

Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅgau Jayataḥ

ŚRĪ
HARI-NĀMA
MAHĀ-MANTRA

COMPILED BY

Tridaṇḍisvāmī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

GAUḌĪYA VEDĀNTA PUBLICATIONS

Dedicated to

the Founder of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti
and the best amongst the 10th generation of
descendants in the Bhāgavat-Paramparā from
Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Śrī Gurupādapadma
Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Ācārya Kesari
Nitya-lilā Praviṣṭa
Om Viṣṇupāda Aṣṭottaraśata

Śrī Śrīmad
Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

ENGLISH TITLES BY
ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAṆA MAHĀRĀJA:

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā	Going Beyond Vaiṅkuṅṭha
Bhakti-rasāyana	Śrī Prabandhāvalī
Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka	Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu
Śrī Manaḥ-sikṣā	Bhakti-tattva-viveka
Rays of The Harmonist	Śrī Gauḍīya Gīti-Guccha
The Essence of All Advice	Śrī Upadeśāmṛta
The Pinnacle of Devotion	Shower of Love
My Śikṣā-Guru and Priya-Bandhu	Arcana Dīpikā
Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism vs. Sahajiyāism	Veṇu Gīta
Secret Truths of the Bhagavata	Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī—His Life and Teachings	

Published by
Gauḍīya Vedānta Publications

Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha
Sevā Kuñja, Vṛndāvana
U.P. 28112, India
Tel: (0565) 443270
harekrishna@vsnl.com

Śrī Kesavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha
Mathurā, U.P. 281001, India
Tel: (0565) 409453
harekrishna@vsnl.com

Śrī Gour Govinda Gauḍīya Maṭha
32 Handsworth Wood Road
Birmingham B20 2DS, England
Tel: 0121 682 9159
gourgovinda@hotmail.com

Sri Sri Radha Govinda
Gaudiya Math
630 10th Avenue,
San Diego, CA 92101
tel: 619 696 8969
purebhakti@hotmail.com

First Edition 2,000 copies
Gaura Purnīma 2001

All copyrights reserved by
Gauḍīya Vedānta Publications

CONTENTS

ŚRĪ HARI-NĀMA MAHĀ-MANTRA.....	1
THE SEQUENCE OF THE MAHĀ-MANTRA.....	3
ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU AND THE MAHĀ- MANTRA.....	13
COMMENTARIES ON THE MAHĀ-MANTRA.....	20
Mādhurya-Mayī.....	20
Aisvarya-Mayī.....	20
Yugala-Smarāṇa-Mayī.....	21
Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī.....	22
Śrīla Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī.....	24
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.....	28
Pada-kalpataru.....	30
THE GLORIES OF ŚRĪ HARI-NĀMA.....	32
Nāma Svarūpa.....	32
In Kali-Yuga Nāma Bestows All Perfection.....	32
The Glories of Nāma as Described by the Ancient Ācāryas.....	33
The Glories of Chanting Nāma Exceed the Glories of Direct Brahma Realization.....	34
The Superiority of Nāma Kīrtana.....	34
The Superiority of Nāma Kīrtana Compared to Dhyāna and Pūjā.....	34
Nāma is not Governed by Rules Regarding Time, Place or Circumstance.....	35
Nāma Saṅkīrtana is the Sādhana and the Sādhyā for Everyone.....	36
‘HARI-NĀMA’ BY ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA.....	37

ŚRĪ HARI-NĀMA MAHĀ-MANTRA

*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*

According to eternal *śāstras* such as the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas* and *Saṁhitās*, the transcendental name (*nāma brahma*), *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma hare hare* is the *mahā-mantra* (supreme *mantra*) for deliverance in Kali-yuga¹. The primary occupational duty (*dharma*) of this age is to chant and perform *saṅkīrtana* of this sixteen word *mahā-mantra*.

The name of Bhagavān is directly the form (*svarūpa*) of Bhagavān. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has filled His names with His sweet form, His sweet pastimes and all of His potencies. Bhagavān is the possessor of His name and is called *nāmī*. Although He (*nāmī*) and His name (*nāma*) are nondifferent, in certain circumstances, the mercy of *nāma brahma* exceeds that of *nāmī brahma*. By His causeless mercy Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears in the form of *nāma* to deliver the conditioned souls. One who is most fortunate takes *dikṣā* in the *śrī hari-nāma mahā-mantra* from a bona fide *guru* who himself is constantly absorbed in *śrī hari-nāma*. In this way he worships Śrī Bhagavān by performing congregational chant-

¹ A *yuga* is defined as being one age within a cycle of four ages, in the life of a universe. They are named Satya, Treta, Dvāpara and Kali. Each age has consecutively less good qualities, longevity, auspiciousness, etc. The final, most degraded age is Kali-yuga (the age of quarrel and hypocrisy), in which we are now living. This age lasts for 432,000 years of which 5,000 have already passed.

ing of His names (*saṅkīrtana*), daily chanting a fixed number of names (*japa*), and remembering Śrī Bhagavān’s name (*smaraṇa*). *Śāstra* states that in Kali-yuga it is more glorious to perform *nāma saṅkīrtana* loudly than to perform *nāma smaraṇa* or *japa*.

*japato hari-nāmāni sthāna-sat-guṇādhikāḥ
ātmānañca punāty-uccair japaṁ śrotṛṇ-ṇunāti ca*

(Śrī Nāradiya, spoken by Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja)

“A person who chants *śrī hari-nāma* loudly is one hundred times superior to one who chants quietly. The person who chants quietly only benefits and purifies himself, whereas one who chants loudly also benefits and purifies all who hear him, such as animals, insects, birds, trees and creepers. Such entities cannot chant, but they can be delivered from the ocean of birth and death simply by hearing this *hari-nāma*.”

Thus, in this age of Kali, the crest-jewel of all kinds of *sādhana* is to perform *saṅkīrtana* of the sixteen word *hari-nāma mahā-mantra*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Pāvana-Avatāri, the most merciful *avatāra* who purifies Kali-yuga. He therefore instructs us to perform *śrī hari-nāma saṅkīrtana*—*kīrtaniya sadā hari*. (Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka 3)

The *Bṛhad Nāradiya Purāṇa* clearly states:

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

“To make spiritual progress in Kali-yuga there is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way than by chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name.”

THE SEQUENCE OF THE MAHĀ-MANTRA

One school of thought says that the *mahā-mantra* should be chanted in the following sequence:

*hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare*

This understanding is based on the following points:

- 1) The *Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad*, published by Venkatesh Press, Mumbai, states that this *mahā-mantra* begins with the words *hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare* followed by *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare*.
- 2) In a book called *Kalyāṇa* from Gorakhpura, the *mahā-mantra* is written in the above mentioned sequence.
- 3) Śrī Rāma appeared in Tretā-yuga. Later Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared in Dvāpara-yuga. It is therefore logical to chant *hare rāma* first and then *hare kṛṣṇa*.

The above mentioned views are both illogical and unfounded:

- 1) Earlier publications of the *Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad* by Venkatesh Press, Mumbai, clearly state that the *mahā-mantra* begins with *hare kṛṣṇa* and not with *hare rāma*. These earlier publications are still preserved in libraries in Calcutta and Jaipura.
- 2) *Kalyāṇa*, published by Gītā Press, Gorakhpura, is not a bona fide proof with which to support the above perspective.

3) That Tretā-yuga is followed by Dvāpara-yuga has no effect on the eternal *mahā-mantra*. The *mahā-mantra* is beyond all *yugas* and time.

This topic can only be understood by chanting the *brahma mahā-mantra*, the deliverer of all *yugas*. Reference to Śrī Bhagavān's names in the different *yugas* can found in the *Ananta-Saṁhitā*:

Satya-yuga:

*nārāyaṇa parā vedāḥ nārāyaṇa parā kṣaraḥ
nārāyaṇa parā muktiḥ nārāyaṇa parā gatiḥ*

“Nārāyaṇa is declared the Supreme in all the *Vedas*. Nārāyaṇa is the supreme of all letters. Nārāyaṇa is the supreme liberation. Nārāyaṇa is the supreme path.”

Tretā-yuga:

*rāma nārāyaṇa-ānanta mukunda madhusūdana
kṛṣṇa keśava kāmśāre hare vaikuṅṭha vāmana*

“He Rāma! He Nārāyaṇa! He Ānanta! He Mukunda! He Madhusūdana! He Kṛṣṇa! He Keśava! He Kāmśāre! He Hare! He Vaikuṅṭha! He Vāmana!”

Dvāpara-yuga:

*hare murāre madhu-kaitabāre
gopāla govinda mukunda saure
yajñeśa nārāyaṇa kṛṣṇa viṣṇo
nirāśrayam mām jagadīśa rakṣa*

“Hare, Murāre, Madhu-Kaitabāre, Gopāla, Govinda, Mukunda, Śaure, Lord of all *yajñas* Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu! He Jagadīśa, please protect me! I have no other shelter.”

Kali-yuga:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
ṣoḍa-saitāni nāmāni dvātrīnsad varṇa kāni hi
kalau yuge mahā-mantraḥ sammato jīva tāraṇe*

“Hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare. This *hari-nāma mahā-mantra* consists of sixteen names and thirty-two syllables. In Kali-yuga this *mantra* can deliver all *jīvas*.”

Thus, in regard to the third point, it is evident that the *brahma mahā-mantra* (Kṛṣṇa’s name) was present as the deliverer even in Tretā-yuga, before the appearance of Kṛṣṇa in Dvāpara-yuga, with names such as Mukunda, Madhusūdāna, Kṛṣṇa, Keśava and Kāmśāri. Therefore, the advice and arguments given about the reversed sequence of the *mahā-mantra* are invalid.

The *slokas* of the *Ananta-Saṁhitā* clearly state that in the *Upanṣads*, such as the *Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad*, the *mahā-mantra* is written in the following sequence: *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*.

Nāradaḥ received the *mahā-mantra* in this sequence from his *guru*, Brahmājī, and this tradition is still practiced today in the Brahmā Mādhava Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Saṁpradāya. In other *saṁpradāyas*, however, this *mahā-mantra* does not descend through the *guru paramparā*, and therefore its secret and sequence are unknown to persons in those *saṁpradāyas*. It is no wonder that they reverse the sequence of the *mahā-mantra* and begin it with *hare rāma*.

Other bona fide *sāstras* give evidence regarding the form of the *mahā-mantra*:

*śiṣya syodaṅ mukha-sthasya harer-nāmāni ṣoḍaśa
saṁśrāvyaiva tato dagdhān mantraṁ trai-lokya-mangalam*

(*Jñānāmṛta-sāra*)

“Śri Gurudeva should recite the sixteen word *hare kṛṣṇa mantra* to the disciple before initiating him into the *gopāla mantra*, which brings auspiciousness to the three worlds. To receive this *gopāla mantra*, the disciple must sit facing north and receive the *mantra* in his right ear.”

In *sāstras* such as the *Brahma Yāmala*, Lord Śiva describes the *svarūpa* (form) of the *mahā-mantra*:

*harim binā nāsti kiñcat pāpani-stārakam kalau
 tasmāl-lokod-dhārāṇa-ārtham hari-nāma prakāśayet
 sarvatra mucyate loko mahā-pāpāt kalau yuge
 hare-kṛṣṇa-pada-dvandvam kṛṣṇeti ca pada-dvayam
 tathā hare-pada-dvandvam hare-rāma iti dvayam
 tad-ante ca mahā-devī rāma rāma dvayam vadet
 hare hare tato brūyād harināma samud dharet
 mahā-mantram ca kṛṣṇasya sarvapāpa pranāśakamiti*

“He Mahādevī! Look! In Kali-yuga there is no easier way to eradicate sins than by *śrī hari-nāma*. It is therefore essential to propagate *śrī hari-nāma* among the general populous. The people in Kali-yuga can be easily liberated from the greatest hell by performing *sankīrtana* of this *mahā-mantra*. To chant the *mahā-mantra*, first chant *hare kṛṣṇa* twice, then chant *kṛṣṇa* twice, then *hare* twice. After that, chant *hare rāma* twice, then *rāma* twice and again *hare* twice. One should chant, articulate and perform *sankīrtana* etc., of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *mahā-mantra*, which destroys all sins.” This is described in these two stanzas.

The Rādhā Tantra states:

*ṣṅṅu mātarmahāmāye viśva-bija-svarūpiṇi
 hari nāmno mahāmāye kramāṅ vad sureśvari*

“A *bhakta* prays, ‘He *viśva bija svarūpiṇi* (seed of the whole universe)! *Sureśvari* (who is worshipable by the demigods)! *Mahāmāyā!* *Māta!* Please hear my prayer and explain to me the sequence of the *mahā-mantra*.’ ”

In response to this, Devī says:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
 hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
 dvātrim śadakṣarāṅyeva kalau nāmāni sarvadam
 etanmantram suta śreṣṭha prathamam śṅṅuyānnarah*

“O best among sons! The *mahā-mantra* for Kali-yuga bestows all perfection. This *mahā-mantra*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa nāma, is composed of six-

teen names and thirty-two syllables: *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*. Therefore, a person who desires his own welfare should first hear this *mahā-mantra* from his Gurudeva.”

In the same *Rādhā Tantra*, Tripurā Devī also suggests:

*hari-nāmnā vinā putra dikṣā ca vi-phalā bhavet
guru-deva-mukhācchrutā hari-nāma parā kṣaram
brāhmaṇa-ksatra-viṭ-sūdrāḥ śrutvā nām parā kṣaram
dikṣām kuryuḥ suta-śreṣṭha mahā-vidhyāsu-sundara*

“O best among sons, you are conversant with the greatest *jñāna*. Look! If you hear the *gopāla mantra* from Śrī Gurudeva before hearing the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, the results of the *gopāla mantra* will become void. Therefore, persons of all *varṇas*, such as *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas*, first have to hear this *mahā-mantra* from Śrī Gurudeva before they accept initiation into the *gopāla mantra*.”

The *Padma Purāṇa* also states:

*dvāntrim-sad-akṣaram mantram nāma-ṣoḍa-śakānvitam
prajāpan vaiṣṇavo nityam rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sthalaṁ-labhet*

“Any Vaiṣṇava who constantly chants the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, which is endowed with sixteen names consisting of thirty-two syllables, will certainly attain the abode of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vṛndāvana Dhāma.”

In the *Rādhā Hṛdya Khaṇḍa* of the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, Romaharṣaṇa Sūta prays to Śrī Veda Vyāsa as follows:

*yattvayā kirtitaṁ nātha hari-nāmeti sanjītam
mantram brahma-padam siddhi karam-tad-vad-no-vibho*

“He Vibho! He Prabhu! Please instruct me in the *brahma svarūpa nāma mantra* of Śrī Hari which is the bestower of all perfections.”

In reply, Śrī Veda Vyāsa gives the following instruction:

*gṛhaṇād yasya mantrasya dehi brahma-mayo bhavet
sadhyaḥ pūtaḥ surāpo ‘pi sarva-siddhi-yuto bha*

*vet tad-ahaṁ te bhidhā-syāmi mahā-bhāgavato hamsi
 hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
 hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
 iti ṣoḍaśakam nāmnām tri-kāla kalmaṣāp-aham
 nātaḥ parataropāyaḥ sarva vedeṣu vidhyate*

“O my son, I will certainly instruct you in that *mahā-mantra*, the acceptance of which a person in the bodily conception of life can be liberated and even a drunkard can quickly become purified and attain all perfection. I will instruct you because you are a *mahā-bhāgavata* and a suitable candidate. Just see! The sixteen word *mahā-mantra*, *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma hare hare*, can destroy the sins of the three worlds. The four *Vedas* do not mention a method for achieving liberation from material bondage superior to the chanting of this *mahā-mantra*.”

Ananta Samhitā also states:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
 hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
 ṣoḍasautāni nāmāni dvātrimśad varṇa-kāṇi hi
 kalāu yuge mahā-mantraḥ sammato jīva-tāraṇe
 utṣṛa-jyaitan-mahā-mantram ye tvanyat kalpitam padam
 mahā-nāmeti gāyanti te śāstra-guru-lāni-ghanāḥ*

”All *śāstras* agree that the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, which is composed of sixteen names and thirty-two syllables, is the illustrious *mantra* to deliver the *jīvas* in Kali-yuga. Those who neglect this *mahā-mantra* and accept any other process, due to their own imagination or the imagination of others, are actually disobeying *guru* and *śāstra*. If someone asks, ‘Why is this sixteen word *hare kṛṣṇa mantra* the *mahā-mantra*?’ then the following answer is given. ‘Among all of Kṛṣṇa’s names, no name other than Hari can easily take away sins, great misfortune and ignorance. No name other than Kṛṣṇa can deliver *prema*. And no name other than Rāma can bestow liberation.’ This is why the *mahā-mantra* is composed of

these three primary names. Secondly, these sixteen names are an invocation. *Om*, *namaḥ*, *klīm*, *svāhā*, etc., are not required to make the *mantra* more potent. For this reason it is called the *mahā-mantra*.”

The *Sanat Kumāra Samhitā* states:

*hare kṛṣṇau dvirā-vṛttau kṛṣṇa tādyak tathā hare
hare rāma tathā rāma tathā tādrak hare punaḥ
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

This means first chant *hare kṛṣṇa* twice, then *kṛṣṇa* twice, followed by *hare* twice. Then chant *hare rāma* twice, *rāma* twice and then *hare* twice. By this we get the *mahā-mantra*, *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*.

In the *Yajur Vēdiya*, the *Kali-santarāṇa Upaniṣad* also describes the *svarūpa* and glories of the *mahā-mantra* in this way:

*hariḥ aum. dvāpavānte nārado brahmāṇam jagām katham bhagavan!
gām paryātan kalim santare yam-iti. sahovāc brahmā sādhu pṛṣto-smi
sarva-srūti-rahasyam gopyam tac-chraṇu yenakali-samsāram tariṣyasi.
bhagavat ādi-puruṣasya nārāyaṇasya nāmoc-cāraṇa-matreṇa nīrdhūt-
kalir-bhavi. nāradaḥ punaḥ paṇḍura. tannām kimiti? sa hovāc
hiraṇya-garbhah, “hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare, hare
rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare.” iti ṣoḍasakam nāmnām kali
kalmaṣa nāsanam. nātaḥ parataropāyaḥ sarva vedeṣu dṛśyate. iti ṣoḍaśa-
kalā-vṛtasya jīvasya āvaraṇa-vināsanam. tataḥ prakāśate para-brahma
maghāpāye ravi-raṣim-maṇḍali-veti. punar-nāradaḥ paṇḍura.
bhagavan! ko sya vidhi-riti? sa hovāc nāsya vidhi-riti. sarvadā sūcir-
śūcīrvā paṭhan brahmaṇaḥ ślokatām samī-patām saru-patām sāyu-
jyatāmeti.*

“At the end of *Dvārāpa-yuga*, Śrī Nārada went to Śrī Brahmā, and, after offering his obeisances inquired, ‘O Lord, how can I cross beyond the influence of this age of *Kali* while wandering on this earthly planet?’

“Brahmāji replied, ‘O son, you have asked an excellent question. Please hear the most confidential secret of the entire *Vedas*

by which you can easily cross this world of Kali. By uttering the name of that *ādi puruṣa* who is Bhagavān Śrī Nārāyaṇa (Kṛṣṇa), the personality of Kali-yuga begins to tremble.’

“Nāradaḥ further inquired, ‘Which name of Śrī Bhagavān and what is its *svarūpa*?’”

“In reply Brahmāji said, ‘*Hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*. In this way this *mahā-mantra*, which is composed of sixteen names, can completely destroy all the sins of Kali-yuga. A superior *sādhana* does not appear in the entire *Vedas*. The *mahā-mantra* is covered by sixteen qualities, which means that it can destroy the five gross elements (*pañca bhuta*) and the eleven senses which cover the *jīva*. Parabrahma then manifests before the *jīva*, just as the sun’s rays shine brightly after a covering of cloud is removed.’

“Nāradaḥ then asked, ‘Oh Lord, what are the rules and regulations for chanting this *mahā-mantra*?’

“Brahmāji said, ‘There are no rules and regulations for chanting this *mahā-mantra*. One can chant in a pure or an impure state. Moreover, by clearly pronouncing this *mahā-mantra*, one can attain *brahma* (*salokya*, *samīpya*, *sarūpya* and *sāyujya*). Not only that, one can attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*, the fifth goal of human life (*pañca puruṣārtha*).’ ”

Śrī Bhakti-chandrika, 7th Paṭal states:

*atha mantra-varaṁ vakṣye dvātrim-śad-akṣarā anvitam
sarva-pāpa-prasāmanam sarva-durvāsanā analam
catur-varga-paradam saumyam bhaktidam prema-pūrvakam
durbuddhi-haraṇam śuddha-sattva-buddhi-pradāyakam
sarva-arādhyam sarva-sevyaṁ sarveṣāṁ kāma-pūrakam
sarva-adhikār-samyuktam sarva-lokaika-bāndhavam
sarva-akarsaṇa-samyuktam duṣṭa-byādhi-vināsanam
dikṣā-vidhi-vihīnam ca kāla-ākāla-vivarjitam
vāṅ-mātreṅcītam bāhma-pūja-avidhyan-apekṣakam
jihvā-sparśan-mātreṇa sarveṣāṁ phala-dāyakam
deśa-kālā-niyamitam sarva-vādisusammataṁ*

“This *mahā-mantra* is endowed with thirty-two syllables and can destroy all sins. Just as fire destroys, this *mahā-mantra* can destroy all evil habits and bestow *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. Its beautiful form (*svarūpa*) is capable of stealing all of one’s foolish, ignorant mentality, and it is the giver of *suddha sattvika* intelligence. It bestows the symptoms of *prema-bhakti*. It is worshipable and is worthy of being served by all. *Śrī nāma* fulfills everyone’s desires. All are qualified to serve this *mahā-mantra*, meaning all are qualified to perform *sankīrtana* of the *mahā-mantra*. This *mahā-mantra* is the personal well-wisher of everyone and is endowed with the potency to attract all. It is the destroyer of all afflictions. It does not consider the rules of *dikṣā*, and is not restricted by time. The *mahā-mantra* is worshipped just by saying it. No external paraphernalia is required. It is capable of giving results simply by its contact with the tongue, without considering the rules pertaining to time, place and circumstance.”

The Piplāda branch of the *Athārva Veda* states:

*svanāma-mūla-mantreṇa sarvaṁ hlādayati vibhuḥ
sa eve mūlam-mantraṁ jāpati haririti kṛṣṇa iti rāma iti*

“That *mahā-mantra*, which is composed of the name, form, etc., of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, the origin of all *avatāras*, is making everyone joyful. He Himself, in the form of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu*, is clearly chanting the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, the source of all *mantras*.”

The following *śloka* explains the result of performing *kīrtana* of the *mahā-mantra*:

*mantra guhyaḥ paramo bhakti-vedhyaḥ nām-ānanya-ṣṭāvaṣṭa ca
śobhanānītāni nityaṁ jāpanti dhīrāste vai māyām-atita-ranti nānye
paramaṁ mantraṁ parama-rahasyaṁ nityamāvartayanti*

“The *mahā-mantra* is most confidential and can only be understood through *bhakti*. Eight of its sixteen charming words are *hare kṛṣṇa* and the other eight, *hare rāma*. Therefore, only those intelligent persons who constantly chant these names will be liberated

from *māyā*—and not others. That is why intelligent persons always chant, perform *kīrtana* of and remember the *mahā-mantra*.”

In the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* (Northern Division, Chapter 6) Piplāda mentions that Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja once prayed to Kratu Muni, “O Lord, if you want to favour me, then please donate to me the names of Hari.” At that moment the saintly Kratu Muni gave him the sixteen name *mahā-mantra*. Therefore, an intelligent person should constantly perform *saṅkīrtana* of this *mahā-mantra*: *nāma saṅkīrtanam tasmāt sadā kāryam vipāścītā*.

ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU AND THE MAHĀ-MANTRA

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who established the chanting of *śrī hari-nāma saṅkīrtana*, instructs the *bhaktas* to perform *saṅkīrtana* of the *mahā-mantra*.

Śrī Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya says:

*viṣṇu-cittān kali-ghora-bhitān
sanvīkṣya gauṛo hari-nāma-mantraṁ
svayaṁ dadau bhakta-janān samā-diśat
saṅkīrtaya dvaṁ nanu nṛtya-vādhyaiḥ*

“Out of His causeless mercy, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself gave the *mahā-mantra* to the helpless, fearful *jīvas* of this Kali-yuga, and directed His devotees by saying, ‘O *bhaktas*, you should collectively perform *saṅkīrtana* by singing and dancing.’”

*harer-nāma-prasādena nistaret pātaki janāḥ
upadeṣṭā svayaṁ kṛṣṇa caitanya jagadīśvaraḥ
kṛṣṇa-caitanya-devena hari-nāma-prakāśitam
yena kenāpi tat-prāptaṁ dhanyo' sau loka-pāvanaḥ*

“By the mercy of *hari-nāma*, a sinner can also be delivered because the instructor of *śrī hari-nāma* is the Lord of the universe, Svayaṁ Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore, a person who is fortunate enough to receive this *hari-nāma*, which has been inaugurated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself, can also purify others by his association.”

The great poet Śrīla Kavi Karṇapūra states in his epic poem, *Caitanya-Caritā* (11-54):

*tatah śrī gaurāṅgah samavadadtiṛ pramudito
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

“At the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s *sannyāsa* ceremony, the barber who had been asked to shave Him felt morose and was perturbed. Although he held the razor in his hand, he could not bring himself to shave off Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s beautiful hair. Instead he simply wept. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who was fully immersed in *rādhā-bhāva*, became deeply pleased and said, ‘O Barber! You must constantly and loudly chant *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*.’ Upon hearing these instructions from Śrī Mahāprabhu, that barber began to chant, and, although he continued to weep in distress, he proceeded to shave off Mahāprabhu’s hair. He became so absorbed in chanting the *mahā-mantra* that he manifested horripilation (*romañca*) and his bodily hairs stood erect (*pulaka*).”

Caitanya Maṅgala states:

*bāhu prasāriyā prabhu brāhmaṇe tulilā
tāra ghare bhakti bhare gāna āraṁbhilā
brāhmaṇera ghara yena haila vṛndāvana
hari-nāma śunibāre āise sarva-jana
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

“Once Mahāprabhu visited the home of a *brāhmaṇa* and embraced him. The *kīrtana* that followed made that home become just like Vṛndāvana and a multitude of people gathered to hear and chant the *mahā-mantra*: *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma hare hare*.”

Caitanya Maṅgala also states:

*hare kṛṣṇa nāma prabhu bole nirantara
prasanna śrī mukhe hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa bali
vijaya hailā gauracandra kutūhali*

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa bali prema sukhe
pratyakṣa haila āsi advaita-sammukhe*

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is always chanting *śrī nāma*. One day when He came to the home of Advaita Ācāryā, His face filled with pleasure as He chanted the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*.”

Caitanya-caritāmṛta states:

*kṛṣṇa nāma mahā-mantra ei t' svabhāva
yei jape tāre kṛṣṇe upajaye bhāva*

(C.c. Ādi-līlā 7.83)

“The nature of the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra* is such that when a person chants it, he immediately develops his loving ecstatic relationship with Kṛṣṇa.”

*kṛṣṇa viṣayaka premā—parama puruṣārtha
yāra āge tṛṇa-tulya cāri puruṣārtha*

(C.c. Ādi-līlā 7.84)

“When the four goals of human life, *dharma* (perfectly performing one’s occupational duty), *artha* (accumulating wealth), *kāma* (satisfying one’s sensual desires) and *mokṣa* (attaining liberation), stand before *kṛṣṇa prema*, the fifth and topmost goal, they appear as insignificant as straw in the street.”

*“pancama puruṣārtha-premānand amṛta sindhu
brahmādi ānanda yāra nahe eka bindu”*

(C.c. Ādi-līlā 7.85)

“The pleasure derived from *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* appear like a drop in the ocean in the presence of a person who has developed *bhāva*.”

“kṛṣṇa-nāmera phal’ premā, sarva sāstre kaya”

(C.c. Ādi-līlā 7. 86)

“The conclusion of all *sāstra* is that one should awaken his dormant *kṛṣṇa-ṭprema*.”

*kali-kāle nāma rūpe kṛṣṇa-avatāra
nāma haite haya sarva-jagat-nistāra*

(C.c. Ādi-lilā 17.22)

“The holy name of Bhagavān, the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, is His *avatāra* in this age of Kali. Just by chanting this name, one associates with Śrī Kṛṣṇa directly. Anyone who does this is certainly delivered.”

*avatari’ caitanya kaila dharma ṭpracāraṇa
kali kāle dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkirtana*

(C.c. Madhya-lilā 11.98)

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has descended in Kali-yuga to propagate the *dharma* of the age, chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa.”

*saṅkirtana-yajñe tāṅre kare ārādhana
sei ta sumedhā āra—kali-hata-jana*

(C.c. Madhya-lilā 11.99)

“A person who worships Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu by performing *saṅkirtana* should be considered to possess great intelligence. It is understood that one who does not perform *saṅkirtana* has no intelligence and is a victim of Kali.”

*nirantara kara kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkirtana
helāya mukti pābe, pabe ṭprema-dhana*

(C.c. Madhya-lilā 25.154)

“Always chant *kṛṣṇa-nāma* and you will very easily achieve *mukti*. Finally you will receive the treasure of *kṛṣṇa-ṭprema*.”

*eka ‘nāmābhāse’ tomāra pāpa doṣa yābe
āra ‘nāma’ la-ite kṛṣṇa-caraṇa-pābe*

(C.c. Madhya-lilā 25.199)

“Begin to chant the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra* and, at the stage of *nāmabhasa*, when your chanting is almost pure, all your sinful reactions will be removed. When you perfectly chant *hare kṛṣṇa*, you will attain the shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet.”

nāmera phale kṛṣṇa-pade prema upajaya

(C.c. Antya-lilā 3.178)

“The result of chanting *nāma* without offence is that a person will awaken his ecstatic love for the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.”

kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana

(C.c. Antya-lilā 7.11)

“In Kali-yuga the *dharma* is to chant *kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana*.”

harṣe prabhukalena suna svarūpa-rāma-rāya

nāma-saṅkīrtana-kalau parama upāya

(C.c. Antya-lilā 20. 8)

“In great jubilation Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, ‘My dear Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya, understand that the easiest way to attain *mokṣa* in this age of Kali is by chanting *hari-nāma*.’ ”

saṅkīrtana-yajñe kalau kṛṣṇa ārādhana

sei ta sumedhā pāya kṛṣṇera caraṇa

(C.c. Antya-lilā 20.9)

“In this age of Kali, the system for worshipping Kṛṣṇa is to perform *yajña* by chanting Śrī Bhagavān’s name. Someone who does so is considered to be intelligent, and he will definitely attain the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.”

nāma-saṅkīrtane haya sarvānatha-nāsa

sarva-śubhodaya kṛṣṇa-premera ullāsa

(C.c. Antya-lilā 20.11)

“By chanting *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, one can eradicate all *anarthas*. In this way all good fortune is awakened and the flow of *kṛṣṇa-prema* begins.”

*khāite suite yathā tathā nāma laya
kāla-deśā-niyama nāhi sarva siddhi haya*

(C.c. Antya-lilā 20.18)

“One who chants the name while eating or sleeping, regardless of time or place, attains all perfection.”

*ei-mata hañā yei kṛṣṇa-nāma-laya
śrī kṛṣṇa-caraṇe tāñra prema upajaya*

(C.c. Antya-lilā 20.26)

“A person will definitely awaken *prema* for the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa if he chants *kṛṣṇa-nāma* like this.”

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmi states in the introduction to his commentary on the *mahā-mantra*:

*ekadā kṛṣṇavirahād dhyāyanti priyasangamam
manovāṣṭpanirāsārtham jalpatidam muhurmuhuha
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
yāni nāmāni virahe jajāpa vārṣabhānavi
tānye va tadbhāvayukto gauracandro jajāpa ha
śrī caitanya-mukhod gīṛṇa hare kṛṣṇeti varṇakah
majjayanto jagat preṃṇi vijayantām tadā vayāḥ*

“Once, Śrīmatī Rādhikā was feeling overwhelming distress due to separation from Her beloved Śyāmasundara and She meditated upon meeting Him. To remove Her fire of separation, She began to chant the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is absorbed in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, also chanted these names. Thus, Kṛṣṇa’s sixteen names consisting of thirty-two syllables, the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, came from the lotus mouth of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. May this *mahā-mantra*, which makes

the entire universe become absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-prema*, be graciously and conspicuously present above all else. *Jaya ho! Jaya ho!* Let there be complete victory for the *mahā-mantra!*”

Reference to the *mahā-mantra* is also found in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, *Uttara-khaṇḍa*, 6.55:

hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare

“The three names, Hare, Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma, which are in the vocative case, comprise the *mahā-mantra*.”

The following *ślokas* from *Caitanya Bhagavata* also show the supremacy of *hari-nāma*: (*Ādi* 14.137,139-143), (*Madhya* 6.117), (*Madhya* 23.74-78) and (*Madhya* 28.28).

COMMENTARIES ON THE MAHĀ-MANTRA

MĀDHURYA-MAYĪ

The *mahā-mantra* consists of three words. Each word is in the vocative case², meaning it is a ‘calling out’, or an address. These words are Hare, Kṛṣṇa and Rāma.

*vijñāpya bhagavat-tattvaṁ cid ghanānandi vigraham
haratyavidhaṁ tatkāryamato haririti smṛtaḥ
ānandaikasukhaḥ śrīmān śyāmaḥ kamala locanaḥ
gokulānando nandandanaḥ kṛṣṇa īryate
vaidagdhi sārāsarvasvaṁ mūrtalilā dhidaivatam
śrī rādhām ramaya nityaṁ rām ityabhidhiyate*

(*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*)

“Śrī Bhagavān is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, the embodiment of eternity, knowledge and bliss. Because He is able to eradicate all ignorance, the term Hari (one who takes away) is an appropriate way to remember Him. It is only lotus-eyed Nanda-nandana, Śrī Syāmasundara, the bestower of bliss to the residents of Gokula, who is referred to as Kṛṣṇa (the all-attractive one). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *lilā-vigraha* (personification of pastimes) and the crest-jewel of all expertise and wisdom. Because He eternally enjoys conju-

² The vocative case means to call out or to address someone. In Sanskrit grammar the last letter of a name will sometimes change in the vocative case e.g. ‘Lalita’, becomes ‘Lalite’. The same rule applies to Harā, which becomes Hare. The names Kṛṣṇa and Rāma remain the same.

gal pastimes with Śrīmatī Rādhikā, He is also known as Rāma (the enjoyer).”

AISVARYA-MAYĪ

The Āgama śāstra states:

*harati trividhaṁ tāpaṁ janmakoṭi śtod bhavam
paṇaṁ ca smaratāṁ yasmāt tasmād dhaririti smṛtaḥ
kṛṣṭirbhūvācakaḥ śabda ṅasca nirvṛtivā-cakaḥ
tayoṛaikyaṁ paraṁ brahma kṛṣṇa ityabhidhīyate
ramante yogino ‘nante satyānande cidāt mani
iti rāmapade nāsau paraṁ brahmā ‘bhīdiyate*

“Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known as Hari because He destroys the three-fold afflictions of countless births as well as the sinful activities performed by the body, mind and words of those devotees who remember Him. Kṛṣ means ‘all attractive’ and ṇa means ‘joyful’. The combination of these syllables refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the all-attractive *para*brahma. Yogīs on the transcendental platform derive great joy by meditating upon Him as the infinite form of supreme bliss (*nityānanda-svarūpa*), and as He who has a transcendental form (*cinmaya svarūpa*). For this reason, He is called Rāma (the supreme enjoyer).”

YUGALA-SMARANA-MAYĪ

Śruti śāstra states:

*mano harati kṛṣṇasya kṛṣṇa hṛādasvaruṇiṇi
tato harā śrī rādhāiva tasyāḥ sambodhanam hare
apagṛhṇa trapāṁ dharmāṁ mānaṁ vrajastriyaḥ
veṇunā karṣati gṛhāt tena kṛṣṇa’ bhīdhīyate
ramayatyaniśaṁ rūpa lāvaṇyair vraja yoṣitām
manaḥ pañcendriyaṇiḥa rāmastasmāt prakīrtitaḥ*

“Śrī Rādhā is the *hlādinī śakti* (pleasure potency) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She is known as Harā (one who steals away) because She can capti-

vate Kṛṣṇa's mind. Harā is addressed as Hare. *Vraja-rāja-kumāra*, the son of the King of Vraja, is known as Kṛṣṇa. Because the sound of His flute is so attractive to the cowherd damsels, they lose their natural shyness, sense of *dharma*, pride, composure and leave their households. Therefore, He is known as Kṛṣṇa. The extraordinary beauty of His form (*rūpa-lāvaṇya*) always surcharges the minds and senses of the cowherd damsels with ever-increasing bliss. For this reason He is glorified as Rāma.”

COMMENTARY BY ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪ

HARE—Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra's transcendental beauty captivates the minds of all, but Śrīmatī Rādhikā captivates the mind of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by exercising Her unrivalled cleverness. Therefore, She is known as Harā. The vocative case of Harā is Hare.

KṚṢṆA—Śrī Hari, who is adorned with qualities which bewilder the three worlds, attracts Śrīmatī Rādhikā by His youthful beauty and the sweet sound of His flute. Therefore, He is called Kṛṣṇa, the all-attractive one.

HARE—Śrī Kṛṣṇa kidnapped doe-eyed Śrīmatī Rādhikā, taking Her to a secluded *kuñja* within the *rāsa-maṇḍala*. This has been learned from the words of *mahā-puruṣas*. Therefore, Rādhikā is known as Harā. Harā in its vocative case becomes Hare.

KṚṢṆA—The magnificent effulgence that emanates from His limbs can convert gold into *śyāma varṇa* (a dark sapphire lustre). That Rādhā-Ramaṇa Śyāmasundara is called Kṛṣṇa.

KṚṢṆA—Śrī Hari manifested Śyāma Kuṇḍa, the topmost of all *sarovaras*, in the forest of Vraja near Govardhana. He did this in accordance with the desire of His beloved Śrī Rādhikā, and He attracted all *tīrthas* to it. Learned people, who call Him Kṛṣṇa, understand this deep secret.

KṚṢṆA—Although His pastimes on the banks of the Yamunā in Vṛndāvana bewilder the world, the all-attractive *dhira-lalita-nāyaka*

Śrī Hari is attracted by the transcendental *mahābhāva* of Śrī Rādhikā. That is why learned people call Him Kṛṣṇa.

HARE—Whilst living in Vraja, Śrī Kṛṣṇa stole the life force of the strong bull-like demon, Aristāsura, and at that very moment Śrīmatī Rādhikā, in great jubilation, loudly chanted “Hari Hari!” For this reason Śrī Rādhā is known as Harā. Harā is addressed as Hare.

HARE—Śrī Rādhikā sings the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in indistinct tones and sometimes, out of intense affection, She sings loudly. Therefore, when learned scholars discriminate between *rasas*, they refer to Her as Harā. Harā is addressed as Hare.

HARE—In Vṛndāvana, Śrī Rādhikā is so absorbed in playful pastimes and *rasa*, that She steals away the flute which falls from the hands of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is why Rādhikā Devī is known as Harā. The address for Harā is Hare.

RĀMA—Śrī Kṛṣṇa, crest-jewel of the ingenious, knows the art of embracing. He is known as Rāma because He wanders with Śrī Rādhikā, playing and enjoying with Her in the *kuñjas* of Govardhana.

HARE—Śrī Rādhikā is most merciful. She steals all the miseries of the *bhaktas* and daily bestows inner happiness upon them. Thus, She is known as Harā and is addressed as Hare.

RĀMA—The minds of the *bhaktas* who perform *bhajana* wander in the topmost ocean of bliss, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. For this reason that Śyāmasundara *vigraha*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is known as Rāma.

RĀMA—In the *kuñjas* Śrīmatī Rādhikā pleases Śrī Hari with Her *prema*. Therefore, according to the definition of *ramayati ānandayati*, ‘He who gives happiness’, He is called Rāma. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known as Rāma because He unites with Śrī Rādhā.

RĀMA—When Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the giver of pleasure to the *bhaktas*, saw all the Vrajavāsīs fearful and weeping, He swallowed the for-

est fire, thus giving them great pleasure. Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who arranges for His *bhaktas* to enjoy with Him, is called Rāma.

HARE—Śrī Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā Purī to kill Kaiṁsa and other demons. His sole intention was to return to Vraja and meet with Śrī Rādhikā. She attracts Śrī Kṛṣṇa from *dhāmas* like Mathurā and brings Him to Vraja. For this reason She is called Harā (one who steals). Harā is addressed as Hare.

HARE—Śrī Nanda-nandana came from Mathurā and Dvārakā to steal away all the miseries of the Vrajavāsīs. That Nanda-nandana, who is endowed with pastimes that captivate the mind of Śrī Rādhikā, is called Hari. The word Hari becomes Hare in the vocative case.

*Thus ends the commentary on the mahā-mantra
by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī*

COMMENTARY BY
ŚRĪ GOPĀLA GURU GOŚVĀMĪ

Mahā-bhāgavatas eternally remember the all-blissful *śyāma kiśora vigraha*, Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa, who can destroy ignorance as well as material existence arising from ignorance.

When *mahā-bhāgavatas* see that their disciples are qualified, meaning that they are grateful, silent, victorious over their senses, pure-hearted and above all, that their hearts are full of attachment (*anurāga*) to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa, they bless them by mercifully giving them the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, which is composed of three words.

HARE—Fire can burn anything, even without our desiring it to burn. Similarly, Prabhu can remove all the sins of a person with a wicked mind regardless of his mood in remembering Him. Thus His name is Hari, He who steals away.

Sac-cid-ānanda vigraha Bhagavān reveals His *tattva* in the hearts of those who chant and remember His names. Simultaneously, He

destroys the ignorance that lies there. That Prabhu is remembered by the name Hari.

He is called Hari because He removes the threefold miseries of the moving and non-moving living entities. The minds of worldly people are captivated by hearing and chanting His transcendental qualities. Therefore, His name is Hari. His sweet beauty captivates the minds of millions of *kāmadevas* (Cupids). Thus the Prince of Vraja, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is known as Hari. The vocative form of Hari is Hare.

To fulfill the loving pleasure of *rāsa*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā captivates the mind of Kṛṣṇa by Her form, qualities and by the nourishment of Her *prema*. Thus, gentle persons talk and sing about the *hlādinī śakti* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Śrī Rādhā, by using the name Harā. Harā is addressed as Hare.

KṚṢṆA—The verb *kṛṣ* means all-attractive and *ṇa* means all-blissful. When combined, they indicate the all-attractive and blissful *parabrahma*, known by the name Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

That Śrī Govinda, whose body is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss, who is primeval and the cause of all causes, is known by the name Kṛṣṇa.

The son of King Nanda, who has lotus eyes and a dark blue complexion, is the only source of bliss for the residents of Gokula. He is referred to as Kṛṣṇa.

RĀMA—Śaṅkaraji said to Pārvati, “He Devi! By pronouncing the first syllable of the word Rāma (*rā*) all sins leave the body, and when one chants the syllable *ma*, the door of the mouth closes so they cannot re-enter.

Yogīs meditate on *parā-tattva*, the transcendental, unlimited truth and the embodiment of pleasure. That *parā-tattva parama brahma* is known as Rāma.

The predominating deity (*adhiṣṭhātri deva*) of all *rasa* filled pastimes, the crest-jewel of the clever, *rasika śekhara* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, eternally enjoys with Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Thus, He is referred to as Rāma.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa attracts the mind of Śrī Rādhikā and thus enjoys performing pastimes with Her. He is, therefore, known as Rāma. In

the *Krama-dīpikā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke to Candramā, the moon. “Rādhā’s name is superior to hundreds of My names. Even I do not know what benefit awaits that person who always chants and remembers Śrī Rādhā.”

HARE—*kṛṣṇasya mano haratīti harā rādhā, tasyāḥ sambodhane he hare*: Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who steals the mind of Kṛṣṇa, is called Harā. The vocative of Harā is Hare.

KṚṢṆA—*rādhāyā manaḥ karṣṭīti kṛṣṇaḥ tasya sambodhane he kṛṣṇa*: Kṛṣṇa means He who attracts the mind of Śrī Rādhā. The address to Him is ‘He Kṛṣṇa!’

HARE—*kṛṣṇasya lokalajjādharyārdi sarvaṁ haratīti harā rādhā, tasyāḥ sambodhane he hare*: Śrī Rādhika causes Kṛṣṇa to lose (*harā*) all His reputation as shy, sober, patient and modest, etc. The address to Her is ‘He Hare!’

KṚṢṆA—*rādhāyā lokalajjādharyārdi sarva karṣṭīti kṛṣṇaḥ, tasya sambodhane he kṛṣṇa*: He who attracts Śrīmatī Rādhikā in such a way that She loses all Her shyness and patience is called Kṛṣṇa. The address to Him is ‘He Kṛṣṇa!’

KṚṢṆA—*yatra yatra rādhā tiṣṭhati gacchati vā tatra tatra sā paśyati kṛṣṇo maṁ spṛśati, balāt kancukādikaṁ sarvaṁ hartīti kṛṣṇaḥ, tasya sambodhane he kṛṣṇa*: Wherever Śrīmatī Rādhikā stands or goes, She sees Śrī Kṛṣṇa touching Her and forcibly attracting Her. For this reason He is called Kṛṣṇa (the all-attractive) and addressed ‘He Kṛṣṇa!’

KṚṢṆA—*punarharṣatām gamyati vanam karṣṭīti kṛṣṇaḥ, tasya sambodhane he kṛṣṇa*: He gives pleasure to Śrī Rādhā, who again ventures to the forest of Vṛndāvana, being attracted irresistibly by the sound of His flute. For this reason He is called Kṛṣṇa and addressed ‘He Kṛṣṇa!’

HARE—*yatra kṛṣṇo gacchati tiṣṭhati vā tatra tatra paśyati rādhā mamāgre pārśveṁ sarvatra tiṣṭhati viharati iti harā rādhā, tasyāḥ*

sambodhane he hare: Śrī Kṛṣṇa sees Rādhā next to Him wherever He stands or moves—in every direction—and hence His consciousness becomes captivated by Her. Therefore, She is called Harā. The address to Her is ‘*He Hare!*’

HARE—*punastam kṛṣṇam harati svasthanam abhisārayati harā rādhā, tasyāḥ sambodhane he hare*: She again steals away Kṛṣṇa to a secret rendezvous, therefore, the address to Her is Harā. Harā changes to Hare in the vocative case.

HARE—*kṛṣṇam vanam harati vanamāgamayātī harā rādhā, tasyā-sambodhane he hare*: Śrī Rādhā forcibly takes Kṛṣṇa to the forest groves of Vṛndāvana. Thus, Śrī Rādhika is called Harā. The address to Her is ‘*He Hare!*’

RĀMA—*ramayati tam narmani rikṣaṇādi neti rāmaḥ, tasya sambodhane he rāma*: Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s smile, laughter and glance create pleasure for Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and therefore, His name is Rāma. He is addressed ‘*He Rāma!*’

HARE—*tātkālikam dhairyāvalam bānādikam kṛṣṇasya haratīti harā rādhā tasyāḥ sambodhane he hare*: The association of Śrī Rādhikā causes Kṛṣṇa to suddenly lose His composure. Therefore, She is Harā. The address to Her is ‘*He Hare!*’

RĀMA—*cumban-stanā karṣaṇā lingaṇādibhiḥ ramate, iti rāmaḥ tasya sambodhane he rāma*: Kṛṣṇa enjoys Śrī Rādhā through confidential caresses, embraces, etc. The address to Him is ‘*He Rāma!*’

RĀMA—*punastam puruṣocitam kṛtvā ramayātīti rāmaḥ, tasya sambodhane he rāma*: Kṛṣṇa is He who enjoys conjugal pastimes with His consort, Śrī Rādhā, by making Her play the dominant role in love. He is thus called Rāma (the enjoyer), and is addressed ‘*He Rāma!*’

RĀMA—*punastatra ramate it rāmaḥ, tasya sambodhane he rāma*: Because He repeatedly enjoys pleasure, He is called Rāma and is addressed ‘*He Rāma!*’

HARE—*punaḥ rāsānte kṛṣṇasya mano hṛatvā gaccatiti harā rādhā, tasyāḥ sambodhane he hare: As rāsa-lilā concludes and She has captured Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s mind, She goes away. She is therefore called Harā. She is addressed ‘He Hare!’*

HARE—*rādhāyā mano hratvā gaccatiti hariḥ kṛṣṇa, tasya sambodhane he hare: Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, at the conclusion of rāsa-lilā also captures Śrī Rādhikā’s mind. Thus He is called Hari. The address to Kṛṣṇa here is ‘He Hare!’*

*Thus ends the commentary on the mahā-mantra
by Śrī Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī*

COMMENTARY
BY ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA

HE HARE!—*maccintam hṛatvā bhava bandha nānmo caya: He Hare!* Please captivate my mind and release me from material existence.

HE KRṢṆA!—*maccit tamākarṣa: He Kṛṣṇa!* Please attract my restless mind towards You.

HE HARE!—*svamadhuryaṇa mac cinttam hara: He Hare!* Captivate my mind with Your spontaneous *mādhurya*.

HE KRṢṆA!—*svabhaktadvārā bhajana jnāndānana maccittam śodhaya: He Kṛṣṇa!* Please make my mind pure with the knowledge of *bhajana* as given by Your *bhaktas* who understand the science of *bhakti-tattva*.

HE KRṢṆA!—*nāma rūpa guṇa lilādiṣu manniṣṭham kuru: He Kṛṣṇa!* Please make me have staunch faith in Your name, form, qualities and pastimes.

HE KRṢṆA!—*rucirbhavatu me: He Kṛṣṇa!* May I develop a taste for Your name, form, qualities and pastimes.

HE HARE!—*nija sevā yogayam mam kuru: He Hare!* Please make me qualified to serve You.

HE HARE!—*svasevā māde śaya: He Hare! Please make me qualified and order me to serve You.*

HE HARE!—*svapreṣṭhena sah svābhīṣṭa līlām śrāvaya: He Hare! Please make me hear of Your sweet pastimes with Your dearest bhaktas.*

HE RĀMA!—*preṣṭhayā sah svābhīṣṭalīlām mām śrāvaya: He Rāma! Rādhikā-Rāmaṇa! Make me hear Your most cherished pastimes and Your sweet affectionate voice in Goloka in the company of You and Your beloved Rādhikā.*

HE HARE!—*svapreṣṭhena sah svābhīṣṭalīlām maṁ darśaya: He Hare! Śrīmatī Rādhikā! Please give me darśana of Your dearest pastimes with You and Your beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa.*

HE RĀMA!—*preṣṭhayā sah svābhīṣṭalīlām maṁ darśaya: He Rāma! Rādhikā-Rāmaṇa! Please reveal to me Your pastimes with Your beloved.*

HE RĀMA!—*nāma rūpa guṇa līlā smaraṇādiṣu mām yojaya: He Rāma! You who perform pastimes with Your eternal associates, please engage me in remembering Your name, form, qualities and pastimes.*

HE RĀMA!—*tatra maṁ nija sevā yogayaṁ kuru! O You who give pleasure to Your eternal associates, Śyāma! Please make me qualified to serve You while remembering Your name, form, qualities and pastimes.*

HE HARE!—*maṁ svāngī kṛtya ramaśva: He Hare! Please accept this fallen, wicked person and play with me as I deserve.*

HE HARE!—*mayā sah ramaśva: He Hare! Please perform Your transcendental sports with me. This is my only prayer at Your lotus feet.*

(Śrī Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta)

*Thus ends the commentary
of Śrī Sacidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura*

COMMENTARY IN THE PADA-KALPATARU

nara harināma antare acchu bhāvaha
habe bhava sagare pāra
dhara re śravaṇe nara harināma sādare
cintāmaṇi uha sāra
yadi kṛta-pāpi ādare kabhu mantraka
rāja śravaṇe kare pāna
śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya bale haya tacchu durgama
pāpa tāpa saha trāṇa
karaha gaura-guru-vaiṣṇava-āśraya
laha nara harināma-hāra
saṁsāre nāma lai sukṛti haiyā tare
āpāmara durācāra
ithe kṛta-viṣaya-tṛṣṇa pahuṇa-nāma-hārā
'yo dhāraṇe śrama-bhāra
kutrṣṇa jagadānanda kṛta-kalmaṣa
kumati rahala kāragāra

“O brother! When you have internally realized this *hari-nāma*, you can cross the ocean of birth and death (*saṁsara*).

“O brother! When this *hari-nāma* is very respectfully placed in the ear, it can be drunk, heard and absorbed because its very essence is *cintāmaṇi*. Even if sinful persons or kings drink *śrī nāma* by respectfully hearing this *mantra*, then Caitanya Mahāprabhu says that all of their sins will be vanquished along with all the miseries in the burning fire of this material world (*adhyātmika*, *adibhautika* and *adhidaivika*).

“O brother! Please take the shelter of Gaura, Guru, and Vaiṣṇavas and take this garland of *śrī hari-nāma*. Even the most wretched and sinful will find relief in chanting this *hari-nāma*, and all their material desires and endeavours will be revealed as so much useless labour. Jagadānanda says that any sinful person whose mentality is wicked and who has innumerable mundane desires will always reside in this material jail, but, by chanting

śrī hari-nāma, one will leave all *māyā* and reach the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”

(*Pada-kalṭaru Gaura pada Tarangiṇī*,
Taranga, uchwāsa 2, pada 59)

1



nana dhara yadi sṛīkṛī kana saṁsā ithe kutṛ

ni-nāma anta śṛavaṇe nana ta-pāpi āda caitanya gaura-guru-nāma lai ta - viśaya - jagadānanda

ha re **kṛ** **ṣṇa** **ha** re **kṛ** **ṣṇa**

bale vai su tṛ

re **ha** re **ha** **ṣṇa** **kṛ** **ṣṇa** **kṛ**

achu bhāvaha ni-nāma sāda kabhu mantraka-ya tuchu dṛṅga va āśraya ta ti haiyā ta pahumī-nāma-hā ta-kalmaṣa ku

ha re **rā** **ma** **ha** re **rā** **ma**

be bhavasāga cintāmaṇi u ja śṛavaṇe ka pāpa tāpa sa nana harinā āpāmara du yo dhāraṇe śṛa ti rahala kā

re **ha** re **ha** **ma** **rā** **ma** **rā**

pāra sāra pāna trāṇa hāra cāra bhāra gāra



2

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare



4

This illustration reveals the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra concealed within the Pada-kalpataru song on the opposite page.

THE GLORIES OF ŚRĪ HARI-NĀMA

One can find an abundance of glorification of Śrī Bhagavān's name in *śāstra*. A portion of those glories will be mentioned here.

NĀMA SVARŪPA

*nāma cintāmaniḥ kṛṣṇas caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ suddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*

(*Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu Eastern Division, 2nd Wave 108*)

“There is no difference between *nāma* (Kṛṣṇa's name) and *nāmī* (Kṛṣṇa) because *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is *cintāmaṇi svarūpa* (giving all transcendental good fortune), and Svayaṁ Kṛṣṇa is *caitanya rasa vigraha* (the form of transcendental *rasa*), complete, beyond *māyā* and eternally liberated.”

NĀMA BESTOWS ALL PERFECTION IN KALI-YUGA

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgaḥ paraṁ vrajet*

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 12.3.51*)

“My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality in this age. Simply by chanting the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*, one can become free from material bondage and attain Bhagavān.”

*kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇum tretāyām yajato makhaiḥ
dvāpare paricaryāyām kalau tad dhari-kīrtanāt*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 12.3.52)

“The result which is attained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Śrī Bhagavān (*dhyāna*), in Tretā-yuga by performing opulent *yajñas*, and in Dvāpara-yuga by performing *arcana*, is easily available in Kali-yuga by performing *hari-nāma kīrtana*.”

*kali-kāle nāma-rūpe kṛṣṇa-avatāra
nāma haite haya sarva-jagat-nistāra*

(Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi 17.22)

“In Kali-yuga, the *avatāra* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes in the form of His name. Simply by chanting this name, the entire world can be delivered.”

*nāma vinā kali-kāle nāhi āra dharma
sarva-mantra-sāra nāma ei sāstra-marma*

(Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi 7.74)

“In Kali-yuga there is no other *sādhana* but to chant *hari-nāma*. It is the essence of all Vedic *mantras*, and the purport of all *sāstra*.”

THE GLORIES OF NĀMA
AS DESCRIBED BY THE ANCIENT ĀCĀRYAS

*amhaḥ sañ harate khilam sakṛdudayādeva-sakal-lokasya
taraṇi riva timir-jalandhi jayati jaganmangalaṁ harernāma*

(Padyavali 16 sankhāy dhr̥ta Śrīdhara Svāmī śloka)

“All glories to *hari-nāma*, which is auspicious for the entire world! Just as the rising sun dissipates all darkness, if *hari-nāma* rises just once, it can destroy all of a person’s sins.”

*ākṛṣṭih kṛtacetasaṁ sumanasāmucchātanam cāmhasā
macaṇḍalamamukalo kasulabho vaśyaśca mukti śriyaḥ*

*no dikṣāṃ na ca satkriyaṃ na ca puraścaryāṃ manāgikṣate
mantra yaṃ rāsanāsprgeva phalati śrī kṛṣṇa nāmātmakaḥ*

(Padyavali 18)

“The minds of those who are *guṇatīta* (beyond the three modes) are attracted to *nāma*. That Śrī Kṛṣṇa *nāma svarūpa* (Kṛṣṇa in the form of the *mahā-mantra*) is easily accessible to those who are lower than *cāṇḍālas* and also captivates the opulence of *mukti*. It awards results even by its initial contact with the tongue. It does not consider whether or not a person has taken *dikṣā*, performed pious activity, or taken vows of austerity.”

THE GLORIES OF CHANTING NĀMA EXCEED THE GLORIES OF DIRECT BRAHMA REALIZATION

*yad-brahma-sākṣāt-kṛti-niṣṭhayāpi vināsam āyāti vinā na bhogaiḥ
apaiti nāma ! sphuraṇena tat te prārabdha-karmeti viranti vedaiḥ*

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa Nāmāṣṭakam 4, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī)

“O *nāma*! The *Vedas* loudly declare that a *bhakta*’s fructified sinful reaction (*prārabdha karma*), which cannot be eliminated even by resolute meditation on impersonal *brahma*, is at once mitigated by Your appearance on the tongue even without his undergoing any suffering.”

THE SUPERIORITY OF NĀMA KĪRTANA

*adhicchat-smaraṇaṃ viṣṇorvahrāyāsena sādhyate
oṣṭhaspandanamatreṇa kirttanstu tato varam*

(*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, 11/236 *Vaiṣṇava Cintāmaṇi Vākya*)

“Although Viṣṇu is the deliverer of all sins, remembrance of Him is only attained after a person has endeavoured with great difficulty over a prolonged period of time. But those who spontane-

ously perform *viṣṇu-kīrtana* are superior to them because, by *nāma-kīrtana*, or rather by *nāmābhāsa* (a shadow of *nāma*), one can be liberated from bondage to this material world.”

THE SUPERIORITY OF NĀMA-KĪRTANA
COMPARED TO DHYĀNA & PŪJĀ

*jayati jayati nāmānanda-rūpaṁ murāre
viramita-nija-dharma-dhyāna-pūjādiyatnam
katham api sakṛdāttaṁ muktidaṁ prāṇinām yat
paramaṁṛtam ekaṁ jivanam bhūṣaṇam me*

(Śrī Bṛhad-Bhāgavatamṛtam 1.1.9, Sanātana Gosvāmī)

“All glories, all glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Murāri’s name, the embodiment of divine bliss! It halts the cycle of birth and death and relieves one of all painful endeavours in practicing religion, meditation, charity, deity worship and austerity. It awards liberation to one who utters it even once. *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* stands alone as the supreme nectar and sole treasure of my life.”

*yena janmaṣṭaiḥ pūrvām vāsudevaḥ samarcitaḥ
tanmukhe harināmāni sadā tiṣṭhanti bhārata*

(Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11. 237 sāstra vākya)

“O great descendant of Bharata! The name of Śrī Hari will remain eternally on the lips of those who have performed *arcana* of Vāsudeva in their previous hundred births.”

NĀMA IS NOT GOVERNED BY RULES
REGARDING TIME, PLACE OR CIRCUMSTANCE

*na desaniyamo rājan na kālaniyamastathā
vidhyate nātra sandeho viṣṇonārmānukirttane
kālo ‘sti dāne yajñe ca snāne kālo ‘sti sajjape
viṣṇuh sankirttane kālo nasyatra pṛthiviale*

(Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11th vibhagha. 206 sankhyā dhṛta)

“O King! It is stated unequivocally that time and place are not considered in the performance of *kīrtana* of Śrī Viṣṇu’s names. Such rules apply to giving in charity, performing *yajña*, and chanting other types of *jaṇa*. On this earth planet, however, such consideration does not apply to the performance of *sankīrtana* of Śrī Viṣṇu’s names.”

*na deśaniyamastastin na kālani yamastathā
nocchiṣṭadau niṣedho ‘sti śrī harernāmi naluḁdhaka*

(*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11th vibhāga. 202 Viṣṇo dharmottara-vākya)

“O Hunter! Time and place are not considered in the performance of *kīrtana* of Śrī Hari’s name. Although a persons mouth may be full of foodstuffs or he may be in an unclean state, he is not prohibited from performing *nāma-kīrtana*.”

*madhura madaram etan maṅgalām maṅgalānām
sakala-nigama-vallī sat-phalaṁ cit-svarūpam
sakṛd api pariḡitaṁ śraddhayā helayā vā
bhṛḡuvara! nara-mātraṁ tārayet kṛṣṇa nāma*

(*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11. 234 *sankyādḥṛta Skanda Purāṇa vākya*)

“*Kṛṣṇa-nāma* is the sweetest of the sweet and the most auspicious of all that is auspicious. It is the flourishing creeper, the eternal, fully ripened fruit of the Bhāgavata, and the embodiment of knowledge, *cit-śakti*. O best of the Bhṛḡu dynasty! Even if someone chants the holy name only once, with faith or indifference (*helā*), he is immediately delivered from this ocean of birth and death!”

NĀMA SAṅKĪRTANA IS
THE SĀDHANA AND THE SĀDHYA FOR EVERYONE

*etan nirvidyamānānām icchatām akuto-bhayam
yoginām nṛpa nirṇitaṁ harer nāmānukīrtanam*

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 2.1.11)

“O King! Previous *ācāryas* have announced this *siddhānta*: chanting and remembering the name of Śrī Hari again and again is the primary *sādhana* and *sādhya* for those persons who desire to attain the heavenly planets, liberation, freedom from material desires, as well as for the self-satisfied *yogīs*.”

HARI-NĀMA

by Śrīla Bhaktivīnoda Thākura

The ocean of material existence is very difficult to cross without the mercy of Parameśvara. It is not only difficult, but impossible. Even though the *jīvas* are superior to matter, they are by nature weak and dependent on Bhagavān as their sole protector, guardian and saviour. The *jīva* is *anu-caitanya*, an atomic particle. He is dependent on and the servant of Parama-Caitanya Bhagavān. In other words, Parama-Caitanya Bhagavān is the refuge of all *jīvas*. This world of matter is created by *māyā* and, therefore, the position of the *jīva* is the same as that of an offender who is in prison. The *jīva* wanders throughout this world as a result of his opposition to Bhagavān. Those *jīvas* who are opposed to Bhagavān are called *baddha-jīvas* (conditioned souls) because they are chained by *māyā*. On the contrary, those *jīvas* who follow Bhagavān are released from *māyā* and are called *mukta-jīvas* (liberated souls). This difference is due to the contrary conditions in which the unlimited *jīvas* are situated. Hence, there are two divisions, *baddha-jīvas* and *mukta-jīvas*.

By performing *sādhana*, the *baddha-jīva* attains the mercy of Bhagavān thus he becomes capable of breaking the powerful chains of *māyā*. After lengthy contemplation, our great *maharṣis* have established three types of *sādhana*: *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*.

Varṇāśrama dharma, *tapasyā*, *yajña*, *dāna*, *vrata* and *yoga* are mentioned in *sāstras* as limbs of *karma* and their results are clearly described. By deeply understanding the distinct nature of these results, the primary effects of executing *karma* are revealed. They

are: 1) enjoyment on the earthly planets, 2) enjoyment of the heavenly planets, 3) relief from disease and 4) the knowledge that great fortune will arise by performing good *karma*³. If we separate the fourth effect—performance of good *karma* will result in great fortune—from the other three, it seems that the results of enjoying the heavenly planets, enjoying the earthly planets and curing disease, which the *jīva* acquires by performing *karma*, are all perishable. They will be destroyed in Śrī Bhagavān’s wheel of time. It is not possible to become free from the bondage of *māyā* by attaining these results. On the contrary, the desire to execute more *karma* will increase, and this will lead to further bondage to *māyā*. The results of good *karma* are negligible if that *karma* is not performed in accordance with the rules and regulations of *śāstra*.

In this regard, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.2.8) states:

*dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsām viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratim śrama eva hi kevalam*

“The main purpose of *varṇāśrama dharma* is to simplify the life of a person who is performing his natural occupational duty, so that he has sufficient time to hear *hari-kathā*. However, if an attraction for *hari-kathā* is not inspired, then all the religious activities he performs in accordance with *varṇāśrama dharma* will be so much useless labour.” The ocean of material existence cannot be crossed by *karma*. I will explain this briefly:

Jñāna is also considered a *sādhana* by which a high goal is achieved. The result of *jñāna* is *ātma-suddhi* (purification of the soul). *Ātmā* (soul) is beyond matter, but when a *jīva* forgets this reality and takes shelter of matter, he becomes lost on the path of *karma*.

By discussing *jñāna*, a person can understand that he is not composed of matter but is transcendental. This type of *jñāna* is generally called *naiṣkarmya* (self-realization). In the stage of *naiṣkarmya*, the *jīva* is only able to relish a limited amount of bliss (*ānanda*). This stage is also called *ātmārāma* (in which one finds pleasure in the self, *ātmā*, alone). But when the *jīva* begins to realize his eter-

nal nature, and starts to relish his relationship with Kṛṣṇa, the stage of *naiṣkarmya*, or *ātmārāma*, becomes completely insignificant. For this reason Devarṣi Nārada states in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.5.12):

*naiṣkarmyam aṅgy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam
na śobhate jñānam alaṁ nirañjanam*

“Although knowledge of self-realization is free from all material affinity, it is not befitting if devoid of a conception of Bhagavān.”

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (1.7.10) also mentions:

*ātmārāmās ca munayo nirgranthā aṅgy urukrame
kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ*

“Parama-Caitanya Hari possesses one extraordinary quality: He attracts all varieties of persons who are *ātmārāma* and are thus free from all kinds of material bondage, to engage in *sevā* to Him.”

Therefore, *jñāna* and *karma* can only be called limbs of *sādhana* when *karma*, by its effect, provides great fortune to perform increasingly improved *karma* and then *jñāna* renounces useless *karma*. This performance of good *karma* and the rejection of impersonal *jñāna* will lead us to *bhakti sādhana*. In and of themselves, *jñāna* and *karma* are not accepted as limbs of *sādhana* except when they lead us to *bhakti*. It is then that they have some significance. Therefore, only *bhakti* is called *sādhana*. When *karma* and *jñāna* lead us to *bhakti*, they are considered a *sādhana*. Otherwise, *bhakti*, by its very nature, is the exclusive *svarūpa* (form) of *sādhana*.

The decision of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.14.20) clearly explains this:

*na sādhayati mām yogo na sāṅkhyam dharma uddhava
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo yathā bhaktir mamorjitā*

“He Uddhava! *Karma yoga*, *sāṅkhyā yoga* or *varṇāśrama dharma* cannot please Me, nor can study of the *Vedas*, austerity or renunciation. Only the performance of pure *bhakti* actually pleases Me.”

Performing *bhakti* is the only way to please Bhagavān. There is no other means. There are nine kinds of *sādhana bhakti*: *śravaṇa* (hearing), *kīrtana* (chanting), *smaraṇa* (remembering), *arcana* (wor-

shipping), *vandana* (praying), *pāda-sevanam* (offering obeisances), *dāśya* (service), *sakhya* (friendship) and *ātmā-nivedana* (full surrender). *Śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa* are the primary limbs of *sādhana*. Śrī Bhagavān’s name, form, qualities and pastimes should be the object of a person’s *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* etc.

Śrī Nāma is the original seed *svarūpa* (*bija-svarūpa*). Thus, according to *śāstra*, *hari-nāma* is the root of all worship.

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatih anyathā*

(*Bṛhad-nāradiya Purāna* 3.8.126)

“In Kali-yuga there is no deliverance for the *jīva* except by the chanting of *hari-nāma*.”

The word *kalau* means that there is never a time when *hari-nāma* is not the way for deliverance. It is especially beneficial to take shelter of this all powerful *hari-nāma*. All other *mantras* are weak.

In relation to *hari-nāma* the *Padma Purāna* states:

*nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇas caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ suddho nitya-mukto ’bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes in his commentary on the above *śloka*:

ekameva sac-cid-ānanda-rasādi rūpaṁ tattvaṁ

“Śrī *kṛṣṇa-tattva* is the non-dual form of eternity, knowledge and bliss (*advaya sac-cid-ānanda svarūpa*).” He has appeared in two forms: (1) *nāmī*, the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *vigraha* and (2) *nāma*, the form of His name.

The essence of *tattva* is that Kṛṣṇa is *sarva-śaktimān*, the possessor of all potencies. The splendour of the supreme *puruṣa* is the splendour of His *śakti*. Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti* takes shelter of Him, and without Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti* no one can understand Him. The effect of *śakti* manifests *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa’s form. The blissful effect of *kṛṣṇa-nāma* advertises itself. Thus *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is *cintāmaṇi-svarūpa*, *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*

and *caitanya-rāsa-svarūpa*. Just by chanting Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name, *kṛṣṇa-rasa* rises spontaneously in the core of the heart. *Nāma* is complete in itself. This means that it does not depend on the construction of *mantras*, such as *kṛṣṇāya* or *nārāyaṇāya*, which are formed by a combination of names. *Nāma* is always transcendental—not lifeless like material syllables. Only *nāma* is *caitanya-rasa*. *Nāma* is ever liberated. It cannot be produced by the material tongue. Only a person who has tasted the mellow of *nāma* can understand this explanation. One who imagines that *nāma* is lifeless is not eligible to relish *caitanya-rasa*, nor is he satisfied with this explanation.

A person may say that *nāma*, which we continuously chant, is dependent on material syllables, so how can it be said that *nāma* is eternally liberated and not a material object? Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī responds to this adverse opinion as follows:

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇā-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu Eastern Division 2/109*)

“The material senses can perceive a material object. *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* is transcendental, therefore, it can never be perceived by the material senses. The *nāma* that then manifests on the tongue is only a result of a *sphūrti*—a pulsating of the transcendental senses of the soul. When devotees utter *kṛṣṇa-nāma* with this transcendental (*aprākṛta*) tongue, the *parama-tattva* appears on their material (*prākṛta*) tongues and begins to dance. Laughing as a result of bliss (*ānanda*), weeping and lamentating with affection (*sneha*) and dancing out of love (*priti*) is how transcendental (*aprākṛta*) *rasa* pervades the senses. Similarly, the *rasa* of *śrī kṛṣṇa-nāma* pervades the tongue.”

The *nāma* practiced during *sādhana* is only *chaya nāma* (a shadow of *nāma*) or *nāmābhāsa* (chanting which is covered by clouds of ignorance and *anarthas*). It is not the real name. Continuous chanting of *nāmābhāsa* will eventually develop into a taste

in *aprākṛta nāma*. Examples of this are evident in the lives of Vālmiki and Ajāmila.

The *jīva* has no taste in *nāma* because of his offences. When the *jīva* chants *kṛṣṇa-nāma* without offence, the *caitanya-rasa-vigraha* (the fully conscious reservoir of all pleasure) transcendental *śrī hari-nāma* manifests Himself within his heart. At that time his heart becomes joyful, streams of tears flow from his eyes, and symptoms of *sāttvika* ecstasy appear in his body. *Srīmad Bhāgavatam* (2.3.24) thus states:

*tad aśma-sāraṁ hṛdayaṁ vatedaṁ
yad gṛhyamāṇair hari-nāma-dheyaiḥ
na vikriyetātha yadā vikāro
netre jalam gātra-ruheṣu harṣaḥ*

“When a *jīva* chants *hari-nāma*, the following symptoms manifest: he experiences a change of heart, tears flow from his eyes and his bodily hairs stand erect. It is to be understood that when, despite chanting *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, a person does not experience any of these symptoms, his heart has become hard due to offences.”

The primary duty of a *sādhaka* is to chant *hari-nāma* without offence. It is, therefore, necessary to know how many types of offences there are, and in this way one can save himself from committing them.

Śāstra refers to ten offences in relation to *hari-nāma*:

1. To blaspheme devotees and saintly persons.
2. To consider demigods like Lord Śiva to be equal to Bhagavān or independent of Him.
3. To disobey Śrī Guru, who reveals the truth about *hari-nāma*.
4. To criticize *sat-śāstra*, which describes the glories of *hari-nāma*.
5. To consider the glories of *hari-nāma* to be an exaggeration.
6. To consider the excellences and divine qualities of *hari-nāma*, as delineated in *śāstra*, to be imaginary.
7. To commit sinful activities on the strength of chanting *hari-nāma*.

8. To equate chanting of *hari-nāma* with materially auspicious activities recommended in the *karma-kaṇḍa* sections of the *Vedas*.
9. To instruct faithless persons on the glories of *hari-nāma*.
10. To not develop love for *kṛṣṇa-nāma* after knowing His glories because of attachments to the body and things related to the body.

1) A person commits an offence to *hari-nāma* if he disbelieves in the saintly *bhaktas* and blasphemes the *mahājanas*, whose characters are spotless. Thus, one who accepts *hari-nāma* must first reject with his whole heart the tendency to disrespect or disregard any Vaiṣṇava. If a doubt arises about the activity of a Vaiṣṇava, one should try to inquire about the cause of that behaviour and avoid criticising him. Our primary duty is to have faith (*śraddhā*) in the *sādhus*.

2) To consider demigods like Lord Śiva to be non-different from Bhagavān is *nāmāparādha*. *Bhagavat-tattva* is one without a second. Demigods like Lord Śiva are not independent of Śrī Bhagavān's authority, nor are they separate from Him. If a person honours demigods like Śiva as *guṇāvataras* or as *bhaktas* of Bhagavān, he will not form the misconception that they are independent of Him. Those who consider Mahādeva (Śivji) an independent and separate demigod worshipping him alongside Viṣṇu, do not actually accept the elevated status of Mahādeva who himself is worshipping Viṣṇu. They therefore become offensive to both Viṣṇu and Śiva. Those who chant *hari-nāma* should reject this kind of misconception.

3) To disobey Śrī Gurudeva is *nāmāparādha*. He who gives the highest teachings of *nāma-tattva* should be accepted as *ācārya*, and as that person who is most dear to Bhagavān. One can attain firm faith in *hari-nāma* by cultivating staunch *bhakti* for Śrī Guru.

4) The bona fide *sāstras* should never be blasphemed. Revealed *sāstras* like the *Vedas* describe *bhagavata-dharma* and detail the importance of *śrī nāma*. Therefore, to blaspheme these *sāstras* is an

offence to the holy name. The glories of *hari-nāma* are described throughout the *Vedas*.

*vede rāmāyāne caiva puraṇe bharate tathā
ādāvente ca madhya ca hariḥ sarvatra giyate*

(C.c. Ādi-līlā 7.131)

“How can a person develop love for *hari-nāma* if he blasphemes bona fide *sāstras*? Some people consider the *sāstras*’ descriptions of the importance of *hari-nāma* to be simply praise. It is *nāmāparādha* to chant *hari-nāma* with such an attitude, and those who do so will never achieve any tangible result. They conclude that *sāstra* falsely praises the glories of *hari-nāma*, as it falsely praises *karma-kaṇḍa* just so that people will develop a taste in it. Those who think like this are unfortunate. On the other hand, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (2.1.11) describes the faith of fortunate persons:

*etan nirvidyamānānām icchatām akuto-bhayam
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītam harer namānukīrtanam*

“A *yogī* thinks that by obtaining detachment from the world, he can become free from all fear, and concludes that his wholesale duty is to chant *hari-nāma*. Persons who have such faith can achieve the result of *hari-nāma*.”

5) Some people do not understand the difference between *nāmābhāsa* and *nāma*. They believe that *nāma* is only a combination of syllables that will definitely grant results whether one has faith or not. They use the life and character of Ajāmila as an example, as well as *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (6.2.14):

*sāṅketyaṁ pārihāsyam vā stobham helanam eva vā
vaikuṅṭha-nāma-grahaṇam aśeṣāgha-haram viduḥ*

“One who chants *hari-nāma* is immediately freed from the reactions to unlimited sins, even if he chants indirectly (to indicate something else), jokingly, for musical entertainment, or neglectfully. This is concluded by all the learned scholars of the *sāstras*.”

6) Previously *hari-nāma* has been described as *caitanya-rasa-viṅraha*, which cannot be perceived by the material senses. This proves that it is not possible to achieve the results of chanting when one commits *nāmāparādha*. He who chants without faith does not achieve the result of chanting; rather, within a few days he attains some faith in *nāma*. Faithless persons who believe that *nāma* is a limb of *karma kāṇḍa* propagate that *nāma* is only a material syllable and, therefore, equal to other names. They are actually conditioned souls and *nāmāparādhis*. Vaiṣṇavas diligently endeavour to avoid this offence.

7) Some people believe that by taking shelter of *hari-nāma*, they have attained a cheap remedy for the results of all their sins. With this idea they think that they can steal, perform acts of fraud, act illicitly, and then chant *hari-nāma* to eradicate all their misdeeds. A person who believes this is certainly a *nāmāparādhi* (offender to *nāma*). One who has once tasted the transcendental mellows of *hari-nāma* will never again become attached to temporary material activities.

8) Some believe in pious activities (*karma*), such as performing *yajña*, giving in charity, behaving according to *dharma*, and visiting holy places. They also include the chanting of *nāma* as a pious activity, therefore, they are *nāmāparādhis*. *Nāma* is always transcendental, whereas all pious activities are material. Anyone who considers *nāma* to be equivalent to pious activities becomes indifferent to *nāma* and cannot relish its mellows (*nāma-rasa*). There is a difference between diamonds and glass. Similarly, there is a vast difference between *hari-nāma* and pious activity.

9) One who instructs faithless persons about *hari-nāma* or gives them the *mantra* is also a *nāmāparādhi*. It is useless to give a string of pearls to a hog. The hog will simply regard it as an insult or completely disregard them. Similarly, it is extremely improper to give instruction on *nāma* to a faithless person. It is wise to first make an effort to develop his faith, and then instruct him on *hari-nāma*. Those who act as *guru* and give instructions on *hari-nāma* to faithless persons will definitely fall down—because they are committing *nāmāparādha*.

10) If a person does not have complete faith in *hari-nāma*, even after hearing its extensive glories, and if he is still attached to or dependent on *sādhanas* such as *karma*, *jñāna* or *yoga*, then he is a *nāmapārādhi*.

In this way, *hari-nāma* will not arise unless we avoid *nāmapārādha*.

Upon seeing the miseries of the *jīva*, the deliverer of Kali-yuga, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, instructs us with a compassionate heart:

*tṛṇād api su-nīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā māna-dena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

(Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka: 3)

“By thinking oneself to be even lower than the straw in the street, being more tolerant than a tree, not accepting honour but giving honour to everyone, a *jīva* becomes eligible to chant *hari-nāma*.”

The primary meaning of this *śloka* is that one is to chant *hari-nāma* with a pure attitude. One who considers himself insignificant never criticises *sādhus* nor disregards demigods like Lord Śiva. He differentiates, but with respect. He never disregards *guru*, blasphemes the bona fide *sāstras*, or doubts the glories of *hari-nāma*. He never combines false speculation with dry arguments to make the word ‘Hari’ equal with *nirguṇa brahma*, nor does he make offences on the strength of *nāma*. He does not accept pious activities to be on an equal level with *hari-nāma*. He never gives *hari-nāma* to faithless persons, and he doesn’t have a scent of disbelief in *nāma*. He constantly endeavours to be aloof from the ten types of *nāmapārādha*. He never follows those who either ridicule or are inimical to *nāma*. Even though he works for the entire world, he does not possess any false ego of being the enjoyer or the doer. Thinking himself to be a servant of the world, he serves the whole world. The transcendental light of the spiritual world is situated in the core of his heart. When a qualified person chants *hari-nāma*, this light radiates, thus keeping the darkness of *māyā* far away from the *jīva*. Therefore, O *mahātmās*, constantly perform *hari-nāma kīrtana* without offence. There is no shelter for the *jīvas* other than *hari-nāma*.

Trying to save oneself from drowning in this ocean of material existence by taking shelter of *jñāna* and *karma* is as useless as taking shelter of a piece of straw to cross a great ocean. Therefore, accepting the shelter of the great ship of the *mahā-mantra*, cross this ocean of material existence.

READERS INTERESTED IN THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THIS
BOOKLET ARE INVITED TO CONTACT US AT ANY OF THE
ADDRESSES GIVEN BELOW.

AUSTRALIA: Sri Giriraja Govardhan Gaudiya Matha // 56 Brisbane Street, Murwillimbah, N.S.W 2482, Australia // tel. 066-728499 // e-mail: lilasuka@bigpond.com

CANADA: Govinda dasi // PO Box 532, Ganjes Salt Spring, BC, Canada-V8K 2W2 // tel: (250) 537 2893 // e-mail: dragonfly108@uniserve.com

CENTRAL AMERICA: Srila Prabhupada Gaudiya Math // AV. 1RA #1333, Cuesta De Nunez, San Jose, Costa Rica // tel: (506) 256 8650 // e-mail: horibol@sol.racs.co.cr

CROATIA: Yashoda dasi // v. Kovacica 12/6 Sopot 1, 10000 Zagreb // tel. (38) 51 667 8914 // e-mail: yugalakishora@educastmail.com

ENGLAND: Sri Gour Govinda Gaudiya Matha // Handsworth wood Road, Handsworth wood, Birmingham, B20 2DS // tel: (121) 682 9159 // e-mail: gourgovinda@hotmail.com

FINLAND: Gaudiya Vedanta Samiti // Maasalvantie 6 A 6, 00710 Helsinki // tel: (09) 5682 0410, e-mail: atul@gaudiya.net

FRANCE: Jayantakrid dasa // 42 rue Blanquerie, 11300 Limoux // tel: (04) 6831 7088 // e-mail: jkd@wanadoo.fr

GERMANY: Purnamasi dasi // Muhlenstr. 93, 25421, Pinnenberg // tel: (49) 410 123 931 // e-mail: ajayadasa@aol.com

HOLLAND: Nama hatta center (Radha-ramana dasa) // van Zeggelenlaan 114, 2524AT Den Haag // tel. 070-393 9334 // e-mail: radharamandas@hetnet.nl

INDIA: Sri Keshavaji Gaudiya Matha // Opp. Dist. Hospital, Jawahar Hata, Mathura (U.P.), 281001 // tel. 0565-409 453 // e-mail: harekrishna@vsnl.com

ITALY: Lila Purusottama dasa // Cantone Salero n.5, 13060 Curino (Biella) // tel: 30-015-928173 // e-mail: gaudyair@tin.it

MALAYSIA: Sri-Sri Radha Govinda Gaudiya Matha // 53A Jalan Tanjung 5/4, 46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia // tel: 031 755 0921 // e-mail: bnm0@hotmail.com

PHILIPPINES: International Gaudiya Vedanta Society of the Philippines // 15 Bituan St. N. Araneta Sub Division, Quezon City

RUSSIA: Ananta Krishna dasa // 105318 Moscow A/YA, 11 Ilyushinoi // tel: (095) 369 2670 // e-mail: swami@aha.ru

SINGAPORE: Gaudiya Vedanta Publications // 5001 Beach Road, 06-06 Golden Mile Complex, Singapore 199588 // tel: (65) 295 2898 // e-mail: bnm0@hotmail.com

SOUTH AMERICA: Sri Venezuela Kesavaji Gaudiya Math // Carrera 17, entre calles 50-51, #50-47, Barquisimeto, Edo. Lara Venezuela // tel: 58-51-452574 // e-mail: janardana@postmark.net

USA: New Vraja Community, P.O. Box 99, Badger, CA. 93603 // tel: (209) 337 2448 // e-mail: 104307.770@compuserve.com

Sri Sri Radha Govinda Gaudiya Math // 630 10th Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101 // tel: 619 696 8969 // e-mail: purebhakti@hotmail.com

Sri Alachua Gaudiya Math // 16721 NW 134th Drive, PO Box 286, Alachua FL 32615 // tel: 386 462-0569 // e-mail: jala@cdoctor.com

The Bhaktivedanta Gaudiya Matha // 134-06 95th Ave. South Richmond Hill, NY 11419 // tel: (718) 526-9835 // e-mail: purudas@compuserve.com

Puspadanta dasa, Eugene // tel: (541) 579 1513, // e-mail: puspadanta@hotmail.com

OUR GENERAL E-MAIL ADDRESS:

sbnmtour@compuserve.com

MORE INFORMATION ON THE WWW:

www.gaudiya.com // www.gaudiya.net // www.purebhakti.com