

My Mouth is the Door to *Kṛṣṇa Prema* *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau...*

Unless one faithfully chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, Kṛṣṇa does not reveal Himself: *sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*. [Brs. 1.2.234] We cannot realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead by any artificial means. We must engage faithfully in the service of the Lord. Such service begins with the tongue (*sevonmukhe hi jihvādau*), which means that we should always chant the holy names of the Lord and accept *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*. We should not chant or accept anything else. When this process is faithfully followed, the Supreme Lord reveals Himself to the devotee.

— The Nectar of Instruction, Text 5 purport



Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau [Brs. 1.2.234] means that the service of the Lord begins with the tongue. This refers to chanting. By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, one begins the service of the Lord. Another function of the tongue is to taste and accept the Lord's *prasāda*. We have to begin our service to the Unlimited with the tongue and become perfect in chanting, and accepting the Lord's *prasāda*. To accept the Lord's *prasāda* means to control the entire set of senses...The tongue should be engaged in chanting and in eating the Lord's *prasāda* so that the other senses will be controlled. Chanting is the medicine, and *prasāda* is the diet. With these processes one can begin his service, and as the service increases, the Lord reveals more and more to the devotee.

— ŚB 4.7.24p



With our material senses, we cannot see Kṛṣṇa, nor can we even hear His name. We can begin to perceive Him when we advance in devotional service. That devotional service begins with the tongue, not the legs, eyes or ears. The tongue must be utilized to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare and take Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*. Thus the tongue has a dual function, and by utilizing it in this way, we will realize Kṛṣṇa. We cannot see Kṛṣṇa with our material eyes, nor hear about Him with material ears, nor touch Him with our hands; but if we engage our tongue in His service, He will reveal Himself, saying, “Here I am.”

— Elevation to Kṛṣṇa Consciousness



The tongue should be engaged in chanting and in eating the Lord's *prasāda* so that the other senses will be controlled. Chanting is the medicine, and *prasāda* is the diet. With these processes one can begin his service, and as the service increases, the Lord reveals more and more to the devotee.

— ŚB 4.7.24p



Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ: when a devotee engages his senses favorably in devotional service, the Lord, through His causeless mercy, reveals Himself to the devotee. This is the conclusive Vedic process. The *Vedas* also indicate that simply by chanting the holy names of the Lord one can without a doubt become spiritually advanced. We cannot approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the speed of mind or words, but if we stick to devotional service we can easily and quickly approach Him. In other words, the Supreme Lord is attracted by devotional service, and He can approach us more swiftly than we can approach Him with our mental speculation. The Lord has stated that He is beyond the range of mental speculation and the speed of thought, yet He can be approached easily by His causeless mercy. Thus only by His causeless mercy can He be attained. Other methods will not be effective.

— ŚB 4.30.22p



In the *bhakti-mārga*, the path of devotional service, one must strictly follow the regulative principles by first controlling the tongue (*sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ* [Brs. 1.2.234]). The tongue (*jihvā*) can be controlled if one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, does not speak of any subjects other than those concerning Kṛṣṇa and does not taste anything not offered to Kṛṣṇa. If one can control the tongue in this way, *brahmacarya* and other purifying processes will automatically follow.

— ŚB 6.1.13-14p



By chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, we gradually develop our eternal relationship with the Supreme Person and thus attain the perfection called *svarūpa-siddhi*. We should take advantage of this benediction and go back home, back to Godhead.

— ŚB 10.3.37-38p



To associate with the holy name and chant the holy name is to associate with the Personality of Godhead directly. In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* it is clearly said, *sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ* [Brs. 1.2.234]. The holy name becomes manifest when one engages in the service of the holy name. This service in a submissive attitude begins with one's tongue. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau*: One must engage his tongue in the service of the holy name. Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is based on this principle. We try to engage all the members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the service of the holy name. Since the holy name and Kṛṣṇa are nondifferent, the members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement not only chant the holy name of the Lord offenselessly, but also do not allow their tongues to eat anything that is not first offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

— CC Ādi 8.16p



The process of understanding Kṛṣṇa is *sevonmukha*—by rendering service. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau* [Brs. 1.2.234]. Realization of Vāsudeva is possible by rendering service, beginning with the tongue. The tongue has two functions—to vibrate and to taste. So if one repeatedly hears and vibrates the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and tastes *prasāda*, food offered to Kṛṣṇa, by this very simple method one will realize Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa will reveal Himself. It is not that by our endeavor alone we

can understand Kṛṣṇa, but our endeavor in loving service will make us qualified, and then Kṛṣṇa will reveal Himself (*svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*).

— **Teachings of Queen Kuntī, Ch. 4**



With the dull material senses, we cannot understand Kṛṣṇa's name, form, and so forth. Why is this? Kṛṣṇa is completely spiritual, and He is also absolute. Therefore His name, form, qualities, and paraphernalia are also spiritual. Due to material conditioning, or material bondage, we cannot presently understand what is spiritual, but this ignorance can be removed by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. If a man is sleeping, he can be awakened by sound vibration. You can call him, “Come on, it's time to get up!” Although the person is unconscious, hearing is so prominent that even a sleeping man can be awakened by sound vibration. Similarly, overpowered by this material conditioning, our spiritual consciousness is presently sleeping, but it can be revived by this transcendental vibration of *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*.

— **Path of Perfection, Ch.10**



Therefore, to understand Kṛṣṇa as He is we have to purify our senses. And to do that we should carefully follow the principles of *sevonmukhe hi jihvādau*: [Brs. 1.2.234] first of all engage in chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. Don't try to understand the loving affairs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with your present senses, but simply chant Their holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa. Then, when the dust on the mirror of your heart is cleansed away, you will understand everything.

— **The Quest for Enlightenment, Ch.1**



The tongue has to be first of all engaged, not the hands and legs. “I have to serve Kṛṣṇa. So yes, I am ready. I am expanding my hands. I am going there.” But *śāstra* says, “No, no, no. Not your hands and legs but your tongue. This is the one. First of all engage your tongue.” This is astonishing: “How can I serve with tongue? If I have to serve, I have got my hands and legs, my eyes and I...” No. *Śāstra* says tongue. This is very peculiar. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*. If you engage your tongue... So how to engage my tongue? What is the business of my tongue? Two business only: to taste, or eat, and chant. Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa with tongue and take *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*—you will conquer Kṛṣṇa. This is the program. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau*. So if you do not control your tongue, if you feel inconvenient in taking *prasādam*, that means you are not making progress. — **Lecture, Denver, 1st July 1975**



The more you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, the more you become fit to understand the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. That is the process. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau* [Brs. 1.2.234].

— **Lecture, Hawaii, 21st Jan 1974**



You cannot see God, you cannot see Kṛṣṇa by your, these blunt senses, but if you purify your senses, *sevonmukhe hi jihvādau*. That purification begins from tongue.

That purification, *sevonmukhe hi jihvādau*. So by the tongue we can do two things. We can taste foodstuff and we can vibrate sound. So if you engage your tongue for vibrating this transcendental sound, *Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*, and do not take anything except *prasādam* of Kṛṣṇa, then your spiritual life immediately begins. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau, svayam eva...* Then gradually, as you advance in spiritual life, Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself to you, “Here I am.” You cannot see Kṛṣṇa, but by being satisfied with your service, Kṛṣṇa sees you. Just like you cannot see sun at night. But when the sun sees you, you can see the sun and yourself, both. Similarly, when Kṛṣṇa sees you, being satisfied with your service, then you can see Kṛṣṇa, you can see yourself and you can see the whole world.

— **Lecture, Vrindavan 26th Oct, 1972**