

Namabhasa

Lord Caitanya to Haridasa Thakura:

“If one thoroughly understands namabhasa, one’s chanting of the holy name will become pure.”

The holy name is like the sun.

Just as a person’s vision of the sun can be blocked by clouds and mist, similarly, ignorance and anarthas cover our vision of the pure holy name.

Ignorance

Three kinds:

1. Ignorance of the name
2. Ignorance of Krsna’s supreme position
3. Ignorance of the transcendental nature of one’s own self

Knowledge

- Krsna is the Lord
- Living entities are His servants
- Material world is an unconscious gross manifestation or byproduct of the Lord.

- Holy name is never covered; only our vision of the holy name is covered by the clouds of anarthas and the mist of ignorance.

Anarthas

1. Thirst for material existence (asat trsna)
2. Weakness of heart (Hrdaya-daurbalya)
3. Offence (aparadha)

Thirst for material objects (asat trsna):

- Craving for material objects.
- Craving for heavenly sense pleasures in next life.
- Desire for mystic yoga powers.
- Desire for liberation in Brahman.

Weakness of heart (Hrdaya daurbalya):

- Attachment to trifling things unrelated to Krsna.
- Deceit.
- Envy of someone else's progress.
- Longing for position and fame.

Offences (aparadha):

- Offences to the holy name (Namaparadha).
- Offences to Krsna Himself (Sevapararada).
- Offences to Krsna's devotees (Vaisnava aparadha).
- Offences to other living entities.

Clearing the mist of ignorance

- Sambandha jnana (received from guru), leading to sadhana bhakti.
- Abhidheya: correct practice and culture of chanting the holy name. By abhidheya the name will show its influence, driving out anarthas; devotee will attain prema, the goal of life.

Namabhasa

- Leads to faith, allowing one to accept devotional service properly.
- Higher than yoga, sacrifice, varnasrama rules, austerities, etc.
- Sinful effects are destroyed and one can attain liberation from the material world. (Even prarabdha karma.)
- Effects of kali yuga are overcome.
- Anxiety is overcome.
- Evil influences counteracted.
- More powerful than Vedas and all holy places.
- Leads all the way to the border of Vaikuntha.
- Lower forms of namabhasa:
 - Sanketa: Chanting with a specific material conception (Ajamila); or chanting while thinking of some other object with the same sound (yavana).

- Parihasa: Chanting in a joking mood (Jarasandha).
- Stobha: Chanting in derision (Sisupala).
- Hela: Chanting with disregard.
- High stage of namabhasa:
 - Sraddha-namabhasa: Chanting with genuine faith even while anarthas are still present.
- Namabhasa cannot give prema, but sraddha namabhasa, following the process of sadhana laid down by the guru, will lead one to prema.
- Namabhasa is better than jnana because it eventually leads to faith that leads to attraction, taste and prema.

Two kinds of abhasa

- Reflected light
- Obstructed, partial light

Reflected faith is characterized by a deeply rooted desire for material enjoyment and liberation. This usually leads to Mayavada and cheating philosophy. (Such a person thinks that chanting is only a means to a higher end.) In this mood, one's anarthas increase.

Obstructed, partial faith leads to dim namabhasa. (This is actual namabhasa.) Due to obstruction, the effects of the name are felt faintly, but gradually, all anarthas become cleared.

From Sambhanda Jnana comes devotion.
Aham sarvasya prabhavah.

Reflect on your own chanting.

- Pray to overcome the anarthas. Identify an anartha and pray for Krsna to remove.

Overcoming weakness of heart.

- Spiritual life means taking steps, in between which are obstacles.
- Figure out ways to overcome your next obstacles.
- Pinpoint what your next obstacle is and decide what you need to do to overcome it.
- Meditate that you're going to counseling and that you're the counselor. Prepare what you're going to say to yourself to overcome your next obstacle.

Jnaana vairagya yuktya.

- Without knowledge you don't know what to do.
Without vairagya you can't do it.

Self discipline.

- How habits are formed according to yoga psychology. When you fulfill a desire, it strengthens. When you deny it you get strength.
- Mind molds to spiritual happiness when you do the right things.
- Learn self discipline and how to form good habits.
- Practice overcoming obstacles.

What is your thirst?

- Free writing is also effective. Write for 5 minutes. Mentally preach to yourself for five minutes.
- How can you increase/improve devotee relationships?
- Regular, attentive chanting gives you the thrust and ability to break through all the barriers.
- If you can connect with Krsna in your heart through prayers, you'll be able to connect with others in a meaningful way. If your heart is touched, you'll be able to touch the hearts of others.
- What's your practical realization and what's the practical application?
- How do you regularly give to others?
- Benefits of getting out of your comfort zone.
- Attitude: my spiritual life and the spiritual life of others depend on how I take shelter of Krsna's names.
- There is no substitute for maturity and realization.