

Week 25 – Members’ Section

Sri Namamrta - The Nectar of the Holy Name

Three kinds of men 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 karmīs 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 Kurukṣetra and His dancing in Vṛndāvana with the gopīs.... Everyone, therefore, including the mumukṣus, the vimuktas and the karmīs, 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 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 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 Nārada and other residents of Śvetadvīpa are seen always engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord because by such chanting they are always externally and internally blissful. The mumukṣus, 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. Karmīs 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...

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.1 “Additional Notes”

Passage for Discussion

The Trap of the Three Material Modes

TRANSLATION

*ribhir guṇa-mayair bhāvair/ ebhiḥ sarvam idaṁ jagat mohitaṁ
nābhijānāti/ mām ebhyaḥ param avyayam*

Deluded by the three modes [goodness, passion and ignorance], the whole world does not know Me who am above the modes and inexhaustible.

PURPORT

The whole world is enchanted by three modes of material nature. Those who are bewildered by these three modes cannot understand that transcendental to this material nature is the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. In this material world everyone is under the influence of these three guṇas and is thus bewildered.

By nature living entities have particular types of body and particular types of psychic and biological activities accordingly. There are four classes of men functioning in the three material modes of nature. Those who are purely in the mode of goodness are called brāhmaṇas. Those who are purely in the mode of passion are called kṣatriyas. Those who are in the modes of both passion and ignorance are called vaiśyas. Those who are completely in ignorance are called śūdras. And those who are less than that are animals or animal life. However, these designations are not permanent. I may either be a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya or whatever-in any case, this life is temporary. But although life is temporary and we do not know what we are going to be in the next life, still, by the spell of this illusory energy, we consider ourselves in the light of this bodily conception of life, and we thus think that we are American, Indian, Russian or brāhmaṇa, Hindu, Muslim, etc. And if we become entangled with the modes of material nature, then we forget the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is behind all these modes. So Lord Kṛṣṇa says that men, deluded by these three modes of nature, do not understand that behind the material background is the Supreme Godhead.

There are many different kinds of living entities-human beings, demigods, animals, etc.- and each and every one of them is under the influence of material nature, and all of them have forgotten the transcendent Personality of Godhead. Those who are in the modes of passion and ignorance, and even those who are in the mode of goodness, cannot go beyond the impersonal Brahman conception of the Absolute Truth. They are bewildered before the Supreme Lord in His personal feature, which possesses all beauty, opulence, knowledge, strength, fame and renunciation. When even those who are in goodness cannot understand, what hope is there for those in passion and ignorance? Kṛṣṇa consciousness is transcendental to all these three modes of material nature, and those who are truly established in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are actually liberated.

Bhagavad-gita 7.14

Discovery:

1. Name the three modes of material nature. Mention which type of persons have which type of mode predominantly in their personalities.

Understanding:

1. Why are these bodily designations unimportant? What do they make us forget?
2. What is the understanding of the absolute truth of a person situated in the mode of goodness?
3. Why is it important to be Kṛṣṇa conscious?

Application:

1. Discuss the different modes which affect you during the course of each day. How do you feel when you are under their influence? When do you feel joyful in Krsna consciousness?

Preaching is the essence

Contrary to the order of Lord Caitanya, some of His modern so-called followers do not preach:

It is the desire of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu that the benevolent activities of the saṅkīrtana movement which was inaugurated five hundred years ago in Navadvīpa be spread all over the world for the benefit of all human beings. Unfortunately, there are many so-called followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu who are satisfied simply to construct a temple, make a show of the Deities, collect some funds and utilize them for eating and sleeping. There is no question of their preaching the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world, but even though they are unable to do so, if anyone else does it they become envious. This is the condition of the modern followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The age of Kali is so strong that it affects even the so-called followers of Lord Caitanya. At least the followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu must come out of India to preach His cult all over the world, for this is the mission of Lord Caitanya. The followers of Lord Caitanya must execute His will with heart and soul, being more tolerant than the trees and humbler than the straw in the street.

Cc. Ādi 9.47