

## THE MARKET PLACE OF THE HOLY NAME

	Discoveries	Practice
Amṛta Vāṇī 1	<i>the power of faith</i>	<i>silence</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 2	<i>all things will be revealed through chanting</i>	<i>controlling the mind</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 3	<i>the name has the same effect as the form</i>	<i>purity</i>
➤ Amṛta Vāṇī 4	<i>the fuel for spiritual life: mercy</i>	<i>contemplating the meaning of the mantra</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 5	<i>chanting with feelings of separation</i>	<i>patience</i>
Amṛta Vāṇī 6		<i>steadfastness</i>

### DISCOVERIES

#### THE FUEL FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE: MERCY



In our spiritual life we need to know what brings us forward, otherwise we will remain an eternal neophyte. Usually we think that our spiritual life will run nicely if we apply the fuel of our own endeavors. But this is the wrong fuel! Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs say that our independent endeavors for enlightenment are like the endeavors of a dwarf jumping to catch the moon. This will never work! To reach the moon one needs a rocket, similarly to become enlightened in spiritual life one needs the rocket of Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

Therefore, the essence of devotional life is a plea for Kṛṣṇa's mercy. This is a wonderful prayer because Kṛṣṇa is always ready to give us his mercy; he likes it when we call out to him for mercy.

What kind of mercy does a devotee cry out for? He wants to be reinstated in his original position as a servant. Therefore Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prays:

*ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaram  
patitaṁ mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau  
krpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-  
sthita-dhūli-saḍṣaṁ vicintaya*

“O My Lord, O Kṛṣṇa, son of Mahārāja Nanda, I am Your eternal servant, but because of My own fruitive acts I have fallen into this horrible ocean of nescience. Now please be causelessly merciful to Me. Consider Me a particle of dust at Your lotus feet.” (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya 20.32)

By crying out for mercy, wonderful things happen:

- Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that one may receive knowledge about the soul's identity from the guru, a qualified *sādhu* or the super-soul if one has developed greed (that is, a desire for mercy).
- In the *Bhajana-rahasya* Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura says that with prayers in the mood of the *ayi nanda-tanuja kīṅkaram* verse, one begins to take shelter of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet. Then Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī expands the *bhakti-saktī* in the devotees' heart. *Bhakti-devī*, the personification of the *bhakti-saktī*, will then gradually reveal everything as required for the devotee's progress. Finally, the devotee's eternal form and service will be shown to him or her – as explained in verse one of the *Śikṣāṣṭakam*: *vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam* refers to the wife or life-giving force of all knowledge which is identical to *Bhakti-devī* – the expansion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

If we manage to chant in the mood of begging for mercy, wonderful things will happen: “My dear Rādhā, my dear Kṛṣṇa, please engage me in your service. Please accept me.” Pray for mercy and it will come!



## —❖❖❖ PRACTICE ❖❖❖—

### THE FOURTH STEP TO PERFECTING ONE'S CHANTING:

#### *Mantra-ārtha-cintana* – Contemplating the Meaning of the Mantra

The Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* is a *yugala-mantra*, a mantra that directly addresses the divine couple. Śrīla Prabhupāda informed the world of the root meaning of the *mahā-mantra* – a meaning that includes all other meanings:

“My dear Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, my dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, please engage me in Your service!”

“Thus we say, ‘O Rādhārāṇī! O Hare! O energy of the Lord!’ When we address someone in this way, he usually says, ‘Yes, what do you want?’ The answer is, ‘Please engage me in Your service.’ This should be our prayer.” (Teachings of Lord Kapila, chapter 14, verse 32, purport)

Many *vaiṣṇava-ācāryas* have realized different meanings of the *mahā-mantra* during their chanting. This is a wonderful topic and those of you who want to go deeper into it are recommended to read pages 52-60 of my book “*Nama Rahasya – The confidential secrets of chanting the holy name in perfection*”.

Why is it important to be mindful of the meaning of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra? Chanting the *mahā-mantra* means to address the Lord. Have you ever tried to address

someone without meaning it? There would be no real communication – no connection at all. If you want to address Kṛṣṇa and qualify for a two-way communication, you have to put your mind into the meaning of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. In other words, you have to enter a prayerful mood. To contemplate the meaning of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra while chanting it, really means to enter the right inner attitude - the proper mood - and to remain mindful of it while continuing to chant.

