

## **The Nectar of the Holy Name**

*The Holy Name is more effective than Vedic Rituals*

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

[Lord Krishna 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-kaṇḍa division of the Vedic literature are to encourage gradual development of self-realization. And the purpose of self-realization is clearly stated in the Fifteenth Chapter of the Bhagavad-gītā (15.15): the purpose of studying the Vedas is to know Lord Krishna, the primeval cause of everything. So, self-realization means understanding Krishna and one's eternal relationship with Him. The relationship of the living entities with Krishna is also mentioned in the Fifteenth Chapter of Bhagavad-gita. The living entities are parts and parcels of Krishna; therefore, revival of Krishna 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 śva-paco 'to garīyān  
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam  
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā  
brahmānūcur nāma grṇanti ye te*

“O my Lord, a person who is chanting Your holy name, although born of a low family like that of a caṇḍala [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 Upaniṣads. 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 Chaitanya, the deliverer of all fallen souls.

## Passage for Discussion

### *What is Religion?*

Primarily, religion means to know God and to love Him. That is religion. Nowadays, because of a lack of training, nobody knows God, what to speak of loving Him.

People are satisfied simply going to the places of worship and praying, “O God, give us our daily bread.”

In the Srimad Bhagavatam, this is called cheating religion, because the aim is not to know and love God but to gain some personal profit.

In other words, if I profess to follow some religion, but I do not know who God is or how to love Him, then I am practicing a cheating religion.

Whoever teaches how to know God and how to love Him- he is a spiritual master. Sometimes bogus men mislead people. “I am God,” they claim, and people who do not know what God is, believe them.

You must be a serious student to understand who God is and how to love Him. Otherwise, you will simply waste your time.

We are presenting the science of how one can know Krishna, the supreme personality of Godhead; by practicing the teachings of the Bhagavad-gita and Srimad Bhagavatam. They teach us that our only business is to love God. Our business is not to ask God for our necessities. God gives necessities to everyone - even to one who has no religion. For example, cats and dogs have no religion, yet Krishna supplies them with the necessities of life. So why should we bother Krishna for our daily bread? He is already supplying it. Real religion means to learn how to love Him

First class religion teaches one how to love God without any motive. If I serve God for some profit, that is business- not love. Real love of God is *ahaituki apratihata*: it cannot be checked by any material cause. It is unconditional. If one actually wants to love God, there is no impediment. One can love Him whether one is poor or rich, young or old, black or white.

There are four classes of men: the *karmis*, the *jananis*, the *yogis* and the *bhaktas* - and each achieves a different goal.

The *karmis* work for some material profit. For example, in the city, many people work hard day and night, and their purpose is to get some money.

A *jnani* is a person who thinks, “why am I working so hard? The birds, bees, elephants, and other creatures have no profession, yet they are also eating. So why should I unnecessarily work so hard? Rather let me try to solve the problems of life-birth, death, old age and disease.” Jnanis try to become immortal. They think that if they merge into God’s existence, then they will become immune to birth, death, old age and disease.

*Yogis* try to acquire some mystic power to exhibit a wonderful show. For instance, a yogi can become very small if you put him in a locked room and he can come out through any little space. By showing this kind of magic, the yogi is immediately accepted as a very wonderful man. Of course, modern yogis simply show some gymnastics - they have no real power. But a real yogi has some power, which is not spiritual, but material.

But the *bhakta* or the devotee doesn’t want anything for himself. He simply wants to serve God out of love, just as a mother serves her child. There is no question of profit in a mother’s service to her child. Out of pure affection and love, she cares for him.

When you come to this stage of loving God, that is perfection. Neither the karmi nor the jnani nor the yogi can know God- only the bhakta can know God. As Krishna says in the Bhagavad-gita: *bhaktya mam abhijanati*: “Only through the process of bhakti can one understand God.” Krishna never says one can understand Him by other processes. No. Only through Bhakti can one understand Krishna. If you are interested in knowing God and loving Him, then you must accept the devotional process. No other process will help you.

*Science of Self- realization*

**Discovery:**

1. What is real religion?
2. Who is a true spiritual master?

**Understanding:**

1. In what different ways are people cheated from following real religion?
2. What is Krishna Consciousness teaching you?
3. Describe who a *karmi*, *jnani*, *yogi* and *bhakta* is?
4. Why is the *bhakti* or devotional process the best of all?

**Application:**

1. Share your realization on what you want from following religion and why you want it.

**Preaching is the Essence**

*Spreading Krishna Consciousness is the highest benefit for society*

My dear Arjuna, one who is engaged in My pure devotional service, free from the contaminations of previous activities and from mental speculation, who is friendly to every living entity, certainly comes to Me.

A devotee of Krishna is friendly to everyone. Therefore, it is said here that he has no enemy. How is this? A devotee situated in Krishna Consciousness knows that only devotional service to Krishna can relieve a person from all the problems of life. He has personal experience of this and therefore, he wants to introduce this system, Krishna Consciousness, into human society. There are many examples in the history of devotees of the Lord risking their lives for the spreading of God Consciousness. The favorite example is Lord Jesus Christ. He was crucified by the nondevotees, but He sacrificed His life for spreading God consciousness.... Similarly, in India also there are many examples, such as Thakura Haridāsa. Why such risk? Because they wanted to spread Krishna Consciousness and it is difficult. A Krishna Conscious person knows that if a man is suffering, it is due to his forgetfulness of his eternal relationship with Krishna. Therefore, the highest benefit one can render to human society is relieving one's neighbour from all material problems. In such a way, a pure devotee is engaged in the service of the Lord.

*Bg. 11.55*