of maya, he will again be satisfied in a different atmosphere. This spell of maya is called avaranatmika sakti because it is so strong that the living entity is satisfied in any abominable condition. Even if he is born as a worm living within the intestine or abdomen in the midst of urine and stool. still he is satisfied. This is the covering influence of maya. But the human form of life is a chance to understand, and if one misses this opportunity, he is most unfortunate. The way to get out of illusory maya is to engage in the topics of Krsna... The International Society for Krishna Consciousness is operating for this purpose. We do not ask anyone to first change his position and then come to us. Instead we invite everyone to come with us and simply chant Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama Rama Rama, Hare Hare, because we know that if one simply chants and hears the topics of Krsna, one's life will change; he will see a new light, and his life will be successful.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.7.44

Chanting of the holy name is sufficient in itself for achieving liberation:

[Yamaraja to the Yamadutas]: ~My dear servants, who are as good as my sons, just see how glorious is the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The greatly sinful Ajamila chanted only to call his son, not knowing that he was chanting the Lord's holy name. Nevertheless, by chanting the holy name of the Lord, he remembered Narayana, and thus he was immediately saved from the ropes of death. Therefore it should be understood that one is easily relieved from all sinful reactions by chanting the holy name of the Lord and chanting of His qualities and activities. This is the only process recommended for relief from sinful reactions. Even if one chants the holy name of the Lord with improper pronunciation, he will achieve relief from material bondage if he chants without offenses. Ajamila, for

example, was extremely sinful, but while dying he merely chanted the holy name, and although calling his son, he achieved complete liberation because he remembered the name of Narayana.

In the assembly of Raghunatha dasa Gosvami's father, Haridasa thakura confirmed that simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord one is liberated, even if he does not chant completely inoffensively. Smarta–brahmanas and Mayavadis do not believe that one can achieve liberation in this way, but the truth of Haridasa thakura's statement is supported by many quotations from Srimad–Bhagavatam.

In his commentary on this verse, for example, Sridhara Svami gives the following quotation:

sayam pratar grnan bhaktya
duhkha–gramad vimucyate

"If one always chants the holy name of the Lord with great devotion in the evening and in the morning, one can become free from all material miseries." Another quotation confirms that one can achieve liberation if one hears the holy name of the Lord constantly, every day with great respect (anudinam idam adarena srnvan)... Furthermore, he quotes from Bhagavatam (6.3.31):

tasmat sankirtanam visnor
jagan–mangalam amhasam
mahatam api kauravya
viddhy aikantika–niskrtam

All these quotations prove that one who constantly engages in chanting and hearing of the holy activities, name, fame and form of the Lord is liberated. As stated wonderfully in this verse, etavatalam agha–nirharanaya pumsam: simply by uttering the name of the Lord, one is freed from all sinful reactions.

The word alam, which is used in this verse, indicates that simply uttering the holy name of the Lord is sufficient. This word is used with different imports. As stated in the Amara–kosa, the most authorized dictionary in the Sanskrit language, alam bhusana–paryapti–sakti–varana–vacakam: the word alam is used to mean "ornament," "sufficiency," "power" and "restraint." Here the word alam is used to indicate that there is no need of any other process, for the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is sufficient. Even if one chants imperfectly, one becomes free from all sinful reactions by chanting.

This power of chanting the holy name was proved by the liberation of Ajamila. When Ajamila chanted the holy name of Narayana, he did not precisely remember the Supreme Lord; instead, he remembered his own son. At the time of death, Ajamila certainly was not very clean; indeed, he was famous as a great sinner. Furthermore, one's physiological condition is completely disturbed at the time of death, and in such an awkward condition it would certainly have been very difficult for Ajamila to have chanted clearly. Nevertheless, Ajamila achieved liberation simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord. Therefore, what is to be said of those who are not sinful as Ajamila? It is to be concluded that with a strong vow one should chant the holy name of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—for thus one will certainly be delivered from the clutches of maya by the grace of Krsna.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.3.23–24

Even a faint light from the holy name brings liberation:

[Haridasa thakura to Lord Caitanya]:~ "Even a faint light from the holy name of the Lord can eradicate all the reactions of sinful life... Because of even the faintest rays of the effulgence of the Lord's holy name, one can attain liberation. We can see this in all the revealed scriptures."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.63, 65

To establish ourselves on the spiritual platform, beyond the modes of nature, we must chant the maha-mantra:

Sri Krsna encourages us to transcend the bodily conception of existence and attain to our actual spiritual life.

gunan etan atitya trin
dehi deha-samudbhavan
janma-mrtyu-jara-dukhair
vimukto 'mrtam asnute

"When the embodied being is able to transcend these three modes [goodness, passion, and ignorance], he can become free from birth, death, old age, and their distresses and can enjoy nectar even in this life." (Bg. 14.20)

To establish ourselves on the pure brahma–bhuta spiritual platform, above the three modes, we must take up the method of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The gift of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the chanting of the names of Kṛṣṇa–Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare–facilitates this process. This method is called bhakti–yoga or mantra–yoga, and it is employed by the highest transcendentalists.

~Beyond Birth and Death

By constantly chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, one remains in a liberated position, even within this material world:

[The demigods to Lord Kṛṣṇa in the womb of Devaki]:

Even while engaged in various activities, devotees whose minds are completely absorbed at Your lotus feet, and who constantly hear, chant, contemplate and cause others to remember Your transcendental names and forms, are always on the transcendental platform, and thus they can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

How bhakti–yoga can be practiced is explained in this verse. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that anyone who has dedicated his life to the service of the Lord (iha yasya harer dasye) by his activities, his mind and his words (karmana manasa gira) may stay in any condition of life (nikhilasv apy avasthasu) and yet is no longer actually conditioned but is liberated (jivan–muktah sa ucyate). Even though such a devotee is in a material body, he has nothing to do with this body, for he is transcendently situated. Narayana–parah sarve na kutascana bibhyati: because a devotee is engaged in transcendental activities, he is not afraid of being materially embodied. (S.B. 6.17.28) illustrating this liberated position, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, mama janmani janmanisvare bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki tvayi: "All I want is Your causeless devotional service in My life, birth after birth." (Siksastaka 4) Even if a devotee, by the supreme will of the Lord, takes birth in this material world, he continues his devotional service. When King Bharata made a mistake and in his next life became a deer, his devotional service did not stop, although some slight chastisement was given to him because of his negligence. Narada Muni says that even if one falls from the platform of devotional service, he is not lost, whereas nondevotees are lost entirely because they are not engaged in service. Bhagavad–gīta (9.14) therefore recommends that one always engage at least in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra:

satatam kirtayanto mam
yatantas ca drdha–vratah
namasyantas ca mam bhaktya
nitya–yukta upasate

"Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, the great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.2.37

Even if one chants the holy name imperfectly, he still easily attains liberation:

[A disciple of Prakasananda Sarasvati to an assembly of disciples]: "In this age of Kali, one cannot attain liberation without taking to the devotional service of the Lord. In this age, even if one does not chant the holy name of Krsna perfectly, he still attains liberation very easily."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.30

By chanting the holy name, one is liberated and attains love of Godhead:

As a result of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one makes such great advancement in spiritual life that simultaneously his material existence terminates and he receives love of Godhead. The holy name of Krsna is so powerful that by chanting even one name, one very easily achieves these transcendental riches.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 8.28

In spite of enjoying material facilities, people can be liberated in this very life by chanting the holy name:

[Maitreya to Vidura]:

Thus Svayambhuva Manu was a saintly king. Although absorbed in material happiness, he was not dragged to the lowest grade of life, for he always enjoyed his material happiness in a Krsna conscious atmosphere.

The kingly happiness of material enjoyment generally drags one to the lowest grade of life, namely degradation to animal life, because of unrestricted sense enjoyment. But Svayambhuva Manu was considered as good as a saintly sage because the atmosphere created in his kingdom and home was completely Krsna conscious. The case is similar with the conditioned souls in general; they have come into this material life for sense gratification, but if they are able to create a Krsna conscious atmosphere, as depicted here or as prescribed in revealed scriptures, by temple worship and household Deity worship,

then in spite of their material enjoyment they can make advancement in pure Krsna consciousness without a doubt. At the present moment, modern civilization is too much attached to the material way of life, or sense gratification. Therefore, the Krsna consciousness movement can give the people in general the best opportunity to utilize their human life in the midst of material enjoyment. Krsna consciousness does not stop them in their propensity for material enjoyment, but simply regulates their habits in the life of sense enjoyment. In spite of their enjoying the material advantages, they can be liberated in this very life by practicing Krsna consciousness by the simple method of chanting the holy names of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 3.22.34

To get freedom from death one should invite Yamaraja to kirtana of the holy name:

[Saunaka Rsi to Suta Gosvami]:

O Suta Gosvami, there are those amongst men who desire freedom from death and get eternal life. They escape the slaughtering process by calling the controller of death, Yamaraja.

The living entity, as he develops from lower animal life to a higher human being and gradually to higher intelligence, becomes anxious to get free from the clutches of death. Modern scientists try to avoid death by physiochemical advancement of knowledge, but alas, the controller of death, Yamaraja, is so cruel that he does not spare even the very life of the scientist himself. The scientist, who puts forward the theory of stopping death by advancement of scientific knowledge, becomes himself a victim of death when he is called by Yamaraja. What to speak of stopping death, no one can enhance the short period of life even by a fraction of a moment. The only hope of suspending the cruel slaughtering process of Yamaraja is to call him to hear and chant the holy name of the Lord. Yamaraja is a great devotee of the Lord, and he likes to be invited to kirtanas and sacrifices by the pure devotees, who are constantly engaged in the devotional service of the Lord. Thus the great sages, headed by Saunaka and others, invited Yamaraja to attend the sacrifice performed at Naimisaranya. This was good for those who did not want to die.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.16.17

Mayavadis cannot tolerate scriptural statements indicating the ease of attaining liberation through pure chanting of the holy name:

At the house of Hiranya and Govardhana Majumadara, a person named Gopala Cakravarti was officially the chief tax collector. This Gopala Cakravarti lived in Bengal. His duty as chief tax collector was to collect 1,200,000 coins to deposit in the treasury of the emperor. He had handsome bodily features, and he was learned and youthful, but he could not tolerate the statement that simply by glimpsing the awakening of the Lord's holy name one can attain liberation. This young man, Gopala Cakravarti, became very angry upon hearing the statements of Haridasa thakura. He immediately criticized him. "O assembly of learned scholars," he said, "just hear the conclusion of the emotional devotee. After many millions upon millions of births, when one is complete in absolute knowledge, one still may not attain liberation, yet this man says that one may attain it simply by the awakening of a glimpse of the holy name." Haridasa thakura said, "Why are you doubtful? The revealed scriptures say that one can attain liberation simply by a glimpse of offenseless chanting of the holy name. For a devotee who enjoys the transcendental bliss of devotional service, liberation is most insignificant. Therefore pure devotees never desire to achieve liberation. 'My dear Lord, O master of the universe, since I have directly seen You, my transcendental bliss has taken the shape of a great ocean. Being situated in that ocean, I now realize all other so-called happiness, including even brahmananda, to be like the water contained in the hoofprint of a calf.'" Gopala Cakravarti said, "If one is not liberated by namabhasa, then you may be certain that I shall cut off your nose." Then Haridasa thakura accepted the challenge offered by Gopala Cakravarti. "If by namabhasa liberation is not available," he said, "certainly I shall cut off my nose." All the members of the assembly who had heard the challenge were greatly agitated, and they got up, making a tumultuous sound. Hiranya and Govardhana Majumadara both immediately chastised the brahmana tax collector. The priest named Balarama Acarya chastised Gopala Cakravarti. "You are a foolish logician," he said. "What do you know about the devotional service of the Lord? You have insulted Haridasa thakura. Thus there will be a dangerous position for you. You should not expect anything auspicious." Then Haridasa thakura got up to leave, and the Majumadaras, the masters of Gopala Cakravarti, immediately dismissed Gopala Cakravarti from their service. With all the members of the assembly, the two Majumadaras fell at the lotus feet of Haridasa thakura. Haridasa thakura was smiling, however, and he spoke in a sweet voice. "None of you are at fault," he said. "Indeed, even this ignorant so-called brahmana is not at fault, for he is accustomed to dry speculation and logic. One cannot understand the glories of the holy name simply by logic and argument. Therefore this man cannot possibly understand the glories of the holy name."

Vaisnavas strictly follow the directions of the sastras regarding how one can be liberated simply by a slight awakening of pure chanting of the holy name. Mayavadis cannot tolerate the statements of the sastras about how easily liberation can be achieved, for as stated in Bhagavad-gita, kleso 'dhikataras tesam avyaktasakta-cetasam: [Bg. 12.5] impersonalists

must work hard for many, many births, and only then will they perhaps be liberated. Vaisnavas know that simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord offenselessly, one achieves liberation as a by-product. Thus there is no need to endeavor separately for liberation. Srila Bilvamangala thakura has said, muktih svayam mukulitanjali sevate 'sman: liberation stands at one's door, ready to render any kind of service, if one is a pure devotee with unflinching faith and reverence. This the Mayavadis cannot tolerate. Therefore the arinda pradhana, chief tax collector, although very learned, handsome and youthful, could not tolerate the statements of Haridasa thakura.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.190-206

11.

By Chanting the Holy Name One Becomes Enlightened

The holy name frees one from false bodily identification

Chanting Hare Krsna frees one from the bodily concept of life:

[Ajamila said]: ~Simply because I chanted the holy name of the Lord in the association of devotees, my heart is now becoming purified. Therefore I shall not fall victim again to the false lures of material sense gratification. Now that I have become fixed in the Absolute Truth, henceforward I shall not identify myself with the body. I shall give up false conceptions of "I" and "mine" and fix my mind on the lotus feet of Krsna.

How a living entity becomes a victim of the material condition is lucidly explained in this verse. The beginning is to misidentify the body as one's self. Therefore Bhagavad-gita begins with the spiritual instruction that one is not the body, but is within the body. This consciousness can be possible only if one chants the holy name of Krsna, the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, and always keeps oneself in the association of devotees. This is the secret of success. Therefore we stress that one should chant the holy name of the Lord and keep oneself free from the contaminations of this material world, especially the contaminations of lusty desires for illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication and gambling. With determination, one should vow to follow these principles and thus be saved from the miserable condition of material existence. The first necessity is to become freed from the bodily concept of life.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.38

The chanting of the holy name cleanses the heart and frees one from misidentification of the body as the self:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's movement consists of spreading kṛṣṇa-sankīrtana. Param vijayate sri-kṛṣṇa-sankīrtanam: "All glories to the sri-kṛṣṇa-sankīrtana!" Why is it so glorious? That has also been explained by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Ceto-darpana-marjanam: [Cc. Antya 20.12] by the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra, one's heart is cleansed. The whole difficulty is that in this age of Kali there is no sattva-guṇa and no clearance of the heart, and therefore people are making the mistake of identifying with their bodies. Even the big philosophers and scientists with whom we deal are practically all under the impression that they are their bodies. The other day we were discussing a prominent philosopher, Thomas Huxley, who was proud of being an Englishman. This means that he was in the bodily conception of life. Everywhere we find this same misunderstanding. As soon as one is in the bodily conception of life, one is nothing but an animal like a cat or a dog (sa eva go-kharah [SB 10.84.13]). Thus the most dangerous of the dirty things within our hearts is this misidentification of the body as the self. Under the influence of this misunderstanding, one thinks, "I am this body. I am an Englishman. I am an Indian. I am an American. I am Hindu. I am Muslim." This misconception is the strongest impediment, and it must be removed... Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore says, ceto-darpana-marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]. To cleanse the core of the heart, which is full of misunderstanding, is possible only through sri-kṛṣṇa-sankīrtana. The leaders of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement should very seriously take this opportunity to be kind to the fallen souls by delivering them from the misunderstanding of materialistic life.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 8.5.23

By chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, one realizes that he is not the material body:

When we cleanse our heart we will realize that we do not belong to this material world. Because people are identifying with this material world, they are thinking, "I am an Indian, I am an Englishman, I am this, I am that." But if one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, he will realize that he is not this material body. "I do not belong to this material body or this material world. I am a spirit soul, part and parcel of the Supreme. I am eternally related with Him, and I have nothing to do with the material world." This is called liberation, knowledge. If I don't have anything to do with this material world, then I am liberated. And that knowledge is called brahma-bhūta.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Knowledge that we are not these bodies is made easily attainable through the process of chanting Hare Krsna:

We may be proud of our academic education, but if asked what we are, we are not able to say. Everyone is under the conception that this body is the self, but we learn from Vedic sources that this is not so. Only after realizing that we are not these bodies can we enter into real knowledge and understand what we actually are. This, then, is the beginning of knowledge... This kind of knowledge may not seem to be so easily attainable, but it is made very easy by the mercy of Krsna and Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu who made this knowledge easily available through the process of chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

Chanting Hare Krsna is part of the treatment to cure one of the bodily conception of life: Suppose you have a disease and you want to be cured. You have to follow the instructions of a physician. If he says, "Don't eat this; eat only this," you have to follow his prescription. Similarly, we also have a prescription for being cured of the bodily conception of life: Chanting Hare Krsna, hearing about Krsna's activities, and eating krsna-prasada. This treatment is the process of Krsna consciousness.

~The Science of Self-Realization

By chanting Hare Krsna one is freed from false identification with the body and thus freed from suffering:

As soon as one understands his identity, his relationship with God, then immediately he becomes happy. We are so full of miseries because we have identified ourselves with the material world. Therefore we are unhappy. Anxieties and fearfulness are due to our misidentifying with the material world. The other day I was explaining that one who identifies with this bag of bones and skin is like an animal. So by chanting Hare Krsna this misunderstanding will be cleansed. Cleansing of the heart means that one will understand that he does not belong to this material world. Aham brahmasmi: I am spirit soul. As long as one identifies oneself with England, with India, or with America, this is ignorance. Today you are an Englishman because you were born in England, but in your next life you may not take your birth in England; it may be in China or Russia or some other country. Or

you may not get this human form of body. Today you are a nationalist, you are a very great follower of your country, but tomorrow if you stay in your country you may be a cow being taken to the slaughterhouse.

~The Science of Self-Realization

The effect of chanting the holy name is to become free from false egoism:

The effect of chanting the holy name of the Lord is perceived by the chanter as liberation from the conception of false egoism. False egoism is exhibited by thinking oneself to be the enjoyer of the world and thinking everything in the world to be meant for the enjoyment of one's self only. The whole materialistic world is moving under such false egoism of "I" and "mine," but the factual effect of chanting the holy name is to become free from such misconceptions.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.11

The devotee constantly chants Hare Krsna and remains aloof from the material body:

A devotee is not hampered by the material body, although he is situated in a physical body that runs according to so many material conditions, just as there are five kinds of air functioning within the body, and so many organs—the hands, legs, tongue, genitals, rectum, etc.—all working differently. The spirit soul, the living entity, who is in full knowledge of his position is always engaged in chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare and is not concerned with the bodily functions... As far as the material body is concerned, there are six "waves," or symptomatic material conditions: hunger, thirst, lamentation, bewilderment, old age and death. The liberated soul is never concerned with these six physical interactions.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.17.29

By chanting the holy name, one comes directly to the spiritual platform and realizes his spiritual identity:

Mr. Faill: Do you think the great mystics down through the ages have actually seen the spiritual spark you mentioned earlier?

Srila Prabhupada: What do you mean by "mystic"?

Mr. Faill: It's just a name given to people who have had an experience of another level of reality.

Srila Prabhupada: We don't use the word mystic. Our reality is God realization, which occurs when we come to the spiritual platform. As long as we have a bodily concept of life, our understanding is sense gratification, because the body is made of senses. When we progress from the bodily platform and we see the mind as the center of sense activity, we take the mind as the final stage of realization. That is the mental platform. From the mental platform we may come to the intellectual platform, and from the intellectual platform we can rise to the transcendental platform. Finally we can rise above even the transcendental platform and come to the mature, spiritual platform. These are the stages of God realization. However, in this age, because people are so fallen, the sastras [scriptures] give the special recommendation that people come directly to the spiritual platform by chanting the holy names of God: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. If we cultivate this practice on the spiritual platform, then immediately we can realize our spiritual identity. Then the process of God realization becomes successful very quickly.

~The Science of Self-Realization

The Holy Name dispels the illusion of maya

The medicine to awaken all living entities from the sleeping condition of material existence is the holy name:

The conditioned soul is actually sleeping on the lap of the illusory energy. Bhaktivinoda thakura has sung, *kota nidra jao maya-pisacira kole*: "O living entity, how long will you sleep in this condition on the lap of the illusory energy?" People do not understand that they are actually sleeping in this material world, being devoid of knowledge of spiritual life.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore says:

enechi ausadhi maya nasibaro lagi'
hari-nama-maha-mantra lao tumi magi'

"I have brought medicine to awaken every living being from perpetual sleep. Please receive the holy name of the Lord, the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, and awaken "

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.13.9

Even a slight appearance of the holy name drives away ignorance due to sin:

"O reservoir of all good qualities, just worship Sri Krsna, the purifier of all purifiers, the most exalted of the personalities worshiped by choice poetry. Worship Him with a faithful, unflinching mind, without duplicity and in a highly elevated manner. Thus worship the Lord, whose name is like the sun, for just as a slight appearance of the sun dissipates the darkness of night, so a slight appearance of the holy name of Krsna can drive away all the darkness of ignorance that arises in the heart due to greatly sinful activities performed in previous lives."

~Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (2.1.103)

~[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.62]

Lord Caitanya introduced the chanting of the holy name to dispel the illusion of maya:

[Lord Caitanya]:

"Therefore I order every man within this universe to accept this Krsna consciousness movement and distribute it everywhere."

In this connection there is a song sung by Srila Bhaktivinoda thakura:

enechi ausadhi maya nasibaro lagi'
hari-nama-maha-mantra lao tumi magi'

bhaktivinoda prabhu-carane pa
se harinama-mantra la-ila magiya

The sankirtana movement has been introduced by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu just to dispel the illusion of maya, by which everyone in this material world thinks himself to be a product of matter and therefore to have many duties pertaining to the body. Actually, the living entity is not his material body; he is a spirit soul. He has a spiritual need to be eternally blissful and full of knowledge, but unfortunately he identifies himself with the body, sometimes as a human being, sometimes as an animal, sometimes a tree, sometimes an aquatic, sometimes a demigod, and so on. Thus with each change of body he develops a different type of consciousness with different types of activities and thus becomes increasingly entangled in material existence, transmigrating perpetually from one body to another. Under the spell of maya, or illusion, he does not consider the past or future but is simply satisfied with the short life span that he has gotten for the present. To eradicate this illusion, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has brought the sankirtana movement, and He requests everyone to accept and distribute it. A person who is actually a follower of Sri Bhaktivinoda thakura must immediately accept the request of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu

by offering respectful obeisances unto His lotus feet and thus beg from Him the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. If one is fortunate enough to beg from the Lord this Hare Krsna maha-mantra, his life is successful.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 9.36

The holy name rises within one's heart like a powerful sun and dissipates the darkness of ignorance:

Vidura, while trying to detach his elder brother, Dhrtarastra, from his familial attachments, said, "My dear brother, you just fix your mind on the lotus feet of Krsna, who is worshiped with beautiful, erudite verses by great sages and saintly persons. Krsna is the supreme deliverer among all deliverers. Undoubtedly there are great demigods like Lord Siva and Lord Brahma, but their positions as deliverers depend always upon the mercy of Krsna." Therefore Vidura advised his elder brother, Dhrtarastra, to concentrate his mind and worship only Krsna. If one simply chants the holy name of Krsna, this holy name will rise within one's heart like the powerful sun and will immediately dissipate all the darkness of ignorance. Vidura advised Dhrtarastra to therefore think always of Krsna, so that the volumes of contaminations due to sinful activities would be washed off immediately.

~The Nectar of Devotion

The devotees are protected from the actions and reactions of material nature by taking shelter of the holy name:

[The demigods to Lord Krsna in the womb]

"The action and reaction of the external energy of material nature (creation, maintenance and annihilation) are being carried on automatically. But simply by taking shelter of Your holy name—because Your holy name and Your personality are nondifferent—the devotees are sufficiently protected."

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Constant chanting of the maha-mantra keeps one aloof from maya:

As it is stated in the Bhagavad-gita, *mam eva ye prapadyante mayam etam taranti te* [Bg. 7.14]. Without Narayana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, no one is able to overcome the action of the illusory energy. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has also given us a nice weapon for this age, as stated in the Bhagavatam: *sangopangastra*—in this age, the *narayanastra*, or

weapon to drive away maya, is the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra in pursuance of the associates of Lord Caitanya, such as Advaita Prabhu, Nityananda, Gadadhara and Srivasa...

Krsna is like the sun, and maya, or the illusory energy of Krsna, is like darkness. Darkness means absence of light; similarly, maya means absence of Krsna consciousness. Krsna consciousness and maya are always there, side by side. As soon as there is awakening of Krsna consciousness, all the illusory pains and pleasures of material existence are vanquished. *Mayam etam taranti te*: [Bg. 7.14] constant chanting of the maha-mantra will keep us always aloof from the illusory energy of maya.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.11.1-2

By chanting, one is freed from the darkness of maya and becomes fully enlightened: *Niharam iva bhaskarah*. *Bhaskarah* refers to the sun. The sun immediately dissipates mist or fog as well as darkness. As stated before, we should try to make the sun of Krsna rise within our hearts. In the *Caitanya-caritamrta* also it is stated that Krsna is like the sun and that maya, the illusory energy, is darkness. *Yahan krsna, tahan nahi mayara adhikara*: as soon as the sun of Krsna is present, the darkness of maya immediately disappears. Without following this process, it is very difficult to overcome the ocean of darkness, maya. If we simply teach people to surrender unto Krsna, God, all the fog and mist of illusion will disappear. The method is very simple: chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

The more one goes on chanting, the more the darkness of many lives is dissipated. *Ceto-darpana-marjanam*: [Cc. Antya 20.12] by chanting, one can cleanse the dust from the mirror of his mind and perceive things very distinctly. Thus one will know what he is, what God is, what this world is, what our relationship with God in this world is, how to live in this world, and what our next life is.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Matchless Gift

The holy name enlightens one with Perfect, transcendental knowledge

By vibrating the transcendental sound of the Hare Krsna mantra, the meaning of everything, both material and spiritual, is revealed:

[Lord Siva to Lord Visnu]:

My dear Lord, by expanding Your transcendental vibrations, You reveal the actual meaning

of everything... I therefore offer my respectful obeisances again and again unto You.

Vedic evidence is called sabda–brahma. There are many things which are beyond the perception of our imperfect senses, yet the authoritative evidence of sound vibration is perfect. The Vedas are known as sabda–brahma because evidence taken from the Vedas constitutes the ultimate understanding. This is because sabda–brahma, or the Vedas, represents the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, the real essence of sabda–brahma is the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra. By vibrating this transcendental sound, the meaning of everything, both material and spiritual, is revealed. This Hare Krsna is non–different from the Personality of Godhead. The meaning of everything is received through the air through sound vibration. The vibration may be material or spiritual, but without sound vibration no one can understand the meaning of anything... Lord Siva is therefore praying to the Personality of Godhead to be kind to us so that simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra we can understand everything in both the material and spiritual worlds.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.24.40

By chanting the maha–mantra, one will understand Krsna, and thus everything will be understood:

Simply by chanting, one can have self–realization, God realization, and when there is God realization, then nature realization is included also. For example, if one learns one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and zero, then he has studied the entirety of mathematics because mathematics means simply changing the places of these ten figures. That's all. Similarly, if one simply studies Krsna, then all his knowledge is perfect. And Krsna is easily understood simply by chanting this mantra, Hare Krsna. So why not take this opportunity?

~The Science of Self–Realization

All knowledge is revealed by the chanting of Hare Krsna:

We cannot doubt that the transcendental is there. Bhagavad–gita is being spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself; therefore we should not doubt His word. The only problem is feeling and understanding what He is telling us. That understanding must be developed gradually, and that knowledge will be revealed by the chanting of Hare Krsna. By this simple process, we can come to understand the spiritual kingdom, the self, the material world, God, the nature of our conditioning, liberation from material bondage, and

everything else. This is called ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12], cleaning the dusty mirror of the impure mind.

~The Path of Perfection

By chanting, the heart is cleansed and one can understand transcendental knowledge: Krsna says in the Bhagavad–gita, "Maya, this external energy, is very, very strong. No one can surpass it. It is almost impossible." Then how can one get free from this material nature? Krsna says, "Simply by surrendering unto Me one can get relief from the onslaught of material nature." That is a fact. So we have to cleanse the heart to learn what is our relationship with God.

In the Katha Upanisad it is stated, nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam. The Supreme Absolute Personality of Godhead, or the Absolute Truth, is eternal. God is eternal, and we are also eternal. But the Vedas indicate that He is the supreme living creature. He is not dead. If He is not living, how is this world working? In the Bhagavad–gita Krsna says, "Under My supervision things are going on." In the Bible also it is said, "God created." That is a fact. Not that at one time there was a chunk and then this happened and then that. No. The Vedas tell us the actual facts, but we have to open our eyes to see. Ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]. That is the process of cleansing our hearts. When we cleanse our hearts, then we will be able to understand what Krsna and the Vedas say.

~The Science of Self–Realization

By chanting Hare Krsna, one becomes enlightened with spiritual understanding: When you can understand Krsna's and your own position in a nice analytical way, then at once you become free from sinful reactions. This process will help you. Chant Hare Krsna and cleanse your mind, and you will receive the message. One has to be qualified. If you chant and hear, for no payment, you will approach God. All things will become clear and illuminated.

~The Path of Perfection

Chanting cleanses the mind and enables us to clearly see our constitutional position: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama,

Hare Hare. This is transcendental sound vibration. It will help us to cleanse the dust from the mirror of the mind. At the present moment we have accumulated so much material dust on the mirror of the mind just as on Second Avenue (New York City) there is dust and soot over everything due to the heavy traffic. Due to our manipulation of material activities, a great deal of dust has collected over our mind's clear mirror, and as a consequence we are unable to see things in perspective. This vibration of transcendental sound (the Hare Krsna mantra) will cleanse away this dust and enable us to see clearly our real constitutional position. As soon as we come to understand "I am not this body; I am spirit soul, and my symptom is consciousness," we will be able to establish ourselves in real happiness.

~On the Way to Krsna

By chanting Krsna's names, we associate with Him and He enlightens us from within: Everyone wants to see God immediately, but we can see God when we are qualified and in perfect knowledge. We can see God eye to eye, just as we are seeing one another, but qualification is required, and that qualification is Krsna consciousness. Krsna consciousness begins with sravana, hearing about Krsna through Bhagavad-gita and other Vedic literatures, and kirtana, repeating what we've heard and glorifying Krsna by chanting His names. By chanting and hearing of Krsna we can actually associate with Him, for He is absolute and nondifferent from His names, qualities, forms and pastimes. As we associate with Krsna, He helps us to understand Him and dispels the darkness of ignorance with the light of knowledge. Krsna is sitting within our hearts acting as guru. When we begin hearing topics about Him, the dust which has accumulated on our minds due to so many years of material contamination becomes gradually cleaned. Krsna is a friend to everyone, but He is a special friend to His devotees. As soon as we become a little inclined toward Him, He begins to give favorable instructions from within our hearts so that we can gradually make progress.

~Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

Perfect knowledge (and thus perfect activities) is derived from chanting the maha-mantra: Cetah means "knowledge." Without perfect knowledge, one cannot act perfectly. The real source of knowledge is the vacah, or sound vibration, given by Vedic instructions. Here the word vacah, or vibration, means the Vedic vibration. The origin of creation is sound vibration, and if the sound vibration is clear and purified, perfect knowledge and perfect activities actually become manifest. This is enacted by the chanting of the maha-mantra, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama,

Hare Hare.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.24.43

Chanting Hare Krsna is the easiest process for purifying the intelligence and understanding spiritual knowledge:

Mike Robinson: What about the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna...

Srila Prabhupada: Chanting Hare Krsna is the easiest process by which to become purified, especially in this age, when people are so dull that they cannot very easily understand spiritual knowledge. If one chants Hare Krsna, then his intelligence becomes purified, and he can understand spiritual things.

~The Science of Self-Realization

12.

If One Chants His Holy Name, Krsna Becomes Pleased and Obligated Krsna is pleased when one chants His holy name:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead exists everywhere (andantara- stha-paramanu-cayantara- stham). Therefore when one chants His transcendental names-Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare-the Supreme Personality of Godhead is automatically pleased by such sankirtana. It is not that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is absent; He is present there. And when a devotee utters the transcendental name, it is not a material sound. Therefore, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is naturally pleased. A devotee knows that the Lord is present everywhere and that one can please Him simply by chanting His holy name.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 8.17.24

Anyone who addresses the Lord by chanting His holy name attracts His attention and obligates Him:

Any person who is conscious of his friend's beneficent activities and never forgets his service is called grateful. In the Mahabharata, Krsna says, "When I was away from Draupadi, she cried with the words, 'He Govinda!' This call for Me has put Me in her debt, and that indebtedness is gradually increasing in My heart." This statement by Krsna gives evidence of how one can please the Supreme Lord simply by addressing Him: "He Krsna! He Govinda!"

The maha-mantra (Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare) is also simply an address to the Lord and His energy. So to anyone who is constantly engaged in addressing the Lord and His energy, we can imagine how much the Supreme Lord is obliged. It is impossible for the Lord to ever forget such a devotee. It is clearly stated in this verse that anyone who addresses the Lord immediately attracts the attention of the Lord, who always remains obliged to him.

~The Nectar of Devotion

13.

Krsna Helps the Sincere Chanter

If Krsna sees that one is chanting Hare Krsna sincerely, He helps internally and externally: We should try to avoid the ten offenses in chanting the holy name, but anyone who chants Hare Krsna sincerely is purified. Ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam [Cc. Antya 20.12] (Siksastaka 1). This is the easiest process by which the mirror of the mind can be cleansed. If Krsna sees that someone is sincerely chanting Hare Krsna, He will help. He is within everyone, and He can understand whether one is sincere or not. Krsna helps a sincere devotee internally and externally.

Internally He helps as Paramatma by giving intelligence from within. Dadami buddhi-yogam tam. Externally He helps as His representative, the spiritual master.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

Revival of love of God does not depend on mechanical hearing and chanting, but on the Lord's causeless mercy:

[Devotional service] is a great transcendental science and begins with the process of hearing

and chanting the name, fame, glory, etc., of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Revival of the dormant affection or love of Godhead does not depend on the mechanical system of hearing and chanting, but it solely and wholly depends on the causeless mercy of the Lord. When the Lord is fully satisfied with the sincere efforts of the devotee, He may endow him with His loving transcendental service.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam

14.

By Chanting His Holy Name, One Can Remember Krsna

To always remember Krsna and never forget Him is possible by constantly chanting the holy name:

"Krsna is the origin of Lord Visnu. He should always be remembered and never forgotten at any time. All the rules and regulations mentioned in the sastras should be the servants of these two principles."

This verse is a quotation from the Padma Purana. There are many regulative principles in the sastras and directions given by the spiritual master. These regulative principles should act as servants of the basic principle—that is, one should always remember Krsna and never forget Him. This is possible when one chants the Hare Krsna mantra. Therefore one must strictly chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra twenty-four hours daily.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 22.113

Those who are intelligent ... are not concerned with the four-fold miseries of material life, but with elevation to the spiritual planets. One who is continuously in trance (nitya-yuktasya yoginah) does not divert his attention to anything else. He is always situated in trance. His mind is always filled with the thought of Krsna, without deviation (ananya-cetah satatam). Satatam refers to anywhere and anytime.

In India I lived in Vrndavana, and now I am in America, but this does not mean that I am out of Vrndavana, because if I think of Krsna always, then I'm always in Vrndavana, regardless of the material designation. Krsna consciousness means that one always lives with Krsna on that spiritual planet, Goloka Vrndavana, and that one is simply waiting to give up this material body. Smarati nityasah means "continuously remembering," and for

one who is continuously remembering Kṛṣṇa, the Lord becomes tasyaham sulabhah—easily purchased. Kṛṣṇa Himself says that He is easily purchased by this bhakti–yoga process. Then why should we take to any other process? We can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare twenty–four hours daily. There are no rules and regulations. One can chant in the street, in the subway, or at his home or office. There is no tax and no expense. So why not take to it?

~Beyond Birth and Death

"The first–class yogi is he who always thinks of Me." One should always remember that Kṛṣṇa is within his heart and think of Him. This is the proper system of meditation. If we always chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, we will always remember Kṛṣṇa, and immediately the form of Kṛṣṇa will be awakened within our hearts. The process of always thinking of Kṛṣṇa is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The first–class yogi is he who is always conscious of Kṛṣṇa. One can be conscious of Kṛṣṇa by hearing about Him submissively.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

One can remember the Lord in constant devotion by the great blessing of the process of chanting the maha–mantra:

[Lord Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna]:

For one who remembers Me without deviation, I am easy to obtain, O son of Prtha, because of his constant engagement in devotional service.

Bhakti–yoga is very simple and pure and easy to perform. One can begin by simply chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is very merciful to those who engage in His service, and He helps in various ways that devotee who is fully surrendered to Him so he can understand Him as He is. The Lord gives such a devotee sufficient intelligence so that ultimately the devotee can attain Him in His spiritual kingdom.

The special qualification of the pure devotee is that he is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa without considering the time or place. There should be no impediments. He should be able to carry out his service anywhere and at any time... A pure devotee constantly remembers Kṛṣṇa and meditates upon Him. These are qualifications of the pure devotee for whom the Lord is most easily attainable... The pure devotee is always constantly engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Supreme Lord and cannot forget the Supreme Lord, and so for him the Lord is easily attained. A pure devotee cannot forget the Supreme Lord for a moment, and similarly, the Supreme Lord cannot forget His pure devotee for a moment.

This is the great blessing of the Kṛṣṇa conscious process of chanting the maha–mantra, Hare Kṛṣṇa.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 8.14

Lord Caitanya says that one can practice remembering Kṛṣṇa by chanting His names always:

[Kṛṣṇa] does not advise Arjuna to simply remember Him and give up his occupation. No, the Lord never suggests anything impractical. In this material world, in order to maintain the body one has to work... The Lord therefore tells Arjuna that he need not give up his occupation, but while he is engaged in his occupation he should remember Kṛṣṇa. If he doesn't practice remembering Kṛṣṇa while he is struggling for existence, then it will not be possible for him to remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death. Lord Caitanya also advises this. He says that one should practice remembering the Lord by chanting the names of the Lord always. The names of the Lord and the Lord are nondifferent. So Lord Kṛṣṇa's instruction to Arjuna to "remember Me" and Lord Caitanya's injunction to always "chant the names of Lord Kṛṣṇa" are the same instruction. There is no difference, because Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's name are nondifferent. In the absolute status there is no difference between reference and referent. Therefore we have to practice remembering the Lord always, twenty–four hours a day, by chanting His names and molding our life's activities in such a way that we can remember Him always.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is Intro

Hearing and chanting of the holy name in the process of kṛṣṇa–smarana:

The essence of all advice is that one should utilize one's full time–twenty–four hours a day–in nicely chanting and remembering the Lord's divine name, transcendental form, qualities and eternal pastimes, thereby gradually engaging one's tongue and mind.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura has commented as follows upon this verse: "...In the neophyte stage one should always engage in hearing kṛṣṇa–katha. This is called sravana–dasa, the stage of hearing. By constantly hearing the transcendental holy name of Kṛṣṇa and hearing of His transcendental form, qualities and pastimes, one can attain to the stage of acceptance called varana–dasa. When one attains this stage, he becomes attached to the hearing of kṛṣṇa–katha. When one is able to chant in ecstasy, he attains the stage of smaranavastha, the stage of remembering. Recollection, absorption, meditation, constant remembrance and trance are the five items of progressive kṛṣṇa–smarana. At first,

remembrance of Krsna may be interrupted at intervals, but later remembrance proceeds uninterrupted. When remembrance is uninterrupted, it becomes concentrated and is called meditation. When meditation expands and becomes constant, it is called anusmrti. By uninterrupted and unceasing anusmrti one enters the stage of samadhi, or spiritual trance. After smarana–dasa or samadhi has fully developed, the soul comes to understand his original constitutional position. At that time he can perfectly and clearly understand his eternal relationship with Krsna. That is called sampatti–dasa, the perfection of life."

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 8

When one is perfect in chanting and hearing, he will always remember Krsna: The more one chants the names of Krsna, the more he becomes attached. Thus service by sravana and kirtana, hearing and chanting about Krsna, is the beginning. The next process is smarana–always remembering Krsna. When one is perfect in chanting and hearing, he will always remember Krsna. In this third stage, he becomes the greatest yogi.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Matchless Gift

By constantly chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, one can be fully in Krsna consciousness and perfect his life:

The example of the gopis is very instructive to persons who are trying to be absorbed in Krsna consciousness. One can very easily associate with Krsna simply by remembering His transcendental pastimes. Everyone has a tendency to love someone. That Krsna should be the object of love is the central point of Krsna consciousness. By constantly chanting the Hare Krsna mantra and remembering the transcendental pastimes of Krsna, one can be fully in Krsna consciousness and thus make his life sublime and fruitful.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

While chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, one is reminded of the Lord's activities:

A devotee always thinks of the Lord continuously. While chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, the words Krsna and Hare immediately remind him of all the Lord's activities.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.1.6

15.

By Chanting, One Associates with the Lord Directly

We can associate with Krsna through His vibrational presence:

Some people complain that when they pray to God they do not feel His presence. We should know that this is due to our incapacities, not God's. There are two conceptions of presence—the physical conception and the vibrational conception. The physical conception is temporary, whereas the vibrational conception is eternal. When we enjoy or relish the vibration of Krsna's teachings in Bhagavad-gita, or when we chant Hare Krsna, we should know that by those vibrations He is immediately present. He is absolute, and because of this His vibration is just as important as His physical presence. When we feel separation from Krsna or the spiritual master, we should just try to remember their words of instructions, and we will no longer feel that separation. Such association with Krsna and the spiritual master should be association by vibration, not physical presence. That is real association. We put so much stress on seeing, but when Krsna was present on this earth, so many people saw Him and did not realize that He is God; so what is the advantage of seeing? By seeing Krsna, we will not understand Him, but by listening carefully to His teachings, we can come to the platform of understanding. We can touch Krsna immediately by sound vibration; therefore we should give more stress to the sound vibration of Krsna and of the spiritual master—then we'll feel happy and won't feel separation.

—Elevation to Krsna Consciousness

The devotee associates with the Lord through His sacred representation, the holy name: Sound is the representation of the actual object, as the sound produced speaking of the object gives an idea of the description of the object. Therefore sound is the subtle characteristic of the object. Similarly, sound representation of the Lord, in terms of His characteristics, is the complete form of the Lord, as was seen by Vasudeva and Maharaja Dasaratha, the fathers of Lord Krsna and Lord Rama. The sound representation of the Lord is nondifferent from the Lord Himself because the Lord and His representation in sound are absolute knowledge. Lord Caitanya has instructed us that in the holy name of the Lord, as sound representation of the Lord, all the potencies of the Lord are invested. Thus one can immediately enjoy the association of the Lord by the pure vibration of the sound representation of His holy name, and the concept of the Lord is immediately manifested before the pure devotee. A pure devotee, therefore, is not aloof from the Lord even for a

moment. The holy name of the Lord, as recommended in the sastras—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—may therefore be constantly chanted by the devotee aspiring to be constantly in touch with the Supreme Lord. One who is thus able to associate with the Lord is sure to be delivered from the darkness of the created world, which is a product of false ego (tamasi ma jyotir gama).
~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.5.25

We can realize the presence of Krsna through sound:

Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is a sound (sabda) that is nondifferent from Krsna. The sound Krsna and the original Krsna are the same. When we chant Hare Krsna and dance, Krsna is also dancing with us. Of course we may say, "Well, I do not see Him," but why do we put so much stress on seeing? Why not hearing? Seeing, tasting, smelling, touching, and hearing are all instruments for experience and knowledge. Why do we put such exclusive stress on seeing? A devotee does not wish to see Krsna; he is satisfied by simply hearing of Krsna. Seeing may eventually be there, but hearing should not be considered any less important. There are things which we hear but do not see—the wind may be whistling past our ears, and we can hear it, but there is no possibility of seeing the wind. Since hearing is no less an important experience or valid one than seeing, we can hear Krsna and realize His presence through sound. Sri Krsna Himself says, "I am not there in My abode, or in the heart of the meditating yogi, but where My pure devotees are singing." We can feel the presence of Krsna as we actually make progress.

~Raja–vidya: The King of Knowledge

The Lord can be realized and worshiped through His transcendental sound representation:
[Narada Muni to Srila Vyasadeva]:

Thus he is the actual seer who worships, in the form of transcendental sound representation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu, who has no material form.

Our present senses are all made of material elements, and therefore they are imperfect in realizing the transcendental form of Lord Visnu. He is therefore worshiped by sound representation via the transcendental method of chanting. Anything which is beyond the scope of experience by our imperfect senses can be realized fully by the sound representation. A person transmitting sound from a far distant place can be factually experienced. If this is materially possible, why not spiritually? This experience is not a

vague impersonal experience. It is actually an experience of the transcendental Personality of Godhead, who possesses the pure form of eternity, bliss and knowledge...The transcendental form of eternal bliss and knowledge can be experienced by our original spiritual senses, which can be revived by chanting the holy mantras, or transcendental sound representations.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.5.38

By chanting the holy name, we can have the Lord's association:

One should ask that the grace of the Lord always be present on earth so that we may be favored with His causeless mercy and be happy, having all necessities of life. One may ask how we can detain the Supreme Lord on this earth after His mission is fulfilled and He has left this earth for His own abode. The answer is that there is no need to detain the Lord. The Lord, being omnipresent, can be present with us if we want Him at all. By His omnipresence, He can always be with us if we are attached to His devotional service by hearing, chanting, remembering, etc.

There is nothing in the world with which the Lord is disconnected. The only thing we must learn is to excavate the source of connection and thus be linked with Him by offenseless service. We can be connected with Him by the transcendental sound representation of the Lord. The holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are identical, and one who chants the holy name of the Lord in an offenseless manner can at once realize that the Lord is present before him. Even by the vibration of radio sound, we can partially realize sound relativity, and by resounding the sound of transcendence we can verily feel the presence of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.16.32-33

Krsna gives us His association through His holy name:

We should always remember that if we can keep ourselves always in company with Krsna, we shall attain all perfection. And especially in this age, Krsna has incarnated as the holy name (kali-kale nama-rupe krsna avatara, Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 17.22).

Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu says:

namnam akari bahudha nija-sarva-saktis
tatrarpita niyamitah smarane na kalah

"My dear Lord, You are so kind that You are giving me Your association in the form of Your holy name, and this holy name can be chanted in any situation."

There are no hard and fast rules for chanting Hare Krsna. One can chant Hare Krsna anywhere. Children, for example, also chant and dance. It is not at all difficult. While walking, our students take their beads with them and chant. Where is the loss? But the gain is very great for by chanting we associate with Krsna personally. Suppose we were to associate personally with the President. How proud we would feel. "Oh, I am with the President." So should we not feel very much proud if we were to associate with the supreme president, who is able to create many millions of presidents like those of this world? This chanting is our opportunity to do so. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *etadrsi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi*: "My dear Lord, You are so kind to me that You are always prepared to give me Your association."

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

By chanting the holy name one associates with God, acquires godly qualities, and becomes an associate of the Lord:

Because God is absolute, His name, His form, and His qualities are also absolute, and they are nondifferent from Him. Therefore to chant God's holy name means to associate directly with Him. When one associates with God, one acquires godly qualities, and when one is completely purified, one becomes an associate of the Supreme Lord.

~The Science of Self-Realization

By chanting the maha-mantra, one can associate with Krsna directly:

Krsna tells Arjuna to always remain in Krsna consciousness. This is possible through the chanting of Hare Krsna. Since Krsna and His spiritual kingdom are nondifferent, being absolute, Krsna and His sound vibration are the same. Simply by vibrating Krsna's name, we can enjoy Krsna's association. If we are walking down the street chanting Hare Krsna, Krsna is also going with us. If we walk down the street and look up at the sky, we may see that the sun or the moon is accompanying us. I can recall about fifty years ago, when I was a householder, my second son, who was about four years old at the time, was walking with me down the street, and he suddenly asked me, "Father, why is the moon going with us?"

If a material object like the moon has the power to accompany us, we can surely understand that the Supreme Lord, who is all-powerful, can always remain with us. Being omnipotent,

He can always keep us company, provided that we are also qualified to keep His company. Pure devotees are always merged in the thought of Krsna and are always remembering that Krsna is with them. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu has confirmed the absolute nature of Krsna in His Siksastaka (verse 2):

namnam akari bahudha nija-sarva-saktis
tatrarpita niyamitah smarane na kalah
etadrsi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi
durdaivam idrsam ihajani nanuragah

"My Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in Your holy name there is all good fortune for the living entity, and therefore You have many names, such as Krsna and Govinda, by which You expand Yourself. You have invested all Your potencies in those names, and there are no hard-and-fast rules for remembering them. My dear Lord, although You bestow such mercy upon the fallen, conditioned souls by liberally teaching Your holy names, I am so unfortunate that I commit offenses while chanting the holy name, and therefore I do not achieve attachment for chanting."

We may take the effort to spend a great deal of money and attempt to build or establish a temple for Krsna, but if we do so we must observe many rules and regulations and see properly to the temple's management. But herein it is confirmed that simply by chanting, any man can have the benefit of keeping company with Krsna. Just as Arjuna is deriving benefit by being in the same chariot with Lord Sri Krsna, we can also benefit by associating with Krsna through the chanting of His holy names—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. This maha-mantra is not my personal concoction but is authorized by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who is considered to be not only an authority but the incarnation of Lord Sri Krsna Himself. It was Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu who said, "O Lord, You are so kind to the people of this material world that You expand Yourself in Your holy name so that they can associate with You."
~The Path of Perfection

While performing devotional service, the devotee remembers the supremacy of the Lord and associates with the Lord by repeating His transcendental names:

[Narada Muni to Srila Vyasadeva]:

While performing duties according to the order of Sri Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one constantly remembers Him, His names and His qualities.

An expert devotee of the Lord can mold his life in such a way that while performing all kinds of duties either for this or the next life, he can constantly remember the Lord's name, fame, qualities, etc. The order of the Lord is distinctly there in the Bhagavad-gita: one should work only for the Lord in all spheres of life. In every sphere of life the Lord should be situated as the proprietor... No one else but Lord Sri Krsna can claim to be the proprietor of everything within His creation. A pure devotee remembers this constantly, and in doing so he repeats the transcendental name, fame and qualities of the Lord, which means that he is constantly in touch with the Lord. The Lord is identical with His name, fame, etc., and therefore to be associated with His name, fame, etc., constantly, means actually to associate with the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.5.36

The performer of offenseless kirtana has positive association with the Lord:

[Sukadeva Gosvami prays]:

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the all-auspicious Lord Sri Krsna, about whom glorification, remembrances, audience, prayers, hearing and worship can at once cleanse the effects of all sins of the performer.

The devotees need not be disappointed in the physical absence of the Lord, though they may think of not being associated with Him. The devotional process of chanting, hearing, remembering, etc. (either all or some of them, or even one of them), can give us the desired result of associating with the Lord by discharging the transcendental loving service of the Lord in the above manner. Even the very sound of the holy name of Lord Krsna or Lord Rama can at once surcharge the atmosphere spiritually. We must know definitely that the Lord is present wherever such pure transcendental service is performed, and thus the performer of offenseless kirtana has positive association with the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.4.15

By chanting, one associates with Krsna:

The same thing is confirmed in the Adi Purana by Krsna. While addressing Arjuna He says, "Anyone who is engaged in chanting My transcendental name must be considered to be always associating with Me. And I may tell you frankly that for such a devotee I become easily purchased."

~The Nectar of Devotion

Being deeply touched by a strong desire for Kṛṣṇa's association, a pure devotee always chants the maha-mantra:

It was Sanātana Gosvami who later composed this verse:

na prema sravanadi-bhaktir api va yogo 'thava vaisnavo
jnanam va subha-karma va kiyad aho saj-jatir apy asti va
hinarthadhika-sadhake tvayi tathapy acchedya-mula sati
he gopijanavallabha vyathayate ha ha madasaiva mam

"I am poor in love of Godhead, and I have no asset for hearing about devotional service. Nor do I have any understanding of the science of devotional service, nor any cultivation of knowledge, nor any righteous activities to my credit. I am not even born in a high family. Nonetheless, O darling of the damsels of Vraja, I still maintain hopes of achieving You, and these hopes are always disturbing me." Such a devotee, being touched deeply by such strong desires, always chants Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

One can come into contact with Kṛṣṇa immediately by hearing His holy name: Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a method for connecting directly with the Supreme. This is the special gift of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Not only is this method direct and immediate, but it is also practical. Although many people entering this Society have no qualifications, they have become highly advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness simply by coming in contact with the Society. In this age, life is very short, and a yoga process that takes a long time will not help the general populace. In Kali-yuga, people are all so unfortunate, and association is very bad. Therefore, this process of directly contacting the Supreme is recommended—hari-nama. Kṛṣṇa is present in the form of His transcendental name, and we can contact Him immediately by hearing His name. Simply by hearing the name Kṛṣṇa we immediately become freed from material contamination.

~The Path of Perfection

Because Kṛṣṇa's name is nondifferent from Himself, when one chants he immediately

comes into contact with Krsna:

Lord Caitanya prayed:

namnam akari bahudha nija–sarva–saktis
tatrarpita niyamitah smarane na kalah
etadrsi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi
durdaivam idrsam ihajani nanuragah
(Siksastaka 2)

Krsna, the transcendental holy name of God, has all potencies, Lord Caitanya said. Krsna has unlimited potencies, and similarly in the holy name of Krsna there are unlimited potencies. Krsna has thousands and thousands of names, of which the name Krsna is the chief, and there are no hard and fast rules for chanting. It is not that one must chant at a certain time. No. At any time one may chant. Furthermore, Krsna's name is identical with Krsna Himself. Therefore the holy name of Krsna is Krsna.

We should not think that Krsna is living in His abode, Goloka Vrndavana, and that His name is different from Him. In the material world, of course, in the material conception, a name is different from the fact it represents. But in the absolute world there are no such differences. The name is as potent as Krsna is. We have a tongue, and if we use this tongue to chant Hare Krsna, we shall immediately come directly in touch with Krsna, because the name Krsna and the person Krsna are not different. We may think that Krsna is far, far away, but in fact Krsna is within us. He is far away, but at the same time He is the nearest. But even if we think that Krsna is far, far away, His name is present. We can chant Hare Krsna, and Krsna will immediately become available. Krsna is available in this easy way, for which there are no hard and fast rules. We can chant at any time and immediately get Krsna. Just see the mercy of Krsna!

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

Because the Lord and His holy name are identical, when a pure devotee chants, the Lord is immediately present:

After due consideration, all the devotees began chanting the holy name congregationally. Lord Caitanya's mind was thus pacified by the ecstasy of the chanting.

Being absolute, Lord Jagannatha is identical in person, form, picture, kirtana and all other circumstances. Therefore when Caitanya Mahaprabhu heard the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, He was pacified. Previously, He had been feeling very morose due to

separation from Jagannatha. The conclusion is that whenever a kirtana of pure devotees takes place, the Lord is immediately present. By chanting the holy names of the Lord, we associate with the Lord personally.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 1.126

By hearing the maha-mantra, one can always feel the presence of the Lord:

There is a statement about hearing and chanting the maha-mantra: "It is said that saints have been able to hear the vibrating strings of the vīna in the hands of Narada, who is always singing the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Now this same sound vibration has entered my ears, and I am always feeling the presence of the Supreme Personality. Gradually I am becoming bereft of all attachment for material enjoyment."

~The Nectar of Devotion

Kṛṣṇa is easily attainable by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa:

Kṛṣṇa consciousness means always living with Kṛṣṇa in His spiritual planet. Because we are conscious of Kṛṣṇa, we are already living with Him. We simply have to wait to give up this material body to go there. For one who remembers Kṛṣṇa without deviation, He is easy to obtain. Tasyaḥ sulabhah partha: "I become very cheap for them." For one who takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the most valuable thing becomes very easy to obtain. Because one is engaged in bhakti-yoga, Kṛṣṇa becomes easily available. Why should we try so hard to attain Kṛṣṇa, when Kṛṣṇa Himself says, "I am easy to obtain"? We have only to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare twenty-four hours daily. There is no fast rule and regulation. We can chant in the street or on the subway, in our home or in our office. There is neither expenditure nor tax.

~The Path of Perfection

Kṛṣṇa, being attracted, appears Himself in His glorification:

[Narada Muni to Śrīla Vyāsadeva]:

The Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose glories and activities are pleasing to hear, at once appears on the seat of my heart, as if called for, as soon as I begin to chant His holy activities.

The Absolute Personality of Godhead is not different from His transcendental name, form,

pastimes and the sound vibrations thereof. As soon as a pure devotee engages himself in the pure devotional service of hearing, chanting and remembering the name, fame and activities of the Lord, at once He becomes visible to the transcendental eyes of the pure devotee by reflecting Himself on the mirror of the heart by spiritual television. Therefore a pure devotee who is related with the Lord in loving transcendental service can experience the presence of the Lord at every moment. It is a natural psychology in every individual case that a person likes to hear and enjoy his personal glories enumerated by others. That is a natural instinct, and the Lord, being also an individual personality like others, is not an exception to this psychology because psychological characteristics visible in the individual souls are but reflections of the same psychology in the Absolute Lord. The only difference is that the Lord is the greatest personality of all and absolute in all His affairs. If, therefore, the Lord is attracted by the pure devotee's chanting of His glories, there is nothing astonishing. Since He is absolute, He can appear Himself in the picture of His glorification, the two things being identical. Srila Narada chants the glorification of the Lord not for his personal benefit but because the glorifications are identical with the Lord. Narada Muni penetrates into the presence of the Lord by the transcendental chanting.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.6.33

Lord Krsna is personally present in offenseless chanting:

[Suta Gosvami to the sages at Naimisaranya]:

Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramatma [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted.

Messages of the Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna are nondifferent from Him. Whenever, therefore, offenseless hearing and glorification of God are undertaken, it is to be understood that Lord Krsna is present there in the form of transcendental sound, which is as powerful as the Lord personally. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, in His Siksastaka, declares clearly that the holy name of the Lord has all the potencies of the Lord and that He has endowed His innumerable names with the same potency. There is no rigid fixture of time, and anyone can chant the holy name with attention and reverence at his convenience. The Lord is so kind to us that He can be present before us personally in the form of transcendental sound.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.17

When a devotee chants Hare Krsna, Krsna and His internal potency are dancing on his tongue:

One who is engaged in Lord Krsna's devotional service lives in a direct relationship with the Supreme Lord, so there is no doubt that his position is transcendental from the very beginning. A devotee does not live on the material plane—he lives in Krsna. The holy name of the Lord and the Lord are nondifferent; therefore when a devotee chants Hare Krsna, Krsna and His internal potency are dancing on the tongue of the devotee.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 12.8

16.

The Holy Name Attracts One to Krsna

By hearing the holy name, one becomes attracted to Krsna:

From the Srimad-Bhagavatam, Lord Caitanya gives an example of pure devotion: it is said in the Bhagavatam that Krsna is situated in everyone's heart. Therefore, just as rivers flow and their natural tendency is to reach the sea, so as soon as one hears the glories of the Lord, his soul is at once attracted toward the Supreme Lord. This is the beginning of pure devotional service. As soon as there is the chanting vibration, Hare Krsna, immediately Krsna's paraphernalia, Krsna's name, Krsna's fame, Krsna's abode, Krsna's associates—everything—all of a sudden become manifested within because He is present. This is the beginning of one's Krsna consciousness. To remember by reference to a context means that as soon as one hears a code word, one at once remembers all the information behind that code. Similarly, when our minds are attracted to Krsna and everything about Krsna simply by hearing a little glorification of His qualities, that is the beginning of pure Krsna consciousness. ~The Science of Self-Realization

By chanting the holy name, the devotee becomes attracted to Krsna:

The Supreme Lord can only be appreciated by devotional service. Therefore, one should be fully devoted. One should fix his mind fully on Krsna in order to achieve Him. One should work only for Krsna. It does not matter in what kind of work one engages, but that work should be done only for Krsna. That is the standard of devotional service. The devotee does not desire any achievement other than pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His

life's mission is to please Kṛṣṇa, and he can sacrifice everything for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction, just as Arjuna did in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. The process is very simple: one can devote himself in his occupation and engage at the same time in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Such transcendental chanting attracts the devotee to the Personality of Godhead.

~Bhagavad-gīta As It Is 12.6-7

17.

The Holy Name Invokes an Attitude of Service to the Lord

The test of successful chanting is eagerness to render service to the Lord:

[Muhammadan governor to Lord Caitanya]:

The Muhammadan governor then said, "Since you have so kindly accepted me, please give me some order so that I can render You some service." The Muhammadan governor then prayed for liberation from the unlimited sinful activities he had previously incurred by being envious of brahmanas and Vaiṣṇavas and killing cows.

If one is purified by following Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu's orders—that is, by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa—one must certainly be eager to render service to the Lord. This is the test. When one engages enthusiastically in the Lord's service, it is to be understood that he is reaping the results of chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa and Hari... After being released from one's sinful reactions (karma), one becomes eager to serve the Lord. This is the test. Since the Muhammadan governor was immediately purified in the presence of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he could utter the names of Kṛṣṇa and Hari. Consequently he was anxious to render some service.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 16.188-89

One engaged in chanting the holy name becomes freed from the bodily conception and attached to serving the Lord:

A person properly initiated by a bona fide spiritual master and engaged in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare gradually becomes freed from the conception of "I" and "mine" and becomes attached

to the Lord's transcendental loving service in one of the five transcendental relationships. Such transcendental service is not a subject matter for gross and subtle bodies. Only when one can understand that there is no difference between the Supreme and His name can one be situated in Krsna consciousness. At such a time one no longer needs to make grammatical adjustments. Rather, one becomes more interested in petitioning the Lord: "Hare Krsna—O my Lord, O energy of the Lord, please engage me in Your service!"

—Teachings of Lord Caitanya

18.

By Chanting the Holy Name, One Achieves Direct Service to the Lord

By chanting the holy name, one achieves liberation from material existence and direct engagement in the service of the Lord:

[isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

"Simply by chanting the holy name of Krsna one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord."

In the Anubhasya, Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami says that the actual effect that will be visible as soon as one achieves transcendental knowledge is that he will immediately become free from the clutches of maya and fully engage in the service of the Lord. Unless one serves the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, one cannot become free from fruitive activities under the external energy. However, when one chants the holy name of the Lord offenselessly, he can realize a transcendental position which is completely aloof from the material conception of life. Rendering service to the Lord, a devotee relates to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in one of five relationships—namely, santa, dasya, sakhya, vatsalya and madhurya—and thus he relishes transcendental bliss in that relationship. Such a relationship certainly transcends the body and mind. When one realizes that the holy name of the Lord is identical with the Supreme Person, he becomes completely eligible to chant the holy name of the Lord. Such an ecstatic chanter and dancer must be considered to have a direct relationship with the Lord.

According to the Vedic principles, there are three stages of spiritual advancement, namely, sambandha—jnana, abhidheya and prayojana. Sambandha—jnana refers to establishing one's original relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, abhidheya refers to acting

according to that constitutional relationship, and prayojana is the ultimate goal of life, which is to develop love of Godhead (prema pum–artho mahan). If one adheres to the regulative principles under the order of the spiritual master, he very easily achieves the ultimate goal of his life. A person who is addicted to the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra very easily gets the opportunity to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly. There is no need for such a person to understand the grammatical jugglery in which Mayavadi sannyasis generally indulge. Sri Sankaracarya also stressed this point. Na hi na hi raksati dukrn–karane: "Simply by juggling grammatical suffixes and prefixes one cannot save himself from the clutches of death." The grammatical word jugglers cannot bewilder a devotee who engages in chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Simply addressing the energy of the Supreme Lord as Hare and the Lord Himself as Krsna very soon situates the Lord within the heart of the devotee. By thus addressing Radha and Krsna one directly engages in His Lordship's service. The essence of all revealed scriptures and all knowledge is present when one addresses the Lord and His energy by the Hare Krsna mantra, for this transcendental vibration can completely liberate a conditioned soul and directly engage him in the service of the Lord.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.73

By offenseless chanting, one attains God realization, develops mystic powers and, ultimately, becomes a confidential devotee of the Lord:

[Narada Muni to Srila Vyasadeva]:

Thus he is the actual seer who worships, in the form of transcendental sound representation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu, who has no material form. O brahmana, thus by the Supreme Lord Krsna I was endowed first with the transcendental knowledge of the Lord as inculcated in the confidential parts of the Vedas, then with the spiritual opulences, and then with His intimate loving service.

Communion with the Lord by transmission of the transcendental sound is nondifferent from the whole spirit Lord Sri Krsna. It is a completely perfect method for approaching the Lord. By such pure contact with the Lord, without offense of material conceptions (numbering ten), the devotee can rise above the material plane to understand the inner meaning of the Vedic literatures, including the Lord's existence in the transcendental realm. The Lord reveals His identity gradually to one who has unflinching faith, both in the spiritual master and in the Lord. After this, the devotee is endowed with mystic opulences, which are eight in number. And above all, the devotee is accepted in the confidential entourage of the Lord and is entrusted with specific service of the Lord through the agency of the spiritual master. A pure devotee is more interested in serving the Lord than in showing an exhibition of the

mystic powers dormant in him. Sri Narada has explained all these from his personal experience, and one can obtain all the facilities which Sri Narada obtained by perfecting the chanting process of the sound representation of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.5.38-39

Chanting Hare Krsna not only frees one from false ego, but elevates the soul to its eternal, constitutional position of pure devotional service:

Simply understanding ahankara means no more than understanding the false identification. Simply understanding that I am not matter, I am soul, is not perfection. The impersonalist, the void philosopher, simply thinks of the negative, that I am not this matter, I am not this body. This will not stay. You have to not only realize that you are not matter, but you have to engage yourself in the spiritual world. And that spiritual world means to be working in Krsna consciousness. That spiritual world, that functioning of real life, is Krsna consciousness... Chanting the maha-mantra-Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare-is the process not merely of putting an end to this false conception of the self, but it goes beyond that, to the point where the pure spirit soul engages in his eternal, blissful, all-knowing activities in the loving service of God. This is the height of conscious development, the ultimate goal of all living entities now evolving through the cycles and species of material nature.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

19.

By Chanting the Holy Name, One Comes to Understand / Realize / See Krsna

By chanting, one comes to understand Krsna:

""Therefore material senses cannot appreciate Krsna's holy name, form, qualities and

pastimes. When a conditioned soul is awakened to Krsna consciousness and renders service by using his tongue to chant the Lord's holy name and taste the remnants of the Lord's food, the tongue is purified, and one gradually comes to understand who Krsna really is."

~Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.2.234) [cited:

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 17.136]

Krsna says that out of many thousands of people, one may try to make perfection of this life; and out of many millions of such persons on the path of perfection, only one may understand Krsna. So understanding Krsna is not very easy. But it is also the easiest. It is not easy, but at the same time it is the easiest. It is the easiest if you follow the prescribed forms... Krsna says that out of many millions of people, one may understand Him. But, by chanting of this Hare Krsna, as introduced by Lord Caitanya—chanting and dancing—you can understand Krsna within a very short time.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

That is the qualification to understand Bhagavad-gita as it is and Krsna as He is—one must become Krsna conscious.

And what is this Krsna consciousness? That is the process of cleansing the dust from the mirror of the mind through the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. By chanting this mantra and by hearing Bhagavad-gita, we can gradually attain to Krsna consciousness. isvarah sarva-bhutanam [Bg. 18.61]—Krsna is always present within our heart. The individual soul and the Supersoul are both sitting in the tree of the body. The individual soul (jiva) is eating the fruit of the tree, and the Supersoul (Paramatma) is witnessing. As the individual soul begins the process of devotional service and gradually begins to develop his Krsna consciousness, the Supersoul who is seated within begins to help him dust all the impurities from the mirror of the mind. Krsna is a friend to all saintly persons, and the attempt to become Krsna conscious is a saintly endeavor. Sravanam kirtanam—by chanting and hearing one can come to understand the science of Krsna and thereby come to understand Krsna... Sri Krsna Himself comes to deliver Bhagavad-gita and to help us to become God conscious. Indeed, this very material creation is given to us to utilize for this cultivation. But if after receiving this chance and this gift of human life we do not utilize them to develop Krsna consciousness, we shall be missing this rare opportunity. The process for cultivation is very simple: sravanam kirtanam—hearing and chanting. We have nothing to do other than listen, and by listening carefully, enlightenment is sure to come. Krsna will surely help, for He is seated within. We only have to make the effort and spare a little time... This chanting of Hare Krsna is a process by which all contaminations due to material association are removed from the mirror of the mind. There is no need for external help in

reviving our Krsna consciousness, for Krsna consciousness is dormant within the self. In fact, it is the very quality of the self. We have only to invoke it by this process.

~On the Way to Krsna

Krsna is available under any circumstances, if we want to catch Him. Krsna says in Bhagavad-gita (10.10):

tesam satata-yuktanam
bhajatam priti-purvakam
dadami buddhi-yogam tam
yena mam upayanti te

"To those who are constantly devoted and who worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me."

If one is actually very serious in searching for Krsna, Krsna is everywhere. Andantara-stha-paramanu-cayantara-stham govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami (Brahma-samhita 5.35). Krsna is present within the universe, within our hearts, and even within the atom. So it is not difficult to find Him, but one must know the process by which to do so. This process is very simple, and by the order of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu we are distributing this process to everyone, without charge. The process is to chant Hare Krsna. As soon as one chants Hare Krsna, one will immediately understand Krsna.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

Understanding God begins with understanding His name:

Although this material world is nothing but darkness, people are very proud of their eyes. They are always saying, "Can you show me God?" The answer to that is: "Have you the eyes to see God?" Why is the emphasis placed on seeing? Certainly, God can be seen, as stated in Brahma-samhita (5.38), premanjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena: "Govinda [Krsna] is always seen by the devotee whose eyes are anointed by the pulp of love."

If we are devotees, lovers of God, the ointment of love will clear our eyes. In order to see God, we have to cleanse our eyes by wiping away the cataracts of material contamination. Although we may be eager to see God, we cannot see Him with these material eyes. Not only can we not see Him, but we cannot understand Him, although His name is there.

Understanding God means first of all understanding His name. Therefore from the beginning we should chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. God is not different from His name. Krsna's name and Krsna's person are the same.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

The process of understanding Krsna begins with chanting the holy name:

The transcendental nature of Krsna is not possible to understand with our blunt material senses. Krsna's name, form, qualities and pastimes are all divya, divine. Our present material senses have to be purified by engagement in the Lord's service, and our first engagement begins with the tongue. It is with the tongue that we can chant the transcendental names of the Lord.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

One can understand Krsna only by devotional service, beginning with chanting the holy name:

In the Brahma–samhita it is stated that the Personality of Godhead cannot be understood simply by study of the Vedanta literature. Only by the mercy of the Supreme Lord can the Personality of the Supreme be known... The fact is that no one can understand Krsna without rendering devotional service and without developing Krsna consciousness. The Gita confirms this.

One cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, or His form, quality or name simply by mental speculation or by discussing Vedic literature. One must understand Him by devotional service. When one is fully engaged in Krsna consciousness, beginning by chanting the maha–mantra–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare–then only can one understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 7.24

One must chant the holy name to cleanse the mind and heart so that one can become sober, understand his higher duty, and understand the Lord:

Prahlada is always situated in the Vaikuntha planets of the spiritual world, but on behalf of the fallen souls he asks how, when his mind is always disturbed by material things, he can

discuss the transcendental position of the Lord... especially in this age of Kali, the mind must be cleansed; and this is possible only by the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Ceto-darpana-marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]. In this age, the process of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra is the only method by which to cleanse the sinful mind. When the mind is completely cleansed of all sinful reactions, one can then understand his duty in the human form of life. The Krsna consciousness movement is meant to educate sinful men so that they may become pious simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra... To cleanse the heart so that one may become sober and wise in this age of Kali, there is no value to any method other than the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Prahlada Maharaja has confirmed this process in previous verses. Tvad-virya-gayana-mahamrta-magna-cittah. Prahlada further confirms that if one's mind is always absorbed in thought of Krsna, that very qualification will purify one and keep one purified always. To understand the Lord and His activities, one must free his mind from all contamination of the material world, and this one can achieve by simply chanting the Lord's holy name. Thus one becomes free from all material bondage.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.9.39

The process of Krsna consciousness is the process of purifying the senses through the chanting of Hare Krsna so that one can understand God:

God cannot be seen by material senses, therefore the bhakti-yoga process is the process of purifying the senses so that we will be able to understand what and who God is. We have power of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and so on, but if these senses are blunt, we cannot understand God. The process of Krsna consciousness is the process of training these senses through regulated principles, specifically through the chanting of Hare Krsna.

~Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

By chanting of the holy name, which is the basis of devotional service and bhagavata-dharma, one comes to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead:

[Yamaraja to the Yamadutas]:

Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society.

The Bhagavatam says, sa vai pumsam paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhoksaje: [SB 1.2.6] the supreme religion is that which teaches its followers how to love the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is beyond the reach of experimental knowledge. Such a religious system

begins with tan–nama–grahana, chanting of the holy name of the Lord (sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam pada–sevanam [SB 7.5.23]). After chanting the holy name of the Lord and dancing in ecstasy, one gradually sees the form of the Lord, the pastimes of the Lord and the transcendental qualities of the Lord. This way one fully understands the situation of the Personality of Godhead.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.3.22

By chanting the maha–mantra, one will understand Krsna, and thus everything will be understood:

Simply by chanting, one can have self–realization, God realization, and when there is God realization, then nature realization is included also. For example, if one learns one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and zero, then he has studied the entirety of mathematics because mathematics means simply changing the places of these ten figures. That's all. Similarly, if one simply studies Krsna, then all his knowledge is perfect. And Krsna is easily understood simply by chanting this mantra, Hare Krsna. So why not take this opportunity?

~The Science of Self–Realization

In this age, the chanting of Hare Krsna will deliver the people of the world from their forgetfulness of God:

Today people have forgotten their relationship with God, but this incarnation of Krsna in the form of His holy names, this chanting of Hare Krsna, will deliver all the people of the world from their forgetfulness. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that if we chant or associate with the chanting of the holy names of Krsna, we will reach the highest perfectional stage of life.

~Elevation to Krsna Consciousness

In order to attain God realization and spiritual happiness in this age, we have only to chant the names of Krsna:

Krsna is within, but due to our material conditioning, we do not realize it. Those who are of the nature of fiends and demons (raksasim asurim) think that this material life is all and that it is the purpose of human life to squeeze out as much pleasure from matter as possible. They try squeezing, but they are constantly baffled. Squeezing material nature is not the

process for finding out real pleasure. If we are searching for real pleasure, we have to take to Krsna consciousness. All happiness in the material world has a beginning and an end, but happiness in Krsna is unlimited, and there is no end. In order to get this happiness we simply have to sacrifice a little time and chant Hare Krsna. In former ages, the great sages and demigods used to sacrifice their whole lives for realizing the Supreme, and still they would not attain success. For this age Caitanya Mahaprabhu has given an easy process for God realization. All that is necessary is careful listening. We have to listen to Bhagavad-gita, and we have to chant the names of Krsna and listen to them carefully. We should not be puffed up, falsely thinking that our knowledge is great or that we are very learned. We need only become a little gentle and submissive to hear the messages from Krsna.

~Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

One can realize Krsna by hearing and vibrating the Hare Krsna mantra and tasting prasada: The word mahatma means "broad-minded." One who cannot understand Krsna is not broad-minded, but cripple-minded. If one becomes broad-minded, then by the grace of Krsna one can understand Krsna.

The process of understanding Krsna is sevonmukha-by rendering service. Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau. Realization of Vasudeva is possible by rendering service, beginning with the tongue. The tongue has two functions-to vibrate and to taste. So if one repeatedly hears and vibrates the Hare Krsna mantra and tastes prasada, food offered to Krsna, by this very simple method one will realize Vasudeva, Krsna. Krsna will reveal Himself. It is not that by our endeavor alone we can understand Krsna, but our endeavor in loving service will make us qualified, and then Krsna will reveal Himself (svayam eva sphuraty adah).

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

By offenseless chanting, one attains God realization, develops mystic powers and, ultimately, becomes a confidential devotee of the Lord:

[Narada Muni to Srila Vyasadeva]:

Thus he is the actual seer who worships, in the form of transcendental sound representation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu, who has no material form. O brahmana, thus by the Supreme Lord Krsna I was endowed first with the transcendental knowledge of the Lord as inculcated in the confidential parts of the Vedas, then with the spiritual opulences, and then with His intimate loving service.

Communion with the Lord by transmission of the transcendental sound is nondifferent from the whole spirit Lord Sri Krsna. It is a completely perfect method for approaching the Lord. By such pure contact with the Lord, without offense of material conceptions (numbering ten), the devotee can rise above the material plane to understand the inner meaning of the Vedic literatures, including the Lord's existence in the transcendental realm. The Lord reveals His identity gradually to one who has unflinching faith, both in the spiritual master and in the Lord. After this, the devotee is endowed with mystic opulences, which are eight in number. And above all, the devotee is accepted in the confidential entourage of the Lord and is entrusted with specific service of the Lord through the agency of the spiritual master. A pure devotee is more interested in serving the Lord than in showing an exhibition of the mystic powers dormant in him. Sri Narada has explained all these from his personal experience, and one can obtain all the facilities which Sri Narada obtained by perfecting the chanting process of the sound representation of the Lord.

˚Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.5.38–39

By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra offenselessly in the association of devotees one becomes pure in heart and realizes the transcendental nature of the Lord:

[Lord Siva to Lord Visnu]:

The devotee whose heart has been completely cleansed by the process of devotional service and who is favored by Bhaktidevi does not become bewildered by the external energy, which is just like a dark well. Being completely cleansed of all material contamination in this way, a devotee is able to understand very happily Your name, fame, form, activities, etc.

As stated in Srimad–Bhagavatam (3.25.25):

satam prasangan mama virya–samvido
bhavanti hrt–karna–rasayanah kathah
tad josnad asv apavarga–vartmani
sraddha ratir bhaktir anukramisyati

Simply by the association of pure devotees one can understand the transcendental name, fame, quality and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has repeatedly said:

'sadhu–sanga', 'sadhu–sanga'–sarva–sastre kaya
lava–matra sadhu–sange sarva–siddhi haya

(Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–līla 22.54)

Simply by associating with a pure devotee, one becomes wonderfully advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sadhu–sanga, or association with a devotee, means always engaging in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and by acting for Kṛṣṇa. Specifically, chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra purifies one, and this chanting is therefore recommended by Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Ceto–darpana–marjanam: [Cc. Antya 20.12] by chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa, the mirror of the heart is cleansed, and the devotee loses interest in everything external. When one is influenced by the external energy of the Lord, his heart is impure. When one's heart is not pure, he cannot see how things are related to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Idam hi visvam bhagavan ivetarah (S.B. 1.5.20). He whose heart is purified can see that the whole cosmic manifestation is but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but he whose heart is contaminated sees things differently. Therefore by sat–sanga, or association with devotees, one becomes perfectly pure in heart.

One who is pure in heart is never attracted by the external energy, which urges the individual soul to try to dominate material nature. The pure head of a devotee is never disturbed when he executes devotional service in the form of hearing, chanting, remembering, etc. In all, there are nine processes one can follow in the execution of devotional service. In any case, a purehearted devotee is never disturbed. The bhakti–yoga process must be carried out by avoiding the ten offenses one can commit while chanting the maha–mantra and the sixty–four offenses one can commit while worshiping the Deity. When a devotee strictly follows the rules and regulations, Bhaktidevi becomes very much satisfied with him, and at that time he is never disturbed by anything external. A devotee is also called a muni. The word muni means "thoughtful." A devotee is as thoughtful as a nondevotee is speculative. The nondevotee's speculation is impure, but a devotee's thoughts are pure. Lord Kapila and Sukadeva Gosvami are also called muni, and Vyasadeva is addressed as Mahamuni. A devotee is addressed as muni, or thoughtful, when he purely understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The conclusion is that when one's heart is purified by the association of devotees and by the avoidance of the offenses committed when chanting and worshiping the Lord, the transcendental name, form and activities of the Lord are revealed by the Lord.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.24.59

Offenseless chanting leads to realization of the form, qualities and pastimes of the Lord: By offenseless chanting and hearing of the holy name of the Lord, one becomes acquainted with the transcendental form of the Lord, then with the attributes of the Lord, and then with

the transcendental nature of His pastimes, etc... Hearing of the holy name gradually promotes one to the stage of hearing about His form, about His attributes, His pastimes and so on, and thus the necessity of the chanting of His glories develops successively.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.11

By chanting the holy name, one is cleansed of the material concept of life and awakens in realization of the Lord's transcendental form, qualities, etc.:

As enunciated by Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, *ceto-darpana-marjanam*: [Cc. Antya 20.12] by chanting the holy name of the Lord, one is cleansed of the material conception of life, which is due to the dirty modes of material nature. When the dirt is cleansed from the core of one's heart, one can realize the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead—*isvarah paramah krsnah sac-cid-ananda-vigraha* [Bs. 5.1]. Thus by hearing the holy name of the Lord, one comes to the platform of understanding the personal form of the Lord. After realizing the Lord's form, one can realize the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and when one can understand His transcendental qualities one can understand the Lord's associates. In this way a devotee advances further and further toward complete understanding of the Lord as he awakens in realization of the Lord's holy name, transcendental form and qualities, His paraphernalia, and everything pertaining to Him.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.5.23–24

Simply by keeping a picture of Lord Caitanya and chanting Hare Krsna one can worship God and realize Him:

In the Srimad-Bhagavatam it is said that [Lord Caitanya] is the incarnation of God in this age. And who worships Him? The process is very simple. Just keep a picture of Lord Caitanya with His associates. Lord Caitanya is in the middle, accompanied by His principal associates—Nityananda, Advaita, Gadadhara, and Srivasa. One simply has to keep this picture. One can keep it anywhere. It is not that one has to come to us to see this picture. Anyone can have this picture in his home, chant this Hare Krsna mantra, and thus worship Lord Caitanya. That is the simple method. But who will capture this simple method? Those who have good brains. Without much bother, if one simply keeps a picture of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu at home and chants Hare Krsna, then one will realize God. Anyone can adopt this simple method. There is no expenditure, there is no tax, nor is there any need to build a very big church or temple. Anyone, anywhere, can sit down on the road or beneath a tree and chant the Hare Krsna mantra and worship God. Therefore it is a great opportunity.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Hearing the vibration of the sound Hare Krsna is nondifferent from seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly:

In bhakti there are nine different activities: sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam pada-sevanam/ arcanam vandanam dasyam sakhyam atma-nivedanam [SB 7.5.23]. Because all these devotional activities are absolute, there is no fundamental difference between worshiping the Deity in the temple, seeing Him and chanting His glories. Indeed, all of these are ways of seeing Him, for everything done in devotional service is a means of direct contact with the Lord... Contrary to the laws of the material world, there is no difference between seeing the Lord, offering prayers and hearing the transcendental vibration. Pure devotees, therefore, are fully satisfied by glorifying the Lord. Such glorification is called kirtana. Performing kirtana and hearing the vibration of the sound Hare Krsna is actually seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly. One must realize this position, and then one will be able to understand the absolute nature of the Lord's activities.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.4.25-26

By constantly chanting the maha-mantra, one makes progress in spiritual life and ultimately sees Krsna face to face:

Srila Sridhara Svami quotes that to do what is good and to reject what is not good is called mangala, or auspicious. To do what is good means to accept everything favorable to the discharge of devotional service, and to reject what is not good means to reject everything not favorable for discharging devotional service. In our Krsna consciousness movement, we accept this principle by rejecting four prohibited items—namely illicit sex life, intoxication, gambling and flesh-eating—and accepting the daily chanting of at least sixteen rounds of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra and daily meditation three times a day by chanting the Gayatri mantra. In this way one can keep his brahminical culture and spiritual strength intact. By following these principles of devotional service strictly, chanting twenty-four hours a day the maha-mantra—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—one makes positive progress in spiritual life and ultimately becomes completely fit to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face. Because the ultimate goal of studying or understanding the Vedic knowledge is to find Krsna, one who follows the Vedic principles as described above can from the very beginning see all the features of Lord Krsna, the Absolute Truth, very distinctly, as one can see one's own face completely reflected in a clear mirror.

Krsna reveals Himself to one who performs devotional service, beginning with chanting: When it is not possible to understand even the material things which we daily see with our eyes, what can we say of the spiritual world and Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead? He is the supreme spiritual form, and it is not possible to understand Him by our limited senses. Then why are we bothering so much for Krsna consciousness, if it is not possible? If these imperfect senses cannot realize Krsna as He is? The answer is that if you become submissive, if you develop the spiritual attitude of following Krsna, and you are as a servant or a friend, as a parent or as a lover—if you begin to give service to the Supreme Lord then you can begin to know Him.

Your service begins with the tongue. How? By the tongue you can chant Hare Krsna, and by the tongue you can taste krsna–prasada, spiritual food. So, the beginning of the process is very nice. You can chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—and whenever prasada is offered to you by Krsna, by His kindness, you accept it. The result will be that if you become submissive, and if you begin this service—chanting and eating prasada—Krsna will reveal Himself before you.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

Krsna reveals Himself to the devotee who faithfully chants His holy name: When one fully engages in chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, he gradually realizes his own spiritual identity. Unless one faithfully chants the Hare Krsna mantra, Krsna does not reveal Himself: *sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah* (Bhakti–rasamrta–sindhu 1.2.234). We cannot realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead by any artificial means. We must engage faithfully in the service of the Lord. Such service begins with the tongue (*sevonmukhe hi jihvadau*), which means that we should always chant the holy names of the Lord and accept krsna–prasada. We should not chant or accept anything else. When this process is faithfully followed, the Supreme Lord reveals Himself to the devotee.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

The Lord reveals Himself to the offenseless chanter:

Chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is the easiest process of meditation in this age. As soon as one chants the Hare Krsna mantra, he sees the forms of Krsna, Rama and Their energies, and that is the perfect stage of trance. One should not artificially try to see the form of the Lord while chanting Hare Krsna, but when the chanting is performed offenselessly the Lord will automatically reveal Himself to the view of the chanter. The chanter, therefore, has to concentrate on hearing the vibration, and without extra endeavor on his part, the Lord will automatically appear.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.8.53

20.

The Holy Name Evokes Love of God

Liberation and freedom from sinful reactions are merely by-products of chanting the holy name. The real result is ecstatic love of Krsna:

It was mentioned in the assembly that Haridasa thakura chanted the holy names of Krsna 300,000 times a day. Thus all the learned scholars began to discuss the glories of the holy name. Some of them said, "By chanting the holy name of the Lord, one is freed from the reactions of all sinful life." Others said, "Simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord, a living being is liberated from material bondage." Haridasa thakura 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 Krsna. '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.' 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. '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.'" After reciting this verse, Haridasa thakura said, "O learned scholars, please explain the meaning of this verse." But the audience requested Haridasa thakura, "It is better for you to explain the meaning of this important verse." Haridasa thakura said, "As the sun begins to rise, even before visible it dissipates the darkness of night. 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. 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 Krsna. Liberation is the insignificant result derived from a glimpse of awakening of offenseless chanting of the holy name."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.176-86

The holy name brings love for Krsna:

The holy name of Krsna is so attractive that anyone who chants it—including all living entities, moving and nonmoving, and even Lord Krsna Himself—becomes imbued with love of Krsna. This is the effect of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.268

The Absolute Truth is Sri Krsna, and loving devotion to Sri Krsna exhibited in pure love is achieved through congregational chanting of the holy name, which is the essence of all bliss.

~Cc Adi-lila 1.96

As a result of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one makes such great advancement in spiritual life that simultaneously his material existence terminates and he receives love of Godhead. The holy name of Krsna is so powerful that by chanting even one name, one very easily achieves these transcendental riches.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 8.28

By chanting offenselessly, one attains love of Godhead:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"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."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 4.71

When one is on the transcendental stage of chanting the holy name, he attains love of God:

By chanting the holy name of the Lord one can directly associate with the Supreme Lord by sound vibration. As one practices this sound vibration, he passes through three stages of development: the offensive stage, the clearing stage and the transcendental stage. In the offensive stage one may desire all kinds of material happiness, but in the second stage one becomes clear of all material contamination. When one is situated on the transcendental stage, he attains the most coveted position—the stage of loving God. Lord Caitanya taught that this is the highest stage of perfection for human beings.

—Teachings of Lord Caitanya

By chanting, one is freed from material activities and develops love for Krsna:

[Lord Caitanya to Satyaraja]:

"By chanting the holy name of the Lord, one dissolves his entanglement in material activities. After this, one becomes very attracted to Krsna, and thus dormant love for Krsna is awakened."

—Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Madhya—lila 15.109

By constantly chanting the holy name, one easily attains liberation and love of Godhead:

[Lord Caitanya to Prakasananda Sarasvati]:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu continued, "Always discuss Srimad—Bhagavatam and constantly chant the holy name of Lord Krsna. In this way you will be able to attain liberation very easily, and you will be elevated to the enjoyment of love of Godhead."

—Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Madhya—lila 25.154

Chanting the holy name initiates the flow of waves of love for Krsna:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Krsna, one can be freed from all undesirable habits. This is the means of awakening all good fortune and initiating the flow of waves of love for Krsna."

—Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Antya—lila 20.11

If one is expert in chanting the holy name, he will, without fail, attain love of Godhead:

The Lord then told Sanatana Gosvami that the association of good devotees, engagement in the transcendental service of the Lord, the understanding of Srimad–Bhagavatam, the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, and residence in a holy place like Vrndavana or Mathura are all very important for elevation to the transcendental plane. One need not attain all five of these items; if one is expert in just one of them, he will, without fail, be elevated to the stage of love of Godhead.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

The great fruit of love of Godhead is distributed through the medium of chanting the maha–mantra:

The fruit of love of God is so tasteful that wherever a devotee distributes it, those who relish the fruit, anywhere in the world, immediately become intoxicated.

Here the wonderful fruit of love of Godhead distributed by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu is described. We have practical experience that anyone who accepts this fruit and sincerely tastes it immediately becomes mad after it and gives up all his bad habits, being intoxicated by Caitanya Mahaprabhu's gift, the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. The statements of Caitanya–caritamrta are so practical that anyone can test them. As far as we are concerned, we are most confident of the success of the distribution of the great fruit of love of Godhead through the medium of chanting of the maha–mantra–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 9.48

How chanting the holy name elevates one to the position of ecstatic pure devotional service to Krsna:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"By performing congregational chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, one can destroy the sinful condition of material existence, purify the unclean heart and awaken all varieties of devotional service. The result of chanting is that one awakens his love for Krsna and tastes transcendental bliss. Ultimately, one attains the association of Krsna and engages in His devotional service, as if immersing himself in a great ocean of love."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 20.13–14

By associating with pure devotees engaged in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, one's heart is purified and one develops pure love for Krsna:

An example of rising to the stage of ecstatic love by executing the regulative principles of devotional service is given in the life story of Narada, which is described to Vyasadeva in Srimad-Bhagavatam. Narada tells there of his previous life and how he developed to the stage of ecstatic love. He was engaged in the service of great devotees and used to hear their talks and songs. Because he had the opportunity to hear these pastimes and songs of Krsna from the mouths of pure devotees, he became very attracted within his heart. Because he had become so eager to hear these topics, he gradually developed within himself an ecstatic love for Krsna. This ecstatic love is prior to the pure love of Krsna, because in the next verse Narada confirms that by the gradual process of hearing from the great sages he developed love of Godhead. In that connection, Narada continues to say in the First Canto, Fifth Chapter, verse 28, of the Bhagavatam, "First I passed my days in the association of the great sages during the rainy autumn season. Every morning and evening I heard them while they were singing and chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, and thus my heart gradually became purified. As soon as I heard them with great attention, the influence of the modes of material ignorance and passion disappeared, and I became firmly fixed in devotional service to the Lord."

These are practical examples of how one can develop to the stage of ecstatic love simply by the association of pure devotees. It is essential, therefore, that one constantly associate with pure devotees who are engaged morning and evening in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. In this way one will get the chance to purify his heart and develop this ecstatic pure love for Krsna.

~The Nectar of Devotion

By chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one's heart becomes cleansed, one's love for Krsna and eternal relationship with Him is revived, and one goes back to Godhead: In this age, we are all fallen, but the Supreme Personality of Godhead has appeared as Caitanya Mahaprabhu to bestow upon us love of Godhead directly. This was appreciated by the associates of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Rupa Gosvami said:

namo maha-vadanyaya
krsna-prema-pradaya te
krsnaya krsna-caitanya
namne gaura-tvise namah
[Madhya 19.53]

In this verse, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is described as maha–vadanya, the most munificent of charitable persons, because He gives Krsna so easily that one can attain Krsna simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. We should therefore take advantage of the benediction given by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and when by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra we are cleansed of all dirty things (ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]), we shall be able to understand very easily that Krsna is the only object of love (kirtanad eva krsnasya mukta–sangah param vrajet).

Therefore, one need not undergo severe penances for many thousands of years; one need only learn how to love Krsna and be always engaged in His service (sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah). Then one can very easily go back home, back to Godhead. Instead of bringing the Lord here for some material purpose, to have a son or whatever else, if we go back home, back to Godhead, our real relationship with the Lord is revealed, and we eternally engage in our eternal relationship. By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, we gradually develop our eternal relationship with the Supreme Person and thus attain the perfection called svarupa–siddhi. We should take advantage of this benediction and go back home, back to Godhead. Srila Narottama dasa thakura has therefore sung, patita–pavana–hetu tava avatara: Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared as an incarnation to deliver all fallen souls like us and directly bestow upon us love of Godhead. We must take advantage of this great benediction of the great Personality of Godhead.

–Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.3.37–38

Anyone who has attained transcendental affection for Krsna by constantly chanting His holy name remains satisfied in any condition of life simply by remembering the holy name: There is a statement by a person fallen in a hellish condition of life. He addressed the Supreme Lord thus: "My dear Lord, Yamaraja has placed me in a situation which is full of filthy and obnoxious smells. There are so many insects and worms, surrounded by the stools left by different kinds of diseased persons. And after seeing this horrible scene, my eyes have become sore, and I am becoming nearly blind. I therefore pray, O my Lord, O deliverer from the hellish conditions of life. I have fallen into this hell, but I shall try to remember Your holy name always, and in this way I shall try to keep my body and soul together." This is another instance of ecstatic love for Krsna in an abominable situation.

It is to be understood that any person who is constantly engaged in chanting the holy names of the Lord–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare–has attained a transcendental affection for Krsna, and as such, in

any condition of life, he remains satisfied simply by remembering the Lord's name in full affection and ecstatic love.

~The Nectar of Devotion

Whereas the holy name of Lord Rama gives liberation, the holy name of Lord Krsna gives one ecstatic love of Krsna:

[Mayadevi, in the form of a prostitute, to Haridasa thakura]:

"The holy name of Lord Rama certainly gives liberation, but the holy name of Krsna transports one to the other side of the ocean of nescience and at last gives one ecstatic love of Krsna."

In an indirect way, this verse explains the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. The Hare Krsna maha-mantra—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—includes both the holy name of Lord Krsna and the name of Lord Rama. Lord Rama gives one the opportunity to be liberated, but simply by liberation one does not get actual spiritual benefit. Sometimes if one is liberated from the material world but has no shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna, one falls down to the material world again... The Hare Krsna maha-mantra, however, gives liberation and at the same time offers shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna. If one takes shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna after liberation, he develops his dormant ecstatic love for Krsna. That is the highest perfection of life.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.257

Revival of love of God does not depend on mechanical hearing and chanting, but on the Lord's causeless mercy:

[Devotional service] is a great transcendental science and begins with the process of hearing and chanting the name, fame, glory, etc., of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Revival of the dormant affection or love of Godhead does not depend on the mechanical system of hearing and chanting, but it solely and wholly depends on the causeless mercy of the Lord. When the Lord is fully satisfied with the sincere efforts of the devotee, He may endow him with His loving transcendental service.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.7.6

21.

The Holy Name Evokes Ecstasy

Offenseless chanting of the holy name brings ecstasy:

[Lord Caitanya to Prakasananda Sarasvati]:

"After describing the potency of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, My spiritual master taught Me another verse, advising Me to always keep the name within My throat. 'In this age of Kali there is no alternative, there is no alternative, there is no alternative for spiritual progress than the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord.' Since I received this order from My spiritual master, I always chant the holy name, but I think that by chanting and chanting the holy name I have been bewildered. While chanting the holy name of the Lord in pure ecstasy, I lose Myself, and thus I laugh, cry, dance and sing just like a madman. Collecting My patience, therefore, I began to consider that chanting the holy name of Krsna had covered all My spiritual knowledge. I saw that I had become mad by chanting the holy name, and I immediately submitted this at the lotus feet of My spiritual master. 'My dear lord, what kind of mantra have you given Me? I have become mad simply by chanting this maha–mantra! Chanting the holy name in ecstasy causes one to dance, laugh and cry.' When My spiritual master heard all this, he smiled and then began to speak. 'It is the nature of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra that anyone who chants it immediately develops his loving ecstasy for Krsna.'"

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu prays in His Siksastaka:

yugayitam nimesena
caksusa pravrsayitam
sunnyayitam jagat sarvam
govinda–virahena me

"O Govinda! Feeling Your separation, I am considering a moment to be like twelve years or more. Tears are flowing from my eyes like torrents of rain, and I am feeling all vacant in the world in Your absence."

It is the aspiration of a devotee that while he chants the Hare Krsna maha–mantra his eyes will fill with tears, his voice falter and his heart throb. These are good signs in chanting the holy name of the Lord. In ecstasy, one should feel the entire world to be vacant without the presence of Govinda. This is a sign of separation from Govinda. In material life we are all

separated from Govinda and are absorbed in material sense gratification. Therefore, when one comes to his senses on the spiritual platform he becomes so eager to meet Govinda that without Govinda the entire world becomes a vacant place... In this verse [83] it is explained that one who chants the Hare Krsna mantra develops bhava, ecstasy, which is the point at which revelation begins. It is the preliminary stage in developing one's original love for God. A neophyte disciple begins by hearing and chanting, associating with devotees and practicing the regulative principles, and thus he vanquishes all of his unwanted bad habits. In this way he develops attachment for Krsna and cannot forget Krsna even for a moment. Bhava is almost the successful stage of spiritual life. A sincere student aurally receives the holy name from the spiritual master, and after being initiated he follows the regulative principles given by the spiritual master. When the holy name is properly served in this way, automatically the spiritual nature of the holy name spreads; in other words, the devotee becomes qualified in offenselessly chanting the holy name. When one is completely fit to chant the holy name in this way, he is eligible to make disciples all over the world, and he actually becomes jagad-guru. Then the entire world, under his influence, begins to chant the holy names of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Thus all the disciples of such a spiritual master increase in attachment for Krsna, and therefore he sometimes cries, sometimes laughs, sometimes dances and sometimes chants. These symptoms are very prominently manifest in the body of a pure devotee. Sometimes when our students of the Krsna consciousness movement chant and dance, even in India people are astonished to see how these foreigners have learned to chant and dance in this ecstatic fashion. As explained by Caitanya Mahaprabhu, however, actually this is not due to practice, for without extra endeavor these symptoms become manifest in anyone who sincerely chants the Hare Krsna maha-mantra... While chanting and dancing or hearing the holy name of the Lord, one automatically remembers the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and because there is no difference between the holy name and Krsna, the chanter is immediately linked with Krsna. Thus connected a devotee develops his original attitude of service to the Lord. In this attitude of constantly serving Krsna, which is called bhava, one always thinks of Krsna in many different ways. One who has attained this bhava stage is no longer under the clutches of the illusory energy. When other spiritual ingredients, such as trembling, perspiration, tears, etc., are added to this bhava stage, the devotee gradually attains love of Krsna.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.75-83

One who chants offenselessly develops symptoms of ecstasy and becomes eligible to enter the kingdom of God:

[Lord Brahma to the demigods]:

Persons whose bodily features change in ecstasy and who breathe heavily and perspire due

to hearing the glories of the Lord are promoted to the kingdom of God, even though they do not care for meditation and other austerities...

When one is free from all ten offenses in chanting the holy name of God, he develops the ecstatic bodily features called pulakasru. Pulaka means "symptoms of happiness," and asru means "tears in the eyes." The symptoms of happiness and tears in the eyes must appear in a person who has chanted the holy name offenselessly. Here in this verse it is stated that those who have actually developed the symptoms of happiness and tears in the eyes by chanting the glories of the Lord are eligible to enter the kingdom of God.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.15.25

By hearing the holy name, the devotee is merged in transcendental bliss:

[Lord Caitanya to Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya]:

"In conclusion, dealings in affection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead bring happiness many millions of times greater than dealings with Him in awe and veneration. Simply by hearing the holy name of the Lord, the devotee is merged in transcendental bliss."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 10.140

The holy name enables one to taste the full nectar of transcendental life at every step:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"... The chanting of the holy name of Krsna expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life. It gives a cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste full nectar at every step."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.12

One who chants the holy name is blessed by Krsna and experiences devotional ecstasy:

[Lord Caitanya to Amogha]:

"Therefore, Amogha, get up and chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra! If you do so, Krsna will unfailingly bestow mercy upon you." After hearing Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and being touched by Him, Amogha, who was on his deathbed, immediately stood up and began to chant the holy name of Krsnu. Thus he became mad with ecstatic love and began to dance emotionally. While Amogha danced in ecstatic love, he manifested all the ecstatic symptoms-trembling, tears, jubilation, trance, perspiration and a faltering voice. Seeing

these waves of ecstatic emotion, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu began to laugh.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 15.277-79

Chanting brings one to the spiritual platform of ecstasy:

By practical experience also, one can perceive that by chanting this maha-mantra, or the Great Chanting for Deliverance, one can at once feel a transcendental ecstasy coming through from the spiritual stratum.

In the beginning, there may not be the presence of all transcendental ecstasies, which are eight in number. These are: (1) being stopped as though dumb, (2) perspiration, (3) standing up of hairs on the body, (4) dislocation of voice, (5) trembling, (6) fading of the body, (7) crying in ecstasy, and (8) trance. But there is no doubt that chanting for a while takes one immediately to the spiritual platform, and one shows the first symptom of this in the urge to dance along with the chanting of the mantra. We have seen this practically. Even a child can take part in the chanting and dancing. Of course, for one who is too entangled in material life, it takes a little more time to come to the standard point, but even such a materially engrossed man is raised to the spiritual platform very quickly.

~The Science of Self-Realization

A small attachment for chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa (etc.) can arouse devotional ecstasy even in a neophyte:

Rupa Gosvami has stated that the five kinds of devotional activities—namely, residing in Mathura, worshiping the Deity of the Lord, reciting Srimad-Bhagavatam, serving a devotee, and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra—are so potent that a small attachment for any one of these five items can arouse devotional ecstasy even in a neophyte.

~The Nectar of Devotion

If materialistic persons would use their dry tongues to chant the holy name, they would taste sweet nectar and enjoy life:

O my merciful Lord Caitanya, may the nectarean Ganges water of Your transcendental activities flow on the surface of my desertlike tongue. Beautifying these waters are the lotus flowers of singing, dancing and loud chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy name, which are the pleasure abodes of unalloyed devotees. These devotees are compared to swans, ducks and bees. The

river's flowing produces a melodious sound that gladdens their ears.

Lord Caitanya's movement of Krsna consciousness is full of dancing and singing about the pastimes of Lord Krsna. It is compared herein to the pure waters of the Ganges, which are full of lotus flowers. The enjoyers of these lotus flowers are the pure devotees, who are like bees and swans. They chant like the flowing of the Ganges, the river of the celestial kingdom. The author desires such sweetly flowing waves to cover his tongue. He humbly compares himself to materialistic persons who always engage in dry talk from which they derive no satisfaction. If they were to use their dry tongues to chant the holy name of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—as exemplified by Lord Caitanya, they would taste sweet nectar and enjoy life.

~Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Adi—lila 2.2

By the simple process of chanting, one's transcendental bliss simply increases: [Krsna consciousness] is called avyayam. Vyaya means "exhaustion." For example, one may have a hundred dollars, and if they are spent one after another, the next day it will come to zero. That is vyaya, exhaustible. But Krsna consciousness is not like that. If you cultivate this knowledge of Krsna consciousness, then it will increase. That is certified by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Anandambudhi—vardhanam. Ananda means "pleasure," "transcendental bliss," and ambudhi means "ocean." In the material world we see that the ocean does not increase. But if one cultivates Krsna consciousness, then his transcendental bliss will simply increase. Anandambudhi—vardhanam. And I shall always remind everyone that the process is very simple. Anyone can chant, anywhere, without taxation or loss, but the gain is very great.

~The Science of Self—Realization

The word rasa means "taste," or "mellow." We enjoy sweets or candy because of their taste. Everyone is trying to enjoy some taste, and we want to enjoy sex because there is some taste there. That is called adi taste. Material tastes are different because they are tasted and quickly finished. Material tastes last only a few minutes. You may take a piece of candy, taste it, and say, "Oh, that is very nice," but you have to taste another in order to continue the enjoyment. Material taste is not unlimited, but real taste is without end. Spiritual taste cannot be forgotten; it goes on increasing. Anandambudhi—vardhanam. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, "This taste is always increasing." Spiritual taste is like the ocean in the sense that it is very great. The Pacific Ocean is always tossing, but it is not increasing. By God's order, the ocean does not extend beyond its limit, and if it extends, there is havoc.

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that there is another ocean, an ocean of transcendental bliss, an ocean that is always increasing. Anandambudhi–vardhanam pratipadam purnamrtasvadanam/ sarvatma–snapanam param vijayate sri–krsna–sankirtanam. By chanting Hare Krsna, our pleasure potency increases more and more.

~The Path of Perfection

A pure devotee absorbed in chanting the holy name of Krsna merges into the ocean of love of Krsna:

To realize our relationship with Krsna, we have but to follow in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya and His chief associates, the six Gosvamis–Sri Rupa, Sanatana, Sri Jiva, Gopala, Raghunatha dasa, and Raghunatha Bhatta. These Gosvamis were always engaged in chanting Hare Krsna and dancing in ecstasy. They taught that when one is merged in krsna–kirtana, or the chanting of the holy names of Krsna, he merges into the ocean of love of Krsna. As soon as the sound of Krsna's name is vibrated, one can immediately merge into the ocean of love. That is the sign of pure devotion. Thus at kirtanas the six Gosvamis would merge immediately into the ocean of love of Godhead.

~The Science of Self–Realization

A devotee should long for the day when, by chanting the holy name, symptoms of ecstasy will appear in his body:

The fruit of love of Godhead distributed by Caitanya Mahaprabhu is such a great intoxicant that anyone who eats it, filling his belly, immediately becomes maddened by it, and automatically he chants, dances, laughs and enjoys... The great gardener, Lord Caitanya, personally eats this fruit, and as a result He constantly remains mad, as if helpless and bewildered. With His sankirtana movement the Lord made everyone mad like Himself. We do not find anyone who was not intoxicated by His sankirtana movement.

While chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu sometimes fainted and remained unconscious for many hours. He prays in His Siksastaka:

yugayitam nimesena
caksusa pravrsayitam
sunyayitam jagat sarvam
govinda–virahena me

"O Govinda! Feeling Your separation, I am considering a moment to be like twelve years or more. Tears are flowing from my eyes like torrents of rain, and I am feeling all vacant in the world in Your absence." (Siksastaka 7)

This is the perfectional stage of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra and eating the fruit of love of Godhead, as exhibited by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. One should not artificially imitate this stage, but if one is serious and sincerely follows the regulative principles and chants the Hare Krsna mantra, the time will come when these symptoms will appear. Tears will fill his eyes, and he will be unable to chant distinctly the maha-mantra, and his heart will throb in ecstasy. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that one should not imitate this, but a devotee should long for the day to come when such symptoms of trance will automatically appear in his body.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 9.49-52

A devotee's aspiration to chant in ecstasy:

"O lotus-eyed one, when will I be able to always chant Your holy name, and being inspired by that chanting, when will I be able to dance on the banks of the Yamuna?"

~Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.2. 156)

~[cited: Teachings of Lord Caitanya]

"My dear Lord, O lotus-eyed one, when will that day come when on the bank of the Yamuna, I shall become just like a madman, and continue to chant Your holy name while incessant tears flow from my eyes?"

~Narada-pancaratra

~[cited: The Nectar of Devotion]

The whole universe becomes ecstatic by the influence of the transcendental vibration of the holy name:

The goodness of the great sage Narada Muni is described herewith. He always chants about the pastimes of the Lord and delivers the fallen souls back to Godhead. In this regard, Srila Bhaktivinoda thakura has sung:

narada muni, bajaya vina,
'radhika-ramana'-name
nama amani, udita haya,

bhakata–gita–same
amiya–dhara, varise ghana,
sravana–yugale giya
bhakata jana, saghane nace,

bhariya apana hiya
madhuri–pura, asaba pasi',
mataya jagata–jane
keha va kande, keha va nace,

keha mate mane mane
panca–vadana, narade dhari',
premera saghana rola
kamalasana, naciya bale,
'bola bola hari bola'
sahasranana, parama–sukhe,
'hari hari' bali' gaya
nama–prabhava, matila visva,

nama–rasa sabe paya
sri–krsna–nama, rasane sphuri',
pura 'la amara asa
sri–rupa–pade, yacaye iha,
bhaktivinoda dasa

The purport of this song is that Narada Muni, the great soul, plays a stringed instrument called a vina, vibrating the sound radhika–ramana, which is another name for Krsna. As soon as he strokes the strings, all the devotees begin responding, making a very beautiful vibration. Accompanied by the stringed instrument, the singing seems like a shower of nectar, and all the devotees dance in ecstasy to the fullest extent of their satisfaction. While dancing, they appear madly intoxicated with ecstasy, as if drinking the beverage called madhuri–pura. Some of them cry, some of them dance, and some of them, although unable to dance publicly, dance within their hearts. Lord Siva embraces Narada Muni and begins talking in an ecstatic voice, and seeing Lord Siva dancing with Narada, Lord Brahma also joins, saying, "All of you kindly chant 'Hari bol! Hari bol!'" The King of heaven, Indra, also gradually joins with great satisfaction and begins dancing and chanting "Hari bol! Hari bol!" In this way, by the influence of the transcendental vibration of the holy name of God, the whole universe becomes ecstatic. Bhaktivinoda thakura says, "When the universe

becomes ecstatic, my desire is satisfied. I therefore pray unto the lotus feet of Rupa Gosvami that this chanting of harer nama [Adi 17.21] may go on nicely like this."
~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.5.22

Nama–sankirtana makes the world dance in ecstasy:

[Lord Krsna, thinking to Himself]:

"I shall personally inaugurate the religion of the age–nama–sankirtana, the congregational chanting of the holy name. I shall make the world dance in ecstasy, realizing the four mellows of loving devotional service."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 3.19

To taste the nectar of the holy name, great demigods and sages, and even Krsna Himself, descended in human form:

During the incarnation of Lord Caitanya to inaugurate the Krsna consciousness movement, even such personalities as Lord Brahma, Lord Siva and the four Kumaras took birth upon this earth, being allured by ecstatic love of Lord Krsna. All of them, including the great sage Narada and devotees like Prahlada, came here as if human beings, chanting the holy names of Lord Krsna together and dancing and floating in the inundation of love of Godhead. The goddess of fortune and others, allured by love of Krsna, also came down in the form of human beings and tasted the holy name of the Lord in love. What to speak of others, even Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, personally descends to taste the nectar of love of Godhead in the form of the chanting of Hare Krsna.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 3.262–65

Those who have tasted the nectar of chanting the holy name do not care for any other spiritual bliss or for material comforts:

[The personified Vedas said:]

"The most intelligent devotees do not take to any means of self–realization except devotional service and constant engagement in the nine different processes of devotional life, especially hearing and chanting. When hearing and chanting about Your transcendental pastimes, Your devotees do not care even for the transcendental bliss derived from liberation or from merging into the existence of the Supreme. Such devotees are not interested even in so–called liberation, and certainly they have no interest in material

activities for elevation to the heavenly planets for sense gratification. Pure devotees seek only the association of paramahamsas, or great liberated devotees, so that they can continually hear and chant about Your glories. For this purpose the pure devotees are prepared to sacrifice all comforts of life, even giving up the material comforts of family life and so-called society, friendship and love. Those who have tasted the nectar of devotion by relishing the transcendental vibration of chanting Your glories, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, do not care for any other spiritual bliss or for material comforts, which appear to the pure devotee to be less important than the straw in the street."

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Bhava results from understanding that Krsna's person and name are identical: The transcendental ecstatic attachment for Krsna which results from perfectly understanding that Krsna's person and name are identical is called bhava. One who has attained bhava is certainly not contaminated by material nature. He actually enjoys transcendental pleasure from bhava, and when bhava is intensified, it is called love of Godhead. Lord Caitanya told Prakasananda Sarasvati that the holy name of Krsna, called the maha-mantra (great chanting), enables anyone who chants it to attain the stage of love of Godhead, or intensified bhava.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

The bliss derived from chanting the holy name is far greater than the happiness of impersonal Brahman realization:

[Lord Caitanya to Prakasananda Sarasvati]:

"Compared to the ocean of transcendental bliss which is tasted by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, the pleasure derived from impersonal Brahman realization [brahmananda] is like the shallow water in a canal."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.97

Impersonalists' apparent ecstatic reactions to chanting the holy name are merely reflections of ecstatic love:

Sometimes impersonalists who are not actually in devotional service may also exhibit such symptoms of ecstatic love, but this is not accepted as actual ecstasy. It is a reflection only.

For example, sometimes in Varanasi, a holy city for impersonalist scholars, there may be seen a sannyasi crying from hearing the glories of the Lord. Impersonalists also sometimes chant the Hare Krsna mantra and dance, but their aim is not to serve the Lord. It is to become one with the Lord and merge into His existence. Rupa Gosvami therefore says that even if the reactions to chanting are manifested in the impersonalist's body, they should not be considered to be symptoms of actual attachment, but reflections only, just like the sun reflected in a dark room through some polished glass. The chanting of Hare Krsna, however, is so nice and transcendental that it will eventually melt even the hearts of persons who are impersonalists. Rupa Gosvami says that the impersonalists' symptoms are simply reflections of ecstatic love, not the real thing.

~The Nectar of Devotion

22.

Chanting of the Holy Name in the State of Ecstasy

In the stage of bhava, the devotee is strongly attached to the process of chanting:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"Due to having a great relish for the holy name, one is inclined to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra constantly. 'O Govinda, this youthful girl named Radhika is today constantly pouring forth tears like nectar falling from flowers. She is also singing Your holy name in a sweet voice.' At this stage of bhava, a devotee has awakened the tendency to chant and describe the transcendental qualities of the Lord. He has attachment for this process... 'O Lord Pundarikaksa, while chanting Your holy name with tears in my eyes, when shall I dance in ecstasy on the bank of the Yamuna?' These are the symptoms of a person who has developed attraction [bhava] for Krsna."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 23.32-34, 37-38

[The quoted statements are found in Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu, 1.3.38 and 1.2.156 respectively.]

Strong attachment to chanting as a characteristic of ecstatic love:

Rupa Gosvami next describes the characteristics of a person who has actually developed his ecstatic love for Krsna. The characteristics are as follows: ... 7) He is very much attached to

the chanting of the holy names of the Lord...

~The Nectar of Devotion

Taste for chanting the holy name as a subordinate sign of ecstatic emotion:

"When the seed of ecstatic emotion for Krsna fructifies, the following nine symptoms manifest in one's behavior: forgiveness, concern that time should not be wasted, detachment, absence of false prestige, hope, eagerness, a taste for chanting the holy name of the Lord, attachment to descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and affection for those places where the Lord resides—that is, a temple or a holy place like Vrndavana. These are all called anubhava, subordinate signs of ecstatic emotion. They are visible in a person in whose heart the seed of love of God has begun to fructify."

~Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.3.25–26

~[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 23.18–19]

An advanced devotee experiences ecstasy in chanting the holy name:

[Kavi to Maharaja Nimi]:

"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."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.40

~[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.262 and Madhya-lila 23.41]

While chanting the holy name, a pure devotee manifests symptoms of ecstasy:

[isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

"It is a characteristic of love of Godhead that by nature it induces transcendental symptoms in one's body and makes one more and more greedy to achieve the shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord. When one actually develops love of Godhead, he naturally sometimes cries, sometimes laughs, sometimes chants and sometimes runs here and there just like a madman. Perspiration, trembling, standing of one's bodily hairs, tears, faltering, fading, madness, melancholy, patience, pride, joy and humility—these are various natural symptoms of ecstatic love of Godhead, which causes a devotee to dance and float in an ocean of transcendental bliss while chanting the Hare Krsna mantra."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.87–90

A pure devotee, whose consciousness is absorbed in the Supreme Lord, chants the holy name in ecstasy:

[Prahlada Maharaja to his schoolmates]:

When a devotee becomes like a person haunted by a ghost, he laughs and very loudly chants about the qualities of the Lord. Sometimes he sits to perform meditation, and he offers respect to every living entity, considering him a devotee of the Lord. Constantly breathing very heavily, he becomes careless of social etiquette and loudly chants like a madman, "Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna! O my Lord, O master of the universe!"

When one chants the holy name of the Lord in ecstasy, not caring for outward social conventions, it is to be understood that he is atmamati. In other words, his consciousness is turned toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.7.35

Ecstatic chanting as a symptom of actual love of Godhead:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"Now hear from Me what actual love of Godhead is. It is the prime object of life and is symptomized by bodily trembling, tears in the eyes, chanting and dancing."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.139

Physical symptoms of ecstasy produced by chanting the holy name:

[Lord Caitanya said]:

"My dear Lord, when will My eyes be beautified by filling with tears that constantly glide down as I chant Your holy name? When will My voice falter and all the hairs on My body stand erect in transcendental happiness as I chant Your holy name?"

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.36

Effects of the ecstatic chanting of the name of Krsna:

"I do not know how much nectar the two syllables 'Krs-na' have produced. When the holy name of Krsna is chanted, it appears to dance within the mouth. We then desire many, many

mouths. When that name 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."

~Vidagdha–madhava (1.15), by Rupa Gosvami
~[cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 1.99]

Narada Muni's ecstatic symptoms due to chanting the Hare Krsna mantra:

When there was stretching of the body of Narada Muni from chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, he chanted so loudly that it was apprehended that Lord Nrsimha had appeared. Thus all the demons began to flee in different directions.

~The Nectar of Devotion

The spiritual master experiences ecstasy in chanting the holy name:

mahaprabhoh kirtana–nrtya–gita
vaditra–madyan–manaso rasena
romanca–kampasru–taranga–bhajo
vande guroh sri–caranaravindam

"Chanting the holy name, dancing in ecstasy, singing, and playing musical instruments, the spiritual master is always gladdened by the sankirtana movement of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Because he is relishing the mellows of pure devotion within his mind, sometimes his hair stands on end, he feels quivering in his body, and tears flow from his eyes like waves. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master."

~Sri Sri Gurv–astaka (verse 2), by Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura

Those who chant Hare Krsna in ecstasy are unconcerned with the derision of outsiders:

"We shall not care for any outsiders. If they should deride us, we shall still not care for them. We shall simply enjoy the transcendental mellow of chanting Hare Krsna, and thus we shall roll on the ground and dance ecstatically. In this way we shall enjoy transcendental bliss."

~Padyavali, by Rupa Gosvami

[cited: The Nectar of Devotion]

Those who chant the holy name in spontaneous ecstatic love can taste the sweetness of Krsna's pastimes:

[Lord Caitanya to Rupa Gosvami]:

"The transcendental mellows generated from the dealings between the gopis and Krsna cannot be tasted by fruitive activity, yogic austerities, speculative knowledge, regulative devotional service, mantra–yoga or meditation. This sweetness can be tasted only through the spontaneous love of liberated persons who chant the holy names with great ecstatic love."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 21.119

Hearing and chanting in the stage of love of Godhead:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"When the permanent ecstasies [neutrality, servitorship, and so on] are mixed with other ingredients, devotional service in love of Godhead is transformed and becomes composed of transcendental mellows."

In Bhakti–rasamrta–sindhu, the following definition is given:

athasyah kesava–rater
laksitaya nigadyate
samagri–pariposena
parama rasa–rupata
vibhavair anubhavais ca

sattvikair vyabhicaribhih
svadyatvam hrdi bhaktanam
anita sravanadibhih
esa krsna–ratih sthayi
bhavo bhakti–raso bhavet

Love for Krsna, Kesava, as previously described, reaches the supreme state of being composed of mellows when its ingredients are fulfilled. By means of vibhava, anubhava, sattvika and vyabhicari, hearing and chanting are activated, and the devotee is able to taste

love for Kṛṣṇa. Then attachment for Kṛṣṇa, or permanent ecstasy (sthayi–bhava), becomes the mellow of devotional service (bhakti–rasa).

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 23.47

23.

By Chanting the Holy Name, One Returns Home, Back to Godhead

In Kali–yuga, one can attain liberation and return to the spiritual kingdom by chanting the holy name:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Parikṣit]:

"My dear King, although Kali–yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom."

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 12.3.51

~[cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 20.344]

By chanting, one becomes liberated and returns home, back to Godhead:

[Lord Caitanya to Satyaraja]:

"...One simply has to vibrate the holy name with his lips. Thus even a man in the lowest class [candala] can be delivered."

Although chanting the holy name is good for both the conditioned and liberated soul, it is especially beneficial to the conditioned soul because by chanting it one is liberated. When a person who chants the holy name is liberated, he attains the ultimate perfection by returning home, back to Godhead... Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 15.108

By chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, one's heart becomes cleansed, one's love for Kṛṣṇa and eternal relationship with Him is revived, and one goes back to Godhead:

In this age, we are all fallen, but the Supreme Personality of Godhead has appeared as Caitanya Mahaprabhu to bestow upon us love of Godhead directly. This was appreciated by the associates of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Rupa Gosvami said:

namo maha–vadanyaya
krsna–prema–pradaya te
krsnaya krsna–caitanya
namne gaura–tvisē namah
[Madhya 19.53]

In this verse, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is described as maha–vadanya, the most munificent of charitable persons, because He gives Krsna so easily that one can attain Krsna simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. We should therefore take advantage of the benediction given by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and when by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra we are cleansed of all dirty things (ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]), we shall be able to understand very easily that Krsna is the only object of love (kirtanad eva krsnasya mukta–sangah param vrajet).

Therefore, one need not undergo severe penances for many thousands of years; one need only learn how to love Krsna and be always engaged in His service (sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah). Then one can very easily go back home, back to Godhead. Instead of bringing the Lord here for some material purpose, to have a son or whatever else, if we go back home, back to Godhead, our real relationship with the Lord is revealed, and we eternally engage in our eternal relationship. By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, we gradually develop our eternal relationship with the Supreme Person and thus attain the perfection called svarupa–siddhi. We should take advantage of this benediction and go back home, back to Godhead. Srila Narottama dasa thakura has therefore sung, patita–pavana–hetu tava avatara: Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared as an incarnation to deliver all fallen souls like us and directly bestow upon us love of Godhead. We must take advantage of this great benediction of the great Personality of Godhead.
–Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.3.37–38

By chanting Hare Krsna one can become purified of all material contamination and return home, back to Godhead:

Generally people are not aware of their interest in life—to return home, back to Godhead. People do not know about their real home in the spiritual world. In the spiritual world there are many Vaikuntha planets, and the topmost planet is Krsnaloka, Goloka Vrndavana... One

should be intelligent enough to return to Godhead. One should be interested in information about the spiritual Vaikuntha planets, and in particular the planet known as Goloka Vrndavana, and should learn the art of going there by the simple method of devotional service, beginning with hearing (sravanam kirtanam visnoh [SB 7.5.23]). This is also confirmed in Srimad–Bhagavatam (12.3.51):

kaler dosa–nidhe rajann
asti hy eko mahan gunah
kirtanad eva krsnasya
mukta–sangah param vrajet

One can go to the supreme planet (param vrajet) simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. This is especially meant for the people of this age (kaler dosa–nidheh). It is the special advantage of this age that simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra one can become purified of all material contamination and return home, back to Godhead. There is no doubt about this.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.29.48

If one constantly thinks of Krsna by chanting His holy name, he will return to Krsnaloka at the time of death:

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

And whoever, at the time of death, quits his body, remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.

In this verse the importance of Krsna consciousness is stressed. Anyone who quits his body in Krsna consciousness is at once transferred to the transcendental abode of the Supreme Lord. The word smarana (remembering) is important. Remembrance of Krsna is not possible for the impure soul who has not practiced Krsna consciousness in devotional service. To remember Krsna one should chant the maha–mantra, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, incessantly, following in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya, being more tolerant than the tree, humbler than the grass and offering all respect to others without requiring respect in return. In such a way one will be able to depart from the body successfully remembering Krsna and so attain the supreme goal.

Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail.

The process of changing one's nature at the critical moment of death is here explained. How can one die in the proper state of mind? Maharaja Bharata thought of a deer at the time of death and so was transferred to that form of life. However, as a deer, Maharaja Bharata could remember his past activities. Of course the cumulative effect of the thoughts and actions of one's life influences one's thoughts at the moment of death; therefore the actions of this life determine one's future state of being. If one is transcendently absorbed in Krsna's service, then his next body will be transcendental (spiritual), not physical. Therefore the chanting of Hare Krsna is the best process for successfully changing one's state of being to transcendental life.

Therefore, Arjuna, you should always think of Me in the form of Krsna and at the same time carry out your prescribed duty of fighting. With your activities dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt.

This instruction to Arjuna is very important for all men engaged in material activities. The Lord does not say that one should give up his prescribed duties or engagements. One can continue them and at the same time think of Krsna by chanting Hare Krsna. This will free one from material contamination and engage the mind and intelligence in Krsna. By chanting Krsna's names, one will be transferred to the supreme planet, Krsnaloka, without a doubt.

He who meditates on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his mind constantly engaged in remembering Me, undeviated from the path, he, O Partha [Arjuna], is sure to reach Me.

In this verse Lord Krsna stresses the importance of remembering Him. One's memory of Krsna is revived by chanting the maha-mantra, Hare Krsna. By this practice of chanting and hearing the sound vibration of the Supreme Lord, one's ear and tongue and mind are engaged. This mystic meditation is very easy to practice, and it helps one attain the Supreme Lord... The devotee can constantly think of the object of worship, the Supreme Lord, in any of His features, Narayana, Krsna, Rama, etc., by chanting Hare Krsna. This practice will purify him, and at the end of his life, due to his constant chanting, he will be transferred to the kingdom of God. Yoga practice is meditation on the Supersoul within; similarly, by chanting Hare Krsna one fixes his mind always on the Supreme Lord. The mind is fickle, and therefore it is necessary to engage the mind by force to think of Krsna. One example often given is that of the caterpillar that thinks of becoming a butterfly and so is transformed into a butterfly in the same life. Similarly, if we constantly think of Krsna, it is certain that at the end of our lives we shall have the same bodily constitution as Krsna.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 8.5-8

One who chants the holy name of the Lord constantly during one's life can, at the time of death, return home, back to Godhead:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

While suffering at the time of death, Ajamila chanted the holy name of the Lord, and although the chanting was directed toward his son, he nevertheless returned home, back to Godhead. Therefore if one faithfully and inoffensively chants the holy name of the Lord, where is the doubt that he will return to Godhead?

At the time of death one is certainly bewildered because his bodily functions are in disorder. At that time, even one who throughout his life has practiced chanting the holy name of the Lord may not be able to chant the Hare Krsna mantra very distinctly. Nevertheless, such a person receives all the benefits of chanting the holy name. While the body is fit, therefore, why should we not chant the holy name of the Lord loudly and distinctly? If one does so, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be properly able to chant the holy name of the Lord with love and faith. In conclusion, one who chants the holy name of the Lord constantly is guaranteed to return home, back to Godhead, without a doubt.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.49

Those who chant the maha-mantra escape continual rebirth and go to the spiritual planet of Krsna, even in this life:

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

When Brahma's day is manifest, this multitude of living entities comes into being, and at the arrival of Brahma's night they are all annihilated.

The less intelligent jivas try to remain within this material world and are accordingly elevated and degraded in the various planetary systems. During the daytime of Brahma they exhibit their activities, and at the coming of Brahma's night they are annihilated. In the day they receive various bodies for material activities, and at night these bodies perish. The jivas (individual souls) remain compact in the body of Visnu and again and again are manifest at the arrival of Brahma's day. When Brahma's life is finally finished, they are all annihilated and remain unmanifest for millions and millions of years. Finally, when Brahma is born again in another millennium, they are again manifest. In this way the jivas are captivated by the material world. However, those intelligent beings who take to Krsna

consciousness and chant Hare Krsna, Hare Rama in devotional service transfer themselves, even in this life, to the spiritual planet of Krsna and become eternally blissful there, not being subject to such rebirths.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 8.18

Better than performing Vedic ritualistic ceremonies to go to higher material planets is to chant the holy name and return home, back to Godhead:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

One who constantly hears and chants the holy name of the Lord and hears and chants about His activities can very easily attain the platform of pure devotional service, which can cleanse the dirt from one's heart. One cannot achieve such purification merely by observing vows and performing Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. Devotees who always lick the honey from the lotus feet of Lord Krsna do not care at all for material activities, which are performed under the three modes of material nature and which bring only misery. Indeed, devotees never give up the lotus feet of Krsna to return to material activities. Others, however, who are addicted to Vedic rituals because they have neglected the service of the Lord's lotus feet and are enchanted by lusty desires, sometimes perform acts of atonement. Nevertheless, being incompletely purified, they return to sinful activities again and again.

One may very easily practice chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord and thus become ecstatic in spiritual life... There is no profit, however, in executing the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. By performing such activities one may go to the higher planetary systems, but as stated in Bhagavad-gita (9.21), *ksine punye martya-lokam visanti*: when the period of one's enjoyment in the heavenly planets is terminated because of the limited extent of the results of one's pious activities, one must return to earth. Thus there is no use in endeavoring to travel up and down in the universe. It is better to chant the holy name of the Lord so that one may become fully purified and eligible to return home, back to Godhead. That is the aim of life, and that is the perfection of life...

A devotee's duty is to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. One may sometimes chant with offenses and sometimes without offenses, but if one seriously adopts this process, he will achieve perfection, which cannot be achieved through Vedic ritualistic ceremonies of atonement. Persons who are attached to the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies, but do not believe in devotional service, who advise atonement, but do not appreciate the chanting of the Lord's holy name, fail to achieve the highest perfection. Devotees, therefore, being completely detached from material enjoyment, never give up Krsna consciousness for Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. Those who are attached to Vedic ritualistic ceremonies

because of lusty desires are subjected to the tribulations of material existence again and again. Maharaja Pariksit has compared their activities to kunjara–sauca, the bathing of an elephant.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.3.32–33

The purpose of the Krsna consciousness movement is to teach the people in general how to enter the kingdom of God in the next life through the chanting of the names of God:

It is not possible in our human condition to understand the Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead completely, but with the help of Bhagavad–gita, the statements given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and of the spiritual master, we can know Him to the best of our capacity. If we can know Him in reality, then immediately after leaving this body we can enter into the kingdom of God. Krsna says, *tyaktva deham punar janma naiti mam eti so 'rjuna*: "After leaving this body, one who is in knowledge does not come again to this material world, for he enters into the spiritual world and comes to Me." (Bg. 4.9)

The purpose of our Krsna consciousness movement is to propagate this advanced scientific idea to people in general, and the process is very simple. Simply by chanting the holy names of God–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—one cleanses the dirt from his heart and gains understanding that he is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord and that it is his duty to serve Him. This process is very pleasant: we chant the Hare Krsna mantra, we dance rhythmically, and we eat nice prasada. While enjoying this life, we are preparing to enter into the kingdom of God in our next life. This is not a fabrication—it is factual.

~Easy Journey to Other Planets

By chanting the holy name, the soul is attracted by Krsna to go back to Godhead: Recognizing Krsna to be the Supreme Brahman, Arjuna addresses Him, *sthane hrsikesa...* "The world becomes joyful hearing Your name, and thus do all become attached to You." [Bg. 11.36] The process of chanting is herein authorized as the direct means of contacting the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. Simply by chanting the holy name Krsna, the soul is attracted by the Supreme Person, Krsna, to go home, back to Godhead.

~The Science of Self–Realization

Even if performed without knowledge or education, chanting the holy name (and dancing and taking prasada) will lead anyone, even an animal, back to Godhead:

When all the devotees came to the place of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, they saw that the same dog was sitting a little apart from the Lord. Furthermore, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was throwing remnants of green coconut pulp to the dog. Smiling in His own way, He was saying to the dog, "Chant the holy names Rama, Krsna, and Hari." Seeing the dog eating the green coconut pulp and chanting "Krsna, Krsna" again and again, all the devotees present were very much surprised. When he saw the dog sitting in that way and chanting the name of Krsna, Sivananda, because of his natural humility, immediately offered his obeisances to the dog just to counteract his offenses to it. The next day, no one saw that dog, for it had obtained its spiritual body and departed for Vaikuntha, the spiritual kingdom. Such are the transcendental pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the son of mother Saci. He even delivered a dog simply by inducing it to chant the maha-mantra, Hare Krsna.

This is the result of sadhu-sanga, consequent association with Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and promotion back home, back to Godhead. This result is possible even for a dog, by the mercy of the Vaisnava. Therefore, everyone in the human form of life should be induced to associate with devotees. By rendering a little service, even by eating prasada, not to speak of chanting and dancing, everyone could be promoted to Vaikunthaloka. It is therefore requested that all our devotees in the ISKCON community become pure Vaisnavas, so that by their mercy all the people of the world will be transferred to Vaikunthaloka, even without their knowledge. Everyone should be given a chance to take prasada and thus be induced to chant the holy names Hare Krsna and also dance in ecstasy. By these three processes, although performed without knowledge or education, even an animal went back to Godhead.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 1.28-33

Even unintentional chanting of the holy name, if offenseless, will take one back to Godhead:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

While suffering at the time of death, Ajamila chanted the holy name of the Lord, and although the chanting was directed toward his son, he nevertheless returned home, back to Godhead. Therefore, if one faithfully and inoffensively chants the holy name of the Lord, where is the doubt that he will return to Godhead?

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.49

24.

Even Improper Chanting of the Holy Name Yields Beneficial Results

General instructions

Even if one chants the holy name imperfectly, he still easily attains liberation:

[A disciple of Prakasananda Sarasvati to an assembly of disciples]:

"In this age of Kali, one cannot attain liberation without taking to the devotional service of the Lord. In this age, even if one does not chant the holy name of Krsna perfectly, he still attains liberation very easily."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.30

Even imperfectly uttered, the holy name frees one from sin:

[Haridasa thakura to Lord Caitanya]:

Namacarya Haridasa thakura continued, "If one offenselessly utters the holy name even imperfectly, one can be freed from all the results of sinful life."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.61

In any condition or for any reason, if one chants the holy name of the Lord, he is freed from all sins:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

Even if he be distressed or degraded, any person who chants the holy name of the Lord, having heard it from a bona fide spiritual master, is immediately purified. Even if he chants the Lord's name jokingly or by chance, he and anyone who hears him are freed from all sins.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.25.11

Even chanting that is indirect, frivolous, neglectful (etc.), frees one from sin:

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:

One who chants the holy name of the Lord is immediately freed from the reactions of unlimited sins, even if he chants indirectly [to indicate something else], jokingly, for musical entertainment, or even neglectfully. This is accepted by all the learned scholars of the scriptures.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.2.14

Conditions of effectiveness of partial or improper uttering of the holy name:

[Haridasa thakura to Lord Caitanya]:

"The letters of the holy name have so much spiritual potency that they act even when uttered improperly."

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura states that the word *vyavahita* ("improperly uttered") is not used here to refer to the mundane vibration of the letters of the alphabet. Such negligent utterance for the sense gratification of materialistic persons is not a vibration of transcendental sound. Utterance of the holy name while one engages in sense gratification is an impediment on the path toward achieving ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa. On the other hand, if one who is eager for devotional service utters the holy name even partially or improperly, the holy name, who is identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, exhibits its spiritual potency because of that person's offenseless utterance. Thus one is relieved from all unwanted practices, and one gradually awakens his dormant love for Kṛṣṇa.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Antya–lila 3.59

Whether vibrated properly or improperly, the holy name will liberate the chanter providing it is not done to facilitate sinning:

"If a devotee once utters the holy name of the Lord, or if it penetrates his mind or enters his ear, which is the channel of aural reception, that holy name will certainly deliver him from material bondage, whether vibrated properly or improperly, with correct or incorrect grammar, and properly joined or vibrated in separate parts. O brahmana, the potency of the holy name is therefore certainly great. However, if one uses the vibration of the holy name for the benefit of the material body, for material wealth and followers, or under the influence of greed or atheism—in other words, if one utters the name with offenses—such chanting will not produce the desired result very soon. Therefore one should diligently avoid offenses in chanting the holy name of the Lord."

This verse from the Padma Purana is included in the Hari–bhakti–vilasa (11.527) by Sanatana Gosvami.

Therein Srila Sanatana Gosvami gives the following explanation:

sarvebhyah papebhyo 'paradhebhyas ca samsarad apy uddharayaty eveti satyam eva; kintu nama–sevanasya mukhyam yat phalam, tan na sadyah sampadyate. tatha deha–bharanady–artham api nama–sevanena mukhyam phalam asu na sidhyatity aha–tac ced iti.

The holy name has so much spiritual potency that it can deliver one from all sinful reactions and material entanglements, but utterance of the holy name will not be very soon fruitful if done to facilitate sinning.

tan nama ced yadi dehadi–madhye niksiptam– deha– bharanady–artham eva vinyastam, tadapi phala–janakam na bhavati kim? api tu bhavaty eva, kintv atreha loke sikhram na bhavati, kintu vilambenaiva bhavatity arthah.

The holy name is so powerful that it must act, but when one utters the holy name with offenses, its action will be delayed, not immediate, although in favorable circumstances the holy names of the Lord act very quickly.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 3.60

Even unconscious, unintentional, Or accidental chanting is effective

Even unconscious chanting of the holy name liberates one from birth and death:

[The sages at Naimisaranya to Suta Gosvami]:

Living beings who are entangled in the complicated meshes of birth and death can be freed immediately by even unconsciously chanting the holy name of Krsna, which is feared by fear personified.

The transcendental name of Krsna, even though uttered unconsciously or by force of circumstances, can help one obtain freedom from the hurdle of birth and death.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.1.16

Even if one chants the holy name of the Lord unintentionally, he is fully purified:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

That old man Ajamila had ten sons, of whom the youngest was a baby named Narayana. Since Narayana was the youngest of all the sons, he was naturally very dear to both his father and his mother. Because of the child's broken language and awkward movements, old Ajamila was very much attached to him. He always took care of the child and enjoyed the child's activities. When Ajamila chewed food and ate it, he called the child to chew and eat, and when he drank he called the child to drink also. Always engaged in taking care of the child and calling his name, Narayana, Ajamila could not understand that his own time was now exhausted and that death was upon him. When the time of death arrived for the foolish Ajamila, he began thinking exclusively of his son Narayana. Ajamila then saw three awkward persons, with deformed bodily features, fierce, twisted faces, and hair standing erect on their bodies. With ropes in their hands, they had come to take him away to the abode of Yamaraja. When he saw them he was extremely bewildered, and because of attachment to his child, who was playing a short distance away, Ajamila began to call him loudly by his name. Thus with tears in his eyes he somehow or other chanted the holy name Narayana. My dear King, the order carriers of Visnu, the Visnudutas, immediately arrived when they heard the holy name of their master from the mouth of the dying Ajamila, who had certainly chanted without offense because he had chanted in complete anxiety.

Since the old man was very attached to the child, he enjoyed the child's activities, and because the child's name was Narayana, the old man always chanted the holy name of Narayana. Although he was referring to the small child and not to the original Narayana, the name of Narayana is so powerful that even by chanting his son's name he was becoming purified (*harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam* [Adi 17.21]). Srila Rupa Gosvami has therefore declared that if one's mind is somehow or other attracted by the holy name of Krsna (*tasmat kenapy upayena manah krsne nivesayet*), one is on the path of liberation. It is customary in Hindu society for parents to give their children names like Krsnadasa, Govinda dasa, Narayana dasa and Vrndavana and get the chance to be purified...

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is kind to the conditioned soul. Although this man completely forgot Narayana, he was calling his child, saying, "Narayana, please come eat this food. Narayana, please come drink this milk." Somehow or other, therefore, he was attached to the name Narayana. This is called *ajnata-sukrti*. Although calling for his son, he was unknowingly chanting the name of Narayana, and the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is so transcendently powerful that his chanting was being counted and recorded... Somehow or other, Ajamila consciously or unconsciously chanted the name of Narayana at the time of death (*ante narayana-smrtih*), and therefore he became all-perfect simply by concentrating his mind on the name of Narayana.

It may also be concluded that Ajamila, who was the son of a brahmana, was accustomed to

worshiping Narayana in his youth because in every brahmana's house there is worship of the narayana-sila. This system is still present in India; in a rigid brahmana's house, there is narayana-seva, worship of Narayana. Therefore, although the contaminated Ajamila was calling for his son, by concentrating his mind on the holy name of Narayana he remembered the Narayana he had very faithfully worshiped in his youth.

In this regard Srila Sridhara Svami expressed his verdict as follows: etac ca tad-upalalanadi-sri-narayana-namoccarana-mahatmyena tad-bhaktir evabhud iti siddhantopayogitvenapi drastavyam. "According to the bhakti-siddhanta, it is to be analyzed that because Ajamila constantly chanted his son's name, Narayana, he was elevated to the platform of bhakti, although he did not know it." Similarly, Srila Viraraghava Acarya gives this opinion: evam vartamanah sa dvijo mrtyu-kale upasthite satyajno narayanakhye putra eva matim cakara matim asaktam akarod ity arthah. "Although at the time of death he was chanting the name of his son, he nevertheless concentrated his mind upon the holy name of Narayana." Srila Vijayadhvaja Tirtha gives a similar opinion:

mrtyu-kale deha-viyoga-laksana-kale mrtyoh sarva-dosa-papaharasya harer anugrahat kale datta-jnana-laksane upasthite hrdis prakasite tanaye purna-jnane bale panca-varsa-kalpe pradesamatre narayanahvaye murti-visese matim smarana-samartham cittam cakara bhaktyasmarad ity arthah.

Directly or indirectly, Ajamila factually remembered Narayana at the time of death (ante narayana-smrtih)...

A person who performs sinful activities performs them with his body, mind and words. Therefore three order carriers from Yamaraja came to take Ajamila to Yamaraja's abode. Fortunately, even though he was referring to his son, Ajamila chanted the four syllables of the hari-nama Narayana, and therefore the order carriers of Narayana, the Visnudutas, also immediately arrived there. Because Ajamila was extremely afraid of the ropes of Yamaraja, he chanted the Lord's name with tearful eyes. Actually, however, he never meant to chant the holy name of Narayana; he meant to call his son.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura remarks, hari-kirtanam nisamyapatan, katham-bhutasya bhartur nama bruvatah: the order carriers of Lord Visnu came because Ajamila had chanted the holy name of Narayana. They did not consider why he was chanting. While chanting the name of Narayana, Ajamila was actually thinking of his son, but simply because they heard Ajamila chanting the Lord's name, the order carriers of Lord Visnu, the Visnudutas, immediately came for Ajamila's protection. Hari-kirtana is actually meant to glorify the holy name, form, pastimes and qualities of the Lord. Ajamila, however,

did not glorify the form, qualities or paraphernalia of the Lord; he simply chanted the holy name. Nevertheless, that chanting was sufficient to cleanse him of all sinful activities. As soon as the Visnudutas heard their master's name being chanted, they immediately came. In this regard Srila Vijayadhvaja Tirtha remarks: anena putra–sneham antarena pracinadrsta–balad udbhutaya bhaktya bhagavan–nama–sankirtanam iti jnayate. "Ajamilā chanted the name of Narayana because of his excessive attachment to his son. Nevertheless, because of his past good fortune in having rendered devotional service to Narayana, he apparently chanted the holy name in full devotional service and without offenses."
–Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.1.24–30

Whether one chants knowingly or unknowingly, the holy name will free one from all reactions to sinful activities:

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:

As a fire burns dry grass to ashes, so the holy name of the Lord, whether chanted knowingly or unknowingly, burns to ashes, without fail, all the reactions of one's sinful activities. If a person unaware of the effective potency of a certain medicine takes that medicine or is forced to take it, it will act even without his knowledge because its potency does not depend on the patient's understanding. Similarly, even though one does not know the value of chanting the holy name of the Lord, if one chants knowingly or unknowingly, the chanting will be very effective.

Fire will act, regardless of whether handled by an innocent child or by someone well aware of its power. For example, if a field of straw or dry grass is set afire, either by an elderly man who knows the power of fire or by a child who does not, the grass will be burned to ashes. Similarly, one may or may not know the power of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, but if one chants the holy name he will become free from all sinful reactions...

In the Western countries, where the Hare Krsna movement is spreading, learned scholars and other thoughtful men are realizing its effectiveness. For example, Dr. J. Stillson Judah, a learned scholar, has been very much attracted to this movement because he has actually seen that it is turning hippies addicted to drugs into pure Vaisnavas who voluntarily become servants of Krsna and humanity. Even a few years ago, such hippies did not know the Hare Krsna mantra, but now they are chanting it and becoming pure Vaisnavas. Thus they are becoming free from all sinful activities, such as illicit sex, intoxication, meat–eating and gambling. This is practical proof of the effectiveness of the Hare Krsna movement, which is supported in this verse. One may or may not know the value of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, but if one somehow or other chants it, he will immediately be purified, just as one

who takes a potent medicine will feel its effects, regardless of whether he takes it knowingly or unknowingly.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.18-19

The holy name acts even when chanted without reference to the Supreme Lord by those bereft of Vedic culture:

One day Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu met Haridasa thakura as usual, and in the course of discussion He inquired as follows. "My dear thakura Haridasa, in this age of Kali most people are bereft of Vedic culture, and therefore they are called yavanas. They are concerned only with killing cows and brahminical culture. In this way they all engage in sinful acts. How will these yavanas be delivered? To My great unhappiness, I do not see any way." Haridasa thakura replied, "My dear Lord, do not be in anxiety. Do not be unhappy to see the condition of the yavanas in material existence. Because the yavanas are accustomed to saying, 'ha rama, ha rama' [O Lord Ramacandra], they will very easily be delivered by this namabhasa. A devotee in advanced ecstatic love exclaims, 'O my Lord Ramacandra! O my Lord Ramacandra!' But the yavanas also chant, 'ha rama, ha rama!' Just see their good fortune!"

If a child touches fire, the fire will burn him, and if an elderly man touches fire it will burn him also. Haridasa thakura says that a great devotee of the Lord exclaims, "ha rama, ha rama," but although yavanas do not know the transcendental meaning of "ha rama, ha rama," they say those words in the course of their ordinary life. For the yavanas the words "ha rama" mean "abominable," whereas the devotee exclaims the words "ha rama" in ecstatic love. Nevertheless, because the words "ha rama" are the spiritual summum bonum, the fact is the same both for a child and for an elderly man. In other words, the holy name of the Lord, "ha rama," always acts, even when the holy names are chanted without reference to the Supreme Lord. Yavanas utter the holy name in a different attitude than devotees, but the holy name "ha rama" is so powerful spiritually that it acts anywhere, whether one knows it or not. This is explained as follows.

Namacarya Haridasa thakura, the authority on the chanting of the holy name, said, "The chanting of the Lord's holy name to indicate something other than the Lord is an instance of namabhasa. Even when the holy name is chanted in this way, its transcendental power is not destroyed. 'Even a mleccha who is being killed by the tusk of a boar and who cries in distress again and again, "ha rama, ha rama" attains liberation. What then to speak of those who chant the holy name with veneration and faith?'"

This refers to an instance in which a meat-eater being killed by a boar uttered the words "ha rama, ha rama" again and again at the time of his death. Since this is a quotation from the Nrsimha Purana, this indicates that in the Puranic age there must also have been mleccas and yavanas (meat-eaters), and the words "ha rama," meaning "condemned," were also uttered in those days. Thus Haridasa thakura gives evidence that even a meat-eater who condemns something by uttering the words "ha rama" gets the benefit of chanting the holy name that the devotee chants to mean "O my Lord Rama."
~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.49-56

Even unintentional chanting of the holy name, if offenseless, will take one back to Godhead:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

While suffering at the time of death, Ajamila chanted the holy name of the Lord, and although the chanting was directed toward his son, he nevertheless returned home, back to Godhead. Therefore, if one faithfully and inoffensively chants the holy name of the Lord, where is the doubt that he will return to Godhead?

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.49

Either deliberate or accidental chanting of the holy name immediately frees one from sinful reactions:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

If one who is embarrassed by hunger or who falls down or stumbles chants the holy name of the Lord even once, willingly or unwillingly, he is immediately freed from the reactions of his past deeds. Karmis entangled in material activities face many difficulties in the practice of mystic yoga and other endeavors to achieve that same freedom.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.24.20

Even if chanted in separate parts,

The holy name is effective

The holy name is effective even if vibrated in separate parts (provided there are no offenses):

"If a devotee once utters the holy name of the Lord, or if it penetrates his mind or enters his ear, which is the channel of aural reception, that holy name will certainly deliver him from

material bondage, whether ... properly joined or vibrated in separate parts."

This verse from the Padma Purana is included in the Hari–bhakti–vilasa (11.527) by Sanatana Gosvami. Therein Srila Sanatana Gosvami gives the following explanation:

vaci gatam prasangad van–madhye pravrttam api,
smarana–patha–gatam kathancin manah–sprstam api,
srotra–mulam gatam kincit srutam api;
suddha–varnam vasuddha–varnam api va;
'vyavahitam' sabdantarena yad–vyavadhanam vaksyamana–narayana–sabdasya
kincid uccarananantaram prasangad apatitam sabdantaram tena rahitam sat.

This means that if one somehow or other hears, utters or remembers the holy name, or if it catches his mind while coming near his ears, that holy name, even if vibrated in separate words, will act. An example of such separation is given as follows:

yadva, yadyapi 'halam riktam' ity ady–uktau hakara–rikarayor vrttya hariti–namasty eva,

tatha 'raja–mahisi' ity atra rama–namapi, evam anyad apy uhyam, tathapi
tat–tan–nama–madhye vyavadhayakam aksarantaram astity etadrsa–vyavadhana–rahitam
ity arthah;

yadva, vyavahitam ca tad–rahitam capi va; tatra 'vyavahitam'–namnah kincid
uccarananantaram kathacid apatitam sabdantaram samadhaya pascan
namavasistaksara–grahanam ity evam rupam,

madhye sabdantarenantaritam ity arthah, 'rahitam' pascad avasistaksara–grahana–varjitam,
kenacid amsena hinam ity arthah, tathapi tarayaty eva.

Suppose one is using the two words "halam riktam." Now the syllable ha in the word "halam" and the syllable ri in "riktam" are separately pronounced, but nevertheless it will act because one somehow or other utters the word "hari." Similarly, in the word "raja–mahisi," the syllables ra and ma appear in two separate words, but because they somehow or other appear together, the holy name rama will act, provided there are no offenses.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 3.60

Even if chanted jokingly,
The holy name is effective

Because the holy name is absolute, it is effective whether one chants sincerely or jokingly: Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not at all to the liking of the demons of the present age. As soon as they see a Vaiṣṇava dressed in saffron garments with beads on his neck and tilaka on his forehead, they are immediately irritated. They criticize the Vaiṣṇavas by sarcastically saying Hare Kṛṣṇa, and some people also chant Hare Kṛṣṇa sincerely. In either case, since Hare Kṛṣṇa is absolute, whether one chants it jokingly or sincerely, it will have its effect. The Vaiṣṇavas are pleased when the demons chant Hare Kṛṣṇa because this shows that the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is taking ground.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.5.7

Even chanting for the sake
Of blasphemy is effective

Even if the holy name is chanted for the sake of blasphemy, the holy name is so powerful that it frees one from reactions of sinful activities:

[Rupa and Sanatana Gosvami to Lord Caitanya]:

"Jagai and Madhai had but one fault—they were addicted to sinful activity. However, volumes of sinful activity can be burned to ashes simply by a dim reflection of the chanting of Your holy name. Jagai and Madhai uttered Your holy name by way of blaspheming You. Fortunately, that holy name became the cause of their deliverance."

Jagai and Madhai chanted the name of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu by way of blasphemy, but because they simply chanted His name, they immediately became free from the reactions of sinful activities. Thus later they were saved.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Mādhya-līla 1.194-95

Even demons who utter Kṛṣṇa's name only for blaspheming Him attain liberation:

The conditioned soul, being envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, may accuse Him, saying, "Kṛṣṇa is bad, Kṛṣṇa is a thief" and so on, but Kṛṣṇa, being kind to all living entities, does not consider such accusations. Instead, He takes account of the conditioned soul's chanting of "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa" so many times. He sometimes punishes such demons for one life by putting them in a lower species, but then, when they have stopped accusing Him, they are liberated in the next life because of chanting Kṛṣṇa's name constantly.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.1.25

Even if uttered to chastise Krsna, the holy name brings liberation:

[Svarupa Damodara to a Bengali poet]:

"Sometimes it so happens that one who wants to chastise Krsna utters the holy name, and thus the holy name becomes the cause of his liberation."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 5.155

Even blasphemers can be freed from sinful activities by chanting the holy name:

Jaya and Vijaya inwardly knew that Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but they purposely became His enemies to be delivered from material life. From the very beginning of their lives they thought of Lord Krsna as an enemy, and even though blaspheming Lord Krsna, they chanted the holy name of Krsna constantly along with their inimical thoughts. Thus they were purified because of chanting the holy name of Krsna. It is to be understood that even a blasphemer can be freed from sinful activities by chanting the holy name of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.1.26

25.

A Devotee Can Be Satisfied in Any Condition of Life Simply by Chanting

A pure devotee can be satisfied in any condition of life simply by chanting Hare Krsna: For the spiritual master, a pure devotee, heaven and hell are both the same if there is no Krsna consciousness. In hell people are suffering in so many ways, and in heaven they are enjoying their senses in so many ways, but a devotee of the Lord can live any place where there is Krsna consciousness, and since he brings this consciousness with him, he is always self-satisfied. If he is sent to hell, he will be satisfied simply chanting Hare Krsna. In fact, he does not believe in hell but in Krsna. Similarly, if he were put in heaven, where there are so many opportunities for sense gratification, he would also remain aloof, for his senses are satisfied by Krsna Himself. Thus for the service of the Lord a devotee is prepared to go anywhere, and for this reason he is very dear to Krsna.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Anyone who has attained transcendental affection for Krsna by constantly chanting His holy name remains satisfied in any condition of life simply by remembering the holy name: There is a statement by a person fallen in a hellish condition of life. He addressed the Supreme Lord thus: "My dear Lord, Yamaraja has placed me in a situation which is full of filthy and obnoxious smells There are so many insects and worms, surrounded by the stools left by different kinds of diseased persons. And after seeing this horrible scene, my eyes have become sore, and I am becoming nearly blind. I therefore pray, O my Lord, O deliverer from the hellish conditions of life. I have fallen into this hell, but I shall try to remember Your holy name always, and in this way I shall try to keep my body and soul together." This is another instance of ecstatic love for Krsna in an abominable situation.

It is to be understood that any person who is constantly engaged in chanting the holy names of the Lord—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—has attained a transcendental affection for Krsna, and as such, in any condition of life, he remains satisfied simply by remembering the Lord's name in full affection and ecstatic love.

~The Nectar of Devotion

Even in a hellish condition, the devotee may chant Hare Krsna and be happy:

[The Kumaras to Lord Visnu]:

O Lord, we pray that You let us be born in any hellish condition of life, just as long as our hearts and minds are always engaged in the service of Your lotus feet, our words are made beautiful [by speaking of Your activities] just as tulasi leaves are beautified when offered unto Your lotus feet, and as long as our ears are always filled with the chanting of Your transcendental qualities.

The holes of the ears are very small and can be filled with any insignificant sound, so how can they receive as great a vibration as the glorification of the Lord? The answer is that the holes of the ears are like the sky. As the sky can never be filled up, the quality of the ear is such that one may go on pouring in vibrations of various kinds, yet it is capable of receiving more and more vibrations. A devotee is not afraid of going to hell if he has the opportunity to hear the glories of the Lord constantly. This is the advantage of chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

One may be put in any condition, but God gives him the prerogative to chant Hare Krsna. In any condition of life, if one goes on chanting he will never be unhappy.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.15.49

In spite of the ups and downs of material life, one must engage himself in Krsna consciousness by chanting the maha-mantra:

The whole population of the world should glorify Lord Krsna, and for their best interest they should take to this Krsna consciousness movement. The process is easy and helpful. It is simply to chant the maha-mantra, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Lord Caitanya has therefore recommended that one should be callous to the material ups and downs. Material life is temporary, and so the ups and downs of life may come and go. When they come, one should be as tolerant as a tree and as humble and meek as the straw in the street, but certainly he must engage himself in Krsna consciousness by chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

26.

The Holy Name Protects the Devotee from Falldown

If one keeps himself pure and steady by constantly chanting the holy name, one will be saved from falldown:

Ajamila's exalted position as a brahmana was vanquished by his association with the prostitute, so much so that he forgot all his brahminical activities. Nevertheless, at the end of his life, by chanting the four syllables of the name Narayana, he was saved from the gravest danger of falling down. *Svalpam apy asya dharmasya trayate mahato bhayat*: even a little devotional service can save one from the greatest danger. Devotional service, which begins with chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is so powerful that even if one falls down from the exalted position of a brahmana through sexual indulgence, he can be saved from all calamities if he somehow or other chants the holy name of the Lord. This is the extraordinary power of the Lord's holy name. Therefore in Bhagavad-gita it is advised that one not forget the chanting of the holy name even for a moment (*satatam kirtayanto mam*

yatantas ca drdha–vratah [Bg. 9.14]). There are so many dangers in this material world that one may fall down from an exalted position at any time. Yet if one keeps himself always pure and steady by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, he will be safe without a doubt.
–Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.1.63

The chanting of Hare Krsna protects a devotee from all accidental falldowns:
Generally, a devotee who is engaged in the nine kinds of devotional activities is engaged in the process of cleansing all material contamination from the heart. He puts the Supreme Personality of Godhead within his heart, and all sinful contaminations are naturally washed away. Continuous thinking of the Supreme Lord makes him pure by nature. According to the Vedas, there is a certain regulation that if one falls down from his exalted position, he has to undergo certain ritualistic processes to purify himself. But here there is no such condition because the purifying process is already there in the heart of the devotee, due to his remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead constantly. Therefore, the chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare should be continued without stoppage. This will protect a devotee from all accidental falldowns. He will thus remain perpetually free from all material contaminations.
–Bhagavad–gita As It Is 9.31

27.

The Holy Name Protects One from Danger and Fear

To be free from danger, one should chant the Hare Krsna mantra:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

My dear King, wherever people in any position perform their occupational duties of devotional service by chanting and hearing [sraavanam kirtanam visnoh SB 7.5.23], there cannot be any danger from bad elements. Therefore there was no need for anxiety about Gokula while the Supreme Personality of Godhead was personally present.

Srila Bhaktivinoda thakura has sung: namasraya kari' yatane tumi, thakaha apana kaje. Everyone is thus advised to seek shelter in the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra and remain engaged in his own occupational duty. There is no loss in this, and the gain is

tremendous. Even from a maternal point of view, everyone should take to chanting the Hare Krsna mantra to be saved from all kinds of danger. This world is full of danger (padam padam yad vipadam). Therefore we should be encouraged to chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra so that in our family, society, neighborhood and nation, everything will be smooth and free from danger.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.6.3

When chanting the maha–mantra, one is completely safe, even in this dangerous material world:

When chanting the maha–mantra, we are completely safe, even in this most dangerous position. We should always be aware that in this material world, we are always in a dangerous position. Srimad–Bhagavatam confirms: padam padam yad vipadam na tesam. In this world, there is danger at every step. The devotees of the Lord, however, are not meant to remain in this miserable, dangerous place. Therefore we should take care to advance in Krsna consciousness while in this human form. Then our happiness is assured.

~The Path of Perfection

Prayer for protection by the holy names:

[Visvarupa to Lord Indra]:

May the glorification of the transcendental name, form, qualities and paraphernalia of the Supreme Personality of Godhead protect us from the influence of bad planets, meteors, envious human beings, serpents, scorpions, and animals like tigers and wolves. May it protect us from ghosts and the material elements like earth, water, fire and air, and may it also protect us from lightning and our past sins. We are always afraid of these hindrances to our auspicious life. Therefore, may they all be completely destroyed by the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra... May the Supreme Personality of Godhead's holy names, His transcendental forms, His carriers and all the weapons decorating Him as personal associates protect our intelligence, senses, mind and life air from all dangers.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.8.27–28, 30

By remembering Visnu (by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra) one can be protected from many dangers and bad elements:

[The elderly gopis to Lord Krsna]:

The evil witches known as Dakinis, Yatudhanis and Kusmandas are the greatest enemies of children, and the evil spirits like Bhutas, Pretas, Pisacas, Yaksas, Raksasas and Vinayakas, as well as witches like Kotara, Revati, Jyestha, Putana and Matrka, are always ready to give trouble to the body, the life air and the senses, causing loss of memory, madness and bad dreams. Like the most experienced evil stars, they all create great disturbances, especially for children, but one can vanquish them simply by uttering Lord Visnu's name, for when Lord Visnu's name resounds, all of them become afraid and go away.

While decorating the body with tilaka, we give protection to the body by chanting twelve names of Visnu. Although Govinda, or Lord Visnu, is one, He has different names and forms with which to act differently. But if one cannot remember all the names at one time, one may simply chant, "Lord Visnu, Lord Visnu, Lord Visnu," and always think of Lord Visnu. Visnor aradhanam param: this is the highest form of worship. If one remembers Visnu always, even though one is disturbed by many bad elements, one can be protected without a doubt. The Ayurveda–sastra recommends, ausadhim cintayed visnum: even while taking medicine, one should remember Visnu, because the medicine is not all and all and Lord Visnu is the real protector. The material world is full of danger (padam padam yad vipadam). Therefore one must become a Vaisnava and think of Visnu constantly. This is made easier by the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Therefore Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has recommended, kirtaniyah sada harih [Cc. adi 17.31], param vijayate sri–krsna–sankirtanam and kirtanad eva krsnasya mukta–sangah param vrajet.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 10.6.27–29

Mother Yasoda chanted different names of Visnu for Krsna's protection:

The gopis, headed by mother Yasoda and Rohini, chanted twelve names of Visnu to give Krsna's body full protection from all evil influences. They washed their hands and feet and sipped water three times, as is the custom before chanting mantra. They chanted as follows: "My dear Krsna, may the Lord who is known as Maniman protect Your thighs; may Lord Visnu who is known as Yajna protect Your legs; may Lord Acyuta protect Your arms; may Lord Hayagriva protect Your abdomen; may Lord Kesava protect Your heart; may Lord Visnu protect Your arms; may Lord Urukrama protect Your face; may Lord isvara protect Your head; may Lord Cakradhara protect Your front; may Lord Gadadhara protect Your back; may Lord Madhusudana who carries a bow in His hand protect Your eyesight; may

Lord Visnu with His conchshell protect Your left side; may the Personality of Godhead Upendra protect You from above, and may Lord Tarkasya protect You from below the earth; may Lord Haladhara protect You from all sides; may the Personality of Godhead known as Hrsikesa protect all Your senses; may Lord Narayana protect Your breath; and may the Lord of Svetadvipa, Narayana, protect Your heart; may Lord Yogesvara protect Your mind; may Lord Prsnigarbha protect Your intelligence; and may the Supreme Personality of Godhead protect Your soul. While You are playing, may Lord Govinda protect You from all sides, and when You are sleeping, may Lord Madhava protect You from all danger; when You are working may the Lord of Vaikuntha protect You from falling down; when You are sitting, may the Lord of Vaikuntha give You all protection; and while You are eating, may the Lord of all sacrifices give You all protection."

Thus mother Yasoda began to chant different names of Visnu to protect the child Krsna's different bodily parts... Mother Yasoda was firmly convinced of the Vedic injunctions about the importance of cows and the holy name of Visnu; therefore she took all shelter in the cows and the name of Visnu just to protect her child Krsna. She recited all the holy names of Visnu so that He might save the child.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Ghosts and evil spirits cannot remain where there is chanting of the holy name:

Mother Yasoda was firmly convinced that she should protect her child from different kinds of evil spirits and ghosts—namely Dakinis, Yatudhanis, Kusmandas, Yaksas, Raksasas, Vinayakas, Kotara, Revati, Jyestha, Putana, Matrkas, Unmadas and similar other evil spirits who cause persons to forget their own existence and give trouble to the life—air and the senses. Sometimes they appear in dreams and cause much perturbation; sometimes they appear as old women and suck the blood of small children. But all such ghosts and evil spirits cannot remain where there is chanting of the holy name of God.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Demons and ghosts are vanquished by the holy name:

The devotee of the Lord, because of manifesting godly qualities, is called a demigod, whereas the atheist is called a demon. The demon cannot stand the presence of Visnu, the Personality of Godhead. The demons are always busy in trying to vanquish the Personality of Godhead, but factually as soon as the Personality of Godhead appears, by either His transcendental name, form, attributes, pastimes, paraphernalia or variegatedness, the demon

is at once vanquished. It is said that a ghost cannot remain as soon as the holy name of the Lord is chanted.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.19.34

The holy name vanquishes the fear of material existence:

The material existence of our present status is full of fear. Out of the four problems of material existence, namely the food problem, the shelter problem, the fear problem and the mating problem, the fear problem gives us more trouble than the others. We are always fearful due to our ignorance of the next problem. The whole material existence is full of problems, and thus the fear problem is always prominent. This is due to our association with the illusory energy of the Lord, known as maya or external energy, yet all fear is vanished as soon as there is the sound of the Lord, represented by His holy name, as it was sounded by Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in the following sixteen words:

Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare

Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare

We can take advantage of these sounds and be free from all threatening problems of material existence.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.11.2

By crying out the word "Krsna" one can at once transcend a fearful situation:

The calves that were pasturing nearby entered into the deep forest, allured by new grasses, and gradually went out of sight. When the boys saw that the calves were not nearby they became afraid for their safety, and they immediately cried out, "Krsna!" Krsna is the killer of fear personified. Everyone is afraid of fear personified, but fear personified is afraid of Krsna. By crying out the word "Krsna," the boys at once transcended the fearful situation.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

By chanting the holy name, one becomes fearless of death:

[The] principles of vaidhi bhakti are also described in Srimad–Bhagavatam, Second Canto, First Chapter, verse 35, where Sukadeva Gosvami instructs the dying Maharaja Pariksit as to his course of action. Maharaja Pariksit met Sukadeva Gosvami just a week before his death, and the King was perplexed as to what should be done before he was to pass on.

Many other sages also arrived there, but no one could give him the proper direction. Sukadeva Gosvami, however, gave this direction to him as follows: "My dear King, if you want to be fearless in meeting your death next week (for actually everyone is afraid at the point of death), then you must immediately begin the process of hearing and chanting and remembering God." If one can chant and hear Hare Krsna and always remember Lord Krsna, then he is sure to become fearless of death, which may come at any moment.

~The Nectar of Devotion

28.

Other Instructions on the Transcendental Effects of the Holy Name

One who chants the holy name will be situated in the transcendental disciplic succession: One must have firm faith in the process of devotional service and the scriptures that support it... In this age a person should ... chant the holy names of Hari and Krsna, the maha-mantra. That is the sum and substance of eternal religion, known as sanatana-dharma... If one strictly follows the Vedic literature and chants the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he will actually be situated in the transcendental disciplic succession. Those who want to attain life's ultimate goal must follow this principle.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.362

A serious devotee absorbed in the holy name cannot divert his attention to any subject matter not associated with Krsna:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"The vibration of His flute is just like a bird that creates a nest within the ears of the gopis and always remains prominent there, not allowing any other sound to enter their ears. Indeed, the gopis cannot hear anything else, nor are they able to concentrate on anything else, not even to give a suitable reply. Such are the effects of the vibration of Lord Krsna's flute."

The vibration of Krsna's flute is always prominent in the ears of the gopis. Naturally they cannot hear anything else. Constant remembrance of the holy sound of Krsna's flute keeps

them enlightened and enlivened, and they do not allow any other sound to enter their ears. Since their attention is fixed on Kṛṣṇa's flute, they cannot divert their minds to any other subject. In other words, a devotee who has heard the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute forgets to talk or hear of any other subject. This vibration of Kṛṣṇa's flute is represented by the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra. A serious devotee of the Lord who chants and hears this transcendental vibration becomes so accustomed to it that he cannot divert his attention to any subject matter not related to Kṛṣṇa's blissful characteristics and paraphernalia.

–Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 21. 144

Chanting the holy name even once, one becomes perfect:

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura says that simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa once, a person becomes perfect. Such a person is understood to be a Vaisnava.

–Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 15.106

By chanting the holy name and serving the Vaisnavas, one soon attains the shelter of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet:

As in the previous year, one of the inhabitants of Kulina–grama submitted a petition to the Lord, saying, "My Lord, kindly tell me what my duty is and how I should execute it." The Lord replied, "You should engage yourself in the service of the servants of Kṛṣṇa and always chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. If you do these two things, you will very soon attain shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet."

–Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 16.69–70

One who worships Lord Caitanya through sankirtana is recognized and blessed by the Lord: Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa Caitanya is the initiator of sankirtana [congregational chanting of the holy name of the Lord]. One who worships Him through sankirtana is fortunate indeed. Such a person is truly intelligent, whereas others, who have but a poor fund of knowledge, must endure a cycle of repeated birth and death. Of all sacrificial performances, the chanting of the Lord's holy name is the most sublime.

Lord Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the father and inaugurator of the sankirtana movement. One who worships Him by sacrificing his life, money, intelligence and words for the sankirtana movement is recognized by the Lord and endowed with His blessings. All others

may be said to be foolish, for of all sacrifices in which a man may apply his energy, a sacrifice made for the sankirtana movement is the most glorious.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 3.77-78

Chanting of the holy name frees one from hellish conditions:

In the Narasimha Purana it is said that as the hellish inhabitants began to chant the holy name of the Lord they began to be elevated from hell toward heaven. Durvasa Muni has also supported this view: mucyeta yan-namny udite narako 'pi. "Simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord all the inhabitants of hell became released from their hellish persecution."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.9.36

Every devotee should perfect his chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra so that if he takes birth again, he will not forget Krsna consciousness:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

Sri Sukadeva Gosvami continued: Thereafter, the King of the elephants, Gajendra, fixed his mind in his heart with perfect intelligence and chanted a mantra which he had learned in his previous birth as Indradyumna and which he remembered by the grace of Krsna.

Such remembrance is described in Bhagavad-gita (6.43-44):

tatra tam buddhi-samyogam
labhate paurva-dehikam
yatate ca tato bhuyah
samsiddhau kuru-nandana
purvabhyasena tenaiva
hriyate hy avaso 'pi sah

In these verses it is assured that even if a person engaged in devotional service falls down, he is not degraded, but is placed in a position in which he will in due course of time remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As explained later, Gajendra was formerly King Indradyumna, and somehow or other in his next life he became King of the elephants. Now Gajendra was in danger, and although he was in a body other than that of a human being, he remembered the stotra he had chanted in his previous life. Yatate ca tato bhuyah samsiddhau kuru-nandana. To enable one to achieve perfection, Krsna gives one the chance to remember Him again. This is proved here, for although the King of the elephants,

Gajendra, was put in danger, this was a chance for him to remember his previous devotional activities so that he could immediately be rescued by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

It is imperative, therefore, that all devotees in Kṛṣṇa consciousness practice chanting some mantra. Certainly one should chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, which is the maha–mantra, or great mantra, and also one should practice chanting cintamani–prakara–sadmasu or the Nṛsimha stotra (ito nṛsimhah parato nṛsimho yato yato yami tato nṛsimhah). Every devotee should practice in order to chant some mantra perfectly so that even though he may be imperfect in spiritual consciousness in this life, in his next life he will not forget Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even if he becomes an animal. Of course, a devotee should try to perfect his Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this life, for simply by understanding Kṛṣṇa and His instructions, after giving up this body one can return home, back to Godhead. Even if there is some falldown, practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness never goes in vain. For example, Ajamila, in his boyhood, practiced chanting the name of Narayana under the direction of his father, but later, in his youth, he fell down and became a drunkard, woman–hunter, rogue and thief. Nonetheless, because of chanting the name of Narayana for the purpose of calling his son, whom he had named Narayana, he became advanced, even though he was involved in sinful activities. Therefore, we should not forget the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra under any circumstances. It will help us in the greatest danger, as we find in the life of Gajendra.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 8.3.1

The Practice of the Holy Name

1.

The Three Stages of Chanting

The three stages of chanting the holy name:

The simple process of offenselessly chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord will gradually promote one very soon to the stage of emancipation. 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.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.2.30

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 Krsna 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-mahadavagni-nirvapanam. As soon as one is liberated from the blazing fire of material existence, he can relish the taste of transcendental life.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 7

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, namabhasa, the offenses have almost stopped, and one is coming to the platform of pure chanting. In the third stage, when one chants the Hare Krsna mantra without offenses, his dormant love for Krsna immediately awakens. This is the perfection.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.24.20

The namabhasa stage of chanting elevates one to the position of offenseless chanting:
[Chand Kazi to his orderlies]:

"The Hindus chant the name Hari because that is the name of their God. But you are Muhammadan meat-eaters. Why do you chant the name of the Hindus' God?' The meat-eater replied, 'Sometimes I joke with the Hindus. Some of them are called Krsnadasa, and some are called Ramadasa. Some of them are called Haridasa. They always chant "Hari, Hari," and thus I thought they would steal the riches from someone's house. Since that time, my tongue always vibrates the sound "Hari, Hari." I have no desire to say it, but still my tongue says it. I do not know what to do.' Another meat-eater said, 'Sir, please hear me. Since the day I joked with some Hindus in this way, my tongue chants the Hare Krsna hymn and cannot give it up. I do not know what mystic hymns and herbal potions these Hindus know.'"

Sometimes demoniac nonbelievers, not understanding the potency of the holy name, make fun of the Vaisnavas when the Vaisnavas chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. This joking is also beneficial for such persons. Srimad-Bhagavatam, Sixth Canto, Second Chapter, verse 14, indicates that the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, even in joking, in the course of ordinary discussion, in indicating something extraneous, or in negligence, is called namabhasa, which is chanting that is almost on the transcendental stage. This namabhasa stage is better than namaparadha. Namabhasa awakens the supreme remembrance of Lord Visnu. When one remembers Lord Visnu, 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.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 17.197-202

2.

Offensive Chanting of the Holy Name

The TEN Offenses Against the Holy Name

The ten offenses against the holy name:

There are offenses to be considered while chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Therefore simply by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa one does not become ecstatic.

There are ten offenses to avoid in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra.

The first offense is to blaspheme great personalities who are engaged in distributing the holy name of the Lord. It is said in the sastra (Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Antya–lila 7.11), *kṛṣṇa–sakti vina nahe tara pravartana*: one cannot distribute the holy names of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra unless he is empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore one should not criticize or blaspheme a devotee who is thus engaged.

The second namaparadha is described as follows:

sivasya sri–visnor ya iha guna–namadi–sakalam
dhiya bhinnam pasyet sa khalu hari–namahita–karah

In this material world, the holy name of Viṣṇu is all–auspicious. Viṣṇu's name, form, qualities and pastimes are all transcendental absolute knowledge. Therefore, if one tries to separate the Absolute Personality of Godhead from His holy name or His transcendental form, qualities and pastimes, thinking them to be material, that is offensive. Similarly, to think the names of demigods such as Lord Gīṭā to be as good as the name of Lord Viṣṇu—or in other words, to think Lord Śiva and the other demigods to be other forms of God and therefore equal to Viṣṇu—is also blasphemous. This is the second offense at the lotus feet of the Lord.

The third offense at the lotus feet of the holy name, which is called *guror avajna*, is to consider the spiritual master to be material and therefore envy his exalted position. The fourth offense (*sruti–sastra–nindanam*) is to blaspheme Vedic literatures such as the four Vedas and the Puranas. The fifth offense (*tathārtha–vadaḥ*) is to consider the glories of the holy name to be exaggerations. Similarly, the sixth offense (*hari–namni kalpanam*) is to consider the holy name of the Lord to be imaginary.

The seventh offense is described as follows:

namno balad yasya hi papa–buddhir

na vidyate tasya yamair hi suddhih

To think that since the Hare Krsna mantra can counteract all sinful reactions one may therefore go on with his sinful activities and at the same time chant the Hare Krsna mantra to neutralize them is the greatest offense at the lotus feet of hari–nama.

The eighth offense is stated thus:

dharma–vrata–tyaga–hutadi–sarva–subha–kriya–samyam api pramadah.

It is offensive to consider the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to be a religious ritualistic ceremony. Performing religious ceremonies, following vows and practicing renunciation and sacrifice are all materialistic auspicious activities. The chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra must not be compared to such materialistic religiosity. This is an offense at the lotus feet of the Lord.

The ninth offense is described as follows:

asraddadhane vimukhe 'py asrvati
yas copadesah siva–namaparadhah

It is an offense to preach the glories of the holy name among persons who have no intelligence or no faith in the subject matter. Such people should be given the chance to hear the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, but in the beginning they should not be instructed about the glories of the spiritual significance of the holy name. By constant hearing of the holy name, their hearts will be purified, and then they will be able to understand the transcendental position of the holy name.

The tenth offense is as follows:

srutvapi nama–mahatmyam
yah priti–rahito narah
aham–mamadi–paramo
namni so 'py aparadha–krt

If one has heard the glories of the transcendental holy name of the Lord but nevertheless continues in a materialistic concept of life, thinking, "I am this body and everything belonging to this body is mine [aham mameti SB 5.5.8]," and does not show respect and love for the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, that is an offense.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 8.25

Srila Jiva Gosvami instructs that chanting of the holy name of the Lord should be loudly

done, and it should be performed offenselessly as well, as recommended in the Padma Purana. One can deliver himself from the effects of all sins by surrendering himself unto the Lord. One can deliver himself from all offenses at the feet of the Lord by taking shelter of His holy name. But one cannot protect himself if one commits an offense at the feet of the holy name of the Lord. Such offenses are mentioned in the Padma Purana as being ten in number. The first offense is to vilify the great devotees who have preached about the glories of the Lord. The second offense is to see the holy names of the Lord in terms of worldly distinction.

The Lord is the proprietor of all the universes, and therefore He may be known in different places by different names, but that does not in any way qualify the fullness of the Lord. Any nomenclature which is meant for the Supreme Lord is as holy as the others because they are all meant for the Lord. Such holy names are as powerful as the Lord, and there is no bar for anyone in any part of the creation to chant and glorify the Lord by the particular name of the Lord as it is locally understood.

They are all auspicious, and one should not distinguish such names of the Lord as material commodities. The third offense is to neglect the orders of the authorized acaryas or spiritual masters. The fourth offense is to vilify scriptures or Vedic knowledge. The fifth offense is to define the holy name of the Lord in terms of one's mundane calculation. The holy name of the Lord is identical with the Lord Himself, and one should understand the holy name of the Lord to be nondifferent from Him. The sixth offense is to interpret the holy name. The Lord is not imaginary, nor is His holy name. There are persons with a poor fund of knowledge who think the Lord to be an imagination of the worshiper and therefore think His holy name to be imaginary. Such a chanter of the name of the Lord cannot achieve the desired success in the matter of chanting the holy name. The seventh offense is to commit sins intentionally on the strength of the holy name. In the scriptures it is said that one can be liberated from the effects of all sinful actions simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord. One who takes advantage of this transcendental method and continues to commit sins on the expectation of neutralizing the effects of sins by chanting the holy name of the Lord is the greatest offender at the feet of the holy name. Such an offender cannot purify himself by any recommended method of purification. In other words, one may be a sinful man before chanting the holy name of the Lord, but after taking shelter in the holy name of the Lord and becoming immune, one should strictly restrain oneself from committing sinful acts with a hope that his method of chanting the holy name will give him protection. The eighth offense is to consider the holy name of the Lord and His chanting method to be equal to some material auspicious activity. There are various kinds of good works for material benefits, but the holy name and His chanting are not mere auspicious holy services. Undoubtedly the holy name is holy service, but He should never be utilized for such

purposes. Since the holy name and the Lord are of one and the same identity, one should not try to bring the holy name into the service of mankind. The idea is that the Supreme Lord is the supreme enjoyer. He is no one's servant or order supplier. Similarly, since the holy name of the Lord is identical with the Lord, one should not try to utilize the holy name for one's personal service.

The ninth offense is to instruct those who are not interested in chanting the holy name of the Lord about the transcendental nature of the holy name. If such instruction is imparted to an unwilling audience, the act is considered to be an offense at the feet of the holy name. The tenth offense is to become uninterested in the holy name of the Lord even after hearing of the transcendental nature of the holy name.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.11

There are ten principal offenses which can be committed against the holy name. The first is to blaspheme the great devotees who have tried to spread the glories of the holy name throughout the world. The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa, and one who attempts to spread the holy names throughout the world is beloved of Him. Kṛṣṇa Himself does not tolerate offenses against His pure devotees. The second offense is to deny that Lord Viṣṇu is the Absolute Truth. There is no difference between His name, quality, form, pastimes and activities, and one who sees a difference is considered an offender. The Lord is Supreme, and no one is equal to or greater than Him. Consequently if one thinks that the Lord's names are nondifferent from the names of demigods, he offends. The Supreme Lord and the demigods should never be considered on the same level.

The third offense is to consider the bona fide spiritual master to be a common man. The fourth offense is to blaspheme Vedic literature and authorized scriptures like the Puranas. The fifth offense is to consider the glories attributed to the holy names to be exaggerations. The sixth offense is to concoct perverted theories about the holy name. The seventh offense is to commit sinful activities on the strength of chanting the holy name. It is understood that by chanting the holy names one is free from sinful reactions, but this does not mean that one should act sinfully on the strength of chanting. That is the greatest offense. The eighth offense is to consider that religious rituals, austerity, sacrifices or other forms of renunciation are equal to chanting the holy name. Chanting the holy name is as good as associating with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Pious activities are only means to approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and they can even be performed for some material reason. The ninth offense is to preach the glories of the holy name of God to a faithless person who is not interested in hearing them. The tenth and last offense is to maintain material attachment even after hearing and chanting the holy names of God. The idea is that by chanting the holy name without offense, one can obtain elevation to the

liberated platform. On the liberated platform one is freed from all material attachments. Thus if one chants the holy names and still has material attachments, he must be committing some offense.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

The offenses against the chanting of the holy name are as follows:

- (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 Siva or Lord Brahma to be equal to, or independent of, the name of Lord Visnu. (Sometimes the atheistic class of men take it that any demigod is as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu. But one who is a devotee knows that no demigod, however great he may be, is independently as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, if someone thinks that he can chant "Kali, Kali!" or "Durga, Durga!" and it is the same as Hare Krsna, that is the greatest offense.)
- (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 Krsna 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. (It should not be taken that because by chanting the holy name of the Lord one can be freed from all kinds of sinful reaction, one may continue to act sinfully and after that chant Hare Krsna to neutralize his sins. Such a dangerous mentality is very offensive and should be avoided.)
- (8) To consider the chanting of Hare Krsna one of the auspicious ritualistic activities offered in the Vedas as fruitive activities (karma-kanda).
- (9) To instruct a faithless person about the glories of the holy name. (Anyone can take part in chanting the holy name of the Lord, but in the beginning one should not be instructed about the transcendental potency of the Lord. Those who are too sinful cannot appreciate the transcendental glories of the Lord, and therefore it is better not to instruct them in this

matter.)

(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.

Every devotee who claims to be a Vaisnava must guard against these offenses in order to quickly achieve the desired success.

~The Nectar of Devotion

Comments on Individual Offenses Against the Holy Name

One should neither engage in, nor hear, blasphemy of devotees:

Srila Jiva Gosvami Prabhu has quoted many passages from authentic scriptures and has ably supported the statements in the matter of offenses at the feet of the holy name...

Quoting from the Markandeya Purana, Sri Gosvamiji says that one should neither blaspheme the devotee of the Lord nor indulge in hearing others who are engaged in belittling a devotee of the Lord.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.1.12

One should not equate the name of the Lord with those of the demigods:

As far as distinguishing the Lord's holy name from the names of the demigods, the revealed scriptures disclose (Bg. 10.41) that all extraordinarily powerful beings are but parts and parcels of the supreme energetic, Lord Krsna. Except for the Lord Himself, everyone is subordinate; no one is independent of the Lord. Since no one is more powerful than or equal to the energy of the Supreme Lord, no one's name can be as powerful as that of the Lord. By chanting the Lord's holy name, one can derive all the stipulated energy synchronized from all sources. Therefore, one should not equalize the supreme holy name of the Lord with any other name. Brahma, Siva or any other powerful god can never be equal to the Supreme Lord Visnu.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.1.12

[Devahuti to Lord Kapila]:

Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your holy name!...

It is specifically said here, tubhyam: "unto You only." One must chant God's name, not, as the Mayavadi philosophers say, any name, such as a demigod's name or the names of God's energies. Only the holy name of the Supreme Lord will be effective. Anyone who compares

the holy name of the Supreme Lord to the names of the demigods is called pasandi or an offender.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.33.7

Guru-aparadha is the most grievous offense against the holy name:

While describing the system of protection for the creeper of devotional service, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has especially stressed protection from offenses unto the lotus feet of Vaisnavas. Such offenses are called vaisnava-aparadha. Aparadha means "offense." If one commits vaisnava-aparadhas, all of his progress in devotional service will be checked. Even though one is very much advanced in devotional service, if he commits offenses at the feet of a Vaisnava, his advancement is all spoiled... Therefore one should be very careful about committing offenses at the feet of a Vaisnava. The most grievous type of vaisnava-aparadha is called guru-aparadha, which refers to offenses at the lotus feet of the spiritual master. In the chanting of the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this guru-aparadha is considered the most grievous offense.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.21.37

A disciple who lacks faith in his spiritual master or who acts independently from him cannot attain success in chanting Hare Krsna:

It appears from the talks of Lord Caitanya that a person who cannot keep his faith in the words of the spiritual master and who acts independently cannot attain the desired success in chanting Hare Krsna. In the Vedic literatures it is stated that the import of all transcendental literature is revealed to one who has unflinching faith in the Supreme Lord and his spiritual master. Lord Caitanya firmly believed in the statements of His spiritual master, and He never neglected the instructions of His spiritual master by stopping His sankirtana movement. Thus the transcendental potency of the holy name encouraged Him more and more in chanting Hare Krsna, the maha-mantra.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Worshippers of impersonalists are guilty of the offense of blaspheming the Vedic literature: While describing one of the offenses against chanting the holy names, an offense called sruti-sastra-nindana (blaspheming the Vedic literature), Jiva Gosvami states in his Bhakti-sandarbha: yatha pasanda-margena dattatreyarsabha-devopasakanam pasandinam.

Worshipers of impersonalists like Dattatreya are also pasandis.

ˆSri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 18.115

Mayavadis offend the holy name by differentiating it from the Lord Himself:

A name which represents an object of this material world may be subjected to arguments and experimental knowledge, but in the absolute world a name and its owner, fame and the famous, are identical, and similarly the qualities, pastimes and everything else pertaining to the Absolute are also absolute. Although Mayavadis profess monism, they differentiate between the holy name of the Supreme Lord and the Lord Himself. For this offense of namaparadha they gradually glide down from their exalted position of brahma-jnana, as confirmed in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.2.32):

aruḥya kṛcchrena param padam tataḥ patanty
adho 'nadrta-yusmad-anḥrayah

Although by severe austerities they rise to the exalted position of brahma-jnana, they nevertheless fall down due to imperfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth. Although they profess to understand the Vedic mantra, sarvaṁ khalv idam brahma ("everything is Brahman"), they are unable to understand that the holy name is also Brahman. If they regularly chant the maha-mantra, however, they can be relieved from this misconception. Unless one properly takes shelter of the holy name, he cannot be relieved from the offensive stage in chanting the holy name.

ˆSri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adī-līla 7.74

To think that glorification of the holy name is an exaggeration or to interpret the glories of the holy name as offenses against the holy name:

Once the Lord explained the glories of the holy name to the devotees, but some ordinary students who heard Him fashioned their own interpretation. When a student interpreted the glories of the holy name as a prayer of exaggeration, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, greatly unhappy, immediately warned everyone not to see the student's face henceforward.

When Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained the glories of the transcendental potency of the Lord's holy name, the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra, one unfortunate student said that such glorification of the holy name was an exaggeration in the sastras to induce people to take to it. In this way the student interpreted the glories of the holy name. This is called artha-vada,

and it is one of the ten offenses at the lotus feet of the holy name of the Lord... The holy name is identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore one who distinguishes between the Lord and His name is called a pasandi, or nonbeliever, an atheistic demon. Glorification of the holy name is glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should never attempt to distinguish between the Lord and His name or interpret the glories of the holy name as mere exaggerations.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 17.72-73

One must not sin with the intention of chanting Hare Krsna to neutralize the reactions: The chanting of the holy name is so auspicious that it can free everyone from the reactions of sinful activities. One should not conclude that one may continue to sin with the intention of chanting Hare Krsna to neutralize the reactions. Rather, one should be very careful to be free from all sins and never think of counteracting sinful activities by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, for this is another offense. If by chance a devotee accidentally performs some sinful activity, the Lord will excuse him, but one should not intentionally perform sinful acts.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.3.31

Along with the devotees from Bengal came a gentleman named Kalidasa. He never uttered anything but the holy name of Krsna. Kalidasa was a very advanced devotee, yet he was simple and liberal. He would chant the holy name of Krsna while performing all his ordinary dealings. When he used to throw dice in jest, he would throw the dice while chanting Hare Krsna.

In this connection Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura warns the men of this age not to imitate the jesting of a maha-bhagavata like Kalidasa. If someone imitates him by playing with dice or gambling while chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, he will certainly become a victim of offenses unto the holy name. As it is said, hari-nama-bale pape pravrtti: one must not commit sinful activities on the strength of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. Playing with dice is certainly gambling, but it is clearly said here that Kalidasa did this only in jest. A maha-bhagavata can do anything, but he never forgets the basic principles. Therefore it is said, vaisnavera kriya-mudra vijneha na bujhaya: "No one can understand the activities of a pure devotee." We should not imitate Kalidasa.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 16.5-7

The holy name is so spiritually potent that simply by chanting the holy name one can be freed from the reactions to all sinful activities. What, then, is to be said of those who chant

the holy name regularly or worship the Deity regularly? For such purified devotees, freedom from sinful reaction is certainly assured. This does not mean, however, that one should intentionally commit sinful acts and think himself free from the reactions because he is chanting the holy name. Such a mentality is a most abominable offense at the lotus feet of the holy name. *Namno balad yasya hi papa–buddhih*: the Lord's holy name certainly has the potency to neutralize all sinful activities, but if one repeatedly and intentionally commits sins while chanting the holy name, he is most condemned.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.13.8–9

In the Skanda Purana there is a statement about submission and humbleness. It is stated there: "My dear Lord, there is no sinful living entity who is more of a sinner than myself. Nor is there a greater offender than myself. I am so greatly sinful and offensive that when I come to confess my sinful activities before You, I am ashamed." This is a natural position for a devotee. As far as the conditioned soul is concerned, there is no wonder that he has some sinful activities in his past life, and this should be admitted and confessed before the Lord. As soon as this is done the Lord excuses the sincere devotee. But that does not mean that one should take advantage of the Lord's causeless mercy and expect to be excused over and over again, while he commits the same sinful activities. Such a mentality is only for the shameless persons. Here it is clearly said, "When I come to confess my sinful activities I become ashamed." So if a person is not ashamed of his sinful activities and continues to commit the same sinful activities with the knowledge that the Lord will excuse him, that is a most nonsensical proposition. Such an idea is not accepted in any part of the Vedic literature. It is a fact that by chanting the holy name of the Lord one becomes washed clean of all sinful activities from his past life. But that does not mean that after being washed off, one should again begin sinful activities and expect to be washed again. These are nonsensical propositions and are not admitted in the devotional service. Someone may think: "For a whole week I may commit sinful activities, and for one day I will go to the temple or church and admit my sinful activities so that I can become washed off and again begin my sinning." This is most nonsensical and offensive and is not acceptable to the author of *Bhakti–rasamrta–sindhu*.

~The Nectar of Devotion

The powerful holy name of the Lord can certainly deliver one from sinful effects, but one who desires to utilize this transcendental potency of the holy name of the Lord in one's sinister activities is the most degraded person in the world. Such persons are never excused by the Lord or by any agent of the Lord.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.1.12

[Maharaja Pariksit]

compared atonement to an elephant's bathing. The elephant may take a very nice bath in the river, but as soon as it comes onto the bank, it throws dirt all over its body. What, then, is the value of its bathing? Similarly, many spiritual practitioners chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra and at the same time commit many forbidden things, thinking that their chanting will counteract their offenses. Of the ten types of offenses one can commit while chanting the holy name of the Lord, this offense is called namno balad yasya hi papa-buddhih, committing sinful activities on the strength of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 1

One should not think that because the holy name of Krsna can nullify sinful activities, one may commit a little sinful activity and chant Hare Krsna to nullify it. This is the greatest offense (namno balad yasya hi papa-buddhih). The members of some religious orders go to church and confess their sins, but then they again commit the same sinful activities. What then is the value of their confession? One may confess, "My Lord, out of my ignorance I committed this sin," but one should not plan, "I shall commit sinful activities and then go to church and confess them, and then the sins will be nullified, and I can begin a new chapter of sinful life." Similarly, one should not knowingly take advantage of the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to nullify sinful activities so that one may then begin sinful acts again. We should be very careful. Before taking initiation, one promises to have no illicit sex, no intoxicants, no gambling, and no meat-eating, and this vow one should strictly follow. Then one will be clean. If one keeps oneself clean in this way and always engages in devotional service, his life will be a success.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

For those who want to be initiated in this Society for Krsna consciousness, there are four principles: no illicit sex, no intoxication, no meat-eating, and no gambling. We don't say, "No sex." But we do say, "No illicit sex." If you want sex, get married and have Krsna conscious children. "No intoxication" means not even taking tea or coffee—to say nothing of other intoxicants. And there is no gambling and no meat-eating (including fish and eggs). Simply by following these four basic rules and regulations, one becomes immediately uncontaminated. No further endeavor is necessary. As soon as one joins this Krsna consciousness movement and follows these rules and regulations, material contamination is immediately removed, but one must be careful not to be contaminated again. Therefore these rules and regulations should be followed carefully.

Material contamination begins with these four bad habits, and if we manage to check them, there is no question of contamination. Therefore, as soon as we take to Krsna consciousness, we become free. However, we should not think that because Krsna

consciousness makes us free, we can again indulge in these four bad habits and get free by chanting. That is cheating, and that will not be allowed. Once we are freed, we should not allow ourselves to become contaminated again. One should not think, "I shall drink or have illicit sex and then chant and make myself free."

~The Path of Perfection

It is an offense to consider the holy name to be an ordinary pious activity:

One who says that ten million asvamedha sacrifices are equal to the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna is undoubtedly an atheist. He is sure to be punished by Yamaraja.

In the list of the ten kinds of offenses in chanting the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hare Krsna, the eighth offense is

dharma–vrata–tyaga–hutadi–sarva–subha–kriya–samyam api pramadah. One should never consider the chanting of the holy name of Godhead equal to pious activities like giving charity to brahmanas or saintly persons, opening charitable educational institutions, distributing free foodstuffs and so on. The results of pious activities do not equal the results of chanting the holy name of Krsna.

The Vedic scriptures say:

go–koti–danam grahane khagasya
prayaga–gangodaka–kalpa–vasah
yajnayutam meru–survarna–danam
govinda–kirter na samam satamsaih

"Even if one distributes ten million cows in charity during an eclipse of the sun, lives at the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna for millions of years, or gives a mountain of gold in sacrifice to the brahmanas, he does not earn one hundredth part of the merit derived from chanting Hare Krsna."

In other words, one who accepts the chanting of Hare Krsna to be some kind of pious activity is completely misled. Of course, it is pious; but the real fact is that Krsna and His name, being transcendental, are far above all mundane pious activity. Pious activity is on the material platform, but chanting of the holy name of Krsna is completely on the spiritual plane. Therefore, although pasandis do not understand this, pious activity can never compare to the chanting of the holy name.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 3.79

To consider the chanting of the holy name to be an auspicious religious ceremony is an offense:

In the list of offenses in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, it is said, *dharmā-vrata-tyaga-hutadi-sarva-subha-kriya-samyam api pramadah*: to consider the chanting of the holy name of the Lord equal to the execution of some auspicious religious ceremony is an offense. According to the materialistic point of view, observing a religious ceremony invokes an auspicious atmosphere for the material benefit of the entire world. Materialists therefore manufacture religious principles to live comfortably and without disturbance in executing their material activities. Since they do not believe in the existence of God, they have manufactured the idea that God is impersonal and that to have some conception of God one may imagine any form. Thus they respect the many forms of the demigods as different representations or manifestations of the Lord. They are called *bahv-isvara-vadis*, or followers of thousands and thousands of gods. They consider the chanting of the names of the demigods an auspicious activity. Great so-called *svamis* have written books saying that one may chant any name—Durga, Kali, Siva, Krsna, Rama, and so on—because any name is all right to invoke an auspicious atmosphere in society. Thus they are called *pasandis*—unbelievers.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta *Adi-lila* 17.212

While chanting the holy name, one should not desire material advancement:

[*isvara Puri* to Lord Caitanya]:

"Religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation are known as the four goals of life, but before love of Godhead, the fifth and highest goal, these appear as insignificant as straw in the street."

While chanting the holy name of the Lord, one should not desire the material advancements represented by economic development, religiosity, sense gratification and ultimately liberation from the material world. As stated by Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the highest perfection in life is to develop one's love for Kṛṣṇa (*prema pūmartho mahān sri-caitanya-mahāprabhor matam idam*). When we compare love of Godhead with religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation, we can understand that these achievements may be desirable objectives for *bubhukṣus*, or those who desire to enjoy this material world, and *mumukṣus*, or those who desire liberation from it, but they are very insignificant in the eyes of a pure devotee who has developed *bhava*, the preliminary stage of love of Godhead.

Effects of Offensive Chanting

The holy name eradicates sins, but if one offends the holy name, he will not be delivered: In the Padma Purana it is stated that even a person whose life is completely sinful will be completely protected by the Lord if he simply surrenders unto Him. So it is accepted that one who surrenders unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes freed from all sinful reactions. And even when a person becomes an offender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, he can still be delivered simply by taking shelter of the holy names of the Lord: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In other words, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is beneficial for eradicating all sins; but if one becomes an offender to the holy names of the Lord, then he has no chance of being delivered.

~The Nectar of Devotion

An offense at the lotus feet of the holy name is extremely dangerous:

Once the Lord explained the glories of the holy name to the devotees, but some ordinary students who heard Him fashioned their own interpretation. When a student interpreted the glories of the holy name as a prayer of exaggeration, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, greatly unhappy, immediately warned everyone not to see the student's face henceforward. Without even changing His garments, Lord Caitanya, with His companions, took bath in the Ganges. There He explained the glories of devotional service.

There are many kinds of offenses, but the offense known as namaparadhā, an offense at the lotus feet of the holy name, is extremely dangerous. The Lord therefore warned everyone not to see the face of the offender. He immediately took a bath in the Ganges with all His clothes to teach everyone to avoid such a namaparadhā. The holy name is identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adī-līla 17.72-74

Without chanting offenselessly, one cannot properly advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness: One should know for certain that without chanting the holy name of the Lord offenselessly,

one cannot be a proper candidate for advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

If one commits offenses against the holy name, he will not achieve attachment for chanting:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"...My dear Lord, although You bestow such mercy upon the fallen conditioned souls by liberally teaching Your holy names, I am so unfortunate that I commit offenses while chanting the holy name, and therefore I do not achieve attachment for chanting."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya-līla 20.16

If one chants the holy name offensively, one does not achieve love for the Supreme Lord:

If one chants the exalted holy name of the Lord again and again and yet his love for the Supreme Lord does not develop and tears do not appear in his eyes, it is evident that because of his offenses in chanting, the seed of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa does not sprout.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adī-līla 8.29-3

If one chants with offenses, even many lifetimes of chanting will not bring him love of Godhead:

If one is infested with the ten offenses in the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra, despite his endeavor to chant the holy name for many births, he will not get the love of Godhead which is the ultimate goal of this chanting.

Srīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī thākura says in this connection that unless one accepts Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, although one goes on chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra for many, many years, there is no possibility of his attaining the platform of devotional service. One must follow strictly the instruction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu given in the Śikṣastaka:

trnad api sunicena taror iva sahisnuna
amanina manadena kirtaniyah sada harih
[Cc. adī 17.31]

"One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all

sense of false prestige, and should be ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly." (Siksastaka 3)

One who follows this direction, being freed from the ten kinds of offenses, becomes successful in Krsna consciousness and ultimately reaches the platform of loving service to the Personality of Godhead.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi 8.16

If one chants without trying to give up offenses, the real creeper of bhakti will be stunted by the unwanted creepers of sense gratification, etc.:

[Lord Caitanya to Rupa Gosvami]:

"When a person receives the seed of devotional service, he should take care of it by becoming a gardener and sowing the seed in his heart. If he waters the seed gradually by the process of sravana and kirtana [hearing and chanting], the seed will begin to sprout...The gardener must defend the creeper by fencing it all around so that the powerful elephant of offenses may not enter. Sometimes unwanted creepers, such as the creepers of desires for material enjoyment and liberation from the material world, grow along with the creeper of devotional service. The varieties of such unwanted creepers are unlimited. Some unnecessary creepers growing with the bhakti creeper are the creepers of behavior unacceptable for those trying to attain perfection, diplomatic behavior, animal killing, mundane profiteering, mundane adoration and mundane importance. All these are unwanted creepers. If one does not distinguish between the bhakti-lata creeper and the other creepers, the sprinkling of water is misused because the other creepers are nourished while the bhakti-lata creeper is curtailed."

If one chants the Hare Krsna mantra while committing offenses, these unwanted creepers will grow. One should not take advantage of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra for some material profit. As mentioned in verse 159:

'nisiddhacara', 'kutinati', jiva-himsana'
'labha', 'puja', 'pratisthadi' yata upasakha-gana

The unwanted creepers have been described by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura. He states that if one hears and chants without trying to give up offenses, one becomes materially attached to sense gratification. One may also desire freedom from material bondage like the Mayavadis, or one may become attached to the yoga-siddhis and desire wonderful yogic powers. If one is attached to wonderful material activities, one is called

siddhi–lobhi, greedy for material perfection. One may also be victimized by diplomatic or crooked behavior, or one may associate with women for illicit sex. Others may make a show of devotional service like the prakṛta–sahajiyas, or one may try to support his philosophy by joining some caste or identifying himself with a certain dynasty, claiming a monopoly on spiritual advancement. Thus with the support of family tradition, one may become a pseudo guru or so–called spiritual master. One may become attached to the four sinful activities–illicit sex, intoxication, gambling and meat–eating, or one may consider a Vaisnava to belong to a mundane caste or creed. One may think, "This is a Hindu Vaisnava, and this is a European Vaisnava. A European Vaisnava is not allowed to enter the temples." In other words, one may consider Vaisnavas in terms of birth, thinking one a brahmana Vaisnava, a sudra Vaisnava, a mleccha Vaisnava and so on. One may also try to carry out a professional business while chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra or reading Srimad–Bhagavatam, or one may try to increase his monetary strength by illegal means. One may also try to be a cheap Vaisnava by chanting in a secluded place for material adoration, or one may desire mundane reputation by making compromises with nondevotees, compromising one's philosophy or spiritual life, or one may become a supporter of a hereditary caste system. All these are pitfalls of personal sense gratification. Just to cheat some innocent people, one makes a show of advanced spiritual life and becomes known as a sadhu, mahatma or religious person. All this means that the so–called devotee has become victimized by all these unwanted creepers and that the real creeper of bhakti–lata–bija has been stunted.

–Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 19.152, 157–60

If one chants the holy name without proper understanding, just to make a show, he will never attain perfection in chanting:

[Lord Caitanya to Prakāśananda Sarasvatī]:

"I firmly believe in these words of My spiritual master, and therefore I always chant the holy name of the Lord, alone and in the association of devotees. That holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa sometimes causes Me to chant and dance, and therefore I chant and dance. Please do not think that I intentionally do it. I do it automatically."

It is to be understood that when Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu chanted and danced, He did so by the influence of the pleasure potency of the spiritual world. Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu never considered the holy name of the Lord to be a material vibration, nor does any pure devotee mistake the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra to be a material musical manifestation. Lord Caitanya never tried to be the master of the holy name; rather He taught us how to be servants of the holy name. If one chants the holy name of the Lord just to make a show, not

knowing the secret of success, he may increase his bile secretion, but he will never attain perfection in chanting the holy name.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Ādi-līla 7.95-96

One should avoid those who offend the chanting of the holy name:

One should avoid...those who offend the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 22.131

Other Instructions Concerning Offensive Chanting

Due to not being freed from material contamination, a non-Vaiṣṇava brahmana cannot chant the holy name offenselessly:

[Lord Caitanya to Amogha]:

"...When a person's heart is cleansed of all contamination, he is able to chant the maha-mantra, Hare Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, Amogha, get up and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra! If you do so, Kṛṣṇa will unfailingly bestow mercy upon you."

Whoever understands Brahman is called a brahmana, and when a brahmana engages in the Lord's devotional service, he is called a Vaiṣṇava. Unless one comes to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, his realization of impersonal Brahman is imperfect. A brahmana can chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on the platform of namabhasa, but not on the platform of pure vibration. When a brahmana engages in the Lord's service, fully understanding his eternal relationship, his devotional service is called abhidheya. When one attains that stage, he is called a bhagavata or a Vaiṣṇava. This indicates that he is free from contamination and material attachment...A brahmana may be a very learned scholar, but this does not mean that he is free from material contamination. A brahmana's contamination, however, is in the mode of goodness. In the material world, the three modes are goodness, passion and ignorance, and all of these are simply different gradations of contamination. Unless a brahmana transcends such contamination and approaches the platform of unalloyed devotional service, he cannot be accepted as a Vaiṣṇava.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 15.276-77

3.

Offenseless Chanting of the Holy Name

General Instructions

One should avoid offenses against the holy name:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"...One should avoid offenses against devotional service and the holy name."

The eleventh item is to avoid offenses when rendering devotional service and chanting the holy names.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 22.117

Mechanical chanting is not as powerful as offenseless chanting:

Mechanical chanting is not as powerful as chanting of the holy name without offenses.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 10.43

The offenseless chanter of the holy name is as auspicious as the Lord and can purify the world:

The offenseless chanter of the holy name of the Lord is as auspicious as the Lord Himself, and the movement of pure devotees of the Lord all over the world can at once change the troublesome face of the world. Only by the propagation of the chanting of the holy name of the Lord can we be immune from all effects of the age of Kali.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.16.32-33

How to Develop Offenseless Chanting

Repeated chanting brings one to the stage of offenseless chanting:

The chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is recommended even for persons who commit offenses, because if they continue chanting they will gradually chant offenselessly. By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra without offenses, one increases his love for Krsna...

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura quotes this verse from the Padma Purana:

namaparadha-yukt

namany eva haranty agham
avisranti–prayuktani
tany evartha–karani ca

Even if in the beginning one chants the Hare Krsna mantra with offenses, one will become free from such offenses by chanting again and again. Papa–ksayas ca bhavati smaritam tam ahar–nisam: one becomes free from all sinful reactions if one chants day and night, following the recommendation of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.3.24

To become free from offenses to the holy name, one must continue to chant constantly and also humbly offer prayers in glorification of the holy name:

While chanting the holy name of the Lord, one should be careful to avoid ten offenses...

There is no way to atone for any of these offenses. It is therefore recommended that an offender at the feet of the holy name continue to chant the holy name twenty–four hours a day. Constant chanting of the holy name will make one free of offenses, and then he will gradually be elevated to the transcendental platform on which he can chant the pure holy name and thus become a lover of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

It is recommended that even if one commits offenses, one should continue chanting the holy name. In other words, the chanting of the holy name makes one offenseless. In the book Nama–kaumudi it is recommended that if one is an offender at the lotus feet of a Vaisnava, he should submit to that Vaisnava and be excused; similarly, if one is an offender in chanting the holy name, he should submit to the holy name and thus be freed from his offenses...

One should be very humble and meek to offer one's desires and chant prayers composed in glorification of the holy name, such as ayi mukta–kulair upasyamanam and nivrtta–tarsair upagiyamanad [SB 10.1.4]. One should chant such prayers to become free from offenses at the lotus feet of the holy name.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.5.23–24

By developing one's service attitude toward the Lord, one can come to chant without offense:

Caitanya Mahaprabhu has recommended that everyone chant the Hare Krsna mantra just to cleanse the dust from the heart. If the dust of the heart is cleansed away, then one can actually understand the importance of the holy name. For persons who are not inclined to clean the dust from their heart and want to keep things as they are, it is not possible to derive the transcendental result of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra. One should, therefore, be encouraged to develop his service attitude toward the Lord, because this will help him to chant without any offense. And so, under the guidance of a spiritual master, the disciple is trained simultaneously to render service and at the same time to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. As soon as one develops his spontaneous service attitude, he can immediately understand the transcendental nature of the holy names of the maha-mantra.

~The Nectar of Devotion

One can chant Hare Krsna offenselessly by developing genuine humility:

Devahuti shows us the process for understanding transcendental subject matters. It is not by challenge but by submission. The entire bhakti process is a process of submission. That is also Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teaching:

trnad api sunicena
taror iva sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih
[Cc. adi 17.31]

If one is interested in advancing in chanting Hare Krsna, Caitanya Mahaprabhu advises that one be humbler than the grass and more tolerant than the trees. One should not be very proud of his intelligence but should give all respect to others. In this way, one can chant Hare Krsna offenselessly.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

When one realizes that the holy name and the Lord are identical, he can chant offenselessly: When one realizes that the holy name of the Lord is identical with the Supreme Person, he becomes completely eligible to chant the holy name of the Lord.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.73

The holy name cannot be chanted offenselessly by one who is not pure:

It is said in the Padma Purana: "There is no difference between the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself. As such, the holy name is as perfect as the Lord Himself in fullness, purity and eternity. The holy name is no material sound vibration, nor has it any material contamination." The holy name cannot, therefore, be chanted offenselessly by one who has failed to purify his senses. In other words, materialistic senses cannot properly chant the holy names of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. But, by adopting this chanting process, one is given a chance to actually purify himself so that he may very soon chant offenselessly.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu has recommended that everyone chant the Hare Krsna mantra just to cleanse the dust from the heart. If the dust of the heart is cleansed away, then one can actually understand the importance of the holy name. For persons who are not inclined to clean the dust from their heart and want to keep things as they are, it is not possible to derive the transcendental result of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra.

~The Nectar of Devotion

Effects of Offenseless Chanting

By chanting offenselessly, one comes to realize that the Lord and His name are nondifferent

Offenseless chanting leads to realization of oneness of the holy name and the Lord Himself: The chanting of the holy names of Krsna is so sublime that if one chants the Hare Krsna maha–mantra offenselessly, carefully avoiding the ten offenses, he can certainly be gradually elevated to the point of understanding that there is no difference between the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

One must come to the understanding that the holy name of the Lord and the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself are identical. One cannot reach this conclusion unless one is offenseless in chanting the holy name. By our material calculation we see a difference between the name and the substance, but in the spiritual world the Absolute is always absolute; the name, form, quality and pastimes of the Absolute are all as good as the Absolute Himself. As such, one is understood to be an eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead if he considers himself an eternal servant of the holy name and in this spirit distributes the holy name to the world. One who chants in that spirit, without offenses, is certainly elevated to the platform of understanding that the holy name and the Personality of Godhead are identical.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 8.16

To realize that Kṛṣṇa and His name are nondifferent, one has to chant the holy name offenselessly:

Unless one is advanced in kṛṣṇa–prema, love of Kṛṣṇa, he cannot see or understand. By the blunt material senses, we cannot even understand the name of Kṛṣṇa. People are always asking, "Why are these people chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa?" They cannot understand, although Kṛṣṇa realization begins with the name. The name of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa are nondifferent, but we cannot realize this intellectually. We have to practice chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa to realize it. When we actually advance in devotional service and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra offenselessly, we will realize that Kṛṣṇa and His name are nondifferent.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti Other effects of offenseless chanting

The meaning and effect of offenseless chanting:

[Suta Gosvami to the sages at Naimisaranya]:

And what to speak of those who are under the direction of the great devotees, chanting the holy name of the Unlimited, who has unlimited potency? The Personality of Godhead, unlimited in potency and transcendental by attributes, is called the ananta [Unlimited].

One who chants the holy name of the Lord under the direction of a pure devotee can at once get free from the disadvantages due to a lower–caste birth. A pure devotee of the Lord does not commit any offense while chanting the holy name of the Lord. There are ten different offenses in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. To chant the holy name under the direction of a pure devotee is offenseless chanting. Offenseless chanting of the holy name of the Lord is transcendental, and, therefore, such chanting can at once purify one from the effects of all kinds of previous sins. This offenseless chanting indicates that one has fully understood the transcendental nature of the holy name and has thus surrendered unto the Lord.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.18.19

Offenseless chanting awakens one's original dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness and is the beginning of sadhana–bhakti:

The process of devotional service–beginning with chanting and hearing–is called sadhana–bhakti. This includes the regulative principles that are intended to awaken one to

devotional service. Devotional service is always dormant in everyone's heart, and by the offenseless chanting of the holy names of the Lord, one's original dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness is awakened. This awakening to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the beginning of sadhana–bhakti. This can be divided into many different parts, including faith, association with devotees, initiation by the spiritual master, engagement in devotional service under the instructions of a spiritual master, steadiness in devotional service and the awakening of a taste for devotional service. In this way, one can become attached to Kṛṣṇa and His service, and when this attachment is intensified, it results in ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 19.177

By chanting offenselessly, one gets immediate shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet:

Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu further advised Subuddhi Raya: "Begin chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, and when your chanting is almost pure, all your sinful reactions will go away. After you chant perfectly, you will get shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa."

The ten kinds of offenses should be considered. In the beginning, when one is initiated into the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, there are naturally many offenses. However, the devotee should be very careful to avoid these offenses and chant purely. This does not mean that the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra is sometimes pure and sometimes impure. Rather, the chanter is impure due to material contamination. He has to purify himself so that the holy names will be perfectly effective. Chanting the holy name of the Lord inoffensively will help one get immediate shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. This means that by chanting purely, one will immediately be situated on the transcendental platform.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 25.199

One can come to the bhava stage only by offenseless chanting of the holy name:

[Saunaka Rsi to Suta Gosvami]:

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.

The whole process of spiritual culture is aimed at changing the heart of the living being in the matter of his eternal relation with the Supreme Lord as subordinate servant, which is his eternal constitutional position. So with the progress of devotional service, the reaction of change in the heart is exhibited by gradual detachment from the sense of material

enjoyment by a false sense of lording it over the world and an increase in the attitude of rendering loving service to the Lord... It is expected by all means that by discharging regulated devotional service one must manifest the change of heart. If there is no such change, the heart must be considered steel-framed, for it is not melted even when there is chanting of the holy name of the Lord. We must always remember that hearing and chanting are the basic principles of discharging devotional duties, and if they are properly performed there will follow the reactional ecstasy with signs of tears in the eyes and standing of the hairs on the body. These are natural consequences and are the preliminary symptoms of the bhava stage, which occurs before one reaches the perfectional stage of prema, love of Godhead.

If the reaction does not take place, even after continuous hearing and chanting of the holy name of the Lord, it may be considered to be due to offenses only. That is the opinion of the Sandarbha. In the beginning of chanting of the holy name of the Lord, if the devotee has not been very careful about evading the ten kinds of offenses at the feet of the holy name, certainly the reaction of feelings of separation will not be visible by tears in the eyes and standing of the hair on end.

The bhava stage is manifested by eight transcendental symptoms, namely inertness, perspiration, standing of hairs on end, failing in the voice, trembling, paleness of the body, tears in the eyes and finally trance... real, steady bhava is definitely displayed in the matter of cessation of material desires (ksanti), utilization of every moment in the transcendental loving service of the Lord (avyartha-kalatvam [Cc.Madhya 23.18-19]), eagerness for glorifying the Lord constantly (nama-gane sada ruci [Cc. Madhya 23.32]), attraction for living in the land of the Lord (pritis tad-vasati-sthale [Cc.Madhya 23.18-19]), complete detachment from material happiness (virakti), and pridelessness (mana-sunyata). One who has developed all these transcendental qualities is really possessed of the bhava stage, as distinguished from the stonehearted imitator or mundane devotee.

The whole process can be summarized as follows: The advanced devotee who chants the holy name of the Lord in a perfectly offenseless manner and is friendly to everyone can actually relish the transcendental taste of glorifying the Lord. And the result of such realization is reflected in the cessation of all material desires, etc., as mentioned above. The neophytes, due to their being in the lower stage of devotional service, are invariably envious, so much so that they invent their own ways and means of devotional regulations without following the acaryas. As such, even if they make a show of constantly chanting the holy name of the Lord, they cannot relish the transcendental taste of the holy name.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.3.24

One who chants offenselessly develops symptoms of ecstasy and becomes eligible to enter the kingdom of God:

[Lord Brahma to the demigods]:

Persons whose bodily features change in ecstasy and who breathe heavily and perspire due to hearing the glories of the Lord are promoted to the kingdom of God, even though they do not care for meditation and other austerities...

When one is free from all ten offenses in chanting the holy name of God, he develops the ecstatic bodily features called pulakasru. Pulaka means "symptoms of happiness," and asru means "tears in the eyes." The symptoms of happiness and tears in the eyes must appear in a person who has chanted the holy name offenselessly. Here in this verse it is stated that those who have actually developed the symptoms of happiness and tears in the eyes by chanting the glories of the Lord are eligible to enter the kingdom of God.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.15.25

By offenseless chanting, one attains God realization, develops mystic powers and, ultimately, becomes a confidential devotee of the Lord:

[Narada Muni to Srila Vyasadeva]:

Thus he is the actual seer who worships, in the form of transcendental sound representation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu, who has no material form. O brahmana, thus by the Supreme Lord Krsna I was endowed first with the transcendental knowledge of the Lord as inculcated in the confidential parts of the Vedas, then with the spiritual opulences, and then with His intimate loving service.

Communion with the Lord by transmission of the transcendental sound is nondifferent from the whole spirit Lord Sri Krsna. It is a completely perfect method for approaching the Lord. By such pure contact with the Lord, without offense of material conceptions (numbering ten), the devotee can rise above the material plane to understand the inner meaning of the Vedic literatures, including the Lord's existence in the transcendental realm. The Lord reveals His identity gradually to one who has unflinching faith, both in the spiritual master and in the Lord. After this, the devotee is endowed with mystic opulences, which are eight in number. And above all, the devotee is accepted in the confidential entourage of the Lord and is entrusted with specific service of the Lord through the agency of the spiritual master. A pure devotee is more interested in serving the Lord than in showing an exhibition of the mystic powers dormant in him. Sri Narada has explained all these from his personal

experience, and one can obtain all the facilities which Sri Narada obtained by perfecting the chanting process of the sound representation of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.5.38-39

One who sincerely chants the holy name without offense is better than a brahmana: Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then glanced with mercy at the Muhammadan governor. Giving him assurance, He asked him to chant the holy names Krsna and Hari.

It is Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy that He advises everyone—even candalas, mlecchas and yavanas—to chant the holy name of the Lord... Whoever follows Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's instructions will certainly be purified, and one who sincerely chants the holy name offenselessly is already more than a brahmana.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 16.187

When one chants the holy name offenselessly, he can make disciples all over the world: When one is completely fit to chant the holy name [offenselessly], he is eligible to make disciples all over the world, and he actually becomes jagad-guru. Then the entire world, under his influence, begins to chant the holy names of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Thus all the disciples of such a spiritual master increase in attachment for Krsna, and therefore he sometimes cries, sometimes laughs, sometimes dances and sometimes chants.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.83

Even Unintentional Chanting Can be Offenseless

If Not Performed to Counteract Sinful Activities

Even unintentional chanting can be offenseless if not performed to counteract sinful activities:

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:

Ajamila has already atoned for all his sinful actions. Indeed, he has atoned not only for sins performed in one life but for those performed in millions of lives, for in a helpless condition he chanted the holy name of Narayana. Even though he did not chant purely, he chanted without offense, and therefore he is now pure and eligible for liberation. The Visnudutas continued: Even previously, while eating and at other times, this Ajamila would call his

son, saying, "My dear Narayana, please come here." Although calling the name of his son, he nevertheless uttered the four syllables na-ra-ya-na. Simply by chanting the name of Narayana in this way, he sufficiently atoned for the sinful reactions of millions of lives.

Previously, when engaged in sinful activities to maintain his family, Ajamila chanted the name of Narayana without offenses. To chant the holy name of the Lord just to counteract one's sinful activities, or to commit sinful activities on the strength of chanting the holy name, is offensive (namno balad yasya hi papa-buddhih). But although Ajamila engaged in sinful activities, he never chanted the holy name of Narayana to counteract them; he simply chanted the name Narayana to call his son. Therefore his chanting was effective. Because of chanting the holy name of Narayana in this way, he had already vanquished the accumulated sinful reactions of many, many lives. In the beginning he was pure, but although he later committed many sinful acts, he was offenseless because he did not chant the holy name of Narayana to counteract them. One who always chants the holy name of the Lord without offenses is always pure. As confirmed in this verse Ajamila was already sinless, and because he chanted the name of Narayana he remained sinless. It did not matter that he was calling his son; the name itself was effective.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.7-8

Even though he was sinful, Ajamila's casual chanting was inoffensive because it was not performed to counteract his sinful activities:

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura's commentary to texts nine and ten of this chapter form a dialogue concerning how one can become free from all sinful reactions simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord...

Ajamila had named his son Narayana, 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 Narayana is not different from the Supreme Lord Narayana. When Ajamila named his son Narayana, all the reactions of his sinful life were neutralized, and as he continued calling his son and thus chanting the holy name of Narayana thousands of times, he was actually unconsciously advancing in Krsna consciousness.

One may argue, "Since he was constantly chanting the name of Narayana, 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 his ultimate chanting of Narayana was the cause of his being freed. However, his chanting would then have been a nama-aparadha. Namno balad yasya hi papa-buddhih:

one who continues to act sinfully and tries to neutralize his sins by chanting the holy name of the Lord is a nama–aparadhi, an offender to the holy name. In response it may be said that Ajamila's chanting was inoffensive because he did not chant the name of Narayana with the purpose of counteracting his sins. He did not know that he was addicted to sinful actions, nor did he know that his chanting of the name of Narayana was neutralizing them. Thus he did not commit a nama–aparadha, and his repeated chanting of the holy name of Narayana while calling his son may be called pure chanting. Because of this pure chanting, Ajamila unconsciously accumulated the results of bhakti. 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, Ajamila's devotional service grew little by little, and therefore although he committed very sinful acts, the reactions did not affect him. In the sastras 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.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.2 "Supplementary note"

4.

One Must Receive the Holy Name from Proper Spiritual Authorities

The holy name must be received from spiritual sources:

One has to learn about the beauty and transcendental position of the holy name of the Lord by hearing the revealed scriptures from the mouths of devotees. Nowhere else can we hear of the sweetness of the Lord's holy name.

It is said in the Padma Purana,

atah sri–krsna–namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyaih

[BRS. atah sri–krsna–namadi

na bhaved grahyam indriyaih

sevonmukhe hi jihvadau

svayam eva sphuraty adah

"No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes

of Sri Krsna through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him." (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.2.234)1.2.234]. Chanting and hearing of the transcendental holy name of the Lord cannot be performed by the ordinary senses. The transcendental vibration of the Lord's holy name is completely spiritual. Thus it must be received from spiritual sources and must be chanted after having been heard from a spiritual master. One who hears the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra must receive it from the spiritual master by aural reception. Srila Sanatana Gosvami has forbidden us to hear the holy name of Krsna chanted by non-Vaisnavas, such as professional actors and singers, for it will have no effect. It is like milk touched by the lips of a serpent, as stated in the Padma Purana:

avaisnava-mukhodgirnam
putam hari-kathamrtam
sravanam naiva kartavyam
sarpocchistam yatha payah

As far as possible, therefore, the devotees in the Krsna consciousness movement gather to chant the holy name of Krsna in public so that both the chanters and the listeners may benefit.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 1.101

One should receive the holy name from spiritual authorities:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.

Here it is mentioned that one should constantly chant the holy name of the Lord after hearing it from authorities. This means that hearing from the authorities is the first essential.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.11

The transcendental sound must be received through a representative of the disciplic succession:

Communion with the Lord by transmission of the transcendental sound is nondifferent from the whole spirit Lord Sri Krsna. It is a completely perfect method for approaching the Lord... There is no bar for chanting this transcendental sound by anyone, provided it is received through Narada's representative, coming down by the chain of disciplic succession, or the parampara system.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.5.39

If not received through the chain of disciplic succession, the holy name does not act: One may receive a published mantra anywhere, but unless it is accepted through the chain of disciplic succession, the mantra does not act. It is said by authoritative sources that any mantra chanted without having been received from the disciplic succession has no efficacy.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.8.53

The disciple receives the authority to chant the holy name from the spiritual master:

[Lord Caitanya to Prakasananda Sarasvati]:

"My dear child, continue dancing, chanting and performing sankirtana in association with devotees. Furthermore, go out and preach the value of chanting krsna–nama, for by this process You will be able to deliver all fallen souls.' Saying this, My spiritual master taught Me one verse from Srimad–Bhagavatam. It is the essence of all the Bhagavatam's instructions; therefore he instructed Me this verse again and again. '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.' I firmly believe in these words of My spiritual master, and therefore I always chant the holy name of the Lord, alone and in the association of devotees. That holy name of Lord Krsna sometimes causes Me to chant and dance, and therefore I chant and dance. Please do not think that I intentionally do it. I do it automatically."

A person who cannot keep his faith in the words of his spiritual master but acts independently never receives the authority to chant the holy name of the Lord. It is said in the Vedas:

yasya deve para bhaktir
yatha deve tatha gurau
tasyaite kathita hy arthah

prakasante mahatmanah

[SU yasya deve para bhaktir
yatha deve tatha gurau
tasyaite kathita hy arthah
prakasante mahatmanah

"Unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, all the imports of Vedic knowledge are automatically revealed." (Svetasvatara Upanisad 6.23)

atah sri-krsna-namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

"No one can understand Krsna as He is by the blunt material senses. But He reveals Himself to the devotees, being pleased with them for their transcendental loving service unto Him." (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.2.234)

bhaktya mam abhijanati
yavan yas casmi tattvatah
tato mam tattvato jnatva
visate tad-anantaram

"One can understand the Supreme Personality as He is only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of the Supreme Lord by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God." (Bg. 18.55)

These are Vedic instructions. One must have full faith in the words of the spiritual master and similar faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then the real knowledge of atma and Paramatma and the distinction between matter and spirit will be automatically revealed. This atma-tattva, or spiritual knowledge, will be revealed within the core of a devotee's heart because of his having taken shelter of the lotus feet of a mahajana such as Prahlada Maharaja.6.23]

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed."

This Vedic injunction is very important, and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu supported it by His

personal behavior. Believing in the words of His spiritual master, He introduced the sankirtana movement, just as the present Krsna consciousness movement was started with belief in the words of our spiritual master. He wanted to preach, we believed in his words and tried somehow or other to fulfill them, and now this movement has become successful all over the world. Therefore faith in the words of the spiritual master and in the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the secret of success. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu never disobeyed the orders of His spiritual master and stopped propagating the sankirtana movement...

It is to be understood that when Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu chanted and danced, He did so by the influence of the pleasure potency of the spiritual world. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu never considered the holy name of the Lord to be a material vibration, nor does any pure devotee mistake the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to be a material musical manifestation. Lord Caitanya never tried to be the master of the holy name; rather He taught us how to be servants of the holy name. If one chants the holy name of the Lord just to make a show, not knowing the secret of success, he may increase his bile secretion, but he will never attain perfection in chanting the holy name. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu presented himself in this way: "I am a great fool and do not have knowledge of right and wrong. In order to understand the real meaning of Vedanta–sutra, I never followed the explanation of the Sankara–sampradaya or Mayavadi sannyasis. I'm very much afraid of the illogical arguments of the Mayavadi philosophers. Therefore I think I have no authority regarding their explanations of Vedanta–sutra. I firmly believe that simply chanting the holy name of the Lord can remove all misconceptions of the material world. I believe that simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord one can attain the shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord. In this age of quarrel and disagreement, the chanting of the holy names is the only way to liberation from the material clutches.

"By chanting the holy name," Lord Caitanya continued, "I become almost mad. However, after inquiring from My spiritual master I have come to the conclusion that instead of striving for achievement in the four principles of religiosity (dharma), economic development (artha), sense gratification (kama) and liberation (moksa), it is better if somehow or other one develops transcendental love of Godhead. That is the greatest success in life. One who has attained love of Godhead chants and dances by his nature, not caring for the public." This stage of life is known as bhagavata–jivana, or the life of a devotee."

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu continued, "I never chanted and danced to make an artificial show. I dance and chant because I firmly believe in the words of My spiritual master. Although the Mayavadi philosophers do not like this chanting and dancing, I nevertheless perform it on the strength of his words. Therefore it is to be concluded that I deserve very

little credit for these activities of chanting and dancing, for they are being done automatically by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.92–96

The holy name should be received from, and chanted under the direction of, the bona fide spiritual master:

[The transcendental sound representation] should be received from the transparent agency of the bona fide spiritual master, and the chanting may be practiced by the direction of the spiritual master. That will gradually lead us nearer to the Lord. This method of worship is recommended in the pancaratika system, which is both recognized and authorized.

˚Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.5.38

One can understand the glories of the holy name by the mercy of the spiritual master: The holy name and the Lord are identical. One who is completely free from the clutches of maya can understand this fact. This knowledge, which is achieved by the mercy of the spiritual master, places one on the supreme transcendental platform. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu presented Himself as a fool because prior to accepting the shelter of a spiritual master He could not understand that simply by chanting one can be relieved from all material conditions. But as soon as He became a faithful servant of His spiritual master and followed his instructions, He very easily saw the path of liberation.

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.73

The spiritual master delivers the disciple from maya by initiating him into the chanting of the holy name:

It is the spiritual master who delivers the disciple from the clutches of maya by initiating him into the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. In this way a sleeping human being can revive his consciousness by chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In other words, the spiritual master awakens the sleeping living entity to his original consciousness so that he can worship Lord Visnu. This is the purpose of diksa, or initiation. Initiation means receiving the pure knowledge of spiritual consciousness.

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 9.61

One must receive the maha–mantra from a guru, who makes it more powerful:

[Lord Siva to the sons of King Pracinabarhi]:

Now I shall chant one mantra which is not only transcendental, pure and auspicious, but is the best prayer for anyone who is aspiring to attain the ultimate goal of life. When I chant this mantra, please hear it carefully and attentively.

Lord Siva voluntarily came to bless the sons of the King as well as do something beneficial for them. He personally chanted the mantra so that the mantra would be more powerful, and he advised that the mantra be chanted by the King's sons (raja–putras). When a mantra is chanted by a great devotee, the mantra becomes more powerful. Although the Hare Krsna maha–mantra is powerful in itself, a disciple upon initiation receives the mantra from his spiritual master, for when the mantra is chanted by the spiritual master, it becomes more powerful. Lord Siva advised the sons of the King to hear him attentively, for inattentive hearing is offensive.

–Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.24.31–32

Being preserved and transmitted through disciplic succession, the holy names of Lord Krsna and Lord Caitanya have as much potency now as during the physical appearance of Lord Caitanya:

Although Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu did not manifest His natural ecstatic love, everyone became a pure devotee simply by seeing and hearing Him.

Srila Rupa Gosvami has described Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu as maha–vadanya–avatara, the most munificent incarnation. Although Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is not physically present now, simply by chanting His holy name (sri–krsna–caitanya prabhu nityananda sri–advaita gadadhara srivasadi–gaura–bhakta–vrnda) people throughout the world are becoming devotees. This is due to the ecstatic chanting of the holy name of the Lord. It is said that a pure devotee can see the Lord every moment, and because of this he is empowered by the Lord. This is confirmed in Brahma–samhita: premanjana–cchurita–bhakti–vilocanena santah sadaiva hrdayesu vilokayanti [Bs. 5.38]. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared five hundred years ago, but it cannot be said that now the potency of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra is less powerful than it was in His presence. By hearing Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu through the parampara system, one can be purified. Therefore in this verse it is said: tathapi tanra darsana–sravana–prabhava. It is not that everyone is able to see Krsna or Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu physically, but if one hears about Him through books like

Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta and through the parampara system of pure Vaisnavas, there is no difficulty in becoming a pure Vaisnava, free from mundane desires and personal motivations.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 17.51

5.

The Chanting of a Pure Devotee Is Especially Effective

The chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra should be heard from the lips of a pure devotee of the Lord:

When the mantra is chanted by a pure devotee of the Lord in love, it has the greatest efficacy on hearers, and as such this chanting should be heard from the lips of a pure devotee of the Lord, so that immediate effects can be achieved.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Chanting of the holy names by pure devotees is very attractive and effective:

[King Prataparudra to Gopinātha Acārya and Sarvabhāuma Bhattachārya]:

The King said, "Upon seeing all these devotees, I am much astonished, for I have never seen such an effulgence. Indeed, their effulgence is like the brilliance of a million suns. Nor have I ever heard the Lord's names chanted so melodiously."

Such are the symptoms of pure devotees when they are chanting. All the pure devotees are as bright as sunshine, and their bodily luster is very effulgent. In addition, their performance of sankīrtana is unparalleled. There are many professional chanters who can perform congregational chanting with various musical instruments in an artistic and musical way, but their chanting cannot be as attractive as the congregational chanting of pure devotees. If a devotee sticks strictly to the principles governing Vaisnava behavior, his bodily luster will naturally be attractive, and his singing and chanting of the holy names of the Lord will be effective. People will appreciate such kīrtana without hesitation.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 11.94-95

Simply by hearing the holy name chanted by a pure devotee, one is purified of all sinful activities and becomes eligible to render devotional service:

[Haridasa thakura to a prostitute]:

"Tomorrow I will surely finish, and my vow will be fulfilled. Then it will be possible for me to enjoy with you in full freedom."

Haridasa thakura never wanted to enjoy the prostitute, but he tricked her to deliver her by giving her a chance to hear the holy name of the Lord while he chanted. Pure devotees chant the Hare Krsna mantra, and simply by hearing this chanting from a purified transcendental person, one is purified of all sinful activities, no matter how lowborn or fallen one may be. As soon as one is thus completely free from the reactions of sinful activities, he is eligible to render devotional service to the Lord. This is the process for engaging the fallen souls in devotional service. As Lord Krsna says in Bhagavad-gita (7.28):

yesam tv anta-gatam papam
jananam punya-karmanam
te dvandva-moha-nirmukta
bhajante mam drdha-vratah

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of delusion, engage themselves in My service with determination."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.126

Devotional service begins with hearing the holy name chanted by a pure Vaisnava: Because living entities are minute, atomic parts and parcels of the Lord, devotional service is already present within them in a dormant condition. Devotional service begins with sravanam kirtanam, hearing and chanting. When a man is sleeping, he can be awakened by sound vibration; therefore every conditioned soul should be given the chance to hear the Hare Krsna mantra chanted by a pure Vaisnava. One who hears the Hare Krsna mantra thus vibrated is awakened to spiritual consciousness, or Krsna consciousness. In this way one's mind gradually becomes purified, as stated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu (ceto-darpana-marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]). When the mind is purified, the senses are also purified. Instead of using the senses for sense gratification, the awakened devotee

employs the senses in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. This is the process by which dormant love for Kṛṣṇa is awakened.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 22.105

The offenseless chanting of a pure devotee can purify hundreds and thousands of other people:

When someone heard the chanting of the holy name from the mouth of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and someone else heard this chanting from that second person, and someone again heard this chanting from the third person, everyone in all countries became a Vaiṣṇava through such disciplic succession. Thus everyone chanted the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and Hari, and they danced, cried and smiled.

The transcendental power or potency of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra is herein explained. First, the holy name is vibrated by Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu. When someone hears from Him directly, he is purified. When another person hears from that person, he also is purified. In this way the purification process is advanced among pure devotees. Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and no one can claim His potency. Nonetheless, if one is a pure devotee, hundreds and thousands of men can be purified by his vibration. This potency is within every living being, provided he chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra offenselessly and without material motives. When a pure devotee chants offenselessly, another person will become a Vaiṣṇava, and from him another Vaiṣṇava will emerge. This is the parampara system.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 17.48-49

6.

One Should Not Hear the Holy Name from a Nondevotee

One must not hear the holy name chanted by non-Vaiṣṇavas:

Srī la Sanātana Gosvāmī has forbidden us to hear the holy name of Kṛṣṇa chanted by non-Vaiṣṇavas, such as professional actors and singers, for it will have no effect. It is like milk touched by the lips of a serpent, as stated in the Padma Purāna:

avaiṣṇava-mukhodgirnam

putam hari–kathamrtam
sravanam naiva kartavyam
sarpocchistam yatha payah
Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 1.101

One should avoid hearing the Hare Krsna mantra chanted by a nondevotee:
As far as possible, chanting from the lips of nondevotees should be avoided. Milk touched by the lips of a serpent has poisonous effects.

~The Science of Self–Realization

7.

Where and When One Should Chant

One can chant anywhere and anytime

The Lord's holy name must be heard, glorified, and remembered always and everywhere:
[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

O King, it is therefore essential that every human being hear about, glorify and remember the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, always and everywhere.

All the great acaryas, like Ramanuja, Madhva, Caitanya, Sarasvati thakura or even, in other countries, Muhammad, Christ and others, have all extensively glorified the Lord by chanting always and in every place. Because the Lord is all–pervading, it is essential to glorify Him always and everywhere. In the process of glorifying the Lord there should be no restriction of time and space. This is called sanatana–dharma or bhagavata–dharma. Sanatana means eternal, always and everywhere. Bhagavata means pertaining to Bhagavan, the Lord. The Lord is the master of all time and all space, and therefore the Lord's holy name must be heard, glorified and remembered everywhere in the world. That will bring about the desired peace and prosperity so eagerly awaited by the people of the world.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.2.36

Krsna consciousness can be cultivated anywhere and everywhere, without material arrangements, by chanting the maha–mantra:.

It may be questioned herein how the child can be fully Krsna conscious within the womb of the mother without any paraphernalia with which to execute Krsna consciousness. It is not necessary to arrange for paraphernalia to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu ... One does not need any material arrangement to cultivate Krsna consciousness. One can cultivate Krsna consciousness anywhere and everywhere, provided he can always think of Krsna. The maha–mantra, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, can be chanted even within the abdomen of one's mother. One can chant while sleeping, while working, while imprisoned in the womb or while outside. This Krsna consciousness cannot be checked in any circumstance.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 3.31.21

One can chant the holy name anytime and anyplace:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"Regardless of time or place, one who chants the holy name, even while eating or sleeping, attains all perfection."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 20.18

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"...there are no hard and fast rules for remembering [the holy names] ..."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 20.16

One can chant Hare Krsna anywhere:

We have only to chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare twenty–four hours daily. There is no fast rule and regulation. We can chant in the street or on the subway, in our home or in our office.

~The Path of Perfection

Other Instructions

Nama–sankirtana can be performed at home, with a small group of friends or with many

people in public:

At a public kirtana one person can chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, while a group listens, and at the end of the mantra, the group can respond, and in this way there is a reciprocation of hearing and chanting. This can easily be performed in one's own home, with a small group of friends or with many people in a large public place.

~The Perfection of Yoga

Chanting the Hare Krsna mantra before the Deity is a regulative principle of Deity worship: In the Hari–bhakti–vilasa (Eleventh Vilasa, verses 127–40) there is a vivid description of what is required in Deity worship. There are sixty–four items mentioned... (50) The Hare Krsna mantra and approved songs should be sung.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 24.334

Upon rising in the early morning one should immediately chant the holy name and thus become auspicious and transcendental:

In the early morning hours (known as brahma–muhurta) one should get up and immediately chant the Hare Krsna mantra, or, at least, "Krsna, Krsna, Krsna." In this way, one should remember Krsna. Some slokas or prayers should also be chanted. By chanting, one immediately becomes auspicious and transcendental to the infection of material qualities.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 24.331

Either in danger or happiness, a devotee constantly chants the maha–mantra:

[Maitreya to Vidura]:

Dhruva Maharaja, seeing that these uncommon personalities were direct servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, immediately stood up. But, being puzzled, in hastiness he forgot how to receive them in the proper way. Therefore he simply offered obeisances with folded hands and chanted and glorified the holy names of the Lord.

Chanting of the holy names of the Lord is perfect in every way. When Dhruva Maharaja saw the Visnudutas, the direct associates of Lord Visnu, four–handed and nicely decorated, he could understand who they were, but for the time being he was puzzled. But simply by chanting the holy names of the Lord, the Hare Krsna mantra, he could satisfy the

uncommon guests who had all of a sudden arrived before him. The chanting of the holy name of the Lord is perfect; even though one does not know how to please Lord Visnu or His associates, simply by sincerely chanting the holy name of the Lord, everything becomes perfect. A devotee, therefore, either in danger or happiness, constantly chants the Hare Krsna mantra. When he is in danger he is immediately relieved, and when he is in a position to see Lord Visnu or His associates directly, by chanting this maha–mantra he can please the Lord. This is the absolute nature of the maha–mantra. Either in danger or in happiness, it can be chanted without limitation.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.12.21

8.

One Must Chant the Holy Name Constantly

The chief object of constant remembrance for all living entities is the holy name (etc.) of the Lord:

[Lord Caitanya to Ramananda Raya]:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu asked, "What should all living entities constantly remember?"

Ramananda Raya replied, "The chief object of remembrance is always the holy name of the Lord, His qualities and pastimes."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 8.252

Following the Lord's order, a devotee chants His holy name incessantly:

One day Vallabha Bhatta said to Advaita Acarya, "Every living entity is female [prakrti] and considers Krsna her husband [pati]. It is the duty of a chaste wife, devoted to her husband, not to utter her husband's name, but all of you chant the name of Krsna. How can this be called a religious principle?" Advaita Acarya responded, "In front of you is Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the personification of religious principles. You should ask Him, for He will give you the proper answer." Hearing this, Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "My dear Vallabha Bhatta, you do not know religious principles. Actually, the first duty of a chaste woman is to carry out the order of her husband. The order of Krsna is to chant His name incessantly. Therefore one who is chaste and adherent to the husband Krsna must chant the Lord's name, for she cannot deny the husband's order. Following this religious principle, a pure devotee of Lord Krsna always chants the holy name. As a result of this, he

gets the fruit of ecstatic love for Krsna."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya-līla 7.103-8

Kṛṣṇa, in the Bhagavad-gīta, recommends constant chanting:

My dear Professor Staal: ... I am surprised to see that in the last paragraph of your letter you say, "It is an indisputable fact that the Bhagavad-gīta (not to mention the Vedas) does not require such constant chanting." I think that you have missed the following verse in the Bhagavad-gīta, apart from many other similar verses:

satatam kīrtayanto mam
yatantas ca drdha-vratah
namasyantas ca mam bhaktya
nitya-yukta upasate
[Bhagavad-gīta 9.14]

The engagement of the great souls, freed from delusion and perfect in their realization of God, is described here: satatam kīrtayanto mam—they are always (satatam) chanting (kīrtayantah) My glories and—nitya-yukta upasate—always worshipping Me (Kṛṣṇa).

So I do not know how you can say "indisputable." ... By devotional service, by understanding well the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one can go to His abode and never come back again to this material condition. How is it possible? The answer is, simply by chanting His name constantly.

This is accepted by the exemplary disciple, Arjuna, who has perfectly learned the conclusion of spiritual science from the yogesvara, the master of mystic knowledge, Kṛṣṇa. Recognizing Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme Brahman, Arjuna addresses Him, sthane hrsikesa...: "The world becomes joyful hearing Your name, and thus do all become attached to You."
[Bg. 11.36]

~The Science of Self-Realization

One should chant the holy name of the Lord constantly:

[Lord Siva to the sons of King Pracinabarhi]:

Therefore, O sons of the King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is situated in everyone's heart. He is also within your hearts. Therefore chant the glories of the Lord and

always meditate upon Him continuously.

The word *asakrt* is significant, for it means not just for a few minutes but continuously. That is the instruction given by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu in His *Siksastaka*. *Kirtaniyah sada harih*: [Cc. adi 17.31] "The holy name of the Lord should be chanted twenty-four hours daily." Therefore in this Krsna consciousness movement we request the devotees to chant at least sixteen rounds on their beads daily. Actually one has to chant twenty-four hours daily, just like thakura Haridasa, who was chanting the Hare Krsna mantra three hundred thousand times daily. Indeed, he had no other business. Some of the Gosvamis, like Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, were also chanting very rigidly and also offering obeisances very rigidly. As stated in Srinivasacarya's prayer to the six Gosvamis (*Sad-gosvamy-astaka*): *sankhya-purvaka-nama-gana-natibhih kalavasani-krtau*. The word *sankhya-purvaka* means "maintaining a numerical strength." Not only was Raghunatha dasa Gosvami chanting the holy name of the Lord, but he was also offering obeisances in the same prolific numbers.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.24.70

One should aspire to chant the Hare Krsna mantra constantly:

In our Krsna consciousness movement we are teaching our followers to chant the Hare Krsna mantra continuously on beads. Even those who are not accustomed to this practice are advised to chant at least sixteen rounds on their beads so that they may be trained.

Otherwise, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu recommended:

*trnad api sunicena
taror iva sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih
[Cc. adi 17.31]*

"One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street. One should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly."

Sada means "always." Haridasa thakura says, *nirantara nama lao*: "Chant the Hare Krsna mantra without stopping."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.137

A devotee always has a taste for chanting Hare Krsna:

There is a verse in which Srila Rupa Gosvami says, avyarthā-kalatvam: [Cc.Madhya 23.18–19] a devotee should be very much careful to see whether his time is being spent unnecessarily. He should ask himself, "Am I now engaged in maya's service or Krsna's service?" This is a symptom of an advanced devotee. Nama-gane sada rucih: such a devotee is never tired of chanting, singing, or dancing. The word sada means "always," and ruci means "taste." A devotee always has a taste for chanting Hare Krsna: "Oh, very nice. Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare." This is taste. Of course, this taste takes time to awaken, but when Rupa Gosvami was chanting he was thinking, "I have only one tongue and two ears. What can I appreciate of chanting? If I could have millions of tongues and trillions of ears, then I could relish something by chanting and hearing." Of course, we should not imitate him, but the devotees of the Krsna consciousness movement must at least be very careful to complete their sixteen rounds, their minimum amount of prescribed chanting. Nama-gane sada rucih: we have to increase our taste for singing and chanting Hare Krsna.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

To always remember Krsna and never forget Him is possible by constantly chanting the holy name:

"Krsna is the origin of Lord Visnu. He should always be remembered and never forgotten at any time. All the rules and prohibitions mentioned in the sastras should be the servants of these two principles."

This verse is a quotation from the Padma Purana. There are many regulative principles in the sastras and directions given by the spiritual master. These regulative principles should act as servants of the basic principle—that is, one should always remember Krsna and never forget Him. This is possible when one chants the Hare Krsna mantra. Therefore one must strictly chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra twenty-four hours daily.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 22.113

Constant chanting of the maha-mantra is the means for continuously remembering Krsna: Those who are intelligent, however, are not concerned with the four-fold miseries of material life, but with elevation to the spiritual planets. One who is continuously in trance

(nitya–yuktasya yoginah) does not divert his attention to anything else. He is always situated in trance. His mind is always filled with the thought of Krsna, without deviation (ananya–cetaḥ satatam). Satatam refers to anywhere and anytime.

In India I lived in Vrndavana, and now I am in America, but this does not mean that I am out of Vrndavana, because if I think of Krsna always, then I'm always in Vrndavana, regardless of the material designation. Krsna consciousness means that one always lives with Krsna on that spiritual planet, Goloka Vrndavana, and that one is simply waiting to give up this material body. Smarati nityasah means "continuously remembering," and for one who is continuously remembering Krsna, the Lord becomes tasyaham sulabhah—easily purchased. Krsna Himself says that He is easily purchased by this bhakti–yoga process. Then why should we take to any other process? We can chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare twenty–four hours daily. There are no rules and regulations. One can chant in the street, in the subway, or at his home or office. There is no tax and no expense. So why not take to it?

~Beyond Birth and Death

To become free from offenses to the holy name, one must continue to chant constantly: While chanting the holy name of the Lord, one should be careful to avoid ten offenses.... There is no way to atone for any of these offenses. It is therefore recommended that an offender at the feet of the holy name continue to chant the holy name twenty–four hours a day. Constant chanting of the holy name will make one free of offenses, and then he will gradually be elevated to the transcendental platform on which he can chant the pure holy name and thus become a lover of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

It is recommended that even if one commits offenses, one should continue chanting the holy name. In other words, the chanting of the holy name makes one offenseless. In the book Nama–kaumudi it is recommended that if one is an offender at the lotus feet of a Vaisnava, he should submit to that Vaisnava and be excused; similarly, if one is an offender in chanting the holy name, he should submit to the holy name and thus be freed from his offenses.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.5.23–24

Repeated chanting brings one to the stage of offenseless chanting:

The chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is recommended even for persons who commit

offenses, because if they continue chanting they will gradually chant offenselessly. By chanting the Hare Krsna mantra without offenses, one increases his love for Krsna....

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti thakura quotes this verse from the Padma Purana:

namaparadha–yuktanam
namany eva haranty agham
avisranti–prayuktani
tany evārtha–karani ca

Even if in the beginning one chants the Hare Krsna mantra with offenses, one will become free from such offenses by chanting again and again. Papa–ksayas ca bhavati smaritam tam ahar–nisam: one becomes free from all sinful reactions if one chants day and night, following the recommendation of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.3.24

Sankirtana–yajna, the chanting of the holy name, should be performed constantly, all over the world:

Maharaja Barhisat dived very deeply into the fruitive activities of sacrifice. This means that as soon as he finished one yajna in one place, he began performing another yajna in the immediate vicinity. At the present moment, there is a similar need to perform sankirtana–yajna all over the world. The Krsna consciousness movement has started performing sankirtana–yajna in different places, and it has been experienced that wherever sankirtana–yajna is performed, many thousands of people gather and take part in it. Imperceptible auspiciousness achieved in this connection should be continued all over the world. The members of the Krsna consciousness movement should perform sankirtana–yajnas one after another, so much so that all the people of the world will either jokingly or seriously chant Hare Krsna. Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, and thus they will derive the benefit of cleansing the heart.... It is not possible at the present moment to perform repeated yajnas as Maharaja Barhisat performed, but it is within our means to perform sankirtana–yajna, which does not cost anything. One can sit down anywhere and chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. If the surface of the globe is overflowed with the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, the people of the world will be very, very happy.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.24.10

An advanced devotee (madhyama–bhagavata) is distinguished from a neophyte by his constant chanting of the holy name (and by his stressing the importance of chanting):
[Inhabitant of Kulina–grama to Lord Caitanya]:

The inhabitant of Kulina–grama said, "Please let me know who is actually a Vaisnava and what his symptoms are." Understanding his mind, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu smiled and gave the following reply. "A person who is always chanting the holy name of the Lord is to be considered a first–class Vaisnava, and your duty is to serve his lotus feet."

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura says that any Vaisnava who is constantly chanting the holy name of the Lord should be considered to have attained the second platform of Vaisnavism. Such a devotee is superior to a neophyte Vaisnava who has just learned to chant the holy name of the Lord. A neophyte devotee simply tries to chant the holy name, whereas the advanced devotee is accustomed to chanting and takes pleasure in it. Such an advanced devotee is called madhyama–bhagavata, which indicates that he has attained the intermediate stage between the neophyte and the perfect devotee.... An intermediate devotee is greatly attracted to chanting the holy name, and by chanting he is elevated to the platform of love. If one chants the holy name of the Lord with great attachment, he can understand his position as an eternal servant of the spiritual master, other Vaisnavas and Krsna Himself. Thus the intermediate Vaisnava considers himself krsna–dasa, Krsna's servant. He therefore preaches Krsna consciousness to innocent neophytes and stresses the importance of chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 16.71–72

Pure devotees in the renounced order should have no other occupation than chanting the holy name:

[Lord Caitanya to Govinda dasa]:

"A person in the renounced order should always chant the holy name of the Lord. He should beg some alms to eat, and he should sustain his life in this way."

As stated in the Hari–bhakti–vilasa at the end of the Twentieth Vilasa (366, 379, 382):

krtyany etani tu prayo
grhinam dhaninam satam
likhitani na tu tyakta–

parigraha–mahatmanam
prabhate cardha–ratre ca
madhyahne divasa–ksaye
kirtayanti harim ye vai

te taranti bhavarnavam
evam ekantinam prayah
kirtanam smaranam prabhoh
kurvatam parama–pritya
krtyam anyan na rocate

A well-to-do householder Vaisnava cannot live like a person in the renounced order who completely takes shelter of the holy name. Such a householder should chant the holy name of Krsna in the morning, at midday and in the evening. Then he will be able to cross beyond nescience. Pure devotees in the renounced order, however, who fully surrender to the lotus feet of Krsna, should chant the holy name of the Lord with great love and faith, always thinking of Krsna's lotus feet. They should have no other occupation than chanting the holy name of the Lord. In the Bhakti–sandarbha, Srila Jiva Gosvami says:

yadyapi sri–bhagavata–mate panca–ratradivad–arcana–margasyavasyakatvam
nasti, tad vinapi saranapatty–adinam ekatarenapi purusartha–siddher abhihitatvat.
–Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 6.223

One who chants the holy name of the Lord constantly during one's life can, at the time of death, return home, back to Godhead:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

While suffering at the time of death, Ajamila chanted the holy name of the Lord, and although the chanting was directed toward his son, he nevertheless returned home, back to Godhead. Therefore if one faithfully and inoffensively chants the holy name of the Lord, where is the doubt that he will return to Godhead?

At the time of death one is certainly bewildered because his bodily functions are in disorder. At that time, even one who throughout his life has practiced chanting the holy name of the Lord may not be able to chant the Hare Krsna mantra very distinctly. Nevertheless, such a person receives all the benefits of chanting the holy name. While the body is fit, therefore, why should we not chant the holy name of the Lord loudly and distinctly? If one does so, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be

properly able to chant the holy name of the Lord with love and faith. In conclusion, one who chants the holy name of the Lord constantly is guaranteed to return home, back to Godhead, without a doubt.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.49

At ISKCON's world center in Mayapur, there should be constant chanting of the holy names of the Lord: When the sankirtana movement thus started, no one in Navadvipa could hear any other sound than the words "Hari! Hari!" and the beating of the mrdanga and clashing of hand bells.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness now has its world center in Navadvipa, Mayapur. The managers of this center should see that twenty-four hours a day there is chanting of the holy names of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, with the addition of haraye namah, krsna yadavaya namah, for this song was a favorite of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. But all such sankirtana must be preceded by the chanting of the holy names of the five tattvas—sri—krsna—caitanya prabhu nityananda sri—advaita gadadhara srivasadi—gaura—bhakta—vrnda. We are already accustomed to chant these two mantras—sri—krsna—caitanya prabhu nityananda sri—advaita gadadhara srivasadi—gaura—bhakta—vrnda and Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Now, after these, the other two lines—namely, haraye namah, krsna yadavaya namah/ gopala govinda rama sri—madhusudana—should be added, especially in Mayapur. Chanting of these six lines should go on so perfectly well that no one there hears any other vibration than the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. That will make the center spiritually all—perfect.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 17.123

Instead of closing the churches, they could be given to the devotees, who would chant the holy name there twenty-four hours a day:

Instead of keeping the churches closed, why not give them to us? We would chant the holy name of God there twenty-four hours a day. In many places we have bought churches that were practically closed because no one was going there. In London I saw hundreds of churches that were closed or used for mundane purposes. We bought one such church in Los Angeles. It was sold because no one came there, but if you visit this same church today, you will see thousands of people.

~The Science of Self-Realization

9.

Devotees Must Chant (at Least) Sixteen Rounds Daily

The first regulative principle is that one must chant a fixed number of rounds:

[Lord Caitanya to Haridasa thakura]:

"Now that you have become old," the Lord said, "you may reduce the number of rounds you chant daily. You are already liberated, and therefore you need not follow the regulative principles very strictly."

Unless one has come to the platform of spontaneous love of God, he must follow the regulative principles. thakura Haridasa was the living example of how to follow the regulative principles. Similarly, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami was also such a living example. In the Ñad-gosvamy-astaka it is stated: sankhya-purvaka-nama-gana-natibhih kalavasanikrtau. The Gosvamis, especially Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, strictly followed all the regulative principles. The first regulative principle is that one must chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra loudly enough so that he can hear himself, and one must vow to chant a fixed number of rounds. Not only was Raghunatha dasa Gosvami chanting a fixed number of rounds, but he had also taken a vow to bow down many times and offer obeisances to the Lord.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 11.24

Following in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya, the six Gosvamis and Haridasa thakura, devotees in the line of Lord Caitanya must chant a fixed number of rounds (sixteen) daily:

[Lord Nityananda to Lord Caitanya]:

"Since Your two hands will always be engaged in chanting and counting the holy names, how will You be able to carry the water pot and external garments?"

From this verse it is clear that Caitanya Mahaprabhu was chanting the holy names a fixed number of times daily. The Gosvamis used to follow in the footsteps of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and Haridasa thakura also followed this principle. Concerning the Gosvamis-Srila Rupa Gosvami, Srila Sanatana Gosvami, Srila Raghunatha Bhatta

Gosvami, Srila Jiva Gosvami, Srila Gopala Bhatta Gosvami and Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami—Srinivasa Acarya confirms: sankhya—purvaka—nama—gana—natibhih. (Nad—gosvamy—astaka, 6) In addition to other duties, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the system of chanting the holy name of the Lord a fixed number of times daily, as confirmed in this verse (tomara dui hasta baddha nama—ganane). Caitanya Mahaprabhu used to count on His fingers. While one hand was engaged in chanting, the other hand kept the number of rounds. This is corroborated in the Caitanya—candramrta and also in Srila Rupa Gosvami's Stava—mala:

badhnan prema—bhara—prakampita—karo granthin katidorakaih
sankhyatum nija—loka—mangala—hare—krsneti namnam japan
(Caitanya—candramrta, 9)

hare krsnety uccaih sphurita—rasano nama—ganana
krta—granthi—sreni—subhaga—kati—surojjvala—karah
(Caitanyastaka, 5)

Therefore devotees in the line of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu must chant at least sixteen rounds daily, and this is the number prescribed by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Haridasa thakura daily chanted 300,000 names. Sixteen rounds is about 28,000 names. There is no need to imitate Haridasa thakura or the other Gosvamis, but chanting the holy name a fixed number of times daily is essential for every devotee.
~Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Madhya—lila 7.37

Of all the regulative principles, the spiritual master's order to chant at least sixteen rounds is most essential:

One may have other duties to perform under the direction of the spiritual master, but he must first abide by the spiritual master's order to chant a certain number of rounds. In our Krsna consciousness movement, we have recommended that the neopyte chant at least sixteen rounds. This chanting of sixteen rounds is absolutely necessary if one wants to remember Krsna and not forget Him. Of all the regulative principles, the spiritual master's order to chant at least sixteen rounds is most essential.

~Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Madhya—lila 22.113

The devotee should not divert his attention from the basic principle of chanting sixteen

rounds daily, according to the prescribed principles:

The Lord, being satisfied, instructed [Tapana Misra] about the object of life and the process to attain it. He instructed him that the basic principle of success is to chant the holy name of the Lord [the Hare Krsna maha-mantra].

The Krsna consciousness movement is based upon this instruction of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu that one must chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra regularly and according to the prescribed principles. We simply ask our Western students to chant at least sixteen rounds a day, but sometimes we find that they fail to chant even these sixteen rounds, and instead they bring many austere books and a worshiping method that diverts their attention in so many ways. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's cult is based upon the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra. Lord Caitanya first advised Tapana Misra to fix his mind in this chanting. We, the members of the Krsna consciousness movement, must strictly follow this advice of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 16.15

The devotees of the Krsna consciousness movement must be very careful to complete their sixteen rounds:

A devotee always has a taste for chanting Hare Krsna: "Oh, very nice. Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare." This is taste. Of course, this takes time to awaken, but when Rupa Gosvami was chanting he was thinking, "I have only one tongue and two ears. What can I appreciate of chanting? If I could have millions of tongues and trillions of ears, then I could relish something by chanting and hearing." Of course, we should not imitate him, but the devotees of the Krsna consciousness movement must at least be very careful to complete their sixteen rounds, their minimum amount of prescribed chanting. Nama-gane sada rucih: we have to increase our taste for singing and chanting Hare Krsna.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

Srila Prabhupada requests all his students to chant sixteen offenseless rounds of the maha-mantra, following the regulative principles:

The Brhan-naradiya Purana repeatedly emphasizes the chanting of the holy name so that people may take it seriously and thus free themselves from the clutches of maya. It is our practical experience in the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world that many millions of people are factually coming to the spiritual stage of life simply by chanting the

Hare Krsna maha–mantra regularly, according to the prescribed principles. Therefore our request to all our students is that they daily chant at least sixteen rounds of this harer nama [Adi 17.21] maha–mantra offenselessly, following the regulative principles. Thus their success will be assured without a doubt.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 17.23

Students of this Hare Krsna movement must chant at least sixteen rounds daily:

The twentieth branch of the Caitanya tree was Haridasa thakura. His character was wonderful. He used to chant the holy name of Krsna 300,000 times a day without fail.

Certainly the chanting of 300,000 holy names of the Lord is wonderful. No ordinary person can chant so many names, nor should one artificially imitate Haridasa thakura's behavior. It is essential, however, that everyone fulfill a specific vow to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. Therefore we have prescribed in our society that all our students must chant at least sixteen rounds daily. Such chanting must be offenseless in order to be of high quality. Mechanical chanting is not as powerful as chanting of the holy name without offenses.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 10.43

Although Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati prescribed sixty–four rounds, the Krsna consciousness movement prescribes sixteen because of Westerners' inability to concentrate for long periods:

The Krsna consciousness movement prescribes sixteen rounds daily because people in the Western countries cannot concentrate for long periods while chanting on beads. Therefore the minimum number of rounds is prescribed. However, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati used to say that unless one chants at least sixty–four rounds of japa (one hundred thousand names), he is considered fallen (patita). According to his calculation, practically every one of us is fallen, but because we are trying to serve the Supreme Lord with all seriousness and without duplicity, we can expect the mercy of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who is famous as patita–pavana, the deliverer of the fallen.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

Haridasa thakura would not even accept prasada or sleep until he finished his daily rounds: thakura Haridasa would not even accept prasada nor even sleep for a moment without

finishing his daily routine of chanting with his beads three hundred thousand names.
~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 6.17

Chanting a fixed number of rounds on beads is necessary for everyone, even a paramahansa:

Madhavendra Puri left the temple and sat down in the village marketplace, which was vacant. Sitting there, he began to chant. In the meantime, the temple priest laid the Deity down to rest. Although Madhavendra Puri was not interested in eating and sleeping, his interest in chanting the maha-mantra was as acute as if he were an aspiring transcendentalist rather than a paramahansa. This means that even in the paramahansa stage, one cannot give up chanting. Haridasa thakura and the Gosvamis were all engaged in chanting a fixed number of rounds; therefore chanting on beads is very important for everyone, even though one may become a paramahansa. This chanting can be executed anywhere, either inside or outside the temple. Madhavendra Puri even sat down in a vacant marketplace to perform his chanting. As stated by Srinivasa Acarya in his prayers to the Gosvamis: nama-gana-natibhih. A paramahansa devotee is always engaged in chanting and rendering loving service to the Lord.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 4.125

An uttama-adhikari chants the prescribed number of rounds on japa beads:

When a neophyte devotee is actually initiated and engaged in devotional service by the orders of the spiritual master, he should be accepted immediately as a bona fide Vaisnava, and obeisances should be offered unto him. Out of many such Vaisnavas, one may be found to be very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord and strictly following all the regulative principles, chanting the prescribed number of rounds on japa beads and always thinking of how to expand the Krsna consciousness movement. Such a Vaisnava should be accepted as an uttama-adhikari, a highly advanced devotee, and his association should always be sought.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

Dealings with the material world for spreading the Krsna consciousness movement are spiritual, as long as one daily chants sixteen rounds of the maha-mantra:

In our preaching work, we deal with so much property and money and so many books

bought and sold, but because these dealings all pertain to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, they should never be considered material. That one is absorbed in thoughts of such management does not mean that he is outside of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one rigidly observes the regulative principle of chanting sixteen rounds of the maha–mantra every day, his dealings with the material world for the sake of spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are not different from the spiritual cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.16.3

By chanting sixteen rounds of the maha–mantra (etc.) one gets spiritual strength with which to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world:

[Chand Kazi to the devotees of Lord Caitanya]:

"For so long you did not follow the regulative principles of the Hindu religion, but now you are following them with great enthusiasm. May I know by whose strength you are doing so?"

It appears that from the aggression of Vaktiyara Khiliji in Bengal until the time of Chand Kazi, Hindus, or the followers of the Vedic principles, were greatly suppressed. Like the Hindus in present–day Pakistan, practically no one could execute the Hindu religious principles freely. Chand Kazi referred to this condition of Hindu society. Formerly the Hindus had not been straightforward in executing their Hindu principles, but now they were freely chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra. Therefore it must have been by the strength of someone else that they were so daring.

Actually, that was the fact. Although the members of the so–called Hindu society had followed the social customs and formulas, they had practically forgotten to execute their religious principles strictly. But with the presence of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu they actually began following the regulative principles according to His order. That order is still existing, and anywhere and everywhere, in all parts of the world, one can execute it. That order is to become a spiritual master under the direction of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu by following the regulative principles, chanting daily at least sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, and preaching the cult of Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. If we adhere to the order of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, we shall get spiritual strength without a doubt, and we shall be free to preach this cult of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and not be hampered by anyone.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Ādi–līla 17.126

If one regularly chants one's prescribed rounds, he is gradually elevated to the uttama–adhikari platform:

Everyone begins his devotional life from the neophyte stage, but if one properly finishes chanting the prescribed number of rounds of hari–nama, he is elevated step by step to the highest platform, uttama–adhikari.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

One who cannot complete his assigned number of rounds is in a diseased condition of spiritual life:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu further inquired from Haridasa, "Can you ascertain what your disease is?" Haridasa thakura replied, "My disease is that I cannot complete my rounds."

If one cannot complete the fixed number of rounds he is assigned, he should be considered to be in a diseased condition of spiritual life. Srila Haridasa thakura is called namacarya. Of course, we cannot imitate Haridasa thakura, but everyone must chant a prescribed number of rounds. In our Krsna consciousness movement we have fixed sixteen rounds as the minimum so that Westerners will not feel burdened. These sixteen rounds must be chanted, and chanted loudly, so that one can hear himself and others.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 11.23

Chanting the holy name 300,000 times daily like Haridasa thakura is for the liberated soul. It should not be imitated:

Haridasa thakura constructed a cottage in a solitary forest. There he planted a tulasi plant, and in front of the tulasi he would chant the holy name of the Lord 300,000 times daily. He chanted throughout the entire day and night.

Haridasa thakura used to chant the holy name on his beads 300,000 times daily. Throughout the entire day and night, he would chant the sixteen names of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. One should not, however, imitate Haridasa thakura, for no one else can chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra 300,000 times a day. Such chanting is for the mukta–purusa, or liberated soul. We can follow his example, however, by chanting sixteen rounds of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra on beads every day.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 3.100

10.

One Develops a Taste for Chanting by Chanting

Chanting the holy name, which is nectarean and eternal, enthralls one to chant more and more:

The sound of this material world and that of the spiritual world are completely different. The sound of the spiritual world is nectarean and eternal, whereas the sound of the material world is hackneyed and subject to end. The sound of the holy name—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare—everlastingly increases the enthusiasm of the chanter. If one repeats monotonous material words, he will feel exhausted, but if he chants Hare Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours a day, he will never feel exhausted; rather, he will feel encouraged to continue chanting more and more.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.21.22

The more one chants the names of Kṛṣṇa, the more he becomes attached to chanting: Once one has attained the spiritual platform, it is material service that actually becomes disgusting. For example, if one chants Hare Kṛṣṇa throughout his life, he will not grow tired of the names, but if one chants a material name over and over, he will soon become disgusted. The more one chants the names of Kṛṣṇa, the more he becomes attached.

~Kṛṣṇa Consciousness: The Matchless Gift

Although a person in ignorance has no taste for chanting the holy name, if he chants, he will develop a taste for the chanting:

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.

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. Avidya (ignorance) similarly perverts the ability to relish the transcendently palatable name, quality, form and pastimes of Krsna. Despite this disease, if one with great care and attention takes to Krsna consciousness, chanting the holy name and hearing Krsna's transcendental pastimes, his ignorance will be destroyed and his tongue enabled to taste the sweetness of the transcendental nature of Krsna and His paraphernalia. Such a recovery of spiritual health is possible only by the regular cultivation of Krsna consciousness.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 7

11.

To Be Effective, Chanting Should Be Accompanied by the Four Regulative Principles

The chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra will be effective if accompanied by the austerity of giving up the four sinful activities:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

For a few months the sons of Prajapati Daksa drank only water and ate only air. Thus undergoing great austerities, they recited this mantra: "Let us offer our respectful obeisances unto Narayana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is always situated in His transcendental abode. Since He is the Supreme Person [Paramahamsa], let us offer our respectful obeisances unto Him."

From these verses it is apparent that the chanting of the mahamantra or the Vedic mantras must be accompanied by severe austerities. In Kali-yuga, people cannot undergo severe austerities like those mentioned herein—drinking only water and eating only air for many months. One cannot imitate such a process. But at least one must undergo some austerity by giving up four unwanted principles, namely illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication and gambling. Anyone can easily practice this tapasya, and then the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra will be effective without delay. One should not give up the process of austerity.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.5.27–28

12.

Before Chanting the Hare Krsna Maha–mantra, One Should Chant the Panca–tattva Maha–mantra

To chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, one should first take shelter of the Panca–tattva maha–mantra:

If one chants the exalted holy name of the Lord again and again and yet his love for the Supreme Lord does not develop and tears do not appear in his eyes, it is evident that because of his offenses in chanting, the seed of the holy name of Krsna does not sprout. But if one only chants, with some slight faith, the holy names of Lord Caitanya and Nityananda, very quickly he is cleansed of all offenses. Thus as soon as he chants the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, he feels the ecstasy of love for God.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura remarks in this connection that if one takes shelter of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda, follows Their instructions to become more tolerant than the tree and humbler than the grass, and in this way chants the holy name of the Lord, very soon he achieves the platform of transcendental loving service to the Lord, and tears appear in his eyes. There are offenses to be considered in chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, but there are no such considerations in chanting the names of Gaura–Nityananda. Therefore, if one chants the Hare Krsna maha–mantra but his life is still full of sinful activities, it will be very difficult for him to achieve the platform of loving service to the Lord. But if in spite of being an offender one chants the holy names of Gaura–Nityananda, he is very quickly freed from the interactions of his offenses. Therefore, one should first approach Lord Caitanya and Nityananda, or worship Guru–Gauranga, and then come to the stage of worshiping Radha–Krsna...

It should be noted in this connection that the holy names of Lord Krsna and Gaurasundara are both identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore one should not consider one name to be more potent than the other. Considering the position of the people of this age, however, the chanting of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's name is more essential than the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra because Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the most magnanimous incarnation and His mercy is very easily achieved. Therefore one must first take shelter of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by chanting sri–krsna–caitanya prabhu nityananda sri–advaita gadadhara srivasadi–gaura–bhakta–vrnda.

–Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Ādi–līla 8.29–31

By chanting the Panca-tattva maha-mantra one becomes free of offenses in chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra:

Whether he is offensive or inoffensive, anyone who even now chants sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu nityananda is immediately overwhelmed with ecstasy, and tears fill his eyes.

It is very beneficial to chant the names sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu nityananda before chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra because by chanting these two holy names sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu nityananda one immediately becomes ecstatic, and if he then chants the Hare Krsna maha-mantra he becomes free of offenses.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 8.22, 24

By chanting the Panca-tattva maha-mantra, one is blessed with the competency to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra without offense:

When chanting the names of the Panca-tattva, one should fully offer his obeisances:

sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu nityananda sri-advaita gadadhara

srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda. By such chanting one is blessed with the competency to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra without offense. When chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one should also chant it fully: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.168

To derive the full benefit of chanting the maha-mantra, one should first chant the Panca-tattva maha-mantra:

As preachers of the Krsna consciousness movement, we first offer our obeisances to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by chanting this Panca-tattva mantra; then we say, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. There are ten offenses in the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, but these are not considered in the chanting of the Panca-tattva mantra, namely sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu nityananda sri-advaita gadadhara srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is known as maha-vadanyavatara, the most magnanimous incarnation, for He does not consider the offenses of the fallen souls. Thus to derive the full benefit of the chanting of the maha-mantra (Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare), we must first take shelter of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu,

learn the Panca-tattva maha-mantra, and then chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. That will be very effective.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.4

Before chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one should first offer respects to the Panca-tattva by chanting the Panca-tattva maha-mantra:

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Srivasa thakura and all other devotees of the Lord. I fall down to offer them respect. I worship their lotus feet.

Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami teaches us first to offer respect to the Panca-tattva—Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, Advaita Prabhu, Gadadhara Prabhu and Srivasa and other devotees. We must strictly follow the principle of offering our respects to the Panca-tattva, as summarized in the mantra—sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu nityananda sri-advaita gadadhara srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda. At the beginning of every function in preaching, especially before chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—we must chant the Panca-tattva's names and offer our respects to them.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 8.4

13.

One Must Distinctly Pronounce the Holy Name

When chanting, one must very distinctly pronounce the maha-mantra:

Chanting involves the activities of the upper and lower lips as well as the tongue. All three must be engaged in chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. The words "Hare Krsna" should be very distinctly pronounced and heard. Sometimes one mechanically produces a hissing sound instead of chanting with the proper pronunciation with the help of the lips and tongue. Chanting is very simple, but one must practice it seriously.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 17.32

If one has chanted distinctly during his life, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be able to chant with faith and love:

While the body is fit, one should chant the holy name of the Lord loudly and distinctly. If one does so, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be properly able to chant the holy name of the Lord with love and faith.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.49

14.

One Must Chant Loudly Enough to Hear Oneself

The first regulative principle is that one must chant a fixed number of rounds, chanting loudly enough to hear oneself:

[Lord Caitanya to Haridasa thakura]:

"Now that you have become old," the Lord said, "you may reduce the number of rounds, you chant daily. You are already liberated, and therefore you need not follow the regulative principles very strictly."

Unless one has come to the platform of spontaneous love of God, he must follow the regulative principles. thakura Haridasa was the living example of how to follow the regulative principles. Similarly, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami was also such a living example. In the Nad-gosvamy-astaka it is stated: sankhya-purvaka-nama-gana-natibhih kalavasanikrtau. The Gosvamis, especially Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, strictly followed all the regulative principles. The first regulative principle is that one must chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra loudly enough so that he can hear himself, and one must vow to chant a fixed number of rounds.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 11.24

If one has chanted loudly during his life, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be able to chant with faith and love:

While the body is fit, one should chant the holy name of the Lord loudly and distinctly. If one does so, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be properly able to chant the holy name of the Lord with love and faith.

15.

One Must Chant in Humility

Explanation of the "trnad api sunicena" verse of Siksastaka:

To chant the holy name always, one should be humbler than the grass in the street and devoid of all desire for personal honor, but one should offer others all respectful obeisances. A devotee engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord should practice forbearance like that of a tree. Even if rebuked or chastised, he should not say anything to others to retaliate. For even if one cuts a tree, it never protests, nor even if it is drying up and dying does it ask anyone for water... "One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor yet is always prepared to give all respect to others, can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord." Raising my hands, I declare, "Everyone please hear me! String this verse on the thread of the holy name and wear it on your neck for continuous remembrance." One must strictly follow the principles given by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu in this verse. If one simply follows in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya and the Gosvamis, certainly he will achieve the ultimate goal of life, the lotus feet of Sri Krsna.

This practice of forbearance (trnad api sunicena) is very difficult, but when one actually engages in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, the quality of forbearance automatically develops. A person advanced in spiritual consciousness through the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra need not practice to develop it separately, for a devotee develops all good qualities simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra regularly...

When chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, in the beginning one may commit many offenses, which are called namabhasa and nama–aparadha. In this stage there is no possibility of achieving perfect love of Krsna by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Therefore one must chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra according to the principles of the above verse, trnad api sunicena taror iva sahisnuna... Chanting is very simple, but one must practice it seriously. Therefore the author of Caitanya–caritamrta, Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami, advises everyone to keep this verse always strung about his neck.

ˆSri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 17.26–28, 31–33

A Vaisnava is able to tolerate insults from others because he is simply interested in humbly chanting the holy name without disturbance:

[Haridasa thakura to an assembly of scholars]:

"All of you may now go to your homes. May Lord Krsna bestow His blessings upon you all. Do not be sorry because of my being insulted."

From this statement by Haridasa thakura, it is understood that a pure Vaisnava never takes anyone's insults seriously. This is the teaching of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

trnad api sunicena
taror iva sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih
[Cc. adi 17.31]

"One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street. One should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige and ready to offer all respects to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly."

A Vaisnava is always tolerant and submissive like trees and grass. He tolerates insults offered by others, for he is simply interested in chanting the holy name of the Lord without being disturbed.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.207

Success in chanting of the holy name depends fully upon humility:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu continued, "O Svarupa Damodara Gosvami and Ramananda Raya, hear from Me the symptoms of how one should chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra to awaken very easily one's dormant love for Krsna. One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor but is always prepared to give all respect to others, can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord. These are the symptoms of one who chants the Hare Krsna maha-mantra.

Although he is very exalted, he thinks himself lower than the grass on the ground, and like a tree, he tolerates everything in two ways. When a tree is cut down, it does not protest, and

even when drying up, it does not ask anyone for water. The tree delivers its fruits, flowers and whatever it possesses to anyone and everyone. It tolerates scorching heat and torrents of rain, yet it still gives shelter to others. Although a Vaisnava is the most exalted person, he is priceless and gives all respect to everyone, knowing everyone to be the resting place of Krsna. If one chants the holy name of Lord Krsna in this manner, he will certainly awaken his dormant love for Krsna's lotus feet."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.20-26

One can chant Hare Krsna offenselessly by developing genuine humility:

Devahuti shows us the process for understanding transcendental subject matters. It is not by challenge but by submission. The entire bhakti process is a process of submission. That is also Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teaching:

trnad api suni
taror iva sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih
[Cc. adi 17.31]

If one is interested in advancing in chanting Hare Krsna, Caitanya Mahaprabhu advises that one be humbler than the grass and more tolerant than the trees. One should not be very proud of his intelligence but should give all respect to others. In this way, one can chant Hare Krsna offenselessly.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

The easiest way to control the mind is to chant Hare Krsna in all humility:

[Arjuna to Lord Krsna]:

For the mind is restless, turbulent, obstinate and very strong, O Krsna, and to subdue it is, it seems to me, more difficult than controlling the wind.

The mind is so strong and obstinate that it sometimes overcomes the intelligence, although mind is supposed to be subservient to the intelligence. For a man in the practical world who has to fight so many opposing elements, it is certainly very difficult to control the mind. Artificially, one may establish a mental equilibrium toward both friend and enemy, but ultimately no worldly man can do so, for this is more difficult than controlling the raging

wind. In the Vedic literatures it is said:

atmanam rathinam viddhi
sariram ratham eva ca
buddhim tu sarathim viddhi
manah pragraham eva ca

indriyani hayan ahur
visayams tesu gocaran
atmendriya–mano–yukto
bhoktety ahur manisinah

"The individual is the passenger in the car of the material body, and intelligence is the driver. Mind is the driving instrument, and the senses are the horses. The self is thus the enjoyer or sufferer in the association of the mind and senses. So it is understood by great thinkers."

Intelligence is supposed to direct the mind, but the mind is so strong and obstinate that it often overcomes even one's own intelligence. Such a strong mind is supposed to be controlled by the practice of yoga, but such practice is never practical for a worldly person like Arjuna. And what can we say of modern man? The simile used here is appropriate: one cannot capture the blowing wind. And it is even more difficult to capture the turbulent mind. The easiest way to control the mind, as suggested by Lord Caitanya, is chanting "Hare Krsna," the great mantra for deliverance, in all humility. The method prescribed is sa vai manah krsna–padaravindayoh: one must engage one's mind fully in Krsna. Only then will there remain no other engagements to agitate the mind.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 6.34

The efficacy of the holy name depends on the quality of feeling of the chanter:

[Queen Kunti to Lord Krsna]:

My Lord, Your Lordship can easily be approached, but only by those who are materially exhausted. One who is on the path of [material] progress, trying to improve himself with respectable parentage, great opulence, high education and bodily beauty, cannot approach You with sincere feeling.

Being materially advanced means taking birth in an aristocratic family and possessing great wealth, an education and attractive personal beauty. All materialistic men are mad after

possessing all these material opulences, and this is known as the advancement of material civilization. But the result is that by possessing all these material assets one becomes artificially puffed up, intoxicated by such temporary possessions. Consequently, such materially puffed-up persons are incapable of uttering the holy name of the Lord by addressing Him feelingly, "O Govinda, O Krsna." It is said in the sastras 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 holy name in quality.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.8.26

16.

One Must Chant with Respect and Veneration

Knowing that Sri Krsna is present in His name, pure devotees chant with full respect and veneration:

Devotees of the Personality of Godhead know that Sri Krsna son of the King of Vraja, is the Absolute Truth. They do not discriminate between Sri Krsna's name, form, quality and pastimes. One who wants to separate the Lord's absolute name, form and qualities must be understood to be lacking in absolute knowledge. A pure devotee knows that when he chants the transcendental name Krsna, Sri Krsna is present as transcendental sound. He therefore chants with full respect and veneration.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 2.11

17.

One Must Have Faith in the Holy Name

A madhyama–adhikari has firm faith in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra: While giving instructions to Sanatana Gosvami, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu divided devotional service into three categories.

sastra–yukti nahi jane drdha, sraddhavan
'madhyama–adhikari' sei maha–bhagyavan

"A person whose conclusive knowledge of the sastras is not very strong but who has developed firm faith in chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra and who is also undeterred in the execution of his prescribed devotional service should be considered a madhyama–adhikari. Such a person is very fortunate."

(Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 22.67) A madhyama–adhikari is a sraddhavan, a staunchly faithful person, and he is actually a candidate for further advancement in devotional service.

The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

He who chants the holy name with faith is a Vaisnava:

[Satyaraja to Lord Caitanya]:

Upon hearing this, Satyaraja said, "How can I recognize a Vaisnava? Please let me know what a Vaisnava is. What are his common symptoms?" Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu replied, "Whoever chants the holy name of Krsna just once is worshipable and is the topmost human being."

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura says that simply by chanting the holy name of Krsna once, a person becomes perfect. Such a person is understood to be a Vaisnava. With such faith and belief, one may begin a life of Krsna consciousness, but an ordinary person cannot chant the holy name of Krsna with such faith... One should understand that the name Krsna and Krsna are identical. Having such faith, one must continue to chant the holy name. When one is situated on the neophyte platform, one cannot understand the devotional ingredients of a pure, unalloyed devotee. However, when the novice engages in devotional service—especially in Deity worship—and follows the order of a bona fide spiritual master, he becomes a pure devotee. Anyone can take advantage of hearing about Krsna consciousness from a pure devotee and thus gradually become purified.

A devotee who believes that the holy name of the Lord is identical with the Lord is a pure devotee, even though he may be in the neophyte stage. By his association, others may also become Vaisnavas... even a neophyte devotee is superior to the karmis and jnanis because he has full faith in chanting the holy name of the Lord.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 15.105-6

18.

One Must Become a Servant of the Holy Name

One must become the servant of the holy name:

In the spiritual world the Absolute is always absolute; the name, form, quality and pastimes of the Absolute are all as good as the Absolute Himself. As such, one is understood to be an eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead if he considers himself an eternal servant of the holy name and in this spirit distributes the holy name to the world. One who chants in that spirit, without offenses, is certainly elevated to the platform of understanding that the holy name and the Personality of Godhead are identical. To associate with the holy name and chant the holy name is to associate with the Personality of Godhead directly. In Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu it is clearly said: *sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah*. The holy name becomes manifest when one engages in the service of the holy name. This service in a submissive attitude begins with one's tongue. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau*: One must engage his tongue in the service of the holy name. Our Krsna consciousness movement is based on this principle. We try to engage all the members of the Krsna consciousness movement in the service of the holy name.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 8.16

19.

The Process of Chanting Is Very Simple

One can perform kirtana without musical instruments by clapping and chanting: Anyone can chant Hare Krsna. There is no need for instruments, although Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the mrdanga (drum) and karatalas (cymbals). Otherwise, clapping in itself is sufficient. Anyone can sit down with his family, clap hands and chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. This sankirtana is very easy to perform.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

The process of chanting is very simple:

So this process of hari-kirtana is very simple: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Actually there are only three words: Hare, Krsna, and Rama. But they are very nicely arranged for chanting so that everyone can take the mantra and chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare. Since we have started this movement in the Western countries, Europeans, Americans, Africans, Egyptians, and Japanese are all chanting. There is no difficulty. They are chanting very gladly, and they are getting the results. What is the difficulty? We are distributing this chanting free of charge, and it is very simple.

~The Science of Self-Realization

The process of chanting requires only a tongue and ears:

The bhakti-yoga process should be completed in this life, because in this life we have all the instruments necessary to become fully Krsna conscious. We have mrdangas and cymbals and tongues with which to chant Hare Krsna. Even if we don't have mrdangas and cymbals, we have a tongue. No one has to purchase a tongue. We also have ears with which to hear the sound that the tongue vibrates. Therefore we have all the instruments we need with us—a tongue and ears. We have only to chant Hare Krsna and use our ears to hear this vibration, and all perfection will be there. We don't have to become highly educated scientists or philosophers. We have only to chant and hear.

~The Path of Perfection

20.

The Pure Brahmachari Engages Fully in the Chanting of the Holy Name

The pure brahmachari engages fully in harer namanukirtanam:

[Lord Krsna]: Some of them sacrifice the hearing process and the senses in the fire of the controlled mind, and others sacrifice the objects of the senses, such as sound, in the fire of sacrifice.

The brahmacharis, or students under the care of a bona fide spiritual master, control the mind by abstaining from sense gratification. They are referred to in this verse as sacrificing the hearing process and the senses in the fire of the controlled mind. A brahmachari hears only words concerning Krsna consciousness; hearing is the basic principle for understanding, and therefore the pure brahmachari engages fully in harer namanakirtanam—chanting and hearing the glories of the Lord. He restrains himself from the vibrations of material sounds, and his hearing is engaged in the transcendental sound vibration of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 4.26

The brahmachari must chant the holy name upon rising in the morning:

In the morning, the first duty of a brahmachari seeking spiritual elevation is huta-hutasana, to offer sacrificial oblations to the Supreme Lord. Those engaged in brahmacharya cannot sleep until seven or nine o'clock in the morning. They must rise early in the morning, at least one and a half hours before the sun rises, and offer oblations, or in this age, they must chant the holy name of the Lord, Hare Krsna. As referred to by Lord Caitanya, kalau nasty eva nasty eva nasty eva gatih anyatha: there is no other alternative, no other alternative, no other alternative, in this age, to chanting the holy name of the Lord. The brahmachari must rise early in the morning, and, after placing himself, should chant the holy name of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.21.45-47

21.

Householders Can Conduct Chanting at Home

Even householders can achieve perfection by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra:

[Narada Muni to King Yudhisthira]:

The process of chanting the holy name of the Lord is so powerful that by this chanting even householders [grhasthas] can very easily gain the ultimate result achieved by persons in the renounced order. Maharaja Yudhisthira, I have now explained to you that process of religion.

This is a confirmation of the Krsna consciousness movement. Anyone who takes part in this movement, regardless of what he is, can gain the topmost result achieved by a perfect sannyasi, namely Brahmajnana (spiritual knowledge). Even more important, he can advance in devotional service. Maharaja Yudhisthira thought that because he was a grhastha there was no hope of his being liberated, and therefore he asked Narada Muni how he could get out of material entanglement. But Narada Muni, citing a practical example from his own life, established that by associating with devotees and chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, any man in any condition of life can achieve the highest perfection without a doubt.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.15.74

Rather than leave his family, a householder can purify his household situation by regularly chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra:

[Kurma to Lord Caitanya]:

The brahmana begged Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, "My dear Lord, kindly show me favor and let me go with You. I can no longer tolerate the waves of misery caused by materialistic life." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu replied, "Don't speak like that again. Better to remain at home and chant the holy name of Krsna always. Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Sri Krsna as they are given in the Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu further advised the brahmana Kurma, "If you follow this instruction, your materialistic life at home will not obstruct your spiritual advancement. Indeed, If you follow these regulative principles, we will again meet here, or, rather you will never lose My company." At whosoever's house Sri Caitanya accepted His alms by taking prasada, He would convert the dwellers to His sankirtana movement and advise them just as He advised the brahmana named Kurma.

One must become freed from the materialistic way of life. One has to merge himself in the ocean of transcendental bliss. In other words, one cannot relish transcendental bliss without being freed from the materialistic way of life. It appears that the brahmana named Kurma was materially happy, for he expressed his family tradition as janma–kula–dhana. Now, being glorified, he wanted to leave all these material opulences. He wanted to travel with Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. According to the Vedic way of civilization, one should leave his family after attaining fifty years of age and go to the forest of Vrndavana to devote the rest of his life to the service of the Lord...

It is not advisable in this age of Kali to leave one's family suddenly, for people are not trained as proper brahmacaris and grhasthas. Therefore Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu advised the brahmana not to be too eager to give up family life. It would be better to remain with his family and try to become purified by chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra regularly under the direction of a spiritual master. This is the instruction of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. If this principle is followed by everyone, there is no need to accept sannyasa. In the next verse Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu advises everyone to become an ideal householder by offenselessly chanting the Hare Krsna mantra and teaching the same principle to everyone he meets... Many people come and inquire whether they have to give up family life to join the Society, but that is not our mission. One can remain comfortably in his residence. We simply request everyone to chant the maha–mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. If one is a little literate and can read Bhagavad–gita As It Is and Srimad–Bhagavatam, that is so much the better. These works are now available in an English translation and are done very authoritatively to appeal to all classes of men. Instead of being engrossed in material activities, people throughout the world should take advantage of this movement and chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra at home with their families. One should also refrain from sinful activities–illicit sex, meat–eating, gambling and intoxication... The real purpose of human life is to attain the spiritual platform and return to Godhead. That is the summum bonum of spiritual realization. The Krsna consciousness movement is trying to elevate human society to the perfection of life by pursuing the method described by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in His advice to the brahmana Kurma. That is, one should stay at home, chant the Hare Krsna mantra and preach the instructions of Krsna as they are given in Bhagavad–gita and Srimad–Bhagavatam... If one simply follows the instructions of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, under the guidance of His representative, and chants the Hare Krsna mantra, teaching everyone as far as possible the same principle, the contamination of the materialistic way of life will not even touch him. It does not matter whether one lives in a holy place like Vrndavana, Navadipa or Jagannatha Puri or in the midst of European cities where the materialistic way of life is very prominent. If a devotee follows the instructions of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he lives in the company of the Lord. Wherever he lives, he converts

that place into Vrndavana and Navadvipa. This means that materialism cannot touch him. This is the secret of success for one advancing in Krsna consciousness...

The cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is explained here very nicely. One who surrenders to Him and is ready to follow Him with heart and soul does not need to change his location. Nor is it necessary for one to change status. One may remain a householder, a medical practitioner, an engineer or whatever. It doesn't matter. One only has to follow the instruction of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra and instruct relatives and friends in the teachings of Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 7.126-30

One can make home life pleasant by chanting Hare Krsna:

As for detachment from children, wife and home, it is not meant that one should have no feeling for these. They are natural objects of affection, but when they are not favorable to spiritual progress, then one should not be attached to them. The best process for making the home pleasant is Krsna consciousness. If one is in full Krsna consciousness, he can make his home very happy because this process of Krsna consciousness is very easy. One need only chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, accept the remnants of foodstuffs offered to Krsna, have some discussion on books like Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam, and engage oneself in Deity worship. These four things will make one happy. One should train the members of his family in this way. The family members can sit down morning and evening and chant together Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. If one can mold his family life in this way to develop Krsna consciousness, following these four principles, then there is no need to change from family life to renounced life.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 13.8-12

Krsna conscious householders should hold sankirtana festivals in their homes by distributing prasada, talking about Krsna, and holding congregational chanting of the holy name:

During the day the devotees discussed subject matters concerning Krsna, and at night there was a great festival of congregational chanting in the house of Advaita Acarya. Mother Saci cooked with great pleasure, and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, along with the devotees, accepted the prasada with great pleasure. In this way all the opulences of Advaita

Acarya—His faith, devotion, home, riches and everything else—were successfully utilized in the worship of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Advaita Acarya set an ideal example for all householder devotees in His receiving of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His devotees and in His execution of a daily festival at His home. If one has the proper means and wealth, he should occasionally invite the devotees of Lord Caitanya, who are engaged in preaching all over the world, and hold a festival at home simply by distributing prasada and talking about Krsna during the day and holding congregational chanting for at least three hours in the evening. This procedure must be adopted in all centers of the Krsna consciousness movement. Thus they will daily perform sankirtana—yajna. In Srimad—Bhagavatam (11.5.32) the daily performance of sankirtana—yajna is recommended for this age (yajnaih sankirtana—prayair yajanti hi sumedhasah). One should worship Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His four associates, the Panca—tattva, by distributing prasada and holding congregational chanting. Indeed, that yajna or sacrifice is most recommended in this age of Kali. In this age, other yajnas are not possible to perform, but this yajna can be performed everywhere and anywhere without difficulty.

—Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Madhya—lila 3.201—3

One who feels he cannot live in the temple can practice Krsna consciousness at home by chanting the maha—mantra, etc.:

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu requested them all to return home and begin chanting the holy name congregationally. He also requested them to worship Krsna, chant His holy name and discuss His holy pastimes.

The cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Hare Krsna movement, is very nicely explained by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu authoritatively. It is not that everyone has to take sannyasa like Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Everyone can execute the cult of Krsna consciousness at home, as ordered by the Lord. Everyone can congregationally chant the holy name of Krsna, the Hare Krsna maha—mantra. One can also discuss the subject matter of Bhagavad—gita and Srimad—Bhagavatam and install Deities of Radha—Krsna or Gaura—Nitai or both and worship Them very carefully in one's own home. It is not that we have to open different centers all over the world. Whoever cares for the Krsna consciousness movement can install Deities at home, and, under superior guidance, worship the Deity regularly, chanting the maha—mantra and discussing Bhagavad—gita and Srimad—Bhagavatam. We are teaching in our classes how to go about this. One who feels that he is not yet ready to live in a temple or undergo strict regulative principles in the

temple—especially householders who live with wife and children—can start a center at home by installing the Deity, worshipping the Lord morning and evening, chanting Hare Krsna and discussing Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam. Anyone can do this at home without difficulty, and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu requested all the devotees present there to do so. [~]Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 3.190

22.

A Neophyte Devotee Should Not Retire to a Secluded Place to Chant

Sitting in a solitary place to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra is not recommended for neophytes:

[Lord Caitanya to Kasi Misra]:

"Please give that room to Me, for I have need for it. Indeed, I shall remember the lotus feet of the Lord sitting in that solitary place."

This statement of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is significant. Nibhrte vasiya tahan kariba smarana: "I shall sit down there in that solitary place and remember the lotus feet of the Lord." Neophyte students are not to imitate sitting in a solitary place and remembering the lotus feet of the Lord by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. We should always remember that it was Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself who wanted such a place, either for Himself or Haridasa thakura. No one can suddenly attain the level of Haridasa thakura and sit down in a solitary place to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra and remember the lotus feet of the Lord. Only an exalted person like Haridasa thakura or Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who is personally exhibiting the proper behavior for an acarya, can engage in such a practice.

At the present moment we see that some of the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness are tending to leave their preaching activities in order to sit in a solitary place. This is not a very good sign. It is a fact that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura has condemned this process for neophytes. He has even stated in a song: pratisthara tare, nirjanera ghare, tava hari-nama kevala kaitava. Sitting in a solitary place intending to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra is considered a cheating process. This practice is not possible for neophytes at all. The neophyte devotee must act and work very laboriously under the direction of the spiritual master, and he must thus preach the cult of Sri Caitanya

Mahaprabhu. Only after maturing in devotion can he sit down in a solitary place to chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself did. Although Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He nonetheless traveled all over India continuously for six years and then retired at Jagannatha Puri to teach us a lesson. Even at Jagannatha Puri the Lord chanted the Hare Krsna maha–mantra in a great meeting at the Jagannatha temple. The point is that one should not try to imitate Haridasa thakura at the beginning of one's transcendental life. One must first become very mature in devotion and thus receive the approval of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Only at such a time may one actually sit down peacefully in a solitary place to chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra and remember the lotus feet of the Lord. The senses are very strong, and if a neophyte devotee imitates Haridasa thakura, his enemies (kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada and matsarya) will disturb and fatigue him. Instead of chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, the neophyte will simply sleep soundly. Preaching work is meant for advanced devotees, and when an advanced devotee is further elevated on the devotional scale, he may retire to chant the Hare Krsna mantra in a solitary place. However, if one simply imitates advanced spiritual life, he will fall down, just like the sahajiyas in Vrndavana.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 11.176

The neophyte devotee must not give up preaching to chant Hare Krsna in solitude: When disciples are grown up and are able to preach, the spiritual master should retire and sit down in a solitary place to write and execute nirjana–bhajana. This means sitting silently in a solitary place and executing devotional service. This nirjana–bhajana, which is the silent worship of the Supreme Lord, is not possible for a neophyte devotee. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura never advised a neophyte devotee to go to a solitary place to engage in devotional service. Indeed, he has written a song in this connection:

dusta mana, tumi kiserai vaisnava?
 pratisthara tare, nirjanera ghare,
 tava hari–nama kevala kaitava

"My dear mind, what kind of devotee are you? Simply for cheap adoration you sit in a solitary place and pretend to chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, but this is all cheating."

Thus Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura advocated that every devotee, under the guidance of an expert spiritual master, preach the bhakti cult, Krsna consciousness, all over the world.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.28.44

One should not merely chant in a secluded place (and fall down) but should preach: Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura sings,

dusta mana, tumi kisera vaisnava?
pratisthara tare, nirjanera ghare,
tava hari–nama kevala kaitava

"My dear mind, what kind of Vaisnava are you? Simply for false prestige and a material reputation you are chanting the Hare Krsna mantra in a solitary place."

In this way people who do not preach are criticized. There are many Vaisnavas in Vrndavana who do not like preaching; they chiefly try to imitate Haridasa thakura. The actual result of their so–called chanting in a secluded place, however, is that they sleep and think of women and money.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.29.1b

One should not retire prematurely to Vrndavana for pretentious solitary chanting of the holy name:

Srila Sukadeva Gosvami has advised Maharaja Pariksit in the beginning of the Second Canto that every conditioned soul should engage himself in hearing and chanting the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. Srila Sukadeva Gosvami also informed King Pariksit that previously many other kings and emperors went to the jungle to prosecute severe austerities and penances in order to go back home, back to Godhead. In India, it is still a practice that many advanced transcendentalists give up their family lives and go to Vrndavana to live there alone and completely engage in hearing and chanting of the holy pastimes of the Lord. This system is recommended in the Srimad–Bhagavatam, and the six Gosvamis of Vrndavana followed it, but at the present moment many karmis and pseudodevotees have overcrowded the holy place of Vrndavana just to imitate this process recommended by Sukadeva Gosvami. It is said that many kings and emperors formerly went to the forest for this purpose, but Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura Gosvami Maharaja does not recommend that one take up this solitary life in Vrndavana prematurely.

One who goes prematurely to Vrndavana to live in pursuance of the instructions of

Sukadeva Gosvami again falls victim of maya, even while residing in Vrndavana. To check such unauthorized residence in Vrndavana, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura has sung a nice song in this connection, the purport of which is as follows: "My dear mind, why are you so proud of being a Vaisnava? Your solitary worship and chanting of the holy name of the Lord are based on a desire for cheap popularity, and therefore your chanting of the holy name is only a pretension. Such an ambition for a cheap reputation can be compared to the stool of a hog because such popularity is another extension of the influence of maya."
~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Unless one is extremely advanced in Krsna consciousness, one will be influenced by the modes of nature if one tries to chant in a solitary place:

There are many who like to chant the Hare Krsna mantra in a silent, solitary place, but if one is not interested in preaching, talking constantly to the nondevotees, the influence of the modes of nature is very difficult to surpass. Therefore unless one is extremely advanced in Krsna consciousness, one should not imitate Haridasa thakura, who had no other business than chanting the holy name always, twenty-four hours a day. Prahlada Maharaja does not condemn such a process; he accepts it, but without active service to the Lord, simply by such methods one generally cannot attain liberation. One cannot attain liberation simply by false pride.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.9.46

One should not try to imitate exalted personalities like Haridasa thakura by chanting in a solitary place:

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura explains in his Anubhasya, "A person who has attracted the attention of the spiritual master by his sincere service likes to dance and chant with similarly developed Krsna conscious devotees. The spiritual master authorizes such a devotee to deliver fallen souls in all parts of the world. Those who are not advanced prefer to chant the Hare Krsna mantra in a solitary place." Such activities constitute, in the language of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura, a type of cheating process in the sense that they imitate the activities of exalted personalities like Haridasa thakura. One should not attempt to imitate such exalted devotees. Rather, everyone should endeavor to preach the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in all parts of the world and thus become successful in spiritual life. One who is not very expert in preaching may chant in a secluded place, avoiding bad association, but for one who is actually advanced, preaching and meeting people who are not engaged in devotional service are not disadvantages. A devotee gives

the nondevotees his association but is not affected by their misbehavior. Thus by the activities of a pure devotee even those who are bereft of love of Godhead get a chance to become devotees of the Lord one day. In this connection Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura advises that one discuss the verse in Srimad–Bhagavatam, naitat samacarej jatu manasapi hy anisvarah (10.33.30), and the following verse in Bhakti–rasamrta–sindhu (1.2.255):

anasaktasya visayan yatharham upayunjatah
nirbandhah krsna–sambandhe yuktam vairagyam ucyate

One should not imitate the activities of great personalities. One should be detached from material enjoyment and should accept everything in connection with Krsna's service.
~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.92

Krsna consciousness does not mean to become inert and to chant the holy name in a secluded place:

Sometimes Krsna consciousness is misunderstood to be inertia, and one with such a misunderstanding often withdraws to a secluded place to become fully Krsna conscious by chanting the holy name of Lord Krsna. But without being trained in the philosophy of Krsna consciousness, it is not advisable to chant the holy name of Krsna in a secluded place where one may acquire only cheap adoration from the innocent public.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 3.1

23.

One Should Not Concoct Chants and Mantras

One does not have to search for or concoct a name of God to chant. The sastras recommend particular names such as the Hare Krsna mantra:

[Svayambhuva Manu said, in trance]:

The entire cosmic manifestation is the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, who has millions of names and unlimited potencies...

The Lord's activities are many, and according to His activities He has many names. He appeared as the son of mother Yasoda, and also as the son of mother Devaki, and therefore He is named Devaki–nandana and Yasoda–nandana. *Parasya saktir vividhaiva sruyate*: the Lord has a multitude of energies, and therefore He acts in multifarious ways. Yet He has a particular name. The sastras recommend which names we should chant, such as Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare. It is not that we have to search for some name or manufacture one. Rather, we must follow the saintly persons and the sastras in chanting His holy name.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 8.1.13

One should chant the maha–mantra and not concoct new types of chanting: *Kirtanad eva krsnasya mukta–sangah param vrajet*: simply by chanting the holy name of Krsna, one is liberated and returns home, back to Godhead... One should not, however, manufacture different types of chanting. One should adhere seriously to the chanting of the holy name as recommended in the scriptures: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.5.23–24

One should not concoct a maha–mantra of one's own: Taking advantage of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, there are many unscrupulous devotees who manufacture a maha–mantra of their own. Sometimes they sing, *bhaja nitai gaura radhe syama hare krsna hare rama* or *sri–krsna–caitanya prabhu nityananda hare krsna hare rama sri radhe govinda*. Actually, however, one should chant the names of the full Panca–tattva (*sri–krsna–caitanya prabhu nityananda sri–advaita gadadhara srivasadi–gaura–bhakta–vrnda*) and then the sixteen words Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, but these unscrupulous, less intelligent men confuse the entire process. Of course, since they are also devotees they can express their feelings in that way, but the method prescribed by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pure devotees is to chant first the full Panca–tattva mantra and then chant the maha–mantra– Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.4

Concocted chants cannot help us advance in devotional service:

I thus explain the truth of the Panca-tattva. One who hears this explanation increases in knowledge of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. While chanting the Panca-tattva maha-mantra, one must chant the names of Sri Caitanya, Nityananda, Advaita, Gadadhara and Srivasa with their many devotees. This is the process.

The Panca-tattva is a very important factor in understanding Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. There are sahajiyas who, not knowing the importance of the Panca-tattva, concoct their own slogans such as bhaja nitai gaura, radhe syama, japa hare krsna hare rama or sri krsna caitanya prabhu nityananda hare krsna hare rama sri radhe govinda. Such chants may be good poetry, but they cannot help us to go forward in devotional service. In such chants there are also many discrepancies, which need not be discussed here. Strictly speaking, when chanting the names of the Panca-tattva, one should fully offer his obeisances:

sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu nityananda sri-advaita gadadhara
srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda. By such chanting one is blessed with the competency to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra without offense. When chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one should also chant it fully: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. One should not foolishly adopt any of the slogans concocted by imaginative devotees. If one actually wants to derive the effects of chanting, one must strictly follow the great acaryas. This is confirmed in the Mahabharata. Mahajano yena gatah sa panthah: "The real path of progress is that which is traversed by great acaryas and authorities."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.168-69

24.

Results of Giving Up Chanting

The attraction of chanting the holy name is so powerful that only an animal can give it up: [King Prthu to Lord Visnu]:

My dear highly glorified Lord, if one, in the association of pure devotees, hears even once the glories of Your activities, he does not, unless he is nothing but an animal, give up the association of devotees, for no intelligent person would be so careless as to leave their association. The perfection of chanting and hearing about Your glories was accepted even by the goddess of fortune, who desired to hear of Your unlimited activities and

transcendental glories.

The glorification of the Supreme Lord can be very much appreciated by the Aryan family. Although there is no bar for others, the members of the Aryan family very quickly catch the essence of spiritual life... Presently these descendants of the Aryan family are taking this Krsna consciousness movement very seriously. Others who are associating with them and hearing the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra from the lips of pure devotees are also becoming captivated by the transcendental vibration. Transcendental vibrations are very much effective when chanted among Aryans, but even though one does not belong to the Aryan family, he will become a Vaisnava simply by hearing the mantra because the vibration has great influence over everyone... The impersonalist may ask why one should bother chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra continually for so many years instead of stopping and trying for kaivalya, liberation, or merging into the existence of the Lord. In answer, Maharaja Prthu maintains that the attraction of this chanting is so great that one cannot give up the process unless he is an animal. This is the case even if one comes in contact with this transcendental vibration by chance. Prthu Maharaja is very emphatic in this connection—only an animal can give up the practice of chanting Hare Krsna. Those who are not animals but actually intelligent, advanced, human, civilized men cannot give up this practice of continually chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.20.26

One who cannot complete his assigned number of rounds is in a diseased condition of spiritual life:

[Lord Caitanya and Haridasa thakura]:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu further inquired from Haridasa, "Can you ascertain what your disease is?" Haridasa thakura replied, "My disease is that I cannot complete my rounds."

If one cannot complete the fixed number of rounds he is assigned, he should be considered to be in a diseased condition of spiritual life.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 11.23

If we neglect the regulative principle of chanting the maha-mantra, we will eventually fall down:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

...Being attached to raising the deer, Maharaja Bharata forgot the rules and regulations for the advancement of spiritual life, and he gradually forgot to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After a few days, he forgot everything about his spiritual advancement.

From this we can understand how we have to be very cautious in executing our spiritual duties by observing the rules and regulations and regularly chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. If we neglect doing this, we will eventually fall down. We must rise early in the morning, bathe, attend mangala-arati, worship the Deities, chant the Hare Krsna mantra, study the Vedic literatures and follow all the rules prescribed by the acaryas and the spiritual master. If we deviate from this process, we may fall down, even though we may be very highly advanced... Even if one is in the renounced order, he should never give up the regulative principles.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.8.8

Even if one is highly elevated in Krsna consciousness, if he stops chanting, his devotional creeper will dry up:

Krsna is within you, and as soon as Krsna sees that you are very sincere, that you are seeking, He sends a bona fide spiritual master. This combination of Krsna and the spiritual master is the cause of one's receiving the seed of Krsna consciousness. The seed is there. If you have a very nice seed of a rose bush, what is your duty? If you have a seed of any nice plant, it is your duty not to lock it up in the safety vault of a bank. Your duty is to sow it in the ground. Where should you sow that seed? If you have information of Krsna consciousness, you just sow it in your heart. Not in this earth, but in the earth within yourself. And after sowing a seed you have to pour a little water on it, so that water is hearing and chanting. Once the seed is sown in the heart, just pour on a little water, and it will grow.

This process should not be stopped by the thought that because one is initiated there is no need of hearing and chanting. It should go on continuously. If you stop pouring water on a plant, it will dry up; it will not produce any fruit. Similarly, even if you are highly elevated in Krsna consciousness, you cannot stop this process of hearing and chanting because maya is so strong, so powerful, that as soon as she sees, "Ah, here is an opportunity," at once you will dry up. By the process of pouring water, that plant of Krsna consciousness grows... If you continue this chanting and hearing process, you will grow and grow and actually reach Krsna's lotus feet and there relish His association.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

If a devotee fails to chant the holy name, he will fall into the material conception of life: We have witnessed that some of our contemporaries who are supposed to be great preachers have gradually fallen into the material conception of life because they have failed to chant the holy name of the Lord.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

25.

Chanting at the Time of Death

One should pray to the Lord to be able to chant His holy name at the time of death:

[The priests at King Nabhi's sacrifice to Lord Visnu]:

Dear Lord, we may not be able to remember Your name, form and qualities, due to stumbling, hunger, falling down, yawning or being in a miserable diseased condition at the time of death when there is a high fever. We therefore pray unto You, O Lord, for You are very affectionate to Your devotees. Please help us remember You and utter Your holy names, attributes and activities, which can dispel all the reactions of our sinful lives.

The real success in life is ante narayana–smrtih–remembering the holy name, attributes, activities and form of the Lord at the time of death. Although we may be engaged in the Lord's devotional service in the temple, material conditions are so tough and inevitable that we may forget the Lord at the time of death due to a diseased condition or mental derangement. Therefore we should pray to the Lord to be able to remember His lotus feet without fail at the time of death, when we are in such a precarious condition.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.3.12

If one has chanted loudly and distinctly during his life, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be able to chant with faith and love:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Pariksit]:

While suffering at the time of death, Ajamila chanted the holy name of the Lord, and

although the chanting was directed toward his son, he nevertheless returned back to home, back to Godhead. Therefore if one faithfully and inoffensively chants the holy name of the Lord, where is the doubt that he will return to Godhead?

While the body is fit, [one should] chant the holy name of the Lord loudly and distinctly. If one does so, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be properly able to chant the holy name of the Lord with love and faith.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.49

Those who are strong in Krsna consciousness by always chanting the Hare Krsna mantra can remember Krsna at the time of death:

If, in our healthy condition, we think of the lotus feet of the Lord and die, it is most fortunate. In old age, at the time of death, the throat sometimes becomes choked with mucus or blocked by air. At such time the sound vibration of Hare Krsna, the maha-mantra, may not come out. Thus one may forget Krsna. Of course, those who are strong in Krsna consciousness cannot possibly forget Krsna at any stage because they are accustomed to chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, especially when there is a signal from death.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.28.15

It is by Krsna's grace that one can chant Hare Krsna at the time of death:

According to a Bengali proverb, whatever spiritual progress one makes in life will be tested at the time of death. In Bhagavad-gita (8.6) it is also confirmed:

yam yam vapi smaran bhavam
tyajaty ante kalevaram
tam tam evaiti kaunteya
sada tad-bhava-bhavitah

Those who are practicing Krsna consciousness know that their examination will be held at the time of death. If one can remember Krsna at death, he is immediately transferred to Goloka Vrndavana, or Krsnaloka, and thus his life becomes successful... Every devotee desires to give up the body while it is sound physically and mentally. This desire was also expressed by King Kulasekhara in his Mukunda-mala-stotra:

krsna tvadiya-padapankaja-panjarantam

adyaiva me visatu manasa–raja–hamsah
prana–prayana–samaye kapha–vata–pittaih
kanthavarodhana–vidhau smaranam kutas te

King Kulasekhara wanted to give up his body while in a healthy state, and he thus prayed to Krsna to let him die immediately while he was in good health and while his mind was sound. When a man dies, he is generally overpowered by mucus and bile, and thus he chokes. Since it is very difficult to vibrate any sound while choking, it is simply by Krsna's grace that one can chant Hare Krsna at the time of death.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.23.13

The Lord enables the yogi–devotee to chant His holy name at the time of death and thus go back to Godhead:

[Bhisma to King Yudhisthira]:

The Personality of Godhead, who appears in the mind of the devotee by attentive devotion and meditation and by chanting of the holy name, releases the devotee from the bondage of fruitive activities at the time of his quitting the material body.

A yogi–devotee of the Lord engages himself twenty–four hours daily in the service of the Lord so that his whole attention is engrossed with the thoughts of the Lord in ninefold devotional service... By such practice of yoga, or linking up in the service of the Lord, one is recognized by the Lord Himself... The Lord calls such a rare devotee the best amongst all the yogis. Such a perfect yogi is enabled by the divine grace of the Lord to concentrate his mind upon the Lord with a perfect sense of consciousness, and thus by chanting His holy name before quitting the body the yogi is at once transferred by the internal energy of the Lord to one of the eternal planets where there is no question of material life and its concomitant factors.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 1.9.23

By chanting the holy name, one becomes fearless at the time of death:

[The] principles of vaidhi bhakti are also described in Srimad–Bhagavatam, Second Canto, First Chapter, verse 35, where Sukadeva Gosvami instructs the dying Maharaja Pariksit as to his course of action. Maharaja Pariksit met Sukadeva Gosvami just a week before his death, and the King was perplexed as to what should be done before he was to pass on. Many other sages also arrived there, but no one could give him the proper direction.

Sukadeva Gosvami, however, gave this direction to him as follows: "My dear King, if you want to be fearless in meeting your death next week (for actually everyone is afraid at the point of death), then you must immediately begin the process of hearing and chanting and remembering God."

~The Nectar of Devotion

By chanting the holy name at the time of death, one enters the spiritual sky:

[The sages to Dhruva Maharaja]:

...The holy name of the Lord is as powerful as the Lord Himself. Therefore, simply by chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord, many men can be fully protected from fierce death without difficulty. Thus a devotee is saved.

By the grace of the Lord, if a devotee, at the time of death, can simply chant His holy name—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—simply by chanting this maha—mantra, he immediately surpasses the great ocean of the material sky and enters the spiritual sky. He never has to come back for repetition of birth and death. Simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord, one can surpass the ocean of death.

~Srimad—Bhagavatam 4.10.30

One who chants the holy name upon accidental death is saved from hellish life after death:

[The Visnudutas to the Yamadutas]:

If one chants the holy name of Hari and then dies because of an accidental misfortune, such as falling from the top of a house, slipping and suffering broken bones while traveling on the road, being bitten by a serpent, being afflicted with pain and high fever, or being injured by a weapon, one is immediately absolved from having to enter hellish life, even though he is sinful.

As stated in Bhagavad—gita (8.6):

yam yam vapi smaran bhavam
tyajaty ante kalevaram
tam tam evaiti kaunteya
sada tad—bhava—bhavitah

"Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain

without fail."

If one practices chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, he is naturally expected to chant Hare Krsna when he meets with some accident. Even without such practice, however, if one somehow or other chants the holy name of the Lord (Hare Krsna) when he meets with an accident and dies, he will be saved from hellish life after death.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.15

By constantly chanting the holy name for Madhavendra Puri, isvara Puri helped Madhavendra Puri remember the holy name at the time of death: isvara Puri, the spiritual master of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, performed service to Madhavendra Puri, cleaning up his stool and urine with his own hand. isvara Puri was always chanting the holy name and pastimes of Lord Krsna for Madhavendra Puri to hear. In this way he helped Madhavendra Puri remember the holy name and pastimes of Lord Krsna at the time of death.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 8.28-29

Even if one cannot chant at the time of death, he still receives all benefits of chanting performed during his life:

At the time of death one is certainly bewildered because his bodily functions are in disorder. At that time, even one who throughout his life has practiced chanting the holy name of the Lord may not be able to chant the Hare Krsna mantra very distinctly. Nevertheless, such a person receives all the benefits of chanting the holy name. While the body is fit, therefore, why should we not chant the holy name of the Lord loudly and distinctly? ...one who chants the holy name of the Lord constantly is guaranteed to return home, back to Godhead, without a doubt.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.49

26.

Other Instructions on the Practice of the Holy Name

On Ekadasi day, one should increase one's chanting of Hare Krsna:

One should generally accept the following principles to properly execute devotional service: ... (9) observe fasting on Ekadasi day. (This occurs on the eleventh day after the full moon and the eleventh day after the new moon. On such days no grains, cereals or beans are eaten; simply vegetables and milk are moderately taken, and chanting Hare Krsna and reading scriptures are increased.)

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Chanting the holy name before the tulasi plant has immense spiritual potency:

Haridasa thakura constructed a cottage in a solitary forest. There he planted a tulasi plant, and in front of the tulasi he would chant the holy name of the Lord 300,000 times daily. He chanted throughout the entire day and night.

Without difficulty one can sit down anywhere, especially on the bank of the Ganges, Yamuna or any sacred river, devise a sitting place or cottage, plant a tulasi, and before the tulasi chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra undisturbed... the process of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra with a vow before the tulasi plant has such great spiritual potency that simply by doing this one can become spiritually strong. Therefore we request the members of the Hare Krsna movement to follow Haridasa thakura's example rigidly. Chanting sixteen rounds does not take much time, nor is offering respects to the tulasi plant difficult. The process has immense spiritual potency. One should not miss this opportunity.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.100

The more people present at kirtana the better:

In India there are sacred places where yogis go to meditate in solitude, as prescribed in Bhagavad-gita. Traditionally, yoga cannot be executed in a public place, but insofar as kirtana-mantra-yoga, or the yoga of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare-is concerned, the more people present, the better. When Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu was performing kirtana in India some five hundred years ago, He organized in each group sixteen persons to lead the chanting, and thousands of persons chanted with them.

~The Perfection of Yoga

There Is no need for mental speculation or intellectual adjustment for chanting the maha–mantra:

This chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is enacted from the spiritual platform, and thus this sound vibration surpasses all lower strata of consciousness—namely sensual, mental, and intellectual. There is no need, therefore, to understand the language of the mantra, nor is there any need for mental speculation nor any intellectual adjustment for chanting this maha–mantra. It is automatic, from the spiritual platform, and as such, anyone can take part in the chanting without any previous qualification.

~The Science of Self–Realization

One may chant the name of the form of the Lord to which one is attracted under the guidance of a pure devotee of that particular form of the Lord (although chanting the name Krsna under the guidance of a pure devotee of Krsna is especially recommended):

The transcendental holy name of the Lord may be heard and chanted accordingly to the attraction of the devotee. One may chant the holy name of Lord Krsna, or one may chant the holy name of Lord Rama or Nrsimhadeva (ramadi–murtisu kala–niyamena tisthan [Bs. 5.39]). The Lord has innumerable forms and names, and devotees may meditate upon a particular form and chant the holy name according to his attraction. The best course is to hear of the holy name, form and so on from a pure devotee of the same standard as oneself. In other words, one who is attached to Krsna should chant and hear from other pure devotees who are also attached to Lord Krsna. The same principle applies for devotees attracted by Lord Rama, Lord Nrsimha and other forms of the Lord. Because Krsna is the ultimate form of the Lord (krsnas tu bhagavan svayam), it is best to hear about Lord Krsna's name, form and pastimes from a realized devotee who is particularly attracted by the form of Lord Krsna. In Srimad–Bhagavatam, great devotees like Sukadeva Gosvami have specifically described Lord Krsna's holy name, form and qualities.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.5.23–24

If one cannot bathe in water he can bathe by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra:

Pratah–krtya means that one should evacuate regularly and then cleanse himself by taking a bath... Actually householders and vanaprasthas should bathe two times a day (pratar–madhyahnayoh snanam vanaprastha–grhasthayoh). A sannyasi should bathe three times daily, and a brahmachari may take only one bath a day. Whenever one is not able to bathe in water, he can bathe by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 24.331

Twelve names of Lord Visnu should be recited while applying tilaka:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"When putting the twelve tilaka marks on the twelve places of the body, one has to chant the mantra consisting of these twelve Visnu names. After daily worship, when one anoints the different parts of the body with water, these names should be chanted as one touches each part of the body."

While marking the body with tilaka, one should chant the following mantra, which consists of the twelve names of Lord Visnu.

lalate kesavam dhyayen
narayanam athodare
vaksah–sthale madhavam tu
govindam kantha–kupake

visnum ca daksine kuksau
bahau ca madhusudanam
trivikramam kandhare tu
vamanam vama–parsvake

sridharam vama–bahau tu
hrsikesam tu kandhare
prsthe ca padmanabham ca
katyam damodaram nyaset

"When one marks the forehead with tilaka, he must remember Kesava. When one marks the lower abdomen, he must remember Narayana. For the chest, one should remember Madhava, and when marking the hollow of the neck one should remember Govinda. Lord Visnu should be remembered while marking the right side of the belly and Madhusudana should be remembered when marking the right arm. Trivikrama should be remembered when marking the right shoulder, and Vamana should be remembered when marking the left side of the belly. Sridhara should be remembered while marking the left arm, and Hrsikesa should be remembered when marking the left shoulder. Padmanabha and Damodara should be remembered when marking the back."

ˆSri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 20.202

One should stamp the holy names of the Lord on his body:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"In the morning, one should regularly brush his teeth, take his bath, offer prayers to the Lord and offer obeisances to the spiritual master. One should render service to the spiritual master and paint one's body in twelve places with urdhva–pundra [tilaka]. One should stamp the holy names of the Lord on his body, or one should stamp the symbols of the Lord, such as the disc and club."

ˆSri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 24.332

The Propagation of the Holy Name

1.

The Holy Name Should Be Propagated Throughout the World

A devotee should not only chant the holy name, but should preach the chanting of the holy name to others:

[isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

"My dear child, continue dancing, chanting and performing sankirtana in association with devotees. Furthermore, go out and preach the value of chanting krsna–nama, for by this process You will be able to deliver all fallen souls."

It is another ambition of the spiritual master to see his disciples not only chant, dance and follow the regulative principles but also preach the sankirtana movement to others in order to deliver them, for the Krsna consciousness movement is based on the principle that one should become as perfect as possible in devotional service oneself and also preach the cult for others' benefit. There are two classes of unalloyed devotees—namely, gosthy–anandis and bhajanandis. Bhajanandi refers to one who is satisfied to cultivate devotional service for himself, and gosthy–anandi is one who is not satisfied simply to become perfect himself but wants to see others also take advantage of the holy name of the Lord and advance in spiritual life. The outstanding example is Prahlada Maharaja. When he was offered a benediction by Lord Nrsimhadeva, Prahlada Maharaja said:

naivodvije para duratyaya–vaitaranyas
tvad–virya–gayana–mahamrta–magna–cittah
soce tato vimukha–cetasa indriyarthā–
maya–sukhaya bharam udvahato vimudhan

"My dear Lord, I have no problems and want no benediction from You because I am quite satisfied to chant Your holy name. This is sufficient for me because whenever I chant I immediately merge in an ocean of transcendental bliss. I only lament to see others bereft of Your love. They are rotting in material activities for transient material pleasure and spoiling their lives toiling all day and night simply for sense gratification, with no attachment for love of Godhead. I am simply lamenting for them and devising various plans to deliver them from the clutches of maya." (S.B. 7.9.43)

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura explains in his Anubhasya, "A person who has attracted the attention of the spiritual master by his sincere service likes to dance and chant with similarly developed Krsna conscious devotees. The spiritual master authorizes such a devotee to deliver fallen souls in all parts of the world. Those who are not advanced prefer to chant the Hare Krsna mantra in a solitary place." Such activities constitute, in the language of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura, a type of cheating process in the sense that they imitate the activities of exalted personalities like Haridasa thakura. One should not attempt to imitate such exalted devotees. Rather, everyone should endeavor to preach the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in all parts of the world and thus become successful in spiritual life. One who is not very expert in preaching may chant in a secluded place, avoiding bad association, but for one who is actually advanced, preaching and meeting people who are not engaged in devotional service are not disadvantages. A devotee gives the nondevotees his association but is not affected by their misbehavior. Thus by the activities of a pure devotee even those who are bereft of love of Godhead get a chance to become devotees of the Lord one day.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.92

One who is advanced in chanting the holy name induces others to chant:

Many fools, not knowing the transcendental nature of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, sometimes impede our loudly chanting this mantra, yet one who is actually advanced in the fulfillment of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra induces others to chant also.

Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami explains, krsna-sakti vina nahe tara pravartana: unless one receives special power of attorney from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he cannot preach the glories of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. As devotees propagate the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, the general population of the entire world gets the opportunity to understand the glories of the holy name.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.83

After initiation, the devotee takes very seriously the chanting and spreading of the holy name:

[Narada Muni to Srila Vyasadeva]:

Thus I began chanting the holy name and fame of the Lord by repeated recitation, ignoring all the formalities of the material world. Such chanting and remembering of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are benedictory. So doing, I traveled all over the earth, fully satisfied, humble and unenvious.

The life of a sincere devotee of the Lord is thus explained in a nutshell by Narada Muni by his personal example. Such a devotee, after his initiation by the Lord or His bona fide representative, takes very seriously chanting of the glories of the Lord and traveling all over the world so that others may also hear the glories of the Lord... Their only business is to chant and remember the holy name, fame and pastimes of the Lord and, according to personal capacity, to distribute the message for others' welfare without motive of material gain.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.6.26

One must become the servant of the holy name by distributing it to the world:

In the spiritual world the Absolute is always absolute; the name, form, quality and pastimes of the Absolute are all as good as the Absolute Himself. As such, one is understood to be an eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead if he considers himself an eternal servant of the holy name and in this spirit distributes the holy name to the world. One who chants in that spirit, without offenses, is certainly elevated to the platform of understanding that the holy name and the Personality of Godhead are identical. To associate with the holy name and chant the holy name is to associate with the Personality of Godhead directly. In Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu it is clearly said: *sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah*. The holy name becomes manifest when one engages in the service of the holy name. This service in a submissive attitude begins with one's tongue. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau*: one must engage his tongue in the service of the holy name. Our Krsna consciousness movement is based on this principle. We try to engage all the members of the Krsna consciousness movement in the service of the holy name.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 8.16

A true Vaisnava bestows the priceless gift of the maha–mantra upon society: Harav abhaktasya kuto mahad–guna mano–rathenasati dhavato bahih [SB 5.18.12]. One who has developed Krsna consciousness will manifest all the good qualities of the demigods. Indeed, it is stated, vanca–kalpatarubhyas ca krpa–sindhubhya eva ca: a Vaisnava or devotee of Krsna is an ocean of mercy to others. He gives the greatest gift to society, for society is in dire need of God consciousness. A Vaisnava bestows the priceless gift of the maha–mantra, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Simply by chanting this mantra, one can remain in a liberated state.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Matchless Gift

The true acarya presents Krsna to everyone by preaching the holy name throughout the world:

One cannot become an acarya simply by mental speculation. The true acarya presents Krsna to everyone by preaching the holy name of the Lord throughout the world. Thus the conditioned souls, purified by chanting the holy name, are liberated from the blazing fire of material existence. In this way, spiritual benefit grows increasingly full, like the waxing moon in the sky... Since he is understood to be the most advanced devotee, he is called paramahamsa–thakura. thakura is a title of honor offered to the paramahamsa. Therefore one who acts as an acarya, directly presenting Lord Krsna by spreading His name and fame, is also to be called paramahamsa–thakura.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 7.1

Lord Caitanya predicted that the Hare Krsna mantra would be chanted in every town and village in the world:

This method [hari–kirtana] is recommended in the scriptures, and it was given to us by Caitanya Mahaprabhu five hundred years ago. He appeared in a town which is known as Navadvipa. It is about sixty miles north of Calcutta. People still go there. We have a temple center there. It is also a sacred place of pilgrimage. Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared there, and He started this mass sankirtana movement, which is conducted without discrimination. He predicted that this sankirtana movement would be spread all over the world and that the Hare Krsna mantra would be chanted in every village and town on the surface of the globe.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

All devotees should combine to distribute the Hare Krsna maha–mantra all over the world:
[Lord Caitanya to His devotees]:

"I am the only gardener. How many places can I go? How many fruits can I pick and distribute? It would certainly be a very laborious task to pick the fruits and distribute them alone, and still I suspect that some would receive them and others would not. Therefore I order every man within this universe to accept this Krsna consciousness movement and distribute it everywhere."

Here Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu indicates that the distribution of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra should be performed by combined forces. Although He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He laments, "How can I act alone? How can I alone pick the fruit and distribute it all over the world?" This indicates that all classes of devotees should combine to distribute the Hare Krsna maha–mantra without consideration of the time, place or situation.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Adi–lila 9.34–36

Even if one is not wealthy, he can act for the highest welfare of human society and please the Supreme Lord by preaching the Hare Krsna mantra to everyone:

[Lord Caitanya to His devotees]:

"I am merely a gardener. I have neither a kingdom nor very great riches. I simply have some fruits and flowers that I wish to utilize to achieve piety in My life."

In performing welfare activities for human society, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu presents Himself as being not very rich, thus indicating that a man need not be rich or opulent to act for the welfare of humanity. Sometimes rich men are very proud that they can perform beneficial activities for human society whereas others cannot. A practical example is that when there is a scarcity of food in India on account of meager rainfall, some members of the richer class very proudly distribute foodstuffs, making huge arrangements with the help of the government, as if merely by such activities people will be benefited. Suppose there were no food grains. How would the rich men distribute food? Production of grains is completely in the hands of God. If there were no rain, there would be no grains, and these so–called rich men would be unable to distribute grains to the people.

The real purpose of life, therefore, is to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Srila Rupa Gosvami describes in his Bhakti–rasamṛta–sindhu that devotional service is so exalted that it is beneficial and auspicious for every man. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu also

declared that to propagate the bhakti cult of devotional service in human society, one does not need to be very rich. Anyone can do it and thus render the highest benefit to humanity if he knows the art. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu takes the part of a gardener because although a gardener is naturally not a very rich man, he has some fruits and flowers. Any man can collect some fruits and flowers and satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead in devotional service, as recommended in Bhagavad-gita:

patram puspam phalam toyam
yo me bhaktya prayacchati
tad aham bhakty-upahrtam
asnamī prayatatmanah
(Bg. 9.26)

One cannot satisfy the Supreme Lord by his riches, wealth or opulent position, but anyone can collect a little fruit or flower and offer it to the Lord. The Lord says that if one brings such an offering in devotion, He will accept it and eat it. When Kṛṣṇa eats, the entire world becomes satisfied. There is the story in the Mahabharata illustrating how by Kṛṣṇa's eating, the sixty thousand disciples of Durvasa Muni were all satisfied. Therefore it is a fact that if by our life (pranah), by our wealth (arthah), by our intelligence (dhiya) or by our words (vaca) we can satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, naturally the entire world will become happy. Therefore our main duty is to satisfy the Supreme Godhead by our actions, our money and our words. This is very simple. Even if one does not have money, he can preach the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra to everyone. One can go everywhere, to every home, and request everyone to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Thus the entire world situation will become very happy and peaceful.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Ādi-līla 9.44

In this age, saintly persons should help the general populace not by political action, but by chanting the maha-mantra:

Saintly persons are not interested in political matters, yet they are always thinking of the welfare of the people in general. Consequently they sometimes have to come down to the political field and take steps to correct the misguided government or royalty. However, in Kali-yuga, saintly persons are not as powerful as they previously were. They used to be able to burn any sinful man to ashes by virtue of their spiritual prowess. Now saintly persons have no such power due to the influence of the age of Kali. Indeed, the brahmanas do not even have the power to perform sacrifices in which animals are put into a fire to attain a new life. Under these circumstances, instead of actively taking part in politics,

saintly persons should engage in chanting the maha–mantra, Hare Krsna. By the grace of Lord Caitanya, by simply chanting this Hare Krsna maha–mantra, the general populace can derive all benefits without political implications.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.14.12

The chanting of Hare Krsna should be vigorously propagated all over the world because it gives tremendous benefit:

The process of Krsna consciousness should be very vigorously propagated all over the world. Simply by seeing the Deity or simply by joining in chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, people will derive tremendous benefit. If one performs kirtana, chanting, one will be able to think of Krsna. One may think, "I danced for two hours and chanted Hare Krsna. What is the meaning of this?" This is smarana, thinking of Krsna. One may even think, "I foolishly chanted 'Krsna, Krsna' for two hours." But that also is smarana.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

Distributing and receiving the holy name as an example of the devotional principle of giving and receiving charity:

By chanting the holy names of the Lord we can actually convert many people throughout the world to Krsna consciousness. Contributing or distributing the holy name of the Lord is a sublime example of contributing or giving charity (the dadati principle). By the same token, one must also follow the pratigrhnati principle and be willing and ready to receive the transcendental gift.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 4

One should go on chanting the Hare Krsna mantra and preaching the chanting of this mantra, tolerating the harassment of envious persons and atheists:

trnad api sunicena
taror iva sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih
[Cc. adi 17.31]

When one is engaged in devotional service, he is often surrounded by envious people, and

often many enemies come to try to defeat him or stop him. This is not new in this present age, for even in the days of yore Prahlada Maharaja, who was engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, was harassed by his demoniac father, Hiranyakasipu. The atheists are always prepared to harass a devotee; therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu suggested that one be very tolerant of these people. Nonetheless, one has to continue chanting the Hare Krsna mantra and preaching the chanting of this mantra because such preaching and chanting constitute the perfection of life. One should chant and preach about the urgency of making this life perfect in all respects.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.24.67

When one situated on the platform of love of God chants the holy name loudly, everyone becomes initiated in the chanting of the holy name:

When a devotee is perfectly qualified in chanting the transcendental vibration of the holy name, he is quite fit to become a spiritual master and to deliver all the people of the world. The chanting of the holy name is so powerful that it gradually establishes its supremacy above everything in the world. The devotee who chants it becomes transcendently situated in ecstasy and sometimes laughs, cries and dances in his ecstasy. Sometimes the unintelligent put hindrances in the path of chanting this maha-mantra, but one who is situated on the platform of love of Godhead chants the holy name loudly for all concerned. As a result, everyone becomes initiated in the chanting of the holy names—Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

2.

The Krsna Consciousness Movement and the Propagation of the Holy Name

Following in the footsteps of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Srila Prabhupada distributed the maha-mantra freely in the West:

Among His own associates, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu laughingly said, "I came here to sell My emotional ecstatic love. Although I came to Varanasi to sell My goods, there were no customers, and it appeared necessary for Me to carry them back to My own country. All of you were feeling unhappy that no one was purchasing My goods and that I would have to

carry them away. Therefore, by your will only, I have distributed them without charging."

When we began distributing the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in the Western countries, a similar thing happened. In the beginning we were very disappointed for at least one year because no one came forth to help this movement, but by the grace of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, some young boys joined this movement in 1966. Of course we distributed Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's message of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra without bargaining or selling. As a result, this movement has spread all over the world, with the assistance of European and American boys and girls. We therefore pray for all the blessings of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu upon all the devotees in the Western world who are spreading this movement.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.168-70

The sankirtana movement was begun in the West when Srila Prabhupada began to chant in Tompkins Square Park in New York in 1966:

Lord Caitanya predicted:

prthivite ache yata nagaradi grama
sarvatra pracara haibe mora nama

"In all the villages and towns all over the world, everywhere, this sankirtana movement will be preached."

This is His prediction.

So by the grace of Lord Caitanya, this movement is already introduced in the Western countries, beginning from New York. Our sankirtana movement was first introduced in New York in 1966. At that time I came and began to chant this Hare Krsna mantra in Tompkins Square. I was chanting there for three hours with a small mrdanga (drum), and these American boys assembled and gradually joined, and so it is increasing. First of all it was started in a New York storefront, 26 Second Avenue, then we started our branches in San Francisco, Montreal, Boston, Los Angeles, Buffalo, Columbus. We now [1970] have twenty-four branches, including one in London and one in Hamburg. In London they are all American boys and girls, and they are preaching. They are not sannyasis, nor are they Vedantists, nor Hindus, nor Indians, but they have taken this movement very seriously. Even in the London Times there was an article headlined, "Krsna Chant Startles London." So we have many in the movement now.

~The Science of Self-Realization

In pursuance of the order of Lord Caitanya, ISKCON is trying to introduce the chanting of Hare Krsna throughout the world:

[Lord Caitanya] started this mass sankirtana movement, which is conducted without discrimination. He predicted that this sankirtana movement would be spread all over the world and that the Hare Krsna mantra would be chanted in every village and town on the surface of the globe. In pursuance of the order of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, following in His footsteps, we are trying to introduce this sankirtana movement, chanting Hare Krsna, and it is proving very successful everywhere. I am preaching especially in foreign countries, all over Europe, America, Japan, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, etc. I have introduced this sankirtana movement, and now we have centers around the world. All eighty centers are being received with great enthusiasm. I have not imported these boys and girls from India, but they are taking this movement very seriously because it appeals to the soul directly.

~Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

The Krsna consciousness movement is distributing the Hare Krsna maha-mantra all over the world, following in the footsteps of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu:

In this way Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu contributed the greatest benefit to the people of East Bengal by initiating them into harinama, the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, and making them learned scholars by educating them.

Following in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Krsna consciousness movement is distributing the Hare Krsna maha-mantra and inducing people all over the world to chant. We are giving people an immense treasury of transcendental literature, translated into all the important languages of the world, and by the grace of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu this literature is selling profusely, and people are chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra with great delight. This is the preaching process of the Caitanya cult. Since the Lord wanted this cult preached all over the world, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is acting in a humble way so that the vision of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu may be fulfilled all over the world, especially in the Western countries.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 16.19

Lord Caitanya's request to chant the holy name is now extended to everyone in the world

through the Krsna consciousness movement:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then glanced with mercy at the Muhammadan governor. Giving him assurance, He asked him to chant the holy names Krsna and Hari.

It is Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy that He advises everyone—even candalas, mlecchas and yavanas—to chant the holy name of the Lord. In other words, one who has taken to chanting the holy names Krsna and Hari has already received Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy. The Lord's request to chant the holy name of Krsna is now extended to everyone in the world through this Krsna consciousness movement. Whoever follows Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's instructions will certainly be purified.

~Sri Caitanya—caritamṛta Madhya—lila 16.187

The members of the Krsna consciousness movement should follow in the footsteps of Narada Muni by chanting Hare Krsna for their own benefit and for the benefit of all fallen souls:

[Sukadeva Gosvami to King Parikṣit]:

The seven musical notes—sa, r, ga, ma, pa, dha and ni—are used in musical instruments, but originally they come from the Sama Veda. The great sage Narada vibrates sounds describing the pastimes of the Supreme Lord. By such transcendental vibrations, such as Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, he fixes his mind at the lotus feet of the Lord. Thus he directly perceives Hrsikesa, the master of the senses. After delivering the Haryasvas, Narada Muni continued traveling throughout the planetary systems, his mind always fixed at the lotus feet of the Lord.

Lord Brahma is the guru of Narada Muni, who is the guru of Vyasadeva, and Vyasadeva is the guru of Madhvacarya. Thus the Gaudiya—Madhva—sampradaya is in the disciplic succession from Narada Muni. The members of this disciplic succession—in other words, the members of the Krsna consciousness movement—should follow in the footsteps of Narada Muni by chanting the transcendental vibration Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. They should go everywhere to deliver the fallen souls by vibrating the Hare Krsna mantra, and the instructions of Bhagavad—gita, Srimad—Bhagavatam and Caitanya—caritamṛta. That will please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One can spiritually advance if one actually follows the instructions of Narada Muni. If one pleases Narada Muni, then the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hrsikesa, is also pleased (yasya prasada bhagavat—prasadah **).

~Srimad—Bhagavatam 6.5.22

So that the minds of the people in general may be cleansed, the Krsna consciousness movement is chiefly engaged in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra all over the world: Material existence is caused by dirty things within the mind. If one can cleanse his mind, he immediately comes to his original position of Krsna consciousness, and thus his life becomes successful. Therefore all the great saints in the devotional line very strongly recommend the process of hearing. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the congregational chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to give everyone a chance to hear Krsna's holy name, for simply by hearing Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, one becomes purified (ceto-darpana-marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]). Therefore our Krsna consciousness movement is chiefly engaged in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra all over the world.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.18.11

The Krsna consciousness movement is especially meant for propagating the Hare Krsna mantra:

In order to get freed from the material disease, one must take to the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra. The Krsna consciousness movement is especially meant for creating an atmosphere in which people can take to the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra. One must begin with faith, and when this faith is increased by chanting, a person can become a member of the Society.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 7

The Krsna consciousness movement is simply requesting people to chant Hare Krsna: Our Krsna consciousness movement is simply requesting people, "Chant Hare Krsna." There was a cartoon in some newspaper that depicted an old lady and her husband sitting face to face. The lady is requesting her husband, "Chant, chant, chant." And the husband is answering, "Can't, can't, can't." So in this same way, we are requesting everyone, "Please chant, chant, chant." But they are replying, "Can't, can't, can't." This is their misfortune.

Still, it is our duty to make all such unfortunate creatures fortunate. That is our mission. Therefore we go into the street and chant. Although they say, "Can't," we go on chanting.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

The devotees publicly preach the importance of the Hare Krsna mantra: However one is situated, one should have the determination to go out and preach Krsna consciousness. That endeavor should at least be there, and one who so attempts to preach renders the best service to the Lord. Despite opposition, one should attempt to elevate people to the highest standard of self-realization. One who has actually seen the truth, who is in the trance of self-realization, cannot just sit idly. He must come out. Ramanujacarya, for instance, declared the Hare Krsna mantra publicly. He did not distribute it secretly for some fee. Recently, an Indian yogi came to America to give some "private mantra." But if a mantra has any power, why should it be private? If a mantra is powerful, why should it not be publicly declared so that everyone can take advantage of it? We are saying that this Hare Krsna maha-mantra can save everyone, and we are therefore distributing it publicly, free of charge... The devotees are preaching without charge, declaring in the streets, parks, and everywhere, "Here! Here is the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Come on, take it!"

~The Path of Perfection

It is a preacher's duty to induce the nondevotees to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra: From that moment when the Mayavadi sannyasis heard the explanation of Vedanta-sutra from the Lord, their minds changed, and on the instruction of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, they too chanted, "Krsna! Krsna!" always. Thus Lord Caitanya excused all the offenses of the Mayavadi sannyasis and very mercifully blessed them with krsna-nama.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the mercy incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is addressed by Srila Rupa Gosvami as maha-vadanyavatara, or the most magnanimous incarnation. Srila Rupa Gosvami also says, karunayavatirnah kalau: it is only by His mercy that He has descended in this age of Kali. Here this is exemplified. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu did not like to see Mayavadi sannyasis because He thought of them as offenders to the lotus feet of Krsna, but here He excuses them (tan-sabara ksami' aparadha). This is an example in preaching. Apani acari' bhakti-sikhaimu sabare. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu teaches us that those whom preachers meet are almost all offenders who are opposed to Krsna consciousness, but it is a preacher's duty to convince them of the Krsna consciousness movement and then induce them to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Our propagation of the sankirtana movement is continuing, despite many opponents, and people are taking this chanting process even in remote parts of the world like Africa. By inducing the offenders to chant the Hare Krsna mantra, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu exemplified the

success of the Krsna consciousness movement. We should follow very respectfully in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya, and there is no doubt that we shall be successful in our attempts.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.149-50

The Krsna consciousness movement is meant to give the proper medicine for the conditioned souls—the Hare Krsna mantra:

The word dharma means "duty." Although the word dharma is often translated as "religion" and religion is generally defined as a kind of faith, dharma is not in fact a kind of faith. Dharma means one's actual constitutional duty. It is one's duty to know the needs of the soul, but unfortunately we have no information of the soul and are simply busy supplying the necessities for bodily comfort.

Bodily comfort, however, is not enough. Suppose a man is very comfortably situated. Does it mean he will not die? Of course not. We speak of a struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, but bodily comforts alone cannot enable anyone to exist or survive permanently. Therefore, taking care of the body only is called dharmasya glanih, or pollution of one's duty.

One must know the necessities of the body and also the necessities of the soul. The real necessity in life is to supply the comforts of the soul, and the soul cannot be comforted by material adjustments. Because the soul is a different identity, the soul must be given spiritual food, and that spiritual food is Krsna consciousness. When one is diseased, he must be given the proper diet and the proper medicine. Both are required. If he is simply given medicine but not a proper diet, the treatment will not be very successful. Therefore the Krsna consciousness movement is meant to give both the proper medicine and the proper diet for the soul. The diet is krsna-prasada, food that has first been offered to Krsna, and the medicine is the Hare Krsna mantra.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

The medicine of the maha-mantra is delivering thousands of Jagais and Madhais: Narottama dasa thakura sings: hari hari vipphale janama gonainu: "My dear Lord Krsna, I have simply wasted my time." Why?

manusya-janama paiya, radha-krsna na bhajiya,

janiya suniya visa khainu

"Because I have received the human form of life, which is meant for understanding Krsna, yet I have simply wasted my time by not taking advantage of this opportunity. I have done everything but worship Radha–Krsna. Therefore I have taken poison knowingly."

When one takes poison knowingly, he commits suicide, and not taking advantage of the human form is something like that. If we do not understand Krsna in this life, we are knowingly taking poison. This material life is just like a blazing forest fire. Eating, sleeping, enjoying sex and defending are the main material activities. When we are engaged simply in these things, our hearts are always burning as if we had taken poison. How can we be cured?

golokera prema–dhana, hari–nama–sankirtana,
rati na janmilo kene taya

"My dear Lord, You have given us the medicine of hari–nama–sankirtana, the chanting of Hare Krsna. Unfortunately, I have no attraction for Your holy names."

It is also stated:

vrajendra–nandana jei, saci–suta hoilo sei,
balarama hoilo nitai

"Krsna has now come as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the son of mother Saci. And Balarama has come as Lord Nityananda."

What is Their business? They are delivering all kinds of sinful men simply by chanting Hare Krsna. And what is the evidence of this? The evidence is that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu delivered the sinful Jagai and Madhai. At the present moment everyone is like Jagai and Madhai, for everyone is intoxicated and mad after sex. Now, by the grace of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, thousands of Jagais and Madhais are being delivered. It is this active medicine, this Hare Krsna maha–mantra, that is doing it. It is the perfect yoga system.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

The holy name is so powerful that even today, wherever ISKCON preachers go, people begin chanting Hare Krsna:

As previously stated, all the residents of the villages visited by Lord Caitanya became Vaisnavas and began to chant Hari and Krsna. In this way, in all the villages visited by the

Lord, everyone became a Vaisnava, a devotee.

The holy names of Krsna and Hari, or the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, are so spiritually powerful that even today, as our preachers go to remote parts of the world, people immediately begin chanting Hare Krsna. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. There cannot be anyone who can compare to Him or His potencies. However, because we are following in His footsteps and are also chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, the effect is almost as potent as during the time of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Our preachers mainly belong to European and American countries, yet by the grace of Lord Caitanya they have tremendous success wherever they go to open branches. Indeed, everywhere people are very seriously chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. ~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.7-8

Wherever they go, devotees infuse the place with Krsna consciousness by chanting Hare Krsna:

When devotees meet in a place where there is no Krsna consciousness, there is no harm, for they take the opportunity to chant Hare Krsna and infuse the place with Krsna consciousness. This opportunity should always be taken. It is not that one should close himself up in a room and chant alone. The great sage Narada is a spaceman who travels all over the universe. Although he can dwell in the most elevated planets, he sometimes goes to hell and preaches there. That is the beauty of a servant of God—he is always acting out of love for Krsna and His parts and parcels.

~The Science of Self-Realization

The chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is the best means for infusing spiritual consciousness into people's hearts:

My dear Professor Staal:

I thank you very much for your kind letter dated January 23, 1970. In the last paragraph of your letter you have mentioned that you are not irritated at the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra (like some people), but rather like it. This has given me much satisfaction, and I am sending herewith a copy of our magazine, Back to Godhead, issue number 28, in which you

will find how the students [at a program at Ohio State University] liked this chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, although all of them were neophytes to this cult of chanting. Actually this chanting is very pleasing to the heart and is the best means of infusing spiritual consciousness, or Krsna consciousness, into the hearts of people in general.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Unlike some modern so-called yogis, we do not keep the Hare Krsna mantra a "secret" or charge money for it:

One who has actually seen the truth, who is in the trance of self-realization, cannot just sit idly. He must come out. Ramanujacarya, for instance, declared the Hare Krsna mantra publicly. He did not distribute it secretly for some fee. Recently, an Indian yogi came to America to give some "private mantra." But if a mantra has any power, why should it be private? If a mantra is powerful, why should it not be publicly declared so that everyone can take advantage of it? We are saying that this Hare Krsna maha-mantra can save everyone, and we are therefore distributing it publicly, free of charge. But in this age, people are so foolish that they are not prepared to accept it. Rather, they hanker after some secret mantra and therefore pay some "yogi" thirty-five dollars or whatever for some "private mantra." This is because people want to be cheated. But the devotees are preaching without charge, declaring in the streets, parks, and everywhere, "Here! Here is the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Come on, take it!" But under the spell of maya, illusion, people are thinking, "Oh, this is not good." But if you charge something and bluff and cheat people, they will follow you.

~The Path of Perfection

ISKCON has established its spiritual communities to give everyone a chance to chant the Hare Krsna mantra:

"Simply by chanting this Hare Krsna mantra one can become liberated and go back to Godhead."

This is practical and authorized, and one can also test himself to see how he is advancing simply by chanting. This Krsna consciousness movement is not something new, something that we have introduced or manufactured. It is authorized on the Vedic principles, authorized by acaryas like Caitanya Mahaprabhu and others. And the method is very simple; there is no loss. We are not charging anything, we are not asking for fees and giving the people some secret mantra and promising them that within six months they will become

God. No. This is open for everyone—children, women, girls, boys, old people—everyone can chant and see the results.

To further this end we not only are establishing New Vrndavana, our farm project in West Virginia, but we are establishing other spiritual communities, such as New Navadvipa and New Jagannatha Puri.

~The Science of Self-Realization

3.

Only One Empowered by the Lord Can Propagate the Holy Name

Unless empowered by Krsna, one cannot propagate the holy name:

[Vallabha Bhatta to Lord Caitanya]:

"The fundamental religious system in the age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Krsna. Unless empowered by Krsna, one cannot propagate the sankirtana movement. You have spread the sankirtana movement of Krsna consciousness. Therefore it is evident that You have been empowered by Lord Krsna. There is no question about it. You have manifested the holy name of Krsna throughout the entire world. Anyone who sees You is immediately absorbed in ecstatic love of Krsna."

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura explains that unless one is directly empowered by the causeless mercy of Krsna, one cannot become the spiritual master of the entire world (jagad-guru). One cannot become an acarya simply by mental speculation... The true acarya, the spiritual master of the entire world, must be considered an incarnation of Krsna's mercy. Indeed, he is personally embracing Krsna

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 7.11-13

Parasya saktir vividhaiva sruyate. The Supreme Lord has multipotencies, which the Lord bestows on His fortunate devotees. The Lord has a special potency by which He spreads the Krsna consciousness movement. This is also explained in Caitanya-caritamrta (Antya-lila 7.11). Krsna-sakti vina nahe tara pravartana: "One cannot spread the holy name of Krsna without being specifically empowered by Lord Krsna." A devotee who receives this power from the Lord must be considered very fortunate. The Krsna consciousness movement is spreading to enlighten people about their real position, their original relationship with

Krsna. One requires Krsna's special power in order to be able to do this. People forget their relationship with Krsna and work under the spell of maya life after life, transmigrating from one body to another. This is the process of material existence. The Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna, personally descends to teach people that their position in the material world is a mistaken one. The Lord again comes as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to induce people to take to Krsna consciousness. The Lord also empowers a special devotee to teach people their constitutional position.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 19.114

In this age of Kali, real religious propaganda should induce people to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. This is possible for someone who is especially empowered by Krsna. No one can do this without being especially favored by Krsna... Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura comments: "Without being empowered by the direct potency of Lord Krsna to fulfill His desire and without being specifically favored by the Lord, no human being can become the spiritual master of the whole world. He certainly cannot succeed by mental concoction, which is not meant for devotees or religious people. Only an empowered personality can distribute the holy name of the Lord and enjoin all fallen souls to worship Krsna. By distributing the holy name of the Lord, he cleanses the hearts of the most fallen people; therefore he extinguishes the blazing fire of the material world. Not only that, he broadcasts the shining brightness of Krsna's effulgence throughout the world. Such an acarya, or spiritual master, should be considered nondifferent from Krsna—that is, he should be considered the incarnation of Lord Krsna's potency. Such a personality is krsnalingita-vigraha—that is, he is always embraced by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna. Such a person is above the considerations of the varnasrama institution. He is the guru or spiritual master for the entire world, a devotee on the topmost platform, the maha-bhagavata stage, and a paramahamsa-thakura, a spiritual form only fit to be addressed as paramahamsa or thakura."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.9

[King Prataparudra and Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya]:

The King said, "According to evidence given in revealed scriptures, it is concluded that Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Lord Krsna Himself. Why, then, are learned scholars sometimes indifferent to Him?" Bhattacharya replied, "Only a person who has received but a small fraction of mercy from the Lord can understand that Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Krsna. No one else can. If the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is not bestowed upon a person—regardless of how learned a scholar that person may be and regardless of his seeing or listening—he cannot accept the Lord as the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

The sankirtana movement can be spread by a person who is especially favored by Lord

Krsna (krsna–sakti vina nahe tara pravartana). Without first obtaining the mercy of the Lord, one cannot spread the holy name of the Lord. One who can spread the Lord's name is called labdha–caitanya in the words of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati. The labdha–caitanya is one who has actually awakened his original consciousness, Krsna consciousness. The influence of the pure devotees in Krsna consciousness is such that it can awaken others to become immediately Krsna conscious and engage themselves in the transcendental loving service of Krsna. In this way the descendants of pure devotees increase, and Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu takes much pleasure in seeing the increase of His devotees. The word sumedhasah means "sharply intelligent." When one's intelligence is sharp, he can increase the interests of common men in loving Caitanya Mahaprabhu and through Him in loving Radha–Krsna. Those not interested in understanding Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu are simply material in their attempts at professional chanting and dancing for money, despite their supposed artistry. If one does not have full faith in Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he cannot properly chant and dance in the sankirtana movement. Artificial chanting and dancing may be due to sentiments or sentimental agitation, but this cannot help one advance in Krsna consciousness... The same principles can be applied to demoniac persons, even though they be in the sampradaya of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Without receiving the Lord's special power, one cannot preach His glories all over the world. Even though one may celebrate himself as a learned follower of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and even though one may attempt to preach the holy name of the Lord all over the world, if he is not favored by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu he will find fault with the pure devotee and will not be able to understand how a preacher is empowered by Lord Caitanya.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 11.101–3

One must become empowered by Lord Caitanya and request everyone to chant the maha–mantra:

Whoever heard Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu chant, "Hari, Hari," also chanted the holy name of Lord Hari and Krsna. In this way, they all followed the Lord, very eager to see Him. After some time, the Lord would embrace these people and bid them to return home, after investing them with spiritual potency. Being thus empowered, they would return to their own villages, always chanting the holy name of Krsna and sometimes laughing, crying and dancing. These empowered people used to request everyone and anyone–whomever they saw–to chant the holy name of Krsna. In this way all the villagers would also become devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In his Amrta–pravaha–bhasya, Srila Bhaktivinoda thakura explains that this spiritual potency is the essence of the pleasure potency and the eternity potency. By these two

potencies, one is empowered with devotional service. Lord Krsna Himself, or His representative, the unalloyed devotee, can mercifully bestow these combined potencies upon any man. Being thus endowed with such potencies, one can become an unalloyed devotee of the Lord. Anyone favored by Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was empowered with this bhakti–sakti. Thus the Lord's followers were able to preach Krsna consciousness by divine grace...

In order to become an empowered preacher, one must be favored by Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu or His devotee, the spiritual master. One must also request everyone to chant the maha–mantra. In this way, such a person can convert others to Vaisnavism, showing them how to become pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

ˆSri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 7.98–101

One who follows in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya and the acaryas will be able to preach the holy name all over the universe:

Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates of the Panca–tattva distributed the holy name of the Lord to invoke love of Godhead throughout the universe, and thus the entire universe was thankful.

Here it is said that Lord Caitanya made the entire universe thankful to Him for propagating the sankirtana movement with His associates. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu has already sanctified the entire universe by His presence five hundred years ago, and therefore anyone who attempts to serve Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu sincerely by following in His footsteps and following the instructions of the acaryas will successfully be able to preach the holy names of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra all over the universe.

ˆSri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.163

Persons who, endowed with the power of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, spread the holy name throughout the world are sometimes called avesa–avataras or incarnations:

Thus by direct meetings, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu delivered the three worlds. Some people, however, could not go and were entangled in material activities. To deliver people in regions throughout the universe who could not meet Him, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu personally entered the bodies of pure devotees. Thus He empowered living beings [His pure devotees] by manifesting in them so much of His own devotion that people in all other countries became devotees by seeing them.

As stated in Caitanya-caritamṛta (Antya-līla 7.11):

kali-kalera dharma-kṛṣṇa-nama-sankīrtana
kṛṣṇa-sakti vīna nāhe tara pravartana

Unless one is empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, one cannot spread the holy names of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra throughout the world. Persons who do so are empowered. Therefore they are sometimes called avesa-avatars or incarnations, for they are endowed with the power of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya-līla 2.12-14

Only one who is empowered by Lord Kṛṣṇa (avesa or saktyavesa) can broadcast the holy name throughout the world:

Lord Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu bestows His causeless mercy upon His devotees in three features: His own direct appearance [saksat], His prowess within someone He empowers [avesa], and His manifestation [avirbhava].

There are many hundreds and thousands of devotees of Lord Caitanya among whom there are no special symptoms, but when a devotee of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu functions with specific prowess, he displays the feature called avesa... The Caitanya-caritamṛta states that in this age of Kali the only spiritual function is to broadcast the holy name of the Lord, but this function can be performed only by one who is actually empowered by Lord Kṛṣṇa. The process by which a devotee is thus empowered is called avesa, or sometimes it is called saktyavesa.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adī-līla 10.56, 59

4.

Only One Who Is Strictly Following Religious Principles Can Propagate the Holy Name

Only one who is strictly following religious principles can be successful in propagating the holy name:

Lieutenant Mozee: There are many Christian organizations in the United States that give the holy communion. Why doesn't this work? Why is this not cleansing the heart?

Srila Prabhupada: To speak frankly, I find it difficult to find even one real Christian. The so-called Christians do not abide by the Bible's order. One of the ten commandments in the Bible is, "Thou shalt not kill." But where is that Christian who does not kill by eating the flesh of the cow? The process of chanting the Lord's holy name and distributing prasada will be effective if carried out by persons who are actually practicing religion. My disciples are trained to strictly follow religious principles, and therefore their chanting of the holy name of God is different from others'. Theirs is not simply a rubber-stamped position. They have realized the purifying power of the holy name through practice... If you are not a true Christian, then your preaching will not be effective. And because we are strictly following religious principles, our preaching will be effective in spreading God consciousness.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Important Instructions

Other Important Instructions Concerning the Holy Name:

1.

The Krsna Consciousness Movement and the Holy Name

The Krsna Consciousness Movement Is Based Upon the Chanting of the Holy Name

Chanting the holy name is the basis of the Krsna consciousness movement:

The simplest process of purification is to assemble in congregation and chant the holy names of God. This is called sankirtana and is the basis of our Krsna consciousness movement... The age we live in is called Kali–yuga, the age of forgetting God. It is an age of misunderstanding and quarrel, and the people's hearts are filled with dirty things. But God is so powerful that if we chant His holy name we become purified, just as my disciples have become purified of their bad habits. Our movement is based on this principle of chanting the holy name of God. We give everyone the opportunity, without any distinction. They can come to our temple, chant the Hare Krsna mantra, take a little prasada as refreshment, and gradually become purified.

~The Science of Self–Realization

The Krsna consciousness movement is based upon the principle of chanting the Hare Krsna mantra at every moment, everywhere:

The Krsna consciousness movement is based on this principle: chant the Hare Krsna mantra at every moment, as much as possible, both inside and outside of the temple, and, as far as possible, distribute prasada. This process can be accelerated with the cooperation of state administrators and those who are producing the country's wealth. Simply by liberal distribution of prasada and sankirtana, the whole world can become peaceful and

prosperous.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.12.10

The Krsna consciousness movement is based upon the principles of chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, etc.:

In the house of Advaita Acarya, all the Vaisnavas took pleasure in always talking of Krsna, always worshiping Krsna and always chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra.

On these principles only does the Krsna consciousness movement go on. We have no business other than to talk of Krsna, worship Krsna and chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 13.66

The Krsna consciousness movement is chiefly engaged in chanting the maha–mantra all over the world:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the congregational chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to give everyone a chance to hear Krsna's holy name, for simply by hearing Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, one becomes purified (ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]). Therefore our Krsna consciousness movement is chiefly engaged in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra all over the world.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.18.11

The Krsna consciousness movement is spreading all over the world due to the chanting of the holy name

The Krsna consciousness movement is being distributed all over the world through the chanting of the holy name:

[Lord Caitanya]: "If the fruits are distributed all over the world, My reputation as a pious man will be known everywhere, and thus all people will glorify My name with great pleasure."

This prediction of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu is now actually coming to pass. The Krsna consciousness movement is being distributed all over the world through the chanting of the

holy name of the Lord, the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, and people who are leading confused, chaotic lives are now feeling transcendental happiness. They are finding peace in sankirtana, and therefore they are acknowledging the supreme benefit of this movement. This is the blessing of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. His prediction is now factually being fulfilled, and those who are sober and conscientious are appreciating the value of this great movement.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 9.40

Thousands of people are attracted to the Hare Krsna movement by the maha–mantra: The Krsna consciousness movement is especially meant for creating an atmosphere in which people can take to the chanting of the Hare Krsna 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 sankirtana parties all over the world, and they are experiencing that even in the remotest part of the world, where there is no knowledge of Krsna, the Hare Krsna maha–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 Krsna maha–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.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 7

The Hare Krsna movement began and developed simply by chanting Hare Krsna: Srila Prabhupada: ... I started my movement simply by chanting Hare Krsna. I chanted in New York in a place called Tompkins Square Park, and soon people began to come to me. In this way, the Krsna consciousness movement gradually developed. Many accepted, and many did not accept. Those who are fortunate have accepted.

~The Science of Self–Realization

Many people are attracted to ISKCON simply by chanting: By the grace of Lord Caitanya, this movement is already introduced in the Western countries, beginning from New York. Our sankirtana movement was first introduced in New York in 1966. At that time I came and began to chant this Hare Krsna mantra in Tompkins Square. I was chanting there for three hours with a small mrdanga (drum), and

these American boys assembled and gradually joined, and so it is increasing... We are attracting many students simply by chanting, and they are understanding the entire philosophy and becoming purified. This Society's movement started only four years ago, in 1966, and we have so many branches already. The American boys and girls are taking it very seriously, and they are happy. Ask any one of them. Ceto-darpana-marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]. They are cleansing the dirty things from the heart, simply by chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Other instructions

The Krsna consciousness movement will increase only if its leaders remain firmly Krsna conscious by following the regulative principles and regularly chanting the Hare Krsna mantra:

The Lord says in Bhagavad-gita (4.7):

yada yada hi dharmasya
glanir bhavati bharata
abhyutthanam adharmasya
tadatmanam srijamy aham

"Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion—at that time I descend Myself."

In this age, at the present moment, there are inordinate discrepancies in the discharge of human duties. Human life is meant for God realization, but unfortunately the materialistic civilization is stressing only the senses of the body, not understanding the living force within the body. As clearly stated in Bhagavad-gita (dehino 'smin yatha dehe [Bg. 2.13]), within the body is the body's proprietor, the living force, which is more important. But human society has become so fallen that instead of understanding the living force within the body, people have become busy with external things. This is a discrepancy in human duties. Therefore Krsna has taken birth or taken shelter within the womb of the Krsna consciousness movement. Men of Kamsa's class, therefore, are very much afraid and are busy trying to stop this movement, especially in the Western countries. One politician has remarked that the Krsna consciousness movement is spreading like an epidemic and that if not checked immediately, within ten years it may capture governmental power. There is, of course, such potency in the Krsna consciousness movement. As stated by authorities (Sri

Caitanya-caritamṛta Ādi-līlā 17.22), kali-kāle nama-rūpa kṛṣṇa-avatāra: in this age, Kṛṣṇa has appeared in the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is spreading like wildfire all over the world, and it will go on doing so. Men who are like Kamsa are very much afraid of the movement's progress and acceptance by the younger generation, but as Kṛṣṇa could not be killed by Kamsa, this movement cannot be checked by men of Kamsa's class. The movement will go on increasing more and more, provided the leaders of the movement remain firmly Kṛṣṇa conscious by following the regulative principles and the primary activities of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra regularly.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.2.20

Dealings with the material world for spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are spiritual, as long as one daily chants sixteen rounds of the maha-mantra: In our preaching work, we deal with so much property and money and so many books bought and sold, but because these dealings all pertain to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, they should never be considered material. That one is absorbed in thoughts of such management does not mean that he is outside of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If one rigidly observes the regulative principle of chanting sixteen rounds of the maha-mantra every day, his dealings with the material world for the sake of spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are not different from the spiritual cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.16.3

By chanting sixteen rounds of the maha-mantra (etc.) one gets the spiritual strength with which to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world:
[Chand Kazi to the devotees of Lord Caitanya]:
"For so long you did not follow the regulative principles of the Hindu religion, but now you are following them with great enthusiasm. May I know by whose strength you are doing so?"

It appears that from the aggression of Vaktiyara Khiliji in Bengal until the time of Chand Kazi, Hindus, or the followers of the Vedic principles, were greatly suppressed. Like the Hindus in present-day Pakistan, practically no one could execute the Hindu religious principles freely. Chand Kazi referred to this condition of Hindu society. Formerly the Hindus had not been straightforward in executing their Hindu principles, but now they were freely chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra. Therefore it must have been by the strength of someone else that they were so daring.

Actually, that was the fact. Although the members of the so-called Hindu society had followed the social customs and formulas, they had practically forgotten to execute their religious principles strictly. But with the presence of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu they actually began following the regulative principles according to His order. That order is still existing, and anywhere and everywhere, in all parts of the world, one can execute it. That order is to become a spiritual master under the direction of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by following the regulative principles, chanting daily at least sixteen rounds of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, and preaching the cult of Krsna consciousness all over the world. If we adhere to the order of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, we shall get spiritual strength without a doubt, and we shall be free to preach this cult of the Hare Krsna movement and not be hampered by anyone.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 17.126

Persecution of ISKCON's public chanting of the holy name proves that the movement is pure and genuine:

[Chand Kazi to some devotees of Lord Caitanya]:

"No one should perform sankirtana on the streets of the city. Today I am excusing the offense and returning home."

Such orders stopping sankirtana in the streets of the world's great cities have been imposed upon members of the Hare Krsna movement. We have hundreds of centers all over the world, and we have been specifically persecuted in Australia. In most cities of the Western world we have been arrested many times by the police, but we are nevertheless executing the order of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by chanting on the streets of all the important cities, like New York, London, Chicago, Sydney, Melbourne, Paris and Hamburg. We must remember that such incidents took place in the past, five hundred years ago, and the fact that they are still going on indicates that our sankirtana movement is really authorized, for if sankirtana were an insignificant material affair, demons would not object to it. The demons of the time tried to obstruct the sankirtana movement started by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Similar demons are trying to obstruct the sankirtana movement we are executing all over the world, and this proves that our sankirtana movement is still pure and genuine, following in the footsteps of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 17.127

At ISKCON's world center in Mayapur, there should be constant chanting of the holy

names of the Lord:

When the sankirtana movement thus started, no one in Navadvipa could hear any other sound than the words "Hari! Hari!" and the beating of the mrdanga and clashing of hand bells.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness now has its world center in Navadvipa, Mayapur. The managers of this center should see that twenty-four hours a day there is chanting of the holy names of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, with the addition of haraye namah, krsna yadavaya namah, for this song was a favorite of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. But all such sankirtana must be preceded by the chanting of the holy names of the five tattvas—sri—krsna—caitanya prabhu nityananda sri—advaita gadadhara srivasadi—gaura—bhakta—vrnda. We are already accustomed to chant these two mantras—sri—krsna—caitanya prabhu nityananda sri—advaita gadadhara srivasadi—gaura—bhakta—vrnda and Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Now, after these, the other two lines—namely, haraye namah, krsna yadavaya namah/ gopala govinda rama sri—madhusudana—should be added, especially in Mayapur. Chanting of these six lines should go on so perfectly well that no one there hears any other vibration than the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. That will make the center spiritually all—perfect.

~Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Adi—lila 17.123

The members of ISKCON should perform nama—sankirtana in Mayapur during Gaura—purnima to attract the attention of important people in India:

The members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness should go to India during the birthday ceremony of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu at Mayapur and perform sankirtana congregationally. This will attract the attention of all the important personalities in India, just as the beauty, bodily luster and sankirtana performance by the associates of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu attracted the attention of Maharaja Prataparudra.

~Sri Caitanya—caritamrta Madhya—lila 11.96

2.

Qualifications and Disqualifications for Understanding and Chanting the Holy Name

Only the devotee can understand the transcendental nature of Krsna's name:

[The demigods to Lord Krsna in the womb of Devaki]:

O Lord, Your transcendental name and form are not ascertained by those who merely speculate on the path of imagination. Your name, form and attributes can be ascertained only through devotional service.

As stated in the Padma Purana:

atah sri-krsna-namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

[BRS. atah sri-krsna-namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

"No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Sri Krsna through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him." (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.2.234)1.2.234]

"One cannot understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Sri Krsna through one's materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him."

Since Krsna and His transcendental name, form and activities are all of a transcendental nature, ordinary persons or those who are only slightly advanced cannot understand them... Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau sveyam eva sphuraty adah: Krsna's transcendental name, form, attributes and activities can be revealed only when one engages in His service in full consciousness. This confirms Krsna's own words in Bhagavad-gita (18.55):

bhaktya mam abhijanati

yavan yas casmi tattvatah
tato mam tattvato jnatva
visate tad—anantaram

"One can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of the Supreme Lord by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God."

Only by sevonmukha, by engaging oneself in the Lord's service, can one realize the name, form and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead...

The Lord is also known as Giridhari or Girivara—dhari. Because Krsna, for the sake of His devotees, lifted Govardhana Hill, the devotees appreciate the Lord's inconceivable strength; but nondevotees, in spite of directly perceiving the Lord's inconceivable strength and power, regard the Lord's activities as fictitious. This is the difference between a devotee and a nondevotee. Nondevotees cannot give any nomenclature for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, yet the Lord is known as Syamasundara and Giridhari. Similarly, the Lord is known as Devaki—nandana and Yasoda—nandana because He accepted the role of son for mother Devaki and mother Yasoda, and He is known as Gopala because He enjoyed the sport of maintaining the cows and calves. Therefore, although He has no mundane name, He is addressed by devotees as Devaki—nandana, Yasoda—nandana, Gopala and Syamasundara. These are all transcendental names that only devotees can appreciate and nondevotees cannot.

—Srimad—Bhagavatam 10.2.36

Although not advanced in purity or Vedic education, the young people of the West could accept the chanting of the holy name because they were not offensive:

[Lord Caitanya to a brahmana]:

"I have brought a heavy load to sell in this city. To take it back again is a very difficult job; therefore if I get but a fraction of the price, I shall sell it here in this city of Kasi."

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was selling the transcendental holy name of the Lord. However, Kasi was a city of Mayavadis (impersonalists), and such people will never chant the holy names of the Hare Krsna maha—mantra. Consequently Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was feeling disappointed. How could He teach the Mayavadis the importance of chanting the Hare Krsna maha—mantra? The attraction for chanting the holy name of the Lord belongs absolutely to pure devotees, and there was no possibility of finding pure devotees at Kasi.

Consequently Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's commodity was certainly very heavy. The Lord therefore suggested that even though there were no pure devotees in Kasi, if someone was a little inclined to chant the Hare Krsna mantra, He would deliver this big load, although the proper price was not paid.

Actually we experienced this when we came to preach the Hare Krsna movement in the West. When we came to New York in 1965, we never expected that the Hare Krsna maha-mantra would be accepted in this country. Nonetheless, we invited people to our storefront to join in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, and the Lord's holy name is so attractive that simply by coming to our storefront in New York, fortunate young people became Krsna conscious. Although this mission was started with insignificant capital, it is now going nicely. The spreading of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra in the West has become successful because the young people were not offenders. The youths who joined this movement were not very advanced as far as purity was concerned, nor were they very well educated in Vedic knowledge, but because they were not offenders, they could accept the importance of the Hare Krsna movement. We are now very happy to see that this movement is advancing more and more in the Western countries. We therefore conclude that the so-called mlecchas and yavanas of the Western countries are more purified than offensive Mayavadis or atheistic impersonalists.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 17.145

The taste of the Hare Krsna mantra can be tasted by one who is free from material hankering:

nivrtta-tarsair upagiyamanad
bhavausadhac chrotra-mano-'bhiramat
ka uttamasloka-gunanuvadat
puman virajyeta vina pasughnat
(S.B. 10.1.4)

Pariksit Maharaja said to the great sage Sukadeva Gosvami, "The discourses on Srimad-Bhagavatam that you are giving me are not ordinary. These Bhagavata discourses are relishable for persons who are nivrtta-trsna, free from hankering." Everyone in this material world is hankering for enjoyment, but one who is free from this hankering can taste how relishable the Bhagavatam is. The word bhagavata refers to anything in relationship to Bhagavan, the Supreme Lord, and the Hare Krsna mantra is also bhagavata. Thus Pariksit Maharaja said that the taste of the Bhagavata can be relished by one who is

free from hankering to satisfy material desires.

~Teachings of Queen Kunti

We can understand the name of God as much as our spiritual understanding is developed:
Srila Prabhupada: Because God is absolute, His name, His form, and His qualities are also absolute, and they are nondifferent from Him...

Father Emmanuel: But our understanding of the name of God is limited.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, we are limited, but God is unlimited. And because He is unlimited, or absolute, He has unlimited names, each of which is God. We can understand His names as much as our spiritual understanding is developed.

~The Science of Self-Realization

By chanting, one comes to understand Krsna (and His holy name):

"Therefore material senses cannot appreciate Krsna's holy name, form, qualities and pastimes. When a conditioned soul is awakened to Krsna consciousness and renders service by using his tongue to chant the Lord's holy name and taste the remnants of the Lord's food, the tongue is purified, and one gradually comes to understand who Krsna really is."

~Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.2.234)

~[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 17.136]

The holy name can be heard by those who have developed love of Godhead:

[The maha-mantra] is not a material sound like the sounds we hear on the radio. It is a spiritual sound that comes from the spiritual world. Even in the material world we can release a sound from one place, and it can be heard thousands of miles away. A spiritual sound can be released from many trillions of miles away, and it can be heard, provided that one has the machine to capture it. That machine is bhagavat-prema. Those who have developed love of Godhead can hear it.

~Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

One cannot understand the glories of the holy name simply by logic and argument:

[Haridasa thakura to an assembly of scholars]:

"One cannot understand the glories of the holy name simply by logic and argument..."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Antya-līla 3.206

The transcendental nature of the holy name cannot be understood by logic and argument, but by regular chanting with faith:

The holy name of the Lord—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—is a transcendental vibration because it comes from the transcendental platform, the supreme abode of Kṛṣṇa. Because there is no difference between Kṛṣṇa and His name, the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is as pure, perfect and liberated as Kṛṣṇa Himself. Academic scholars have no entrance by means of logic and other argument into the understanding of the transcendental nature of the holy name of God. The single path in understanding the transcendental nature of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare is the chanting of these names with faith and adherence.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Empiricists who reject the parampara system cannot understand the transcendental activities of the holy name:

The principles of the parampara system were strictly honored in the ages of Satya-yuga, Treta-yuga and Dvāpara-yuga, but in the present age, Kali-yuga, people neglect the importance of this system of srauta-parampara, or receiving knowledge by disciplic succession. In this age, people are prepared to argue that they can understand that which is beyond their limited knowledge and perception through so-called scientific observations and experiments, not knowing that actual truth comes down to man from authorities. This argumentative attitude is against the Vedic principles, and it is very difficult for one who adopts it to understand that the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is as good as Kṛṣṇa Himself... although materialists who are addicted to experimental knowledge and the so-called "scientific method" cannot place their faith in the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra, it is a fact that simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra offenselessly one can be freed from all subtle and gross material conditions. The spiritual world is called Vaikuntha, which means "without anxiety." In the material world everything is full of anxiety (kuntha), whereas in the spiritual world (Vaikuntha) everything is free from anxiety. Therefore those who are afflicted by a combination of anxieties cannot understand the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, which is free from all anxiety...

A name which represents an object of this material world may be subjected to arguments

and experimental knowledge, but in the absolute world a name and its owner, fame and the famous, are identical, and similarly the qualities, pastimes and everything else pertaining to the Absolute are also absolute.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adī-līla 7.74

Being ignorant about and offensive to Kṛṣṇa, Mayavadis cannot understand or chant the personal names of the Lord:

The brahmana's mind was already purified by seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He therefore went to Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu and described what took place before the Mayavadi sannyasi Prakāśananda. Hearing this, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu mildly smiled. The brahmana then spoke again to the Lord. The brahmana said, "As soon as I uttered Your name before him, he immediately confirmed the fact that he knew Your name. While finding fault with You, he uttered Your name three times, saying, 'Caitanya, Caitanya, Caitanya.' Although he spoke Your name three times, he did not utter the name of Kṛṣṇa. Because he uttered Your name in contempt, I was very much aggrieved. Why could Prakāśananda not utter the names of Kṛṣṇa and Hari? He chanted the name Caitanya thrice. As far as I am concerned, simply by seeing You I am moved to chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa and Hari." Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied, "Mayavadi impersonalists are great offenders unto Lord Kṛṣṇa; therefore they simply utter the words Brahman, atma and caitanya. The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is not manifest in their mouths because they are offenders unto Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is identical with His holy name ... Because the Mayavadis are great offenders and atheistic philosophers, the holy name of Kṛṣṇa does not come from their mouths."

Prakāśananda Sarasvatī vilified and blasphemed Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Words like brahma, caitanya, atma, paramātmā, jagadīśa, īśvara, virāt, vibhu, bhūman, viśvarūpa and vyāpaka all indirectly indicate Kṛṣṇa. However, the chanter of these names is not actually attracted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental pastimes. One may get a little light from these names, but one cannot understand that the holy name of the Lord is identical with the Lord. One considers the Lord's names material due to a poor fund of knowledge. Mayavadi philosophers and the pañcopasakas cannot in the least understand the existence of the spiritual world and the blissful variegatedness there. They cannot understand the Absolute Truth and its spiritual varieties—name, form, qualities and pastimes. Consequently they conclude that Kṛṣṇa's transcendental activities are māyā. Due to this, one has to directly cultivate knowledge about the holy name of the Lord. Mayavadi philosophers do not know this fact, and therefore they commit great offenses... Mayavadis believe that the Absolute Truth is ultimately impersonal. When an incarnation of God or

God Himself comes, they think He is covered by maya. In other words, Mayavadi impersonalists think that the Lord's form is also a product of this material world. Due to a poor fund of knowledge, they cannot understand that Krsna has no body separate from Himself. His body and Himself are both the same Absolute Truth. Not having perfect knowledge of Krsna, such impersonalists certainly commit offenses at His lotus feet. Therefore they do not utter the original name of the Absolute Truth, Krsna. In their impersonal way, they utter the name of impersonal Brahman, spirit soul. In other words, they indulge in indirect indications of the Absolute Truth. Even if they happen to utter the name of Govinda, Krsna or Madhava, they still cannot understand that these names are as good as Govinda, Krsna or Madhava the person. Because they are ultimately impersonalists, their uttering of the personal name has no potency. Actually they do not believe in Krsna but consider all these names to be material vibrations. Not being able to appreciate the holy name of the Lord, they simply utter indirect names like Brahman, atma and caitanya.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 17.123-30, 132, 143

Because the Mayavadis cannot understand the transcendental nature of the holy name, they cannot utter it:

According to the material conception, there is duality between the name, form, quality, emotions and activities of a person and the person himself, but as far as the transcendental vibration is concerned, there is no such limitation, for it descends from the spiritual world. In the spiritual world there is no difference between the name of the person and the quality of the person. Of course in the material world there is a difference. Because the Mayavadi philosophers cannot understand this, they cannot utter the transcendental vibration.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Lord Caitanya was disappointed because the Mayavadis of Kasi could not accept the chanting of the holy name:

[Lord Caitanya to a brahmana]:

"Because the Mayavadis are great offenders and atheistic philosophers, the holy name of Krsna does not come from their mouths. I have come here to sell My emotional ecstatic sentiments in this city of Kasi, but I cannot find any customers. If they are not sold, I must take them back home. I have brought a heavy load to sell in this city. To take it back again is a very difficult job; therefore if I get but a fraction of the price, I shall sell it here in this city of Kasi."

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was selling the transcendental holy name of the Lord. However, Kasi was a city of Mayavadis (impersonalists), and such people will never chant the holy names of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Consequently Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was feeling disappointed. How could He teach the Mayavadis the importance of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra? The attraction for chanting the holy name of the Lord belongs absolutely to pure devotees, and there was no possibility of finding pure devotees at Kasi. Consequently Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's commodity was certainly very heavy. The Lord therefore suggested that even though there were no pure devotees in Kasi, if someone was a little inclined to chant the Hare Krsna mantra, He would deliver this big load, although the proper price was not paid.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 17.143-45

One can mentally respect, but should avoid the association of, prakṛta-sahajiyas who chant the Hare Krsna mantra:

We can see from practical experience that there are different types of Vaisnavas. The prakṛta-sahajiyas generally chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, yet they are attached to women, money and intoxication. Although such persons may chant the holy name of the Lord, they are not yet properly purified. Such people should be respected within one's mind, but their association should be avoided.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

Sometimes yogis and jnanis chant the maha-mantra, but without proper understanding: Impersonal speculation, monism (merging into the existence of the Supreme), speculative knowledge, mystical yoga and meditation are all compared to grains of sand. They simply cause irritation to the heart. No one can satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead by such activities, nor do we give the Lord a chance to sit in our hearts peacefully. Rather, the Lord is simply disturbed by them. Sometimes yogis and jnanis in the beginning take to the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra as a way to begin their various practices. However, when they falsely think that they have attained release from the bondage of material existence, they give up chanting. They do not consider that the ultimate goal is the form of the Lord or the name of the Lord. Such unfortunate creatures are never favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for they do not know what devotional service is.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 12.135

3.

Nama–diksa, Brahminical Initiation, and the Holy Name

Sincere eagerness to chant the holy name is the main qualification to be initiated according to the pancaratrika process:

The following injunction is given in the Hari–bhakti–vilasa (1.194):

tantrikesu ca mant
diksayam yositam api
sadhvinam adhikaro 'sti
sudradinam ca sad–dhiyam

"Sudras and women who are chaste and sincerely interested in understanding the Absolute Truth are qualified to be initiated with the pancaratrika–mantras."

This is also confirmed in Bhagavad–gita (9.32):

mam hi partha vyapasr
ye 'pi syuh papa–yonayah
striyo vaisyas tatha sudras
te 'pi yanti param gatim

"O son of Prtha, those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower birth–women, vaisyas [merchants], as well as sudras [workers]–can approach the supreme destination."

If one actually wants to serve Krsna, it doesn't maner whether one is a sudra, vaisya, or even a woman. If one is sincerely eager to chant the Hare Krsna mantra or diksa–mantra, he is qualified to be initiated according to the pancaratrika process. According to Vedic principles, only a brahmana who is fully engaged in his occupational duties can be initiated. Sudras and women are not admitted to a vaidika initiation. Unless one is fit according to the estimation of the spiritual master, one cannot accept a mantra from the pancaratrika–vidhi or the vaidika–vidhi. When one is fit to accept the mantra, he is initiated by the pancaratrika–vidhi or the vaidika–vidhi. In any case, the result is the same.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 24.331

When the disciple has become competent and purified by chanting, the spiritual master offers him the sacred thread:

Usually, initiation depends on the bona fide spiritual master, who directs the disciple. If he sees that a disciple has become competent and purified by the process of chanting, he offers the sacred thread to the disciple... By the process of initiation by the spiritual master, a person is accepted as a brahmana in his purified state of chanting the holy name of the Lord.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.33.6

Even without recitation of kama-gayatri, the chanting of Hare Krsna is sufficient to elevate one to the highest spiritual platform:

Lord Krsna is worshiped by the Gayatri mantra, and the specific mantra by which He is worshiped is called kama-gayatri. Vedic literatures explain that that sound vibration which can elevate one from mental concoction is called gayatri. The kama-gayatri mantra is composed of 24 ½ syllables thus:

klim kama-devaya vidmahe
puspa-banaya dhimahi
tan no 'nangah pracodayat

This kama-gayatri is received from the spiritual master when the disciple is advanced in chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In other words, this kama-gayatri mantra and samskara, or reformation of a perfect brahmana, are offered by the spiritual master when he sees that his disciple is advanced in spiritual knowledge. Even then, the kama-gayatri is not uttered under certain circumstances. In any case the chanting of Hare Krsna is sufficient to elevate one to the highest spiritual platform.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Haridasa thakura formally initiated Maya by asking her to chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra:

After speaking in this way, Maya worshiped the lotus feet of Haridasa thakura, who initiated her by saying, "Just perform chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra."

Now even Maya wanted to be favored by Haridasa thakura. Therefore Haridasa thakura formally initiated her by asking her to chant the Hare Krsna maha–mantra.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 3.259

When one situated on the platform of love of God chants the holy name loudly, everyone becomes initiated in the chanting of the holy name:

When a devotee is perfectly qualified in chanting the transcendental vibration of the holy name, he is quite fit to become a spiritual master and to deliver all the people of the world. The chanting of the holy name is so powerful that it gradually establishes its supremacy above everything in the world. The devotee who chants it becomes transcendently situated in ecstasy and sometimes laughs, cries and dances in his ecstasy. Sometimes the unintelligent put hindrances in the path of chanting this maha–mantra, but one who is situated on the platform of love of Godhead chants the holy name loudly for all concerned. As a result, everyone becomes initiated in the chanting of the holy names–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

4.

Relative Importance of Chanting and Initiation

The chanting of the holy name does not depend upon initiation:

[Lord Caitanya to Satyaraja]:

"One does not have to undergo initiation or execute the activities required before initiation. One simply has to vibrate the holy name with his lips. Thus even a man in the lowest class [candala] can be delivered."

In the Ramarcana–candrika it is stated:

vinaiva diksam viprendra
purascaryam vinaiva hi
vinaiva nyasa–vidhina
japa–matrena siddhida

In other words, the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra is so powerful that it does not depend on official initiation...

The offenseless chanting of the holy name does not depend on the initiation process. Although initiation may depend on purascarya or purascarana, the actual chanting of the holy name does not depend on purascarya-vidhi, or the regulative principles. If one chants the holy name once without committing an offense, he attains all success... Simply by chanting the holy name, one is immediately delivered.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 15.108

The holy name is self-sufficient:

"...Simply by touching the holy name with one's tongue, immediate effects are produced. Chanting the holy name does not depend on initiation, pious activities or the purascarya regulative principles generally observed before initiation. The holy name does not wait for all these activities. It is self-sufficient."

~Padyavali (29), by Rupa Gosvami

~[cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 15.110]

Whether or not one is properly initiated, if he chants the holy name offenselessly, he is a pure Vaisnava and must be respected:

[Lord Caitanya to Satyaraja]:

Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu then finally advised, "One who is chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is understood to be a Vaisnava; therefore you should offer all respects to him."

Srila Bhaktivinoda thakura comments that serving Vaisnavas is most important for householders. Whether a Vaisnava is properly initiated or not is not a subject for consideration. One may be initiated and yet contaminated by the Mayavada philosophy, but a person who chants the holy name of the Lord offenselessly will not be so contaminated. A properly initiated Vaisnava may be imperfect, but one who chants the holy name of the Lord offenselessly is all-perfect. Although he may apparently be a neophyte, he still has to be considered a pure unalloyed Vaisnava. It is the duty of the householder to offer respects to such an unalloyed Vaisnava. This is Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu's instruction.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya-līla 15.111

Although chanting the holy name is sufficient for perfection, one should receive brahminical initiation for purification:

If one is interested in the process of arcana, one must positively take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master and learn the process from him. There are many books for arcana, especially Narada–pancaratra. In this age, the Pancaratra system is particularly recommended for arcana, Deity worship. There are two systems of arcana—the bhagavata system and pancaratrici system. In the Srimad–Bhagavatam there is no recommendation of pancaratrici worship because in this Kali–yuga, even without Deity worship, everything can be perfectly performed simply through hearing, chanting, remembering and worship of the lotus feet of the Lord... The special purpose of Deity worship is to keep oneself always pure and clean...

Deity worship should be continued along with hearing and chanting... By chanting the holy name of the Lord, one can reach the platform of love of Godhead. One might ask, then what is the necessity of being initiated? The answer is that even though the chanting of the holy name is sufficient to enable one to progress in spiritual life to the standard of love of Godhead, one is nonetheless susceptible to contamination because of possessing a material body. Consequently, special stress is given to the arcana–vidhi. One should therefore regularly take advantage of both the bhagavata process and pancaratrici process.

–Srimad–Bhagavatam 7.5.23–24

Although chanting of the holy name is complete in itself, initiation and Deity worship are still necessary for purification:

To chant the holy name of the Lord, one need not depend upon other paraphernalia, for one can immediately get all the desired results of connecting or linking with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It may therefore be questioned why there is a necessity for initiation or further spiritual activities in devotional service for one who engages in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The answer is that although it is correct that one who fully engages in chanting the holy name need not depend upon the process of initiation, generally a devotee is addicted to many abominable material habits due to material contamination from his previous life. In order to get quick relief from all these contaminations, it is required that one engage in the worship of the Lord in the temple. The worship of the Deity in the temple is essential to reduce one's restlessness due to the contaminations of conditional life. Thus Narada, in his Pancaratrici vidhi, and other great sages have sometimes stressed that since every conditioned soul has a bodily concept of life aimed at sense enjoyment, to restrict this sense enjoyment the rules and regulations for

worshiping the Deity in the temple are essential. Srila Rupa Gosvami has described that the holy name of the Lord can be chanted by liberated souls, but almost all the souls we have to initiate are conditioned. It is advised that one chant the holy name of the Lord without offenses and according to the regulative principles, yet due to their past bad habits they violate these rules and regulations. Thus the regulative principles for worship of the Deity are also simultaneously essential.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.76

5.

Relative Importance of Chanting and Deity Worship

In Kali-yuga, chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is more powerful than Deity worship: As it is said in Srimad-Bhagawtam (12.3.52):

krte yad dhyayato vi
tretayam yajato makhaih
dvapare paricaryayam
kalau tad dhari-kirtanat

"Whatever result one obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Visnu, in Treta-yuga by performing sacrifices and in Dvapara-yuga by serving the Lord's lotus feet one can also obtain in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra."

In Satya-yuga, every person was spiritually advanced, and there was no envy between great personalities. Gradually, however, because of material contamination with the advance of the ages, disrespectful dealings appeared even among brahmanas and Vaisnavas... When great saintly persons saw this contamination, they introduced worship of the Deity in the temple. This began in Treta-yuga and was especially prominent in Dvapara-yuga (dvapare paricaryayam). But in Kali-yuga, worship of the Deity is being neglected. Therefore chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is more powerful than Deity worship. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu set a practical example in that He did not establish any temples or Deities, but He profusely introduced the sankirtana movement.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.14.39

Although chanting of the holy name is complete in itself, initiation and Deity worship are still necessary for purification:

To chant the holy name of the Lord, one need not depend upon other paraphernalia, for one can immediately get all the desired results of connecting or linking with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It may therefore be questioned why there is a necessity for initiation or further spiritual activities in devotional service for one who engages in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The answer is that although it is correct that one who fully engages in chanting the holy name need not depend upon the process of initiation, generally a devotee is addicted to many abominable material habits due to material contamination from his previous life. In order to get quick relief from all these contaminations, it is required that one engage in the worship of the Lord in the temple. The worship of the Deity in the temple is essential to reduce one's restlessness due to the contaminations of conditional life. Thus Narada, in his pancaratrici vidhi, and other great sages have sometimes stressed that since every conditioned soul has a bodily concept of life aimed at sense enjoyment, to restrict this sense enjoyment the rules and regulations for worshipping the Deity in the temple are essential. Srila Rupa Gosvami has described that the holy name of the Lord can be chanted by liberated souls, but almost all the souls we have to initiate are conditioned. It is advised that one chant the holy name of the Lord without offenses and according to the regulative principles, yet due to their past bad habits they violate these rules and regulations. Thus the regulative principles for worship of the Deity are also simultaneously essential.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Adi-līla 7.76

Sankirtana, chanting of the holy name, must go hand in hand with Deity worship:

Especially in this age of Kali, sankirtana alone is sufficient. If the members of our temples in the different parts of the world simply continue sankirtana before the Deity, especially before Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, they will remain perfect. There is no need of any other performances. Nevertheless, to keep oneself clean in habits and mind, Deity worship and other regulative principles are required. Srila Jiva Gosvami says that although sankirtana is sufficient for the perfection of life, the arcana, or worship of the Deity in the temple, must continue in order that the devotees may stay clean and pure. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura therefore recommended that one follow both processes simultaneously. We strictly follow his principle of performing Deity worship and sankirtana along parallel lines. This we should continue.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.3.25

6.

The Interrelationship Between Chanting and Studying Scripture

By becoming purified by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, the general mass of people can come to understand Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam:

Saintly people like Jada Bharata do not speak ordinary words. Whatever they say is approved by great yogis and those advanced in spiritual life. That is the difference between ordinary people and saintly people. The listener must also be advanced to understand the words of such exalted, spiritually advanced people as Jada Bharata. Bhagavad-gita was spoken to Arjuna, not to others. Lord Krsna especially selected Arjuna for instruction in spiritual knowledge because Arjuna happened to be a great devotee and confidential friend. Similarly, great personalities also speak to the advanced, not to sudras, vaisyas, women or unintelligent men. Sometimes it is very risky to give great philosophical instructions to ordinary people, but Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, for the benefit of the fallen souls of Kali-yuga, has given us a very nice instrument, the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra. The general mass of people, although sudras and less, can be purified by chanting this Hare Krsna mantra. Then they can understand the exalted philosophical statements of Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam. Our Krsna consciousness movement has therefore adopted the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra for the general masses. When people gradually become purified, they are instructed in the lessons of Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam. Materialistic people like stri, sudra and dvija-bandhu cannot understand words of spiritual advancement, yet one can take to the shelter of a Vaisnava, for he knows the art of enlightening even sudras in the highly elevated subject matter spoken in Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.10.18

After one's mind becomes cleansed by chanting Hare Krsna, one advances and studies the Vedic literature:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu introduced the congregational chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra to give everyone a chance to hear Krsna's holy name, for simply by hearing Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare, one

becomes purified (ceto–darpana–marjanam [Cc. Antya 20.12]). Therefore our Krsna consciousness movement is chiefly engaged in chanting the Hare Krsna mantra all over the world.

After one's mind becomes cleansed by chanting Hare Krsna, one gradually comes to the platform of Krsna consciousness and then reads books like Bhagavad–gita, Srimad–Bhagavatam, Caitanya–caritamrta and The Nectar of Devotion. In this way, one becomes more and more purified of material contamination.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.18.11

To become attached to the chanting of the holy name, one must read Srimad–Bhagavatam regularly and with scrutiny:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu presented Himself as a grand fool, yet He maintained that all the words that He had heard from His spiritual master strictly followed the principles stated by Vyasadeva in Srimad–Bhagavatam.

anarthopasamam saksad
bhakti–yogam adhoksaje
lokasyajanato vidvams
cakre satvata–samhitam

The material miseries of the living entity, which are superfluous to him, can be directly mitigated by the linking process of devotional service. But the mass of people do not know this, and therefore the learned Vyasadeva compiled this Vedic literature, which is in relation to the Supreme Truth.

[SB 1.7.6]

... acting on the instruction of Sri Narada, has very kindly introduced Srimad–Bhagavatam to relieve the conditioned souls from the clutches of maya. Lord Caitanya's spiritual master instructed Him, therefore, that one must read Srimad–Bhagavatam regularly and with scrutiny to gradually become attached to the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.73

To learn about the glories of the holy name, one must hear the revealed scriptures from devotees:

One has to learn about the beauty and transcendental position of the holy name of the Lord

by hearing the revealed scriptures from the mouths of devotees. Nowhere else can we hear of the sweetness of the Lord's holy name.

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Antya–lila 1.101

7.

Even If One Cannot Read or Understand the Scriptures, He Can Attain Perfection Through Chanting

Even if one is illiterate (and thus cannot read Bhagavad–gita and Srimad–Bhagavatam) he can still perfect his life simply by chanting the maha–mantra:

A realized student of Kṛṣṇa consciousness can very easily say what his next life is, what God is, what the living entity is and what his relationship with God is. His knowledge is perfect because it is coming from perfect books of knowledge such as Bhagavad–gita and Srimad–Bhagavatam.

This, then, is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is very easy, and anyone can adopt it and make his life perfect. If someone says, "I'm not educated at all, and I cannot read books," he is still not disqualified. He can still perfect his life by simply chanting the maha–mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. Kṛṣṇa has given us a tongue and two ears, and we may be surprised to know that Kṛṣṇa is realized through the ears and tongue, not through the eyes.

˚Kṛṣṇa Consciousness: The Matchless Gift

Even an illiterate or unintelligent person can be liberated by chanting the holy name: In the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, the dancing in ecstasy and the eating of the remnants of food offered to the Lord are very, very important. One may be illiterate or incapable of understanding the philosophy, but if he partakes of these three items, he will certainly be liberated without delay.

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 15.237

8.

One Chants the Holy Name Due to Devotional Service Performed in Previous Lives

Only one who has worshiped Krsna for many births can chant the holy name:

In the Padma Purana it is stated: "The chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is present only on the lips of a person who has for many births worshiped Vasudeva."

~The Nectar of Devotion

Devotional service performed in a previous life may lead one to the chanting of the holy name:

The leader of the elephants was much distressed when he was attacked by the crocodile. Although the elephant is always stronger than the crocodile, the latter is stronger than the elephant when it is in the water. And because the elephant was a great devotee of the Lord in his previous birth, he was able to chant the holy name of the Lord by dint of his past good deeds. Every living entity is always distressed in this material world because this place is such that at every step one has to meet with some kind of distress. But one who is supported by his past good deeds engages himself in the devotional service of the Lord, as confirmed in the Bhagavad-gita (7.16). Those who are supported by impious acts cannot be engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, even though they are distressed. This is also confirmed in the Bhagavad-gita (7.15). The Personality of Godhead Hari appeared at once on the back of His eternal bearer, Garuda, and delivered the elephant.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.7.15

9.

Anyone Who Chants the Holy Name Is Worthy of Respect

One should mentally honor the devotee who chants the holy name:

One should mentally honor the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Krsna...

The kanistha-adhikari is a neophyte who has received the harinama initiation from the

spiritual master and is trying to chant the holy name of Krsna. One should respect such a person within his mind as a kanistha–vaisnava.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

Any person trying to advance in Krsna consciousness by chanting the holy name should be respected by Vaisnavas:

[Rupa Gosvami]: One should mentally honor the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Krsna...

One of our friends, a famous English musician, has become attracted to chanting the holy names of Krsna, and even in his records he has several times mentioned the holy name of Krsna. At his home he offers respect to pictures of Krsna and also to the preachers of Krsna consciousness. In all regards, he has a very high estimation for Krsna's name and Krsna's activities; therefore we offer respects to him without reservation, for we are actually seeing that this gentleman is advancing gradually in Krsna consciousness. Such a person should always be shown respect. The conclusion is that anyone who is trying to advance in Krsna consciousness by regularly chanting the holy name should always be respected by Vaisnavas.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

10.

One Who Realizes that the Lord and His Name Are Identical Is a Pure Devotee and Should Be Respected

A devotee who believes that the holy name is identical with the Lord is a pure devotee: A devotee who believes that the holy name of the Lord is identical with the Lord is a pure devotee, even though he may be in the neophyte stage. By his association, others may also become Vaisnavas.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 15.106

One who has realized that the Lord and His name are identical should be very much respected:

The chanting of the holy names of Krsna is so sublime that if one chants the Hare Krsna maha–mantra offenselessly, carefully avoiding the ten offenses, he can certainly be gradually elevated to the point of understanding that there is no difference between the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself. One who has reached such an understanding should be very much respected by neophyte devotees.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

11.

Great Souls Chant the Holy Name

A real mahatma is always engaged in chanting the glories of Krsna, praising His holy name:
[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion.

The mahatma cannot be manufactured by rubber–stamping an ordinary man. His symptoms are described here: a mahatma is always engaged in chanting the glories of the Supreme Lord Krsna, the Personality of Godhead. He has no other business. He is always engaged in the glorification of the Lord. In other words, he is not an impersonalist. When the question of glorification is there, one has to glorify the Supreme Lord, praising His holy name, His eternal form, His transcendental qualities and His uncommon pastimes. One has to glorify all these things; therefore a mahatma is attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 9.14

Understanding Krsna to be the primal source of everything, great souls glorify Him by chanting Hare Krsna:

Understanding Krsna to be the primal source of everything, how do the great souls act? Krsna Himself characterizes them in this way:

satatam kirtayanto mam

yatantas ca drdha–vratah
namasyantas ca mam bhaktya
nitya–yukta upasate

"Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion." (Bg. 9.14)

That glorification is this process of bhakti–yoga, the chanting of Hare Krsna.
~Raja–vidya: The King of Knowledge

A mahatma chants the glories of the Lord via the maha–mantra:
This process of kirtana (kirtayantah), always chanting the glories of the Lord, is the beginning of mahatma. That process is simplified by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who imparted to mankind this chanting of Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/
Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.
~Raja–vidya: The King of Knowledge

Out of compassion for the people in general, saintly persons take to the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra:
Even though saintly persons have no business in political affairs, they are always compassionate upon the people in general. Thus even though they are always aloof from society, out of mercy and compassion they consider how the citizens can peacefully execute their rituals and follow the rules and regulations of varnasrama–dharma... In this age of Kali, everything is disturbed. Therefore saintly persons should take to the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, as recommended in the sastras:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatih anyatha
[Adi 17.21]
~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.14.37

12.

Our Misfortune: No Attachment for Chanting

It is our misfortune that although Krsna makes Himself so available through His name, we have no attachment for chanting:

The Krsna consciousness movement is giving all facilities so that people may come here, chant, dance, live very peacefully, take krsna–prasada, and be happy, but people will not accept it. That is called misfortune. Caitanya Mahaprabhu, portraying the people of this age, therefore said, "I am so unfortunate that I have no attachment for chanting Hare Krsna."

Lord Caitanya prayed:

namnam akari bahudha nija–sarva–saktis
tatarpita niyamitah smarane na kalah
etadrsi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi
durdaivam idrsam ihajani nanuragah
(Siksastaka 2)

Krsna, the transcendental holy name of God, has all potencies, Lord Caitanya said. Krsna has unlimited potencies, and similarly in the holy name of Krsna there are unlimited potencies. Krsna has thousands and thousands of names, of which the name Krsna is the chief, and there are no hard and fast rules for chanting... We can chant at any time and immediately get Krsna. Just see the mercy of Krsna!

Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, etadrsi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi durdaivam idrsam ihajani nanuragah: "My dear Lord, You have given me such generous facilities by which to contact You, but I am so unfortunate that I have no attachment for these things. I have attachment for so many other things, but I have no attachment for chanting Hare Krsna. This is my misfortune." Krsna is so magnanimous that He is present before us by the transcendental vibration of His name, which has all the potencies of Krsna Himself, and if we remain in contact with that name we shall get all the benefits of Krsna's benedictions. But still we are not inclined to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. This is our misfortune.
~Teachings of Queen Kunti

If one commits offenses against the holy name, he will not achieve attachment for chanting:

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"...My dear Lord, although You bestow such mercy upon the fallen conditioned souls by liberally teaching Your holy names, I am so unfortunate that I commit offenses while chanting the holy name, and therefore I do not achieve attachment for chanting."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.16

13.

To Preach Effectively, One Must Chant the Holy Name

In order to have potency to preach, the preachers of the Krsna consciousness movement should become purified by chanting the holy name:

Our preachers who are preaching Krsna consciousness all over the world should follow in the footsteps of Narada Muni and become purified by following the four principles and chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. This will make them fit to become Vaisnavas. Then, when they speak to sinful people about the teachings of this Krsna consciousness movement, people will be affected and take the instructions.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 24.252

By chanting sixteen rounds of the maha-mantra (etc.) one gets spiritual strength with which to preach Krsna consciousness all over the world:

[Chand Kazi to the devotees of Lord Caitanya]:

"For so long you did not follow the regulative principles of the Hindu religion, but now you are following them with great enthusiasm. May I know by whose strength you are doing so?"

It appears that from the aggression of Vaktiyara Khiliji in Bengal until the time of Chand Kazi, Hindus, or the followers of the Vedic principles, were greatly suppressed. Like the Hindus in present-day Pakistan, practically no one could execute the Hindu religious principles freely. Chand Kazi referred to this condition of Hindu society. Formerly the Hindus had not been straightforward in executing their Hindu principles, but now they were freely chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Therefore it must have been by the strength of someone else that they were so daring.

Actually, that was the fact. Although the members of the so-called Hindu society had followed the social customs and formulas, they had practically forgotten to execute their religious principles strictly. But with the presence of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu they actually began following the regulative principles according to His order. That order is still existing, and anywhere and everywhere, in all parts of the world, one can execute it. That order is to become a spiritual master under the direction of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by following the regulative principles, chanting daily at least sixteen rounds of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, and preaching the cult of Krsna consciousness all over the world. If we adhere to the order of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, we shall get spiritual strength without a doubt, and we shall be free to preach this cult of the Hare Krsna movement and not be hampered by anyone.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 17.126

14.

Chanting of the Holy Name Continues in the Liberated State

Even a self-realized devotee must continue to execute all scriptural injunctions, especially hearing and chanting:

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"There are two processes by which one may execute this raganuga bhakti—external and internal. When self-realized, the advanced devotee externally remains like a neophyte and executes all the sastric injunctions, especially hearing and chanting. However, within his mind, in his original purified self-realized position, he serves Krsna in Vrndavana in his particular way. He serves Krsna twenty-four hours, all day and night."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 22.156-57

An *uttama-adhikari* chants the prescribed number of rounds on japa beads:

When a neophyte devotee is actually initiated and engaged in devotional service by the orders of the spiritual master, he should be accepted immediately as a bona fide Vaisnava, and obeisances should be offered unto him. Out of many such Vaisnavas, one may be found to be very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord and strictly following all the regulative principles, chanting the prescribed number of rounds on japa beads and always

thinking of how to expand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Such a Vaiṣṇava should be accepted as an *uttama-adhikari*, a highly advanced devotee, and his association should always be sought.

~The Nectar of Instruction Text 5

Chanting a fixed number of rounds on beads is necessary for everyone, even a *paramahansa*:

Madhavendra Puri left the temple and sat down in the village marketplace, which was vacant. Sitting there, he began to chant. In the meantime, the temple priest laid the Deity down to rest.

Although Madhavendra Puri was not interested in eating and sleeping, his interest in chanting the *maha-mantra* was as acute as if he were an aspiring transcendentalist rather than a *paramahansa*. This means that even in the *paramahansa* stage, one cannot give up chanting. Haridasa thakura and the Gosvamis were all engaged in chanting a fixed number of rounds; therefore chanting on beads is very important for everyone, even though one may become a *paramahansa*. This chanting can be executed anywhere, either inside or outside the temple. Madhavendra Puri even sat down in a vacant marketplace to perform his chanting. As stated by Srinivasa Acarya in his prayers to the Gosvamis: *nama-gana-natibhih*. A *paramahansa* devotee is always engaged in chanting and rendering loving service to the Lord.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta *Madhya-lila* 4.125

The process of chanting continues even after the *bhakti-yoga* creeper reaches the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vrndavana:

The primary practice of *bhakti-yoga* will cause the seed already sowed in the 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 *Vaikunthalokas*. Above all of them is *Kṛṣṇaloka*, or Goloka Vrndavana, wherein the growing creeper enters and takes repose at the lotus feet of Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa, the original Personality of Godhead. When one reaches the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa at Goloka Vrndavana, 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.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.2.30

In Vaikuntha, the liberated souls are always chanting:

In Vaikuntha, the spiritual world, there is no anxiety. Vaikuntha means "freedom from anxiety," and in Vaikuntha the liberated souls are always dancing, chanting, and taking prasada. There are no factories, hard work, or technical institutions. There is no need for these artificial things. In Vedanta–sutra it is stated, anandamayo 'bhyasat: God is anandamaya, full of bliss and pleasure. Since we are part and parcel of God, we also possess these same qualities. So the goal of our yoga process is to join with the supreme anandamaya, Sri Krsna, to join His dance party. Then we will be actually happy.

The Path of Perfection

15.

Chanting of the Holy Name in Krsna–lila

Unable to find Krsna, and completely absorbed in Krsna consciousness, the gopis gathered on the bank of the Yamuna and chanted the names of Krsna:

All the gopis, including Radharani, began to proceed further into the forest until they could no longer see the moonlight.

When they saw that it was getting gradually darker, they stopped. Their mind and intelligence became absorbed in the thoughts of Krsna; they all imitated the activities of Krsna and His speeches. Due to their heart and soul being completely given to Krsna, they began to chant His glories, completely forgetting their family interests. In this way, all the gopis assembled together on the bank of the Yamuna, and expecting that Krsna must return to them, they simply engaged in the chanting of the glories of Sri Krsna–Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Radharani's hearing is eternally fixed on Krsna's name and fame:
Radharani's sense of hearing is eternally fixed on Krsna's name and fame.
~Teachings of Lord Caitanya

Radharani's alertness caused by hearing Krsna's name:
When Srimati Radharani first saw Krsna, She suddenly became conscious of all transcendental happiness, and the functions of Her different limbs were stunned. When Lalita, Her constant companion, whispered into Her ear the holy name of Krsna, Radharani immediately opened Her eyes wide. This is an instance of alertness caused by hearing the sound of Krsna's name.
~The Nectar of Devotion

Radharani's embarrassment in chanting the holy name of Krsna near Her superiors:
One day Srimati Radharani was churning curd for Krsna. At that time the jeweled bangles on Her hands were circling around, and She was also chanting the holy name of Krsna. All of a sudden She thought, "I am chanting the holy name of Krsna, and My superiors—My mother—in—law and My sister—in—law—may hear Me!" By this thought Radharani became overanxious. This is an instance of feeling guilty because of devotion to Krsna.
~The Nectar of Devotion

The ecstatic, devotional chanting of Radharani:
In the Krsna—karnamrta there is another statement about the chanting of Radharani. It is said by one of the associates of Radharani: "O Lord Govinda, the girl who is the daughter of King Vrsabhanu is now shedding tears, and She is anxiously chanting Your holy name—Krsna! Krsna!"
~The Nectar of Devotion

16.

Other Instructions

The Lord as nama–dheya, one whose holy name is worth chanting:

[Gajendra to Lord Visnu]:

"...All are purified simply by hearing Your holy name, which is worthy to be chanted."

The holy name of the Lord and topics in relation with Him are always worth hearing, and therefore He is called here in this verse nama–dheya, or one whose holy name is worth chanting.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.7.15

One who has taken to chanting has already received the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu: Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then glanced with mercy at the Muhammadan governor. Giving him assurance, He asked him to chant the holy names Krsna and Hari.

It is Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy that He advises everyone—even candalas, mlecchas and yavanas—to chant the holy name of the Lord. In other words, one who has taken to chanting the holy names Krsna and Hari has already received Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 16.187

A person situated in Krsna consciousness and engaged with determination in chanting Hare Krsna is to be considered to be on the transcendental position even if by accident he falls down:

[Lord Krsna to Arjuna]:

Even if one commits the most abominable actions, if he is engaged in devotional service, he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated.

In the Srimad–Bhagavatam it is stated that if a person falls down, but is wholeheartedly engaged in the transcendental service of the Supreme Lord, the Lord, being situated within his heart, beautifies him and excuses him from that abomination. The material contamination is so strong that even a yogi fully engaged in the service of the Lord sometimes becomes ensnared; but Krsna consciousness is so strong that such an occasional

falldown is at once rectified. Therefore the process of devotional service is always a success. No one should deride a devotee for some accidental falldown from the ideal path, for, as explained in the next verse, such occasional falldowns will be stopped in due course, as soon as a devotee is completely situated in Krsna consciousness.

Therefore a person who is situated in Krsna consciousness and is engaged with determination in the process of chanting Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare should be considered to be in the transcendental position, even if by chance or accident he is found to have fallen. The words *sadhur eva*, "he is saintly," are very emphatic. They are a warning to the nondevotees that because of an accidental falldown a devotee should not be derided; he should still be considered saintly even if he has fallen down accidentally. And the word *mantavyah* is still more emphatic. If one does not follow this rule, and derides a devotee for his accidental falldown, then he is disobeying the order of the Supreme Lord. The only qualification of a devotee is to be unflinchingly and exclusively engaged in devotional service.

The mark of a spot which may be seen on the moon does not become an impediment to the moonlight. Similarly, the accidental falldown of a devotee from the path of a saintly character does not make him abominable.

~Bhagavad-gita As It Is 9.30

A first-class Vaisnava is he whose very presence makes others chant the holy name (and who chants the holy name perfectly):

[Lord Caitanya to the inhabitants of Kulina-grama]:

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "A first-class Vaisnava is he whose very presence makes others chant the holy name of Krsna."

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura says that if an observer immediately remembers the holy name of Krsna upon seeing a Vaisnava, that Vaisnava should be considered a maha-bhagavata, a first-class devotee. Such a Vaisnava is always aware of his Krsna conscious duty, and he is enlightened in self-realization. He is always in love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, and this love is without adulteration. Because of this love, he is always awake to transcendental realization. Because he knows that Krsna consciousness is the basis of knowledge and action, he sees everything connected with Krsna. Such a person is able to chant the holy name of Krsna perfectly.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 16.74

Chanting the holy name of Visnu has gone on in Vedic culture since the beginning of history:

Mother Yasoda was firmly convinced of the Vedic injunctions about the importance of cows and the holy name of Visnu; therefore she took all shelter in the cows and the name of Visnu just to protect her child Krsna. She recited all the holy names of Visnu so that He might save the child. Vedic culture has taken advantage of keeping cows and chanting the holy name of Visnu since the beginning of history.

~Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

The Vedic scriptures do not authorize any kirtana other than hari-kirtana, the glorification of Krsna:

In Bengal there is competition between the Vaisnavas and the saktas. The saktas have introduced a certain type of kirtana called kali-kirtana. But in the Vedic scriptures there is no recommendation of kali-kirtana. Kirtana means hari-kirtana. One cannot say, "Oh, you are Vaisnava. You can perform hari-kirtana. I shall perform siva-kirtana or devi-kirtana or ganesa-kirtana." No. The Vedic scriptures do not authorize any kirtana other than hari-kirtana. Kirtana means hari-kirtana, the glorification of Krsna.

~The Science of Self-Realization

The "Hari Haraye Namah" prayer is another way of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra: There were four people accompanying Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and these were Candrasekhara, Paramananda Puri, Tapana Misra and Sanatana Gosvami. They were all chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra in the following way. They chanted, "Haraye namah, krsna yadavaya namah/ gopala govinda rama sri-madhusudana."

This is another way of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. The meaning is: "I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna. He is the descendant of the Yadu family. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Gopala, Govinda, Rama and Sri Madhusudana."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.63-64

In the spiritual atmosphere of Vrndavana, one will automatically chant the holy name: In India there are hundreds of sacred places of pilgrimage, of which Prayaga, Hardwar, Vrndavana and Ramesvaram are considered principal. After leaving his home, which was full of politics and diplomacy, Vidura wanted to purify himself by traveling to all the sacred places, which are so situated that anyone who goes there automatically becomes purified. This is especially true in Vrndavana; any person may go there, and even if he is sinful he will at once contact an atmosphere of spiritual life and will automatically chant the names of Krsna and Radha. That we have actually seen and experienced.

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.20.4

The Vrndavana scheme—execute Krsna consciousness by chanting Hare Krsna: We should especially establish this New Vrndavana because Lord Caitanya recommended, aradhyo bhagavan vrajesa—tanayas tad—dhama vrndavanam: "Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, in the Vrndavana—dhama of Vrajabhumi, is the supreme worshipable Deity, and His place Vrndavana is also worshipable." The Western boys and girls are taking to Krsna consciousness, and they should have a place like Vrndavana. Swami Kirtanananda, who went to Vrndavana with me two years ago, knows what Vrndavana is like, so I have instructed him to construct at least seven temples. In Vrndavana, there are five thousand temples of Radha—Krsna, but the most important temples are seven, established by the Gosvamis. Our program is to live in New Vrndavana, depend on agriculture and cows as an economic solution, and peacefully execute Krsna consciousness, chant Hare Krsna—that is the Vrndavana scheme.

~The Science of Self-Realization

Chanting of the holy name as muni—vrata, the vow of silence:

[Lord Siva to the sons of King Pracinabarhi]:

My dear princes, in the form of a prayer I have delineated the yoga system of chanting the holy name. All of you should take this important stotra within your minds and promise to keep it in order to become great sages. By acting silently like a great sage and by giving attention and reverence, you should practice this method.

The topmost yogi is he who constantly thinks of Krsna within himself and chants the glories of the Lord... The word muni—vratah is significant in this regard because those who are interested in advancing in spiritual life must be silent. Silence means talking only of krsna—katha. This is the silence of Maharaja Ambarisa:

sa vai manah krsna–padaravindayor
vacamsi vaikuntha–gunanuvarnane

"King Ambarisa always fixed his mind on the lotus feet of the Lord and talked of Him only." (S.B. 9.4.19)

We should also take this opportunity in life to become as good as a great saint simply by not talking unnecessarily with unwanted persons. We should either talk of Krsna or chant Hare Krsna undeviatingly. This is called muni–vrata.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.24.71

Some caste brahmanas mistakenly think that if non–brahmanas chant the holy name, its potency is reduced:

[Some nonbelieving Hindus to Chand Kazi]:

"Now the lower classes are chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra again and again. For this sinful activity, the entire city of Navadvipa will be deserted. According to Hindu scripture, God's name is supposed to be the most powerful hymn. If everyone hears the chanting of the name, the potency of the hymn will be lost."

Pasandis [unbelievers] do not know the actual value of the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna. Foolishly proud of their material birth as brahmanas and their consequently higher position in the social order, they think of the other classes–namely, the ksatriyas, the vaisyas and sudras–as lower classes. According to them, no one but the brahmanas can chant the holy name of Krsna, for if others chanted the holy name its potency would be reduced. They are unaware of the potency of Lord Krsna's name. The Brhan–naradiya Purana recommends:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatih anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"For spiritual progress in this age of Kali, there is no alternative, no alternative, no alternative to the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord."

The pasandis do not accept that the potency of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is so great that one can be delivered simply by chanting the holy name, although this is confirmed in Srimad–Bhagavatam (12.3.51). Kīrtanad eva kṛṣṇasya mukta–sangah param vrajet: any man from any part of the world who practices chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa can be liberated and after death go back home, back to Godhead. The rascal pasandis think that if anyone but a brahmana chants the holy name, the potency of the holy name is vanquished. According to their judgment, instead of delivering the fallen souls, the potency of the holy name is reduced. Believing in the existence of many gods and considering the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa no better than other hymns, these pasandis do not believe in the words of the sastra (harer nama harer nama harer namaiva kevalam [Adi 17.21]). But Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu confirms in His Siksastaka, kīrtaniyah sada hariḥ: [Cc. adi 17.31] one must chant the holy name of the Lord always, twenty–four hours a day. The pasandis, however, are so fallen and falsely proud of having taken birth in brahmana families that they think that instead of delivering all the fallen souls, the holy name becomes impotent when constantly chanted by lower–class men.

Significant in verse 211 are the words nica bada bada because anyone can join in the sankīrtana movement, as mentioned in Srimad–Bhagavatam (2.4.18): kirata–hunandhra–pulinda–pulkasa abhira–sumbha yavanah khasadayah. This is a list of the names of candalas. The pasandis say that when these lower–class men are allowed to chant, their influence is enhanced. They do not like the idea that others should also develop spiritual qualities because this would curb their false pride in having taken birth in families of the elevated brahmana caste, with a monopoly on spiritual activities. But despite all protests from so–called Hindus and members of the brahmana caste, we are propagating the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world, according to the injunctions of the sastras and the order of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Thus we are sure that we are delivering many fallen souls, making them bona fide candidates for going back home, back to Godhead.

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Adi–līla 17.211–12

Chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra will not free one from offending a brahmana or Vaisnava (one must beg the pardon of the offended person):

When one pollutes his Kṛṣṇa consciousness by offending a brahmana or a Vaisnava, it is very difficult to revive. Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu has described the vaisnava–aparadhā, or offense to a Vaisnava, as "the mad elephant offense." One should be very careful not to offend a Vaisnava or a brahmana. Even the great yogi Durvasa was harassed by the Sudarsana cakra when he offended the Vaisnava Maharaja Ambarisa, who was neither a

brahmana nor a sannyasi but an ordinary householder. Maharaja Ambarisa was a Vaisnava, and consequently Durvasa Muni was chastised.

The conclusion is that if Krsna consciousness is covered by material sins, one can eliminate the sins simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra, but if one pollutes his Krsna consciousness by offending a brahmana or a Vaisnava, one cannot revive it until one properly atones for the sin by pleasing the offended Vaisnava or brahmana. This was the course that Durvasa Muni had to follow, for he surrendered unto Maharaja Ambarisa. A vaisnava–aparadha cannot be atoned for by any means other than by begging the pardon of the offended Vaisnava.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.26.24

A renunciate should not renounce chanting Hare Krsna:

Even one who has renounced the world and has taken sannyasa should not renounce chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra. Renunciation does not mean that one has to renounce sankirtana–yajna.

~Srimad–Bhagavatam 5.6.2

Rather than discuss the Lord's confidential, transcendental pastimes among mundane moralists who misinterpret them, one should give them the maha–mantra so that they may become gradually purified and elevated to transcendental understanding:

[Priest calling Madhavendra Puri]:

Holding the pot of sweet rice, the priest called, "Will he whose name is Madhavendra Puri please come and take this pot! Gopinatha has stolen this pot for you!" The priest continued, "Would the sannyasi whose name is Madhavendra Puri please come and take this pot of sweet rice and enjoy the prasada with great happiness! You are the most fortunate person within these three worlds!"

The difference between the Absolute Truth and relative truth is explained here. Lord Gopinatha has openly declared herein that He is a thief. He had stolen the pot of sweet rice, and this was not kept a secret because His act of stealing is a source of great transcendental bliss. In the material world, theft is criminal, but in the spiritual world the Lord's stealing is a source of transcendental bliss. Mundane rascals, who cannot understand the absolute nature of the Personality of Godhead, sometimes call Lord Sri Krsna immoral, but they do

not know that His seemingly immoral activities, which are not kept secret, afford pleasure to the devotees. Not understanding the transcendental behavior of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, these rascals slur His character and immediately fall into the category of miscreants (rascals, lowest among men, demons and those whose knowledge is taken away by the illusory energy)... Although Krsna is the purest of the pure, mundane people, thinking of Krsna's pastimes that appear immoral, themselves become polluted. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore never publicly discussed Krsna's dealings with the gopis. He used to discuss these dealings only with three confidential friends. He never discussed rasa-lila publicly, as the professional reciters do, although they do not understand Krsna or the nature of the audience. However, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu encouraged the public chanting of the holy name on a huge scale for as many hours as possible...

Here is an example of a personal benediction by Krsna's immoral activity. By Gopinatha's stealing for His devotee, the devotee becomes the most fortunate person within the three worlds. Thus even the Lord's criminal activities make His devotee the most fortunate person. How can a mundane rascal understand the pastimes of Krsna and judge whether He is moral or immoral? Since Krsna is the Absolute Truth, there are no mundane distinctions such as moral and immoral. Whatever He does is good. This is the real meaning of "God is good." He is good in all circumstances because He is transcendental, outside the jurisdiction of this material world. Therefore, Krsna can be understood only by those who are already living in the spiritual world...

One who is engaged in unalloyed devotional service to the Lord is already situated in the spiritual world (brahma-bhuyaya kalpate). In all circumstances, his activities and dealings with Krsna are transcendental and thus not understandable by mundane moralists. It is therefore better not to discuss such activities among mundane people. It is better to give them the Hare Krsna maha-mantra so that they will be gradually purified and then come to understand the transcendental activities of Krsna.

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 4.133-34

The sankirtana party of the followers of Tukarama exactly resembles those of the Gaudiya-Vaisnavas:

It is said that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu initiated Tukarama when He visited Pandarapura. This Tukarama Acarya became very famous in the Maharashtra province, and he spread the sankirtana movement all over the province. The sankirtana party belonging to Tukarama is still very popular in Bombay in the province of Maharashtra. Tukarama was a disciple of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and his book is known as Abhanga. His sankirtana party exactly

resembles the Gaudiya–Vaisnava sankirtana parties, for they chant the holy name of the Lord with mrdanga and karatalas.

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 9.282

Due to the influence of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, even today many scholars and sannyasis of Varanasi gather on the banks of the Ganges to perform sankirtana:

All the inhabitants of Kasi [Varanasi] began chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra in ecstatic love. Sometimes they laughed, sometimes they cried, sometimes they chanted, and sometimes they danced. After this, all the Mayavadi sannyasis and learned scholars at Varanasi began discussing Srimad–Bhagavatam. In this way Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu delivered them. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then returned to His residence with His personal associates. Thus He turned the whole city of Varanasi into another Navadvipa [Nadiya–nagara].

Both Navadvipa and Varanasi were celebrated for their highly educational activities. At the present time these cities are still inhabited by great, learned scholars, but Varanasi is especially a center for Mayavadi sannyasis who are learned scholars. However, unlike Navadvipa, there are hardly any devotees in Varanasi. Consequently a discussion of Srimad–Bhagavatam was very rare in Varanasi. In Navadvipa, such a discussion was quite ordinary. After Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu visited Varanasi and turned Prakasananda Sarasvati and his disciples into Vaisnavas, Varanasi became like Navadvipa because so many devotees began discussing Srimad–Bhagavatam. Even at the present moment one can hear many discussions on Srimad–Bhagavatam taking place on the banks of the Ganges. Many scholars and sannyasis gather there to hear Srimad–Bhagavatam and perform sankirtana.

˚Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 25.165–67

Appendix I

Songs by Vaisnava Saints

on the Glories of the Holy Name

Sri Nama

(from Gitavali)

by Bhaktivinoda thakura

(1)

gay gora madhur sware
hare krsna hare krsna krsna krsna hare hare
hare rama hare rama rama rama hare hare

(2)

grhe thako, vane thako, sada 'hari' bole' dako,
sukhe duhkhe bhulo na'ko, vadane hari–nam koro re

(3)

maya–jale baddha ho 'ye, acho miche kaja lo 'ye,
ekhona cetana pe'ye, 'radha–madhav' nam bolo re

(4)

jivana hoilo sesa, na bhajile hrsikesa
bhaktivinodopadesa, ekbar nam–rase mato re

(1) Lord Gaurasundara sings in a very sweet voice, Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

(2) Whether you are a householder or a sannyasi, constantly chant "Hari! Hari!" Do not forget this chanting, whether you are in a happy condition or a distressful one. Just fill your lips with the hari–nama.

(3) You are bound up in the network of maya and are forced to toil fruitlessly. Now you have obtained full consciousness in the human form of life, so chant the names of Radha–Madhava.

(4) Your life may end at any moment, and you have not served the Lord of the senses, Hrsikesa. Take this advice of Bhaktivinoda thakura: "Just once, relish the nectar of the holy name!"

Arunodaya–kirtana

Kirtana songs to be sung at dawn (from Gitavali)

by Bhaktivinoda thakura

part one

(1)
udilo aruna puraba–bhage,
dwija–mani gora amani jage,
bhakata–samuha loiya sathe,
gela nagara–braje

(2)

'tathai tathai bajalo khol,
ghana ghana tahe jhajera rol,
preme dhala dhala sonara anga,
carane nupura baje

(3)

mukunda madhava yadava hari,
bolena bolo re vadana bhori',
miche nida–base gelo re rati,
divasa sarira–saje

(4)

emana durlabha manava–deho,
paiya ki koro bhava na keho,
ebe na bhajile yasoda–suta,
carame poribe laje

(5)

udita tapanā hoile asta,
dina gelo boli' hoibe byasta,
tabe keno ebe alasa hoy,
na bhaja hrdoya–raje

(6)

jivana anitya janaha sar,
tahe nana–vidha vipada–bhar,
namasraya kori' jatane tumi,
thakaha apana kaje

(7)

jivera kalyana–sadhana–kam,
jagate asi' e madhura nam,
avidya–timira–tapanā–rupe,
hrd–gagane biraje

(8)

krsna–nama–sudha koriya pan,

jurao bhaktivinoda–pran,
nama bina kichu nahiko aro,
caudda–bhuvana–majhe

(1) When the eastern horizon became tinged with the redness that heralds the rising of the sun, the jewel among the brahmanas, Lord Gaurasundara, immediately awakened. Taking His devotees with Him, He journeyed through the towns and villages of Nadia.

(2) The mrdangas resounded "tathai, tathai," and the jhajas [large metal karatalas that look like small cymbals] in that kirtana played in time. Lord Gauranga's golden form slightly trembled in ecstatic love of Godhead, and His footbells jingled.

(3) Lord Caitanya called out to the townsfolk, "You spend your nights uselessly sleeping and your days decorating your bodies! Now just fill your mouths with the holy names, 'Mukunda!' 'Madhava!' 'Yadava!' and 'Hari!' chanting without offense!

(4) "You have achieved this rare human body. Don't you care for this gift? If you do not worship the darling of mother Yasoda now, then great sorrow awaits you at the time of your death.

(5) "With every rising and setting of the sun, a day passes and is lost. Why then do you remain idle and not serve the Lord of the heart?

(6) "You should understand this essential fact: life is temporary and filled with various kinds of miseries. Therefore carefully take shelter of the holy name and remain always engaged in His service as your eternal occupation.

(7) "Desiring to bless all living entities, this sweet name of Krsna has descended to this material universe and shines like the sun in the sky of the heart, destroying the darkness of ignorance."

(8) Drink the pure nectar of the holy name of Krsna and thus satisfy the soul of thakura Bhaktivinoda. There is nothing except the holy name within all the fourteen worlds.

Arunodaya–kirtana

part two

(1)

jiv jago, jiv jago, gauracanda bole
kota nidra jao maya–pisacira kole

(2)

bhajibo boliya ese samsara–bhitare
bhuliya rohile tumi avidyara bhare

(3)

tomare loite ami hoinu avatara
ami bina bandhu ara ke ache tomara

(4)

enechi ausadhi maya nasibaro lagi'
hari–nama maha–mantra lao tumi magi'

(5)

bhaktivinoda prabhu–carane pariya
sei hari–nama–mantra loilo magiya

(1) Lord Gauranga calls, "Wake up, sleeping souls! Wake up, sleeping souls! You have slept so long in the lap of the witch Maya.

(2) "You came into this world saying, 'O my Lord, I will certainly worship You,' but having forgotten this promise, you have remained in great ignorance.

(3) "I have descended just to save you. Other than Myself, who else is your friend?

(4) "I have brought the medicine for destroying the illusion of Maya. Now pray for this hari–nama maha–mantra and take it."

(5) thakura Bhaktivinoda fell at the lotus feet of Lord Gauranga, and after begging for the holy name, he received that maha–mantra.

Radha–Krsna Bol

(from Gitavali)

by Bhaktivinoda thakura

(1)

'radha–krsna' bol bol bolo re sobai
(ei) sikha diya, sab nadiya
phirche nece' gaura–nitai
(miche) mayar bese, jaccho bhese',
khaccho habudubu, bhai

(2)

(jiv) krsna–das, e biswas,
korle to' ar dukkho nai
(krsna) bolbe jabe, pulak ha'be
jhorbe ankhi, boli tai

(3)

('radha) krsna' bolo, sange calo,
ei–matra bhikha cai
(jay) sakal'bipod bhaktivinod
bole, jakhon o–nam gai

(1) "Everyone chant, chant, chant, 'Radha–Krsna!'" Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityananda are dancing all over the land of Nadia giving this teaching to all. O brother, needlessly under the control of maya you suffer and are carried away by her waves, sometimes floating and sometimes sinking in this ocean of illusion.

(2) If you have this faith that the soul is the eternal servant of Krsna, then there will be no more misery. And when you chant the holy name of Krsna, your body will shiver in ecstasy and your eyes will shed tears in love of God. This is what I say.

(3) Chant 'Radha–Krsna' in the association of devotees. This is the only request I beg. thakura Bhaktivinoda says, "When I chant that holy name of the Lord, all dangers go away."

Kabe Ha'be Bolo

(from Saranagati)

by Bhaktivinoda thakura

(1)

kabe ha'be bolo se–dina amar
(amar) aparadha ghuci', suddha name ruci,
krpa–bale ha'be hrdoye sancar

(2)

trnadhika hina, kabe nije mani',
sahisnuta–guna hrdoyete ani'
sakale manada, apani amani,
ho'ye aswadibo nama–rasa–sar

(3)

dhana jana ara, kobita–sundari,
bolibo na cahi deho–sukha–kari
janme–janme dao, ohe gaurahari!
ahaituki bhakti carane tomar

(4)

(kabe) korite sri–krsna–nama uccarana,

pulakita deho gadgada bacana
baibarnya–bepathu ha'be sanghatana,
nirantara netre ba'be asru–dhar

(5)

kabe navadwipe, suradhuni–tate,
gaura–nityananda boli' niskapate
naciya gaiya, beraibo chute,
batulera praya chariya bicar

(6)

kabe nityananda, more kori 'doya,
charaibe mora visayera maya
diya more nija–caranera chaya,
namera hatete dibe adhikar

(7)

kinibo, lutibo, hari–nama–rasa,
nama–rase mati' hoibo bibasa
rasera rasika–carana parasa,
koriya mojibo rase anibar

(8)

kabe jibe doya, hoibe udoya,
nija–sukha bhuli' sudina–hrdoya
bhakativinoda, koriya binoya,
sri–ajna–tahala koribe pracar

(1) Please tell me, When will that day be mine–when my offenses will end and a taste for the pure holy name will be infused within my heart by the power of divine grace?

(2) Considering myself lower than a blade of grass, bringing the quality of forbearance into my heart, showing respect to all, myself being freed from all false pride–when will I taste the essence of the liquid nectar of the holy name?

(3) Wealth, following, beautiful women, as described in worldly poetry–I do not want any such bodily pleasures. O Lord Gaurahari, please give me unmotivated devotion to Your

lotus feet, birth after birth.

(4) When, while articulating the divine name of Sri Krsna, will my body be thrilled in ecstatic rapture and my words be choked with emotion, when will pallor and ecstatic trembling occur, and when will streams of tears flow constantly from my eyes?

(5) When, in the land of Navadvipa, on the banks of the Ganges, will I run about, guilelessly calling, "O Gaura! O Nityananda!" dancing and singing like a madman, giving up all considerations?

(6) When will Lord Nityananda be merciful to me and release me from the illusion of worldliness? Giving me the shade of His lotus feet, when will He allow me to enter the marketplace of the holy name?

(7) I shall buy and plunder the mellows of the name of Hari, and becoming thoroughly intoxicated by those liquid mellows of the holy name, I shall become stunned. By touching the feet of those great souls who are able to relish those mellows, I will be constantly immersed in the sweet nectar of the holy name.

(8) When will there be an awakening of compassion for all fallen souls, and when will this Bhaktivinoda, forgetting his own happiness, with a meek heart set out to propagate by humble entreaty the sacred order of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu?

Sri Sri Gaura–Nityanander Daya

The Mercy of Sri Gaura and Nityananda (from Dhamali)

by Locana dasa thakura

(1)
parama koruna, pahu dui jana
nitai gauracandra
saba avatara–sara siromani

kevala ananda–kanda

(2)

bhajo bhajo bhai, caitanya nitai
sudrdha biswasa kori
visaya chadiya, se rase majiya,
mukhe bolo hari hari

(3)

dekho ore bhai, tri–bhuvane nai,
emona doyala data
pasu pakhi jhure, pasana vidare,
suni' janra guna–gatha

(4)

samsare majiya, rohili poriya,
se pade nahilo asa
apana karama, bhunjaye samana,
kahoye locana–dasa

PURPORT

by His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

This is a song by Locana dasa thakura. Pahu means "Lord," and dui jana means "two." Locana dasa thakura declares that the two Lords, Nitai–Gauracandra–Lord Nitai and Lord Caitanya–are very merciful (parama koruna). Saba avatara–sara siromani. Avatara means "incarnation," and saba means "all." They are the essence of all incarnations. The specific significance of these incarnations is that prosecuting Their way of self–realization is simply joyful (kevala ananda–kanda), for They introduced chanting and dancing. There are many incarnations, like Lord Rama and even Krsna, who taught Bhagavad–gita, which requires knowledge and understanding. But Lord Caitanya and Nityananda introduced a process that

is simply joyful—simply chant and dance. Therefore, Locana dasa requests everyone, bhajo bhajo bhai, caitanya—nitai: "My dear brother, I request that you just worship Lord Caitanya and Nityananda with firm conviction and faith." Don't think that this chanting and dancing will not lead to the desired goal. It will. It is the assurance of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu that one will get all perfection by this process. Therefore one must chant with firm faith and conviction (biswasa kori').

But what is the process? The process is visaya chariya, se rase majiya. If one wants to be Krsna conscious by this process, one has to give up his engagement in sense gratification. That is the only restriction. If one gives up sense gratification, it is sure that he will reach the desired goal. Mukhe bolo hari hari: one simply has to chant, "Hare Krsna! Hari Hari!" without any motive of sense gratification.

Dekho ore bhai, tri—bhuvane nai. Locana dasa thakura says, "My dear brother, you just try and examine this. Within the three worlds there is no one like Lord Caitanya or Lord Nityananda, because Their merciful qualities are so great that They make even birds and beasts cry, what to speak of human beings." Actually, when Lord Caitanya passed through the forest known as Jharikhanda, the tigers, elephants, snakes, deer, and all other animals joined Him in chanting Hare Krsna: It is so nice that anyone can join. Even the animals can join, what to speak of human beings. Of course, it is not possible for ordinary men to induce animals to chant, but if Caitanya Mahaprabhu could inspire animals to chant, at least we can encourage human beings to adopt this path of Hare Krsna mantra chanting. It is so nice that even the most stonehearted man will be melted. Pasana means "stone." It is so nice that even stone will melt.

But Locana dasa thakura regrets that he is entrapped by sense gratification. He addresses himself, "My dear mind, you are entrapped in this sense gratification process, and you have no attraction for chanting Hare Krsna. Since you have no attraction for the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityananda, what can I say? I can simply think of my misfortune. Yamaraja, the superintendent of death, is punishing me by not allowing me to be attracted by this movement."

Ista–deve Vijnapti

Prayer to One's Beloved Lord

(from Prarthana)

by Narottama dasa thakura

(1)

hari hari! bifale janama gonainu
manusya–janama paiya, radha–krsna na bhajiya,
janiya suniya bisa khainu

(2)

golokera prema–dhana, hari–nama–sankirtana,
rati na janmilo kene tay
samsara–bisanale, diba–nisi hiya jwale,
juraite na koinu upay

(3)

brajendra–nandana jei, saci–suta hoilo sei,
balarama hoilo nitai
dina–hina jata chilo, hari–name uddharilo,
tara saksi jagai madhai

(4)

ha ha prabhu nanda–suta, vrsabhanu–suta–juta,
koruna karo ho ei–baro
narottama–dasa koy, na theliho ranga pay,
toma bine ke ache amara

(1) O Lord Hari, I have spent my life uselessly. Having obtained a human birth and having not worshiped Radha and Krsna, I have knowingly drunk poison.

(2) The treasure of divine love in Goloka Vrndavana has descended as the congregational chanting of Lord Hari's holy names. Why did my attraction for that chanting never come about? Day and night my heart burns from the fire of the poison of worldliness, and I have

not taken the means to relieve it.

(3) Lord Krsna, who is the son of the King of Vraja, became the son of Saci (Lord Caitanya), and Balarama became Nitai. The holy name delivered all those souls who were lowly and wretched. The two sinners Jagai and Madhai are evidence of this.

(4) O Lord Krsna, son of Nanda, accompanied by the daughter of Vrsabhanu, please be merciful to me now. Narottama dasa says, "O Lord, please do not push me away from Your reddish lotus feet, for who is my beloved except for You?"

Appendix II

Important Verses

from Vedic and Vaisnava Literature
on the Glories of the Holy Name

*1.

The Holy Name Is the Universal and Supreme Religion for this Age

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatih anyatha
[Adi 17.21]

"In this age of Kali there is no alternative, there is no alternative, there is no alternative for spiritual progress than the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord."

~Brhan-naradiya Purana

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.76]

krsna-varnam tvisakrsnam
sangopangastra-parsadam
yajnaih sankirtana-prayair
yajanti hi su-medhasah

[SB 11.5.32]

[Karabhajana Rsi to Maharaja Nimi]:

"In the age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the name of Krsna. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Krsna Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.5.32

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.10]

hare krsna hare krsna krsna krsna hare hare
hare rama hare rama rama rama hare hare
iti sodasakam namnam kali-kalmasa-nasanam
natah parataropayah sarva-vedesu drsyate

"Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare—these sixteen names composed of thirty-two syllables are the only means to counteract the evil effects of Kali-yuga. In all the Vedas it is seen that to cross the ocean of nescience there is no alternative to the chanting of the holy name."

~Kalisantarana Upanisad

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.76 transliteration given: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 3.40]

kaler dosa-nidhe rajann
asti hy eko mahan gunah
kirtanad eva krsnasya
mukta-sangah param vrajet

[Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Pariksit]:

"My dear King, although Kali-yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 12.3.51

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.344]

krte yad dhyayato visnum
tretayam yajato makhaih
dvapare paricaryayam
kalau tad dhari-kirtanat

[Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Pariksit]:

"Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Visnu, in Treta-yuga by performing sacrifices and in Dvapara-yuga by serving the Lord's lotus feet can also be obtained in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra."

-Srimad-Bhagavatam 12.3.52

- [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.345]

dhyayan krte yajan yajnais
tretayam dvapare 'rcayan
yad apnoti tad apnoti
kalau sankirtya kesavam

"Whatever is achieved by meditation in Satya-yuga, by performance of yajna in Treta-yuga or by the worship of Krsna's lotus feet in Dvapara-yuga is also obtained in the age of Kali simply by chanting and glorifying Lord Kesava."

-Visnu Purana (6.2.17), Padma Purana (Uttara-khanda 72.25) and Brhan-naradiya Purana (38.97)

- [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.346]

dvapariyair janair visnuh
pancaratrais tu kevalaih
kalau tu nama-matrena
pujyate bhagavan harih

"In the Dvapara-yuga one could satisfy Krsna or Visnu only by worshiping opulently according to the pancaratrici system; but in the age of Kali, one can satisfy and worship the

Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari simply by chanting His holy name."

~Narayana-samhita (quoted by Srila Madhvacarya in his commentary on Mundaka Upanisad)

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 7.12]

kalim sabhajayanty arya
guna jnah sara-bhaginah
yatra sankirtanenaiva
sarva-svartho 'bhilabhyate

[Karabhajana Rsi to Maharaja Nimi]:

"Those who are advanced and highly qualified and are interested in the essence of life know the good qualities of Kali-yuga. Such people worship the age of Kali because in this age, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra one can advance in spiritual knowledge and attain life's goal."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.5.36

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.347]

nama vinu kali-kale nahi ara dharma
sarva-mantra-sara nama, ei sastra-marma

[isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

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

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.74

etavan eva loke 'smin
pumsam dharmah parah smrtah
bhakti-yogo bhagavati
tan-nama-grahanadibhah

[Yamaraja to the Yamadutas]:

"Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.3.22

etan nirvidyamananam
icchatam akuto-bhayam
yoginam nrpa nirnitam
harer namanukirtanam

[Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Pariksit]:

"O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.1.11

tattva-vastu-krsna, krsna-bhakti, prema-rupa
nama-sankirtana-saba ananda-svarupa

"The Absolute Truth is Sri Krsna, and loving devotion to Sri Krsna exhibited in pure love is achieved through congregational chanting of the holy name, which is the essence of all bliss."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 1.96

iti murty-abhidhanena
mantra-murtim amurtikam
yajate yajna-purusam
sa samyag darsanah puman

[Narada Muni to Vyasadeva]:

"Thus he is the actual seer who worships, in the form of transcendental sound representation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Visnu, who has no material form."
~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.5.38

II.

The Transcendental Attributes and Effects of the Holy Name

ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam
sreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranam vidya-vadhu-jivanam
anandambudhi-varadhanam prati-padam purnamrtasvadanam
sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam
[Cc. Antya 20.12]

"Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna, 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 Krsna expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life. It gives a cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste full nectar at every step."

~Sri Sri Siksastaka (verse 1), by Lord Caitanya

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.12]

namnam akari bahudha nija-sarva-saktis
tatarpita niyमितah smarane na kalah
etadrsi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi
durdaivam idrsam ihajani nanuragah

"My Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in Your holy name there is all good fortune for the living entity, and therefore You have many names, such as Krsna and Govinda, by which You expand Yourself. You have invested all Your potencies in those names, and there are no hard and fast rules for remembering them. My dear Lord, although You bestow such mercy upon the fallen, conditioned souls by liberally teaching Your holy names, I am so unfortunate that I commit offenses while chanting the holy name, and therefore I do not achieve attachment for chanting."

~ Sri Sri Siksastaka (verse 1), by Lord Caitanya

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.16]

akrstih krta-cetasam sumanasam uccatanam camhasam
acandalam amuka-loka-sulabho vasyas ca mukti-sriyah
no diksam na ca sat-kriyam na ca purascaryam manag iksate
mantra 'yam rasana-sprg eva phalati sri-krsna-namatmakah

"The holy name of Lord Krsna is an attractive feature for many saintly, liberal people. It is the annihilator of all sinful reactions and is so powerful that save for the dumb who cannot chant it, it is readily available to everyone, including the lowest type of man, the candala. The holy name of Krsna is the controller of the opulence of liberation, and it is identical with Krsna. Simply by touching the holy name with one's tongue, immediate effects are produced. Chanting the holy name does not depend on initiation, pious activities or the purascarya regulative principles generally observed before initiation. The holy name does not wait for all these activities. It is self-sufficient."

~ Padyavali (29), by Rupa Gosvami

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 15.110]

nama cintamanih krsnas
caitanya-rasa-vigraha
purnah suddho nitya-mukto
'bhinnatvan nama-naminoh

"The holy name of Krsna is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Krsna Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Krsna's name is complete, and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Krsna Himself. Since Krsna's name is not contaminated by the

material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with maya. Krsna's name is always liberated and spiritual; it is never conditioned by the laws of material nature. This is because the name of Krsna and Krsna Himself are identical."

~Padma Purana

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 17.133]

jayati jayati namananda-rupam murarer
viramita-nija-dharma-dhyana-pujadi-yatnam
kathamapi sakrd-attam muktidam praninam yat
paramam amrtam ekam jivanam bhusanam me

"All glories, all glories to the all-blissful holy name of Sri Krsna, which causes the devotee to give up all conventional religious duties, meditation and worship. When somehow or other uttered even once by a living entity, the holy name awards him liberation. The holy name of Krsna is the highest nectar. It is my very life and my only treasure."

~Brhad-bhagavatamrta (1.9), by Sanatana Gosvami

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 4.71]

nikhila-sruti-mauli-ratna-mala-
dyuti-nirajita-pada-pankajanta
ayi mukta-kulair upasyamanam
paritas tvam hari-nama samsrayami

"O Hari-nama! The tips of the toes of Your lotus feet are constantly being worshiped by the glowing radiance emanating from the string of gems known as the Upanisads, the crown jewels of all the Vedas. You are eternally adored by liberated souls such as Narada and Sukadeva. O Hari-nama! I take complete shelter of You."

~Namastaka (verse 1), by Rupa Gosvami

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 4.71]

trayo vedah sad-angani
chandamsi vividhah surah
sarvam astaksarantahstham

yac canyad api van–mayam
sarva–vedanta–sararthah
samsararnava–taranah

"The essence of all Vedic knowledge—comprehending the three kinds of Vedic activity [karma–kanda, jnana–kanda and upasana–kanda], the chandah or Vedic hymns, and the processes for satisfying the demigods—is included in the eight syllables Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna. This is the reality of all Vedanta. The chanting of the holy name is the only means to cross the ocean of nescience."

˘Narada–pancaratra

˘ [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.76]

tam nirvyajam bhaja guna–nidhe pavanam pavananam
sraddha–rajyan–matir atitaram uttamah–sloka–maulim
prodyann antah–karana–kuhare hanta yan–nama–bhanor
abhaso 'pi ksapayati maha–pataka–dhvanta–rasim

"O reservoir of all good qualities, just worship Sri Krsna, the purifier of all purifiers, the most exalted of the personalities worshiped by choice poetry. Worship Him with a faithful, unflinching mind, without duplicity and in a highly elevated manner. Thus worship the Lord, whose name is like the sun, for just as a slight appearance of the sun dissipates the darkness of night, so a slight appearance of the holy name of Krsna can drive away all the darkness of ignorance that arises in the heart due to greatly sinful activities performed in previous lives."

˘Bhakti–rasamrta–sindhu (2.1.103), by Rupa Gosvami

˘ [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 3.62]

namno hi yavati sa
papa–nirharane hareh
tavat kartum na saknoti
patakam pataki narah

"Simply by chanting one holy name of Hari, a sinful man can counteract the reactions to more sins than he is able to commit."

˘Brhad– Visnu Purana

~ [cited: Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.2.7]

avasenapi yan–namni
kirtite sarva–patakaih
puman vimucyate sadyah
simha–trastair mrgair iva

"If one chants the holy name of the Lord, even in a helpless condition or without desiring to do so, all the reactions of his sinful life depart, just as when a lion roars, all the small animals flee in fear."

~Garuda Purana

~ [cited: Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.2.7]

"My dear King, this word 'Krsna' is so auspicious that anyone who chants this holy name immediately gets rid of the resultant actions of sinful activities from many, many births."

~Visnu–dharma

~ [cited: The Nectar of Devotion]

'eka' krsna–name kare sarva–papa nasa
premera karana bhakti karena prakasa

"Simply chanting the Hare Krsna maha–mantra without offenses vanquishes all sinful activities. Thus pure devotional service, which is the cause of love of Godhead, becomes manifest."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 8.26

apannah samsrtim ghoram
yan–nama vivaso grnan
tatah sadyo vimucyeta

yad bibheti svayam bhayam

[The sages at Naimisaranya to Suta Gosvami]:

"Living beings who are entangled in the complicated meshes of birth and death can be freed immediately by even unconsciously chanting the holy name of Krsna, which is feared by fear personified."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.1.14

sakrd uccaritam yena
harir ity aksara-dvayam
baddha-parikaras tena
moksaya gamanam prati

"By once chanting the holy name of the Lord, which consists of the two syllables ha-ri, one guarantees his path to liberation."

~Skanda Purana

~ [cited: Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.2.7]

"For any person who is chanting the holy name either softly or loudly, the paths to liberation and even heavenly happiness are at once open."

~Padma Purana

~ [cited: The Nectar of Devotion]

krsna-mantra haite habe samsara-mocana
krsna-nama haite pabe krsnera carana

[isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

"Simply by chanting the holy name of Krsna, one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.73

tara madhye sarva-srestha nama-sankirtana
niraparadhe nama laile paya prema-dhana

[Lord Caitanya to Sanatana Gosvami]:

"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."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 4.71

krsna-adi, ara yata sthavara-jangame
krsna-preme matta kare krsna-sankirtane

"The holy name of Krsna is so attractive that anyone who chants it—including all living entities, moving and nonmoving, and even Lord Krsna Himself—becomes imbued with love of Krsna. This is the effect of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 3.268

anayase bhava-ksaya, krsnera sevana
eka krsna-namera phale pai eta dhana

"As a result of chanting the Hare Krsna maha-mantra, one makes such great advancement in spiritual life that simultaneously his material existence terminates and he receives love of Godhead. The holy name of Krsna is so powerful that by chanting even one name, one very easily achieves these transcendental riches."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 8.28

sankirtana haite papa-samsara-nasana
citta-suddhi, sarva-bhakti-sadhana-udgama
krsna-premodgama, premamrta-asvadana
krsna-prapti, sevamrta-samudre majjana

[Lord Caitanya to Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya]:

"By performing congregational chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, one can destroy the sinful condition of material existence, purify the unclean heart and awaken all varieties of devotional service. The result of chanting is that one awakens his love for Krsna and tastes transcendental bliss. Ultimately, one attains the association of Krsna and engages in His devotional service, as if immersing himself in a great ocean of love."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 20.13-14

krsna-nama-maha-mantrera ei ta' svabhava

yei jape, tara krsne upajaye bhava

[isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

"It is the nature of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra that anyone who chants it immediately develops his loving ecstasy for Krsna."

~Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 7.83

evam-vratah sva-priya-nama-kirya

jatanurago druta-citta uccaih

hasaty atho roditi rauti gayaty

unmada-van nrtyati loka-bahyah

[Kavi to Maharaja Nimi]:

"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."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.40

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.262]

nayanam galad–asru–dharaya
vadanam gadgada–ruddhaya gira
pulkair nicitam vapuh kada,
tava nama–grahane bhavisyati

"My dear Lord, when will My eyes be beautified by filling with tears that constantly glide down as I chant Your holy name? When will My voice falter and all the hairs on My body stand erect in transcendental happiness as I chant Your holy name?"

–Sri Sri Siksastaka (verse 6), by Lord Caitanya
– [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 20.36]

tunde tandavini ratim vitanute tundavali–labdhaye
karna–kroda–kadambini ghatayate karnarbudebhyah sprham
cetah–prangana–sangini vijayate sarvendriyanam krtim
no jane janita kiyadbhir amrtaih krsneti varna–dvayi

"I do not know how much nectar the two syllables 'Krs–na' have produced. When the holy name of Krsna is chanted, it appears to dance within the mouth. We then desire many, many mouths. When that name 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."

–Vidagdha–madhava (1.15), by Rupa Gosvami
– [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 1.99]

mriyamano harer nama
grnan putropacaritam
ajamilo 'py agad dhama
kim uta sraddhaya grnan

[Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Pariksit]:

"While suffering at the time of death, Ajamila chanted the holy name of the Lord, and although the chanting was directed toward his son, he nevertheless returned home, back to Godhead. Therefore if one faithfully and inoffensively chants the holy name of the Lord, where is the doubt that he will return to Godhead?"

atah sri–krsna–namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

[BRS. atah sri–krsna–namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah

"No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Sri Krsna through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him." (Bhakti–rasamrta–sindhu 1.2.234)1.2.234]

"Therefore material senses cannot appreciate Krsna's holy name, form, qualities and pastimes. When a conditioned soul is awakened to Krsna consciousness and renders service by using his tongue to chant the Lord's holy name and taste the remnants of the Lord's food, the tongue is purified, and one gradually comes to understand who Krsna really is."

˘Bhakti–rasamrta–sindhu (1.2.234), by Rupa Gosvami

˘ [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 17.136]

syat krsna–nama–caritadi–sitapy avidya–
pittopatapta–rasanasya na rocika nu
kintv adarad anudinam khalu saiva justa
svadvi kramad bhavati tad–gada–mula–hantri

"The holy name, character, pastimes and activities of Krsna are all transcendently sweet like sugar candy. Although the tongue of one afflicted by the jaundice of avidya, 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."

~The Nectar of Instruction, Text 7

'kanhara smarana jiva karibe anuksana?'
'krsna–nama–guna–lila–pradhana smarana'

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu asked, "What should all living entities constantly remember?"
Ramananda Raya replied, "The chief object of remembrance is always the holy name of the Lord, His qualities and pastimes."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Madhya–lila 8.252

yasya smrtya ca namoktya
tapo–yajna–kriyadisu
nunam sampurnatam eti
sadyo vande tam acyutam

"I offer my obeisances unto Him, the infallible, because simply by either remembering Him or vibrating His holy name one can attain the perfection of all penances, sacrifices or fruitive activities, and this process can be universally followed."

~Skanda Purana

~ [cited: Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.9.36]

yan–namadheya–sravananukirtanad
yat–prahvanad yat–smaranad api kvacit
svado 'pi sadyah savanaya kalpate
kutah punas te bhagavan nu darsanat

[Devahuti to Lord Kapila]:

"To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog–eaters immediately becomes eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even

remembers Him."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.33.6

aho bata sva-paco 'to gariyan
yaj-jihvagre vartate nama tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuh sasnur arya
brahmanucur nama grnanti ye te
[SB 3.33.7]

[Devahuti to Lord Kapila]:

"Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your holy name! Even if born in the families of dog-eaters, such persons are worshipable. Persons who chant the holy name of Your Lordship must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Aryans. To be chanting the holy name of Your Lordship, they must have bathed at holy places of pilgrimage, studied the Vedas and fulfilled everything required."

~Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.33.7

rama rameti rameti
rame rame manorame
sahasra-namabhis tulyam
rama-nama varanane

[Lord Siva to his wife, Durga]:

"I chant the holy name of Rama, Rama, Rama and thus enjoy this beautiful sound. This holy name of Ramacandra is equal to one thousand holy names of Lord Visnu."

~Brhad-Visnu-sahasranama-stotra, 72.335 (from Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda)

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.32]

sahasra-namnam punyanam
trir-avrttya tu yat phalam
ekavrttya tu krsnasya
namaikam tat prayacchati

"The pious results derived from chanting the thousand holy names of Visnu three times can be attained by only one repetition of the holy name of Krsna."

~Brahmanda Purana (quoted in Laghu–bhagavatamṛta, 1.354, by Rupa Gosvami)

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 9.33]

III.

The Practice of the Holy Name

trnad api sunicena
taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih
[Cc. adi 17.31]

"One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street. One should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige and ready to offer all respects to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly."

Sri Sri Siksastaka (verse 3), by Lord Caitanya,

~Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Antya–lila 20.21

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Antya–lila 3.207]

bahu janma kare yadi sravana, kirtana
tabu ta' na paya krsna–pade prema–dhana

"If one is infested with the ten offenses in the chanting of the Hare Krsna maha–mantra, despite his endeavor to chant the holy name for many births, he will not get the love of Godhead which is the ultimate goal of this chanting."

˘Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Adi–lila 8.16

namaparadha–yuktanam
namany eva haranty agham
avisranti–prayuktani
tany evārtha–karani ca

[Even if in the beginning one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra with offenses, one will become free from such offenses by chanting again and again.]

˘Padma Purana

˘ [cited: Srimad–Bhagavatam 6.3.24]

tad asma–saram hṛdayam batedam
yad grhyamanair hari–nama–dheyaih
na vikriyetatha yada vikaro
netre jalam gatra–ruhesu harsah

[Sukadeva Gosvami to Maharaja Parikṣit]:

"If one's heart does not change, tears do not flow from his eyes, his body does not shiver, nor his hairs stand on end as he chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, it should be understood that his heart is as hard as iron. This is due to his offenses at the lotus feet of the Lord's holy name."

˘Srimad–Bhagavatam 2.3.24

˘ [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Adi–lila 8.25]

dusta mana! tumi kisera vaisnava?
pratisthara tare, nirjanera ghare,
tava hari–nama kevala kaitava

"My dear mind, what kind of devotee are you? Simply for cheap adoration you sit in a solitary place and pretend to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha–mantra, but this is all cheating."

˘Song by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura

- [cited: Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.28.33]

IV.

The Propagation of the Holy Name

prthivite ache yata nagaradi grama
sarvatra pracara haibe mora nama

[Lord Caitanya]:

"In every town and village, the chanting of My name will be heard."

-Caitanya-bhagavata, by Vrndavana dasa thakura

- [cited: Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 25.264]

kali-kalera dharma-krsna-nama-sankirtana
krsna-sakti vina nahe tara pravartana

"The fundamental religious system in the age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Krsna. Unless empowered by Krsna, one cannot propagate the sankirtana movement."

-Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 7.11

naca, gao, bhakta-sange kara sankirtana
krsna-nama upadesi' tara' sarva-jana

[isvara Puri to Lord Caitanya]:

"My dear child, continue dancing, chanting and performing sankirtana in association with devotees. Furthermore, go out and preach the value of chanting krsna–nama, for by this process You will be able to deliver all fallen souls."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.92

apane acare keha, na kare pracara
pracara karena keha, na karena acara
'acara', 'pracara',–namera karaha 'dui' karya
tumi–sarva–guru, tumi jagatera arya

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 7.92

[Sanatana Gosvami to Haridasa thakura]:

"Some behave very well but do not preach the cult of Krsna consciousness, whereas others preach but do not behave properly. You simultaneously perform both duties in relation to the holy name by your personal behavior and by your preaching. Therefore you are the spiritual master of the entire world, for you are the most advanced devotee in the world."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 4.102–3

kali–yuge yuga–dharma–namera pracara
tathi lagi' pita–varna caitanyavatara

"The religious practice for the age of Kali is to broadcast the glories of the holy name. Only for this purpose has the Lord, in a yellow color, descended as Lord Caitanya."

~Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Adi–lila 3.40

V.

Other Verses About the Holy Name

naham tisthami vaikunthe
yoginam hrdayesu va
tatra tisthami narada
yatra gayanti mad–bhaktah

"My dear Narada, actually I do not reside in My abode, Vaikuntha, nor do I reside within the hearts of the yogis, but I reside in that place where My pure devotees chant My holy name and discuss My form, pastimes and qualities."

~[cited: Srimad–Bhagavatam 4.30.35]

"The chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra is present only on the lips of a person who has for many births worshiped Vasudeva."

~Padma Purana [cited: The Nectar of Devotion]

...yajnanam japa–yajno 'smi...

[Krsna to Arjuna]: "...Of sacrifices I am the chanting of the holy names [japa]..."

~Bhagavad–gita As It Is 10.25

avaisnava–mukhodgirnam
putam hari–kathamrtam
sravanam naiva kartavyam
sarpocchistam yatha payah

[The holy name chanted by non–Vaisnavas is like milk touched by the lips of a serpent.]

~Padma Purana

~ [cited: Sri Caitanya–caritamrta Antya–lila 1.101]

"krsna–nama nirantara yanhara vadane
sei vaisnava–srestha, bhaja tanhara carane

[Lord Caitanya to an inhabitant of Kulina–grama]:

"A person who is always chanting the holy name of the Lord is to be considered a first–class Vaisnava, and your duty is to serve his lotus feet."

–Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 16.72

yanhara darsane mukhe aise krsna–nama
tanhare janiha tumi 'vaisnava–pradhana'

Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "A first–class Vaisnava is he whose very presence makes others chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

–Sri Caitanya–caritamṛta Madhya–lila 16.74

**I Srimad–Bhagavatam, Sixth Canto, Chapters Two and Three ("Ajāmila Delivered by the Viṣṇudūtas" and "Yamarāja Instructs His Messengers").*

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada appeared in this world in 1896 in Calcutta, India. He first met his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami, in Calcutta in 1922. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, a prominent religious scholar and the founder of sixty-four Gaudiya Mathas (Vedic institutes), liked this educated young man and convinced him to dedicate his life to teaching Vedic knowledge. Srila Prabhupada became his student, and eleven years later (1933) at Allahabad he became his formally initiated disciple.

At their first meeting, in 1922, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati thakura requested Srila Prabhupada to broadcast Vedic knowledge through the English language. In the years that followed, Srila Prabhupada wrote a commentary on the Bhagavad-gita, assisted the Gaudiya Matha in its work and, in 1944, without assistance, started *Back to Godhead*, an English fortnightly magazine, edited it, typed the manuscripts and checked the galley proofs. He even distributed the individual copies and struggled to maintain the publication. Once begun, the magazine never stopped; it is now being continued by his disciples in the West and is published in over thirty languages.

Recognizing Srila Prabhupada's philosophical learning and devotion, the Gaudiya Vaisnava Society honored him in 1947 with the title "Bhaktivedanta." In 1950, at the age of fifty-four, Srila Prabhupada retired from married life, adopting the vanaprastha (retired) order to devote more time to his studies and writing. Srila Prabhupada traveled to the holy city of Vrndavana, where he lived in very humble circumstances in the historic medieval temple of Radha-Damodara. There he engaged for several years in deep study and writing.

He accepted the renounced order of life (sannyasa) in 1959. At Radha–Damodara, Srila Prabhupada began work on his life's masterpiece: a multi–volume translation of and commentary on the eighteen–thousand–verse Srimad–Bhagavatam (Bhagavata Purana). He also wrote *Easy Journey to Other Planets*.

After publishing three volumes of the Bhagavatam, Srila Prabhupada came to the United States, in 1965, to fulfill the mission of his spiritual master. Subsequently, His Divine Grace wrote more than sixty volumes of authoritative translations, commentaries and summary studies of the philosophical and religious classics of India.

In 1965, when he first arrived by freighter in New York City, Srila Prabhupada was practically penniless. It was after almost a year of great difficulty that he established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in July of 1966. Before his passing away on November 14, 1977, he guided the Society and saw it grow to a worldwide confederation of more than one hundred asramas, schools, temples, institutes and farm communities.

In 1968, Srila Prabhupada created New Vrindaban, an experimental Vedic community in the hills of West Virginia. Inspired by the success of New Vrindaban, now a thriving farm community of more than two thousand acres, his students have since founded several similar communities in the United States and abroad.

In 1972, His Divine Grace introduced the Vedic system of primary and secondary education in the West by founding the Gurukula school in Dallas, Texas. Since then, under his supervision, his disciples have established children's schools throughout the United States and the rest of the world, with the principal educational center now located in Vrindavana, India.

Srila Prabhupada also inspired the construction of several large international cultural centers in India. The center at Sridhama Mayapur in West Bengal is the site for a planned spiritual city, an ambitious project for which construction will extend over the next decade. In Vrindavana, India, is the magnificent Krsna–Balarama Temple and International Guesthouse. There is also a major cultural and educational center in Bombay. Other centers are planned in a dozen other important locations on the Indian subcontinent.

Srila Prabhupada's most significant contribution, however, is his books. Highly respected by the academic community for their authoritativeness, depth and clarity, they are used as standard textbooks in numerous college courses. His writings have been translated into over thirty languages. The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, established in 1972 exclusively to publish

the works of His Divine Grace, has thus become the world's largest publisher of books in the field of Indian religion and philosophy.

In just twelve years, in spite of his advanced age, Srila Prabhupada circled the globe fourteen times on lecture tours that took him to six continents. In spite of such a vigorous schedule, Srila Prabhupada continued to write prolifically. His writings constitute a veritable library of Vedic philosophy, religion, literature and culture.

