

Prema Vivarta
—Divine Transformations of Spiritual Love—

by
Srla Jagadananda Pandita

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On Srila Jagadananda Pandita

—A Biographical Sketch—

Srila Jagadananda Pandita was a close and confidential associate of Lord Caitanya. A resident of Navadvipa, he was Nimai's boyhood friend and classmate. They enjoyed a unique relationship throughout life. He was continually picking fights with the Lord. These quarrels began from their early boyhood days and continued in Jagannatha Puri. By then Lord Caitanya had already entered the *sannyasa* order of life; for the sole purpose of benedicting the fallen souls of Kali-yuga. Some of the boyhood pastimes depicting their innocent disputes have been described in this book. The emotional exchanges between Lord Caitanya and Jagadananda Pandita should not be misunderstood. Their relationship is unspoilt by mundane hate, selfish motivations or evil designs. Whether the pastimes took

place in their early boyhood or late in their mature dealings they are completely free of envy. Their seemingly acrimonious demeanour stemmed from a deep concern for each other and indeed not from self aggrandisement.

Their dealings were enacted on the transcendental plane of pure divine consciousness. The main actor in these pastimes is Lord Krsna or Lord Gauranga Himself. Lord Krsna in the Dvaraka pastimes exhibited a similar relationship with His favoured queen Satyabhama. And now the same supreme Lover Krsna, appearing as Lord Caitanya, the most munificent incarnation of Godhead, performs in ditto His extraordinary pastime of Dvaraka presently with Jagadananda Pandita in Navadvipa.

In the *Gaura-ganoddesa-dipika* Jagadananda Pandita is described as Satyabhama, one of the principal queens of Krsna in Dvaraka — "*Satyabhama prakaso pi Jagadananda Pandita*". He participated in many of Lord Caitanya's pastimes. He was present when Lord Caitanya subdued Chandkazi; delivered Jagai and Madhai, when Lord's *sannyasa* staff was broken; accompanied the Lord to Puri after His *sannyasa* along with Nityananda Prabhu, Damodara Pandita, and Mukanda Datta; sang and danced in innumerable *sankirtana* gatherings; once in ire he broke the pot of sandalwood oil with a stick. In all of these pastimes Jagadananda Pandita exhibited a volatile nature which even Lord Caitanya always carefully handled. As Satyabhama possessed a 'leftist' mood and nature so did Jagadananda Pandita. Among the queens of Krsna in Dvaraka Rukmini and others were restraint, awe, demureness to the extent of grovelling and always ready to surrender to the will of the lover. While the 'leftist' mood is recalcitrant argumentative, intransigent and always trying to impose her will on the lover. The 'leftist' mood was full embodied in Jagadananda Pandita. These pastimes have been vividly described in the *Sri Caitanya Caritamrta* and *Sri Caitanya Bhagavat*.

Although there were frequent quarrels between them the Lord always submitted to the dictates of Jagadananda's intense love for Him. Jagadananda Pandita could not stand to see his beloved Lord performing severe austerities. He, repeatedly tried to force the Lord to give up His strict vows of *sannyasa*, knowing that He was none other than the supreme Lord Krsna. Therefore what was the need for such undue hardships. Consequently The Lord never gave anyone the slightest reason to think that Jagadananda Pandita, inspite of his explosive nature, was offensive or a disturbing element. Rather the Lord willingly remained under Jagadananda Pandita's influence, which tells volumes about the depth and intimacy of their relationship. The Lord would go out of His way to appease Jagadananda Pandita whenever he was upset and irreconcilable, knowing fully that Jagadananda acted only out of spontaneous love for Him.

Once Sanatana Gosvami, tying a saffron cloth around his head, came to take '*prasadam*' with Jagadananda Pandita at his residence in Vrndavana. Jagadananda Pandita felt divine exhilaration seeing the cloth, thinking that it must belong to Lord Caitanya. He was nevertheless curious, and wanted to confirm with Sri Sanatana where he had received that cloth. Being told that it was from one Mukunda Saraswati, a *mayavadi sannyasi*, Jagadananda flew into a fit of rage. He

cried out, "This cloth is not my beloved Lord Caitanya's remnant." He jumped up and brandishing a cooking pot, rushed at Sanatana Gosvami as if to strike him. Sanatana Gosvami was truly impressed at the Pandita's love and undivided attachment for the Lord. Later the Gosvami commented that this was precisely what he was always wanting to see in a devotee— unalloyed love for Lord Caitanya.

PREMA-VIVARTA —Salient Features of this book—

Some of the lord's pastimes in Navadvipa, before He took up *sannyasa*, are very enchantingly described in this book. These pastimes have never appeared in any other literature. Further the book delineates the Lord's exemplary Vaisnava dealings and His preaching activities in a simple, lucid style of Bengali. In fact there are few literatures that can boast of an easy, direct and unequivocal presentation of complex esoteric concepts. I hope that this attempt to translate this book is able to convey at least a fraction of the wonderful excellences contained in the original text. I humbly pray to all the readers to forgive me for any inadvertence and offences on my part; they are unintentional. Vaisnavas are swan-like personalities therefore they may kindly overlook the mistakes and taste only the nectar Srila Jagadananda has so mercifully left behind for posterity. I like to end by repeating Srila Jagadananda's own words describing his book. He said that anyone who hears *Prema-Vivarta* is guaranteed to experience the divine ecstasy of love of Godhead.

Chapter 1—Mangalacarana—

The loving affairs of Sri Sri Radha and Krsna are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure-giving-potency. Although Radha and Krsna are one in Their identity, They have separated Themselves eternally. Now these two transcendental identities have again united in the form of Sri Krsna Caitanya. I bow down to Him, who has manifested Himself with the sentiment and complexion of Srimati Radharani, although He is Krsna Himself.

The transcendental identities of Sri Radha and Sri Krsna

I offer my prostrated obeisances again and again to the indivisible, non-dual truth, Sri Krsna, who is the ultimate essence of all scriptural conclusions.

That absolute principle sometimes manifests Himself as two— Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna— and sometimes as one Supreme Absolute in the form of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

The Supreme Truth is one without a second, and there is no difference between the Lord and His absolute potency. Yet simultaneously, there is an eternal difference between the two, hence the entire Vedic literature emphasizes the principle that the Supreme Lord's potencies are inconceivably one and different from the Lord Himself.

The Supreme Absolute Truth is the embodiment of knowledge, *samvit*, His *sandhini* potency sustains His own existence of all others, and His pastimes are carried out by His *hladini* potency. Thus He manifests Himself by these three principal potencies and their innumerable sub-potencies.

The Supreme Absolute Truth manifests Himself through His multifarious transcendental potencies, and everything is achieved through the interaction of these potencies. Thus, dynamic exchanges of pure emotions are eternally exhibited in the indivisible Supreme, yet the energy and the Energetic are always non-different.

The pleasure potency transforms the original Absolute Truth, Sri Krsna, into two forms, Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna, and thus wonderfully arranges transcendental pastimes for Them.

The loving affairs of Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna, are transformations of the 'hladini sakti' or the pleasure potency. And it is this inconceivable potency which maddens Radharani and Krsna. The *hladini* possesses the extraordinary capacity to make the impossible happen, without Herself being affected; She is also responsible for creating variagatedness in transcendence.

The Absolute Truth is imperceptible to empiricists and is revealed only by Lord Krsna's Grace

This gives rise to an extraordinary point of consideration: the empiricists and speculators can never understand this subject matter if they go on thinking about it for thousands and millions of years. Only that person who has received the mercy of Lord Krsna can know about these esoteric subject matters. Speculations on them for millions of years will not crystallize into actual comprehension.

The loving affairs of Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure-giving potency *hladini*. The quintessence of Their loving exchanges is ecstasy, in which Their hearts become maddened with love.

When Krsna becomes two separate identities, Srimati Radharani and

Himself, loving affairs take place and hladini transforms Herself into various loving pastimes. These loving pastimes are eternally present but in an unmanifest state prior to the transcendental forms, of Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna, are manifest as two personalities. How then did one become two? The pleasure potency of the Lord necessitates the existence of two separate identities, but whence came this pleasure potency of the Lord that created this division?

The answer to this question is that all of these affairs are taking place because of the omnipotent will of Lord Krsna, who is eternally beyond the influence of time and circumstances.

Spiritual Truth is transcendental to the influence of material nature

Material nature is bound by past and future due to the influence of time factor, but the transcendental energy or the absolute reality is free from inebrieties like past and future. The most wonderful thing about It is that It exists eternally in the present.

This spiritual reality, the transcendental existence, is beyond the realm of sense perception, as well as mundane words and mental faculty. The truth is that any attempt to describe this reality will merely result in the commission of some grievous offense. This transcendental reality is devoid of any discrepancies or mistakes, and everything there finds perfect harmony in the inconceivable energy of the Lord.

Moreover, any inconsistency is totally absent in spiritual reality, which is forever fresh and dynamic, and intoxicates one with spiritual bliss. Thus, it is the nature of this reality that we see apparent contradictions and opposing sentiments existing simultaneously in It.

A most amazing attribute of transcendental reality is that It shelters contrary concepts. It is sufficiently proficient to initiate activities without the pleasure potency becoming manifest.

Before the pleasure potency manifests Herself, she arranges that Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna appear as two separate transcendental personalities and the loving exchanges between Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna causes Her to be born. Eternally existent, the transcendental reality is always free from material incongruities such as time, fallacies and so on. On the other hand, it is only appropriate that the time factor and dualities co-exist in material nature.

The non-dual Absolute Truth and the transcendental reality of Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna exist simultaneously and eternally, and both are situated in the pure absolute plane.

Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna are united in Lord Caitanya

Thus, Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna entered into one transcendental form which presently appears as my dearmost Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

And when I say 'presently' do not mistakenly judge this according to the mundane time factor. Remember, the transcendental truth is beyond the influence of time. Thus to say that Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna appeared before Lord Caitanya, who made His appearance recently, would be an attempt to impose material inebrieties like time and chronological order on Them. This misconception will totally alienate us from the eternal Truth.

The word *ekatma* means an independent and individual spirit; so, if you consider that this word refers to Lord Caitanya alone, then it implies that Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna appeared later than Lord Caitanya.

Do not waste valuable time uselessly trying to debate who appeared first - Srimati Radharani and Lord Krsna or the son of Srimati Sacidevi, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Earlier I explained that everything is perfectly adjusted on the transcendental plane. Thus, be extra cautious before you enter into a debate about who appeared first —Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu or Sri Krsna.

The two qualities, namely simultaneity and eternity are characteristic of the absolute reality which finds full expression in transcendental truth. Uninterrupted spiritual pastimes are the supreme excellences of this transcendental truth.

The pleasure-giving *hladini* potency simultaneously shelters two truths, as far as I know. One is *pranaya*, or loving exchange, and the other is *vikara*, or the transformation of that love or the pastimes between Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna. That transcendental potency has now appeared in this material world in the form of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He roams along the banks of the Ganges, constantly performing congregational chanting of the holy name of God.

The pastimes of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu are even more ecstatic than the pastimes of Lord Sri Krsna. In Lord Caitanya's *lila* the loving exchanges reach their quintessence. When this love achieved excessive heights, *hladini*, or the pleasure potency of the Lord, embraced Krsna with feelings of great ecstasy and covered Him with the mood and lustre of Srimati Radharani.

Lord Krsna, appearing in His full manifestation as Caitanya Mahaprabhu, came to His own abode *Navadvipa-dhama* where He felt a much greater pleasure than in *Vraja-dhama*. He appeared in *Navadvipa* to fulfil the specific purpose of His incarnation and to relish His heart's desire.

Lord Caitanya's true identity

The form of Lord Caitanya is the non-different, original and most wonderful manifestation of Lord Krsna. Simultaneously the form of Lord Krsna is the original and most unprecedented manifestation of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

The two Supreme Personalities are most nectarean because of the pleasure potency. They are sweeter than the sweetest nectar and more. Lord Krsna's sweet nectarean form is the form of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and I offer my repeated obeisances at His lotus feet.

If you analyse the word *ekatma*, you might say it means Brahman or the formless. You might also say that Brahman is the source of the appearance of Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna. But this is not the proper conclusion of the verse under discussion. The real meaning is that these two identities have become one again in the form of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Brahman is Lord Caitanya's bodily effulgence

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu must never be considered as the formless impersonal brahman. He is the dynamic embodiment of bliss, the Supreme Personality in a pure state of existence. Brahman is the impersonal bodily effulgence of the Lord and thus Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the source of Brahman.

Therefore the word *ekatma* addresses only Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Erudite scholars such as Svarupa Damodara Gosvami are truly fortunate, because they have understood this.

Thus, offer your obeisances to that Absolute Truth — *ekatma*. Then you shall receive service at the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna, and all of your desires will find complete fulfilment.

Paramatma or Supersoul is Lord Caitanya's partial expansion

And, if you conjure that the word *ekatma* means *paramatma*, or the Supersoul, from which Radha and Krsna have appeared as two separate identities, then the import of the verse is not fully justified, and it contradicts very strongly the definition of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the original Absolute Truth, and one must understand that the Supersoul always remains His plenary expansion.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the Lord of my heart, He is the form of *ekatma*, the oneness of Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna. I am a maidservant of the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani and there is no other position I desire more. I love that form which has been adorned with the lustre of Srimati Radharani.

I offer my fallen obeisances with undivided surrender at His lotus feet, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, son of Mother Saci, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Chapter 2—About Sri Prema-vivarta

Lord caitanya's beauty and transcendental attributes always sustain my

remembrance; my heart cries out, my body swells and twists unceasingly. Amongst incessant tears, a desire to write subdues all other thoughts. I take up the pen and write, pushing aside shame and fears.

I am a pandita or scholar by name only. I do not possess any real knowledge. Yet I have a strong yearning to write about Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's transcendental pastimes.

Srila Svarupa Damodara Gosvami and Sri Jagadananda Pandita

Svarupa Damodara Gosvami once enquired. "What do you write, Panditji?" I replied, "I simply write about subjects which are most dear to me."

"I wish to secretly write down those pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu that are stored in my memory."

Svarupa Damodara Gosvami said, "Then write about the wonderful characteristics of the Lord. The entire world can derive their greatest benefit from reading them."

I said, "I am ignorant about what is beneficial to the world. I'll just write down whatever appeals to me."

Svarupa Damodara Gosvami left me alone, knowing I was eccentric. Sitting by myself, I meditate upon the Lord, and I simply write about His pastimes. I have witnessed many of my Lord's pastimes, because I have always stayed by Him. I am writing down some of those events according to my bent of mind.

I remember the Lord's activities and my mind and heart cry out in separation, my eyes shed incessant tears. I write down the incidents as they come to memory.

Lord Caitanya and the author

One day the Lord jokingly said to me, "You have been the chief queen of Dvaraka for a long time, and I am just a poor beggar. Why do you serve Me? You can get so many hundreds of renunciants like Myself to serve."

I replied, "Give up Your pretension and deceit. Why don't You say that I am simply a maidservant engaged at the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani.

"You have stolen the lustre of my dear mistress Radharani: hence, You are a thief, and I shall catch You and return You back to the land of Vraja.

"My only desire is to serve Srimati Radharani, but You want to send me to far away Dvaraka. This is all Your mischievous pastime. Your activities as a renounced sannyasi are only too well-known to me. In fact, You just want to deceive and deprive us while You serve the lotus feet of Radharani all by Yourself."

Remembering the Lord's childhood pastimes

Oh! How wonderful are Lord Caitanya's lotus feet. They are my most cherished treasure in devotional service. Where has He gone, leaving me alone, a lonesome wretch? He has left me, yet I am still alive? I toss and turn, suffering this unbearable agony of separation!

Once in our early boyhood days, we had a quarrel in school. Feeling very sad and hurt, I sat down on the bank of the Ganga in Mayapura and cried all day and night. My Lord, always the most merciful master, came to me at the break of dawn with Gadadhara Pandita. He called out to me, "Jagadananda, such anger is not at all good. Speak to us and forget your stubbornness."

My anger melted just looking at His ecstatic face, and I asked Him, "Why did you come in the darkness of early morning? Nadia roads are very hard and full of stones. It must have caused you great pain to walk on it. You have undertaken so much difficulty just for my sake?"

The Lord said, "Come, let us go! The night has ended. Go to your house and eat. I know the sadness you feel. I have also fasted all this while and slept on the stone floor."

"Gadadhara Pandita came to My house, so together we have come to search for you. It is good that you have given up your insolence. Now go to your house, tomorrow we can joyfully play together again."

Catching hold of Gadadhara's feet, I sat up slowly, for it was impossible for me to disregard my Lord's instructions. I then went to the Lord's house, ate a little and laid down to rest for a few hours.

In the morning Mother Saci and Jagannatha Misra fed me rice and milk and then sent me off to school with the Lord. After classes I went to my home with the Lord, and sitting together, we ate.

The love one feels for the beloved after a quarrel is like pure nectar, and so I also felt intense ecstasy. The Lord said, "It is because of ecstatic love that you and I get angry. Our love for each other continues to increase after every quarrel."

The author's love for the Lord

My Lord Gauranga is a moon-like personality, one's life becomes a series of illusions without worshipping Him, but one can experience supreme ecstasy by rendering Him devotional service. The Lord is the embodiment of magnanimity, so who can ever forget Him? He endlessly distributes mercy to His servants.

Lord Caitanya is my Lord and master, and I will never leave His shelter. He is the Lord of my heart. Whoever utters His name 'Sri Caitanya!' becomes my dearest friend and I will rush to embrace him.

O Lord Caitanya! You are the most precious treasure of my heart. I refuse to see the face of that faithless person who has never glorified the name of Lord Caitanya. However if by chance I see the face of anyone who has forgotten the Lord or disregard His lotus feet, then my whole day is ruined!

I shall beat with a stick that person who offers respect to some other sannyasi, neglecting Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and I shall put fire to the mouth of

the person who discusses frivolous and mundane topics, avoiding the nectarean pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

If to please Lord Caitanya I have to experience pain, then let me suffer eternal anguish. And if my Lord renounces pleasure and joy, accepting an austere life style, then I shall drown in an ocean of grief.

Lord Caitanya and Srila Gadadhara Pandita

One day, while I was totally absorbed in playing, my Lord entered the deep forest on the bank of the river Alokanda Ganga. Gadadhara Pandita and I quickly got up and followed behind Him. A splendid parrot perched on a fragrant Bakula tree observed our movements.

The Lord saw the parrot. Catching hold of him He said, "You are Vyasadeva's son, so you should sing the glories of Sri Radha and Krsna and increase our bliss." The parrot, ignoring the Lord's words, began to sing — "Gaura Hari"! The Lord feigning anger, hurled the parrot away.

The parrot continued to sing, "Gaura! Gaura!" and began to dance. We immediately felt the stirrings of ecstatic emotions hearing the parrot's wonderful song. The Lord again said, "O parrot! This is Vrndavana! Sing loudly the divine names of Radha and Krsna so that everyone can hear."

The parrot replied, "Vrndavana has now been transformed into Navadvipa, and I see Radha and Krsna in the form of Gaura Hari. I am a parrot living in this forest, simply surviving on the chanting of the holy name of Gaura. You are my Krsna, and Gadadhara here is my Radharani."

I offer my prostrated obeisances at the feet of anyone who remembers the ambrosial pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Sri Navadvipa and Sri Vrndavana

To me, Sri Gadadhara and Sri Gauranga are Radha and Syama, and I see the thirty-two square miles area of Navadvipa-dhama as an exact replica of Vrndavana. Whoever differentiates between Lord Krsna, the son of Mother Yasoda and Lord Nimai, the son of Mother Saci, is to be avoided like poison.

He who cannot perceive Vrndavana in Navadvipa is a foolish logician whose life is merely a burden to him.

Worship of Radha-Krsna without approaching Lord Gauranga is futile

I have unconditional love for one who worships the holy name, the holy abode, and the wonderful pastimes and characteristics of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Any person, even though born in Bengal, will never feel attraction in his heart for the transcendental name, pastimes and abode of Sri Radha and Krsna, if he does not take shelter of the transcendental form, name, ecstatic pastimes and

sublime abode of Lord Caitanya first.

Chapter 3—First Prayer

I offer my repeated obeisances at the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani, whose partial expansion, Srimati Satyabhama, resides in Dvaraka.

The son of Nanda Maharaja, Sri Krsna, has now appeared as Sri Krsna Caitanya, and having brought with Him Sri Gadadhara Pandita, they purify and bless the land of Nadia.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu brought Gadadhara Pandita to Sri Purusottama-Ksetra, Puri and there They manifested many confidential pastimes, in the conjugal mood as "Gaura Gadai".

The Lord introduced Gadadhara Pandita to the worship of the Sri Tota-Gopinatha Deity and encouraged him in that service.

To me He gave Lord Giridhari's worship, Who resides on the ocean shores. Additionally He sent me all the devotees from Bengal to look after.

Srila Svarupa Damodara Gosvami is more dear to me than my very life, for he is Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu's life and soul.

I throw myself, my entire life, at the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. I am able to write this Prema-vivarta only on the instructions and by the inspiration of all the devoted Vaisnavas.

Chapter 4 —Lord Caitanya's Magnitude

Lord Caitanya's Dancing is Eternal

All of you, my brothers! Please worship Sri Gauranga, the Lord and master of my heart, because without Him, life becomes a meaningless dreary and drab burden.

My Lord Gauranga dances eternally in Srimati Sacidevi's courtyard in Mayapura, accompanying Him is Lord Nityananda and Advaita Acarya Prabhu. He danced in Srivas Pandita's house absorbed in the most ecstatic moods; anyone beholding Him thus never forgets that wonderful sight.

His sublime pastimes and bodily movements remain indelibly imbedded in my heart like moving pictures, and as my soul yearns and cries out to see more, They flash across the screen of my mind.

When I saw my Lord dancing in the Jagannatha Mandira, endless waves of ecstatic emotion flooded my heart. What is there for me in this wretched life except to see the exquisite dancing movements of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu performing on the banks of the Jahnvi Ganga River.

All demigods and demigoddesses are Lord Caitanya's servitors

Everyone must worship the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu with undeviating devotion and reject the worship of demigods and goddesses as though they were on the same level. Know that all the demigods and goddesses are servitors of Sri Gauranga. Never let the mind entertain the idea that Lord Krsna and Lord Gauranga are different personalities.

Be enlightened in spiritual truth; your spiritual master is the recipient of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's special mercy. The eternal associates of the Lord are the different limbs of His transcendental body.

As for those who adamantly oppose Lord Caitanya's divine position as the supreme person they should clearly understand that every soul is Lord Gauranga's servant.

Firm faith in worshipping Lord Caitanya

Do not indulge in useless criticism and finding faults in others. Deep within your heart simply worship the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu with unflinching devotion.

Chant Lord Gauranga's holy name, because His name is omnipotent; all other names of demigods, goddesses and Visnu-tattvas are perfectly harmonised and contained in His name.

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the original spiritual master in this cosmic creation, so teach everyone the process of simple, unalloyed love for Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Give up deceit and hypocrisy and purify your mind. Either sincerely worship Lord Gauranga or maintain society, family and friendship. It is impossible to do both.

Choose between engaging yourself in the transcendental devotional service of Caitanya Mahaprabhu or taking shelter of mundane activities; serving family, friends and society. It is impossible to maintain both these activities simultaneously.

I, Jagadananda, humbly caution that if we do not develop single-mindedness in executing devotional service, then we place ourselves in the impossible position of trying to cross a river with two boats, with a foot in each.

Chapter 5—Quarrelsome Jagai

The emotional upheavals caused by my intense love for the Lord dance ceaselessly like waves on the ocean of my mind. Every day I get into some quarrel and misunderstanding with Lord Gauranga, so I came to be known as Kundale Jagai: "the quarrelsome Jagai".

I went on a pilgrimage to Vraja Vrndavana, and spent some days staying with Srila Sanatana Gosvami. There I also picked a fight with him. One day I saw the equiposed, self-realised soul, Sanatana Gosvami, wearing a red cloth usually worn by "devi-worshippers" wrapped around his head.

I immediately felt like smashing him with the rice pot lying in the corner, but when I saw Sanatana Gosvami's humble dealings, all my pugnaciousness vanished, and I threw myself to one corner in great shame. My beloved Lord Gaura knows everything about me and yet He sent me to Vrndavana, while He stayed far away and watched the fun.

It is good that my woes give Him pleasure. Let me suffer eternal tribulations, because His happiness brings me great joy. I weep day and night feeling pangs of separation from my Lord, and my Lord Gaura simply smiles, looking at my tear-streaked face. That sannyasi, Gauracandra, is actually a cheater, yet I love His wonderful pastimes and His nectarean words. My Lord is now manifesting that same mood He previously manifested in Vraja, Vrndavana, yet understanding all this, I cannot fully enter into that mood.

Once I brought Him a pot of pure sandalwood oil, but in return He simply gave me cutting words; so out of insolence and frustration I broke that pot in front of Him. Angry and in a sulking mood, I remained fasting. But my wonderful Lord, using devious means, dissolved my ire. He made me cook wild-grown varieties of spinach for our meal, saying food prepared by an angry cook enhances the taste. This statement incensed me further, and He seemed more pleased by this. His joys are my only precious concern.

When Sanatana enquired from me as to what he should do, I advised him to go to Vrndavana. The Lord thought that it was foolish of me to try and advise Sanatana Gosvami. I am always amazed to see how child-like the Lord is. I fervently hold on to His lotus feet for shelter. Then when I desired to go to Vrndavana he refused me permission, giving various excuses, trying to deceive me. And when I resisted His order, He asked me to go to Navadvipa. Of course, I consider all this His causeless mercy on me.

My Lord now resides in Purusottama-ksetra, which is equivalent in spiritual status to the opulent Dvaraka. He lives away from His own abode on the pretext that He has received His mother's permission to stay there, yet He instructed me to go to Navadvipa, which is His actual home. In fact, the Lord sends those fortunate souls, who are recipients of His mercy, to His home — Navadvipa. As for me, coming back to Navadvipa was like returning home, just like a cowherd boy returning to Goloka Vrndavana.

In this way, I am executing my devotional service to the Lord day and night. It is the nature of all of Lord Gauranga's devotees to serve His lotus feet. The lotus feet of Srila Gadadhara Pandita and Lord Gauranga are my only invaluable treasure. Sri Svarupa Damodara knows my inner mood

Chapter 6—The Ultimate Goal of Living Entities

The Living entity and Lord Krsna

the living entities are infinitesimal parts of the Supreme Absolute Truth, and Lord Krsna is that Supreme absolute Personality, transcendental and effulgent. When the living entities realise that Lord Krsna is the eternal and absolute controller, they engage in His loving devotional service.

The living entities in their conditioned state

When the living entity desires to enjoy separately from Krsna, the illusory potency of the Lord, maya, immediately grabs the soul in her clutches. Being maya's captive, he becomes bewildered and acts like someone who has been possessed by a witch.

The jiva soul, forgetting his constitutional position as the eternal servant of Krsna, perfect and pure, becomes a slave of maya. In this condition he roams eternally in the material world from one body to another.

He goes through many births, sometimes born as a king, sometimes as an ordinary citizen, sometimes as a brahmana and sometimes as a sudra or menial labourer. Sometimes he is suffering, and sometimes he is happy. Sometimes he is born as an insect, and sometimes he goes to heaven. Then sometimes he has to come down to this earth again, and sometimes he has to go to hell. Sometimes he is born as a demigod, sometimes as a demon, sometimes as the master and other times the servant.

Only the association of saintly souls can save one

Roaming about in the material world, taking one birth after another, if by chance the living entity comes in contact with a saintly person he becomes immediately knowledgeable of his true identity as pure spirit soul, an eternal servant of Krsna. Enlightened by this knowledge, he does not want material entanglement any longer, and he laments: "Alas! Why have I served this illusory material energy for so long?"

He bitterly regrets and cries out, "Krsna! My Lord, I am Your eternal servant. Ever since I left the shelter of Your lotus feet my life has been completely devastated."

Lord Krsna is so merciful that if anyone appeals to Him earnestly, He immediately releases the jiva from material entanglement. When the jiva breaks away from maya's captivating spell and strives toward Lord Krsna by rendering devotional service, he regains the supreme shelter of the Lord's lotus feet. Lord Krsna fortifies him with His transcendental, internal potency, and this overbearing power of the Lord's spiritual potency weakens maya's influence on the living entity.

The only desirable object is to be able to chant the holy name of the Lord in the association of pure and saintly devotees. This is the best and only way to conquer nescience.

I, Jagadananda, the eternal servant of Lord Gaurasundara, have given up all other hope and shelter and am sitting here with only one desire: to receive the shelter of Sri Gaurasundara's lotus feet.

Chapter 7— Chanting the Holy Name is for Everyone

Chanting is not possible in the company of non devotees

One cannot chant the holy name of Lord Krsna purely in the company of non devotees. The sound and syllables of the name may be uttered, but that is not real chanting.

Chanting of this nature is at best the clearing stage or namabhasa. It is always mixed with offenses to the holy name. This chanting is a detriment to spiritual progress and cannot be considered as pure devotional service.

The Proper Method of chanting

If you want to chant Lord Krsna's holy name purely, then earnestly seek the company of pure devotees of the Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna. Reject all the unwanted desires for sense enjoyment, liberation, mystic powers, and other material desires.

Avoid the ten offenses against the holy name of the Lord and become free from the dualities of honour and dishonour. This material world is meant to be utilised in the service of the Lord. Render service without attachment for material things and chant the holy name of Lord Krsna constantly.

Accept everything that is favourable for executing devotional service and reject everything that is unfavourable. Do not endeavour for mundane speculative knowledge, fruitive activities and mystic yoga. False renunciation is 'monkey renunciation', which only aims at bodily pleasure and comforts. Bear in mind that Lord Krsna always protects and maintains everyone. Humbly surrender your life and soul to the lotus feet of the Lord, and, in that way, rid yourself of unwanted material desires.

The Supreme Lord Krsna knows that it is very difficult for the living entities to find the association of real saintly persons, so He has now come to Nadia as a pure devotee of the Lord. Therefore, all who are endowed with proper intelligence should take shelter of Lord Gauranga's lotus feet, because Lord Gauranga is the perfect saint and spiritual master.

The duties of a renunciant

My dear brother, you are in the renounced order of life and should not listen to mundane prattles nor should you engage in materialistic discussions when you meet one another.

Do not think of women even in dreams. You have accepted the renounced order of life with a vow that forbids associating with women. If you wish to associate with Caitanya Mahaprabhu, you must always remember the incident of Chota Haridasa and how he was rejected by the Lord.

Do not eat rich palatable dishes or dress in fineries. Always remain humble and serve their Lordships Sri Sri Radha-Krsna in your heart of hearts.

Chant Lord Krsna's name incessantly like Thakura Haridasa and meditate on the pastimes of Sri Sri Radha and Krsna in the shady bowers of Vrndavana day and night.

Instructions to the householder and the renunciant

Lord Gauranga instructed both the householder and the renunciant: "O brothers! Take care that not a moment passes without chanting the holy name of Lord Krsna." Many rules and spiritual practices are not necessary for advancement in devotional service. Simply take complete shelter of the holy name and purify your heart and consciousness.

The Supreme Lord Krsna descended to this material world in the form of His holy name out of compassion for the conditioned souls. And now to show special mercy to the living entities of Kali-yuga, Lord Krsna has advented as Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu. Serve the dear associates of Lord Caitanya with a sincere and innocent heart. You will certainly receive the shelter of Lord Krsna's lotus feet.

Seek the association of Lord Gauranga's devotees and chant the glories of Lord Gauranga. Chant the maha-mantra Hare Krsna and dance in ecstasy. Very soon you will be favoured by the most treasured object: love of Godhead! Only to freely distribute this priceless treasure the Supreme Lord has appeared in Nadia. I, the argumentative Jagai, am Lord Gauranga's servant. I request and pray to the devotees with tears in my eyes, to please take shelter of the holy name and chant constantly.

Chapter 8—Be Free From Finding Fault With Others

Worship Lord Gauranga with a pure heart

Thrice i do confirm it my brothers! Worship Lord Gauranga! Lord Gauranga is the original spiritual master of this entire cosmic manifestation. If you sincerely desire to worship Lord Gauranga, then purify your mind and become free from the tendency to find fault and criticise others. In this manner take shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Gauranga.

Lord Gauranga knows everyone's innermost thoughts, so how can you cheat Him? When your heart becomes pure and free from all vices, you will easily understand His instructions. Ultimately you will end up cheating yourself if you engage your thoughts in nonessential things like finding faults with others. How can you hide your thoughts from the Supreme Lord Gauranga? He knows everything in your heart.

Lord Gauranga has taught us to follow His ideal life and character. If you want the best for yourself, then follow His instructions.

Insincere devotional service

Simply telling the world, "I am Lord Caitanya's servant", will not suffice. Real success in devotional life, comes when one take to heart the life and teachings of Lord Caitanya. Making an external show of worshipping Lord Caitanya, by keeping the appearance of a devotee, wearing tilaka, tulasi mala, etc. but secretly committing sins, then Lord Gauranga will certainly discover such cheating and deception.

You will become very degraded and despised by everyone if you try to act in this way. All of your devotional practices will be ruined by committing offenses against the holy name. Such a capricious mentality will hurl you to the depths of depravity and you will be shunned by all. You will be forced to commit offenses against the holy name, which will gradually destroy the creeper of devotion. What is more crippling to devotional life than the committing of sins while chanting the holy name?

No hardship is involved in chanting the holy name. It is an easily attainable, priceless spiritual gem. Simply by moving the lips and tongue and loudly pronouncing the Lord's name, one can chant the holy name. And if that involves too much physical effort, then certainly it is easy to remember the holy name. Even if a person is dumb or suffering from mental aberrations, he can at least hear the holy name of the Lord, and that hearing will destroy all the sinful reactions within his heart and give him the highest goal in spiritual life.

As a result of worshipping the temple Deity with proper devotion for many, many births, the holy name of Krsna appears and dances constantly on one's tongue. The paths of fruitive activity, speculative knowledge or mystic yoga are incapable of offering the same spiritual success, because according to the scriptures, a little fault in the execution of these processes will render everything null and void.

So give up endeavouring in these other processes. Take complete shelter of the holy name, for it is the essence of all religious practices, and very soon you can

easily cross over the ocean of birth and death.

About Srila Kavi-Karnapura

All glories to Kavi-Karnapura! He is a greatly blessed soul. Both of us hail from the same village. He has revealed in his writings some of the marvellous qualities of the holy name. One who is the recipient of Lord Gauranga's mercy is certainly the most fortunate soul in the entire universe. Kavi-Karnapura, having received the Lord's mercy at the tender age of seven, became respected by all as a great poet.

All glory to Sri Sivananda Sena, the father of Sri Kavi-Karnapura. In my early years he taught me Bhagavad-gita and Srimad Bhagavatam. He took me to Nadia and placed me at the lotus feet of Lord Gauranga. Srila Sivananda Sena has always been my saviour and mentor in times of happiness and distress.

In his house he taught me cooking, allowing me to prepare the Deity's offering, and because he taught me well, I could cook for my Lord, Sri Gauranga, and satisfy Him with my service.

My humble submission to all is that only he who stays in the company of saintly Vaisnavas can constantly chant the holy name of the Lord.

Chapter 9—Renunciation Through Utilisation

True and False renunciation

One day Srila Sanatana Gosvami humbly asked the Lord to explain yukta-vairagya, renunciation through utilisation

Srila Sanatana said, "According to Mayavadis, the perfectly renounced sannyasi considers the material world and matter to be crow's stool at best. I have the desire to learn the proper duties of a Vaisnava. Be merciful and instruct me on this subject, so that I may treasure these instructions and always follow them."

The Lord replied, "Renunciation is of two kinds: yukta and phalgu, true and false. I have taught this repeatedly."

False Renunciation

Lord Caitanya continued: When fruitive workers and empirical philosophers deviate from the Vedic instructions, the devil of false renunciation creeps into their hearts. At this juncture a transient feeling of attraction to family life overwhelms them and they frantically seek a life apart from materialism.

However, they neither find any interest in serving the Supreme Lord Krsna and the saintly Vaisnavas, nor in enjoying sense gratification. In this bizarre situation their hearts dry up and life becomes joyless. They are unable to develop a taste for chanting the Lord's holy name, or remembering His form, attributes and transcendental pastimes.

Yukta-vairagya or true renunciation

Lord Caitanya continued, "A true renunciant is successful in all of his devotional practices, He accepts everything that is favourable for the execution of devotional service to Krsna and attains the goal. He can easily give up attachment for material things and family life, and having taken shelter of the Lord's spiritual potency, he very soon tastes the nectar of transcendental devotional service.

"Lord Krsna is very pleased with His devotees who engage in unalloyed devotional service. Thus, He promises in the Bhagavad-gita: na me bhakta pranasyati — 'My devotee never perishes'.

"When the Lord is pleased with His devotee, He showers him with unlimited mercy. He becomes a fortunate and rare soul. The super-excellent spiritual emotions of Goloka, the highest transcendental abode, manifest within his heart. He becomes an eternal resident of Goloka Vrndavana in the spiritual sky even while residing in Gokula on the earth planet where the Supreme Lord performed His transcendental pastimes. He is never again deluded by the material energy."

Root out dry and joyless renunciation

My dear brothers! Stop practicing dry, joyless renunciation and cultivate within your hearts the taste for real renunciation by utilising matter without attachment for it.

Tell me where can you live in this world without material contact? Even if you escape to the forest, you will find material entanglement, material life, and so on all around you. The stomach will accompany you to the forest to maintain your body. Just try and imagine the dilemma you have to face.

Without food and care the body will become quickly wasted, and if we give up the body prematurely, then the rare opportunity to conquer maya, the illusory potency, is lost. And if you manage to somehow live, you will still be too weak and ineffectual. An extremely debilitated physical condition obfuscates the mind. Thus, with a diminishing intellect and hazy mind, how can you realise absolute knowledge?

Cultivate Yukta-vairagya

Remain in your house and chant the name of Lord Krsna constantly. Utilise

different material objects properly but without any attachment for them. Realise the true purport of the word *yatha-yogya* — real or appropriate. Do not misconstrue its meaning and then lead a life of debauchery. Accept everything favourable and reject everything unfavourable for the execution of pure devotional service.

One who rejects the true meaning of the instruction and follows the misconstrued meaning becomes attracted to sense gratification, and is forced to remain on the crooked path of self-deceit. Amassing immense wealth he pampers his palate with good food, wears fine clothes, and spends days and nights in carnal pursuits in the company of ladies. At other times, the fool hunts for comfortable beds and lavish houses.

It is essential to maintain body and soul, so strive to keep this body fit. Consume food that is pure and in the mode of goodness, and do not use intoxicants. Be kind to all living entities and chant the holy name of the Lord loudly and clearly.

Do not use demigod worship and a show of religiosity as an excuse to enjoy the senses. Be detached from the material sense objects and rise above the dualities of attraction and repulsion. At all times be free from envy and deceit. Befriend every living entity and live purely. This is my advice for those who value it.

Cultivate undeviating resolve in devotional service in the quiet of seclusion. Utilise all your time in lovingly serving the Supreme Lord Krsna. Do not endeavour to build big temples or massive mansions to live in. If you have wealth, then use it properly and fulfil your spiritual wishes. In case you are poor, live purely, offer water and tulasi to the Lord and hold Him always within your heart. With feelings of genuine love implore the Lord saying, "O Lord, I am Yours! Kindly place Your lotus feet on the throne of my heart."

Be always affectionate and respectful to the Vaisnavas, taking care to serve them with offering *prasadam* and other personal services. Again, in case you are without any means, then satisfy them with your kindness and sweet words. Endear yourself to Lord Krsna's eternal associates, servitors and the gopi damsels that serve the Lord so well. Embrace them within your heart with deep love.

A *yukta-vairagi*, or real renunciant, practices constant devotional service, remembering and chanting the Lord's names and pastimes. He will show compassion to all living beings.

Lord Krsna may not provide us the association of His eternal servitors; or He may confiscate everything we possess which He Himself had kindly given, yet to us He will always remain the source of divine, unlimited bliss. This is the way of Lord Gauranga Krsna but I will never leave Him. Therefore, discard your lamentation and illusion and chant the holy names of Krsna incessantly. Jagai humbly declares that he prefers this transcendental mellow of always fighting with Lord Gauranga, than anything else.

Chapter 10—Caste and Family Lineage

Eligibility to worship the Lord

Faith alone qualifies a man to chant the holy name of Krsna, not the mundane hair-splitting analysis of caste, creed or family lineage. An elevated birth in a brahmana family does not necessarily make him eligible for chanting the Lord's name, similarly a lowborn person having proper faith is certainly not rejected from the path of devotional service.

Non-devotees are puffed up by high birth

In ordinary materialistic society those taking high birth are a privileged class, but to a devotee of Krsna all such material designations are inconsequential.

Persons becoming puffed up by high birth disparage the process of devotional service and thus pave their way to hell. They disrespect the devotees of the Lord and cannot discriminate between religion and irreligion. Confounded by self-conceit they engage in sinful and illicit activities.

A low born devotee is superior to a high born non devotee

If a low born cobbler, who must handle animal hide, worships the Supreme Lord Krsna, he certainly receives the full mercy of the Lord. But if a brahmana born of a high lineage does not worship the Supreme Lord Krsna, he becomes bereft of all good qualities and forfeits the Lord's mercy. A well-bred *brahmana* may possess the twelve brahmanical qualities as enumerated in the scriptures, but if he does not serve the Supreme Lord Krsna then he paves his path to hell.

A devotee engaged in devotional service to Lord Krsna is immediately decorated with all good qualities. These manifest in him automatically and become his constant companion. Decorations on a dead body look grotesque and shocking, similarly devotional practices like chanting and austerities performed by non-devotees are superficial and a sham.

Freedom from attraction and repulsion for matter

My dear brothers, cultivate undeviating devotion for Lord Caitanya, the son of Mother Saci. Then you can easily forget all the false identifications of this body. Caste, race, etc. will not matter to you any more.

If you can discard false ego and pride, you can easily give up attachment for material life. Once detachment comes, your heart will become pure. Withdraw your senses and subdue the passion for material life; simultaneously, develop attachment and attraction for the Lord's lotus feet.

You may be born as a *brahmana*, but you must root out the pride of being born in a high class family and become meek and humble.

The Lord is compassionate to the humble

The Supreme Lord is always mercifully disposed towards humble persons. Arrogance and humility cannot reside harmoniously in a person.

Pride draws one to hell, so scrupulously avoid it. Become humble and surrender yourself to the lotus feet of Sri Radha and Sri Govinda and experience the greatest joy.

O Lord Nityananda! When will I receive Your mercy so that I can take shelter of Your lotus feet and give up my insolence and false pride?

Chapter 11—The Lamp of Navadvipa

Sri Navadvipa and Sri Vrndavana are non-different

The earth is the foremost planet in the entire universe and Gauda, Bengal, is the most elevated country on this earth. In Bengal, Navadvipa, consisting of 164sq. miles, is the most incalculably auspicious tract of land in the entire cosmos.

The holy Ganga flows through this land, and the sacred waters of the rivers Yamuna and Sarasvati converge here into the Ganga. On Ganga's eastern bank is Mayapura, the direct manifestation and exact replica of Goloka Vrndavana in the spiritual sky. In the house of Sri Saci-devi in Mayapura, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Gauranga, appeared for the pleasure of His parents.

Towards the end of Dvapara-yuga, the Supreme Personality as Krsna had performed super-excellent and transcendental pastimes such as the rasa dance, with Srimati Radhika and all the young damsels of Vraja. As Lord Krsna, the son of Mother Yasoda and Nanda Maharaja, He descended to this material world with His associates, paraphernalia, the spiritual abode Vraja, etc. He brought with Him the highest precious treasure of Goloka Vrndavana, namely the *parakiya-bhava*, or the loving conjugal exchanges in the mood of a paramour lover. He had exhibited this mood in the rasa dance with the young damsels of Vrndavana.

That same Supreme Personality has now descended again to the material world in His own transcendental abode of Mayapura in Bengal and brought with Him that same spiritual, loving mood. But this time it is carefully camouflaged.

The esoteric reason for Lord Gauranga's appearance

The Supreme Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa had three intimate desires which remained unfulfilled, even after having performed so many pastimes. Therefore, appearing as Sri Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, He came to relish the fulfilment of all those desires.

He always wanted to understand the glory of Rādhārāṇī's love for Him, the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and the divine ecstasy She experiences when She realises the sweetness of His love for Her. Lord Kṛṣṇa, as the Supreme Enjoyer and Hero of all pastimes, had never tasted the three mellows of happiness relished by Srimatī Rādhārāṇī. The divine ecstasy She experiences when She realises the sweetness of His love for Her.

Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa decided to manifest Himself as His own devotee in the form of Lord Caitanya, imbued with the inner sentiment and bodily lustre of Srimatī Rādhārāṇī.

Having considered all this, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared in Navadvīpa, Bengal, with all His associates, paraphernalia, transcendental abode, etc. accompanied by feelings of great happiness.

Serving Kṛṣṇa is part of worshipping Lord Gaurāṅga

My dear brothers! Give up your material aspirations and plans and come and reside in Navadvīpa. Serve the Supreme Lord Sri Gaurāṅga by remembering His most confidential transcendental pastimes He performs throughout the day and night — *asta-kaliya-līla*. All your miseries and distresses will disappear.

Lord Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes in Goloka are divided into eight three-hourly pastimes covering day and night. These pastimes are known as *asta-kaliya-līla* and are eternally going on. Each of these eight pastimes inspires a particular mood. When they are relished in the mood set by Lord Caitanya, one experiences the highest ecstatic *prema*.

One who has developed a single-minded resolve to worship Lord Kṛṣṇa, should meditate on the eight three hourly pastimes of Lord Caitanya in Navadvīpa. They are the repositories of priceless gems of ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa. If one wants to worship Lord Kṛṣṇa but is not submerged in the devotional mood of Lord Caitanya, he can never perceive the most confidential and esoteric truth about Kṛṣṇa.

An acarya is not restricted by varnasrama system

To be a real *acarya* does not depend on whether one is a sannyasi or belongs to any of the three other orders of the varnasrama system, or even whether he is born outside of the varnasrama society. What decides the issue is whether he has realised the Absolute Truth about Lord Kṛṣṇa.

If one rejects the Absolute Truth for the non-essential, material system of varnasrama, then he is led to a bogus spiritual master. This association jeopardises his spiritual birth.

Chapter 12—The Glories of the Vaisnavas

Devotional and places of pilgrimage

A person who goes to a place of pilgrimage only for taking a bath in holy rivers and worships the deity, whom he considers to be made of stone, will take a very long time to develop true religious sentiments.

On the other hand, as soon as one sees a pure devotee of the Lord, his heart is cleansed of all unwanted material desires. He is put into touch with the highest objective of life, and transcendental devotional service dawns within his heart like the rising morning sun that dissipates all darkness.

Associating with a pure devotee

After many births, when the living entity receives the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord, he comes into contact with a pure devotee of the Lord and by this association he becomes gradually free from the material disease.

The pure devotee purifies the conditioned soul's heart and then he understands unequivocally that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Lord of all other lords.

The kanistha-adhikari neophyte devotee

A neophyte devotee is one who has received formal initiation from a spiritual master and worships the Deity form of the Lord strictly adhering to rules and regulations. He cannot distinguish between an intermediate devotee and a pure devotee. He does not know how to properly respect a pure, elevated devotee of the Lord.

The madhyama-adhikari intermediate devotee

An intermediate devotee is one who has developed love for the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, is affectionate and friendly to the Lord's devotees, is compassionate to the innocent and avoids the association of envious non-devotees. Very soon, on the strength of his devotional service and Kṛṣṇa's mercy, an intermediate devotee becomes a first class devotee or *uttama-adhikari*.

The uttama-adhikari first class devotee

According to the instructions of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, a first class or pure devotee of the Lord is one who sees Krsna in every living entity and sees every living entity as part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. He is completely free from envy, anger or hate, and he has no friends or enemies. He is spiritually highly enlightened and is best amongst the Lord's devotees.

The best of the first class devotees utilises his senses and things of this material world in executing pure devotional service. Free from the vices of greed, hate, anger, etc. he constantly perceives the Supreme Lord and His energies manifest everywhere.

The wise devotee spends his days remembering and meditating on Lord Krsna's pastimes. He is no longer deluded by the temporary nature of mundane life and material duties. He is free from the urges of his body and sense, mind and material intelligence, and he is transcendental to the dualities of birth and death, fear, hunger and thirst.

One whose heart has become the permanent abode of Lord Krsna, the son of Mother Yasoda, executes his duties only to maintain the body. He cleanses his heart of any desire to engage in fruitive activities. Such is the process of pure devotional service.

Devotee is free from all material designations

The natural propensity for one who is in the material concept of life is to be attracted to speculative knowledge, fruitive activities and the designations of caste and social order. When the pure soul begins associating with the body, he develops the mood of false identification, such as 'me' and 'mine'. But one who is free from such false identification is to be considered an eternally liberated soul and dear to the Supreme Lord Hari.

He who is free from possessiveness and is completely detached from material things does not make bodily distinctions like 'you' and 'me', which create imaginary friends and enemies. One who looks equally upon all living entities, making no distinctions between them, is an equiposed person, free from anxiety. He is certainly to be counted amongst the best of the devotees of the Lord.

He never leaves the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet, even if he is offered all the opulences of the entire universe in exchange. The Lord's lotus feet are the most coveted object of the demigods and sages. Never for a single moment does he forget the lotus feet of Sri Krsna, he is foremost amongst the pure devotees of the Lord, and he is always in a blissful state of consciousness.

Devotee is free from the threefold miseries

One who comes into contact with Lord Krsna's lotus feet has extinguished the fire of material desire within his heart by the soothing, iridescent rays emanating from the moonlike nails of the Lord's lotus feet. Why should he crave

for the conflagration of material existence when his heart can always remain cool under the comforting shade of the Lord's lotus feet?

Other symptoms of a first-class devotee

Once the devotee fastens Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet with the bonds of love, the Supreme Lord can never leave the throne of his heart. A first-class devotee of the Lord is automatically free from all duties and responsibilities, because he is wholly surrendered to the holy name of the Lord. Even in an unconscious state, he utters the Lord's name purely.

One who understands the temporary nature of material duties and responsibilities, who leaves all material activities and takes complete shelter of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet is certainly a first-class, elevated devotee and is very rarely found. The devotee engaged in devotional service, fully cognizant of the transcendental truth about Lord Kṛṣṇa's original form, holy name, pure devotees and the process of devotional service, is indeed foremost amongst the Vaiṣṇavas.

One who worships the Supreme Lord and His holy name with undivided faith, knowing Them to be non-different, although he does not understand the intricacies of his own spiritual identity, is also to be considered a very elevated, first-class Vaiṣṇava. This is Lord Caitanya's opinion.

Chapter 13—Eagerness to see Lord Gauracandra

O my dear lord gaurāṅga! I am to be deprived of the association of Your lotus feet, because I wished to go to Sri Vr̥ndavana-dhama. It suddenly came to my mind that I want to see Your pastimes there. I do not know why I was overcome and goaded on by such a desire, but now I am regretting it. I feel like putting an end to my life. I cannot continue to live without seeing You. I do not know what I should do presently.

Those lovely, reddish lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga are my most treasured object. Alas! I am so foolish I left them behind me in Puri. Now I cannot see them as they tenderly leave their impression on the sands of Purusottama-kṣetra. I do not know the reason for my coming here; it is only my restless mind that must fly about like a loose bird. I am losing my head in this confusion.

My feet drag me away from Him although my mind refuses to follow. My stubborn nature goads me on; oh! the whimsical ways of love, they turn me into a dancing doll. Completely confused, I feel like a lifeless man. Lord Gaurāṅga's playful ways are incomprehensible to me, and they plunge me into an ocean of

distress. That which I most desire remains beyond my reach. I do not know my own mind any more.

I want to relinquish my life for Lord Gauranga, yet death escapes me. I throw myself into the ocean wanting to drown, I choke, and splutter being profusely dunked in the salty ocean water. But the intense yearning to see the moon-like face of my beloved Lord, makes me quickly swim to the sandy beach. And when I search for Him, He is not there any more. My mind takes wings; swiftly, I run to the temple of Tota Gopinatha.

In the courtyard of Sri Gopinatha's temple I see the divine face of my Lord, and I fall down unconscious in a state of ecstasy. On regaining consciousness, I look around and find that I have been brought inside. It must have been Gadadhara Pandita who brought me in. I faintly hear my Lord Gauranga and Gadadhara Pandita discussing me. Right away, tears well up in my eyes, and I roll on the ground, losing composure.

I cannot bear even a moment's separation from the Lord, because my beloved Sri Gaurasundara always dances in the chambers of my heart. He does not allow me to end my life, and if I remain alive, then we constantly quarrel with each other. I don't know what can sustain my life.

Therefore, it is incomprehensible to me what intelligence prompted me to act in this way. Although I am aware of my own nature, yet I wanted to leave the association of the Lord's lotus feet and go to Vrndavana. This would have certainly dashed all my spiritual hopes for success in this lifetime and the next. I received permission to go to Vrndavana, and now if I do not fulfil His wishes, then I stand to commit a grave offense. On the other hand, I will surely die if I am unable to see the blooming, full-moon face of my beloved Lord Gauranga. I am thus tortured on the horns of a dilemma.

Whoever has been captivated by Lord Gauranga's love is in deep waters, a precarious situation where there is a tug-of-war between life and death. This is the woeful condition of all the followers of Gadadhara Pandita. Even now you can hear everyone whispering to each other about these facts.

Chapter 14—Contradictory Transformation

Perceiving Vrndavana in Navadvipa

Alas! I could not visit Vrndavana. Each time I made an attempt to go the memory of my Lord's beautiful face brought me back. I began to meditate on His golden transcendental form, and immediately I lost composure. I became confused about the direction and arrived at some unknown place. First, I had set out in one

direction; then retraced my steps, and after some walking I started to recognise landmarks, so I finally sat down.

I don't know what is to become of me. If I continue in this manner, I doubt if I will ever reach Vrndavana. Sometimes I spend days and nights sitting wide awake under a tree, and at other times, I fall into a deep slumber deliberating on this matter.

I sleep and dream that I have travelled to a faraway place. There on the ocean shore I see my beloved Lord Sri Gauranga's beautiful dancing figure. Gadadhara Pandita and all the devotees around Him and dance in ecstasy to sweet music and singing, which is like sprinklings of nectar to the senses.

After the dancing and singing stopped, my Lord Gauranga approached me, and taking me by the hand, said, "You left because you are angry with Me, but tell Me what is My fault if you are feeling restless. Now you have run away to Vraja, leaving Me here. Enough of this now. Come, let Me embrace you and hold My breast against yours to drive away the desolation in My heart.

"Cook rice and spinach sak for Me this afternoon and satisfy My hunger. O Jagadananda, My mind is bereft of joy since you left. In My condition I have just mechanically consumed food. You are always so cruel to Me. I am yet to fathom the cause of your sudden departure, but all I know is that you left Me morose and pining.

"Go and see Vraja-dhama, this will make you happy. But return very quickly, because I want to eat rice and sak prepared by you. Your cooking will resuscitate Me, and I know this will also please you. And then, never again leave Me in a huff."

When I awoke from my dream, I noticed that Vrndavana Vrajabhumi, was far away, but Ganga was very near. Oh, how wonderful is Navadvipa-dhama, the transcendental abode where my Lord Gauranga performed His eternal pastimes. It is the exact replica of Vraja dhama in every respect.

Bounding with gleeful exuberance, I came to Mayapura and went straight to the house of my Lord. Entering into the inner quarters, I found Mother Saci and offered my obeisances. We spoke about Lord Gauranga, the subject which is closest to our hearts, and then I went out to savour the opulence of Navadvipa.

I thought I was in Vrndavana as I went around looking at the different places in Navadvipa. Thus, it finally occurred to me that there was no need to go so far away to see Vrndavana. If I can see my beloved Lord, then I forget all of my miseries and thus escape the excruciating pain of separation from Him and His abode.

Chapter 15—The Forenoon Pastimes of Navadvipa-dhama

Whatever transcendental pastimes of Lord Gauranga come to my memory I write down, turning a blind eye to their chronological accuracy.

Lord Gauranga's mercy

One day Mother Saci very carefully collected Lord Caitanya's prasadam remnants and offered them to me. I relished the divine nectar of my Lord's remnants and experienced sublime ecstasy.

Will I again be so fortunate as to relish Mother Saci's cooking of acyuta-sak, a spinach that grows wild abundantly and other wonderful preparations made from banana flowers known as moca-ghanta, kachu-sak with fried balls of pasted pulses and man chaki, nimba patal and dabhi bari etc.

Visit to the village of Gadigacha

Fully satisfied with the Lord's remnants, I joined Lord Caitanya, Lord Nityananda Prabhu and all their associates, who were moving gracefully like swans along the banks of the Ganga. We finally came to the village Gadigacha singing the holy name of Lord Krsna all the way.

Sri Govinda played the mrdanga, Sri Vasu Ghosa sang, and Srila Gadadhara Pandita and Srila Vakresvara Pandita danced ecstatically. Sounds of Lord Hari's name filled the air, the ladies' shrill voices rent the sky, and everyone was submerged in the ecstatic ocean of love of Lord Gauranga.

I am very awkward at singing and dancing, yet I am also dancing with the others, waving high my upraised hands. This is happening because my Lord Gauranga has entered my body and heart and is forcing me to do it. I have no concept of either tune or rhythm, yet I am dancing and singing. I do not know how this is possible. I only know that my Lord — the effulgent, moon like Gauranga — knows everything about me.

The cowherd boys of the village serve the Lord

Upon entering the village of Gadigacha, we went to the locality of the cowherders and milkmen, where Lord Gauranga addressed us, "My dear devotees! Now we will rest for a while on the bank of this pond and sleep under a tree. The cows are happily grazing and the cowherd men are resting under this banyan tree. Let us join them." Seeing us approach, many of the cowherd men came forward with yoghurt, curd, butter and other palatable delicacies made out of milk. Their warm welcome and fine food relieved our travel fatigue.

Sri Nrsimhananda, Sri Pradyumna and Sri Purusottama Acarya all came to join us in the congregational chanting of the holy name of Krsna. The throbbing

sound of the mrdanga rose above all of the music and drew everyone out of their homes. The loud, jubilant sound of Lord Hari's name rose up and filled the azure sky.

The cowherd boy named Bhima

A noble-hearted cowherd boy named Bhima approached saying, "O revered Sirs, my mother Syama is a very pious and well-respected lady in our community. she is the daughter of Sadhu, a cowherdman residing in Ganganagar.

"She is always serving Mother Saci in her heart and calls her 'Mother'. On the strength of this relationship, You are my maternal uncle. Come with me, my uncle, and bring Your whole group. Let them continue to happily chant Lord Krsna's holy name.

"Whatever milk and yoghurt is stored in our house by my mother, I shall distribute to all of the devotees and then I want to serve You by massaging Your lotus feet.

Lord Gauranga visits Bhima's house and eats sweet rice

When the Lord found Bhima adamant and determined to take everyone to his house, He was softened by his affection, and agreed. Syama, Bhima's mother, welcomed every devotee with the usual loud, shrill sound ladies make by moving their tongues. She then arranged for everyone to sit down.

Lady Syama asked Gauranga, "My dear elder brother, Pandita Nimai, how is Mother Saci?" The Lord replied, "Oh! Very well, very well indeed!" Syama spread banana-leaf plates for the devotees and served them with sweetened condensed milk. Nimai and all of His associates relished and ate with great pleasure.

The pond of Goradaha

After eating, the Lord, accompanied by His associates, returned to the bank of the same pond and began softly singing the glories of the Supreme Lord Hari. A cowherd boy by the name of Ramadasa shyly approached the Lord, and said that for some reason the cows refused to drink the water from the pond.

He said a fearful looking crocodile lived in the waters of the pond and having seen him, the cows refused to drink and began mooing and lowing in fear. Hearing this, Lord Gauranga started to loudly chant the holy name, and immediately the crocodile was attracted by the sweet, melodious singing.

The crocodile quickly climbed onto the bank and came and touched the lotus feet of Lord Gauranga. By the Lord's touch he was instantaneously transformed into a celestial being having the form of an infant boy. He cried and offered prayers to the Lord and then narrated the sad story of his life.

The infant boy's past life

The little boy said, "My dear Lord! I took this terrible form of a crocodile by the curse of the sage Durvasa. Wherever I went afterward, I terrified everyone.

"Once in the Kamyavana forest the great sage lay asleep. I, being a restless mischievous young boy, cut a few strands of his matted locks. He woke up in a rage and cursed me to become a crocodile and to remain in that body for the next four yugas."

"I began to bitterly lament and begged him to forgive me. The sage, feeling compassionate, called me and said, 'My dear celestial boy! When Lord Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, appears in Navadvipa as the darling of Mother Saci, you will hear Him sing the Lord's holy name, and this curse will then be absolved. You will regain your celestial form and transcend the three worlds.

The boy offers prayers

"All glories to the son of Mother Saci. He is the purifier of fallen conditioned souls, the magnanimous shelter of the hopeless, wretched and poverty-stricken souls!

"Your wonderful activities are eulogised throughout the entire universe. You are so merciful that You have saved an abominable character like me.

"Navadvipa is the super excellent dhama, the essence of all the other places of pilgrimage, and it is here that the most munificent incarnation of the Lord has appeared in this age of Kali. You have come to liberate the conditioned souls of Kali-yuga by profusely distributing the holy names of God. I offer You my humblest obeisances, for You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

"For four yugas I have remained continuously in the hideous body of a crocodile, and now You have come and liberated me from this suffering. Certainly, You are the infinitely munificent, Supreme Lord Hari Himself. To hear You chant the holy name of the Lord is so nectarean that innumerable moving and non-moving living entities have been saved by your sweet songs.

"My dear Lord, I beg leave of You. Now I want to return to my celestial home and see my parents again. They will be very happy to meet me."

The boy goes back to his home

After the boy had recited his choicest prayers to the Lord, he offered obeisances and proceeded to leave amidst jubilant chanting of the holy name of God. Seeing that the sun had reached the meridian, the devotees accompanying the Lord prepared to go back to Mayapura.

Whosoever hears this wonderful pastime of Lord Gauranga with faith and attention will become liberated from even the worst curse known as 'Brahmasapa'.

The result of seeing the pond Goradaha

After this incident the pond became known as Goradaha and it is like the Kaliyadaha pond in Vraja where Lord Krsna subdued the snake Kaliya. Just by seeing this pond or touching its waters, one becomes free from all sinful reactions. Gradually, he comes to the platform of pure devotional service to Lord Krsna. This has been explained in the Vedas.

The cowherd men marvelled at this miracle which took place right before their eyes. With great joy they lifted the Lord upon their shoulders shouting, "All victory to our material uncle! — Marna".

Lord Gauranga's mid-day pastimes are identical to the mid-day pastimes of Lord Balarama and Lord Krsna in Vrndavana. Govardhana Hill, the Manasi Ganga and Lord Krsna's pastimes of pasturing the cows all manifested simultaneously to the devotees at that site.

These cowherd men actually realised the transcendental nature of Lord Nimai, for His pastimes are non-different from the pastimes of Sri Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja.

Chapter 16—The Nature of Divine Love

Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami Inquires

One day Raghunatha dasa Gosvami inquired from Svarupa Damodara, "Please instruct me! Give me some inkling of the nature of divine love. I am unable to fathom the descriptions of love so sublimely sung by Candidasa and Vidyapati.

"I extract only the external mundane meanings of love from their songs, which pertain to feelings of attraction between a man and a woman. How can such emotions be considered spiritual? How can mundane lust be called spiritual love?"

"Lord Caitanya is always singing these songs and relishing it's mood with you, but I have no access into such intimate exchanges. The Lord has placed me in your hands to be under your spiritual tutelage. Please, therefore, guide me in comprehending these confidential truths."

"Please be gracious and explain to me the concept of spiritual love. With my doubts dispelled, I will remain ever grateful to you."

Spiritual love

Svarupa Damodara Gosvami replied, "My dear Raghunatha dasa, I will reveal its esoteric truth to you in a solitary place. Neither Ramananda Raya, Gadadhara Pandita nor I fully comprehend this spiritual truth which the Lord

Himself embodies. But if Lord Gauracandra presides on the tip of my tongue and Himself reveals this highest transcendental truth about Himself by His causeless mercy, then you can be convinced that all that was narrated to you was the actual truth. Raghunatha dasa, you will experience unmitigated bliss upon hearing this.

"Know without a doubt that the songs by Candidasa and Vidyapati; the subject matter of the book Krsna-karnamrta; Ramananda Raya's play are all peerless scriptures. The topics described in them are completely devoid of material lust. They are, in fact, transcendental compositions that contain and foster pure love of Godhead. Descriptions of men and women in these pages are simply used as substitutes. You must perceive their transcendental significance, because one cannot perceive Krsna in mundane literature which deals with erotic lust.

"Whether man or woman, as long as one is attached to the bodily concept of life and interested only in enjoying the senses he or she, will never be able to grasp spiritual truth. The spiritual master who claims to be a representative of Lord Krsna, but does not understand the Lord's pure loving exchanges, is not fit to be in that position. His show of devotion is deceptive. He is in the clutches of maya and is, therefore, an instrument of maya.

Love of Godhead, Krsna

"Spiritual love of Krsna is untainted and pure like the sacred waters of the Ganges. That love is like an unlimited ocean of nectar. The devotee's spiritual attachment for such loving relationships is totally free from the slightest material contamination, like spotless white linen.

"Pure love of Godhead is like an ocean of bliss. If I could have just one drop from there, it could inundate the entire universe. I am so wretched that I am a hundred percent attached to my material body and controlled by lust, so my original form of pure spirit is never manifest. When one is blinded by carnal love and rejects pure spiritual love, then Lord Krsna will never respond to his deceitful approach. But one who sincerely and earnestly implores Krsna for His mercy will certainly be crowned with success.

"The spiritual exchanges and emotions of one experiencing love of Krsna are transcendental; all the symptoms of transcendental loving mellows find expression in his person. The ecstatic symptoms of the conjugal mellow are of the super mundane nature. They are always experienced on the spiritual platform between Krsna and the purely spiritual beings.

"Oh! How fortunate Lilasuka, Bilvamangala Thakura, is! Lord Krsna appeared before him in person and elevated him to relish loving exchanges with Him in the transcendental mood of Vraja-dhama. Lilasuka became detached from the demands of physical pleasure and developed aversion for mundane sentiments. This pleased Krsna very much.

"Vidyapati and Candidasa developed distaste for non-scriptural, spurious 'spiritual' mellows which they had previously accepted as true devotional

sentiments. They had imposed mundane concepts on the spiritual exchanges between Krsna and His beloved devotees. By the Lord's mercy they became purified to understand the transcendental mellows. They rejected their immature sentiments and emotions and surrendered themselves to Krsna, always engaging in the transcendental loving service of the Lord.

"One who is too engrossed in the pleasures of the flesh never tastes transcendental loving exchanges with Krsna. Even the beautiful form of the boy Krsna playing His flute cannot evoke in him ecstatic emotions and spiritual sentiments. That unfortunate person identified the self with his body and is busy decorating it. When the thunderbolt of death strikes him down, then who knows what his next birth is? —perhaps an insect or worse.

"On the other hand, if one can subdue the urge for material pleasures and develop real taste for loving devotional service at the lotus feet of Krsna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, then he can see the exquisite face of Lord Krsna directly. He swiftly returns to his eternal home to sport in the forests of Goloka in his spiritual body, disassociating himself forever from previous identity and material association.

The sloka composed by Lord Caitanya

"I have not the slightest tinge of love of Godhead within my heart. When you see Me crying in separation, this merely indicates that I am conceited enough to try and demonstrate My great fortune. Indeed, not having a glimpse of that beautiful face of Krsna playing on His flute, I still continue to live my life like a moth, whose life is without purpose, except, at best, to rush into the flames and die.'

Only the gopis understand transcendental conjugal love

"Everyone is talking about love, love; but who really understands what love is? One who realises spiritual amorous exchanges with the Supreme Lord is truly fit to become a damsel in the bowers of Vrndavana.

"The word piriti, or love, consisting of three syllables, is famous throughout the universe, and whoever is touched by love, becomes totally obsessed by it, oblivious to shame or disrepute of this world.

"Gradually one develops the mood of the gopis, he begins to recollect his original identity in the spiritual world and cuts asunder all material attachments. Lord Krsna becomes the only object of love, and the soul becomes the repository of that love. He approaches the Lord through an intermediary who constantly reminds him of his beloved Krsna. In this way, the conjugal exchanges in the mood of a paramour go on increasing.

"Parakiya-bhava, or conjugal mellows in the relationship of a paramour, is available in Vraja alone. Whereas this same relationship in Vaikuntha is absent between Lord Narayana and Laksmi-devi and is considered immoral.

The 'sahajiyas' mundane sentimental love

"In the material world a man's lust for a woman and vice versa, is misinterpreted as spiritual love by a certain group of people known as *sahajiyas*. They will surely suffer eternal hell, because they artificially attempt to impose transcendental emotions on a mundane relationship.

"But when the *sahajiyas* tread the proper path of devotional service and receive the mercy of Lord Krsna,, they become disgusted with this body, the material senses, and the sense pleasures derived from them. They then begin to aspire for the transcendental nectarean mellows of devotional service.

Raya Ramananda's love

"Sri Ramananda Raya's devotional service is pure and simple and strictly follows religious principles. He is perfectly detached from matter and uses everything in the service of the Lord, although he is apparently situated in a physical form.

"His body is spiritual, and he is always serving the Lord in the Vrndavana mood. This is due to the fact that he has received Lord Caitanya's mercy. He writes and directs plays utilising beautiful actresses, yet he remains unaffected by such intimate contact with women, and he is always transcendently situated.

"No one other than Sri Ramananda Raya is eligible to teach and understand the subject of divine love. One whose mind is always eager to see, touch, and enjoy a woman is never pure enough to learn the confidential truths of divine love.

Pure devotion is impossible to attain for one who identifies someone as man or woman.

"One can never attain the priceless gift of living devotional service if his consciousness is polluted by association with women or materialistic men who are lusty for the opposite sex. The pleasures of the flesh are invariably transient and can never transport us to the transcendental realm.

"One who acts on the transcendental platform of rendering devotional service in the mood of the damsels of Vrndavana can alone cultivate real spiritual life. Through living in the mood of the *gopis* of Vraja, he is no longer attracted to the mundane exchanges between man and woman.

One whose external social dealings and conduct are perfect, like a gentleman following the path of true religion who never deviates from scriptural injunction, and internally he intensely cultivates the mood of the *gopis* of Vrndavana, serving the lotus feet of Lord Krsna with all his heart, is truly eligible for attaining love of Krsna.

"The poem which begins with *yah kaumara harah* - 'the one who stole my heart in my youth' — is really used as an analogy by Lord Caitanya. One has to transcend the physical plane, and then the charming Krsna becomes his life's hero, and Krsna's consort becomes the heroine in all Their transcendental pastimes. He

then serves Them with the purest love.

Sahajiyas are fit for hell deluded by Kali-yuga

"If someone claims that by some artificial process the spiritual nature can be projected into this material world, that ordinary men can be worshipped as the Supreme Lord Krsna and that by this method the supreme goal can be attained, then he is wrong. According to the instructions of Lord Caitanya, such a proposition is unacceptable. I know such perverted intelligence will lead to hell.

"One should always avoid the association of those persons who consider that the material body can be artificially spiritualised. To enlighten such a person with Krsna consciousness is almost impossible. This idea has gained prominence due to Kali-yuga's evil influence, but such thinking will certainly lead to the degradation of the pure precepts of the Vaisnava religion.

"A person who has developed mature faith in God will understand the purports of the use of these analogies of material loving affairs, not taking them literally. Such an elevated saint worships the Supreme Lord Krsna in his original, spiritual body. Great spiritual personalities like Candidasa and Vidyapati are perfect examples of liberated souls who discarded their previous misconceptions and cultivated the pure devotional process.

"The highest concept in pure devotional service is The unalloyed worship of the transcendental loving exchanges of the Supreme Lord Krsna. Yet the nature of the mischievous, materialistic mind is to be reluctant to accept these facts. Dear Raghunatha, consider well these points carefully, because you are the devotee who will have to propagate the high standards of proper Vaisnava conduct in the near future.

"Reveal your mind to Lord Caitanya about your desire to worship the Supreme Lord in this confidential and intimate mood and take His permission to do so. Become steadfast and determined, set your heart on achieving this end."

Raghunatha dasa Gosvami then approached Lord Caitanya, and he very humbly begged for His permission to execute devotional service in this mood. Lord Caitanya consented to it in my presence, and Raghunatha dasa Gosvami now serves Lord Krsna with a very satisfied mind.

Lord Caitanya's instructions to Raghunatha dasa Gosvami

"Do not listen to mundane prattle and do not waste your time in frivolous discussions. Why eat to titillate the palate and maintain the body lavishly with luxurious amenities? Do not hanker for esteem and respect, but offer respects to everyone. Take shelter of the holy name of Krsna and chant constantly. Serve Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna in the mood of Vraja in the core of your heart."

The Lord's unequivocal instructions opened Raghunatha dasa Gosvami's eyes of knowledge, and he understood that pure love of Godhead can never be cultivated without first being freed from all material illusions.

Lord Caitanya continued: "Through pure chanting and in meditation develop your pure, perfected, spiritual form, and worship Krsna, the Lord of Srimati Radharani. Free yourself from the desire for distinction and adoration. Always offering respect to others, cultivate complete detachment from material life and become as tolerant as a tree.

"Externally, your devotional service is to always chant the name of Lord Krsna, and internally, constantly engage in serving Sri Sri Radha-Krsna with your spiritual body. Control your rapacious palate and give up luxury and comfort. Do only what is essential for maintaining your body."

Markata-vairagya or monkey renunciation

Do not try to artificially impose the transcendence on the mundane by imagining some mortal couple to be the Divine Couple, Radha and Krsna. This self-deception destroys all religious principles.

Lord Caitanya has warned us, "A false renunciant is a person who is externally renounced, but who is actually always trying to enjoy, the material world. He is like a monkey who appears detached due to his natural habits but is excessively attached to sex life.

The pure renunciant

A pure renunciant is always engaged in chanting the holy name. He begs only what he needs to maintain his body. If one practices renunciation, not depending on Krsna but on others for his maintenance, then he will not achieve spiritual success. Krsna will also reject him. and if a renunciant submits to the urges of his tongue, he becomes a prisoner of his sensual urges and loses the chance of achieving the transcendental realm.

A real renunciant is always chanting Lord Krsna's name. His diet is simple, consisting of leafy vegetables, fruits and roots, etc. But a lusty person who makes social calls on people's houses to gratify his tongue will never receive the shelter of Lord Krsna's lotus feet.

Chapter 17—The Standards Of Vaisnava Etiquette

Reflects The Class of a Devotee

On an another occasion Srila Svarupa Damodara Gosvami said to Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, "I have to tell you something very confidential."

Religious practices without chanting are futile

The perfect varnasrama system is to maintain one's life by performing his prescribed duty according to varna and asrama, constantly chanting the holy name and rendering loving devotional service to the Supreme Lord Krsna. He who follows this is truly intelligent, righteous and a real Vaisnava.

"Mere ritualistic performances masquerading as religion are cheating processes. They rob human life of its value and degrade the performer. One may make an attempt to act righteously without executing devotional service to the Supreme Lord. And he may belong to any social order of life: celibate student, householder, retired or a renouncer of the world, but his company should be avoided if he is not a devotee of Krsna.

Acquire sambandha and act on the platform of yukta-vairagya

"Everyone should act on the platform of yukta-vairagya - using everything without attachment in Lord Krsna's service. This must be done with a true understanding of sambandha-jnana or knowledge of our real relationship with the Supreme Lord. When sambandha-jnana further unfolds, one realises that the Supreme Person is the object of all devotional sentiments alambana. And when such alambana perceptions become purified then love of Godhead or prema, first dawns on the horizon of our spiritual consciousness.

"A devotee will be respected even by venerable souls if he renders devotional service and cultivates prema for Lord Krsna, but a living entity is no more than a pitiful mongrel puppy if he is devoid of devotional service. He is indeed a Vaisnava who is engaged in devotional service; not he who leaves home and lives by begging but does not worship Krsna. A devotee must never accept the remnants or flowers offered directly to a demigod, nor acknowledge invitations to ritualistic performances of *karma-kanda*.

Activities of householders and renounced devotees

"Vaisnavas are broadly of two types; householders and renunciants. Both are qualified to perform pure devotional service, but their duties vary. Both are required to act on the platform of *yukta-vairagya*. Thus, they steadily progress on the path of unalloyed surrender with devotion and knowledge.

Duties of a householder Vaisnava

"A Vaisnava householder should always live according to the prescribed duties; graciously hosting guests to their full satisfaction. His spiritual discipline will not be impaired by his living or associating with his wife. Nor is it forbidden

for him to use mustard oil or other perfumed oil. Foods like milk, curd, etc., which are considered by ritualistic brahmanas to be inedible and non-vegetarian, become wholesome vegetarian food for the *yukta-vairagi*.

"He is always attentive in chanting the holy name free from the ten offenses. He accepts everything favourable for the execution of devotional service and carefully rejects things that are unfavourable. His spiritual success and excellence grow by cultivating undeviating faith in the holy name. A Vaisnava of this stature becomes illustrious in his householder life. He strictly avoids fault-finding and analysing others behaviour. He is compassionately disposed to all living entities and is dedicated to act for their benefit, always free from envy.

Duties of renounced Vaisnavas

"The renounced Vaisnava reduces his material activities down to merely maintaining body and soul together; he is disinterested in saving anything for the future. He avoids the slightest contact with women, and he wholeheartedly worships the Supreme Lord Krsna Hari.

"Thus the different Vaisnavas act in their designated manner, and by worshipping Krsna and rendering devotional service to Him, they find shelter in His internal spiritual energy.

Vaisnavas are Free of fault finding

"One should never make distinctions between householder and renunciant Vaisnavas. This mentality results in the perpetration of grievous offenses. The important fact to remember is that one who has a fault-finding nature is not a devotee, but rather he is a disgrace to the whole Vaisnava community.

"One should diligently develop his own devotional discipline with sincere simplicity, devotional service to Lord Krsna as the essence of all human activities. Devotional service becomes impotent for one who cannot subdue within himself the evil habits of fault-finding, deceit, dishonesty and deviousness. These sinful culprits act against the injunctions of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and with uncontrolled senses they try to enjoy material nature.

*anugrahaya bhaktanam manusam deham-asritah
bhajate tadsih krida yah srutva tatparo bhavet*

In the *Srimad Bhagavatam* it says, "The rotten sinners falsely presume that they are Supreme Lord Krsna. Impudently they try to imitate Lord Krsna's transcendental pastimes and pollute the process of pure religious principles.

A pure devotee serves Sri Sri Radha-Krsna

"The pure devotee, who attains his original, spiritual form, renders unalloyed devotional service to Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna in Vraja in the mood of a gopi. But the atheist, who is eager to imitate Krsna's mood as the Supreme Enjoyer, will surely be damned to the lowest hell.

"Antaranga bhakti" or confidential devotional service is never executed in this material body, but is performed on the platform of the purified mind. The foolish upstarts, given to constant faultfinding, think that such confidential service can be externally performed. Hence, the pure devotees carefully avoid such despicable, evil-minded company and simply serve Lord Krsna in their original, spiritual forms.

Krsna is the purusa, and everyone else is prakrti

"Pure devotees are satisfied in their constitutional position as prakrti the subordinate female principle, drinking the nectar of Lord Krsna's lotus feet. For Krsna alone is the purusa, The Supreme Enjoyer - male principle my dear, revered Raghunatha dasa."

The householder and his prescribed duties

Then Raghunatha dasa once again humbly approached Svarupa Damodara Gosvami with folded hands. "I have another question. Please enlighten me. The highest and purest form of devotional service is above the prescribed religious practices of varnasrama dharma. Therefore, why is the householder bound by prescribed duties according to his asrama, if he can easily transcend the duties of his social order and render spontaneous devotional service?"

Svarupa Damodara Gosvami replied, "Listen, dear brother, I will disclose to you the essence of everything by enunciating the principles of pure devotional service. It is simple to live one's life following one's prescribed duties, but if one tries to execute someone else's prescribed duties, then his life becomes burdensome and artificial.

"The sincerely devoted person intelligently executes from amongst his prescribed duties of varnasrama only that which is conducive to pure devotional service. And by diligently rejecting those duties which are detrimental, he attains the platform of pure devotion. Therefore, one should not be overly attached to stringently following the prescribed varnasrama duties, but he has to simply unflinchingly render unalloyed devotional service, and by so doing, he emulates the hallowed path of saintly persons. Rejecting the overly rigid rules and regulations of varnasrama assists in elevating one to the platform of a pure Vaisnava.

Always remember Krsna and never forget Him

"The most important regulation is to constantly remember Lord Krsna, and the strictest rule is to never forget Him."

Raghunatha dasa humbly inquired further, "I would like you to kindly clarify another point. I want to know the Vaisnava conclusion on this subject: The Vaisnavas are classified as *acyuta-gotra* lineage back to Acyuta, the Supreme Lord Himself. What is its significance and purport?"

Acyuta-gotra and varnasrama duties

Svarupa Damodara Gosvami replied, "Both the householder and the renunciant Vaisnavas belong to the *acyuta-gotra* and not to any other *gotra*. The pure devotees of this divine *gotra* never become attached to the ritualistic practices of *k*. The *Vaisnava* gives up his family *gotra* and worships the Supreme Lord, taking shelter of His *gotra* because this is the eternal *gotra* stemming from the Lord Himself.

Devotees of this standard are eligible to become permanent residents of Vraja Vrndavana. The most perfect devotees find their exact position of service in Goloka Vrndavana while still residing on earth, and render service to the Lord in their liberated forms as Vraja gopis. Others, who are '*aropa-siddha*' sincerely cultivate the mood of loving devotion within their minds.

Pravarta, sadhaka, and siddha-bhaktas

"There are three types of devotees: the steady practitioner on the path of perfection *sadhaka*, the beginner *pravarta* and the self-realised pure devotee *siddha-bhakta*. One who can understand these gradations can easily know the science of devotion. The beginner is known as *kanistha-adhikari*, or neophyte devotee; the sincere practitioner is called *madhyama-adhikari*, or intermediate devotee; and the self-realised soul is known as *uttama-adhikari*, or a devotee of the highest order. The highest order devotee is emphatically disinclined towards ritualistic practices. Both the *uttama-adhikari* and *madhyama-adhikari* fit the description of those belonging to the *acyuta-gotra*."

Aropa superimposition or ascription

Raghunatha dasa said, "Now I want to properly understand the meaning of *aropa* to dispel my existing doubts."

Svarupa Damodara Gosvami replied, "Listen attentively to the symptoms of *aropa*! This method is for a practitioner who lacks knowledge of his real spiritual identity. There are three types of Vaisnavas, *aropa siddha*, *sanga-siddha* and *svarupa-siddha*. First, I will explain *aropa siddha*. Listen attentively and try to understand it.

"A condition living entity is essentially a gross materialist and is always

inclined to associate with the material phenomena and continuously experience material happiness or distress. He is constantly interacting with material nature, is oblivious of the transcendental realm and has no knowledge or experience of the divine nature. He does not realise that he is of that same transcendental nature. He is like a child who feels forlorn due to a moment's absence from his mother, unaware that his parents are close to him.

"If by some divine arrangement and the results of his own pious deeds from his past lives he becomes fortunate, then his heart is impregnated with *sraddha* faith. *Sraddha* induces him to inquire deeply into the mysteries of life. At first he is informed that he is constitutionally Lord Krsna's servant. Understanding this, the sincere desire to gain freedom from this entanglement called material life takes shape in his heart.

Worshipping Lord Krsna

"The guru instructs him to worship Lord Krsna, and the faithful person gradually develops a desire to worship the Lord on the strength of the guru's words. He understands from hearing that Krsna is the Supreme Lord, but he does not realise His eternal transcendental nature and personality. From the world that surrounds him he identifies objects that remind him of Krsna. He worships the Lord and offers Him objects he values.

"At this juncture the process of superimposition or ascription *aropa* begins. He obtains a statue of a human-like form of the Deity which to a neophyte is not the eternal form of the Lord and worships it with incense, flowers, oils and lamp, but without the proper understanding that the Deity is non different from the Lord. He tries to think that all of this paraphernalia and the Deity is spiritual, and sometimes through thought ascription he actually experiences transcendence.

"At this stage when he is induced to surrender the results of his works, even though the knowledge to act in a certain way is superimposed in the thought process without realisation, it nevertheless helps him to become steadfast on the devotional path. These are the symptoms of *aropa-siddha* devotion that are manifest in the *kanistha-adhikari* the neophyte devotee.

Worshipping the Deity with proper understanding

"Thereafter, when he fully comprehends the truth about the Deity form of the Lord and begins to worship the Deity as a manifestation non different from the Lord, he gradually enters the state of a *madhyama-adhikkari*. On the *uttama-adhikari* platform or advanced stage of devotion, there is no question of *aropa* ascription; his purified mind is in constant communication.

"The first rays of love of God dawn in his heart and he sees the Lord with eyes anointed with the salve of devotion. He worships the Lord of his heart with spontaneous devotion, discarding all *kanistha* mentality, i.e. ascribing the devotional mood. Pure devotion, by nature, is not the same as the simulated surrender, or invoked devotional mood through *aropa*, although *aropa* is certainly

a part of the process of *bhakti*.

The basis of aropa-siddhi

"One of the prime symptoms of an aropa-siddha is that he relates to mundane objects and activities with a devotional attitude. Obnoxious and perverted material activities and objects, even when offered to the Supreme Lord, do not automatically become transformed into devotional service. So, such a devotee offers delectable things and renders favourable service to the Lord, not really knowing what offerings please the Lord most. This devotional attitude is called aropa-siddha bhakti.

Worship of the Deities by the Mayavadis is considered by them as a temporary means to achieve liberation. Hence, for them, such worship is aropa; whereas on the path of devotion, the ultimate perfection of attaining one's spiritual identity is non-different from the process by which the goal is reached.

Perfection through pure association or Sanga-siddha bhakti

"Now hear about *sanga-siddha bhakti* which means the spiritual perfection achieved through the execution of pure knowledge and devotion. Pure knowledge of the absolute and proper renunciation are the main symptoms of *sanga-siddha-bhakti*. Devotion is always accompanied by the knowledge of *yukta-vairagya* renunciation through utilising everything in the Lord's service. Humility, compassion and tolerance automatically appear as devotion deepens. These qualities are concomitants and assist one in devotional life, they are its integral part.

Devotion on the platform of spiritual perfection-svarupa-bhakti

"Direct, spontaneous and pure devotion to the Supreme Lord is possible only when one is situated in his original spiritual identity svarupa. Hearing, chanting, etc. are the nine kinds of activities performed in devotional service. *Svarupa siddha-bhakti* devotion performed in one's original form, begins with pure chanting of the Lord's names and pastimes. The prime objective of these unalloyed devotees is to offer direct devotional service to Lord Krsna which pleases Him.

"In the other two types of devotion *aropa-siddha* and *sanga-siddha*, this objective is not in full focus. The inherent spiritual qualities which lie latent, locked within the soul, which also provide the spirit soul the inclination for a particular devotional mellow, are the ingredients that evoke pure devotion. They manifest in the mind of a conditioned soul as his initial, but covered spiritually mentality. His proclivity is aroused and then becomes rampant in the conditioned souls who are rendering service to the Supreme Lord. Pure devotion seeks such inclinations to flourish in.

The effects of these three types of devotion

"*Svarupa-siddha* is direct and spontaneous devotional service. *Sanga-siddha* assists and enhances pure devotional fervour. *Aropa-siddha*" is effective only where the material concept of life is prominent. The neophyte, or *aropa-siddha* if he desires to become elevated to render transcendental devotional service must destroy this concept first.

Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami fully comprehended Srila Svarupa Damodara Gosvami's elucidation. These wonderful spiritual conclusions by Svarupa Damodara Gosvami about the svarupa the original spiritual form of the soul are my Jagai's constant companion in meditation.

Chapter 18—Sri Ekadasi

One day, Lord Gaurahari went from Gundica mandira to the Jagannathavallabha gardens and sat amongst the flowers. The day was ekadasi. He celebrated this auspicious occasion by chanting the holy name incessantly, day and night. Present with Him were Svarupa Damodara, Ramananda Raya, Vakresvara Pandita and the other resident Vaisnavas of Sri Purusottama-ksetra, Puri.

The Lord said, "Today, all of you should refrain from eating and sleeping, and constantly chant Krsna's name. Some of you should chant japa, some of you should circumambulate the temple with prostrated obeisances and others should discuss the pastimes of Lord Balarama and Lord Krsna." Everyone became spiritually surcharged by the Lord's instructions and busied themselves with different activities, chanting, "Govinda, Govinda!" They felt intoxicated with prema.

Suddenly, Sri Gopinatha arrived from Gundica, accompanied by Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya. They were laden with Lord Jagannatha's mahaprasadam! They placed the prasadam of cooked rice, a variety of vegetables, pitha, pana, sweet rice, curd and yoghurt before the Lord. At the Lord's bidding, devotees offered respectful obeisances to the prasadam and then continued chanting the Lord's name deep into the night in an ecstatic mood of devotion, free from all material desires.

Early next morning, the devotees, begged permission from Sri Gaurahari and, went to take bath. On returning, they sat down and respectfully honoured mahaprasadam, breaking their ekadasi fast. They experienced ineffable bliss, and falling to the ground they offered obeisances to the Lord and spoke to Him in great earnestness with folded hands:

Ekadasi in Puri

"Sri Harivasara ekadasi, is considered to be the most important vrata vow of fasting. It is to be observed by maintaining complete fast and without sleeping at night. We also know that Lord Jagannatha's maha-prasadam must be respected at all times in Purusottama-ksetra. It should be honoured by eating it immediately upon receiving it. Therefore, we find ourselves in a dilemma as to how to honour prasadam on ekadasi. Please tell us unequivocally the conclusions of the scriptures on this subject in a manner that would convince even spiritual stalwarts like Lord Siva and Lord Brahma. This will dispel our disquietude."

Lord Caitanya's conclusion

Lord Caitanya replied, "To not observe complete fasting on ekadasi will greatly endanger one's spiritual life. Honour prasadam on ekadasi only by offering it obeisances and eating it the next day. In this way, one can easily cross this material ocean. The fast is any way over on the following day.

"All Vaisnavas, beloved associates of the Supreme Lord, are very pleased when ekadasi is properly observed by simply relishing the nectar of Lord Krsna's holy name. One should not taste anything nor should any mundane topics be discussed on Ekadasi. All physical pleasures should be proscribed. It is a Vaisnava's duty to daily honour and eat only prasadam, for he never consumes unoffered food. On ekadasi he observes complete fasting, and the next day he breaks his fast with *maha-prasadam*. And if, for some reason, one has to eat on ekadasi, then let the Vaisnavas take *anukalpa*, a light meal consisting of merely fruits, roots and milk, without grains or beans or other prohibited vegetables.

"The non-Vaisnavas gormandise without control, offering only lame excuses that they are honouring maha-prasadam. They do this on ekadasi, because they are engrossed day and night in sense enjoyment. They enjoy grains and rice on ekadasi and thereby eat the sins that enter grains on such days, disregarding the sanctity of ekadasi-vrata. You must diligently execute devotional service and respect the process of devotion. You will then surely receive the blessings of Bhakti-devi Herself. Avoid the association of non-devotees and properly observe the ekadasi-vrata by constantly chanting the holy name.

"Try to realise in your heart that there is no offence or contradiction in refusing maha-prasadam on ekadasi or any other important fast day. It is inane to observe certain spiritual disciplines and vows while neglecting others. Earnestly observe prescribed vows on designated days and timings and in an appropriate devotional manner. Sri Vrajendra-nandana, Krsna, is the Lord and ultimate goal of all vows and devotional activities, so observe all spiritual vows for His pleasure and satisfaction alone. Therefore, remember to abstain from eating, drinking and sleeping on ekadasi, and so the next day honour prasadam with full relish."

The devotees present, both from Bengal and Orissa were experiencing intense joy upon hearing the Lord speak. They chanted, "Govinda! Govinda!" in blissful appreciation. Svarupa Damodara, Ramananda Raya and other stalwarts felt ineffable exultation.

O my dear brothers! Lord Gauranga is the most valuable treasure of my heart. Worship His lotus feet, freeing yourself from duplicity. This can help you to easily cross this insurmountable ocean of nescience and experience everlasting peace, beyond anxiety and death.

Chanting the holy name and observing ekadasi-vrata are both eternal spiritual activities, hence they are on the same devotional platform. Therefore, become sincerely fixed in executing these activities.

Chapter 19—The Mysteries of the Holy Name

The night was young, the moon bathed the dark shadows on the beach with her cooling rays. This attracted the Moon of Navadvipa, Sri Gauracandra. He came near the ocean with His associates, sat down in the midst of the Vaisnavas like an iridescent moon, and began to speak to the assembly.

The best and only means to perfection

He said, "My dear devotees! In Kali-yuga there is no spiritual activity and religious practice to surpass congregational chanting of Lord Krsna's holy name. Fruitive activities, cultivation of knowledge, yoga or meditation are extremely ineffectual processes for spiritual elevation. They cannot lead one of the transcendental realm of absolute realisation.

"Prescribed religious duties, penances, renunciation and sacrifices are mundane activities. Hence, they cannot help one reach the supreme absolute goal— the spiritual world. The sruti scriptures declare that complete spiritual perfection is achieved only through chanting, hearing and remembering Krsna's name, fame, pastimes, etc. All scriptures have revealed the highest esoteric truth about the holy name and Its glories. One experiences spiritual bliss immediately upon chanting the holy name.

In the *Padma Purana* Sri Saunaka Rsi says:

*namoccarana mahatmyam
sriyate mahad adbhutam
yaduccarana-matrena
naro yayat param padam
tad vadasv adhuna suta*

vidhanam namkirtane
sri suta uvaca
srnu saunaka vaksyami
samvadam moksa-sadhanam
naradah prsthavan purvam
kumara tad vadami te
ekada yamuna-tire
nivistam santa-mansam
sanatkumaram papraccha narado racitanjalih
srutva nanavidhan dharman
dharmavyatikarams tatha
sri narada uvaca
yo'sau bhagavat prokta
dharmavyatikaro nrnam
kantham tasya vinasah syad
ucyatam bhagavat priya

The Supreme Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu continued, "I will explain in some detail the meanings of these slokas. O Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda, pay special heed to this!

Uccharana defined

The meaning of the word uccarana in this context is to chant or sing the holy names loudly or audibly. The devotees generally chant their prescribed number of holy names either on their fingers or on the tulasi beads. Many chant extra or sing in kirtana which are in addition to the prescribed number. Whenever the holy name is chanted audibly it is referred to as uccarana.

Japa and kirtana defined

"Soft, but barely audible chanting is known as *japa*, and *kirtana* is always loud and clear. Both of these are a part of *smarana* or remembrance, meaning meditation on the Lord and His pastimes. *Kirtana* is also loud singing. It is imperative for everyone to know how to properly chant the holy name and accrue the best results from it.

Perform kirtana always and everywhere

"Chanting the holy name is the eternal religion of the living entities. It is his prime duty whether he is living in the material world or is in Vaikuntha in a liberated existence, for the conditioned souls, chanting is the process to achieve

liberation, and for the liberated jiva, chanting remains an eternal, integral part of his existence as a servitor of the Lord.

Activities devoid of bhakti are to be rejected

"According to the scriptures, religion that does not include devotional service, vrata that is not intended to arouse devotional fervour, renunciation that is not spontaneously inspired by devotion, and sacrifice that is against the principles of devotional service are all mundane activities. Even though they are considered pious activities, they are, in fact, unfavourable to the execution of devotional service.

"But these same activities, when performed in relationship to devotional service, become favourable spiritual activities, and they constitute true *bhakti*. This is the verdict of the revealed scriptures. In Kali-yuga these activities have become degraded to the level of material activities, having lost all spiritual flavour due to being performed divorced from bhakti. They oppose the principles of pure devotional service.

"All devotees should therefore listen attentively: In Kali-yuga there is no religion other than the chanting of the Supreme Lord's holy name. Other religious practices that exist outside of the chanting process should be strictly avoided. The spiritual vision you attained through *bhakti* will help you to properly discriminate the truth.

*sri sanatkumara uvaca
srnu narada govinda
priya govinda dharmavit
yat prshtam lokanirmukti
karanam tamasah param*

You are famous as Narada Muni, one who is enlightened about the process of devotional service to Lord Govinda, Krsna. You are dear to Lord Govinda, and you can cut asunder the chains of material entanglement that keep the souls eternally enthralled. Your inquiry is aimed at liberating the conditioned souls, and its answer will allow the jiva to surmount the insurmountable ocean of nescience."

"In Kali-yuga, irreligious acts, as well as all other religious practices, are performed in gross ignorance. Therefore, the only path of liberation open to the jivas is the chanting of the holy name.

The holy name alone can purify all sins

*sarvacara-vivarjitah sathadhiyoh vratya jagadvancakah
dambhahankrti pana-paisunyaparah papasca ye nisthurah*

*ye canye dhanandaraputraniratah sarve 'dhamaste' pi hi
srigovinda-padaravindasaranah suddhah bhavanti dvija*

"For one who takes shelter of Lord Govinda's lotus feet,, all of his sins are eradicated by chanting the Lord's holy name. He may be an abominable wretch, the biggest liar and cheat, arrogant and egoist, always given to sinful ways, and a grossly materialistic person attached to wife, children and wealth. If one recognises his offenses and remorsefully weeps and chants Lord Krsna's name, then very soon, due to his advancement in devotional surrender, his sin are expiated. He is elevated to become a pure brahman.

Ritualistic penances cannot destroy material desires

"Formal *prayascitta*, or atonement and penance, the process of knowledge and fruitive activities are all too feeble to purify even a single tendency of a fallen soul. However, the amount of sinful activities that can be cleansed by once chanting Lord Krsna's name is of such magnitude that a sinner cannot commit so much sin in many lifetimes. Sinful activities of any enormity, that is mentioned in smarta scriptures scriptures of the ritualistic *brahmanas*: *karma-kandis*, can facilely be effaced by chanting a single name of Krsna.

"One may then ask, "Why do the ritualistic perform *prayascitta*? The answer is that they lack *sukrti*, or sufficient piety. Therefore, they prefer ritualistic activities or fruitive activities. The desire to commit sins never goes away by performing ritualistic *prayascitta*, or penance according to *karma-kanda*. With the execution of *jnana-prayascitta* atonement with knowledge, the desire may only be temporarily curbed, but soon that desire becomes rampant again and needs expression.

"Devotional service roots out nescience, which is the cause of all material desires. Souls who surrender at Lord Govinda's lotus feet entreat the Lord for deliverance by chanting His name and by hearing the Lord's direct instructions in the *Bhagavad-gita*. These practices will act like nectarean salve for the benefit of human society. The blessed Lord has said:

*sarva dharman parityajya
mam ekam saranam vraja
ham tvam sarva papebhyo
moksya yisyami 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.

*api cet suduracaro
bhajate mam ananya bhak
sadhur eva sa mantayah
samyag vyavasi to hi sah*

"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." Bg. 9.30.

*ksipram bhavati dharmatma
sasvacchantim nigacchati
kaunteya pratijanihi
na me bhaktah pranasyati*

"He quickly becomes righteous and attains lasting peace. O son of Kunti, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes. Bg. 9.31.

The results of chanting

"Therefore, one should give up the practices of prayascitta and other such fruitive activities, because a truly intelligent person worships the Supreme Lord Hari, knowing Him to be the dearmost Lord of the heart.

*tam api devakaram karuna-kara
sthavara-jangama muktikaram param
aticaranty aparadhapara jana
ya iha tanvapati dhruvanama hi*

The holy name of Krsna is compassionate and invested with Krsna's full potencies. It can easily liberate all moving and non-moving beings. One who chants but commits offenses against the holy name, is burdened with grievous sins. This causes upheavals in his spiritual life. The only way he can be exonerated is to take complete shelter of the holy name. There is no greater well-wishing friend in the entire world surpassing the holy name of the Lord.

*sri narada uvaca
ke te 'paradha vipendra
namno bhagavatah krta
vinighnanti nram krtyam
prakrtam hy-anayanti ca*

"O Sanatkumara, my dear spiritual master, kindly enumerate the different offenses to the holy name. Chanting the holy name is the prime duty and religious practice of the jiva and his ultimate shelter. Caution must be taken that the aspiring devotee is not thrust down into maya due to offenses. Offenses can misguide the devotee into believing that chanting is a mundane activity. In this way, he ends up with meagre material benefits from chanting, depriving him of real benediction."

*sri sanatakumara uvaca
satam ninda namnah parama aparadham vitanute
yatah khyatim yatam kathanamu sahate tad vigarham*

*sivasya sri visnor ya iha guna
namadi sakalam dhiyabhinnam pasyet sa khalu
hari-namdhitakaraha*

"Try to understand each of the ten offenses to the holy name individually. Then you can avoid them. This sloka analyses two of the offenses. Avoid them and try to chant purely."

"According to the verdict of Vaisnava saints one who takes complete shelter of the holy name, can break the shackles of material existence. He must have given up all endeavours for cultivating material knowledge and fruitive activity and is simply engaged in chanting the holy name purely. Only such saintly persons are eligible to propagate the holy name. any criticism against them is intolerable to Krsna and His name."

Anyone who minimises the gravity of such an offense is as seriously implicated as the offender himself. Therefore meticulously refrain from committing this offense and instead aspire for such saintly association, for this will add tremendous potency to one's devotional life. Krsna's name, beauty, qualities and pastimes are all transcendental and are in truth non-different from Him.

"Lord's name and the Lord Himself are of the same transcendental, spiritual substance. There are no equivalent examples found in material nature. This spiritual knowledge can be attained only through the process of devotional service, or *bhakti*, not mental speculation nor contentiousness. The two greatest aids in installing the living entity in this platform of realisation are a combination of rigid discipline, endeavour, together with the mercy of elevated saintly Vaisnavas and *guru*.

"Until one realises this truth he cannot transcend material consciousness, nor will his chanting produce the desired result: achieving one's original spiritual form. Instead he remains on the undesirable platform of namabhasa chanting, or the stage of merely clearing one's offenses. Diligently endeavour for favourable results in chanting. You can reach the ultimate goal of Krsna's lotus feet by chanting the holy name purely. Therefore, avoid this offense and take full shelter of the holy name, because by His mercy you can revive your original, spiritual form *svarupa*.

"Lord Krsna is the Supreme Absolute Lord, controller and master of all other lords. Lord Siva and the demigods are His parts and parcels. The demigod's names, forms, potencies, etc., are but transformations of Lord Krsna's energy. When one is situated in this knowledge, he realises that the Supreme Lord Visnu and Lord Siva are just qualitatively the same— as is the verdict of the Vedas. One should circumvent its offense and advance on the spiritual path by the indispensable mercy of the *guru*. The demigods can never be on the same level as the Supreme Lord.

Disobeying the spiritual master

*guror avajna sruti-sastra-nindanam
tathartha-vado hari-namni kalpanam*

*namno balad yasya hi papa-buddhir
na vidyate tasya yamair his suddhih*

"The guru directs the conditioned soul to the Supreme Lord Hari, Krsna, reminding him of his forgotten kinship with Him. He also introduces him to the process of chanting the Lord's holy names. Such a perfect spiritual master is like the helmsman for the conditioned soul, steering the boat of life across the ocean of nescience. To disrespect and disobey him is a serious offense against the holy name; *namaparadha*

"Only a foolish rascal will try to pass judgement on the guru who initiated him into the chanting of Krsna's holy name, on the basis of material considerations such as birth in a low family or lack of expertise in the chanting of Vedic mantras etc.

Disrespecting the Vedic Literatures

"The sruti scriptures and Vedas unequivocally establish with impeccable logic and widely propagate the transcendental nature and limitless glory of the holy name. It is therefore a grave offense to criticise these scriptures, or show preference for and praise the less intelligent path of fruitive action propounded in the karma-kanda section of the Vedas. This is yet another *namaparadha*.

Considering the glories of the holy name imaginary

"The holy names of Krsna are absolutely spiritual and are eternal priceless treasure to the jivas. The holy name is positioned on the transcendental plane. To consider the name and its transcendental qualities as imaginary is a serious *namaparadha*.

Committing sin on the strength of chanting

"The next *namaparadha* is to commit sin on the strength of the holy name. This mentality will render all devotional performances ineffective, and one will become addicted to sinful activities, therefore shun this offense."

Interpreting the holy name

"That fleeting pleasures are accrued as results of fruitive activity is certainly a fact. But by chanting the holy name within the realm of bhakti, one is crowned with immense spiritual results which are eternal. The transcendental holy name is unlimitedly glorious, so to give a mundane interpretation to the holy name, considering its qualities to be exaggerated, is very offensive.

"These five offenses, which are effects of gross ignorance, should be strictly avoided. Only then can an aspiring devotee attract the mercy of the Lord and His holy name to help him on the spiritual path."

All pious activities are material

*dharmā-vrata-tyāga-hutaḍi sarva-
subhā kriyā samyam api pramadāh
asraddadhane vimukhe'py asmvati
yas copadesah sivanamaparadhah*

Mundane activities are works recommended in the section of the scripture which propagates the varnasrama system and its religious practices. Fasting on the new moon and full moon days is in the mode of ignorance. Renunciation by taking *sannyasa*, living as a mendicant, performing daily ritualistic sacrifices and the different branches of yogic practices may be considered auspicious but are factually not spiritual.

"These activities are actually meant to help a practitioner achieve a higher goal, but if the aspiration to reach the supreme objective Kṛṣṇa, is missing in such practices, then these same become mundane activities."

Chanting is the means and the goal

Chanting the holy name purely, on the other hand, is a perfect, and transcendental activity, thus entirely different from these other activities. On the stage of practice, or 'sadhana' the holy name is the only means *upaya* to reach the supreme absolute goal, Kṛṣṇa. But when perfection in chanting is attained by '*upeya*', chanting the holy name purely, then chanting itself becomes an indispensable necessity '*sadhya*'. Therefore, the holy name and the chanting process are both transcendental, supremely spiritual and impossible to realise through any fruitive, mundane methods. Hence considering the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa synonymous with cultivation of material knowledge, fruitive activities and other such mundane endeavours is a serious offense, or namaparadha.

Instructing the faithless in chanting the holy name

"Another namaparadha is to instruct those persons who, due to insufficient piety, have not been able to develop faith in the holy name. Only by the blessings and the instructions from a bona fide guru can one rid himself of these two formidable namaparadhas. At that time it is possible to achieve a degree of perfection in chanting.

*srutvapi nama mahatmyam
yah priti-rahito'dhamah
aham-mamadi-paramo
namni so'py aparadha-krt*

Even after hearing unlimited eulogies of the holy name from the different scriptures, a person may not develop deeper attachment for the holy name. This is due to gross material consciousness: being attached to the body and material objects, false ego, and thirsting after material gains, adoration and distinction.

"Engrossed in sinful activities, he cannot give them up, and makes no attempt to chant the holy name even with a little sincerity. He has no attraction for saintly association, and prefers the company of the depraved. He finds pleasure in following the dictates of his uncontrolled senses, rather than in the silent promptings of his conscience which advise him self-restraint. His lower nature goads him to commit namaparadha, and he never develops a taste for chanting the holy name. Thus, he is debarred from joining the blissful family of Krsna.

"These, then, are the ten offenses against the holy name which keep one from taking advantage of the full shelter of the holy name and ensuring one of redemption and eternal peace.

*sarvaparadha-krd-api
mucyate hari-samsrayah
harerapyaparadhan yah
kuryad dvipadapamsanah
namasrayah kadacit syat
taraty eva sa namatah
namno hi sarva-suhrdo
hy aparadhat pataty adah*

All sinful reactions, sufferings and offenses of the jiva are immediately destroyed as soon as he comes under the supreme shelter of the Supreme Lord, Hari. At this point, the jiva develops distaste for material existence, and because he is gradually becoming free from his offenses, he joins Krsna's family of devotees without ulterior, material motives.

"When *jiva* receives formal initiation from a bona fide guru into the chanting of the holy name of Hari, Krsna, he is pardoned from all his sins of previous births. Then, when he guilelessly surrenders himself to Krsna's lotus feet, Lord Krsna nullifies all his offenses accumulated over innumerable lifetimes. One does not have to separately perform *prayascitta* penance, for his sins, for simply by receiving initiation he becomes freed from sinful reactions, such is the scriptural verdict. From the moment of sincere surrender, he no longer delights in sinful, sensual pleasures. The desire to sin becomes further weakened, and he conquers over maya illusion.

Offenses while performing devotional service

"Thereafter, the *jiva* may accidentally commit mistakes and offenses in the execution of devotional service, known as *sevaparadha*. These offenses prevent the supremely purifying process of devotional service from taking full effect. To counteract this ill effect, one must take shelter of chanting the holy name in the association of elevated Vaisnavas. Only then will the holy name give one protection against committing *seva-aparadha*, as well as nullifying any previous offenses. The holy name purifies everyone from all sins and elevates them to the highest state where they are able to render pure devotional service to Lord Krsna.

Namaparadha must always be avoided

"And if, inadvertently one commits *namaparadha*, he certainly falls down from grace and loses his spiritual direction. The holy name is *jiva*'s greatest well-wishing friend so any offense against the holy name can almost never be exonerated. Hence, one should be extremely cautious and avoid committing *namaparadha*, and in this way perfect one's human life by attaining the lotus feet of Lord Hari.

*evam naradha sankarena krpaya mahyam muninam param
proktam nama sukhavaham bhagavato varjyam sada
yatnatah
ye jnatvapi na varjayanti sahasa namaparadhandasa
kruddha mataramapyabhojanaparah khidyanti te
balavat*

"Long ago I placed this same question on *namaparadha* before Lord Sankara in his residence in Sivaloka. In the presence of many sages Lord Siva, seated on Mount Kailasa, mercifully instructed me. "The Lord's holy name is the source of supreme bliss for the *jiva*. Offense against the holy name augurs untold despair and suffering. ne who wants the utmost benefit for himself will carefully shun *namaparadha*."

"He will humbly approach his guru and other elevated Vaisnavas to learn from them how to avoid the ten *namaparadhas*. He should explicitly understand all of the imports and avoid these offenses. Then, very soon the holy name will crown him with the success of achieving *Krsna-prema*. Even after being instructed about the chanting of the holy name, if one remains unconcerned and does not avoid *namaparadha*, he at once comes under the ominous shadow of all ten offenses, and a foolish man as he drowns in the whirlpool of distress.

Just as a child who refuses to eat because he is angry with his mother will naturally always be debile and susceptible to disease, in the same way, without abrogating the ten offenses, the idiot may chant the holy name but his offenses hinder his path to salvation and happiness.

aparadha-vinukto hi

*namni japtam sadacara
namnaiva tava devarse
sarvam setsyati nanyatah*

"Sanatkumara said, 'O Devarsi Narada: The proper way to chant the holy name is to always avoid the ten offenses. There is no need for any other process of spiritual elevation other than chanting the holy name, for the holy name alone can award one the highest perfection.'

*"Sri Narada Muni replied,
sanatkumara priya sahasanam
viveka-vairagya-vivarjitanam
deha priyarthatmy-aparayananam
ukta aparadha prabhavanti no katham*

"O Sanatkumara! You are perfect and a highly elevated devotee of the Supreme Lord Hari, so it was possible for you to unambiguously elucidate the esoteric truth about the holy name. We are all simply practitioners and who are always fearful of committing mistakes, so please explain to us how we can scrupulously desist the offenses of the holy name. Material nature is presently acting as our friend and supplying us with strength and courage to act, but all such activities are illusory. We are considering the body our dearest kinsman and have become callous to the voice of conscience. Too lazy to accept voluntary renunciation, we are greedy to earn money and accumulate material holdings. Under the circumstances, please reveal to us how a *sadhaka* practitioner, can root out the slightest possibility of committing the ten offenses."

Sri Sanatkumara replied,

*jate namaparadhe tu
pramade vai kathancana
sada sankirtayen nama
tad ekasarano bhavet
namaparadha-yuktani
namanyeva haranty agham
avisranta-prayutani
tany evarta-karani hi*

"As soon as a person humbly surrenders himself to the holy name the holy name and Krsna being non-different, all the offenses he has committed are immediately nullified. Yet, if due to some negligence, he once again commits namaparadha, it will jeopardise his progress in bhakti. The only antidote to such an accident is to intensify chanting. By continuous chanting one should solidly reaffirm his faith and mood of surrender to the holy name, and on the strength of such sincere chanting namaparadha will once again be extirpated.

Chanting is the only means

"The holy name alone can absolve 'namaparadha' and no other remedial measures are as effective. O Narada Muni, let me explain to you the essential truth

about this subject, which is so widely sung in the Vedas. Try to understand the topic in the same manner as you have understood the Vedas.

*namaikam yasya vaci smaranapathagatam srotramulam
gatam va suddham vasuddhavarnam vyavahita rahitam tarayatyeva
satyam taceddehadravinajanatalobhapasandamadhye
niksiptam syannaphalajanakam sigrhamevatra vipra*

"If the holy name of the Lord is chanted without 'vyavahita', remembered or heard even once with heart and soul, then in a moment the holy name can liberate anyone. The word vyavahita covered, distance has two meanings in this context. The holy name is obfuscated when the syllables are too far apart while chanting; secondly, when chanted in ignorance, one sees only the external, material form of the holy name. But when the holy name is chanted in full awareness of Its nature i.e that the name and the Supreme Lord are one and the same, then nescience is destroyed. When these two discrepancies termed 'vyavahita' are removed, pure chanting is manifest. There is no fault if diction, voice inflection and pronunciation are not perfect. Lord Krsna has impregnated His holy name with His full transcendental potencies, hence the name is unencumbered by such considerations as chanting at the right or wrong time, or that one must bathe before chanting. Simply chant the holy name at all times and under all circumstances. This is the most auspicious activity, and it will drive away all inauspiciousness."

"When the sublime holy name is chanted in the company of saintly persons, only then does it give good results quickly but not otherwise. Due to close contact with atheists and gross materialists, the jiva becomes caught up in the false conception of body, wealth, relatives, greed, etc. giving rise to 'vyavahita' in chanting he thus falls into grave confusion. Therefore, his first step towards advancing in Krsna consciousness should be to disassociate himself from non-devotees. Taking complete shelter of the holy name, he should simply chant. By the mercy of the holy name one becomes delivered from nescience and confusion; his offenses vanish, and he feels pure joy. Once freed from offenses to the holy name, he profoundly experiences the first stirrings of Krsna-prema within his heart." The symptoms of an offensive chanter are that he is deceitful and capricious. A sincere chanter should avoid such bad company.

*idam rahasyam paramam
pura narada sankarat
srutam sarvasubhaharam
aparadha nivarakam
vidur visnvabhidhanam
ye hy-aparadhapara narah
tesam api bhaven muktih
pathanad eva narada*

"Sanatkumara said, "O best of the sages, Narada, Lord Sankara compassionately revealed this great mystery about the holy name to me in the past. This knowledge at once dissipates all ills and misgivings and mitigates namaparadha to nil. Even those persons who are offensive can achieve liberation if

they chant the names of Lord Visnu with knowledge of His supreme position."

"Svarupa Damodara! Ramananda Raya! It is imperative that you propagate the esoteric truth about the holy name of the Lord with great care. The conditioned souls in Kali-yuga have no means of redemption other than to realise the superexcellent knowledge of the holy name. This knowledge, as revealed by Vyasadeva in these verses, was explained by me in the past in the form of the Siksastaka. Therefore, sincerely broadcast this transcendental knowledge, always discuss the esoteric essence of the holy name and chant constantly.

Chant under the tutelage of Haridasa Thakura

"When it comes to chanting, the topmost devotee is Srila Haridasa Thakura, and it was he who propagated the supreme truth about the holy name. He preached as well as practiced chanting the holy name, hence he is the acarya of the holy name, or the namacarya. Whoever chants the Lord's name, following in Srila Haridasa Thakura's footsteps, will achieve the highest perfection in it."

Chapter 20—The Glories of the Holy Name

One day Krsnadasa broke his long silence and asked Lord Caitanya a question in Kasi Misra's house. "If you will kindly permit me to ask, then please tell me about the unlimited and wonderful glories of the holy name, about which even Lord Siva and Lord Brahma are unacquainted."

Lord Caitanya replied, "The excellences of the holy name are like an ever-expanding shoreless ocean. Even Lord Krsna Himself does not know the limits of It, what to speak of ordinary mortals. I will simply repeat what is written in the scriptures. If you listen with proper faith, you can be delivered from this distressful material world.

"The holy name is capable of dissolving sins and removing impediments. The name embalms sufferings and diminishes the detriments that are so characteristic of Kali-yuga. It redeems the unredeemable residents of hellish planets and nullifies the inevitable sinful reactions carried over from previous births. The holy name purifies offenses and is the quintessence of all transcendental activities, shining more brilliantly than the Vedas. The scriptures declare that chanting is the highest spiritual activity, higher than making pilgrimages to the holiest of places. The holy name is omnipotent and blesses the chanter with unimaginable good fortune—Its very nature is that It elevates one to experience divine bliss. A chanter is no ordinary person, for he becomes worthy of the entire world's praise. The holy name is the only means of salvation for the fallen conditioned souls, and It is always worshippable for It offers the much desired liberation, exalts one to the supreme spiritual abode and blesses the chanter with transcendental love of Godhead, Sri Hari. The *sruti* and *smṛti* contain countless proofs of the holy name's sublime position. It is the supreme destination of all spiritual aspirations and the

mainstream of the current of bhakti devotional service.

The Holy Name destroys all sins

"One of the inherent characteristics of the holy name is that It destroys all sins. Hear first the different, authoritative conclusions on the subject. Take note of Ajamila, the example of a sinner, who on his deathbed unconsciously called out, 'Narayana', the Supreme Lord's name. The innumerable sins he had committed in countless lives were immediately absolved.

*ayam hi krta-nirveso
janma-koty-amhasam api
yad vyajahara vivaso
nama svasty-ayanam hareh
(Bhag. 6.27)*

"Ajamila had 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 offenses, and therefore he is now pure and eligible for liberation.

"The most heinous offenses like murdering a woman, a king, a cow or a brahmana; taking intoxicants, cohabiting with guru's wife, betraying a friend, stealing, etc. are easily condoned simply by chanting the holy name. Once one is purified of his sins, he becomes attracted to Lord Krsna. In this way the holy name guides the living entity to his penultimate spiritual goal.

*stenah sura-po mitra dhrug
brahma-ha guru-talpa-gah
stri-rajapitr-go-hanta
ye ca patakino 'pare*

*sarvesam apy aghavatam
idam eva suniskrtam
nama vyaharanam visnor
yatas tad-visaya matih*

(Bhag. 6.2.9-10)

"The chanting of the holy names 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.'"

Penances and vows are insignificant activities compared to chanting

"Observing penances and vows like candrayana-vrata strictly according to scriptural injunctions cannot completely eradicate the sins a sinner commits. Yet, by chanting Lord Krsna's name even once, one becomes totally free from all sins.

*na niskrtair uditair brahma-vadibhis
tatha visuddhyaty aghavan vratadibhih
yatha harer nama-padair udahrtais
tad uttamasloka-gunopalambhakam*

(Bhag. 6.2.11)

"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.

"Even if the holy name is chanted unconsciously, jokingly, simply for entertainment, or neglectfully, the most grievous sins are absolved, and he enters the spiritual realm of Vaikuntha, lying beyond the jurisdiction of Yamaraja, the god of death.

*sanketyam parihasyam va
stobham helanam eva va
vaikuntha-nama grahanam
asesagha-haram viduh*

(Bhag. 6.2.14)

"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 learned scholars of the scriptures.

*patitah skhalito bhagnah
sandastas tapta ahatah
harir ity avasenaha
puman narhati yatanah*

(Bhag. 6.2.15)

"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 travelling 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.

*ajnanad athava jnanad
uttamasloka-nama yat*

*sankirtitam agham pumso
dahed edho yathanalah*

(Bhag. 6.2.18)

"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.

*vartamanantu yat papam
yadbhutam yad bhavisyati
tat-sarvam nirdahaty asu
govinda-kirtananalah*

Laghu-bhagavatamrta

"The holy name is the only real friend of the living entity. By chanting the holy name of Govinda, Krsna one very easily uproots all sinful reactions that have been accumulated not only in this lifetime but also those of many past lives and which are yet to mature into fruition.

*sada drohaparo yas tu
sajjananam mahitale
jayate pavano dhanyo
harer-namanukirtanat*

Laghu-bhagavatamrta

"An offense committed against a saintly person is a serious crime, and only by chanting the holy name of Krsna can one atone for it.

"The scriptures have amply described the various forms of prayascitta rituals for atonement of sins. However, all of these ritualistic activities are inconsequential compared to the chanting of the holy name.

*vasanti yani kotistu
pavanani mahitale
na tan tat-tulyam yanti
krsna-namaukirtane*

Kurma Purana

"The process of chanting the holy name has the power to eradicate all the accumulated and sinful reactions and much more, so much so that the holy name can absolve more sinful reactions than one is at all capable of committing.

*namno sya yavati saktih
papa-nirharane hareh
tatvat kartum no saknoti
patakam pataki janah*

Kurma Purana

"It is impossible to commit such volumes of sinful activities in this age of Kali that cannot be eradicated by the chanting of the holy name of Govinda.

tan nasti karmajam loka-

*vag-jam manasam eva va
yan na ksapayete papam
kalau govinda-kirtanam*

Skanda Purana

"The scriptures proclaim unequivocally that the holy name is the only cure for all diseases. O residents of Vrndavana, I say it is true, trust Me. Just chant the name of Govinda, Acyutananda, Krsna! Chant the holy name out for Madhusadan feeling from the heart with tears flowing from the eyes and rid yourself of all material disease and sufferings.

*acyutananda-govinda-
namoccarana-bhasitah
nasyanti sakala rogah
satyam satyam vadamy aham*

Brhan-naradiya Purana

"Chanting the holy name constantly can purify even the most fallen sinner, and after he becomes purified, he in turn is to be counted amongst the saintly persons who can purify others by his association.

*mahapataka-yukto 'pi
kirtayan manisam harim
suddha-antahkarano bhutva
jayate pankti-pavanah*

Brahmananda Purana

"All dreadful fears and sufferings, like severe sickness, the fear of capital punishment, etc. are easily quelled by chanting Lord Narayana's holy name.

*maha-vyadhi-samacchano
raja-badhopa-piditah
narayaneti samkirtya
niratanko bhaven narah*

Vahni Purana

"The chanting of the holy name drives away all diseases, sufferings, distressful conditions and inauspicious situations.

*sarva-roga-upasamanam
sarva-upadrava-nasanam
santidam sarva-aristanam
harer-nama-anukirtane*

Brhan-naradiya Purana

"As a strong wind disperses the clouds of gathering gloom, and the rising sun's first rays dispel darkness, similarly chanting of the holy name countervails against all calamities by its own unlimited potency. This is clearly explained by Srila

Vyasadeva in the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (12.12.48):

*samkirtamano bhagavan anantah
srutanubhavo vyasanam hi pumsam
pravisya cittam vidhunoty asesam
yatha tamo 'rko'bhrativati-vatah*

"When people properly glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead or simply hear about His power, the Lord personally enters their hearts and cleanses away every trace of misfortune, just as sun removes the darkness or as a powerful wind drives away the clouds."

"A person deeply afflicted by poverty, hopelessness, despondency, weakness of mind, fear and serious diseases and distress can rarely see the redeeming rays of hope, but if he simply chants 'Narayana', 'Hari', he will certainly be released from this intolerable misery and experience unlimited happiness.

*arta visannah sithilas ca bhita
ghoresu ca vyadhisu vartamanah
samkirtya narayana-sabdam ekam
vimukta dukkhah sukhino bhavanti*

Visnudharmottara

"The holy name of Visnu, Krsna, possesses inconceivable power and potency. By chanting the holy name, all evil spirits, ghosts, demons and monsters etc. flee in fear, putting an end to the living entities' extreme trepidations. Chanting removes all inauspiciousness, tribulations, hunger, thirst, confusion, and so on.

"After knowing all these facts about the name's potency, if one is still in doubt about Its efficacy, then he will not achieve any success in chanting. Another esoteric point about the holy name the devotees must be aware of is that one receives the mercy of the holy name only by increasing one's faith and not by faithless doubting.

*kirtanad-deva-devasya
visnoramita-tejasah
yaksa-raksasa-vetala-
bhuta-preta-vinayakah
dakinyo-vidravanti sma
ye tathanye ca himsakah
sarva natha-haram tasya-
namasamkirtanam smrtam
namasamkirtanam krtva
ksuttrt praskhalitadisu
viyogam sikhram-apnoti
sarvanarthaima samsayah*

Visnudharmottara

"I see that Kali-yuga is like a black, poisonous snake with a gaping mouth and fangs. But please be unperturbed dear devotees and listen with faith. Once the holy name of the Lord is being chanted, it is like igniting a forest fire which will burn to ashes the poisonous snakes within the forest.

*kali-kala kusarpasya
tikсна-damstrasya ma bhayam
govinda-nama-danena
dagdho yasyati bhasmatam*

Skanda Purana

In this dark age of Kali-yuga, sincere devotees of the Supreme Lord should leave aside all other means for liberation and take full shelter of the holy name. This is their real responsibility and duty. There is unlimited bliss in chanting the different names of Krsna: Hari, Kesava, Govinda, Vasudeva and Jaganmaya. For one who chants constantly with unflinching faith, he remains unaffected by the reverses of Kali-yuga, because his heart has become purified by chanting.

*harinama para ye ca
ghore kali-yuge narah
te eva krtakrtyasca
na kalir badhate hi tan
hare kesava govinda
vasudeva jaganmaya
itirayanti ye nityam
na hi tam badhate kalih*

Brhan-naradiya Purana

"An abominable sinner a fit resident of hell, can easily become a devotee of the Lord by chanting Krsna's name. Thus he can enter into the highest spiritual abode of the Lord.

*yatha tatha harenama
kirtayanti sma narakah
tatha tatha harau bhaktim-
ucvahanto udivam yayuh*

Nrsimha Purana

"Prarabdha, or unmanifested reactions of sinful activities committed in a previous life, can be counteracted only by means of chanting the holy name.

"This result cannot be achieved by pursuing speculative knowledge or performance of fruitive activity. In fact, it is impossible to break free from the entanglement of karma results of actions without the help of the chanting process. Final liberation, therefore is unattainable through other processes. The kind of liberation the holy name offers to the living entity will never again allow him to be induced to perform fruitive activities, but will rather make him transcend illusion and the three material modes.

*natah param karma-nibandha-krntanam
mumuksatam tirtha-padanukirtanat
na yat punah karmasu sajjate mano
rajas-tamobhyam kalilam tato 'nyatha*

Bhag. 6.2.46

"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.

"If a person who is in a death stupor, suffering acutely in a state of coma, somehow - unconsciously or otherwise - chants Krsna's name, the bonds of karmic reaction that bind him are severed, and he attains the supreme goal. In Kali-yuga such liberation is unobtainable by any other methods.

*yan namadheyam mriyamana aturah
patan skhalan va vivaso grnan puman
vimukta-karmargala uttamam gatim
prapnoti yaksanti na tam kalau janah*

Bhag. 12.3.44

"Terrified, about to die, a man collapses on his bed. Although his voice is faltering and he is hardly conscious of what he is saying, if he utters the holy name of the Supreme Lord he can be freed from the reaction of his fruitive work and achieve the supreme destination. But still people in the age of Kali will not worship the Supreme Lord.

"The holy name should be chanted with sincere faith and devotion and without envy. Krsna then forgives all of his countless offenses. As for the unfortunate soul who does not believe in the holy name, the gates of liberation remain always closed to him.

*mama namani loke'smin
sraddhaya yastu kirtayet
tasyaparadha-kotistu
ksamamy evam na samsayah*

Visnu-yamala

"Discrepancies that arise while pronouncing Vedic hymns and following regulative principles of ritualistic activities in regard to time, place and paraphernalia are all rectified by chanting the holy name, and thus one experiences unlimited joy. Chanting is the most important of all spiritual activities, so if one takes shelter of the holy name he will automatically achieve perfection in all other devotional endeavours.

*mantratas-tantratas-chidram
desa-kalarna-vastutah
sarvam karoti nischidram
anusa mkirttanam tava*

Bhag. 8.23.16

"There may be discrepancies in pronouncing the mantras and observing the

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

"The holy name is the essence of the Vedas, and far superior to it, anyone who doubts this faces constant misery. *Pranava* the sound om is one of Krsna's names; the Vedas have emanated from this seed sound om, spoken first by Lord Brahma. One who continuously chants Lord Hari, Krsna's name, is considered to have mastered the four Vedas.

*rg-vedo hi yajur-vedah
samavedapy'tharvanah
adhitastena yenoktam
harir ity aksara-dvayam*

Visnudharmottara

"What prompts you to undertake the tedious study of the four Vedas, namely, Rg, Sama, Yajur and Atharva? Simply go on chanting, "Govinda, Govinda!" That is all that is required to achieve perfection.

*ma rco ma yajus tata
ma sama patha kincana
govindeti harermama
geyam gayasva nityasah*

Skanda Purana

"Each name of Lord Visnu is greater and more potent than the entire Vedas; and Lord Rama's name alone is superior to a thousand names of Lord Visnu.

*visnor-ekaika-namapi
sarva-vedadhikam matam
tadrk nama-sahasrena
rama-nama-samamsmrtam*

Padma Purana

"The spiritual result one obtains from chanting a thousand names of Visnu three times is attained by chanting Lord Krsna's holy name once.

"Dear devotees of the Lord, please continuously chant, "Krsna, Krsna, Krsna, Krsna, Krsna, Krsna, he!" And also chant, "Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare; Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare". This mantra consisting of sixteen names is perfect in every respect, and chanting this *mantra* gives one the highest benefit and perfection in spiritual life.

*sahasra-namnam punyanam
triravrttya tu yat phalam
eka vrttya tu krsnasya
namaikam tat prayacchati*

Brahmanda Purana

Why undertake so many inconveniences that automatically accompany

pilgrimages simply to gain some piety, when by constantly chanting Hare Krsna, wherever you are situated, you can accrue the results of all pious activities?

"For one who continually chants the Lord's holy name there is no extra spiritual benefit by visiting even such holy places as Kuruksetra, Kasi, Puskara, etc.

*kuruksetrena kim tasya
kim kasya puskarana va
jihavagrete vasati yasya
harir-ity-aksara-dvayam*

Skanda Purana

"The spiritual value of Hari kirtana is far superior to even circumambulating many thousands of holy pilgrimages.

*tirtha-koti-sahasrani
tirtha-koti-satani ca
tani sarvany-avapnoti
visnor-nama-anukirtanat*

Vamana Purana

On a visit to the holy land of Kuruksetra the powerful sage Visvamitra once said, that he had heard the names of many holy places of pilgrimage in the material universe but none of them possessed even one millionth of the spiritual potency contained in the chanting of the holy name. This statement is of utmost value to everyone.

*visrutani bahunyeva
tirthani bahudhani ca
koty amsena api tulyani
nama-kirtanato hareh
Visvamitra Samhita*

"What is the necessity for studying such voluminous works as the Vedic literature and its corollaries? And why do people visit innumerable holy pilgrimage sites? One who truly desires to liberate his soul from illusion, let him constantly chant Lord Govinda's Krsna's holy name.

*kitanta veda-agama-satra-vistarais-tirthair-ane-kair api kim paryojanam
yady atmano vanchasi mukti-karanam govinda govinda iti sphuratam rata*

The chanting of the holy name is the highest spiritual activity, far superior to all other pious activities. One who chants with this realisation is automatically executing all other prescribed religious duties. Pious activities like giving lakhs of cows in charity on solar eclipses; residing in Prayaga in the month of Magha December-January and observing strict vows and baths; performing countless sacrifices and disbursing mountains of gold are not equivalent to a minute fraction of a fraction of the spiritual potency of chanting the holy name.

*go-koti-danam grahane khagasya
prayaga-gangodake kalpavasah*

*yajñayutam meru-suvarṇadanam
govinda-kīrtanerna samam satamsaiḥ*
Laghu Bhagavatamṛta

"Even if hundreds of altruistic works are performed for the benefit of the general's welfare, all such activities are mundane activities according to the scriptures. The chanting of the names of God alone can actually give complete liberation from this material world. Every other activity is insignificant in comparison.

*istapurtani karmani
suvahuni kṛtany api
bhava-hetur hi tany eva
harer-namatu muktidam*
Bodhayana-saṁhita

How reliable is samkhya-yoga deductive philosophical speculation, astanga-yoga the eightfold yoga process, etc. to offer one liberation? If you are really searching for mukti, then continuously chant Govinda's name. In fact, *mukti* is also insignificant in comparison to the actual result one achieves by chanting the holy name. *Mukti* is but facile even to someone who chants the holy name indifferently.

*kim karisyati samkh yena
kim yogair nara-nayaka
muktim-icchasi rajendra
kuru govinda-kīrtanam*
Guru Purana

"One who constantly chants Kṛṣṇa's name the holy name dances on his tongue. He may have taken birth in a family of dog-eaters svapaca, but he should certainly be considered a highly elevated brahmana. He must have already performed severe austerities and penances, visited all the holy places, taken bath in all of the sacred rivers and studied the conclusions of the Vedas. Thus, obtaining immense piety, he incessantly tastes the nectar of the holy name.

*aho bata svapaco to gariyan
vat-jihvagre vartate nama tubh yam
tepus tapas te juhuvuh sasnur arya
brahmanucur nama grnanti ye te*
Bhag. 3.33.7

"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.

"The *Hare Krsna maha-mantra* is the greatest chant for deliverance. It can easily offer all perfections and bring one to the highest spiritual realisations. This fact has been boldly proclaimed in the Vedic literatures. The chanting of the holy name brings completely under control all six vicious vices lust, greed, anger, etc and the impetuous senses, thus freeing one to execute perfect devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

*etad sad-varga-haranam
ripunigrahanam param
adhyatma-mulam-etadbhi
visnor-nama-anukirtanam*

Skanda Purana

"The really qualified and intelligent scholar, who applies his knowledge by proper behaviour and who relish the essence of the scriptures, appreciates Kali-yuga; because it is only in this yuga that one attains the highest perfection simply by chanting the holy name.

*kalim sabhajayanty arya
guna-jnah sara-bhaginah
yatra samkirtanenaiva
sarva-svartho 'bhilabhyate*

Bhag. 11.5.36

"Those who are actually advanced in knowledge are able to appreciate the essential value of this age of Kali. Such enlightened persons worship Kali-yuga because in this fallen age all perfections of life can easily be achieved by the performance of sankirtana.

"The supremely potent holy name is equal in every respect to the Supreme Lord Krsna Himself, because Lord Krsna has invested the holy name with all of His potencies. Krsna has collected the spiritual results accrued by charity, austerity, penance, pilgrimage, karma-kanda rituals offered to the demigods, rajasuja-yajna, asvamedha-yajna, knowledge of self-realisation and so on infused them into His holy name to make It absolutely powerful.

*dana-vrata-tapas-tirtha
ksetradinanca yah sthitah
saktayo devamahatam
sarva-papa-harah subhah
rajasuyasvamedhanam
jnanamadhyatmavastunah
akrsya harina sarvah
sthapitah svesu namasu*

Skanda Purana

"Lord Krsna, Lord of the demigod, possesses inconceivable potencies, and all of His names are endowed with the same potencies. One should develop attachment for Krsna's holy names. Take shelter and worship the holy name, for the omnipotent name can give one every desirable object.

sarvartha sakti-yuktasya

*devadevasya cakrinah
yac cabhir ucitam nama
tat sarvarthesu yojayet*

Brahmananda Purana

"The world becomes joyful hearing Hrisikesa's Krsna holy name, and they become attached to Him. The perfected souls offer their respectful homage to Him, but the demons are afraid, and they flee away. Lord Krsna and His names are the same; the name has immense powers of influence — It is not lacking in anything.

*sthane hrsikesa tava prakirtya
jagat prahrsyaty anurajyate ca
raksamsi bhitani drso dravanti
sarve namasyanti ca-siddha-sanghah*

"O master of the senses, the world becomes joyful upon Your name, and thus everyone becomes attached to You. Although the perfected beings offer You their respected homage, the demons are afraid, and they flee here and there All this is rightly done.

"Special material qualifications, caste, etc. are not the required qualifications for chanting the holy name. One does not need to have formal initiation or have undergone vows of purification to be eligible to chant the holy name. Whoever constantly chants the names of the Supreme Lord: Narayana, Jagannatha, Vasudeva, Janardana, is respected by all as a spiritual master. That person who chants Lord Krsna's name in sleeping, walking, dreaming and while performing other chores, is to be worshipped by everyone.

*narayana jagannatha
vasudeva janardana
itirayanti nityam
te vai sarvatra banditah
s vapam bhunjana vrajams-
tisthan uttisthams-ca vadamas
tatha ye vadanti harer-nama
tebhyo nityam namo namah*

Brhan-naradiya Purana

"Anyone who chants Lord Krsna's holy name is to be worshipped like a guru without considering that such a person is a woman, a sudra, a *pukkasa*, a *yavana* or of even lower birth.

*stri sudrah pukkaso vapi
ye canye papayonayah
kirtayanti harim bhaktya
tebhyo'piha namo namah*

Narayana-vyuha-stava

"One who is shelterless, who has no higher spiritual goals, who is a debauchee, cruel, violent, very licentious and devoid of knowledge, austerity or

religious principles can become more elevated than the pious men simply by the chanting holy name.

*anaya gatayo martya
bhogino'pi parantapah
jnana-vairagya-rahita-
brahmacaryadi-varjitah
sarva dharmojjhita-visnor-
nama-matraika-jalpakah
sukhena yam gatim yanti
na tam sarve'pi dharmikah*

Padma Purana

"There are no rules indicating time, place or circumstances for chanting the holy name, nor is anyone prohibited from chanting if he is unclean or contaminated.

*na desa-niyamas-tasmin
na kala-niyamas-tatha
nocchistadu nisedho'sti
sri-harer-namni lubdhaka*

Visnudharma

"Just go on chanting the holy name of Lord Krsna. Do not be inhibited by external rules such as those governing cleanliness, the holy name is fully independent of all such material proscriptions and It is the supremely purifying agent—cleansing everything but without becoming affected in any way.

*chakrayudhasya namami
sada sarvatra kirtayet
na saucam kirtane tasya-
sa pavitrkaro yatah*

Skanda Purana

"Ritualistic religious practices like yajna, charity, sacred baths and chanting of Vedic hymns are all regulated by rules of times, cleanliness, etc. To consider that the chanting of the holy name is subject to the same restrictions is a gross blunder. There are no hard and fast rules for chanting. Therefore, everyone chant Krsna's name at all times.

*na desa-niyamo rajan
na kala-niyamas-tatha
vidyate natra sandeho
visnor-nama anu kirtane
kalo'sti dane yajne
ca sthane kalo'sti sajjape*

*visnu-samkirtane kalo
nasty atra prthiviale*

Vaisnava Cintamani

"For the yogi who is searching for peace of mind, tranquillity and freedom from fear, the only quick and effective way is to chant the holy name.

*etam-nirvidyamananam
icchatana kuto-bhayam
yoginam rupa nirnitam
harer namanukirtanam*

Bhag. 2.1.11

"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.

"Lord's holy name is the most magnanimous deliverer of souls. The name alone offers the living entity sure and easy liberation. One needs to chant the bisyllabic name of the Supreme Lord Hari, just once, and immediately become an eligible candidate for liberation.

*sakrd-uccaritam yena
harir-ity-aksara-dvayam
baddhah parikaras-tena
moksaya gamanam prati*

Skanda Purana

"Anyone who chants Lord Narayana's holy name even once with a pure heart, having conquered sleep and lethargy, is liberated and is in constant communion with the Lord.

*sakrd-uccaritam yastu
narayanam atantritah
sudhantah karano bhutva
nirvanam adhigacchati*

Padma Purana

"A ;living entity, enmeshed in the abysmal ocean of repeated birth and death, even if unconsciously chants the holy name of Hari Krsna he becomes immediately liberated and personified fear being afraid of the holy name goes away.

*apannah samsrtim ghoram
yan-nama vivaso grnan*

*tatah sadyo vimucyeta
yad bibheti svayam bhayam*

Bhag. 1.1.14

"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.

"Let me take shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, whose incarnations, transcendental qualities and activities are all mysterious imitations of worldly affairs. One who invokes His transcendental names, even unconsciously, at the time of death, is certainly absolved of all his sins of many lifetimes, and attains Him without fail.

*yasyavatara-guna-karma-vidambanani
namani ye' su-vigame vivasa grnanti
te'nai ka-janma samalam sahasaiva hitva
samyanty apavrtamrtam tam ajam prapadye*

Bhag. 3.9.15

"Let me take shelter of the lotus feet of Him whose incarnations, qualities, and activities are mysterious imitations of worldly affairs. One who invokes His transcendental names, even unconsciously, at the time he quits this life, is certainly washed immediately of the sins of many, many births and attains Him without fail.

"In our normal activities of eating, sleeping, sitting, dreaming, etc. to chant Krsna's names, while nullify the ill effects of Kali-yuga, is the perfection of speech. Even if a person chants Krsna's names indifferently, he will surely achieve his svarupa, or original spiritual self and attain that state beyond all material fear and lamentation. He will reach Vaikuntha, the supreme goal.

*varjams-tisthan svapannasnan
svasan vakya-prapurane
nama-samkirtanam visnor-
helaya kali-varadhanam
krtva svarupatam yati
bhakti-yuktam param vrajet*

Linga Purana

*vasudevasya samkirtya
surapo vyadhito'pi va
mahavisnu prasidati*

Varaha Purana

"If somehow or other one chants Krsna's holy name, Krsna is attracted to him and He showers him with causeless mercy. Even a ghostly haunted drunkard,

miserably suffering numerous health disorders simply chants the holy name, then liberation is immediately within his easy reach.

*madhura-madhuram etan mangalanam sakalnigama
vali-sat phalam cit-svarupam
sakrd-api parigitam sraddhaya helaya va bhrguvara
nara matram tarayet krsna nama*
Skanda Purana

"Amongst the different limbs of bhakti chanting of the holy name is, according to all the scriptures, the most efficacious. *Astanga-yoga* necessitates much arduous physical and mental exercise in order to remember the Supreme Lord Visnu. But simply moving the lips and chanting is the best form of glorification and remembrance of the Supreme Lord.

*aghacchit smaranam visnor
vahvayasena sadhyate
ostha-spandana-matrena
kirtanantu tato varam*
Vaisnava Cintamani

"One who has worshipped the Deity of the Lord for at least a thousand lifetimes, and in each life having taken proper brahmanical initiation, is able to vibrate the holy name of Lord.

*yena janma-sataih purvam
vasudevah samarcitah
tan-mukhe harinamani
sada tisthani bharata*
Vaisnava Cintamani

"The supreme goal which was attained in Satya-yuga by years of prolonged meditation; in Treta-yuga by performing extensive yajnas; in Dvapara-yuga by opulent and scrupulous Deity worship; in Kali-yuga the same results are easily had simply by the chanting of the holy name.

*dhyayan krte yajan yajnaish-
tretayam dvapare rcayan
yadapnoti tadapnoti
kalau samkirtaya kesavam*
Visnu Purana

"The hallmark of a mahabhagavata the most elevated devotee in kali-yuga is that he chants the holy name of the Lord constantly.

*mahabhagavata nityam
kalau smakirtaya kesavam
Skanda Purana*

"The extraordinary result derived from chanting the transcendently empowered and eternal name of Krsna just a few times cannot be satisfactorily described, even by persons like Lord Siva or Lord Brahma. So marvellous is the holy name that immediately upon chanting It, the chanter attains the supreme destination.

*sakrd uccarayanty eva
harer nama cidamakam
phalam nasya ksamo vaktum
sahasra-vadano vidhiih
namoccarana-mahatmyam
srutyate mahad-abhutam
yad-uccarana-matrena
naro yayat param padam
Brhan-naradiya Purana*

"Lord Krsna said to Arjuna, 'O Arjuna! Listen attentively. When the living entity chants My name, whether out of devotion or indifference, I never forget this act. It remains always close to My heart. There is now vow like chanting the holy name, no knowledge superior to It, no meditation which comes anywhere near it, and it gives the highest result. No penance is equal to it, and nothing is as potent or powerful as the holy name.

"Chanting is the greatest act of piety and the supreme refuge. Even the words of the Vedas do not possess sufficient power to describe its magnitude. Chanting is the highest path to liberation, peace and eternal life. It is the pinnacle of devotion, the heart's joyous proclivity and attraction and the best form of remembrance of the Supreme Lord. The holy name has appeared solely for the benefit of the living entities as their Lord and master, their supreme worshipable object and their spiritual guide and mentor.

*sraddhaya helaya nama ratani mama jantuvah
tesam nama sada partha vartate hrdaye mama
na nama-sadrsam jnanam na nama-sadrsam vratam
na nama sadrsam dhyvanam na nama sadrsam phalam
na nama sadrsastyago na namasadrshah samah
na namasadrsham pnyam na namasadrshah gatih
namaiva parama muktir namaiva parama gatih
namaiva parama santir namaiva parama sthithi
namaiva parama bhaktir namaiva parama matih
namaiva parama priti namaiva parama smritih
namaiva karanam jantor namaiva prabhur eva ca
namaiva paramaradhyam namaiva paramo guruh*

Adi Purana

"There are no limits to the glories of the holy name. Just by hearing the Lord's names even a pukkasas, the lowest of mankind can be saved.

*na hi bhagavan aghatitam idam
tvad-darsanam nrnam akhila-papa-ksayah
yan-nama sakrc chravanat
pukkasas 'pi vimucyate samsarat*

Bhag. 6.16.44

"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?

"Whoever continuously chants Lord Krsna's holy name, even in his sleep, can easily realise that the name is a direct manifestation of Krsna Himself, in spite of the influences of Kali-yuga. This has been ordained by Lord Krsna.

*krsna krsneti krsneti
svapan jagrad vrajamstatha
yo jalpati kalau nityam
krsna-rupi bhaveddhi sah*

Varaha Purana

"One who chants Krsna's name and constantly remembers Him, even though living in this material ocean of nescience, is like the lotus, which is born in the water but is untouched by it: its position is transcendental. This great soul is capable of liberating all the suffering residents of the hellish planets.

*krsna krsneti krsneti
yo mam s marati nityasah
jalam hitva yatha padmam
narakad-uddharamy-aham*

Narsimha Purana

"The holy name is the prime and most secure shelter for the living entities. The holy name can eradicate endless offenses and liberate a person.

*namnam mukhyataram nama
krsnakhyam me parantapa
prayascittam-asesanam
papanam mocakam param*

Prabhasa-khanda

"The holy name is a transcendental touchstone, a direct manifestation of Krsna Himself, a fully cognisant Being, perfect, pure, eternally independent— the name and Krsna are identical.

*nama cintamani krsnas-
caitanya-rasa-vigraha
purnah suddho nitya-mukto
bhinnatvat nama-naminoh*

Brs. P.V.2.108

"One who philosophically understands that the Lord's holy name and His potencies are the same can properly approach and worship the Supreme Lord with transcendental knowledge and choice prayers."

*om a'sya jananto nama cid-vivaktan
mahaste visnoh sumatim bhajamahe om tat sat*

Rg Veda 1.56.3

Sri Krsnadasa, a resident of a dhama, then humbly enquired from lord Caitanya with folded hands: "Dear Lord, I have one other clarification to be made, which I place before Your lotus feet: after having heard the wonderful glories of the holy name, I wonder why chanting does not give everyone the same result."

The Lord replied, "Sraddha faith is the root of everyone's spiritual life. Some persons do not get results from chanting due to their lack of faith. The holy name is the Supreme Lord Himself, residing in everyone's heart as the Supersoul and He offers success in chanting proportionate to one's faith. Persons who do not have sufficient faith in the holy name or the chanting process, cannot have spiritual progress. Instead they slide down the path to destruction, committing offenses against the holy name.

They misinterpret the glories and transcendental nature of the holy name, and due to this offense they suffer hellish existence."

*arthavadam harer-namni
sambhavayati yo narah
sa papistho manusyanam
niraye patati sphutam Katyayani Samhita
yannama-kirtana vividhan nisamya na sraddadhata manute
yadutartha vadam
yo manusas-tan-ihya duhkha ye ksipami sansara-ghora vividharti
nipiditangam*

Brahma Samhita