

O Harināma, Please enter my heart through my ears!

“Without *śravaṇa* there is no *kīrtana*. First *śravaṇa*, then *kīrtana*.

— Śrīla Prabhupādera goloka-vāṇī 1.198



“Unless accompanied by *śravaṇa* any attempt to perform *kīrtana* must be material. Repeated hearing gives rise to *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa*. By hearing *kīrtana* one begins to perform *kīrtana*, and from performing *kīrtana*, *smaraṇa* of *hari-kathā* awakens.

— Śrīla Prabhupādera goloka-vāṇī 1.296, 299



“The name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are not two separate entities, but one. When the sound of the holy name passes over the lips, the conditioned sense of hearing and the conditioned consciousness initially process the sound as if it were material, and that is how it is perceived. As a result, only the external ear hears it. Since the other senses and the mind, which is the collector of sensory experience, are envious of the ear, which they consider to be an equal partner, the result is that such chanting does not affect the cleansing of *anarthas*.

“We do not have the capacity even to theoretically know that the name and the Lord of the name are one. Yet just as piercing of the ear is one of the Vedic rites for a young child, when our spiritual ear has been pierced by the holy name the other senses give up their envy of the auditory sense. They no longer quibble with the ear, which alone can perceive transcendental sound. Then the flood of *prema* pours forth from all the spiritual senses and cleans away the contaminants of opposition and malice. Thereafter the Lord’s beautiful form, qualities, associates, and pastimes are revealed in the name Himself, and experienced by the chanter as something quite distinct from his previous experiences in the mundane world. Then the kinds of worries and distractions of the mind that are typical of the conditioned living being cannot remain... When we learn to hear as we chant, the opportunity to remember (Kṛṣṇa) will automatically arise. At that time *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā-smaraṇa* will become possible. There is no need artificially to try for it.....But we should constantly pray to the holy name for His mercy.

— Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Letter, 18 Dec.1928, *Patrāvalī*, 162-163