

Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

॥ 6.2.9-10 ॥

stenah surā-po mitra-dhruḡ
brahma-hā guru-talpa-gaḡ
strī-rāja-pitr-go-hantā
ye ca pātakino 'pare

sarveṣām apy aghavatām
idam eva suniṣkṛtam
nāma-vyāharaṇam viṣṇor
yatas tad-viṣayā matiḡ

The chanting of the holy name of Lord Viṣṇu (**viṣṇoh nāma-vyāharaṇam**) is the best process of atonement (**eva suniṣkṛtam**) for a thief, for a drunkard, for one who betrays a friend or relative (**stenah surā-pah mitra-dhruḡ**), for one who kills a brāhmaṇa, for one who indulges in sex with the wife of his guru or another superior (**brahma-hā guru-talpa-gaḡ**), for one who kills women, the king, his father, or cows (**strī-rāja-pitr-go-hantā**), and for all other sinful men (**ye ca pātakino apare**). Simply by chanting the holy name of Lord Viṣṇu (**idam eva**), such sinful persons (**sarveṣām apy aghavatām**) attract the attention of the Supreme Lord (**yataḥ tad-viṣayā matiḡ**).

5, 6, 8

Among the ten offenses, the very strong effects of interpreting the name, thinking its glories are exaggeration and equating it to pious acts—are obstacles to being a Vaiṣṇava.

① ⑦

Among the other offenses two are very strong—offending the devotees and committing sin on the strength of chanting. Those two are particularly described in a frightening way.

①

yataḥ khyātim yātaṁ katham u sahate tad vigarhām

How can the name tolerate criticism of those who spread the name? Padma Purāṇa

②

nāmno balādyasya hi pāpabuddhir
na vidyate tasya yamair hi śuddhiḥ

For a person who commits sin on the strength of chanting there is no purification by the servants of Yama. Padma Purāṇa

There is no other means of destroying the effects of these two offenses than to continually chant the name while suffering appropriately for the offense.

The effects of the other offenses will be destroyed simply by continual chanting (without the suffering).

Some people make the following proposition.

Question-7

3

“Those offenders of the name who are without karma and jñāna, and practicing bhakti with hearing and chanting but have not take initiation because they have not surrendered to the feet of a guru are still called Vaisnavas.

The word vaiṣṇava is defined as “the person who takes Viṣṇu as his object of worship” according to Pāṇini sūtras 4.2.24 and 4.3.95.

Thus Vaiṣṇavas are those who have made Viṣṇu the object of worship by accepting initiation and also those who make Viṣṇu the object of worship simply by worship, since there is no other word to describe the two types of people.

So the latter type of persons also should not fall to hell.”

Arbuda-7

This however is not correct because one cannot attain the Lord easily without guru.

nr-deham ādyam su-labham su-durlabham
plavam su-kalpam guru-karṇadhāram
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritam
pumān bhavabdhim na taret sa ātma-hā

Having attained the human body, rarely attained, but attain easily sometimes by good fortune, which is like a well-constructed boat, with the guru as the captain, pushed by the favorable wind of serving me, a person who does not cross the ocean of material existence is a killer of himself.

SB 11.20.17

Therefore it should be explained that there is no other way of attaining the Lord than by becoming a devotee who has surrendered to the feet of a guru, who will be attained in another birth by the power of worship.

QUESTION - 8

“But it is seen that Ajāmila, without surrendering to guru easily attained the Lord.”

Answer

This can be explained as follows.

Those who, like cows or asses, make their senses pursue sense objects cannot know the Lord, bhakti or guru even in their dreams.

But as in the case of Ajāmila, they can be delivered even
without guru by chanting the name in nāmābhāsa without
offense.



Though it has been definitely ascertained that the Lord
should be worshipped, that worship is the means of
attaining him, that the guru is the person who teaches
about worship, and that those who were devotees attained
the Lord, it is also said:

no dīkṣām na ca sat-kriyām na
ca puraścaryām manāg ikṣate
mantra 'yam rasanā-sprg eva
phalati śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmātmakah

Chanting the holy name does not depend on initiation,
pious activities or the puraścaryā regulative principles
generally observed before initiation. The holy name does
not wait for any of these activities. It is self-sufficient.

Padyāvalī

As well, we have the example of Ajāmila.

But one who thinks, “What is the benefit of taking the trouble to accept guru? I will attain the Lord just by chanting the name,” he will not attain the Lord, because of the offense of offending guru (third offense).

However, in this life or another life, if he surrenders to the feet of guru after destroyed his offense, he will then attain the Lord.