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His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age 69, to fulfill his spiritual master’s request that he teach the science of Krishna consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India’s Vedic literature, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, travelling almost nonstop, Srila Prabhupada moulded his international society into a world wide confederation of ashramas, schools, temples and farm communities. He passed away in 1977, in Vrindavana, the place most sacred to Lord Krishna. His disciples and followers are carrying forward the movement he started.

To know more about Srila Prabhupada visit www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada
Use Your Tongue To Realize Krishna

A lecture by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Hamburg, September 4, 1969—Janmastami

visnu-saktih para prokta ksetrajnakhya tatha para
avidya-karma-samjnanya ttriya saktir isyate

"The potency of Lord Vishnu is summarized in three categories, namely the spiritual potency, the living entities and ignorance. The spiritual potency is full of knowledge; the living entities, although belonging to the spiritual potency, are subject to bewilderment; and the third energy, which is full of ignorance, is always visible in fruitive activities."

—Vishnu Purana 6.7.62

It is stated here, visnu-saktih para: “The energy of the Supreme Lord is spiritual." The energy and the energetic are nondifferent. Although the sunshine is the energy of the sun globe, the quality of sunshine and that of the sun globe are the same. The sunshine is bright, illuminating, hot. Similarly, we can understand, in the sun globe the temperature may be very high, but the quality is the same.

So visnu-saktih para prokta. God has one energy. And that energy is spiritual energy. The same energy is manifested in another form: kshetra-jna, or marginal energy, or the energy in which we living creatures are acting.

And anya means that besides these two energies—the spiritual energy and the marginal energy, the living entities—there is another energy, called avidya. Avidya means ignorance. In that energy one has to enjoy the fruit of his own labour. That is the nature of the material world. This material world is also an energy of Krishna, or God, but here ignorance prevails. Therefore one has to work. Practically one hasn't got to work, but because he is in ignorance he has to work.

So actually there is one energy, the spiritual energy. Krishna, or God, is the whole spirit, and the energy is emanating from Him. Like Krishna, that energy is also spiritual. Shakti-shaktimatayor abhinna. In the Vedic language we understand that the shaktiman, or the energetic, Krishna, and the energy are nondifferent. So this material energy is also nondifferent from Krishna.

In other words of Vedic language it is said, sarvam khaly idam brahma: “Everything is Brahman." In Bhagavad-gita also, Lord Krishna says, maya tatam idam sarvam. Sarvam means "all." Idam refers to this cosmic manifestation. Krishna says, "I am expanded as this cosmic manifestation, this impersonal feature of Myself." Maya tatam idam sarvam jagad aavyakta-murtina. He then says, mat-sthani sarva-bhutani naham tsv avasthitah: “Everything is resting on Me, or everything is an expansion of Me. But I am not there."

This philosophy, known as achintya-bhedabheda, or simultaneously one and different, is our philosophy, inaugurated by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, although it is in the Vedanta-sutras.

Everything is simultaneously one with and different from the Supreme Lord. There are two classes of philosophers. One class says that God and the living entities are one and the same, and the other says that God and the living entities are different. The achintya-bhedabheda philosophy adjusts this conflict by saying that God and the living creatures are simultaneously one and different. They are one in quality—just like the energy and the energetic, the sun globe and the sunshine. In sunshine there is heat, there is illumination, light. In the sun globe also there is heat, there is illumination, but the degrees are quite different. You can bear the heat and illumination of the sunshine, but you cannot go to the sun globe or bear the heat and temperature there. The scientists say that if some planet goes within so many millions of miles of the sun globe, it will immediately burn into ashes.

Similarly, God and our self, Krishna and the living entities, are qualitatively one, but quantitatively we are different. The living entities are minute, anu. We are smaller than the atom.

The Srimad-Bhagavatam says that it may be possible someday by scientific research to count how many atoms are within this cosmic manifestation. Still, it is not possible to know the Supreme Personality of Godhead by our ordinary sense perception. Atah shri-krishna-namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyaih. Krishna, or God, is not perceivable by our material senses. It is not possible. Namadi means “beginning from His name,” because we try to understand Krishna beginning with the chanting of His holy name, Hare Krishna. Then, after chanting Hare Krishna, when our heart is purified, we can understand His form—sac-cid-ananda-vigrahah.

So either His name or His form or His quality or His paraphernalia or His activities—none of these can be understood.
by our material senses. It is not possible. Then how it is understood? Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah. When we take to the transcendental loving service of the Lord, the Lord reveals Himself. We cannot understand Him on our own, but He reveals Himself.

Therefore, sevonmukhe hi jihvadau. Jihva means the tongue. Our first business is to engage our tongue in the service of the Lord. How? By chanting and glorifying His name, fame, qualities, form, paraphernalia, pastimes. This is the business of the tongue. Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau. When the tongue is engaged, gradually all other senses are also engaged in the service of the Lord.

The tongue is the most important sense within our body. Therefore for controlling our senses it is recommended that one should first of all control the tongue. Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura sings, tara madhye jihva ati, lobhamoy sudur-mati. Our present conditional state is like this, sarira avidya jal. We are packed up in the network of this material body. Like a fish caught within a net, we are caught up by the network of this material body.

Not only this body—we are changing nets in various phases of life. There are 8,400,000 forms of bodily networks. These are networks of ignorance. Avidya jal. Avidya means "ignorance." Sarira avidya jal, jadendriya tahe kal. Our imprisonment within these networks of ignorance is being continued because of the dangerous senses.

Out of these dangerous senses, Bhaktivinoda Thakura says, the tongue is the most dangerous. If I cannot control the tongue, the tongue will oblige me to take different types of body one after another. If I am very much fond of satisfying my tongue by flesh and blood, material nature will give me facility to taste fresh flesh and blood by giving me the body of a tiger. If I do not discriminate in eating, material nature will give me the body of a hog, and I will have to accept stool as my food.

We are materially suffering and enjoying according to this body. Therefore the human body is a great opportunity because God realization can begin simply by engaging the tongue. Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau. By engaging the tongue in the loving service of the Lord one can make advancement in Krishna consciousness.

So this human form of life is a great boon to the living entity who is traveling through the cycle of birth and death, perpetually changing different sorts of body. Here is the opportunity, the human form of body. We can utilize the tongue properly and get out of these clutches.

Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau. Seva means "service," and jihva adau, "beginning from the tongue." We should keep our tongue engaged always in chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, because Krishna the sound is not different from Krishna Himself. Krishna is absolute. Nothing is different from Him. Krishna and Krishna's name are not different. In the material sense, everything is different. I myself am different from this body. But Krishna is not like that. Krishna and Krishna's body are the same. Krishna says in the Bhagavad-gita,

avajananti mam mudha manusim tanum asritam
param bhavam ajananto mama bhuta-mahesvaram

"Rascals and fools deride Me because I appear as a human being. They are thinking I am an ordinary human being. These rascals do not know My influence and what I am." Param bhavam ajananto: "They do not know My nature. Without knowing Me, they consider, 'Krishna is an ordinary human being.'"

Avajananti mam mudhah. This very word has been used: mudha. Mudha means "rascals." But in spite of this warning, there are so many rascals passing as big scholars. When Krishna orders, "You surrender unto Me," the rascals comment, "It is not to Krishna but to the unborn spirit within Krishna." They are monists. They are philosophizing oneness. But as soon as they come to Krishna they divide: "Krishna is different from His body." They do not know that Krishna is not different from His body, Krishna is not different from His name, Krishna is not different from His fame—anything pertaining to Krishna is Krishna.

Krishna's name and Krishna are not different. Therefore, as soon as my tongue touches the holy name of Krishna it associates with Krishna. If you constantly keep yourself associated with Krishna by chanting this mantra, Hare Krishna, then you are easily being purified simply by this process of chanting.

Engage the tongue in chanting. And your tongue wants palatable dishes to taste, so Krishna is very kind. He has given you hundreds and thousands of palatable dishes, remnants of food eaten by Him. You can eat these remnants. In this way, if you simply make it a determination that "I shall not allow my tongue to taste anything not offered to Krishna, and I shall engage my tongue always chanting Hare Krishna," all perfection is within your hold.

Two simple things: Chant Hare Krishna and don't eat anything not offered to Krishna. That's all. Our Krishna prasadam is so variegated. "Variety is the mother of enjoyment." How much enjoyment do you want from your tongue? You can have it simply by eating Krishna prasadam. And the more your tongue is purified, the more you
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relish the chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra.

Anandambudhi-vardhanam. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu states that the chanting increases the ocean of transcendental bliss. The ordinary ocean does not increase. We have no experience of the ocean increasing. If the ocean were able to increase, then all the lands would have been swallowed up long, long ago. The ocean does not increase. But this ocean—the ocean of transcendental bliss—is increasing.

Some of you must have experienced it, those who are actually relishing. Rupa Gosvami, a great authority in Krishna consciousness, says, "What shall I chant with one tongue? If I would have millions of tongues I could chant a little more. And what shall I hear with two ears?" He's aspiring to have millions of ears and trillions of tongues to relish chanting Hare Krishna. So that is another stage, of course, when this chanting will be so melodious that we shall try to have more ears and more tongues to appreciate it.

Atah shri-krishna-namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyaih. By our present senses we cannot understand Krishna, or God, His name, His form, His quality. Therefore if we immediately try to understand Krishna by His pictures—"Oh, Krishna is embracing Radharani and the gopis"—we shall be mistaken. Because unless our senses are purified, we shall accept Krishna and Radharani as an ordinary young boy or girl. But actually They are not. Their dealings are pure.

In the Chaitanya-charitamrita, Krishnadasa Kaviraja has distinguished that there is a gulf of difference between the loving affairs of the gopis with Krishna and the ordinary, lustful dealings of human beings. He compares the gopis' love of Krishna to gold, and our so-called love in this world to iron. As there is a difference between gold and iron, there is a difference between the loving affairs of the gopis with Krishna and the mundane, lusty affairs between men and women or boys and girls. They are never equal.

Our present impure senses, contaminated senses, cannot understand Krishna. Therefore we should follow this principle: sevonmukhe hi jihvadau. First of all engage in chanting Hare Krishna. "Hare Krishna" refers to Radha and Krishna. Hara is Radha. But don't try to understand by the present senses. Simply chant Their holy names, Hare Krishna.

The dust on the mirror of your heart will be cleansed simply by chanting. Ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-mahadavagni-nirvapanam. And there will be no more material condition. That is the next stage. If you chant the Hare Krishna mantra without offense, you are at once freed from all material anxieties. That is the test. How you are advancing in chanting will be tested by how far you are free from material anxieties.

Then real life begins. As long as you are perturbed by material disturbances, you should know that your spiritual life has not begun. This is confirmed everywhere in the scriptures. Brahma-bhutah prasannatma na socati na kanksati. Bhagavad-gita says that one who is Brahma realized is always joyful.

"Brahman realized" means that one understands, "I am not this body; I am pure spirit soul, eternal servitor of Krishna." Simply understanding "I am not this body; I am spirit soul" is not enough. That is not sufficient knowledge. Of course, that is good. That is just on the margin between matter and spirit. But you have to transcend this material existence completely and come to the platform of spiritual understanding. So for that purpose you have to go further, after Brahm realization.

Brahma-bhutah prasannatma. If you are actually Brahma realized, the symptom will be that you are always joyful. No anxiety. Why do we have anxiety? Everything is nicely discussed in the Srimad-Bhagavatam. Bhayam dvityabhinivesatah syat. When we forget Krishna and think there is something other than Krishna, we are afraid. And for those who are realized souls and are convinced that there is nothing but Krishna, where is the cause of fearfulness?

Therefore those who are pure devotees are not disturbed even in the most distressed condition of life. What do they think? They think, tat te 'nukampam: "My Lord, it is Your great mercy that You have put me into this distressed condition." In a distressed condition the devotees take it as an opportunity—"I have got a very nice opportunity to remember God constantly. Krishna, You are so kind that You have given me this distress."

So this Krishna consciousness is very nice. The Bhagavad-gita says that if one is situated in Krishna consciousness, even in a terrible situation, a fearful situation, he's not afraid. Just like Prahlada Maharaja, a five-year-old boy. His father tortured him like anything, but the boy was not afraid. This is the Krishna conscious state. The boy was not afraid even in such a tortured condition.

His father challenged him, "Prahlada, with whose strength are you so powerful that you do not fear me?" Prahlada answered, "My dear father, by whose power are you talking like that?"
So in Krishna consciousness even if one is put into a terrible condition of distress he's not perturbed. Narayana-parah sarve. There are many verses like that. We can quote hundreds. Narayana-parah sarve na kutascana bibhyati. If one becomes Krishna conscious, he's not afraid in any condition of life. Na kutascana bibhyati, svargapavarga-narakesv api. If he is put into hell or heaven or the spiritual world or any world, he's happy. Tulyartha-darsinah. He thinks everything is the same: "Either You put me in the hell or heaven or this or that, it is all the same."

Because he is always with Krishna, chanting Hare Krishna, Krishna is always with him. So where is the cause of being afraid—"Oh, that place is not good; this place is very good"? No. Wherever Krishna is, that place is very good.

So we have to practice and train the tongue very nicely. Engage the tongue in the loving service of Krishna. It is very nice service. You simply chant and eat Krishna prasadam. Is it very difficult service? Everyone will accept, "Oh, yes." But unfortunately, everyone does not accept. [Chuckles.] You see? Chaitanya Mahaprabhu therefore says, etadrisi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi: "My dear Lord, You are so kind that You have approached Me by transcendental sound." If I take, Krishna is always with me. If I reject, that is my ignorance.

"Krishna is everywhere" means that as soon as we accept Krishna, He is with us, and as soon as we reject Him, He is far, far away. So Krishna can be with us very easily when we simply chant or engage the tongue in His service.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu recommends this process. He inaugurated this process in the present age. Although the system is not new, He especially introduced it because His incarnation is to reclaim the fallen souls of this age.

Thank you very much.

Srila Prabhupada, the founder-acharya of ISKCON, has delivered more than 1500 lectures on Vedic scriptures like Bhagavad-gita, Srimad-Bhagavatam and Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita. The audio recording of his lectures are available in ISKCON centers. You can also hear some of these lectures in www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada-lectures
Where Is Your Religion?

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and a journalist took place in Los Angeles on December 30, 1968.

Journalist: The biggest problem preventing men, at least American men, and women from loving God or following the Ten Commandments is the sexual problem. And there is nothing in Western culture that teaches or helps a young person cope with this very difficult problem. I went through it. We all have. Now, do you in your message give young people something to hang on to, and if so, what?

Srila Prabhupada: I ask all my disciples to get married. I don’t allow this living with boyfriend, girlfriend. No, you must get yourself married. Live like a gentleman. Treat your wife as an assistant. Treat your husband as your provider. In this way, I am teaching them. This boy was married just four days ago. He is a professor. So I have got so many of my disciples married, and they are living very happily. This girl is married. Formerly, they were living as boyfriend, girlfriend. I don’t allow that.

Journalist: Let me get a little more basic. How about when someone is fourteen, fifteen, sixteen years old?

Srila Prabhupada: We teach our boys to become brahmachari. Brahmachari means to lead a life of celibacy.
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Journalist: Yes, I understand.

Disciple: Brahmachari means control of the senses. He teaches us how to control the senses. Generally, marriage doesn’t take place until a boy is about twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-five.

Journalist: You mean in Indian culture?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. We select a girl, say, about sixteen, seventeen years old, and boys not more than twenty-four years old. I get them married. And because their attention is diverted to Krishna consciousness, they have very little interest simply for sex life. They have got better engagement. Param drstva nivartate. We give a substitute. We don’t simply say, “You don't do it.” But we give them something better. Then automatically the “don’t” comes.

Journalist: At the right time.

Srila Prabhupada: Immediately. We give some better engagement.

Journalist: What is that?

Srila Prabhupada: Our boys and girls are all engaged in the business of Krishna consciousness—in temple work, in painting, in typing, in recording, so many things. And they are happy. They are not going to the cinema, they are not going to clubs, they are not drinking, they are not smoking. So practically, I am teaching them how to control their senses. And this means it is possible. These boys and girls are all Americans. They are not imported from India. Why have they taken to this? The system is so nice that they like it. If you spread this system, everything will be solved.

Journalist: So then it...

Srila Prabhupada: We don't prohibit men from mixing with women. We don't say that you should stop sex life. But we make everything regulated under Krishna consciousness. The aim is higher.

Journalist: Well, the answer seems to be very pat, so to speak, and if it’s that simple...

Srila Prabhupada: If you cooperate, then I can change the whole thing in your country. The people will be very happy. Everything will be nice. This Krishna consciousness movement is so nice. But nobody is cooperating. These boys, they have kindly come to me, and they are cooperating. So my movement is progressing, but very slowly. But if the leaders of the American people understand and introduce this system, your country will be the nicest country in the world.

Journalist [to disciple]: From a practical point, how has this sexual thing the swami is talking about affected you? Have you found there is efficacy in what we have been talking about? To me it's a very paramount problem in terms of young people.

Disciple: Well, there are desires, and we have so many desires. And the sexual desire is perhaps one of our strongest desires.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, yes.

Disciple: So these desires are channeled, so to speak. They are redirected toward Krishna.

Journalist: I understand that. But I’m saying is it efficacious? Does it work?

Disciple: Yes, it works. But you have to stick with it. It can be very difficult, especially at first, but it works.

Journalist: Now, I want to understand this thoroughly. In other words, it’s nothing that you feel that you’re giving up.

Disciple: No, it's that when you see something better...

Journalist: That's what I mean.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, you are accepting something better.

Journalist: Better, yes. Not by just biting your tongue or your lip saying, "I won't touch it, I won't touch it." There's a substitute.

Disciple: It's very human not to give up something unless you have something better. So you have to get something better than what you want to give up.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes.

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Today there is a seeking for a particular type of surrounding or “spiritual atmosphere” for meditation, especially among groups of people interested in meditation and the nature of existence. Even for those who are simply desiring relaxation, or repose in old age, there is a necessity for some kind of place with a meditative mood. Certainly, for clear uninterrupted thought, meditation, one must become freed from everyday anxieties and the nervous mechanical nature of today’s cities and industrial towns.

Being a city-dweller from birth, I have found, as I’m sure many others have, that the forests with their varieties of flora and fauna rather set the stage for meditation. They are not the creations of man; they are superior in some way to man’s creations. They might represent to us, if we wish it, the grace and beauty existing in the movements of the cosmos.

To be sure, there is always some superior force present which makes the seasons change, the rains come, the planets revolve; and that force is more perceivable in natural surroundings, of which the forest is only one example. That superior force or life force gives animation to non-living material, and it is that force to which we are attracted when we seek a rural environment.

In our own experience we may find that when this superior living force leaves a person, the remaining material, the dead body, bears little attraction for us, although when the same body was occupied by the life force, that person might have been a close relation. This life force is sometimes called the “soul;” and the universe also has a soul, we may call it the Supersoul, which causes the phenomena of Nature to occur.

The presence of spirit-soul in mutable matter is recognizable by six symptoms: birth, growth, consumption, reproduction, old age and death. And there is also a seventh and more important symptom—consciousness. When we associate with that superior spiritual nature of things, or when we associate with others also seeking after that superior nature, we feel uplifted because we are approaching closer to this basic truth of existence—which is existing within both ourselves and the world around us as a controlling force.
Srila Vyasadeva, compiler of the Vedas, author of the Puranas, Upanishads, Mahabharata, and ultimately of the Srimad Bhagavatam—who lived about 5,000 years ago—describes in all these writings how one may gradually come to the awareness and understanding of this superior nature by which the cosmic manifestation is functioning so perfectly. In his most mature stage, he composed 12 cantos or books, each larger then the preceding, to form an immense literature called Srimad Bhagavatam. In this he described the nature of a spiritual realm existing outside of this world of matter.

It would be very difficult for us to understand that spiritual realm when we have available to us only information of this temporary and mutable world. Therefore we must accept the information given us directly from the place where the spiritual energy predominates; a realm which, fortunately, lies outside the scope of our limited mundane sense perception. Srila Vyasadeva was a personality incarnated from that place specifically for the purpose of delivering such information. In the Srimad Bhagavatam, then, one may find in the later cantos a lucid description of a place called Goloka Vrindavana. This is the supreme abode of the Lord, who is the source of all cosmic manifestations.

The Supreme Lord is described as eternally youthful. He is not burdened by the maintenance of all the planets, but by His omnipotence, He maintains them effortlessly and at the same time enjoys childlike sports as a cowherd boy, in eternal Vrindavana. He has many companions and lovers there, amid beautiful fields and surroundings described as “all-conscious.” In that spiritual world, of which the material sphere that we know is a perverted mirror-reflection, the nature of people, places and events is permanent or eternal, all-blissful and full of all knowledge. These are the qualities of the higher spiritual nature, of the spiritual living entities when they are out of contact with the inferior, mutable Nature of this world.

There is a verse in the scriptural text called Brahma Samhita which says of Vrindavana: “The houses are made of touchstone [a substance which turns iron to pure gold]. There are thousands of trees, called desire-trees, from which one may obtain anything whatever. The Lord is surrounded by hundreds of thousands of Lakshmis, goddesses of fortune, and the Lord is constantly attending the Surabhi cows, which give an unlimited supply of nectar-like milk. I worship Govinda, the Primeval Lord, who is the cause of all causes.”

Of course the absolute center of attention in the spiritual world is Govinda or Krishna. In that sublime realm walking is dancing and speaking is sweet song. It is a realm meant for all living beings to dwell in. We ourselves cannot even conceive of the wonders of this universe of matter and so it may be difficult for us to conceive of another, transcendental realm where there is no death. It is stated in the Bhagavad-gita that all living beings are meant to enjoy some relationship with the Lord directly, either as friend or lover, parent or son. But a small percentage of living beings have come to be trapped in this world that we now find ourselves in. We might assume, therefore, that the Supreme Lord is a cruel and punishing personality, having placed us on this plane of death and that He freely inflicts all manner of pains upon us. For example, a mother’s son having been harmed in an auto accident, the mother might ask: “O Lord, why have You so cruelly harmed this boy?” The mother is attentive to the idea of “innocent youth.” But actually the child's life force—his real self—is existing unchanged in its superior form of spiritual energy, and only the temporary body has been affected, being of a mutable nature.

The spiritual form is in a state of false identification and is governed, as a result, by impure or ignorant desires. Because of these impure desires he is forced to transmigrate from body to body, until such a time as he may desire to awaken to the higher platforms of spiritual consciousness. Therefore, he whom we are seeing as...
“young” is in reality a spiritual entity who has been allotted a certain body, like a shell covering his true self, and who has also been allotted certain circumstances, according to past deeds.

One who makes inquiry into the spiritual cause for all this manifested world becomes acquainted with the spiritual life force within himself, and therefore he need not lament for himself, even though death is approaching. Those who seek after spiritual understanding can know for a fact that the Lord is most kind and merciful to have given them this human life with which to reach Him and understand Him. And it is only those who are not using their lives in this way who fail to understand the kindness of the Lord.

The Lord can be known by direct experience, through the process of chanting the holy Names: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In the attainment of such knowledge one experiences the sweetest love and the fulfillment of life, a state of bliss that he could never have even hoped for in his fallen state.

The Lord might well leave the inhabitants of this world to suffer and rise up, going round and round on their own blind groping efforts. But His kindness is so great and His desire to see the living beings out of this morass of birth, death, old age and disease is so strong, that He personally descends from time to time into our view to lift the veil of illusion which renders invisible the spiritual reality, the eternal Truth of His own personage and realm.

That spiritual realm, the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna and all His eternal associates, the enactment of His eternal pastimes—all this is sometimes made manifest in the material world. And the location for such a manifestation is described as entirely nondifferent from that location in the spiritual realm. Thus the Vrindavana which we find as a small village in north central India today, and pictured on these pages, is in reality the very Vrindavana of the spiritual sky, the supreme abode of the Lord. At this location the Lord reveals His eternal pastimes, although He has not left that original locality in the spiritual sky. This is done by the Lord’s omnipotence, and it is as though a dimensional window has opened, making the spiritual realm visible to beings of this mundane world.

When this manifestation takes place, Krishna creates a spiritual locality for those beings who are attracted by the higher spiritual nature. For those persons who are advanced in the matter of self realization, especially by the process of chanting the holy names, the Lord reveals His eternal pastimes at Vrindavana, and He may also reveal the nature of an individual’s eternal relationship to Himself. You might say that Vrindavana is a pleasure reserved only for devotees of the Lord, because they alone are able to relish the transcendental aspect of that most sacred place on Earth. And anyone may come to the devotional stage whereby he can understand Vrindavana simply by chanting the Holy Names of Krishna.
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Located in the temple town of Kanchipuram is the temple of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is lovingly addressed here as Pavalavannar Pachavannar or the emerald and red hued Lord.

The Legend

The legend of this temple is much associated with the episode of Sage Bhrgu testing the Supreme Lord. The narration of this follows. This except is from the book KRSNA The Supreme Personality of Godhead, authored by Srila Prabhupada.

Long, long ago, there was an assembly of great sages on the bank of the river Sarasvati who performed a great sacrifice of the name Satra. In such assemblies, the great sages present usually discuss Vedic subject matters and philosophical topics, and in this particular meeting the following question was raised: The three predominating deities of this material world, namely, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva, are directing all the affairs of this cosmos, but who among them is the Supreme? After much discussion on this question, the great sage named Bhrgu, the son of Lord Brahma, was deputed to test all three predominating deities and report to the assembly as to who is the greatest.

Being thus deputed, the great sage Bhrgu Muni first of all went to his father’s residence in Brahma-loka. The three deities are the controllers of the three material qualities, namely the qualities of goodness, passion and ignorance. The plan decided upon by the sages was for Bhrgu to test which one of the predominating deities possesses the quality of goodness in full. Therefore, when Bhrgu Muni reached his father, Lord Brahma, because Bhrgu wanted to test whether Brahma had the quality of goodness, he purposely did not offer his respects to his father, either by offering obeisance or by offering prayers. It is the duty of a son or a disciple to offer respects and recite suitable prayers when he approaches his father or spiritual master. But Bhrgu Muni purposely failed to offer respects, just to see Lord Brahma’s reaction to this negligence. Lord Brahma was very angry at his son’s impudence and he showed signs which definitely proved this to be so. He was even prepared to condemn Bhrgu by cursing him, but because Bhrgu was his son, Lord Brahma controlled his anger with his great intelligence.
This means that although the quality of passion was prominent in Lord Brahma, he had the power to control it. Lord Brahma's anger and his controlling his anger are likened to fire and water. Water is produced from fire at the beginning of creation, but fire can be extinguished with water. Similarly, although Lord Brahma was very angry due to his quality of passion, he could still control his passion because Bhrgu Muni was his son.

After testing Lord Brahma, Bhrgu Muni went directly to the Mount Kailasa, where Lord Shiva resides. Bhrgu Muni happened to be Lord Shiva's brother. Therefore, as soon as Bhrgu Muni approached, Lord Shiva was very glad and personally rose to embrace him. But when Lord Shiva approached, Bhrgu Muni refused to embrace him. “My dear brother,” he said, “you are always very impure. Because you smear your body with ashes, you are not very clean. Please do not touch me.” When Bhrgu Muni refused to embrace his brother, saying that Lord Shiva was impure, the latter became very angry with him. It is said that an offense can be committed either with the body, with the mind or by speech. Bhrgu Muni’s first offense, committed toward Lord Brahma, was an offense with the mind. His second offense, committed toward Lord Shiva by insulting him, criticizing him for unclean habits, was an offense by speech. Because the quality of ignorance is prominent in Lord Shiva, when he heard Bhrgu’s insult his eyes immediately became red with anger. With uncontrollable rage, he took up his trident and prepared to kill Bhrgu Muni. At that time Lord Shiva’s wife, Parvati, was present. Her personality, like Lord Shiva’s, is a mixture of the three qualities, and therefore she is called Trigunamayi. In this case, she saved the situation by evoking Lord Shiva’s quality of goodness. She fell down at the feet of her husband, and with her sweet words she talked him out of killing Bhrgu Muni.

After being saved from the anger of Lord Shiva, Bhrgu Muni went directly to the planet Shvetadvipa, where Lord Vishnu was lying on a bed of flowers in the company of His wife, the goddess of fortune, who was engaged in massaging His lotus feet. There Bhrgu Muni purposely committed the greatest sin by offending Lord Vishnu by his bodily activities. The first offense committed by Bhrgu Muni was mental, the second offense was vocal, and the third offense was corporal. These different offenses are progressively greater in degree. An offense committed within the mind is a positive offense, the same offense committed verbally is comparatively graver, and when committed by bodily action it is superlative in offensiveness. So Bhrgu Muni committed the greatest offense by kicking the chest of the Lord with his foot in the presence of the goddess of fortune. Of course, Lord Vishnu is all-merciful. He did not become angry at the activities of Bhrgu Muni, for Bhrgu Muni was a great brahmana. A brahmana is to be excused even if he sometimes commits an offense, and Lord Vishnu set the example. Yet it is said that from the time of this incident the goddess of fortune, Lakshmi, has not been very favourably disposed toward the brahmans, and therefore, because the goddess of fortune withholds her benedictions from them, the brahmans are generally very poor. Bhrgu Muni’s kicking the chest of Lord Vishnu with his foot was certainly a great offense, but Lord Vishnu is so great that
He did not care. The so-called brahmanas of the Kali-yuga are sometimes very proud that a great brahmana like Bhrgu Muni could touch the chest of Lord Vishnu with his foot. But in fact when Bhrgu Muni kicked the chest of Lord Vishnu it was the greatest offense, although Lord Vishnu, being greatly magnanimous, did not take it very seriously.

Instead of being angry or cursing Bhrgu Muni, Lord Vishnu immediately got up from His bed along with His wife, the goddess of fortune, and offered respectful obeisance to the brahmana. He addressed Bhrgu Muni as follows: “My dear brahmana, it is My greatest fortune that you have come here. Please, therefore, sit down on this cushion for a few minutes. My dear brahmana, I am very sorry that when you first entered My home I could not receive you properly. It was a great offense on My part and I beg you to pardon Me. You are so pure and great that the water which washes your feet can purify even the places of pilgrimage. Therefore, I request you to purify the Vaikuntha planet where I live with My associates. My dear father, O great sage, I know that your feet are very soft, like a lotus flower, and that My chest is as hard as a thunderbolt. I am therefore afraid that you may have felt some pain by kicking My chest. Let Me touch your feet to relieve the pain you have suffered.” Lord Vishnu then began to massage the feet of Bhrgu Muni.

The Lord continued to address Bhrgu Muni. “My dear lord,” He said, “My chest has now become sanctified because of the touch of your feet, and I am now assured that the goddess of fortune, Lakshmi, will be very glad to live there perpetually.” Another name for Lakshmi is Chanchala, indicating that she does not stay in one place for a long time. Therefore, we see that a rich man’s family sometimes becomes poor after a few generations and sometimes we see that a poor man’s family becomes very rich. Lakshmi, the goddess of fortune, is Chanchala in this material world, whereas in the Vaikuntha planets she eternally lives at the lotus feet of the Lord. Because Lakshmi is famous as Chanchala, Lord Narayana indicated that she might not have been living perpetually by His chest, but because His chest had been touched by the feet of Bhrgu Muni, it was now sanctified and there was no chance that the goddess of fortune would leave. Bhrgu Muni, however, could understand his position and that of the Lord, and he was struck with wonder at the behaviour of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because of his gratitude, his voice choked up and he was unable to reply to the words of the Lord. Tears glided from his eyes and he could not say anything. He simply stood silently before the Lord.

After testing Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu, Bhrgu Muni returned to the assembly of great sages on
the bank of the river Sarasvati and described his experience. After hearing him with great attention, the sages concluded that of all the predominating deities, Lord Vishnu is certainly the greatest.

Now comes the part of the sthala purana of the temple. After kicking the chest of the Lord, Bhrgu Maharshi was very upset and approached the Supreme Lord to beg pardon. The Supreme Lord asked Bhrgu to proceed to Kanchipuram and do penance there, which he did, following which the Lord appeared and blessed Bhrgu. He appeared in two forms, as red hued as well as green hued like an emerald.

The Lord who appeared as red hued is lovingly called as Pavalavannar, as pavalam means red pearl (coral).

The Lord who appeared as green hued is lovingly called as Pachavannar as pachai means green in Tamil.

There are two temples in the same complex but it is considered as one divya desam.

The Temple

The central shrine of the temple has the presiding Deity, Pavalavannar, in standing posture. The festive deity and that of Santhanagopala Krishna are located inside the sanctum. The west-facing sanctum is approached through the flagstaff, pillared halls, mahamandapam and the ardhamandapam. The roof of the sanctum is called Vedasara Vimana and it has five kalasams or golden pots in the vimana and stucco images of various pastimes of the Supreme Lord. The temple has separate shrines for the Alwars located to the north of the flagstaff. The pillars in the hall are sculpted with deities of Nammalwar, Ramanujar, Manavala Mamunigal and various avatars and legends of Vishnu. There are other shrines of Rama along with Sita, Hanuman and Garuda. The shrine of Mahalakshmi, known in this temple as Pavazhavalli, the consort of Pavalavannar, is located facing the central shrine, on the eastern side of the temple. The temple has two prakarams with the second prakaram enclosed by granite walls pierced by a five-tiered rajagopuram (gateway tower). The rajagopuram is studded with stucco images of various legends, with the notable among them being the representation of Narasimha, an avatar of Vishnu, slaying the demon Hiranya. A shrine of Manavala Mamunigal is located to the left of the gopuram from the entrance. The temple tank, Chakra Theertham, is located to the north east direction from the entrance.

Festivals

There are weekly, monthly and fortnightly rituals performed in the temple. Brahmotsavam celebrated during the Tamil month of Vaikasi (May - June) is the major festival of the temple. Pavitrotsavam celebrated during the Tamil month of Panguni (March - April) and Vaikuntha Ekadashi during Margazhi (December - January) are the other festivals celebrated in the temple.

Thirumangai Alwar has sung a song about the Lord of this temple.

To read online visit: www.goo.gl/mtrBjo

Photo courtesy: Santhanakrishnan, Srirangam
Someone to Love

The nationalist, the musician, the parent—the depth of their feelings hints at the power of love of God.

by Dvarakadhisha Devi Dasi

I could foresee during my pregnancy that I was approaching a turning point in my life. I went through those days mentally noting, "I won't be able to do this. I won't be able to do that." I observed mothers struggling with hefty babies, strollers, and diaper bags. "That will be me," I shuddered. But somehow I never expected the cadence of my life to alter dramatically. I supposed that I would remain unchanged, except for the additional baggage.

Well, I was so wrong. From the day my daughter was born I realized how superficial my previous conceptions of motherhood had been. Sure there were the well-publicized endless chores, a lot of ga-ga-ing, and discussions on diaper rash—things that had been totally disdainful before. But how those changes were dwarfed by the revolution in my heart as I became increasingly enamoured of the tiny girl. Those weary first days spent rocking, pacing and pampering seemed to flow along in one great wave of affection. However tiresome the activities, they seemed so sweet because of my love for my daughter.

Having come to understand, with some chagrin, what little I knew of maternal love before becoming a mother, I can also comprehend that there are many varieties of love of which I have no experience. I can't tell you for instance, of the fierce patriotism that inspires someone to die for his country. Nor can I understand why anyone would spend hours a day playing the violin. From my dispassionate vantage point, I can't penetrate the core of such heartfelt emotion.

These examples of love—for a nation or music or a child—flourish here in this world. But they are not perfect love, because they depend on circumstantial arrangements by which the lover extracts pleasure from the beloved object. I love my daughter because... well, because she's my daughter. It's a happenstance of our arrangements by which the lover extracts pleasure from the beloved object. I love the nationalist, the musician, the parent—the depth of their feelings hints at the power of love of God.

Although such sublime love is also our own spiritual legacy, it can be regained in full only when the heart is cleansed of all conflicting lovable objects. How can we join the Lord, unhampered, in His spiritual pastimes, if we are yearning after the lesser pleasures offered in the material arena?

Furthermore, simply to announce one's love for the Lord is but a hollow declaration unless one is indeed dedicated to His glorification and service above all else. The example of the Pandavas indicates that the Supreme Lord may be served in many ways, but always in accordance with His will.

The scriptures show us the pure devotees' love so that we might reverently worship them, not so that we can attempt superficial imitation. We might as yet be unable to taste the sweetness of pure love for God, but we can still derive true spiritual benefit by submissively hearing of that pure love. "Simply by appreciating the dealings of the Lord with His pure devotees," Srila Prabhupada

innumerable bodies, each with its particular passions, yet all is ultimately forgotten. Such is the nature of material love.

Beyond this fundamentally ephemeral love is real, spiritual love, the natural love every spirit soul feels for the transcendent Supreme Lord, Krishna. Although every living entity has the potential to develop deep, eternal exchanges of love with the source of all pleasure Himself, such love is rarely seen in this world. Yet the scriptures offer a glimpse of how intimately the Lord deals with the pure-hearted souls who reserve all love and affection for Him alone.

A famous example is the five Pandava brothers. The story of their pastimes as Lord Krishna's cousins is magnificently told in the epic Mahabharata. Srila Prabhupada explains their special relationship with the Lord:

Lord Krishna is everything to unalloyed devotees like the Pandavas. The Lord was for them the Supreme Lord, the spiritual master, the worshipable Deity, the guide, the chariot driver, the friend, the servant, the messenger and everything they could conceive of. And thus the Lord also reciprocated the feelings of the Pandavas.... The Pandavas were so malleable to the will of the Lord that they could sacrifice any amount of energy for the service of the Lord, and by such unalloyed determination they could secure the Lord's mercy in any shape they desired. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.6.16, purport)

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writes, "one can attain salvation."

Still, what is the fate of those of us deeply entrenched in temporal, illusory relationships? Should those real feelings be denied, repressed, abandoned? Well, that's hardly a realistic solution, since love is a primary nutrient of the human psyche. And even more than that, it is intrinsic to the soul. We won't be awarded transcendental love for God simply by denying feelings of affection, or by harbouring them secretly. The apparent absence of overt material attachments doesn't necessarily indicate spiritual consciousness; it may simply be material neurosis. A better choice would be to accept the feelings of love in perspective. As my love for my daughter has so enriched my life, despite the pains of self-sacrifice, how much more would love for God enhance my existence? What unimaginable magnitude of pleasure must there be in that sublime relationship with Him! We can crave that experience and strive for it earnestly.

And when we and those with whom we have material relationships embrace devotion to Krishna as a common goal, our union becomes a powerful, transcendental vehicle toward the ultimate realization of love of God. Today I am entranced by my little girl's activities, always thinking of her needs and desires. This love of the mother for the child was cited by Srila Prabhupada as the closest thing in the material world to pure love. Compared to other kinds of love in this world, it is selfless, unconditional, fulfilling. Yet even this is not the real love of the spirit soul, not the love that will free me from misery and death. That pure, spiritual love, which is infinite and eternal, is the special benediction of the Supreme Lord upon one who qualifies himself through sinless service. It is for a taste of that love that I pray.

New Year Celebrations at Hare Krishna Movement, Ahmedabad

On the eve of New Year 2019, Hare Krishna Mandir Bhadaj organized a grand spiritual extravaganza. The prime attraction of the festival was Harinam Sankirtan Mela, from 7 pm to 12 midnight, interluded with enthralling plays presented by the Krishna Ashraya devotees of the temple. At 12 midnight, arati was offered to Sri Sri Nitai Gauranga, followed by Deepotsava. Everyone present got a chance to offer a lamp to Their Lordships and begin the New Year with divine blessings. The celebration concluded with distribution of maha-prasadam.
Prof. Walter Gilbert, American biochemist, physicist, molecular biology pioneer and Nobel laureate visited ISKCON Sri Radha Krishna Temple, Bangalore, on January 03, 2019.

TVM Signalling and Transportation Systems Private Limited (TSTS) donated a food distribution vehicle to The Akshaya Patra Foundation. Sri P. Gopalakrishnan, Managing Director, TSTS handed over the keys of the vehicle to Sri Vasudev Keshav Dasa, Vice-President, ISKCON-Bangalore.
Bangalore: (above left) Devotees walking and dancing in front of the ratha. (above right) Address by His Holiness Sri Sri Subudhendra Tirtha Swamiji, Mantralaya Matha as His Grace Madhu Pandit Dasa (President, ISKCON-Bangalore) and His Holiness Sri Stoka Krishna Swami look on. (left) Sri K Gopalaiah (MLA, Mahalakshmi Layout) and Sri Prakash S Iyengar, swept the road as part of the inaugural ceremony.
“It’s time you dance and time you sing and time you rejoice in the reveling!
It’s time you play and time you pray and time you delight in the carnival day!”

These words aptly describe the true spirit of the maiden ‘Krishna Kids Carnival’ event organized by the Cultural Education Services division of ISKCON Bangalore, for children during their winter break.

Check out the vibrant glimpses of the memorable moments from the carnival to be able to feel the pulse of the blessed kids who enthusiastically danced, sang, played and prayed, delighting and rejoicing in the carnival hosted in the blessed environs of the temple. This, besides imbibing life skills and important value based lessons all along the way!

To view the glimpses of the gala event, visit our photo gallery ‘Krishna Kids Carnival – 2018’ on ‘Iskcon Bangalore’ Facebook page.

For more details, call us on 9341124222 / 9341211119.
A spiritually surcharged Inter-School Competition based on the holy Srimad Bhagavad-gita, Gita Fest 2019, was organized by the Cultural Education Services division of ISKCON Bangalore. The Fest was organized to commemorate Gita Jayanti, the auspicious day on which the confidential transcendental knowledge of the Bhagavad-gita was revealed to Arjuna by the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Himself.

With a view to engage children in the celebration of the pious Gita Jayanti festival, the fest was organized at Hare Krishna Hill temple in the second week of January and in several schools across the city and surrounding areas, during the month of December and January. It offered children the unique opportunity to present their understanding of the sublime message of Bhagavad-gita by participating in a host of literary, oratory and art competitions centered on the theme of the holy scripture.

Competitions like Gita Shloka Chanting, Gita Quiz, Decode the Gita, Elocution, Model Making, Poster Collage, Essay Writing, Handwriting and Goloka Shades, a popular state-wide coloring and painting competition, saw over 25,000 students from different schools enthusiastically participate and display their understanding, talent and creativity surrounding the Bhagavad-gita As it is. To encourage families to derive benefits on the lines of the famous quote, ‘a family that prays together stays together,’ the Gita Kutumba contest was organized under the Vatsalya events category, where families had the opportunity to record their rendition of shlokas from the holy scripture.

With over 350 trophies and as many Bhagavad-gita As it is books to be won, the competition will be culminating with a grand prize distribution ceremony in the month of February.

To view the glimpses of Gita Fest 2019, visit our photo gallery ‘Gita Fest 2019 – Album’ ‘Iskcon Bangalore’ Facebook page.
ISKCON PILGRIMAGES

KUMBH MELA MAGHA POORNIMA PILGRIMAGE

Places of visit: Prayag, Stay in Swiss Tent, Escorted Bath in Sangam on Magha Poornima and few local temples

Travel date: Monday Feb 18th to Thursday 21st, 2019

Donation amount: ₹22000/- (+flight charge)

Rameshwaram Madurai Pilgrimage

Places of visit: Rameshwaram, Dhanushkodi, Pamban Bridge, Rama-Sita-Lakshmana Teertham, Ramarpaadam, Madurai and more

Travel date: Friday, March 8 (6 pm) to Monday, March 11 (6 am)

Donation amount: ₹6,500/- (Volvo bus)
Join us for a spiritual and devotional retreat with ecstatic *kirtans*, *bhajans*, pastime narrations and delicious Krishna *prasadam*!

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Limited seats. First come first served basis
Hare Krishna Movement News

HKM Hyderabad celebrates Sri Goda Krishna Kalyanam

Hare Krishna Movement (HKM) Hyderabad celebrated Sri Goda Krishna Kalyanam at the Swayumbhu Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Golden Temple on Jan. 13. The ceremony was held to mark the occasion of the marriage of Goda Devi, who is Lakshmi Devi incarnate, with Lord Krishna in the form of Lord Ranganatha. The festivities were presided by prominent people from all walks of life.

For more details, visit: https://goo.gl/ki5TsT

Festival of Kites at HKM, Jaipur

Makara Sankranti – the festival of kites was witnessed by the people of Jaipur at the Hingonia Gaushala on Jan. 15. The event was organized by the Hare Krishna Movement (HKM) Jaipur in association with Sri Krishna Balaram Seva Trust. Sri Manoj Bharadhwaj, Mayor of Jaipur, who was one of the Chief Guests at the event, congratulated HKM Jaipur on completion of two years in successfully running the gaushala.

View more images: https://goo.gl/efMmVd

Hare Krishna Golden Temple, Hyderabad celebrates Gita Jayanti

Hare Krishna Movement (HKM) Hyderabad celebrated Gita Jayanti grandly on Dec. 19 at the Swayumbhu Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Golden Temple (Hare Krishna Golden Temple). The celebrations included Sampoorna Gita Parayanam from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and explanation of important shlokas of the Bhagavad-gita.

For more details, visit: https://goo.gl/pNC5ky
Sri Nityananda Trayodashi
February 18, 2019
The Auspicious Appearance Day of Sri Nityananda Prabhu

We invite you to participate in the festivities and seek the blessings of Sri Nityananda Prabhu. Celebrations begin 6:00 p.m. onwards.

Seva Opportunities
You may offer the following sevas on the day of Sri Nityananda Trayodashi:

Prasada Seva
Donate towards the distribution of free Khichadi prasadam to all devotees visiting our temple on this day.

Pushpalankara Seva
Contribute towards decorating the Deities of Their Lordships Nityananda Prabhu and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu with colourful fragrant flowers.

Vishesha Naivedya Seva
Offer bhoga with a variety of specially prepared delicious food items to Sri Nityananda Prabhu and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

To offer sevas, please visit: www.iskconbangalore.org/sri-nityananda-trayodashi/
Krishnazine
Fortnightly e-Magazine of ISKCON Bangalore

Ratha Yatra at Thrissur
Sri Jagannatha Ratha Yatra was held by Hare Krishna Movement, Thrissur on Dec. 29. A large number of devotees as well as the general public participated in the event.
https://goo.gl/twwi4y

Sri Vishvanatha Chakravarti
Sri Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura is an acharya in the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition. At a young age, he left his wife and home to live in Vrindavana and serve Lord Krishna.
https://goo.gl/ffwosg

Soul-Body Connection
The soul is different from the body. At the time of death, the soul gives up the body which it was occupying and accepts another body just like a person changes his dress.
https://goo.gl/cNixFK

Srivigraha Nitya Seva
An opportunity for you to contribute towards alankara, daily worship and various other sevas which are regularly performed to the Deities at our temple.
To donate, please visit: www.iskconbangalore.org/srivigrahasevas

Divine experience: Our first visit to Iskcon, Bangalore has left us with extreme calmness in mind and made us feel pious. The entire place was very clean and vibrant. Display of Krishna souvenirs and prasada attracted everyone. It's definitely a must-visit place at Bangalore. - rajashwin2007

Huge but beautiful: This temple is devoted to Lord Krishna. The area covered by the temple is huge but it is very beautiful. If you reach on time you may see the morning or evening prayers performed by the priests there. They sing and dance to various Krishna songs and it is an absolute delight to see it. - Ari377

Serenity: Have been to this temple a few times and love it every time I visit. The path to reach the main shrine, being there and finishing the visit with awesome snacks that you get there completes it. Hare Krishna!! - 87himanshug

Full of life: Far beyond our expectations as tourists. This place is fairly new & frequented by large numbers of locals. Easy for a few hours to slip by. Food is provided for free & is a great experience. - Jon-Irene

www.iskconbangalore.org
Shubharambham heralds the New Year at ISKCON

The Shubharambham festival was held at ISKCON Bangalore on the 1st of January, 2019. This was the fourth year of celebrations, meant to give an opportunity to those devotees who wish to begin the New Year on a high note, by seeking the divine blessings of their Lordships Sri Radha Krishna. About 110 families joined the festivities by taking part in the Harinama Yajna that involved the chanting of Hare Krishna mahamantra for 108 times. After the yajna, devotees had a chance to hear Sri Chanchalapathi Dasa, Senior Vice-President, ISKCON Bangalore, emphasize the need for investing faith in the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. Devotees who took part in this programme were also fortunate to treat their taste buds with Chappan Bhog mahaprasadam, that comprised of 56 exotic delicacies offered to Lord Sri Krishna.

Shri Raghunatha Rao, one of the participants of Shubharambham said, “This is the best New Year celebration that I have ever attended. The temple was filled with divine vibrations all around. We had the good fortune of being the part of fire sacrifice and then understand the purpose of our lives in the association of experienced saints. My daughter was fascinated by the wide-spread of 56 varieties of prasada, along with beautifully decorated flowers and lights. We couldn’t have asked for a better way to start the New Year. I wish to be a part of this event at ISKCON every year.”
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