

Week – 21 – Members’ Section

Sri Namamrta

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed the nectar of the Holy Name to everyone:

The most munificent Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Gaurakṛṣṇa, 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.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 23.1

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

Following the orders of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, 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 prasāda, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu 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 Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu performed wonderful pastimes.

Kṛṣṇa 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.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu therefore advised the beggars to chant “Hari bol!” while taking prasāda. Chanting means accepting one’s self as the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. This is the only solution, regardless of social position. Everyone is suffering under the spell of māyā; therefore the best course is to learn how to get out of the clutches of māyā....

One can overcome the spell of māyā and attain the transcendental platform by agreeing to engage in the devotional service of the Lord. Devotional service begins with śravaṇam kīrtanam; [SB 7.5.23] therefore Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu advised the beggars to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra for elevation to the transcendental position. On the transcendental platform, there is no distinction between the rich, the middle class and the poor.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 14.44-46

Passage for Discussion
The Perfection of Life

TRANSLATION

*ye tu sarvāṇi karmāṇi / mayi sannyasya mat-parāḥ ananyenaiva yogena / mām dhyāyanta
upāsate teṣām ahaṁ samuddhartā / mṛtyu-saṁsāra-sāgarāt bhavāmi na cirāt pārtha / mayy
āveśita-cetasām*

For one who worships Me, giving up all his activities unto Me and being devoted to Me without deviation, engaged in devotional service and always meditating upon Me, who has fixed his mind upon Me, O son of Pṛthā, for him I am the swift deliverer from the ocean of birth and death.

PURPORT

It is explicitly stated here that the devotees are very fortunate to be delivered very soon from material existence by the Lord. In pure devotional service one comes to the realization that God is great and that the individual soul is subordinate to Him. His duty is to render service to the Lord-if not, then he will render service to māyā.

As stated before, the Supreme Lord can only be appreciated by devotional service. Therefore, one should be fully devoted. One should fix his mind fully on Kṛṣṇa in order to achieve Him. One should work only for Kṛṣṇa. It does not matter in what kind of work one engages, but that work should be done only for Kṛṣṇa. 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 Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. Such transcendental chanting attracts the devotee to the Personality of Godhead.

The Supreme Lord herein promises that He will without delay deliver a pure devotee thus engaged from the ocean of material existence. Those who are advanced in yoga practice can willfully transfer the soul to whatever planet they like by the yoga process, and others take the opportunity in various ways, but as far as the devotee is concerned, it is clearly stated here that the Lord Himself takes him. He does not need to wait to become very experienced in order to transfer himself to the spiritual sky.

In the Varāha Purāṇa this verse appears:

*nayāmi paramam sthānam arcirādi-gatiṁ vinā / garuḍa-skandham āropya yatheccham
anivāritaḥ*

The purport of this verse is that a devotee does not need to practice aṣṭāṅga-yoga in order to transfer his soul to the spiritual planets. The responsibility is taken by the Supreme Lord Himself. He clearly states here that He Himself becomes the deliverer. A child is completely cared for by his parents, and thus his position is secure. Similarly, a devotee does not need to endeavor to transfer himself by yoga practice to other planets. Rather, the Supreme Lord, by His great mercy, comes at once, riding on His bird carrier Garuḍa, and at once delivers the devotee from this material existence. Although a man who has fallen in the ocean may struggle very hard and may be very expert in swimming, he cannot save himself. But if someone comes and picks him up from the water, then he is easily rescued. Similarly, the Lord picks up the devotee from this material existence. One simply has to practice the easy process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and fully engage himself in devotional service. Any intelligent man should always prefer the process of devotional service to all other paths. In the Nārāyaṇīya this is confirmed as follows:

yā vai sādhana-sampatti-puruṣārtha-catustaye / tayā vinā tad-āpnoti naro nārāyaṇāśrayaḥ

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 Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare* - a devotee of the Lord can approach the supreme destination easily and happily, but this destination cannot be approached by any other process of religion.

The conclusion of Bhagavad-gītā is stated in the Eighteenth Chapter:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja / ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ.*

One should give up all other processes of self-realization and simply execute devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That will enable one to reach the highest perfection of life. There is no need for one to consider the sinful actions of his past life because the Supreme Lord fully takes charge of him. Therefore one should not futilely try to deliver himself in spiritual realization. Let everyone take shelter of the supreme omnipotent Godhead Kṛṣṇa. That is the highest perfection of life.

B-gita Ch 12, verses 6 - 7

Discovery:

1. What does Krsna ask us to do in order to qualify ourselves to be taken back to Godhead by Him?

Understanding:

1. What is the pure devotee's understanding of his relationship and duty towards Krsna?
2. How can we hope to reach this state of awareness of our relationship and our duty to wards Krishna?
3. Why should we not take part in other processes of religion such as performing yagnas for material benefit, cultivating knowledge by speculation and performing astanga yoga to achieve siddhis?
4. What are the advantages of rendering pure devotional service in comparison to the other processes?
5. What is the highest perfection in self realization? Can a sinful person hope to achieve this perfection? Why?

Application:

1. Share your realization on this verse.

Preaching is the essence

We are protected when we execute our duty to preach:

Our actual duty is to carry out the supreme order of the Personality of Godhead. If we are fixed in our determination to carry out the supreme order of the Lord, we are always secure, regardless of where we are situated, whether in hell or in heaven.... The devotees in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are preaching all over the world in accordance with the order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. They have to meet many karmīs, but by the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, they are unaffected by material influences.... A sincere devotee who engages in the service of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu by preaching His cult all over the world will never be affected by viṣaya-taraṅga, material influences. On the contrary, in due course of time he will return to the shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and will thus have perpetual association with Him.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

5.1.19