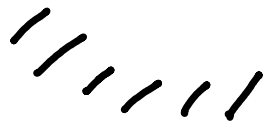


Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam

Emanated from the lotus mouth
of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu



Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam

1. Śrī Sanmodana Bhāṣyam by Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
2. Śrī Bhajana-Rahasya by Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
3. Related Verses from Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta with Srila Prabhupada's Purport
4. Vivṛti Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvati Ṭhākura
5. Śikṣāṣṭākam songs from Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Gītāvalī

Śloka Two

Why is the practice of
chanting (nāma sādhana) so
accessible?

nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktis
tatrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ
etādrśī tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi
durdaivam īdrśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ

My Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead (**bhagavan**), in Your holy name there is all good fortune for the living entity, and therefore You have many names, such as Kṛṣṇa and Govinda, by which You expand Yourself (**nāmnām akāri bahudhā**). You have invested all Your potencies in those names (**tatra arpitā nija-sarva-śaktih**), and there are no hard and fast rules for remembering them (**niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ**). My dear Lord, although You bestow such mercy upon the fallen, conditioned souls by liberally teaching Your holy names (**etādrśī tava kṛpā mama api**), I am so unfortunate that I commit offenses while chanting the holy name (**īdrśam durdaivam**), and therefore I do not achieve attachment for chanting (**ihajani na anurāgaḥ**).

Śrī Sanmodana Bhāṣyam

2.3.24

tad aśma-sāraṁ hrdayaṁ batedaṁ
yad gr̥hyamāṇair hari-nāma-dheyaiḥ
na vikriyetātha yadā vikāro
netre jalaṁ gātra-ruheṣu harṣaḥ

"O Suta! Certainly that heart is steel-framed which, inspite of hearing and chanting the all auspicious holy names of the Supreme Lord, does not melt and begin to flow toward Him. When the heart does melt, the eyes become overflooded with tears and the hairs of the body stand on end due to ecstasy."

Hari Bhakti Vilāsa

madhura-madhuram-etan-maṅgalam maṅgalānām
sakala-nigama-vallī-satphalam cit-svarūpam
(sakṛd-api parigītam) śraddhayā helayā vā
bhṛguvara naramātram tārayeta kṛṣṇanāma

"O respected Bhṛgu! This holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is sweeter than the
sweetest honey. Amongst all that is auspicious, it stands supreme. It
is the spotlessly pure (viśuddha), eternal, cognisant (cinmaya), and
fully ripened fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literature. If anyone
chants the holy name even once, whether (sincerely) or (casually), but
without offenses, the holy name immediately delivers the chanter
from material existence."

We can easily understand from these statements of different revealed scriptures that the holy name is endowed with unlimited spiritual potencies.

Practice of karma, jñāna and yoga always bound by specific rules and restrictions, and by the factors of time, place and circumstance.

But in chanting and remembering the Lord's name there is no such consideration.

This indeed is an example of the Lord's fathomless mercy.

Śrī Sanmodana Bhāṣyam

2. Ten kinds of offenses to the holy name

In spite of what has been said, it is truly a matter of great regret that we cannot develop even a drop of attraction for the holy name, which is most magnanimous.

The word durdaiva, or misfortune, is synonymous with offenses to the holy name, or nāmāparādha.

A concise summary of these offenses to the holy name is given below.

There are ten kinds of offenses against the holy name:

1. Criticizing and finding faults in devotees or sadhus is a serious offense against the holy name. How can the holy name tolerate criticism of devotees who have dedicated their lives to propagating the glories of the holy name? Offending sadhu or saintly persons is therefore the first offense.

2. Those who try to analyze transcendental subject matters with material intelligence falsely conclude that Lord Visnu's, name, form, qualities and pastimes are different from the Lord Himself. They try to impose material characteristics upon spiritual matters, or they mistakenly equate demigods like Lord Siva, Brahma, etc., with the Supreme Lord, or even think that such demigods are independent of the Supreme Lord. Their chanting is offensive.

3. To consider the guru who is self-realized and perfected in the holy names as an ordinary mortal possessing a material and thus disobeying and disregarding him.
4. To criticize and find fault in the Vedic scriptures, as well as corollary transcendental literatures, such as the Purāṇas.
5. To consider the glories of the holy name as imaginary or exaggerated.

6. To consider the holy name to be fictitious or concocted.

7. One who commits sinful activities on the strength of chanting the holy name can never be exonerated from this offense by any process, including the practice of yoga, meditation, etc.

8. Only a person in illusion will think that mundane ritualistic activities, such as giving in charity, fasting, observing vows, renunciaton, austerity, etc., are on the same level as the transcendental activity of chanting the holy name.

9. It is also an offense to instruct a faithless person, averse to hearing the holy name, about the glories of the holy name.

10. If, even after hear the wonderful qualities of the holy name, one maintains material attachments, it is to be understood that he has not developed attraction or interest for chanting.