A Drop of the Ocean of Nectar of the Holy Name
(Śrīman-nāmāmṛta-sindhu-bindu)
Version 0.1

by
Manindranath Guha
translated
by
Neal Delmonico

October 24, 2001
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Prologue

Laghu: O Master, Dearest to Mukunda, Teacher of the Holy Name! Today My mind is depressed seeing the frightening direction of this material world. Today I am severely wounded by the blows of desires and subconscious urges. In front of me death spreads open its mouth. In the river of time we are like little bubbles that appear for a second and then dissolve forever. In the midst of this, what is the best and easiest way to regain balance, to conquer death and attain immortality? Please tell me.

Goswami: Look. This material world is like a forest fire, but until the mind is a little cleansed it does perceive the heat. It is a good sign indeed that you are able to perceive it a little. Nevertheless, your question is very timely. An indication of the intelligence of the intelligent and the wisdom of the wise is the gaining of immortality by means of the mortal body.
Alright listen then. Different religious prescriptions are found in scripture according to place, time and person. In the peaceful Satya-yuga, when the religious mood was strong, there was the establishment of meditation. Like that, in this tumultuous Kali-yuga, when the irreligious mood is strong, the *sankirtana* (loud, congregational chanting) of the Holy Name is the established practice. When society is troubled by the flames of the three miseries, when even the smallest sign of peace is not found anywhere, when society is fidgeting about in the heat of the conflagration of the sense objects produced by absorption in unnatural enjoyments, a prescription is needed that is capable of putting out that fire and granting highest peace. That is why the most compassionate Lord himself, Gaurahari, has come down from Goloka to earth in the middle of this frenzied dance of the Kali-yuga bringing with him a downpour of the highest nectar in the form of the *sankirtana* of the Holy Name, the best means of putting out the forest fire, the most powerful and best item in his storehouse. He calls out to the living being burned by the three flames of Kali:

चेतार्थार्थमेयं भवमहाबधायिनिनिरापदम्
श्रेयः कैरवचनिन्नकावितरं विद्यावधूतीवनम्।
आनन्दामुखिवर्धयते प्रतिपदं पूणामृतस्वादनम्
सर्वार्थं श्रीकृष्णसक्षीतलं परं विजयते। (शिक्षामूलं, १)
Chapter 1. The Best Way of All

It cleans the mirror of the mind, puts out the forest fire of the ills of material existence, is like the moon in revealing the lily of the most auspicious love for Kṛṣṇa, is the very life of the bhakti of love, swells up the ocean of joy, in each word of it is found the taste of full nectar, and it floods all the senses with joy; may the saṅkīrtana of the Names of Kṛṣṇa gain overwhelming victory.

He also says (C.c., Antya, 4.70-71):

bhajaner madhye śreṣṭha navavidhā bhakti
kṛṣṇaprema kṛṣṇa dite dhare mahāśakti
tār madhye sarvaśreṣṭha nāmasaṅkīrtana
niraparādhe nāma laile pāya premadhana

Among the forms of worship, the best are the nine forms of bhakti. Love of Kṛṣṇa has the great power to bestow Kṛṣṇa himself. Among those (nine) the best of all is saṅkīrtana of the Holy Name. If one says the name without offense, one gets the treasure of love.”

Although saṅkīrtana of the Holy Name is the religion of the age in all Kali-yugas, in this present age of Kali saṅkīrtana has a special quality and that is that this time he has given it to the world with his own hand, sprinkling it with a shower of his own limitless mercy. Therefore it is seated in a place of even greater magnificence for which there is no equal. As Śrī Jiva says in the Bhakti-sandarbha (273): "And in Kali, it is mercifully given by the Lord himself. That is its glorification by comparison.”

Śrī Gaura, taking from the Sātvata scripture the Padma Purāṇa, has given to the world the religion of the age, sankirtana of the Holy Name, with his own merciful commentary:

हरेन्नाम हरेन्नाम हरेन्नामेव केवलम् ।
कलो नास्त्येव नास्त्येव नास्त्येव गतिर्नित्ययः ॥

1कली च श्रीभगवता कृपया तद् यात्रात इत्यपेक्षयेत तत् तत्र तत्र्यशंसति स्थितम्
The name of Hari, the name of Hari, only the name of Hari. In the age of Kali, there is no, there is no, there is no other way.

\[ \text{n¯ amar¯ upe kalik¯ ale kr¯ s.n. a avat¯ ara} \\
\text{n¯ ama haite haya sarva jagat nist¯ ara} \\
\text{d¯ ardhyā lāqi harernāma ukti tīn bāra} \\
\text{jadaloka bujhāite punar evakāra} \\
\text{kevalaśabda punarapi niścaya karaṇa} \\
\text{jñāna-yoga-tapa-karma-ādi nibāraṇa} \\
\text{anyathā ye māne tār nāhika nistāra} \\
\text{nāhi nāhi nāhi e tīn evakāra} \]

Kṛṣṇa’s incarnation in the Age of Kali is in the form of the Holy Name. From the Holy Name comes the salvation of the whole world. For emphasis harernāma is stated three times in this verse. To inform the dull there is again the eva [indeed, for sure]. The word kevala [alone, only] again creates certainty. Knowledge, yoga, austerity, rituals, and so forth are rejected. Whoever thinks otherwise is not delivered. “Not!” “Not!” “Not!” and these with three eva-s. (C.c., Ādi, 17.19-22)

The followers of Śrī Gaura join their voices with that of their dear Lord’s in praise of the Holy Name.

Sanātana Gosvāmin says:

\[ \text{कृष्ण श्रवणपासात्तचं नियांतो ध्यानर्जुनभि:} \\
\text{ग्राह्यस्तम्भं नियांतो नामकीकरणशृङ्खले: }\] \\
\[ \text{तवद्विलोकितेनाय न मया जातु मोक्षसे} \\
\text{वृतो धृतोदसि गार्थ त्वं पीतकोशयवाससि }\] \( \text{॥ (१. भा.) २.१२.१) } \]

Krsna! Getting free from the cords of hearing, you are caught by the ropes of meditation. Getting free from those, too, you are captured by the chains of saṅkīrtana of your Names. Now, I, who am unsettled by bhakti for you, will never let you go. You are surrounded and firmly held by that cloth of yellow silk.
Here, following the teaching of the Bhāgavata (2.3.5), the best of the various forms of bhakti is shown in the manner of a comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of sravaṇa (hearing), kīrtana (praising), and smaraṇa (remembering). If the bhakti of hearing is like binding with silk threads, the bhakti of remembering is like binding with cow ropes. And compared to that the bhakti of praising (kīrtana) is much more firm like binding with iron chains. Remembering pulls a mind absorbed in hearing away and makes it absorbed in it, and again kīrtana pulls a mind absorbed in remembering away and makes it fully absorbed in it. But kīrtana of the Holy Name effects such a firm binding that nothing else has the power to pull the mind away. In power the chanting of the Holy Name is the best of all; it has no equal. This has been shown here.

Śrī Jīva says, commenting on the Bhāgavata (2.1.11):

“Then, too. it is taught that it is the highest practice of all and the highest goal: this saṅkīrtana of the name of Hari is recommended for those disgusted (with the material world).”

The teaching is that saṅkīrtana of the Holy Name is the highest practice and the highest goal for all, for those desiring piety, wealth, sense enjoyment, or liberation, and the single-minded devotee.

Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartin says in his commentary on Bhāgavata (2.1.11):

Though from scriptures like the Bhāgavata and others it is known that bhakti is what is to be communicated, the question arises which among all of the forms of bhakti, remembering etc., has been ascertained as primary. In answer it is said that the kīrtana of the names of Hari that are dear to one has been recognized as the best of all, like the emperor among great kings. Among all the forms of bhakti, hearing, remembering, and glorifying are the primary ones (vide Bhāg. 2.1.5). In this verse it is said that among those three, kīrtana or glorification is the main one. Again among the various forms of kīrtana (glorification of the
names, the forms, the qualities, the sports), glorification of the names is the best. Moreover, in this glorification of the names, glorification of the names that fit one’s own bhakti or, in the sweet rasa, for instance, glorification of names like Gaura, Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, Rādhāramaṇa, Rādhā, and so forth, is the foremost of all. There is nothing equal or superior to it.³

In the present age of Kali, while, on the one hand, all perfections come to one without fail who travels the path of cultivation, depending, wholeheartedly and with respect, on the knowledge that the kirtana of the Holy Names that was initiated and bestowed by Śrī Gaura is the best, on the other, there no other way for living beings to gain salvation. Śrī Gaurahari proclaimed this with his own lips, repeating the truth three times: nāstyeva nāstyeva nāstyeva gatiranyathā, “there is not, there is not, there is not another way.” Therefore, Śrī Rūpa said, wishing the best for all the Vaiṣṇavas that would follow him:

śrīcātanyamukhāṇaḥ hāre kṛṣṇotivṛtiṇāḥ
mṛṣajñānto jagatṛ premī viṣayāntaṁ taddāhayaḥ || (l. bhā., 4)

May they rule supreme, the syllables ‘hare kṛṣṇa’ springing from the mouth of Śrī Caitanya, his own names inundating the whole world with love.

Again, Śrī Rūpa reveals his heart’s special feeling in a blessing to the world:

nīcīlānāṁbhūtirarbhāṅgādāvādānirājanijānānta
avidyā mukkutikāyaśyāmāṁ pāraitattvam hārīnām samabhāyāmi || (kṛṣṇa-
nāmātanak, 1)

³नन्त्र शास्त्रान् भक्तिभक्तिभयोजनयोगमयं एव। तत्रापि भक्तिद्वित्य संग्रामाकर्षणविवेत किमेकं मुख्यवेद परिभाषिते। तत्राहृ गृह्यानुप्रतिनेत्रिति । सवेदु भक्तिद्वित्य संयात्य अवपक्तनभयानानानं श्रीनि मुख्यत्व समाधानं इति ब्रह्मकृत्यकानि । तेनु विषयानि संग्रामकृतस्तिति कृतस्तिति । कृतस्तिति नामपलाग-शादिकोशस्त्रिति तत्स्तिति नामानुप्रतिनेत्रिति । तत्रापि मुख्यानुप्रतिनेत्रिति सर्वकृतस्तिति प्रामानकृतस्तिति (निर्लक्षकृतस्तिति वा) निर्माति प्रवृत्ताधिकारपि न केवल मुख्यभूमि निर्मातित इति।
O Holy Name! The lustre of the crowning jewels of all the Veda honors your lotus-like feet. I seek complete shelter in every way in you who are worshiped even by the liberated.

Here an item of particular note is that Śrī Rūpa who is usually extremely measured with words has used two words that have the same meaning in characterizing his seeking shelter with the Holy Name: paritas and saṃśrayāmi which mean ‘in every way’ and ‘I take shelter completely,’ respectively. The point of stating one idea twice is that this subject is so important for the practitioner that if he does not grasp it his entire life of practice will become useless. Therefore, the extremely compassionate Rūpa has stated it twice for emphasis.

L: I’ve understood that saṅkīrtana of the Holy Name is the best of all of the forms of worship, but some have an opposing opinion here, don’t they? Is this conclusion only applicable to vaidhi bhakti or does it apply to rāgānugā bhakti, too? Some say that in rāgānugā bhakti, smaraṇa is best.

G: What some people say is not supported by scripture. Though in rāgānugā bhakti smaraṇa is indeed important, still, in thinking hierarchically, importance is not the final word. Beyond importance there is more important, most important, and finally the ‘fourth.’ Viśvanātha Cakravartin makes such distinctions in his commentary on Karnapūra’s Ānandavṛndāvanacampū (14.53). In the world of spiritual cultivation (sādhanā) that ‘fourth’ is saṅkīrtana of the Holy Names, beyond which there is nothing.

In this connection, here are the conclusions of the Gosvāmin:

1.1 Viśvanātha Cakravartin’s Conclusion

Viśvanātha Cakravartin, who has said that since saṅkīrtana of the Holy Name is in ‘fourth’ position it is better than smaraṇa and the rest and who has called it the emperor above kings in many places (comm. on Bhāg. 2.1.11, comm. on Brs. 1.2.230), while agreeing that in rāgānugā-bhakti smaraṇa is
central, has nevertheless placed smaran, like the chief commander of the
armed forces, beneath the emperor, saṅkīrtana of the Holy Name.

In the Rāga-vartma-candrikā he says:

The subservience of smaran, the central practice in rāgānugā, to
kīrtana must indeed be emphasized because kīrtana has authority
in this age and because it is established by all scriptures as the
most excellent of all among the various paths of bhakti.⁵

Therefore, not just for vaidhī, but for rāgānuga-bhakti too, saṅkīrtana of
the Holy Name is the best.

1.2 Sanātana Gosvāmin’s Conclusion

The predominance of saṅkīrtana of the Holy Name in attaining the service
of Rādhā, the highest prize of rāgānuga-bhakti, is shown in a comparative
way quite clearly in one of the Gosvāmin’s verses:

तद्विद्गविश्लेष्यांग्निज्ञानप्रभानया ।
भक्ता सम्पत्ति प्रेमनामसंप्राचारगीतवलम् ॥ (६. भाग., २.४.२१५) ॥

That (service of Rādhā) is attained by bhakti in which meditation
on and singing about the various sports of Vraja is predominant
and which is set ablaze by saṅkīrtana of the names of one’s most
beloved one.

In his commentary on that verse Sanātana Gosvāmin says:

Now, the means of attaining the service of Rādhā is stated: “tad-
 dhi ...” By ninefold bhakti in which remembering and singing of
the various Gokula-sports of Śrī Kṛṣṇa predominate, preman is

⁵ ‘अत्र रागानुगाय श्रमूद्ध मात्यायि कौरैनाधीनत्वमवृष्य वक्तृययेव कौरैनाधीव अवतुगाधि-
कारित्वभवत्क्रिमियां यथेऽवेयस्वर्गस्वेय सवेयस्वर्गस्वेय सवोवक्तष्प्रतिपादनाद्वः’
easily achieved. The one qualification that there is in this matter is stated next: *preman* is manifested or purified by *saṅkīrtana* of the names of one’s desired lord or the names of the lord that are most dear to one. Although in using the word *gāna*, *saṅkīrtana* of the Holy Names is meant, *saṅkīrtana* of the names most dear to one has been mentioned again in particular. The reason is that compared to meditating on and singing of the Vraja sports, *saṅkīrtana* of the Holy Names is a comparatively more intimate means to *preman*, more primary than the primary, than which there is nothing higher.\(^6\)

Or, *saṅkīrtana* of the beloved’s Holy Names is itself the very essence of the attainment of *preman*.

### 1.3 The Easiest Way

Why is the Holy Name the easiest way of all to attain immortality? That is found in the first principles of the Holy Name. Now listen to the principles of the Holy Name.

\(^6\)तत्राय विशेषमाह प्रेमस्य निजप्रेमितस्य प्रेमायुक्तम् श्रद्धायां सहितेन प्रेमायुक्तम्। गान्त्युक्ता नामकोन्योऽस्मात् निजप्रेमितस्य गान्त्युक्ता नामकोन्योऽस्मात् प्रेमायुक्तस्य रक्ष्टरसाधनमिव पुनविद्यायः किम् तत्समपत्तिलक्षणम्॥
Chapter 2

The First Principles of the Holy Name

Just as iron in contact with fire gains the qualities of fire, by mere contact with an immortal thing we, too, are able to become immortal. That immortal thing is the Holy Name.

As the Holy Name and the Holy Named are non-different, the Name is a thought-jewel, the very embodiment of consciousness and rasa, full [undivided] and pure [free of connection with māyā], eternally liberated [beyond māyā], the very nature of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Jīva in a commentary on this verse has said:

The Holy Name is a thought-jewel: it grants all one’s desires [i.e., while in contact with the Holy Name, which has the nature of truth, whatever is thought of becomes true. Therefore it is a thought-jewel. See Bhāg., 11.15.26: yathā sakalpayet ...]. Since the Holy Name is Kṛṣṇa, it has the nature of Kṛṣṇa. Consciousness and so forth are adjectives of Kṛṣṇa. The reason the Holy
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Name is Kṛṣṇa is that the Holy Name and the Holy Named are not different. One eternal, conscious, joyful, rapturous, truth has appeared as two.¹

Joyful astonishment is called rasa. This rasa is consciousness rasa — it has no relationship with māyā. It is as though a liquid substance, being poured into two molds, one in the form of a human and the other in the form of syllables, settled in two forms. One is the human form — Śyāmasundara, Vaṃśīdhārī, Tribhaṅgi — and the other is the highest syllabic form 'kṛṣṇa.' The two are embodied consciousness and rasa, the highest nectar,² a condensed ocean of the highest joy.³ The Holy Name is possesses a full form.⁴

Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmin whose very life and decoration was the Holy Name, the highest of nectars, has revealed the truth of the Holy Name with his own lips in a rapturous outburst:

Alas! The name of Kṛṣṇa is an extremely elevated rasa-filled thing. Why rasa-filled? Because it is composed of soft, sweet, syllables, or, because it is made of the rasa of eternal being, consciousness, and joy, it is rasa-filled. Or, because it presents a particular kind of rasa, either the nine rasa headed by śṛṅgāra, the rasa of bhakti, or the rasa of preman. Also, even in the states of separation and union the name appears, therefore it is rasa-filled. Or, rasa is meant in the sense of passion; this name is accompanied by passion. Or, it without failing brings about love of the Lord. Therefore this name is rasa-filled. Or, the name creates in the minds of its servants or of everyone love for itself, therefore it is rasa-filled. Or, rasa might be understood as a kind of potency this name possesses, it has the greatest of powers, therefore, it is rasa-filled. Or, rasa can be a special kind

¹नामेय चिन्तामणि: सर्वोभोजनकः यत्रनादयो कुष्णः कुष्ण्यय: स्वर्पमिलयः । कुष्ण्यय: विशेषणान्तु भत्त्वाहैव तथा कुष्ण्यः हंतुभ्रिहङ्क्यसदितः । एकमेव सबंद्धनन्दसाधिरूप तत्वं द्विविभाविशुद्विषाधिपथः (भ. र. सिः, १.२.२३३) ।
²परमाशयं जानन पूर्णम मे — षानतान गोस्वामिन, ब्र. भाः, १.१.९
³स्मयचिन्तनसुखस्वर्पमिलयः — रुपा, नामश्तक
⁴कुष्ण्यःन्यो नमो नम: — रुपा, नामश्ताका
of quality — this name delivers all distressed people, therefore it is *rasa*-filled.\(^5\)

It is as if he has drank so much *rasa* that his outburst will never end. Therefore again the outburst continues:

If *rasa* is viewed as a kind of happiness, the name is made of intense happiness, therefore it is filled with *rasa*. Or, the name is sweetness at its highest limit, or supremely sweet, therefore it is filled with *rasa*. This name is sweeter than sweet, extremely sweet, therefore it is incomparable.\(^6\)

The Named himself and the syllables of the Name, these are, without dependence on anything else, fully, that is completely, non-different in power and in sweetness. They are just like the way a mango and an apple molded from solid sugar are independently the same in taste, aroma, and in sweetness.

Therefore, even though Ajāmila was completely devoid of any connection with the Named, Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha, at the time he called his own son named Nārāyaṇa, as a result of the contact of his tongue with those four syllables he got sudden liberation.

Furthermore, in Rūpa’s play *Vidagdha-mādhava* Paurnāmāśī said: *no jāne janita kiyadbhiramrtaḥ kṛṣṇetivarṇadvaye*, I don’t know how much nectar the two syllables *kṛṣṇa* are made of. This is the sweetness of the Holy Name. "One truth, in the form of eternal being, consciousness, joy, *rasa* and so forth, has appeared in as two."\(^7\) This statement of Śrī Jīva, in his discussion of the Holy Name, is the definitive statement. It has authority everywhere, or, in other words, it is the final conclusion.

\(^5\)यत: सरस कौमल मधुराक्षरस्वानि सधि-दान-न्दरसमयवाद्यः। यद्वा रसेरशैषैरय सह वर्तमान शुभःराजिनिवर्षेऽथ भक्तिस हरससे च तथा विद्वाने मयोभ परस्कुरणात्। यद्वा रसी गुणस्त्व-हितमस्विविभारिताविवयमेवाश्रीमवद्यसमयवादात्। यद्वा रसी वीर्यविविष: परस्मशक्तिमयात्। यद्वा गुणविविष: विशेषज्ञनिनिमेऽरक्षात्।

\(^6\)यद्वा सुखविविष: वनसुखसमयवात्। मधुर्यविशेष: वा परमसुखसमयवादित दिक। यथोऽह मधु-भुरमुखत्वी। अतस्तः नाम: एव सम तत्तुलमन्यमिहसमानतीति निरुपममित्वः॥ (श्र: भाग: 2.3.184 )

\(^7\)From his comm. on (Brs. 1.2.233)
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The Holy Name is a Vaikuṇṭha substance (Bhāg. 6.2.14) — that is, a substance always without weakness — it does not become impure in any condition — it does not not become corrupted by incursion of the faults of an offender nor, in the adumbration of the Name is it changed.

2.1 The Holy Name: its Compassion and Generosity

L: If the Holy Name is a condensed ocean of the highest joy then just as when one places one’s hand on a large block of ice and immediately goose-bumps arise at the infusion of its quality of coldness throughout the body, by mere contact with the Holy Name goose-bumps should arise in our bodies at the infusion of the great joy of the Holy Name. But that doesn’t happen. What’s the deal?

G: Just think a little bit. Does the hand always feel the cold when it is placed on a lump of ice? It doesn’t. It depends on the condition of the hand. If the hand is covered with a thick covering of cork, it will not feel any of the cold at all. The degree of experience of cold depends on the degree of covering. In the same way, the degree of our experience of that great joy depends on the degree of our offense. If one’s offense is as hard as quilt of diamond then one will not experience any joy at all and visa-versa.

L: Very well, I accept that. Offense deprives us of tasting the joy. Still, the point is that the need for the gift of the generous is greater for penniless, fallen low-lifes like us. If those gifts don’t reach us then where is the greatness of those gifts? Or, what is the use of calling the giver a ‘thought-jewel,’ ‘bestower of all one’s desires,’ and so on?

G: Look, there is one who is the crown jewel of givers, an ocean of mercy, whose compassion has no limit and of whose compassion even offenders, the bad, the lowest, the outcasts are not deprived; that is the Holy Name. Even when the ocean of great compassion, the Named One himself, is put off by the foul smell of the rubbish in the heart-courtyard of a sinful offender, and stands at a distance, this Holy Name willingly accepts the lowly work of the sweeper and, sweeping out that courtyard, gradually makes it clean and pure again. Then the Holy Name comes and sits down to rest in that pure,
peaceful, temple of the heart, washed in the water of the Gaṅgā. (Narottama Dāsa sings: "in the hearts of the holy, ever Govinda rests") Then can see: the Holy Name is greater than the Named himself in compassion and generosity. Even though the Holy Name and the Holy Named are entirely non-different, the Holy Name is distinguished in terms of greater compassion and generosity. The Name understands the condition of everyone and distributes compassion equally. The offenses of the offender dwindle and the self-less love (preman) of those who are offenseless increases. A typhoon arises in his ocean of love (preman) during his daily respectful saṅkīrtana of the Holy Name.8

L: Still, some contemporary people say that supernatural bhakti can never come into the refuse of the natural senses. Along with becoming prepared for service, the senses become supernatural and to these supernatural senses supernatural bhakti can come. They cite the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.234) as evidence for this position. It states there:

अतः श्रीकृष्णामादि न भवेद्वाद्यमिनिवेयः ।
सेवोन्मुखे हि जित्ताधी स्वयमेव स्थुरतः ॥

Therefore, the names and so forth of Kṛṣṇa cannot be grasped by the senses. When one is ready for service, they appear themselves on the tongue and the rest.

But previously it was said that the Holy Name comes to the natural senses and slowly after a while in contact with bhakti the senses become supernatural. What is the real intention of scripture on this topic?9

G: Listen carefully to what Viśvanātha Cakravartin has said on this matter. All of your doubts will be overcome and there will be no need for me to say anything more than that.

8तमस्तत्कृतीन विवाहारिति अनुजिनिधिदारो शुभवित्यादिषु भक्तेनकेषाम्रानां श्रद्धृतिः-सम्यकार्यपि यद्धानां तत्त्रपराधाना प्रेमवृक्षम । नामार्थवतां तृ पामार्थवतायथेऽः । (विश्वनाथ टीका भाग. ६३२४)

9The way that some interpret the verse, "Therefore ... ," is not warranted by scripture. Śrī Jiva in his commentary on this verse says: bhagavatsvarūpatamāmagrahaṇāya pravṛttah, "engaged in taking his name which is part of the essential nature of the Lord." In accordance with this, the meaning of the verse is: since the Kṛṣṇa's names are of his the essential nature, they cannot by grasped by the power of the senses. If, however, the tongue and other senses become engaged in taking the names and the rest, the names themselves come to and appear in those senses.
Alright, let preman be without any material quality, but how can mental activity be without material quality? If one claims that a relationship of holder and held obtains between them, then if the mental activity of a practitioner, who has not developed love (rati) and whose worship has barely begun, is considered without material quality because it is the holder of bhakti, how can anger, hatred, and so forth be present in his mind as obstacles to bhakti?

That is right. One cannot say here that the mind becomes free of material qualities through the relationship of holder-held. But, it happens without that. The conclusion of scripture is like this: there is no mixing of the senses with bhakti in the form of kirtana of the Holy Name and so forth by its merely entering the ears. Rather, in the endless grinding of bhakti against the material mind by means of repeated practice, after rising through the stages of cessation of harmful habits, stability, taste, and attachment, meeting takes place. As long as there is no meeting, the mundane conditions of lust, anger, and so forth in the mind remain harmful.\(^\text{10}\)

By merely adding mercury to sulphur powder no real mixing takes place between them. But, with repeated grinding, after a while mixing does occur. Furthermore, just as when mixing occurs, sulphur’s own form disappears and it takes on another form, so is the mundane condition of the mind destroyed and it becomes spiritualized (cinmaya). Just as in the mixing of sulphur and mercury a new thing, mascara (kohl), is produced, so in the mixing of bhakti with the mind preman is produced.

In his commentary on the 10th Canto of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (10.29.10), Viśvanātha Cakravartin has even more clearly made this point:

the body of the devotee at first is a mixture of material quality (gunā) and absence of material quality (nirguṇa). To the degree that bhakti gradually increases, the material quality part

\(^{10}\text{तथाहि प्रथम स्वानामित्यविरीत्या भक्तं कर्तव्यश्लायनं सध्यं भक्तं मिलात् किन्नु निर्निर्माणं कर्जनं सह भक्तमयं। पीरं पुराणमर्षिनिशिविविश्वाश्च व्यासकिर्मुक्तिकारकोर्य। यावत् तथा न मिलात् स्यानात्नन्दनोऽति रागशास्त्रं प्रकृत्य अन्यथे। (उ. नू. टीका, १.२८)\)
decreases and quality-less part increases. On the stage of *preman* the material quality-state is completely destroyed and the quality-less condition becomes complete.\(^{11}\)

It is just like a mango that is at first slightly reddened, then half ripened, and finally fully ripened.

Sanātana Gosvāmin has said the very same thing in the statement "even of those having bodies made of the five elements ..." (in his comm. on Brhad Bhāg. 2.3.139):

With the appearance of *bhakti*, [in the course of time] the body of composed of five elements obtains the form of eternal being, consciousness, and joy. Moreover, by the force of her power of the compassion, Bhakti-devi is able to appear in any condition [that is, even in a body of the material elements].\(^{12}\)

L: Śrī Cakravartin in his commentary has spoken of repeated grinding. But isn’t anything possible quickly by the power of the thing alone without that grinding?

G: Yes, it is possible for it to happen quickly by the power of the thing itself. Still, that is not a common occurrence. It is uncommon, as for instance (1) in the case of success by mercy in which by Kṛṣṇa’s mercy or by that of his devotee, even without practice, love is able to arise (see B.r.s., 1.2.15). Again in the *Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* Sanātana Gosvāmin has said: the holy land’s power is limitless. By its mercy even without practice some are able to attain that goal (Brhad Bhāg., ?). Do you know what this is like? It is like finding money by chance. if, hearing that someone has found money, we tie up our waist cloths and sit in our rooms, making no effort to earn it, then it is almost certain that we will die of starvation. We have to force the descent of his mercy through intense practice. Worship depends upon effort.

It can also happen quickly (2) for someone who is without offense (B.r.s., 1.2.238).

\(^{11}\)भक्तेऽद्वायं निरुपाक्ष्येऽऽकुलोऽन्तः भगवत्सां प्रस्तुतः।
भक्ति-वृद्धिद्वायं निरुपाक्ष्येऽऽकुलोऽन्तः भगवद्वस्तः।

\(^{12}\)साधनहृदयानां साधनहृदयानां भक्तिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धिवृद्धि
The top five forms of bhakti, headed by the Holy Name, have a difficult to comprehend power indeed; even by merely deciding to undertake them those whose minds are free of offense obtain love.

Jīva Gosvāmin in his commentary has defined the word sad-dhiyām as "those whose minds are free of offense." As soon as a person free of offense pronounces the Holy Name or touches the dust of the holy land, he will be overcome with feelings that produce tears, trembling, gooseflesh and so forth. But the sad thing is that we living beings in the age of Kali are almost all gripped by offense, whether large or small. Therefore, none of this does happens quickly for us. We need the repeated grinding.

2.2 The Adumbration of the Holy Name

L: What is the adumbration of the Holy Name?

G: The meaning of the word adumbration (abhāsa) is "vague or unclear manifestation." Śrī Saṅatana Gosvāmin has given as the meaning of abhāsa the word "imitating (i.e., having the same form as, anukāra) like a reflection," like when the sun is the original and its image in water is its reflection.

In scripture the following discussion of adumbration of the Holy Name is found:

1. It is the first unfolding of the Holy Name in the mind of a practitioner engaged in cultivating the Holy Name, like the earliest stage of sunrise. (When the Holy Name is not present on the tongue, but is in the mind, it is adumbration of the Holy Name. When it is present on the tongue it is the Holy Name itself not an adumbration) (C.c., Antya 3.182-85)

2. If the Holy Named is joined with any living being through the syllables of the Holy Name in an incidental way completely without expectation, it is the adumbration of the Holy Name. Examples:
The Adumbration of the Holy Name

(a) The story of Ajāmila who in order to call his son named Nārāyaṇa pronounced the word “nārāyaṇa”. This is elsewhere called adumbration of the Holy Name by convention.

(b) The story of Satyatapas in the Varāha Purāṇa cited in Sanatana’s commentary on Brhad- bhagavatamrta (2.2.173). A brāhmaṇa was standing in water doing his daily prayers. At that time a tiger who was about to attack him was struck by the arrow of a hunter and was liberated on hearing in his dying moment the Holy Name from the mouth of the brāhmaṇa. This is an example of liberation by the adumbration of the Holy Name.

Nearly all of Kali’s living beings are in the grips of some measure of offense. As a result adumbration of the Holy Name has no affect on them (Krama-sandarbha, 6.2.20). What then is the purpose of discussing adumbration of the Holy Name? In order to get some sense of the indescribable, unlimited power of the Holy Name.

The statement in scripture that by one adumbration of the Holy Name one gets liberation and eventually attains Vaikuṇṭha applies in the case of absence of offense to the Holy Name; when there is offense adumbration of the Holy Name has no effect. In the latter case, one must depend on practice. The sin and offense of a person possessed of offense to the Holy Name the Name itself clears away. If one is tirelessly engaged in chanting, the Holy Name will be effective: nāmānyeva harantyagham. One should take the words nāmānyeva to mean “only the Holy Name,” or the adumbration of the Holy Name, but not any thing else.

Here is the victory flag of the mercy of Gaura — without his grace there was no other way for the living beings of the Age of Kali because we had lost the ability to even take the medicine. We are profoundly offensive. It was a case of the Holy Name, the one and only medicine, not coming to our tongues. Before the coming of Gaura, the Holy Name did not come — Śrī Vālmīki is an example of that. At first the name of Rāma would not come to Ratnākara’s tongue. But now the situation is different — now, if anyone

\[\text{13}^{13}\text{अथ साङ्केत्यमित्राय मुकुञ्जामाबार्तनाय यदिःशास्त्रविद्वदिः वासनापद्धतिः नामार्थम्} \text{ गु-} \\
\text{णांभव इत्यदि तु भक्तिदर्शयति न्यत्तु यथाकर्म नामार्थम् नामार्थम् नामार्थम् नामार्थम्} \\
\text{अविभेदतप्रभुकानि तान्यवधकारणातिपापात । (अम-} \\
\text{संदभे, ६.२.२०)
Chapter 2. The First Principles of the Holy Name

desires to repeat the Holy Name, that Name, out of the greatest compassion, comes and dances on his tongue, the mirror of his mind is cleansed, and gradually that servant of the nectar of the Name becomes submerged in the ocean of the nectar of preman.
Chapter 3

Offenses to the Holy Name

L: What is an offence to the Holy Name?

G: The only cause of being cheated of the mercy of the merciful Holy Name is its displeasure, otherwise known as *aparâdha* or offense. That which brings about the displeasure of the Holy Name, causing pleasure (*râdha*) to vanish (*apa*), is called an offense to the Holy Name. The displeased Holy Name contracts its power to protect the sheltered.¹

L: Then along with learning of the greatness and sweetness of the Holy Name one needs to learn especially well about the difficult-to-control power of offense to the Holy Name. Please graciously describe that to me.

G: Just as the Holy Name’s power is limitless — if one knowingly or unknowingly does Nama *kirtana* all of one’s sins are uprooted, so is the power of offense to the Holy Name limitless — if one knowingly or unknowingly touches an offense to the Holy Name the love even of one who is a great devotee is destroyed. The action of an offense is that gradually love is destroyed and one begins to regard the spiritual as material. The great ones have by their examples given us warning in this thoroughly destructive matter.

One day, while the beloved *bhakta* of Nrîsimhadeva, Prahlâda, was engaged in the service of Viṣṇu, a guard came and delivered the news "two

¹यदि ते अपराधिनस्मि स्मृतिति तस्याप्रसाद एव स्वाभितापालने कारणम्। विभवाधिः भाग। ६.२९ -२०
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Vaiśṇava have come to see you and are waiting at the door.” Mahārāja Prahlāda then requested him with folded hands ”Please ask the Vaiśṇava to wait for a little bit.” Then in the absorption of performing arcana he forgot about those Vaiśṇava. The Vaiśṇava waited for quite a while and then, blaming their fortune, left. On this side, the great offense of disrespectsing Vaiśṇava touched the heart of bhakta Prahlāda and suddenly his mind reversed. He became disfigured with anger and began to say: ”Viṣṇu is the enemy of my father. He is on the side of the gods who are opposed to us, the long-standing enemies of our clan. Today I am going to attack Vaikuṇṭha and punish them.” Throughout the clans of demons the sounds ”Prepare! Prepare!” rose up. Outfitting a huge army Prahlāda went to conquer Vaikuṇṭha. Just imagine what great troubles can rise from just one offense. Fortunatley, by his guru’s mercy, Prahlāda Mahārāja was protected from that course.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin has also given us an example in this connection. One day he was situated in trance remembering the sacred sport. He was watching Śrī Kṛṣṇa lift Rādhā with both hands to collect flowers from a high branch. Suddenly he released her and Rādhā, grabbing the branch, was left dangling there. Seeing this trick the girlfriends all began to laugh and along with them Śrī Rūpa in trance. At that very moment a crippled Vaiśṇava was passing in front of Rūpa. He thought ”Gosvāmi is making fun of me” and became sad. Because of that Vaiśṇava’s sadness an offense touched Śrī Rūpa’s heart and his trance was broken. The sport did not appear any more in his heart. Just see how one offense is able to subtly spread its web of harm. Anyway, later that crippled Vaiśṇava understood the secret of Rūpa’s laughter and his mental balance returned. Śrī Rūpa was able to return to his meditations.

L: My, what incredible power offense has. How does the displeasure of the Holy Name or offense to the Holy Name occur? Kindly tell me about this.

G: One can know how the Holy Name becomes displeased from the satām nindā nāṁnāḥ verses of the Padma Purāṇa (Sarga, 48.46-49). Ten kinds of offense are listed there. Listen to a discussion following Śrī Jīva’s comments, in his Krama-sandarbha, on the Bhagavata verse 2.1.11.

1. Blasphemy of the Good. It is a fault to blaspheme any living being. That is a general fault, however, not an offense to the Holy Name. Faith is the door through which one enters the world of bhakti. “A person who
has faith is qualified for bhakti.” 2 “By the word faith one means a belief that is strong in the certainty that if one performs bhakti to Kṛṣṇa all actions are complete.” 3 From this state of mind one’s being a Vaiṣṇava begins. Such Vaiṣṇava from whom the glory of the Holy Name is spread in the world are the good (sādhu). Blasphemy of such good ones, or nourishing a feeling of hostility towards them, or not welcoming them or being pleased when one sees them is the most egregious of offense to the Holy Name. Therefore, it is listed first. Even hearing blasphemy of the good is an offense to the Holy Name.

2. Thinking Śiva Independent of Viṣṇu. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, after becoming the womb-ocean-lying Mahāviṣṇu who is a part of the causal-ocean-lying Mahāviṣṇu who, in turn, is a portion of Kṛṣṇa’s own Saṅkarṣaṇa form, takes on the quality of inertia (tamoguṇa) and becomes the Quality Avatāra, Śiva, in order to destroy the world. It is like yogurt coming from milk. Those who think that this Śiva is an independent principle are offenders of the Holy Name. One should see Śiva as the best bhakta of the Lord and respect him. Harihara are one self — that is, in dearness.

3. Neglecting or Disrespecting the Guru. The guru is a teacher about the spiritual world, a protector, and a friend — more affectionate than a father. The Lord who exists in the form of the guru, having become an incarnation of a bhakta in a distributive fashion in the world, is also in the spiritual realm as the collective guru which, though personally having descended [into the world], is eternally present in the form of the guru at the left side of the Lord. 4 For this reason, the form of Kṛṣṇa and the form of the best bhakta of Kṛṣṇa simultaneously coexist in the guru. 5 The Lord is manifested in the form of the individual guru for the benefit of the disciples through the medium of some bhakta who possesses love for Him. In worship is in pursuit of passion (rāgānugā, when the godly opulent part subsides, one has a

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2 śraddhāvān jana haya bhakti adhikārī, C.c., Madhya, 22.64.
3 śraddhā sabde viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niścaya, kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarvakhayakta haya, C.c., Madhya, 22.62.
4 म एवं भवतात्त्र व्यक्तिर्पम्या भक्तवतात्त्रविन्यमुत्पत्तिः स एव तत्र समिस्तिर्पम्या । स्वामामन्दे साक्षारत्तात्त्वनाति तृप्ति वतेत् । (भ. सं., २८६)
5 गृहर्षोऽत्साहनाति साक्षारूपनातिः मद्यवर्तमनाति भावः । (संस्कृतवैष्णविषयोः, १०.३०.३४)
Chapter 3. Offenses to the Holy Name

sweet vision of the guru as a dear girlfriend of Kṛṣṇa in the māñjarī form. Not respecting such an affectionate spiritual father is an offense to the Holy Name.

4. Blasphemy of Scripture. Blasphemy of śrutī [the Veda], smṛti [the ritual and law texts], the Purāṇa [ancient histories and genealogies], and the scriptures that follow them, or disrespect for them, or lack of belief in them is one kind of offense to the Holy Name.

5. Hollow Praise. Thinking that the passages in scripture that describe the greatness of the Holy Name are just hollow praise is an offense to the Holy Name.

6. Thinking Fancifully with Respect to the Holy Name. Thinking of another means in order to lessen emphasis on the greatness of the Holy Name is an offense to the Holy Name. If, out of mental anguish, thought of another means arises with the objective of arriving at one’s goal faster, it is not an offense. But if one is impelled by the objective of making the greatness of the Holy Name secondary it is an offense.

7. Sinning on the Strength of the Holy Name. The power of the Holy Name delivers the highest goal of human life, the lotus feet of the Lord himself, the very condensation of eternal existence, consciousness, and joy. To use that unlimitedly powerful, supremely ambrosial Holy Name to acquire sensual pleasures like wealth, followers, and so forth is the greatest depravity toward the Holy Name. It is like using a śālarāma stone to crack open nuts.

8. Thinking Other Auspicious Actions Equal to the Holy Name. The Holy Name is the whole (aṅgi). From this whole all the others limbs of worship rise. Thinking that one of those parts is equal to

9. All sense objects are sin” says Śrī Narottama — viṣaya garalamaya (Prema-bhakti-candrikā).

10. From this whole all the others limbs of worship rise. Thinking that one of those parts is equal to...
the whole is an offense to the Holy Name. If one is able to survive this offense, that is, if one is able seek shelter with the Holy Name exclusively, thinking it the best of all and with the greatest of respect, Master Holy Name, who is affectionate to those who seek shelter, will protect them from the other nine offenses. This is his promise — *name bhaktah praṇaśyati* (Bhag. gī, 9.31).11

9. **Instructing the Holy Name to the Faithless.**

10. **Displeasure on Hearing the Greatness of the Holy Name.**

11:芽摩智仏: साम्यमननमिप्रमादोपराधो पार्वेण रामाऽतरशतनामस्तोंरविन्द्मक्टक्नामापिसर्वंबियिवियम्। (कम-सन्दे, २३३)