

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Dr. Sampurnananda in his article, "Notes on Soma," admits his lack of extensive knowledge about soma. Tracing back historically to the past when certain so-called rishis indulged in soma-taking and quoting passages from little-known Vedic texts gives us some information, but the most practical question, "What would soma do for me?", is never answered by the author. For the answer to this question (and any others we might have) we must turn to the Bhagavad-Gita, or Geetopanishad, since being the essence of all the Upanishads, it is considered by the learned to be the highest authority.

Lord Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, tells his devotee Arjuna the benefit of soma.

The knowers of the three vedas who drink the soma juice and are cleansed of sin, worshipping Me with sacrifices, pray for the way to heaven. They reach the holy world of Indra (the Lord of heaven) and enjoy in heaven the pleasures of the gods.

Heavenly delight is in store of the soma-taker, but these delights, alas, are only temporary. The very next verse states:

Having enjoyed the spacious world of heaven, they enter (return to) the world of mortals, when their merit is exhausted, thus conforming to the Doctrine enjoined in the three vedas and desirous of enjoyments, they obtain the changeable (what is subject to birth and death.).

This material world is so dissatisfying for us, because we hunger for happiness that is completely unconditioned by time, environment, and mental and physical well-being. This is bliss. Yet our every attempt through sex, drugs, palatable food, music, great novels, and even nature, meditation,

thought, and soma yield pleasure that comes but goes. Sri Krishna tells us the folly of mundane, sensual pleasures.

Whatever pleasures are born of contacts with objects are only sources of sorrow, they have a beginning and an end. No wise man delights in them.

Eternal Bliss is Lord Sri Krishna Himself. He is Sat-Chit-Ananda-Vigraha, All Knowledge, Eternal, and All Blissful with Absolute Form. To achieve just a fragment of His Bliss for ourselves, we simply have to go to Him.

Having come to Me, these great souls do not get back to rebirth, the place of sorrow, impermanent, for they have reached the highest perfection.

Krishna says in the Bhagavad-Gita how to go directly to Him.

This Yoga has been declared to thee by Me; for thou art My devotee and My friend; and this is the supreme secret.

Of all yogins, he who full of faith worships Me with his inner self abiding in Me, him, I hold to be the most attuned to Me in Yoga.

The supreme secret is lost to speculative investigators who insist on interpreting the Vedic scriptures. Dr. Sampurnananda says we have "lost the key to Vedic interpretation" because he is looking in the wrong place. Instead of trying to fit the Absolute Truth into our own limited mental concoctions, we should approach the Vedas with open minds and try to perfect ourselves so that we can understand its Absolute quality. This is what the Absolute Truth is; it cannot be improved upon and is its own, and the highest authority.

But he who discards the scrip-

tural law and acts as his desires prompt him, he does not attain either perfection or happiness or the highest goal. Therefore let the scriptures be thy authority for determining what should be done and what should not be done. Knowing what is declared by the rules of the Scripture, thou shouldst do thy work in this world.

Being a friend and servant of Krishna and worshipping Him with devotion is bhakti yoga, the only yoga system of the four presented in the Bhagavad-Gita which Arjuna concedes he can do sincerely. Bhakti yoga yields the most exalted state of consciousness a human being can achieve — Love of Godhead. The process is to glorify the Lord by the sublime chanting of His Holy Names:

**HARE KRISHNA HARE
KRISHNA KRISHNA
KRISHNA HARE HARE
HARE RAMA HARE RAMA
RAMA RAMA HARE HARE**

Chanting of this Great Mantra for Deliverance purifies our consciousness so that we no longer identify ourselves as being our bodies, and our real identity of eternal spirit soul is immediately uncovered. We can then understand that our relationship with the Supreme Lord is that we are His eternal servants and that our perfection of life is to serve Him with love and devotion.

This transcendental process is practical and simple and the public is cordially invited to chant HARE KRISHNA with us at our temples, and to purchase Swami Bhaktivedanta's beautiful recording of this Mahamantra which can be used to practice this sound vibration. It is available from us by mail @ \$3.25.

Respectfully yours,

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