

holy name of the Lord (the process of self-realization for this age - to meditate upon the sound of the maha-mantra:



*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa  
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare  
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma  
Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*

Although Lord Caitanya was widely renowned as a scholar in His youth, He left only eight verses, called *Śikṣāṣṭaka*. These eight verses clearly reveal His mission and precepts. These supremely valuable prayers are translated herein.

श्री शिक्षाष्टकम्  
Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam

### Verse 1

Glory to the *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, which cleanses the heart of all the dust accumulated for years and extinguishes the fire of condi-

tional life, of repeated birth and death. This saṅkīrtana movement is the prime benediction for humanity at large because it spreads the rays of the benediction moon. It is the life of all transcendental knowledge. It increases the ocean of transcendental bliss, and it enables us to fully taste the nectar for which we are always anxious.

### Verse 2

O my Lord, Your holy name alone can render all benediction to living beings, and thus You have hundreds and millions of names, like Kṛṣṇa and Govinda. In these transcendental names You have invested all Your transcendental energies. There are not even hard and fast rules for chanting these names. O my Lord, out of kindness You enable us to easily approach You by Your holy names, but I am so unfortunate that I have no attraction for them.

### Verse 3

One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and should be ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.

### Verse 4

O almighty Lord, I have no desire to accumulate wealth, nor do I desire beautiful women, nor do I want any number of followers. I only want Your causeless devotional service, birth after birth.

### Verse 5

O son of Mahārāja Nanda [Kṛṣṇa], I am Your eternal servitor, yet somehow or other I have fallen into the ocean of birth and death. Please pick me up from this ocean of death and place me as one of the atoms at Your lotus feet.

### Verse 6

O my Lord, when will my eyes be decorated with tears of love flowing constantly when I chant Your holy name? When will my voice choke up, and when will the hairs of my body stand on end at the recitation of Your name?

### Verse 7

O *Govinda*! Feeling Your separation, I am considering a moment to be like twelve years or more. Tears are flowing from my eyes like torrents of rain, and I am feeling all vacant in the world in Your absence.

### Verse 8

I know no one but Kṛṣṇa as my Lord, and He shall remain so even if He handles me roughly by His embrace or makes me brokenhearted by not being present before me. He is completely free to do anything and everything, for He is always my worshipful Lord, unconditionally.

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**If anyone recites or hears these eight verses of instruction by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, his ecstatic love and devotion for Kṛṣṇa increase day by day.**

(CC. Antya 20.65)

## Commentary by

A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda:

Lord Caitanya gave us eight stanzas of His mission, what He wanted to do. They are explained in eight stanzas, and they are known as Sikṣāṣṭaka. **Sikṣā** means instruction, and **āṣṭaka** means eight. So in eight stanzas He has finished his instruction, and His next disciples, the six Gosvāmīs, have explained them in volumes of books. So Lord Caitanya says the subject is **param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam**: all glories to the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra or Kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtan movement. All glories. All victory. How it is victory, all victory? That He explains, that *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*. If you chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, then the dirty things which have accumulated in your heart due to material contamination will be cleared off.

He gives the example that the heart is just like a mirror. If on the mirror there are heaps of dust accumulated, then one cannot see the real face by the reflection of the mirror. Therefore, it should be cleansed. So in our present conditional life, our heart is overloaded with so much dust accumulated due to our material association from time immemorial. So if we chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, then the dust will be removed. Even not immediately, it will begin to be removed. And as soon as the mirror of the heart is cleansed of all dust, immediately one can see the face what he is. That face means real identification. By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, one will understand that he is not this body. This is our misconception. The dust means this misconception, accepting this body or the mind as self.

Actually, we are not this body or the mind. We are spirit soul. So as soon as we can understand that we are not these bodies, immediately *bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam*. The blazing fire of material conditions, or the blazing fire of material miseries, immediately becomes dissipated. No more misery. Ahaṁ brahmāsmi (I am spirit soul).

Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu recommended: *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*. **Mārjanam** means "cleanse," and **darpaṇam** means "mirror." The heart is a mirror. It is like a camera. Just as a camera takes all kinds of pictures of days and nights, so also our heart takes pictures and keeps them in an unconscious state [Sub-consciousness]. Psychologists know this. The heart takes so many pictures, and therefore it becomes covered. We do not know when it has begun, but it is a fact that because there is material contact, our real identity is covered. Therefore *ceto-darpaṇa-marjanam*: one has to cleanse his heart.

When the mind and heart is completely washed of all material contamination, the pure consciousness acts. We need only take the advice of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra to cleanse the mind of all material contamination

By chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa all illusions and false ego are removed and we become joyful. (*SP: Science of Selfrealization*)

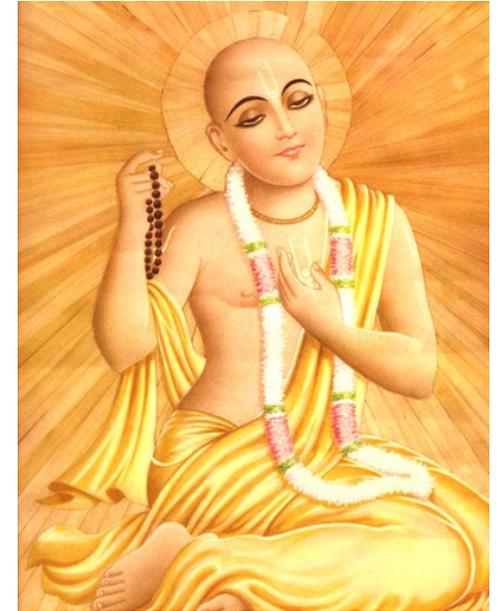
*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa,  
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare  
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# श्री शिक्षाष्टकम्

## Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam

The Eight Instructions of  
Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu



[From: "Teachings of Lord Caitanya"]  
A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda  
Original version 1968

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu (1486-1535) is the most recent incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He appeared 500 years ago in Navadvīpa, West-Bengal and started His worldwide Saṅkīrtan mission of propagating the chanting of the