

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam

Emanated from the lotus mouth
of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu



Śloka One - Nāma Tattva

ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam
bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-
nirvāpaṇam

-

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam Śloka One

ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam
śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-vardhanam prati-padam
pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam
sarvātma-snapanam param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam

Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa (param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam),

① Which can cleanse the mirror of the heart (ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam)

And stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence (bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam).

That chanting is the waxing moon (candrikā) that spreads (vitaraṇam) the white lotus of good fortune for all living entities (śreyah-kairava).

kleśāgni
kṛṣṇa → cure → benefits
① Makes us forget our past relationships with this material world.

kleśāgni
kṛṣṇa → effect.
② Absorption in Q.

śreyā
śubhā dā
③ Service attitude. → All other good qualities

④

It is the life and soul of all education

Samvit

vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam

Knowledge → Relationship with life → Husband

5. Bhāva

Hladini potency

Chaste wife

The chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life (ānanda-ambudhi-varḍhanam).

6. Burning → Selfishness

It gives a cooling effect to everyone

sarvātma-snapanam

7. Plevā

remove the sporadic nature of the
Flow of bliss
↓
outflows

And enables one to taste full nectar (pūrṇa-amṛta-āsvādanam) at every step (prati-padam).

Purport by Śrīla
Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

2. Japa, kīrtana and
saṅkīrtana

Proper japa chanting is possible only in the mind.

Then the chanter will achieve the desired perfection.

Chanting audibly with lip movements is kīrtana; it is more effective than japa and brings about the greatest benefit to the hearer.

Saṅkīrtana means 'complete kīrtana', for it is unnecessary to perform any other devotional activities if one performs saṅkīrtana.

Partial or imperfect kīrtana of Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name is not the same as saṅkīrtana.

Imperfect chanting of Kṛṣṇa's name is unable to cause the optimum spiritual change in the living entities.

This will lead them to doubt the potency of kīrtana.

Therefore, let the complete and perfect chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy name, or nama-saṅkīrtana, be victorious.

Purport by Śrīla
Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

3. The seven perfections of
chanting

One's knowledge of a mundane subject matter is fragmental.

In the spiritual world, however, Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate subject, and being transcendental, this plane remains forever untouched by material nature.

By thus discussing transcendental subject matter, or Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one achieves supra-mundane perfection.

Seven of these perfections, specially related to chanting Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name are mentioned in this śloka.

**Purport by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta
Sarasvatī**

**3. The seven perfections of
chanting**

I - Cleanses the mirror of the heart

Chanting Lord Kṛṣṇa's name cleanses the mirror of the conditioned soul's polluted heart, which is wholly covered by three contaminations, namely material desires, the enjoying spirit, and ungodly atheistic activities.

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The most effective process to cleanse the jīva's heart of all these impurities is chanting Lord Kṛṣṇa's name.

These treacherous contaminations, cover the mirror of consciousness and cause the jiva to reject his true nature.

Kṛṣṇa's name alone can free the consciousness of these aberrations.

Thus by constantly chanting, taking complete shelter of the holy name, the jiva gradually perceives the reflection of his original form as the servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the mirror of his consciousness.

Purport by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

3. The seven perfections of chanting

II - Protects the devotee from
material existence

This material existence only appears to be sweet and pleasurable, but in reality it is like a fire in the depths of a forest, which can sometimes burn the entire forest to ashes.

Non-devotees who have no faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa have to constantly tolerate the searing burning pain of this forest fire of material existence.

Saṅkṣiptam.

On the other hand, when Lord Kṛṣṇa's name is perfectly chanted, the devotees are protected from these scorching flames, even though they are in the midst of the forest of the material world.

Purport by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

3. The seven perfections of chanting

III - The holy name speaks the
highest benediction

Sarve Yatah

Whole hearted chanting of Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name is the highest goodness and munificence.

↓
Sreyah

↑
Kṛṣṇa's auspiciousness

Sreyah means 'benediction', kairava means 'white lilies', and candrika are the rays of the moon.

↓
MN

Just as by the illuminating rays of the rising moon the lily's white beauty is highlighted in the night similarly, the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's name brings out the best in man and enlightens the darkened universe showering it with divine benediction.

Human society cannot benefit from material desires for sense enjoyment, speculative knowledge or fruitive activities, but chanting Kṛṣṇa's name blesses all with the greatest prosperity.

Purport by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvati

3. The seven perfections of chanting

IV - The source of all
transcendental knowledge

The Mundaka Upanisad mentions two types of knowledge: material and transcendental.

Chanting of Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name is indirectly the fountainhead of material knowledge, but it is primarily the life and soul of transcendental, or supra-mundane knowledge.

Chanting induces the jīva to break the shackles of false ego and false prestige—a product of material knowledge, and elevates him to understand his eternal relationship with the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The ultimate focus of real transcendental knowledge, therefore, is
chanting Kṛṣṇa's holy name.

Purport by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

3. The seven perfections of chanting

V - Expands the ocean of bliss

VI

Chanting the holy name expands the boundless ocean of transcendental bliss, and enables one to fully relish the sweetest nectar at every moment.

Only a vast expanse of water is called an ocean, nothing less; therefore unlimited bliss has been rightly compared to an ocean.

Such transcendental experiences as these are eternal and unfettered by imperfections, nor does it lack fullness or constancy.

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Even spiritual nature and objects take on an a tenderness and cooling sheen in touch with the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy name.

In the mundane realm, the body and mind, and above them, the soul, not only become purified by Kṛṣṇa's name, but gradually and inevitably embalmed by its cooling tenderness.

Purport by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvati

3. The seven perfections of chanting

VI - Cures the disease of material
existence

The subtle and gross contaminations attendant upon the material conception of life have quite devoured the spiritual soul, but these material diseases can at once be terminated by chanting the holy name.

When the soul released from his material designations, is eager to reach Lord Kṛṣṇa, he engages in devotional service under the cooling shade of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Purport by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvati

3. The seven perfections of chanting

VII - The essential ingredient in all
devotional service

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes in the Bhakti-sandarbhā [273], and in the Krama-sandarbhā:

āta evā yadyapyanya bhaktih kalau kartavya
tada kirtanakhya-bhakti-samyogenaiva

This means that although it is required in Kali-yuga to practice the eight limbs of devotional service, they have to be performed in conjunction with chanting.

References and Notes from Śrīla
Bhaktivinoda Thākura's Śrī
Bhajana-rahasya

1. Ceto-darpana-marjanam

The contaminations that cover the mirror of consciousness
are swept away by chanting the holy name, for it is the
embodiment of profound spiritual bliss.

For example, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in his Namastaka
(7):

sūditāśrita-janārti-rāśaye
ramya-cid-ghana sukha-svarūpiṇe
nāma gokula-mahotsavāya te
kṛṣṇa pūrṇa-vapuṣe namo namaḥ

O Holy Name (nāma)! You destroy the many sufferings (sūdita ārti-rāśaye) of those who take shelter of You (āśrita-jana). You are the very form of concentrated spiritual bliss (ramya-cid-ghana sukha-svarūpiṇe), a festival of happiness for Gokula (gokula-mahotsavāya), and the perfect and complete form of Lord Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa pūrṇa-vapuṣe). Again and again I bow to You (namo namaḥ).

References and Notes from Śrīla
Bhaktivinoda Thākura's Śrī
Bhajana-rahasya

2. Bhava-mahā-davagni-
nirvapanam

It is stated in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [6.2.46]

nātaḥ param karma-nibandha-kṛntanam
mumukṣatām tīrtha-padānukīrtanāt
na yat punaḥ karmasu sajjate mano
rajas-tamobhyām kalilam tato 'nyathā

There is no better way (na ataḥ param) for those desiring liberation (mumukṣatām) to cut the bondage of karma (karma-nibandha-kṛntanam) than chanting about the Lord (tīrtha-pada anukīrtanāt), because by chanting (yat), the mind (manah) does not again become attached to material actions (na punaḥ karmasu sajjate). By other processes (anyathā) the mind (manah) again becomes contaminated by rajas and tamas (rajas-tamobhyām kalilam tatah).