

JANUARY, 2026

BI-ANNUAL MAGAZINE OF ISKCON SYDNEY

BHAKTI VIBES

Celebrating devotion, community, and conscious living

Personal Journey of Devotees

Also stories on
Rising in Spirituality
Mind's Battle
Trials that Transform
Peace Formula

Poem on
Sri Damodar
Srila Prabupada

KIDS ZONE:
FEATURING
REFLECTIONS
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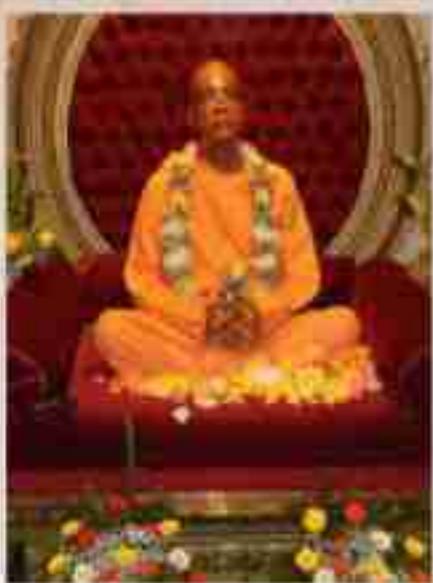
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In May 1971, **Srila Prabhupada** planted the seed of Krishna Consciousness in Australia by personally installing Sri Sri Radha Gopinath—the first Radha-Krishna Deities in the country. From those humble beginnings in Potts Point to today's vibrant **North Sydney temple**, **ISKCON Sydney** has grown into a beacon of devotion, hosting festivals, distributing prasadam, and welcoming countless seekers to the Lord's mercy.

Bhakti Vibes emerges from the desire to connect, inspire, and serve our congregation. More than a publication, it is an offering to **Sri Sri Radha Gopinath** and to all who seek shelter in Their lotus feet.

Its purpose is simple:

- **Preserve History** – Honouring our temple's journey and the devotees who carried the mission forward.
- **Nourish Devotion** – Sharing reflections, scriptural insights, and practical guidance.
- **Celebrate Community** – Showcasing the voices, talents, and service of our bhakti family.
- **Inspire the Future** – Encouraging the next generation to embrace Krishna Consciousness with joy and sincerity.

As we present this first bi-annual edition, we invite you to see Bhakti Vibes as a reflection of our collective journey. Every article, poem, and story is a thread in the tapestry of devotion that binds us together. We offer heartfelt gratitude to all contributors and a special thank-you to our advertisers for supporting this inaugural issue.

May this magazine remind us of our roots, uplift our daily lives, and deepen our service to Sri Sri Radha Gopinath. Together, let us continue Srila Prabhupada's mission by spreading the holy names and sharing the joy of Krishna Consciousness.

With gratitude to every devotee, supporter, and well-wisher who enriches the life of this temple, we pray that Bhakti Vibes becomes a cherished companion on your spiritual journey.

Your servants in the service of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath,
Editorial Team - Bhakti Vibes

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WELCOME TO ISKCON SYDNEY



HIS DIVINE GRACE SRILA A.C.
BAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPADA



THEIR LORDSHIPS SRI SRI RADHA GOPINATH

"On behalf of the ISKCON Sydney Temple Council, we warmly welcome all devotees, visitors, and well-wishers to our temple community! The Sydney temple is a place for everyone to experience spiritual nourishment, devotee association, and the joy of devotional service. Whether you are visiting for the first time or have been connected for many years, we invite you to feel at home and take shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath.

By the mercy of His Divine Grace Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, this temple continues to share the teachings of Lord Krishna and the process of bhakti yoga. Central to this process is the chanting of the holy name - **Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare / Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare** - which purifies the heart and awakens love for God. We encourage everyone to visit the temple regularly, attend festivals and programs, and participate more deeply in cultivating their Kṛṣṇa consciousness through association and service."

MEMBERS OF THE ISKCON SYDNEY TEMPLE COUNCIL



Atula Gopal Das



Ghanashyam Govinda Das



Mathura Gokul Devi Dasi



Nityananda Prana Das



Radha Vinod Das



Venkat Madhava Das



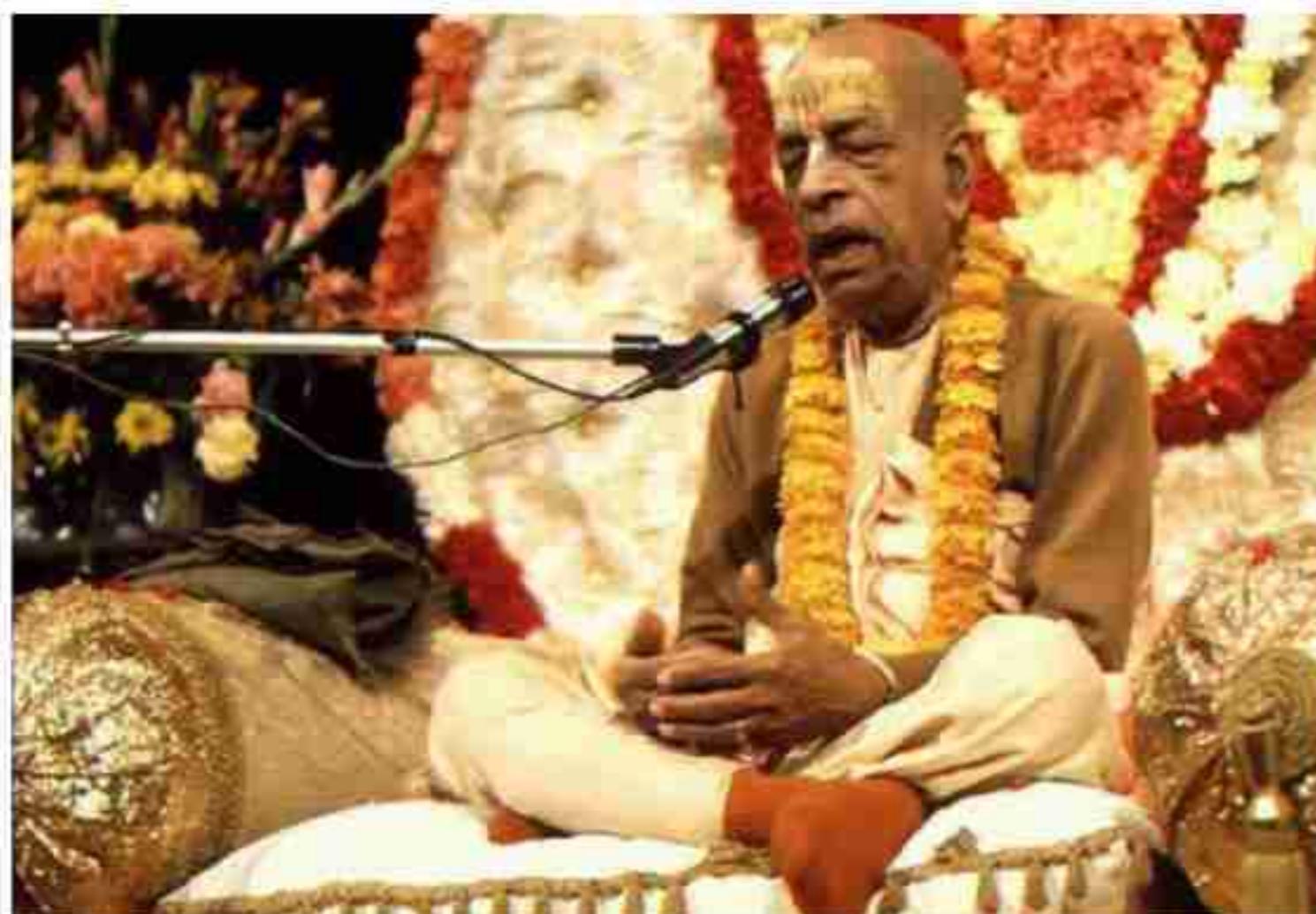
Recorded Speech to Members of ISKCON London

Dec. 23, 1968 Los Angeles

Prabhupāda:

*ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur-unmilitam yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namah*

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto the spiritual master, who has opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge in my material existence of darkness."



Iskcon Founder Archarya His Divine Grace
A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Ladies and Gentlemen, please accept my greetings in the happy new year of 1969, and blessings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for your kindly participating in this happy meeting of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa appeared on this earthly planet five thousand years ago and gave us the unique philosophy and religious principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the shape of the Bhagavad-gītā. Unfortunately, in course of time, as things change and deteriorate in the material world, people deteriorated and forgot the art of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Lord Kṛṣṇa again therefore

appeared as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu at the end of the fifteenth century to revive the same Kṛṣṇa consciousness

atmosphere in the human society. Lord Caitanya's special gift to the fallen souls of this age of quarrel and disagreement is to induce the people in general—the religionists, the philosophers and everyone—to take to the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

He informed us that the Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead can descend also in transcendental sound vibration, and thus, when you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra offenselessly, we immediately

contact Kṛṣṇa and His internal energy, and thus we become immediately purified from all dirty things in our heart.

Our conditional life of material existence is due to dirty things in our heart. Originally we are all Kṛṣṇa conscious living beings, but due to our long material association in different species of life, varying to 8,400,000's of different forms of life, we are accustomed to transmigrating from one form of body or another. In such cycle of birth and death, I, you and every one of us, although originally spirit soul and therefore qualitatively one in constitution with the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa,

PRABHUPADA'S TALK CONTINUES

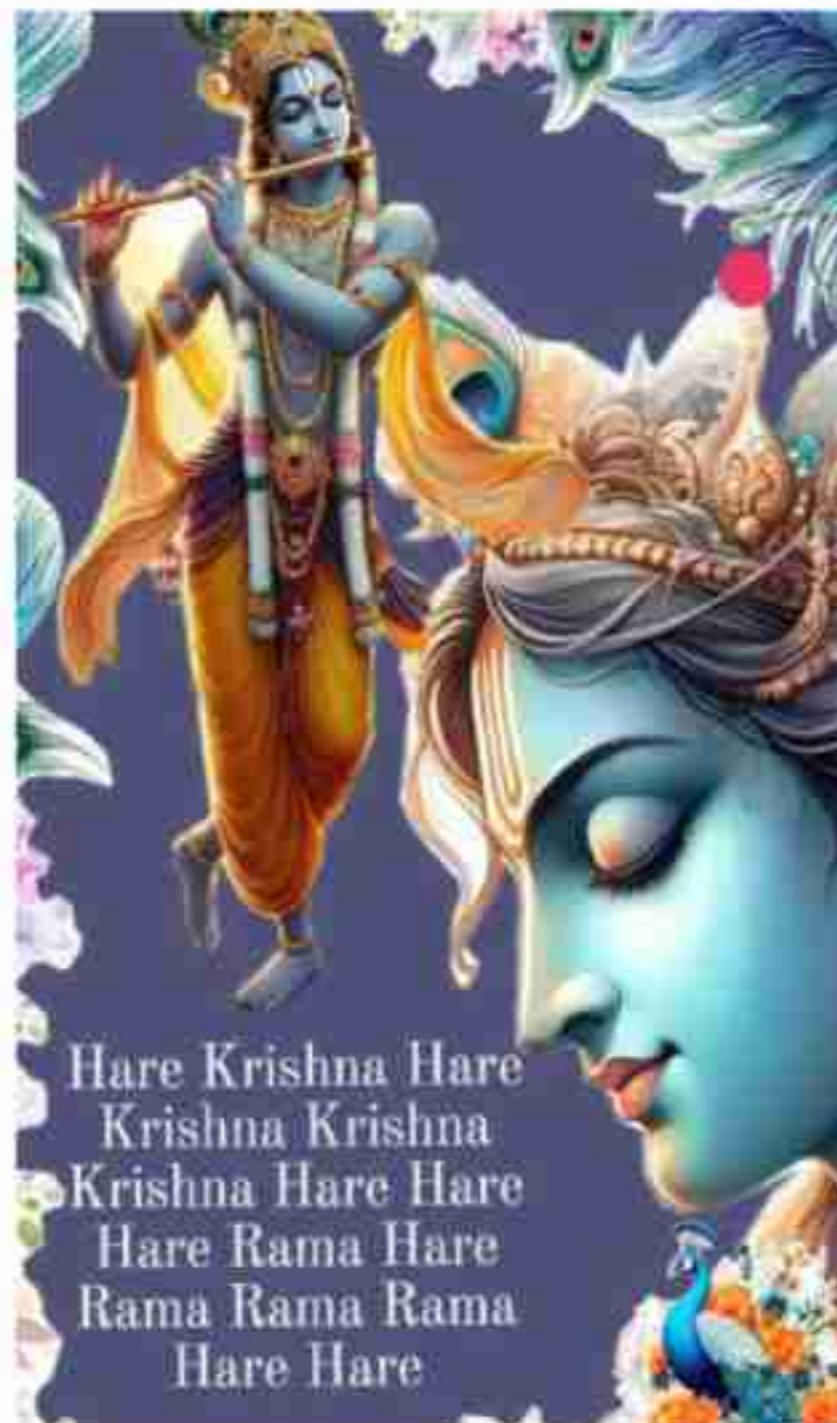
we have identified with this material form of life, subjected to various forms of material pangs, specifically in the shape of birth, death, old age and disease.

The whole material civilization is a process of hard struggle of life, ending in birth, death, old age and disease. The human society is struggling fruitlessly against these perpetual problems of life in different ways. Some of them are making material attempts and some of them are making partially spiritual attempts.

The materialists are trying to solve the problems by achievement of scientific knowledge, education, philosophy, morality, ethics, poetic thoughts, etc., and the spiritualists are trying to solve the problems by different theses like discerning matter from spirit in various ways. And some of them are trying as mystic yogis to arrive at the right conclusion. But all of them must know it for certain that in this age of Kali, or the age of quarrel and dissension, there is no possibility of success without accepting the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the speaker of Śrimad-Bhāgavatam, has therefore recommended that everyone, be he a fruitive worker, a salvationist or a mystic yogī, if actually he wants to be freed from the pangs of material existence, he must take to the process of chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is therefore an art of changing our hearts by purification from the dust of material desires. We cannot stop our desire, because as living entity, desiring is the component part of our constitution. .



Therefore we cannot give up our desire, but we can purify our desire. Killing of desire is no solution, but curing the desires, diseased condition of desire, is the right solution. As such, therefore, this dust of misunderstanding is cleared off. We can see our real position of life and make steady progress towards the ultimate goal of life.

We have forgotten the ultimate goal of our life due to lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore our entire activity should be executed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness to revive our lost relationship with God, or Kṛṣṇa.

We do not prohibit anyone to cease from the present occupational duties, but we simply recommend that he execute such duties in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu never recommended changing one's position of life, but He favored the process of hearing about Kṛṣṇa from the right, bona fide source.

One should give up the artificial process of philosophical speculation to arrive at the real goal of life, but one should submissively hear about the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is generally inculcated in Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā and Śrimad-Bhāgavatam.

If one submissively chants the mahā-mantra, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, and hears the message of Kṛṣṇa as it is in the Bhagavad-gītā, without any malinterpretation, then he does not have to change his position by some artificial method. Simply by the method of chanting and hearing, he comes to a transcendental position which will help him to know God, His name, His form, His quality, His pastimes, His paraphernalia and so on.

We are, however, misled by persons and leaders who have very little connection with God, or Kṛṣṇa. Some of them are denying the existence of God, some of them are falsely trying to place themselves in place of God, some of them are in favor of the impersonal feature of



PRABHUPADA'S TALK CONTINUES

God and, at last, some of them, without being able to reach any right conclusion, are accepting the ultimate goal of life as void, or zero, in utter hopelessness and frustration.

But Kṛṣṇa consciousness is solid ground for understanding Kṛṣṇa, or God, directly by the simple method of chanting the holy name of God, or Kṛṣṇa. Misled by blind leaders, the followers who themselves are blind have failed to achieve the desired success. But here is a method, called by the name Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is directly offered by Kṛṣṇa, and the instruction are plainly described in the Bhagavad-gītā, given to us five thousand years ago, and again confirmed by Him in the form of Lord Caitanya five hundred years ago.

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is a great art of life, very easy and sublime. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement gives you everything you want, without any artificial endeavor. It is transcendently colorful and full of transcendental pleasure. We prosecute these Kṛṣṇa consciousness activities through singing, dancing, eating and talking philosophy received through authorized disciplic succession, and therefore it gives us everything we want, without any artificial change of our natural instincts.

The consciousness is there in you, but it is now dirty consciousness, and what you

have to do now is to cleanse it from all dirty things and make it clear Kṛṣṇa consciousness in pleasant method by chanting the glorified holy name of God: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*

These performances we can practice anywhere. It does not matter either in a temple or in a street or in a park or at home. But to assemble together and sit together, we require a place for congregation; therefore, a temple of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is required to be established in various centers of the world, irrespective of the particular countries, culture, philosophy and religion.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so universal and perfect that it can appeal to everyone, irrespective of his position; therefore I fervently appeal to you all present in this meeting to extend your cooperation for successful execution of this great movement.

Thanking you once more.

66

*What you have to do now is to cleanse your consciousness by chanting the glorified holy name of God: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.**

SOURCE:

prabhupadavani.org/



Your Day with Sri Sri RadhaGopinath ISKCON SYDNEY

- 04:30 am: Mangala Arati
04:50 am: Sri Narasimha Arati
05:00*am : Tulasi Puja
05.10*am : Namamrita
05:15*am Onwards : Japa
07:15 am : Srngara Arati
07:20 am : Srila Prabhupada Guru Puja
07:40 am : Siksastakam Prayers
07:45 am : Srimad Bhagavatam Discourse (English)
11:45* am : Raj-bhog Offering
12:30 pm : Raj-bhog Arati
1:00-4:00 pm : *Darshan Closed
04:00 pm : Dhoop Arati
(from 04:30 pm on Sundays)
07:00 pm : Gaura Arati
7:30-9:00 pm : *Darshan Closed
09:00 pm : Sayana Arati
9.30 pm : Altar Closes for the Day

SPIRITUAL STIMULUS DAYS

- 1 | *Sat-tīla Ekādaśī* | 15 Jan (Thu)
2 | *Bhaimī Ekādaśī* | 29 Jan (Thu)
3 | *Vijaya Ekādaśī* | 13 Feb (Fri)
4 | *Amalaki-vrata Ekādaśī* | 28 Feb (Sat)
5 | *Papamocani Ekādaśī* | 15 Mar (Sun)
6 | *Kamada Ekādaśī* | 29 Mar (Sun)
7 | *Varuthini Ekādasi* | 14 Apr (Tue)
8 | *Mohini Ekādaśī* | 27 Apr (Mon)
9 | *Apara Ekādaśī* | 13 May (Wed)
10 | *Padminī Ekadasi* | 27 May (Wed)
11 | *Parama Ekadasi* | 12 Jun (Fri)
12 | *Pandava Nirjala Ekādaśī* | 25 Jun (Thu)



Sri Sri Radha Gopinatha – A Unique History

Fifty-five Years of Grace: The Journey of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath in Sydney

Sri Sri Radha Gopinath in Sydney are among the earliest installed Krishna deities in Australia and are central to the history of ISKCON in the country. Their story is closely tied to Srila Prabhupada's first visit to Australia and the development of the Hare Krishna community in Sydney.

Installation and Arrival

The deities of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath were personally brought from Mumbai to Sydney in early May 1971 by Srila Prabhupada and his disciple Vegavan Das, carrying Them by hand on the flight via Malaysia. They had previously presided over a major ISKCON pandal program in Mumbai where thousands took darshan daily.

Srila Prabhupada installed Sri Sri Radha Gopinath in the Sydney temple (then located in Paddington) on 10 May 1971, making Them the first installed ISKCON deities in Australia. This installation is celebrated as a foundational moment for Vaishnava worship in the country.

Early Temple Locations

ISKCON in Sydney initially began with a small temple in Potts Point in May 1970, recognised as the first Hindu temple and cultural centre established in Australia. After Potts Point, the devotees briefly operated from Bondi Beach before the move to Paddington, where Sri Sri Radha Gopinath were formally installed in 1971.

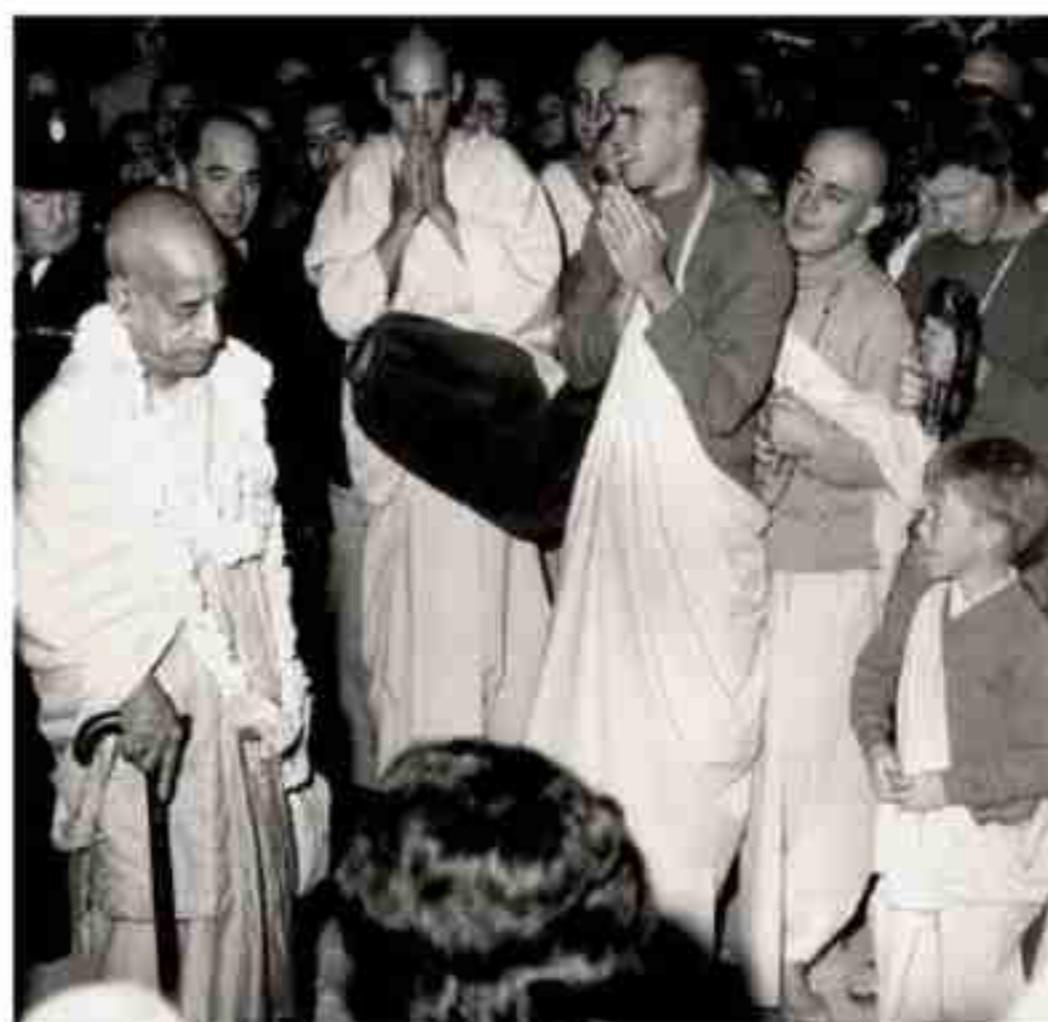
Over subsequent years, due to changing circumstances and property moves, Radha Gopinath presided successively over multiple ISKCON Sydney centres. Between 1971 and the early 1990s, They are recorded as having presided over a total of eleven different Sydney temple locations.

Settlement in North Sydney

On 18 March 1992, on the festival of Gaura Purnima, Sri Sri Radha Gopinath were moved to and permanently settled at the present North Sydney temple. This temple is now widely known as Sri Sri Radha Gopinath Mandir and functions as the main Hare Krishna temple for Sydney.

The North Sydney centre has become an important community hub for bhakti-yoga, meditation, kirtan, and cultural festivals, drawing a diverse congregation across the city.

Srila Prabhupada arrives in Sydney, 1971



Courtesy: iskconnews.org

Harinam Sankirtan at the Sydney Beach



Courtesy: dandavats.com



Sri Sri Rādhā-Gopīnath: The Deities Who Chose Their Devotees

Worship and Daily Service

For over fifty years, Sri Sri Radha Gopinath have been worshipped with a full schedule of six daily aratis and food offerings, starting at 4:30 a.m. and continuing until about 9:00 p.m. Thousands of devotees and visitors have participated in Their worship over the decades through deity service, kirtan, cooking, cleaning, and festival organisation.

Their presence is described within the community as central to inspiring people in Sydney to take up the path of bhakti, chanting, and devotional service.



Devotees' at King's Cross Sydney, July 1970

Anniversaries and Milestones

In 2011, the North Sydney Hare Krishna temple marked the 40th anniversary of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath's installation, aligning that year's Janmashtami with special celebrations. In 2021, devotees celebrated the 50th anniversary of the installation with festivals, kirtan, storytelling, yajnas and abhiseka to honour Their long history of worship in Sydney.

These anniversary events have also served as reunions for past servants of the deities, highlighting the continuity of community and service from the 1970s to the present day.



Sydney Street-Sankirtan led by Upendra Dasa in May 1970

Courtesy: Iskcondesiretree



Bali Mardana Dasa with Upendra Dasa in May 1970

Uniqueness of ISKCON Sydney

The first Deities in Australia, the beautiful Sri-Sri Radha Gopinatha have a unique history. In February 1970, two devotees sent by Srila Prabhupada – Bali Mardana Das and Upendra Das – opened the very first ISKCON temple in Australia at Potts Point in Sydney, and began distributing photocopies of essays from Back to Godhead magazine, and performing Harinama Sankirtana on the streets.

In May 1970, the devotees moved from Potts Point to a small center in the famous Bondi Beach, where they held Sunday Feasts and worshipped a photo of Sri Pancha-Tattva. Impressed by their devotion, an Indian gentleman by the name of Mr. Singh promised that upon his return to India, he would send them Radha Krishna deities.

True to his word, he did so – however, unfortunately by that point the devotees had already moved to a third location without leaving a return address. So the deities arrived with no one to receive Them, and were sent back to a disappointed Mr. Singh in India. Determined to give Radha Krishna to the devotees and taking no chances this time, he brought Their Lordships straight to Srila Prabhupada, who was then at the renowned March 1971 Cross Maidan pandal program in Mumbai.

The deities gave Their darshan to the thousands who attended the pandal.



KNOW TO GROW & RISE

Nityananda Pran Das

"Rise above material concerns through chanting and higher consciousness."

Spiritual life often feels mysterious, especially for those unfamiliar with pujas or rituals. Many imagine temples as quiet sanctuaries of peace. Yet, stepping into an ISKCON temple can be surprising; devotees joyfully dance and sing during arati, sometimes pulling newcomers into the circle. For an introvert, this can feel intimidating. In my early days, I avoided eye contact to escape being swept into the dance. But over time, as I understood the philosophy, my soul began to dance naturally. Spirituality is less about explanation and more about experience.

Growth Through Letting Go

A common doubt arises: If I take up spirituality, what must I give up? The truth is, growth always involves letting go. As children, we gave up sleep to play, being carried to walk, staying home to make friends, and cycles for motorcycles. Each stage required sacrifice, yet brought greater joy and independence. Likewise, spiritual growth means moving from material consciousness to spiritual consciousness. What once seemed dear gradually feels trivial—not as loss, but as progress.

The Higher Plane Analogy

Consider flying above a city. From the ground, buildings loom large. From the plane, they shrink until they vanish. They still exist, but at a higher altitude they no longer concern us. Similarly, spiritual practice elevates consciousness. Petty problems - traffic, parking

detours—lose significance when viewed from above. Krishna explains in the Bhagavad Gita (2.59):

viśayā vinivartante
nirāhārasya dehināḥ
rasa-varjam raso 'py asya
param dṛṣṭvā nivartate

"Though the embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment, the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness."

The "higher taste" comes through chanting the Hare Krishna maha-mantra, the essential practice for this age:

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare

Like boarding a flight, chanting requires only that we sit, disconnect from distractions, and let the mantra carry us upward.

Scriptural Assurance

The scriptures repeatedly emphasize the power of chanting:

Caitanya Caritamrita (Adi 7.76):

harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā

"For spiritual progress in this Age of Kali, there is no alternative to the holy name."

Śrimad Bhagavatam (12.3.51):

kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann
asti hy eko mahān guṇah
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya
mukta-saṅgaḥ param vrajet

"Though Kali-yuga is full of faults, one great quality remains: by chanting Hare Krishna, one is freed from bondage and attains transcendence."

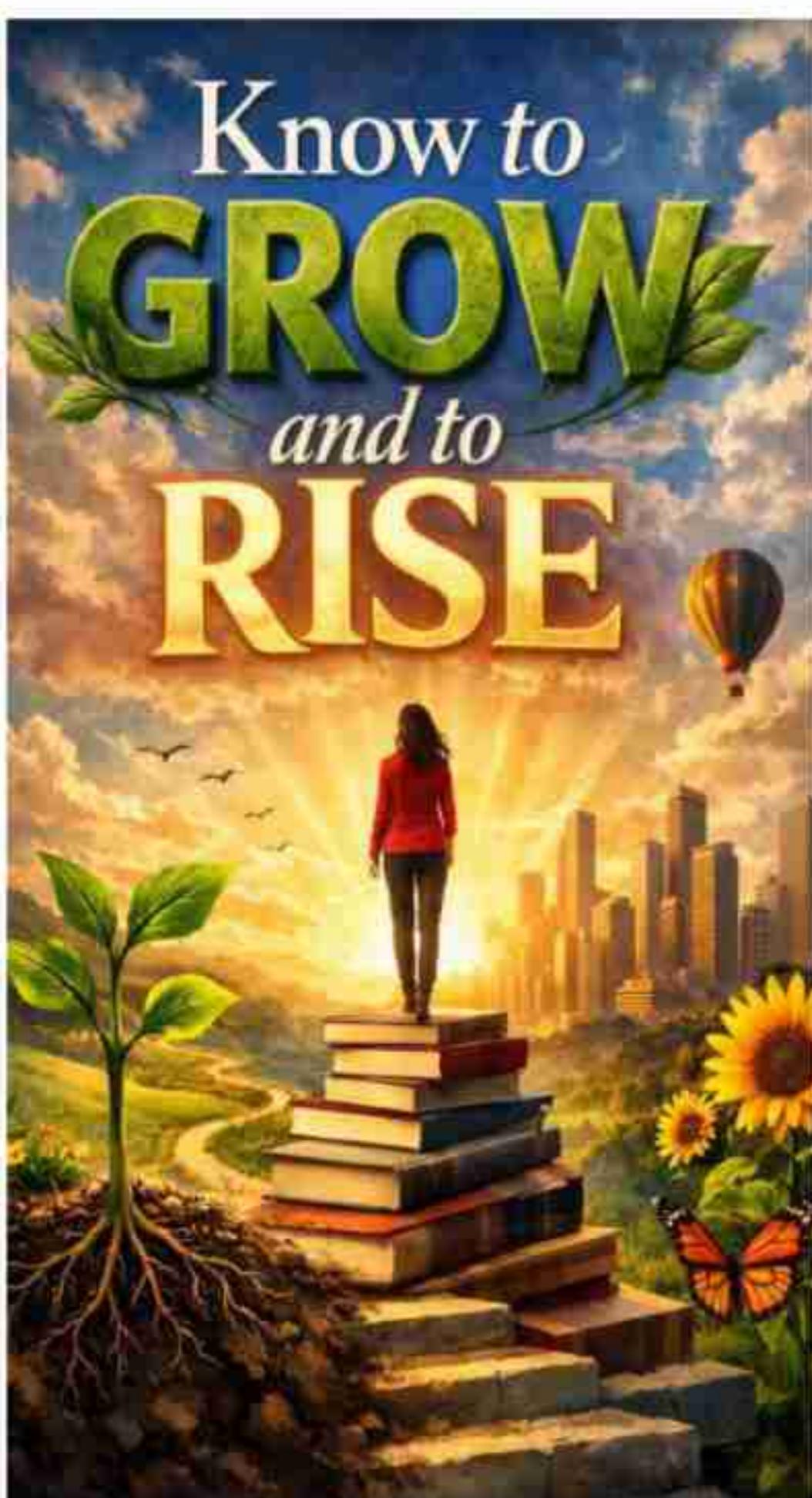


Śrimad Bhagavatam (12.3.52):

kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇum
tretāyāṁ yajato makhaiḥ
dvāpare paricaryāyāṁ
kalau tad dhari-kīrtanāt

"What was achieved in Satya-yuga by meditation, in Treta-yuga by sacrifice, and in Dvapara-yuga by service is attained in Kali-yuga simply by chanting."

Thus, chanting is not merely ritual—it is the direct path to liberation.



Addressing the Mind

The mind often resists: Spirituality is good, but how do I stop worrying about the world?

The mind's nature is to pull us down, so we must learn not to take it too seriously. Yet, its questions deserve answers. Imagine being on holiday, preparing to fly home. News of rising hotel costs or extreme weather next week doesn't bother you—you'll be gone. Similarly, when we see life as temporary, worries lose their grip. Chanting helps us realize we are visitors here, actors playing a brief role. The soul's true destination is the spiritual world.

Krishna describes this eternal abode in the Bhagavad Gita (15.6):

na tad bhāsayate sūryo
na Śaśāṅko na pāvakah
yad gatvā na nivartante
tad dhāma paramāṁ mama

"That supreme abode of Mine is not illumined by sun, moon, or fire. Those who reach it never return to this material world."

This perspective relieves anxiety. Life is not the "all in all" but a stopover in the soul's journey back to Godhead. Each of us has the opportunity to make this our last life and return home.

Invitation

So, when you visit our ISKCON Sydney centre and encounter practices that feel unfamiliar, please ask. We are eager to share their meaning and help you experience the joy behind them. Spirituality is not about restriction—it is about rising to a higher plane, where material concerns fade and the soul dances freely in devotion.

"Chanting 'Hare Krishna' is the flight that lifts us above worldly concerns into Krishna's embrace."





A MODERN BATTLE: WHEN MIND TURN AGAINST YOU

Bhava Alankar Devi Dasi

Aarav was a young professional working in a bustling city. From the outside, he had it all – a stable job, supportive family, and bright future. But inside, his thoughts were in turmoil.

The world around him seemed unpredictable – job instability, health scares, constant news of conflict. Each morning, as he scrolled through his phone, anxiety gripped him tighter. “What if I lose everything? What if things don’t go as planned?” His mind ran faster than his breath, spinning scenarios that never came true yet left him drained.

He tried meditation apps, positive affirmations, and even medication. They helped for a while, but the anxiety returned like an uninvited guest. Isn’t this a global situation now with uncertainty in everything.

The Battlefield of the Mind

Like Aarav, Arjuna too stood in confusion – not on a corporate battleground, but on the field of Kurukshetra. Faced with moral uncertainty, fear of loss, and overwhelming emotion, he declared,

“*My mind is reeling; my limbs are trembling.*” (Gita 1.28–29)

Arjuna’s paralysis of decision and anxiety mirrors what millions experience today. Krishna’s response was not mere motivation but divine psychology – a practical path to restore balance through self-mastery, devotion, and right understanding.

Understanding the Root of Anxiety

Krishna explained that anxiety arises from attachment and misplaced identification:

“*From attachment comes desire, from desire anger, from anger delusion; and from delusion the loss of memory and intelligence – and thus one falls down.*” (Gita 2.62–63)

When our happiness depends on uncertain external outcomes – careers, relationships, finances – the mind constantly oscillates between hope and fear.

“*The mind is restless & hard to control, Arjuna.*” (Gita 6.35)

– an admission that even a warrior-saint struggles with anxiety. Yet He offers a profound solution:

“*It can be controlled by practice (abhyāsa) and detachment (vairāgya)*

In modern terms, abhyāsa is mindful repetition – daily training of attention through prayer, chanting, or spiritual reading. Vairāgya is emotional detachment – understanding that events may change, but one’s inner connection to Krishna remains unshaken. When the mind learns to rest in remembrance of the Divine, uncertainty loses its sting.

Bhakti: The Heart-Centered Cure

Bhakti-yoga doesn’t deny emotion; it sanctifies it. Devotional remembrance shifts mental energy from self-preoccupation to God-connection. Instead of battling thoughts alone, the devotee learns to hand them to Krishna – the Supreme Friend who carries what we lack and preserves what we have (Gita 9.22).



After taking up Bhakti approach, the same challenges exist, but our reactions soften. The anxious “What if?” becomes a peaceful “Whatever Krishna wills.”

Practical Ways to Befriend the Mind

- 1. Morning Centering:** Begin each day with japa or a Gita verse. It anchors consciousness before worldly noise sets in.
- 2. Sattvic Diet and Routine:** A calm body supports a calm mind; regulate food, sleep, and digital input.
- 3. Service and Gratitude:** Convert worry into

“

Abandon all varieties of religion and surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sin and fear.” (Gita 18.66)

worship – help others, sing kirtan, or cook for the Lord.

4. Association: Stay close to those whose faith is stronger than your fears.

5. Surrender, Don't Struggle: When uncertainty rises, repeat Krishna's promise: The Bhagavad Gita teaches that mental health is not merely the absence of anxiety, but the presence of divine harmony within.

When the mind becomes Krishna's friend through devotion and discipline, it stops being our tormentor and becomes our liberator.

“

Fix your mind on Me, be My devotee, worship Me, and offer homage unto Me; thus you will come to Me.” (Gita 9.34)

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An Everyday Journey



SANJAYA VYASA DAS

ātmendriya-prīti-vāñchā — tāre bali 'kāma'
kṛṣṇendriya-prīti-icchā dhare 'prema' nāma

'The desire to gratify one's own senses is kāma [lust], but the desire to please the senses of Lord Kṛṣṇa is prema [love].'-Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi 4.165

Feeling Stagnant on the Path

After eleven years in this spiritual society, I still feel a gap between service and devotion. I perform service whenever possible, but I yearn to perform it sincerely—with love, not just duty.

Krishna Consciousness is an everyday journey. I'm determined to reconnect with Krishna and experience the joy our spiritual masters speak of. I believe this joy is real and permanently born from a heart softened by love and freed from the six enemies: lust, anger, greed, ego, attachment, and envy. I see this joy in our spiritual masters and fellow devotees. Yet, it escapes me.

The Power of Determination

I think determination is important to grow in Krishna Consciousness. Nārada Muni says to Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja:

asaṅkalpāj jayet kāmam
krodham kāma-vivarjanāt
arthānarthekeṣyā lobham
bhayam tattvāvamarśanāt

"By making plans with determination, one should give up lusty desires for sense gratification. Similarly, by giving up envy one should conquer anger; by discussing the disadvantages of accumulating wealth one should give up greed, and by discussing the truth, one should give up fear." - Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 7.15.22

Determination is essential—but so is association with pure devotees. Srila Prabhupada defines association as learning how to perform devotional service from sincere practitioners.

A Wake-Up Call

I once confided in a devotee that I wasn't experiencing happiness in Krishna Consciousness. His reply was simple and piercing: "If you're not happy in Krishna Consciousness, something is not right. You must change something."

The process is perfect. If something feels off, it's in my practice.

brahma-bhūtah prasannātmā
na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samah sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhaktim labhate parām

"One who is thus transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed toward every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me."

- Bhagavad-gītā 18.54

To change in a big way, I had to make big changes.



Three Transformations That Helped Me to increase my love for Krishna

1. Stop Competing and Comparing

I used to feel inadequate unless I matched the intensity of others' service. But Krishna Consciousness is deeply personal—like DNA, no two journeys are the same.

His Holiness Radhanath Swami beautifully explains: "One can build a temple for Krishna, and that is great service. Or one can offer a small flower to Krishna, and that is also great. Perhaps offering a flower is even nicer—it depends on the intention."

Now, I focus on my own intentions, not others' actions.

2. Chant Attentively

Inattentive chanting is the root of all problems. Though I've chanted 16 rounds daily for years, it became ritualistic—devoid of focus and love.

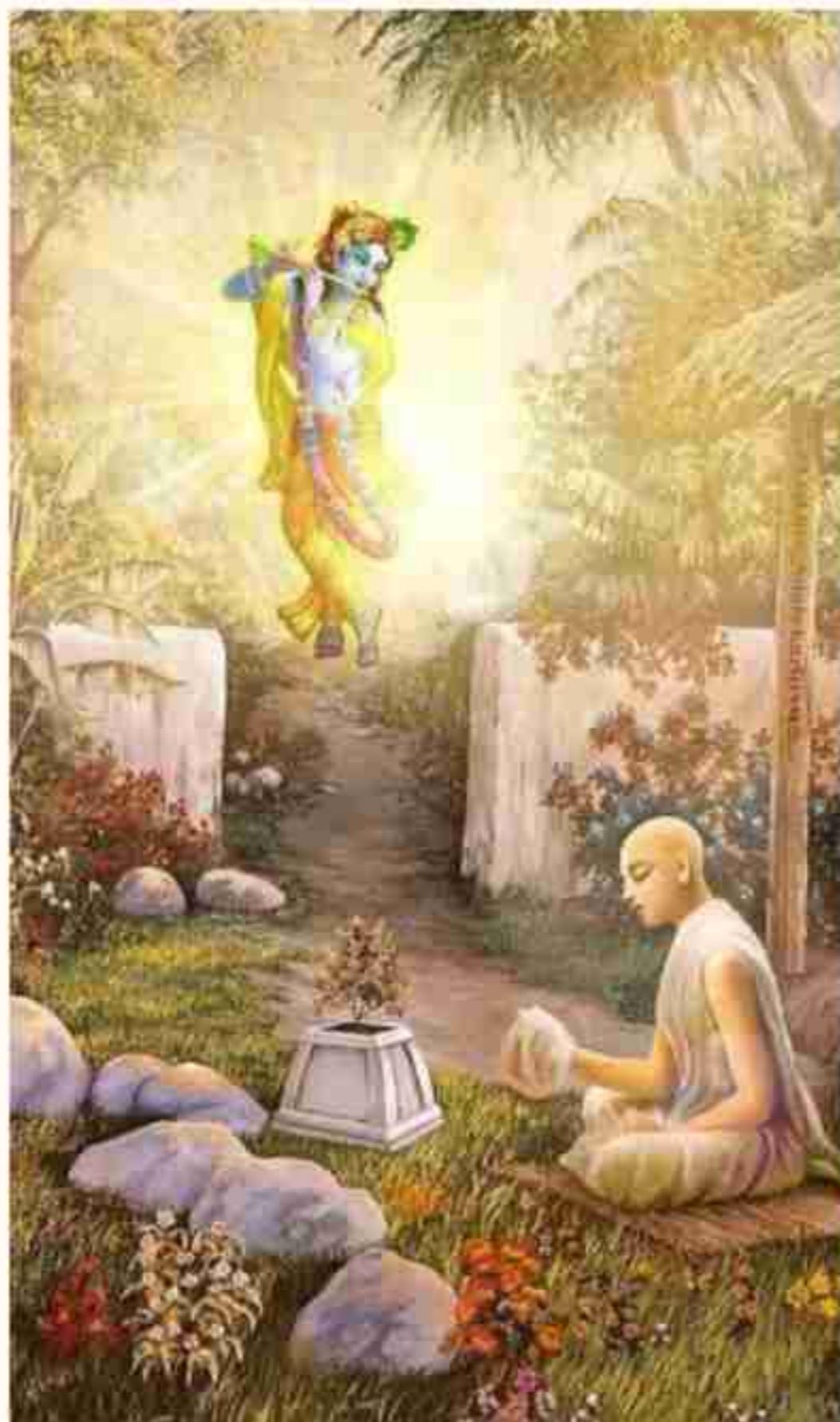
Srila Prabhupada writes in the Krishna Book introduction: "Krishna Consciousness means the art of focusing one's mind on Krishna and offering their love to Him."

Now, I strive to offer every breath, every name, with sincerity and longing.

3. Associate with Inspiring Devotees

Everyone is at a different stage. Seek those who sincerely strive to overcome material conditioning. The disease of the heart is stubborn—it needs an expert doctor. A sincere devotee teaches us how to simultaneously refrain from sense gratification and offer loving service to Krishna. If you feel stagnant, connect with someone who radiates joy in Krishna Consciousness. If you're already joyful, stay vigilant—material conditioning is strong.

Krishna can leave the heart in a moment. In that moment, have faith and rediscover your love.



The Goal of Life

veda-śāstra kahe — 'sambandha',
'abhidheya', 'prayojana'
'krṣṇa' — prāpya sambandha, 'bhakti' —
prāptyera sadhana

"The Vedic literatures give information about the living entity's eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, which is called sambandha. The living entity's understanding of this relationship and his acting accordingly is called abhidheya. Returning home, back to Godhead, is the ultimate goal of life and is called prayojana."

-Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya
20.124





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Sunday School

NURTURING BHAKTI IN THE HEARTS OF OUR CHILDREN

In today's fast-paced world, children grow up surrounded by constant stimulation, information overload, and increasing pressures. Amid these influences, Sunday school offers a sacred and joyful space where children can develop inner strength, spiritual identity, and Krishna conscious values. For children of all ages, it becomes a nurturing environment where character, devotion, and timeless principles naturally take root.

Srila Prabhupada emphasized the importance of cultivating Krishna consciousness from early childhood. He reminded us that children are naturally receptive to spiritual life when they receive loving guidance and uplifting association. His vision was a society where children grow up hearing about Krishna, chanting His holy names, serving devotees, and joyfully practicing bhagavata-dharma as part of daily life. Sunday school is a living expression of this vision.

This principle is beautifully captured in the Srimad Bhagavatam (7.6.1):

kaumāra ācaret prājño
dharmān bhāgavatān iha

"From early childhood, a wise person should practice devotional service (bhāgavata-dharma), for human life is meant for spiritual realization."

Sunday school helps create these early samskaras—deep spiritual impressions—through stories from the Bhagavad-Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam; kirtan, prayers, and simple seva. These joyful activities plant the seeds of humility, gratitude, kindness, and self-discipline in a natural and loving way.

As children grow older, Sunday school becomes a place for deeper reflection. In a world shaped by social media and external validation, many young people struggle with identity and self-worth. Krishna consciousness teaches them that they are eternal souls, parts and parcels of Krishna—not defined by achievement or appearance. This understanding brings clarity, resilience, and inner confidence, helping them navigate life's challenges with wisdom.

A key strength of ISKCON Sydney Sunday School is its dedicated team of teachers—devotees who bring both philosophical understanding and living experience. Many are parents themselves, balancing family life, sadhana, and service.

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Their presence creates a warm, values-based environment where children feel supported, heard, and inspired.

ISKCON Sydney is also committed to ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all children. The Sunday School operates within the National Child Safe Framework, supported by the Child Protection Office (CPO), ensuring sound policies, training, and accountability. This allows parents to feel confident that their children's spiritual growth takes place in a space of trust, dignity, and responsibility.

Sunday school also cultivates a spirit of seva. Children learn that devotion is expressed not only through knowledge, but through action—serving others, respecting all beings, and contributing positively to the community.

Ultimately, Sunday school is more than a weekly class; it is an investment in the spiritual future of our children and our community. By nurturing bhakti from a young age, ISKCON Sydney helps raise compassionate, grounded individuals who will carry Srila Prabhupada's legacy forward with faith and devotion.

For more information, please contact Manasvi Devi Dasi.





KIDSZONE

From Young Hearts

HANDS THAT SERVE, HEARTS THAT SOAR



A Selfless service is a cornerstone of devotional practice and a deeply rooted value within the devotee community. It refers to actions performed solely for the benefit of others, without any expectation of recognition or reward. When service is offered with pure intentions, it becomes a powerful expression of bhakti (devotion) that not only pleases Krishna but also accelerates one's spiritual growth.

Why Selfless Service Matters

Selfless service purifies the heart and cultivates humility, helping devotees transcend the selfish tendencies of Kali Yuga and align their actions with Vedic principles. In contrast, service driven by ego or personal gain can lead to spiritual stagnation and unintended consequences.

- Duryodhana's example in the Mahabharata illustrates this. Though he gave generously, his motives were rooted in pride and manipulation. His actions bred resentment and ultimately led to his downfall.
- Sudama's story, on the other hand, reveals the beauty of sincere devotion. Despite his poverty, Sudama offered Krishna a humble gift of chipped rice, expecting nothing in

Ananya

return. Krishna, moved by his pure heart, showered him with blessings—demonstrating that selfless service invites divine grace.

Living Selfless Service Daily

- Incorporating selfless service into everyday life doesn't require grand gestures. It begins with small acts of kindness performed with a genuine heart:
- In daily life: Helping an elderly neighbor with groceries out of compassion, not for praise.
- In devotional practice: Serving prasadam at the temple without seeking recognition, simply to nourish others and please Krishna.

These actions, whether secular or spiritual, reflect the essence of selfless service—giving with love and without expectation.

The Spiritual Rewards

Selfless service is transformative. It deepens our connection with Krishna, fosters humility and compassion, and brings joy to both the giver and the receiver. By shifting our focus from personal desires to the well-being of others, we align ourselves with Krishna's teachings and progress on the path of devotion.

Spot the Differences - At least Six



Kids Zone

Ajaya, one who cannot be defeated

Mysha Bhardwaj

oh Krishna, oh Krishna, God of love,
compassion, protection!
I yearn for Your godly affection!
oh Krishna, oh Krishna, You are the Savior of
every cosmic age!
Protecting us all from our sins every day!
oh Krishna, oh Krishna, no person can begin
Describing Your beauty, such as Your blue skin!



Reflection on Ajaya one who cannot be defeated

Title significance: The title of my poem is Ajaya, one who cannot be defeated. I chose this as my title, as it is one of the names of Krishna as taught within the Vaishnava traditions.

Krishna, being a major deity in Hinduism, is said to have 108 names in total; each name reflects his attributes and mythological associations. This name is how I view Krishna. In my poem, I state this by writing many names for You, such as Ajanma, Adhoksaje, and Madhusudhana; however, I know You as the god of protection.

Favorite line: My Favorite line in my poem is "no person can begin describing Your beauty, not even Your own reflection."

This line tells us all that Krishna is so pure and beautiful. That no object or person can describe how much. This line helps me connect to my everyday life, as when I go to visit the temple with my mum, Krishna is so eye-catching in His gowns and jewelry that everybody starts dancing and praising Him.

Purpose of my poem: The purpose of my poem was to express my cultural identity. I have taken inspiration from the epic known as the Bhagavad Gita.

This epic teaches people about the stories and characteristics of Krishna, the Supreme. When writing my poem, I took my perspective of Krishna and wrote down the way I see Him. I wrote down His beauty, affection, protection, as well as His procession upon leading people to the spiritual world, truly showing an emphasis on my view of Krishna.

Bubble sentence upon Ajay, one who cannot be defeated:

In my poem, I use the line "protecting us all from our sins every day, This line highlights the importance of Krishna and what He does for us, demonstrating how Krishna protects us, contrasting the love, affection, and protection Krishna feels for people by doing so He is showing us that His love for people is infinite, as said to be in the Hindu scriptures.



Envy: The Silent Thief of Devotion

ARITRI

Why Non-Enviness Is the Key to Vaikuntha-like Harmony

The Secret of Vaikuntha's Joy

Have you ever wondered why no one is ever upset in Vaikuntha? The answer lies in one powerful principle: non-envy. In that divine realm, every soul rejoices in the success of others. There's no competition—only cooperation in glorifying the Supreme Lord.

- The melodious birds, though gifted with enchanting voices, joyfully encourage the humble bee to buzz the Lord's praises.
- The exquisitely fragrant flowers lovingly make way for Tulasi Maharani, knowing her service is most dear to Krishna.

This spirit of mutual encouragement allows everyone to reach their full potential in devotional service. Helping others serve the Lord wholeheartedly is not a loss—it's our greatest gain.

The Poison of Envy

Envy, on the other hand, is a subtle yet destructive force. It clouds our vision, distorts our relationships, and blocks our spiritual progress. Take the example of Daksha, who harbored deep envy toward Lord Shiva.

Unable to accept Shiva's exalted position, Daksha insulted him, cursed his followers, and even neglected his own daughter's well-being—all because she was married to Shiva. His envy led to tragic consequences, ultimately resulting in his own demise.

Envy is like a boomerang: it may take time, but it always returns—with painful results.

Choose Encouragement Over Comparison

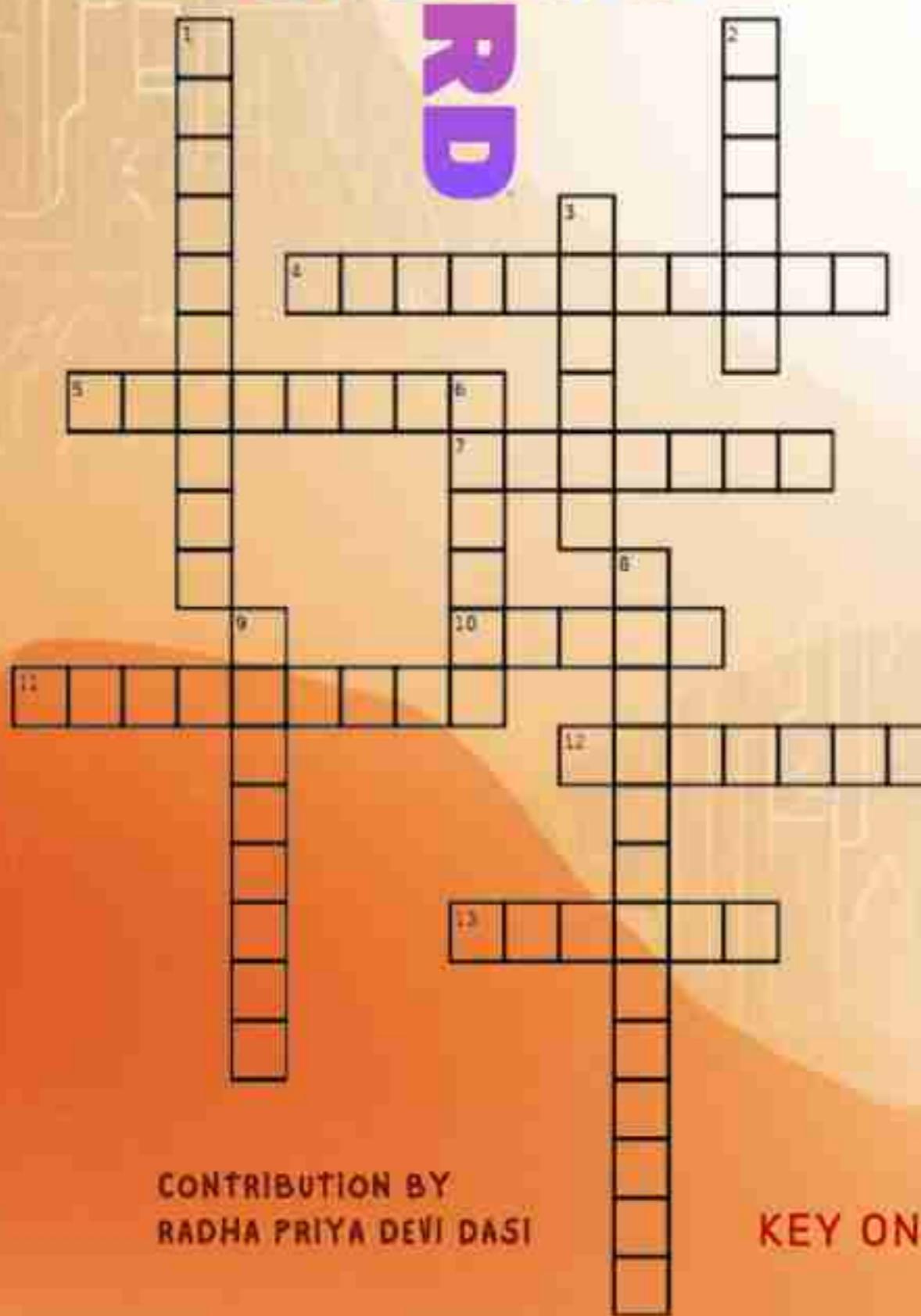
In our spiritual communities, we must strive to cultivate non-envy. When we uplift others, we uplift ourselves. By celebrating the unique service of each devotee, we create an atmosphere of Vaikuntha right here on Earth.

Let us remember:

"A devotee's greatness is not in how much they shine, but in how much they help others shine."



CROSS WORD



CONTRIBUTION BY
RADHA PRIYA DEVI DASI

KEY ON PAGE: 33

Down:

- denizens of the heavenly planets who sing very beautifully
- the father of Devaki
- the giant bird-carrier of Visnu
- a name of Durga meaning "mother"
- Visnu lying on the ocean of milk
- the son of Surasena

Across:

- the demigods offered this prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead
- a type of flower found on the heavenly planets
- a clay drum with two heads
- the son of Ugrasena
- the compiler of the vedas and author of the Puranas, Mahabharat
- the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth
- a great devotee in the form of a plant

FOLLOW THE WAY TO GOLOKA

Trace your path out of this maze by passing by all devotional sources you can find.



KEY ON PAGE: 42

CONTRIBUTION BY RASANANDA GOPAL DAS



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Pujas & Homas

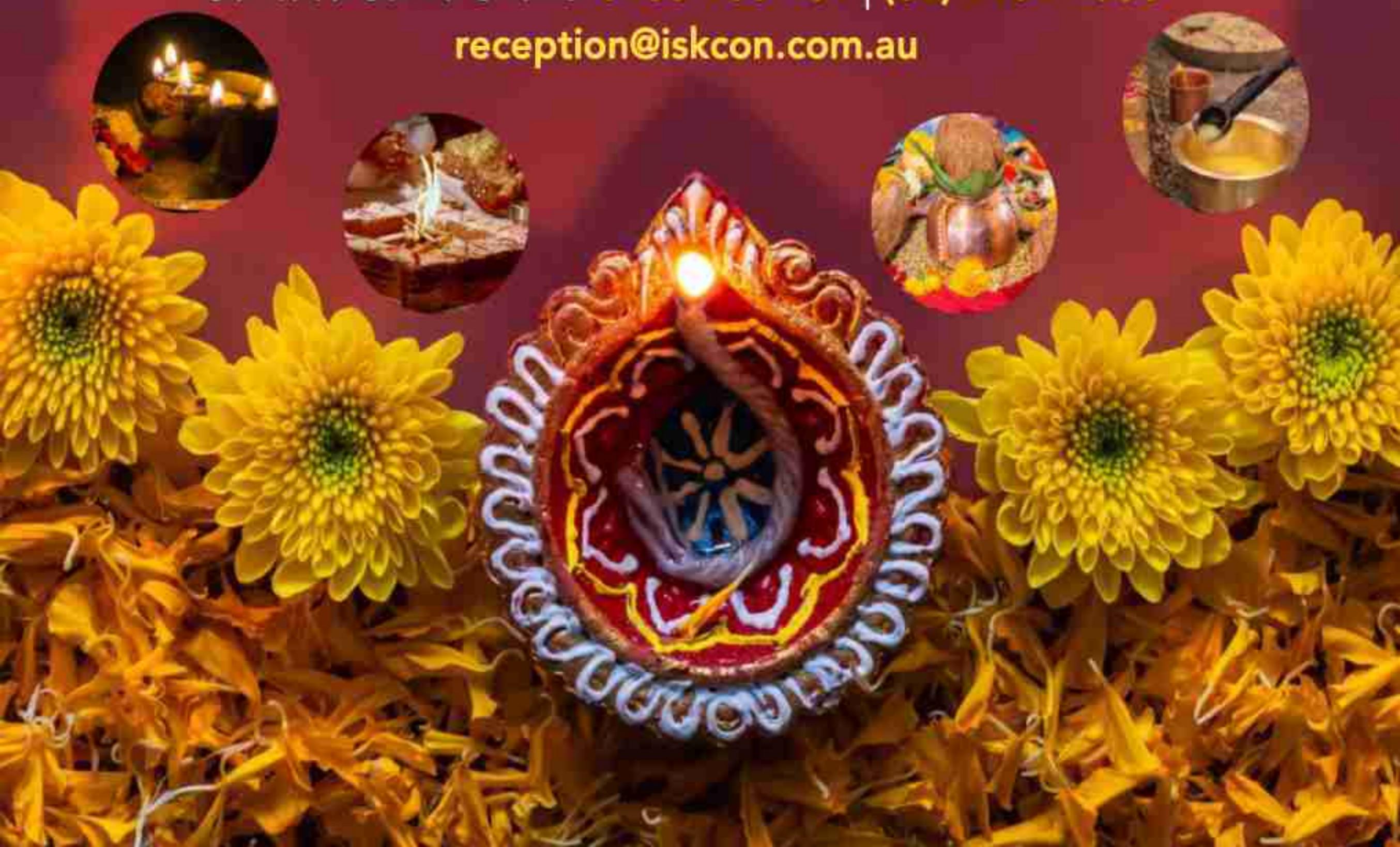
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- **Pausti-karma** (for the protection of the child's health)
- **Anna-prasana** (feeding the child grains for the first time)
- **Cuda-karanam** (first hair cutting ceremony)
- **Vidyarambha** (child's entering school for the first time)
- **Samavartana** (graduation ceremony)
- **Vivaha-yajna** (marriage ceremony)
- **Griha-aramba** (laying of the foundation stone for a house)
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Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, possesses six divine opulence's in full: beauty, strength, knowledge, wealth, fame, and renunciation. These qualities not only reveal His greatness but also offer profound lessons for our own lives.

Knowledge – Doing Our Best with Compassion

Krishna's perfect knowledge inspires us to act with wisdom and care. When the gopas were hungry in the

forest and struggled to reach mangoes, Krishna didn't dismiss their need. He ensured no one went hungry, showing that true intelligence is expressed through compassion and practical action.

Beauty – Humility and Kindness

Krishna's beauty is enchanting, yet He never uses it for pride or comparison. His sweetness reminds us that beauty should be accompanied by humility and gentleness. True charm lies in kindness, not vanity.

Fame – Influence Used for Good

Krishna's fame is eternal, yet He remains humble. His reputation is built on love, protection, and righteousness. We learn that fame should be earned through service and used to inspire, not dominate.



Strength – Courage in the Face of Adversity

During the devastating storm sent by Indra, Krishna remained calm while others panicked. He led the villagers to safety and lifted Govardhan Hill on His little finger for seven days. His strength teaches us to be fearless and protective, especially when others depend on us.

Wealth – Serving Others with What We Have

Though Krishna possesses all wealth, He uses it to uplift others.

His example teaches us that our resources—whether material or spiritual—should be shared to benefit those around us.

Renunciation – Finding Joy Beyond Possessions

Despite having everything, Krishna is detached. He shows that happiness doesn't come from accumulation but from love, dharma, and inner peace. Renunciation is not rejection—it's choosing what truly matters.

Realizations from His Pastimes

His Holiness Jayapataka Swami beautifully states: "Krishna is the Supreme Bhagavan." Bhagavan means the one who possesses all six opulences in full. In Navadvipa, people didn't realize Visvambhara was Krishna. Similarly, in Vrindavan, Krishna's divinity remained hidden until He lifted Govardhan Hill. After this miraculous feat, the villagers approached Nanda Maharaj and exclaimed: "Don't tell us your son is ordinary—He lifted a hill for seven days!" Nanda Maharaj replied: "Garga Muni told us our son would have the power of Lord Narayana and be auspicious for the cowherd community." Yet even then, many didn't grasp the full truth: Krishna is not just empowered—He is the original Supreme Lord Himself.

Why These Opulences Matter

Understanding Krishna's six opulences helps us grow spiritually. They guide us to be:

Wiser in our choices

Braver in challenges

Kinder in relationships

Generous with our gifts

Humble in success

Detached from distractions

By meditating on these qualities, we deepen our connection with Krishna and become better instruments of His love.

TINY ARTIST CORNER

Art by Prajna



LITTLE
HANDS, BIG
ART



Art by Revati



Attempt to find atleast 15

Lords'Name Hunt

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A	W																		
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V	A	A	H	R	U	A	D	I	E	U	A	A	D						
B	Y	N	T	H	B	H	S	G	H	K	D	B	R	C	T				
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Clue: Name can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal

Key on Page: 28

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The Danger of Anger

kids Zone

Dipti Radha

Introduction

Anger is often described as holding a burning coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else—yet the one who gets burned first is ourselves. Resentment and rage may feel justified in the moment, but they corrode clarity, cloud judgment, and ultimately destroy peace. As the Vedic wisdom reminds us, 'anger is like drinking poison and expecting another to die'.

Lessons from the Mahabharata

Few tales illustrate the destructive power of anger none better than the epic of the Mahabharata

Duryodhana's downfall:

Despite wealth, fame, and power, he was consumed by jealousy of the Pandavas. When asked for just five villages to avoid war, he arrogantly refused—even declaring he would not give land "the size of a needle's tip."

Ignoring wise counsel: Elders like Bhishma, Dronacharya, and even his father pleaded with him to reconsider. But blinded by resentment, he dismissed their advice.

The tragic result: His stubborn anger led to the Kurukshetra war, costing countless lives—including his own. Today, Duryodhana stands as a cautionary figure, remembered for how ego and rage eclipsed wisdom.

"Anger blinds one from what truly matters."

The Bhagavad Gita on Mastering the Mind

Srila Prabhupada often emphasized that an uncontrolled mind is a person's worst enemy. The Bhagavad Gita offers timeless guidance:

mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino 'nityās tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata

bandhur ātmātmanas tasya yenātmaivātmanā jitāḥ
anātmanas tu śatruvē vartetātmaiva śatru-vat

The message is loud and clear: 'Conquering anger begins with conquering the mind'

BG 2.14: Krishna tells Arjuna to tolerate happiness and distress, comparing them to passing seasons.

BG 6.6: "For one who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best friend. But for one who has failed, the mind will remain the greatest enemy."

Dhruva Maharaj: From Rage to Revelation

Another powerful example comes from Dhruva Maharaj.

Fueled by anger: Denied his rightful place by his stepmother, Dhruva entered the forest determined to gain a kingdom greater than Brahma's.

Guided by a guru: Narada Muni redirected his energy, giving him a mantra and spiritual focus.

Transformation: Through sincere chanting, Dhruva overcame his resentment, forgave his stepmother, and chose peace.

Reward: Krishna blessed him with an eternal planet, showing that devotion and forgiveness yield far greater rewards than anger ever could.

Conclusion

Anger is the destroyer of serenity. It blocks gratitude, breeds pessimism, and blinds us to life's blessings. To overcome it, we must:

Regulate the mind and senses.

Tolerate life's ups and downs as passing seasons.

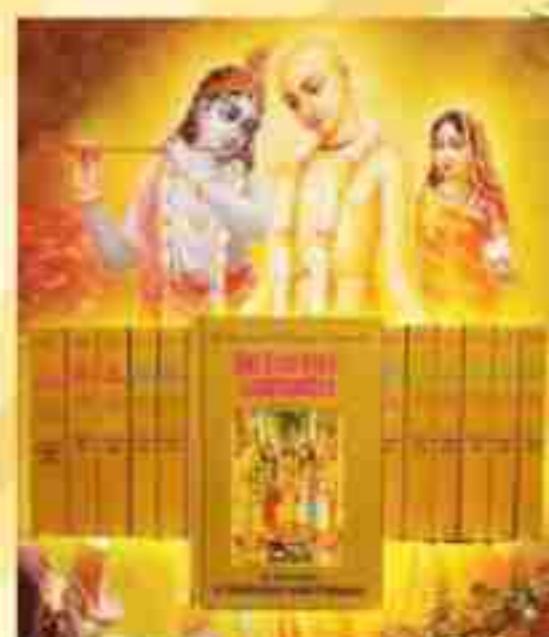
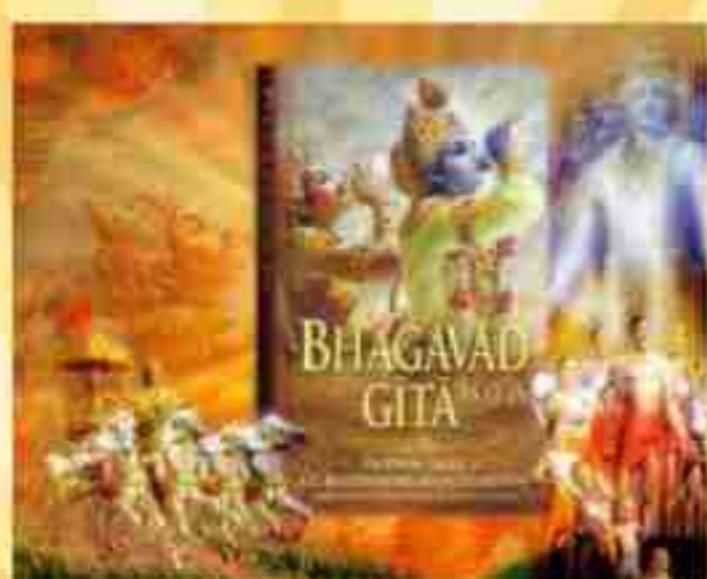
Seek guidance from a guru, just as Dhruva Maharaj did.

When anger is conquered, peace reigns once again.



Srila Prabhupada Books That Change Lives

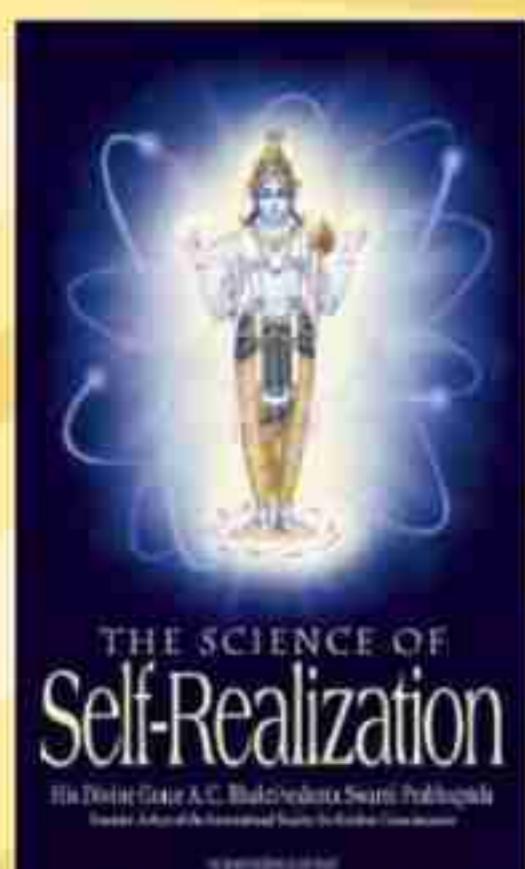
Carrying Krishna's Message to the World



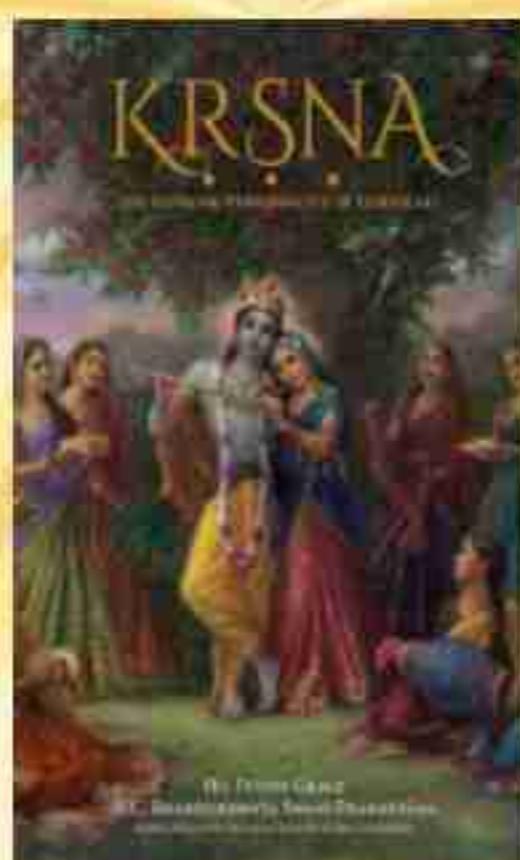
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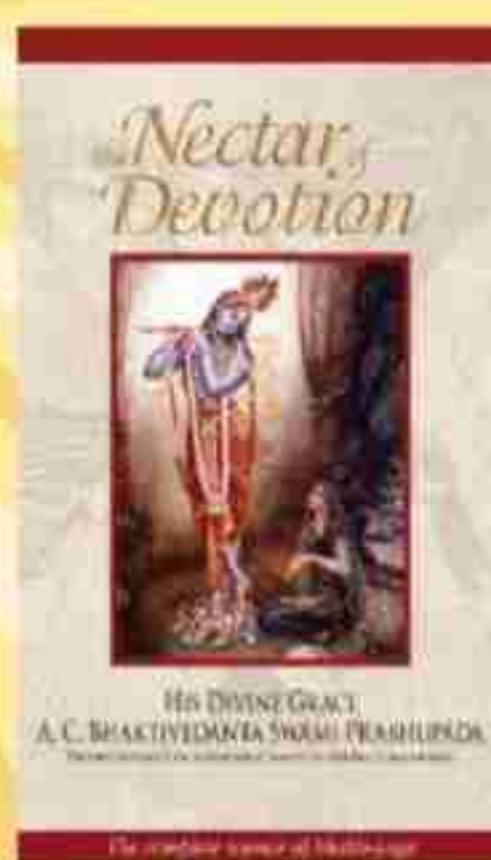
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Lord's Name Hunt - Key

VERTICAL HORIZONTAL DIAGONAL L-R DIAGONAL R-L

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Varaha | 1. Prthu | 1. Vyasadeva | 1. Narasimha |
| 2. Rsabha | 2. Kalki | 2. Gopinath | 2. Yajna |
| 3. Vamana | 3. Byuddha | 3. Bhrgupati | 3. Shyam |
| 4. Damodara | 4. Murari | 4. Kesava | 4. Madhava |
| | 5. Matsya | 5. Giridhari | |
| | | 6. Kurma | |



Gopinath's Youth

Gopinath's Youth is a space for young adults to **connect, grow, and serve** in a positive, spiritual environment.

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What we do:

- Interactive weekly **classes & discussions**
- Online **catch-ups** and spiritual conversations
- **Mantra meditation** (japa & kirtan) sessions
- **Retreats, camps,** and youth programs
- **Temple services:** kitchen seva, cooking, cleaning
- **Festival services:** decoration, preparation, and support

Whether you're new, curious, or already practicing, this group offers:

- **fantastic association**
- **meaningful service**
- **spiritual clarity**
- and **genuine friendships**



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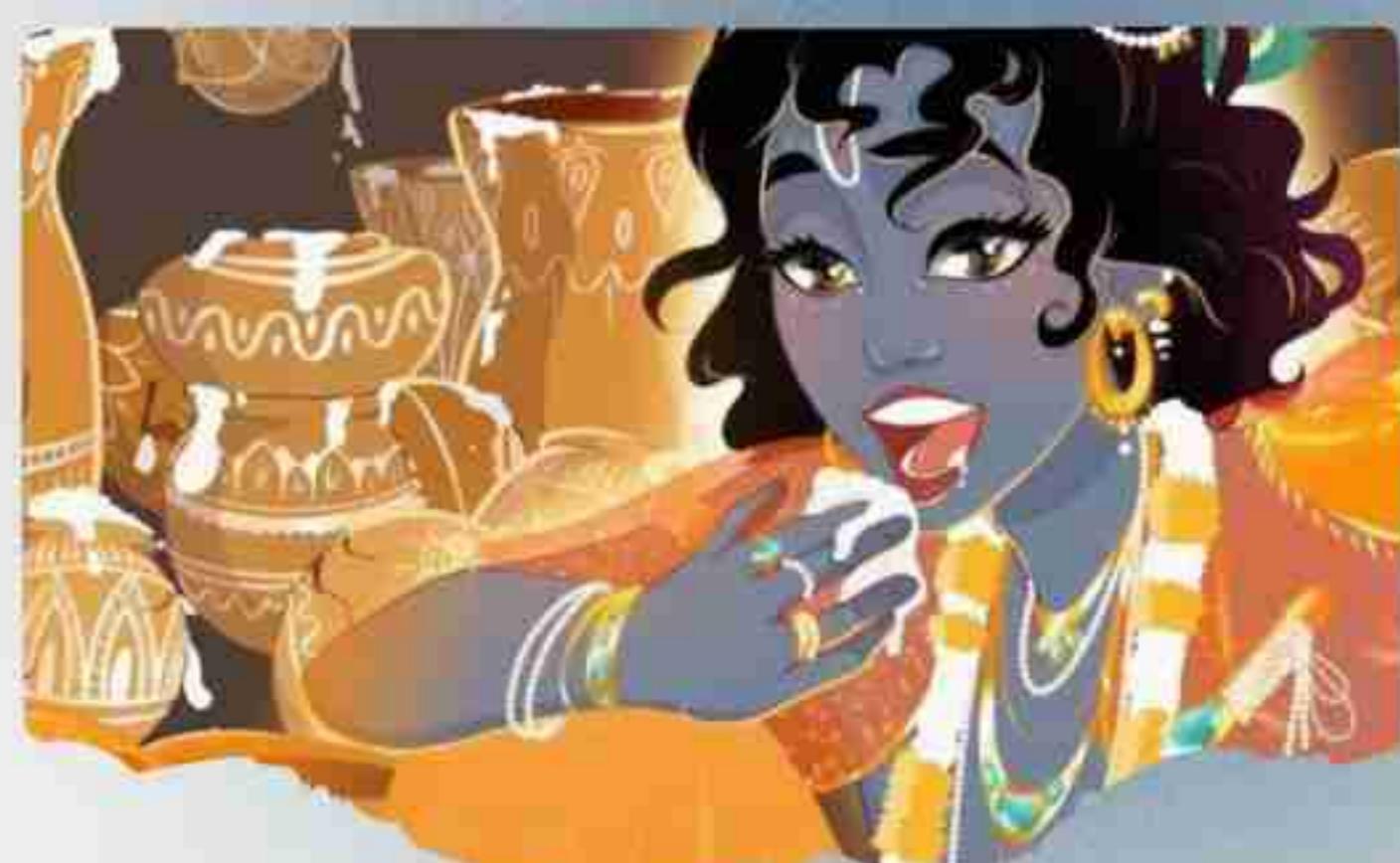
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Aaditri



THE ECHO OF HOME

Tik tik tik... The steady ticking of a clock fills the quiet room. Far away in Australia, I find my mind drifting back to Nepal—to the days before I left home after high school. I remember calling out, "Mamuuuuu, this exam is so hard!" and hearing my mother's gentle reply: "Don't worry, you'll be fine." Faces of friends, my brother, my cousins—all flash through my mind. Now, sitting here, I begin to write, trying to capture a realization that has quietly taken root. But what is it?

THE FINAL THOUGHT

Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita (8.6): "Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail." Why is it so hard to remember our loved ones at death? I've heard of a senior mataji who had a near-death experience and remembered her mother. I think of Bharata Maharaj, who became a deer out of attachment, and the man Narada invited to Vaikuntha. He kept postponing, saying, "Who will take care of my children and grandchildren?" His attachments pulled him back—first as a puppy guarding the house, then as a snake protecting the crops—until, by Krishna's mercy, he was reborn in a devotee family and finally attained Vaikuntha.

LOVE, BUT LIMITED

Life throws challenges. Mom still talks on calls, and she's still there—but not in the same way. Through the distance and loneliness, I'm learning something profound: family love, no matter how beautiful, has limitations. One devotee friend told me how she used to talk to Radha Gopinath's photo like a real friend. They didn't speak back in words, but she cried—and they responded in unexpected ways: new job opportunities, toxic people leaving her life, genuine people arriving, and less anxiety. She knew they were listening. Love needs patience.

THE GIVER BEHIND THE GIFT

So why can't I remember my loved ones at death, Krishna? I love them dearly. Yet Krishna says (18.66): "Abandon all forms of dharma and surrender to Me, and I will deliver you from all sinful reactions." Our truest attachment is meant for Him alone. Even our parents are souls, like us, dependent on the same divine grace. The jiva is made to love Krishna—just like an eraser is made to rub. Love is our natural function. When I feel my mother's love, I remember the One who placed that love in her heart. She's the gift, and Krishna is the Giver—so remembering the gift naturally leads me back to Him.

THE LOOP OF LESSONS

Just before coming to Australia, someone handed me a Bhagavad Gita. I kept it in my lap during the flight, not thinking much of it. Now, reading it here, I'm realizing how life connects the dots. We're all on our own journey—sometimes there are books, sometimes messengers. But do we notice? Maybe because I was a computer science student, I can't unsee the loop. In coding, we write else-if statements—if this condition, do that; if not, try again. Life is like that. Different faces, same lessons. Different situations, same tests. Until we purify our heart through chanting, the loop keeps running. But when we chant? The loop breaks. We finally exit the cycle.





A GENTLE NUDGE

You're still reading? Then I have to ask: are you chanting? Someone once told me about chanting—I ignored them. That Instagram reel popped up—I scrolled past it. But here I am now, telling you. Maybe try it? You know that old soap ad in Hindi? “Pehle istemaal karein, phir vishwas karein”—first use it, then believe it. Same with Krishna and chanting. Just give yourself 21 days. When the test comes, I heard that when you die, it feels like 100,000 scorpion bites. Can you imagine? Will we remember Krishna then? If we’re not depending on Him our whole life—“Krishna, see this happened; Krishna, see that happened”—if He’s not our go-to person, then at that last breath, will we suddenly remember? It depends on our subconscious mind.

LOVING THEM BETTER

Krishna isn’t asking us to love them less. He’s asking us to love them better—in their true identity as souls, as His beloved children too. When we see them only as “mine”—my possession, my source of security—that’s selfish love. But when we understand they are also Krishna’s children, our love becomes purer, less demanding, more selfless.

THE SNEAKY LOVER

I know He’s sneaky—He’s the Liladhara, the Makhan Chor Kanhaiya of Braj! But He’s also deeply idealistic. He won’t come straight away. But He will come when our prayers are free from material contamination. When we call Him with love and tears and longing—like those stories from Bhakta Maal. That’s what I believe.

LOVE OVER LIBERATION

Honestly, who needs liberation when someone’s got love? A true devotee never asks Krishna for liberation—all they want is to love Him. And to such a person, even liberation bows down. Krishna might give you riches, but His love. That won’t come easily. He will test you, but He will never leave your hand.

THE ACHE THAT REMAINS

You know that feeling when something is always missing? When you have everything—loving family, caring friends, success, comfort—but there’s still an ache inside? That’s because our soul is searching for Him. We’ve searched through countless lifetimes, in countless faces, countless places. We look for perfect love in our parents, partners, children—and they give us glimpses, beautiful glimpses—but something always remains incomplete. That’s not their fault. They’re souls too, searching just like us.

THE ONE WHO WAITS

Krishna is that missing piece. He’s the Lover our soul has been crying for since time immemorial. Not just a God on a throne—but the Beloved who knows every tear we’ve cried, every prayer we’ve whispered in the dark, every moment we felt alone in a crowded room. He’s been waiting, so patiently, for us to turn around and see Him. And when we finally do?

Shakespeare said it best:

“Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.”

That’s Krishna’s promise to us—never doubt that He loves you always.



SRILA PRABHUPADA OUR BELOVED GRANDFATHER

Srila Prabhupada our beloved grandfather
He saved this world from a spot of bother
With a graceful stride he climbed the ship
To the west he took a trip

Following his Guru's order, he left this land
To spread the glories of the kirtan band
Facing a lot of stress and pain
He always served only for Krsna's gain



At New York he landed with a certain plight
Not knowing if he should turn left or right
With Krsna in his heart he walked ahead
Not knowing where his path led

As he walked he met a lad
Whom he used as a launching pad
As he preached at every street
People took shelter of his lotus feet

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Little DAMODAR



Dear Sri Radha Damodar

With your chubby cheeks and twinkling eyes,
You are absolutely cute and nice 😊

Your belly appears so small and tiny,
Yet it holds the whole universe so divinely!

Your feet are caught in one place now,
Strictly no more mischief anytime now...

If You stand quietly and don't run away soon,
Ma Yashoda will give You lots of butter and
show you the moon 🌙

May your sweet lilas fill our hearts with ever
increasing love and joy...our greatest boon



Ananda Vardhini Devi Dasi

Crossword Puzzle

KEY



A SACRED HOME FOR BHAKTI IN THE HEART OF SYDNEY

ISKCON SYDNEY TEMPLE REBUILD PROJECT

In the heart of one of the world's most vibrant multicultural cities, a sacred vision is taking form – the rebuilding of ISKCON Sydney, a culturally significant Vedic temple dedicated to Sri Sri Radha Gopinatha. This project is not merely a construction effort; it is the creation of a spiritual, cultural, and community landmark that will serve generations to come.

Sydney is home to people from every corner of the world, yet amidst its modern skyline, there remains a deep need for spaces that nourish the soul. A temple is more than architecture – it is a living centre of bhakti (devotional service), learning, culture, and community connection. The ISKCON Sydney Temple has long been a spiritual refuge for thousands, and this rebuild represents a renewed commitment to preserving and sharing Gaudiya Vaishnava heritage in a way that speaks to both tradition and modern society.

Preserving Culture, Inspiring Future Generations

The new ISKCON Sydney Temple is envisioned as a New Vedic Temple, blending timeless spiritual wisdom with contemporary functionality. Inspired by classical Indian temple architecture while responding to the needs of an urban environment, this sacred space will become a beacon of cultural identity in Sydney.

Beyond daily worship, the temple will host:

- Spiritual and cultural education programs
- Festivals celebrating India's rich devotional traditions
- Art exhibitions and heritage displays
- Music, kirtan, and philosophical discourse

For children growing up in Australia, this temple will be a place to connect with their roots, values, and spiritual identity. For the broader community, it will offer a window into India's profound philosophical and cultural legacy – centred on compassion, service, and devotion.

A Temple Designed for Community

Located just 10 minutes from Sydney CBD, the rebuilt temple will be accessible, welcoming, and inclusive. Facilities planned as part of the project include:

- A larger temple room to accommodate growing congregations
- An underground car park, ensuring convenience and accessibility
- A café and function hall for community gatherings and events
- Spaces for arts, exhibitions, and cultural engagement

This is a temple not only for worship, but for connection – a place where spiritual life integrates naturally with daily living.

Why This Project Matters – And How You Can Participate

At its heart, the ISKCON Sydney Temple Rebuild Project is an invitation – an invitation to participate in seva, to be part of something enduring and meaningful.



Temples have always been built through collective devotion. Every stone laid, every offering made, carries the sincerity of those who contribute. In the Vedic tradition, participating in temple construction is considered one of the most spiritually uplifting services, as it creates a sacred space where countless souls will connect with Krishna for years to come.

A Shared Responsibility, A Shared Blessing

This project belongs to everyone who values:

- Cultural preservation
- Spiritual education
- Community cohesion
- Passing timeless wisdom to future generations

By contributing to this project, you are not only helping construct a physical building – you are helping build a legacy of bhakti in Australia.

All contributions are welcome and donors are able to participate at various levels, allowing everyone to offer according to their capacity and inspiration.

Many Ways to Offer Seva

Participation in this project is open to all. Whether through one-off offerings, pledges over time, or dedicated sponsorships, every contribution plays a vital role in bringing this vision to life.

Those who participate become part of a growing family of devotees and well-wishers who are collectively offering this temple to Sri Sri Radha Gopinatha – as an act of love, gratitude, and service.

Take the Next Step

You are warmly invited to be part of this historic endeavour.

To learn more about the project, contribution options, and ways to participate, simply scan the QR code below



This will guide you to detailed information and allow you to offer your seva directly.

A Living Legacy of Devotion

The ISKCON Sydney Temple Rebuild Project is not just about today – it is about tomorrow, and the generations that will follow. Together, let us create a sacred home where devotion flourishes, culture is honoured, and spiritual wisdom continues to illuminate the heart of Sydney.

**Check out the Webpage
for more details:
www.iskcon.com.au/templerebuild**

**“ JOIN THIS SACRED JOURNEY TO
OFFER YOUR SEVA AND
BE PART OF A LEGACY OF BHAKTI ”**



Transforming Tribulations: Embracing Suffering as a Path to Deepen Devotion



Rasananda Gopal Das

In "The Nectar of Devotion (Chapter 10)", Srila Prabhupada emphasizes a profound spiritual principle: suffering is not a punishment but a divine instrument for purification and deepening one's devotion to Krishna. For a sincere devotee, life's adversities are not random misfortunes but carefully orchestrated opportunities to strengthen faith, cultivate humility, and detach from material illusions. This perspective transforms suffering into a sacred catalyst for spiritual growth.

The Role of Suffering in a Devotee's Life

Newcomers often expect that Krishna Consciousness will immediately free them from suffering. Yet Krishna's promise in Bhagavad-gītā (18.66) — 'to deliver His devotees from sinful reactions' — this does not always manifest instantly. Srila Prabhupada compares this to a fan that continues to spin after being switched off; karmic momentum may still play out.

The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam teaches that lingering attachments and sinful tendencies require purification. What appears as suffering is actually Krishna's mercy—divine interventions meant to cleanse the heart and redirect the soul toward eternal service.

Attitude Transforms Experience

Suffering is inevitable, but for a devotee it becomes transformative when approached with the right consciousness. As HH Śrī SB Kesava Swami says: "The world says 'leave the problem,' but Krishna says 'learn from the problem.'"

By seeing suffering as Krishna's arrangement, devotees can:

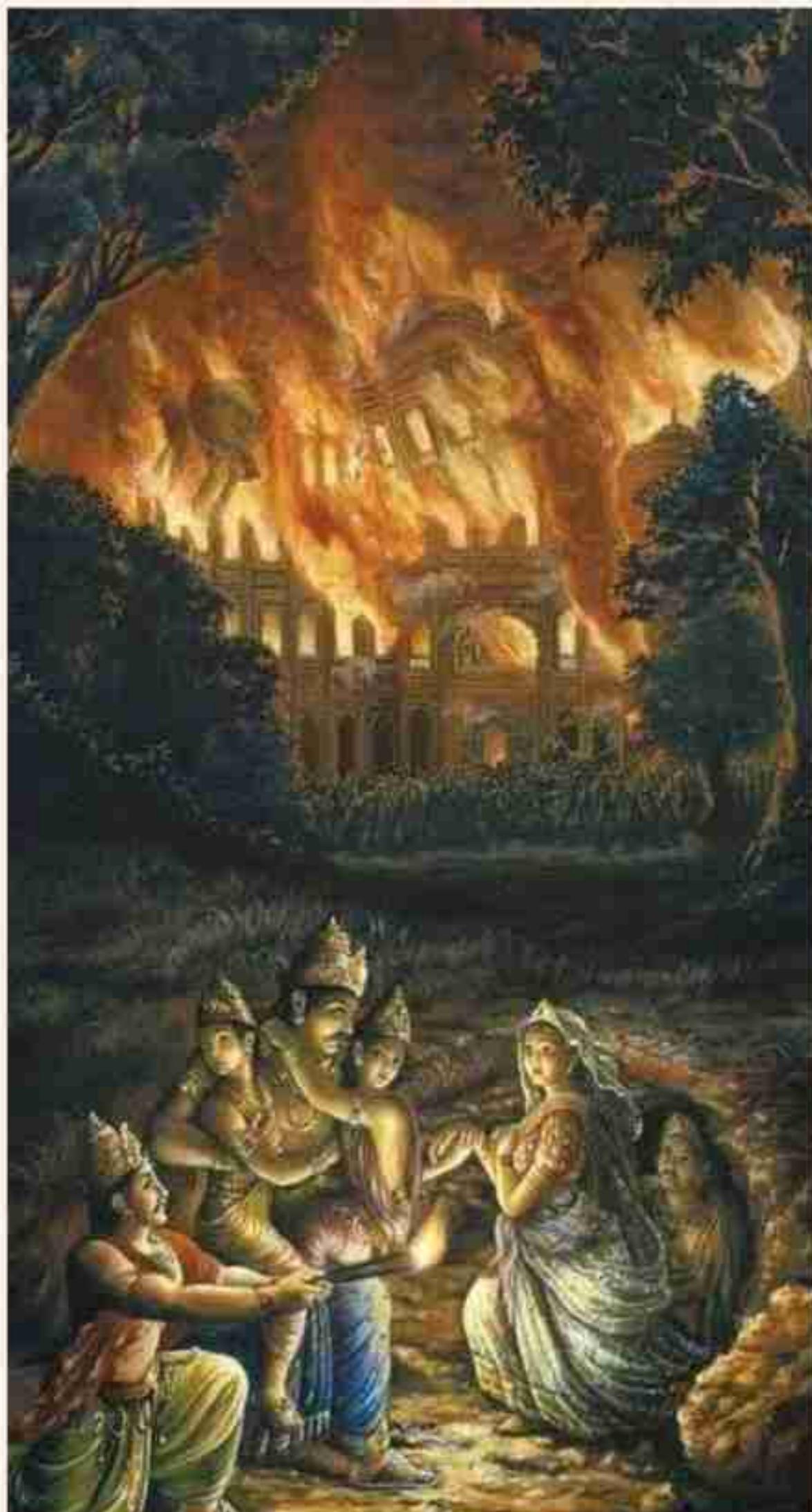
- Deepen surrender by trusting His plan.
- Strengthen practices of prayer, chanting, and service.
- Cultivate patience, humility, and compassion.
- Detach from material entanglements and focus on eternal truths.

A Personal Realization: From Job Loss to Spiritual Gain

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, I faced a significant life upheaval—an unexpected job loss due to corporate restructuring and managerial bias. In the past, such a blow would have left me questioning, "Why me?" But this time, fortified by the teachings of Krishna Consciousness, I saw it as a divine test. Rather than succumbing to despair, I embraced the situation as an opportunity to practice patience; seek guidance from senior devotees; and deepen my connection with Krishna.



The inner strength I derived from spiritual practices brought peace and clarity. In hindsight, this period became a blessing. It allowed me to spend precious time with my mother, who had come to Sydney. Serving her during her final days became a cherished memory and a profound spiritual experience. Though, I couldn't attend her last rites due to Covid travel restrictions, I now see Krishna's hand in orchestrating our final moments together.



Developing positive attitude to deal with life quakes

Developing an optimistic attitude towards suffering as outlined in our scriptures can significantly help in dealing with life's challenges. Here are Six Ways Suffering Strengthens Devotion:

1. **Deepening Faith** – Trusting Krishna's plan brings peace and insight.
2. **Cultivating Compassion** – Personal pain inspires service to others.
3. **Detachment** – Loss reminds us of life's impermanence and redirects focus to eternal truths.
4. **Inner Resilience** – Trials anchor us in spiritual practice.
5. **Purification** – Criticism and setbacks expose our inner impurities and prompt sincere introspection.
6. **Intensifying Practice** – Grief and loss fuels to deepen our sadhana like chanting and service

Conclusion: Divine Alchemy

For the materialist, suffering is karmic reaction. For the devotee, it is Krishna's curative mercy—divine alchemy that transforms pain into progress and tribulation into transcendence.

The lives of exalted devotees—Kuntī, the Pāñdavas, Prahlāda, Draupadī, Gajendra, and Parīksit—shine as examples of unwavering devotion amidst adversity. Their stories in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are spiritual blueprints for us to emulate. Until perfection in Krishna Consciousness is attained, we can expect the Lord's mercy to manifest through challenges. These are not setbacks but sacred invitations to surrender more deeply, love more purely, and return home to Krishna.



HERE COMES THE HOME BAKER

SEVYA RADHIKA DEVI DASI

Krishna prasadam means vegetarian food that has been lovingly offered to Lord Krishna and is considered a sacred, sanctified "mercy". By eating this food, devotees receive spiritual blessings, help to destroy the effects of past sinful activities, and feel a connection to Krishna.

One such recipe for preparation as Bhoga (enjoyment) for the Supreme Lord is presented here -

Recipe for Dates and Walnuts Cake

Ingredients :

One cup self-raising flour
One cup milk powder
One cup sugar (Any)
One glass milk
One cup olive oil
1 tea spoon baking powder
1 tea spoon baking soda
100 g pitted dates roughly chopped
50gm walnuts roughly chopped

Instructions/Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 160degree C.
Lightly grease the pan with some oil and line it with a sling of parchment paper.

Mix the wet ingredients:

In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, sugar, milk, oil whisk well to combine .



Mix the dry ingredients:

Mix all the nuts and dates dust with some self-rising flour and mix them nicely.

Make the batter:

Fold the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients using a spatula. Give a good mix so that there are no pockets of flour.

Assemble: Add the batter to the prepared pan and smooth out the top of it with a spatula. Place the pan on the aluminum tray.

Bake: Bake for 25-30 minutes. The cake will rise, and the top will be golden brown. Check the cake is done after 25 minutes by piercing it with a toothpick the toothpick should come out clean. Continue to bake in 5-minute increments as and if needed until baked though.

Allow the cake to cool in the pan for about 10 to 15 minutes before transferring it to a cooling rack to cool completely,

Offer to Krsna with love and with a Tulsi leaf.

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ISA-AVASYAM: THE FORGOTTEN PEACE FORMULA

Akhanda Rasa Das

Applying the Teachings of Sri Isopanishad in Society, ISKCON, and Personal Life

Sri Isopanishad begins with a transformative truth: everything—animate and inanimate—is owned and controlled by the Supreme Lord. Mantra 1 introduces the isa-avasyam principle, teaching that each living being has a rightful quota, and real harmony emerges when we accept only what is allotted to us without infringing on others. Far from abstract philosophy, this is a practical formula for peace, prosperity, and spiritual fulfillment.

Application in Society

Modern society is plagued by conflict, exploitation, and greed. Srila Prabhupada reminded us: "There is enough in the world to meet everyone's need, but not everyone's greed."

Quarrels over resources: Wars, political unrest, and economic inequality stem from false proprietorship. When nations or individuals take more than their share, others are deprived.

False designations: Altruism, socialism, nationalism, and communism—though noble sounding—are extensions of false ego when divorced from God consciousness. As Sri Isopanishad warns, such "isms" bind us in karma.

True peace formula: Leaders must recognize themselves as caretakers, not owners. Without this shift in consciousness, institutions like the UN cannot solve global problems such as Russia - Ukraine conflict

Sri Isopanishad (Mantra 3) concludes: Human life is not meant merely for solving economic problems but for transcending material bondage.

Application in ISKCON

ISKCON embodies the isa-avasyam principle through its global initiatives:

- **Temples worldwide:** Over 108 centers foster harmony across diverse cultures by recognizing everything as Krishna's property.
- **Farm communities:** Self-sufficient projects teach "living off the land" without exploitation, honoring nature as God's energy.
- **Food for Life:** Free prasadam distribution exemplifies sharing resources as the Lord's mercy.

- **Scriptural education:** Courses like Bhakti-vriksha and Bhakti-shastri cultivate true vidya (knowledge).
- **Book distribution:** Outreach spreads the universal message of isa-avasyam—that all beings are part of one divine family.

Application in Personal Life

On the individual level, the isa-avasyam principle transforms daily living:

God-centered family life: Worship, chanting, scripture study, and offering food to the Lord before eating.

Detachment from material hankering: Recognizing possessions as temporary and dedicating them to Krishna's service.

Respect for all life: Avoiding unnecessary harm to even the smallest creatures.

Responsible use of resources: Taking only what is needed, minimizing waste, and donating wealth for spiritual outreach.

Spiritual priority: Using the rare human birth to reconnect with the Supreme, rather than squandering it in material pursuits.

The isa-avasyam principle is the **forgotten peace formula**. Applied at every level—personal, communal, national, and global—it restores harmony by reminding us that **everything belongs to the Lord, and we are His caretakers**. Sri Isopanishad urges us to begin with the leaders, teachers, and influencers of society, so that this consciousness permeates all communities. When embraced, humanity will rediscover unity, cooperation, and the completeness that comes only from living in relationship with the Supreme.



Upcoming Festivals

Important Festivals:

Jan - Jun 2026 (ISKCON Sydney)

January 2026

31 Sat: Nityananda Trayodashi - Appearance of Lord Nityananda Prabhu, the eternal companion of Lord Chaitanya, who freely distributes love of God.

February 2026

16 Mon: Shiva Ratri - Devotees of Lord Krishna honor Lord Shiva as the greatest Vaishnava on this night.

March 2026

03 Tues: Gaura Purnima - The most auspicious ISKCON festival celebrating the appearance of Lord Chaitanya, who propagated the chanting of the Hare Krishna Mahamantra.

27 Fri: Rama Navami - Celebration of the Divine Appearance of Lord Rama

April 2026

30 Thur: Narasimha Chaturdashi - Appearance of Lord Narasimhadeva, the half-man, half-lion incarnation who protects devotees.

May 2026

01 Fri: 55th Anniversary of Shri Shri Radha Gopinath

June 2026

30 Tues: Snana Yatra - Bathing festival of Lord Jagannatha, Baladeva, and Subhadra Devi; marks preparation for Ratha Yatra.

“

Observe many festivals, that will keep both public and devotees alive. 'Temple means festivals' and "Festivals means chanting and distribution of Prasadam"

(Letter to Tamal Krsna Maharaj, 8 Aug 1973)

-Sri A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



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DIVINE INSPIRATION

RESTYLE
REFRESH
REARRANGE

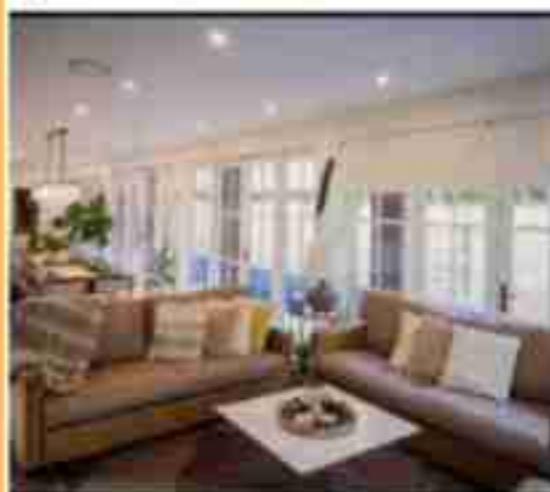


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- Thoughtful rearrangement



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Spot the Difference - Key

1. Missing Sri Gopinath's Peacock feather
2. Sri Gopinath's Flute Size
3. Garland missing around Sri Gopinath's foot
4. Sri Gopinath's earring is missing
5. Sri Gopinath's turban is missing two ornaments
6. Missing Tulsi on Srimati Radharani's palm
7. Flower missing in the Garland held by Srimati Radharani right hand
8. Srimati Radharani's ornamental headpiece mismatch
9. Big silver petals mismatch on Srimati Radharani's skirt
10. Background mismatch between Srimati Radharani and Sri Gopinath (faces)



Tulasi Maharani

To look after Tulsi Maharani in Summer

1. Provide plenty of sunlight (6-8 hours)
2. Water it regularly to keep the soil moist
3. Fertilize every two to three months with cow dung if possible
4. Pluck the Manjari when it comes
5. Pluck two or three leaves everyday
6. If plant is small and growing move the plant to big pot
7. Pluck the weeds as soon it comes
8. Add new soil to the plants every six months or so
9. Every day check the plants and protect them from insects



To look after Tulsi Maharani in Winter

1. Protect it from cold weather
2. Reduce watering frequency (Water everyday but in very less quantity)
3. Bring the plant outside to get the sunlight for atleast few hours
4. Bring the plant inside everyday in the evening
5. Pluck the Manjari when it comes
6. Pluck the leaves when needed
7. Protect the plant form frost and winds .
8. Fertilize every two to three months with cow dung
9. Add new soil to the plants every six months
10. Pluck the weeds as soon it comes

Contribution By Sevya Radhika Devi Dasi

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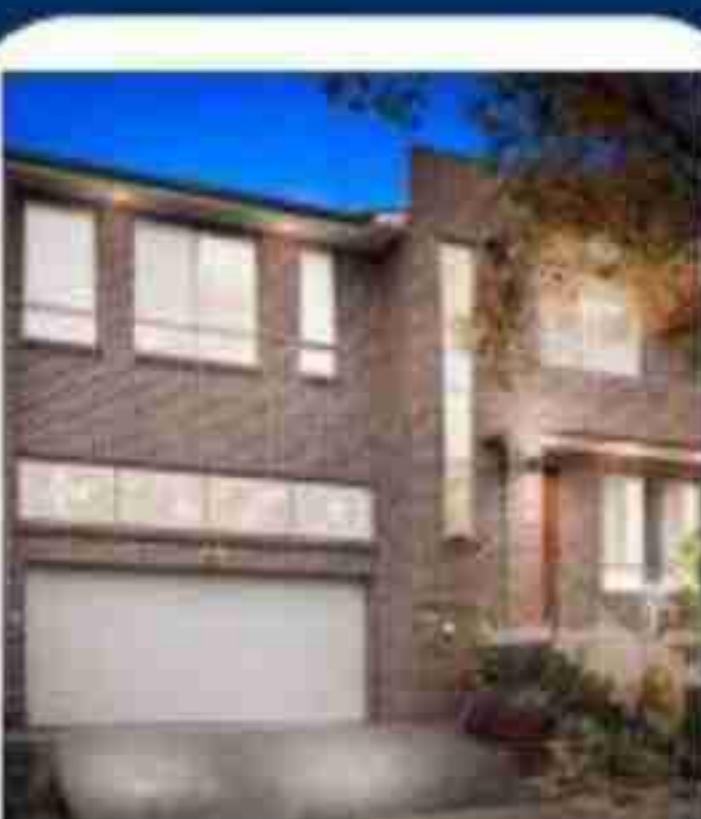


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