

Hari-Nāma-Cintāmaṇi

The Touchstone of the Holy- Name

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Chapter – 9

Committing Sin on the Strength of the Name

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**gaura-gadādhara jaya jāhnavā-jīvana
jaya jaya sītādvaita jaya bhakta-gaṇa ||1||**

- Haridāsa spoke on the power of the name to eradicate sinful activities:
- "If the jīva takes shelter of the pure name, which is śuddha-sattva or transcendental and pure at all times, quickly all the anarthas, including weakness of the heart, will go away.
- When one becomes fixed in the holy name, one will no longer think of committing sin and the effects of past sins will no longer influence one. This is due to purification of the heart.

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- "Sin may be analyzed in three stages.
- A sinful act is the final stage. This is caused by a seed of sin, or a desire to sin.
- That desire or seed originates in ignorance, which is the root cause.
- All three are considered as causes of the suffering of the jīva.
- However, Kṛṣṇa is merciful, always looking to the welfare of His parts and parcels; not being able to bear the sufferings of the jīvas, He always tries to help them.

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- Thus, by the process of bhakti, the thirst for material stimulation or the lust of the senses, leaves the heart.
- One is able to look with contempt on the endeavor to acquire a beautiful woman or wealth.
- One lives satisfied with one's constitutional service to the Lord.
- The devotee accepts everything favorable to the development of bhakti and rejects everything unfavorable to bhakti
- He regards Kṛṣṇa alone as his protector and maintainer and gives up all ideas of the selfish concept of "I and mine."
- Thinking himself very low and worthless, the devotee will continuously chant the holy name.

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- Whoever takes shelter of the name in this way can neither think nor do any sinful activity.
- "It is guaranteed that quickly one will be purified from all sinful influence and will become wise.
- However, inevitably there is a period between sinful life and the pure state and in this interim period there may be some relation with past sin, that is, some diminishing trace of sin.
- However, the association of Holy-Name engenders a purity of mind due to which that residue of sinful proclivity quickly perishes.

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- Kṛṣṇa promised Arjuna that He would never let His devotee fall into trouble.
- Since trouble is caused by sin, Kṛṣṇa mercifully takes away all sin from the devotee.
- Only with great trouble is the jñānī able to control sin, but without Kṛṣṇa's shelter, quickly he will fall from his spotless position.
- Therefore, as scripture concludes, only by taking shelter of the Lord in bhakti is safety guaranteed.

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- "Even if by accident a devotee happens to commit a sin, he does not resort to the purificatory rites of prāyaścitta and karma-kānda.
- That sin is temporary and does not count; and by swimming in the nectar of the holy name it will be washed away, leaving no influence.
- However, there is another type of sin.
- If someone intentionally commits a new sin out of lust, thinking that there will be no bad effect because of the name's power in destroying sins, that person is not a serious devotee but is known as a cheater.
- From his offense against the name he will reap lamentation, fear and death.

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- Thus, two types of sinful activities may be distinguished: an unpremeditated sin and a premeditated sin.
- There is a gross difference between the two according to scripture.
- "In the case of ordinary sin, one can counteract it by *prāyaścitta*, but if one even thinks of committing sin on the strength of the holy name, there is no remedial measure, so serious is the offense.
- Even endless torture by the servants of Yamarāja cannot deliver him from the offense.
- And if thinking of committing the offense to the name brings such suffering, how much more will be the suffering from actually committing such an act?

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- "An example is given. In scripture one hears that the holy name removes the effects of more sins than one can commit in ten million lifetimes.
- In countless places the scriptures state that by nāmābhāsa all five types of sin, even the greatest sin, can be removed.
- A person of a cheating mentality, hearing this information, will with ill motive start chanting the holy name.
- In the same way, a person may give up regular work as difficult and take the cloth of a renunciate, but still associate with women and wealth for sense gratification.

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- O Lord! You have called such a person a markata vairagi. Pretending to be a sannyasi, he likes to spend time chatting with women.
- Such a person pretends to be a sannyasi but in truth lives like a house-holder. They must be avoided as they are nothing but a disturbance to the whole world.
- Either as a householder or as a renunciate, there is no impediment to taking the holy name and perfecting one's life, provided one carries out his devotions according to the rules without offense.
- But to have the idea of committing sin under the shelter of the name is a great offense, which will block the path of bhakti.

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- "One who is at the nāmābhāsa stage, by bad association, is always in danger of committing this offense; but one who has śuddha-nāma does not commit this aparādha.
- Those who have taken shelter of the pure name do not at any time in any form come near to committing any of the ten aparādhas.
- The Holy-Name protects anyone who takes shelter of the Holy-Name.
- Such persons never commit offenses.
- However, as long as one does not have the pure name, there is every danger of onslaught of offenses.

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- Therefore the person in nāmābhāsa should be aware of the mentality of committing sin on the strength of the holy name.
- Drawing strength from association with devotees who purely chant the Holy-Name, one should take great care to avoid the offenses.
- Those in whom the pure chanting of the Holy-Name has appeared have a mind determined not to move from thought of Kṛṣṇa, not even for a moment.
- But one not in this status should live in fear of offenses, particularly the offense of committing sin on the strength of the name.

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- Especially one should throw far away the offense of committing sin on the strength of the Holy-Name.
- Day and night he should chant the Holy-Name.
- By the grace of the guru, get sambandha jñāna, which will in turn give him real Kṛṣṇa bhakti and real Kṛṣṇa nāma.
- If by fate one commits this offense, one should purify himself by association with pure Vaiṣṇavas.
- Sinful desires are like thieves on the road to bhakti, and the pure Vaiṣṇavas are the protectors of the road.

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- Loudly call out the name of the protector; when the protector comes, the thief flees.
- Say that name in love and do not fear, for remember that the Lord has said, 'I am your protector.'
- Whoever vows to exclusively serve the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, thinking himself the lowest of the low, gets to sing the touchstone of the holy name.