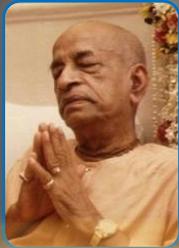


Freedom Newsletter



Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

ISKCON Prison Ministry / February 2026

PO Box 2676
Alachua, FL 32616

PRABHUPADA SPEAKS OUT

— The Senses: Gratification or Purification?

This exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and some of his disciples took place in April 1975 during an early-morning walk in Mayapur, India.

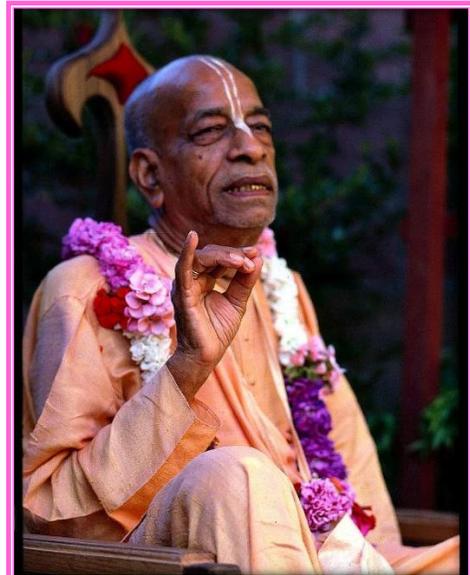
Devotee: Srila Prabhupada, sometimes people argue that if there is no God, it doesn't matter what I do, and if there is a God, then He is controlling everything and it still doesn't matter what I do, because everything is predetermined anyway. In either case, I am free to do anything I like.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, but why do you suffer?

Devotee: Well, it's all God's plan. I suffer according to God's plan.

Srila Prabhupada: No. It is not God's plan that you suffer; you suffer because you violate God's laws. He is controlling everything, but He has given you minute independence: you can either follow His laws or violate them. But you are so foolish that you do not understand you are suffering. Your position is like that of the cats and dogs, who also cannot understand that they are suffering.

Our point is that you are suffering because you have



violated God's laws, and if you become obedient to God you will not suffer. But you are such a fool, such a rascal, that you do not even know that you are suffering.

Devotee: But the devotees also seem to be suffering.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, but they are not suffering like the nondevotees. Material life, which is the cause of suffering, is like a disease, and devotees are giving up this diseased condition of life for Krishna consciousness. If you are suffering from some disease, you cannot expect to be cured immediately. But one who is taking the medicine is very intelligent. His sufferings will soon be gone. But these nondevotee rascals will not even take the medicine -- Krishna consciousness -- so they will continue to suffer. And for the most part, devotees enjoy. Why are you always chanting Hare Krishna and dancing unless you are enjoying?

Devotee: Sometimes I get a sick stomach, too.

Srila Prabhupada: That's because you have a material body. But your suffering is just like the movement of a fan that has been switched off. The fan is still moving, but the switch is off; so it will soon stop. Similarly, your suffering will soon stop, because you are acting on the spiritual platform. And after giving up this body, you will have a completely blissful life.



As Krishna says in the Bhagavad-gita [4.9], *tyaktva deham punar janma naiti*: "After giving up the body, a devotee doesn't take birth again in the material world." You are not going to get another material body, full of suffering. That is your advantage.

But these nondevotee rascals are going to continue getting body after body, all full of suffering. They will have to accept one body and suffer, and then again they'll have to give up that body and take another body and suffer. As long as one accepts a material body he will have to suffer, because having a material body means suffering. So those who are not Krishna conscious will change bodies one after another and continue to suffer the threefold miseries [those caused by the body and mind, those caused by other living beings, and those caused by natural disasters].

But devotees, even if they appear to be undergoing some suffering, will eventually give up the material body and remain in their spiritual body, free from all suffering.

Devotee: [taking the position of a materialist] That is simply your faith.

Srila Prabhupada: And it is your faith that you do not believe it. We are accepting the words of the Bhagavad-gita on faith, so we have a chance of getting promoted to the spiritual world. But you have no faith, so you are sure to continue suffering in the material world. We are at least willing to take the chance, but you are so foolish that you are not willing to take the chance. So your suffering is sure to continue.

Devotee: Indians often say, "Well, I will take the chance when Krishna wishes. His will is supreme, so whenever He wishes He will make me Krishna conscious."

Srila Prabhupada: In the Bhagavad-gita [18.66], Krishna says, *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*: "Give up all your nonsense and surrender unto Me. Become Krishna conscious." So, Krishna wishes that you surrender to Him. Why don't you obey His wish?

Devotee: Why does Krishna arrange for the pleasures of sense gratification if they only bring us suffering?

Srila Prabhupada: Again, the same answer: Krishna has given us minute independence -- we can use our senses for either sense gratification or for serving Him, which is the real pleasure of the senses. The senses are meant for enjoyment, but if you try to enjoy your senses in a diseased way -- by gratifying them -- that is your misfortune, and you will have to suffer. You have to cure your disease by becoming Krishna conscious. Then you will enjoy unlimitedly.

We are not like the Mayavadis [impersonalists], who want to destroy the senses and become senseless. That is not our program. We want to purify the senses

(*sarvopadhi-vinirmuktam tat-paratvena nirmalam*). Suppose a man cannot see because he has glaucoma. The mayavada program is that if your eye is giving you trouble and you cannot see, pluck it out. That is not our program. We want to cure the disease so you can see very nicely. So, our senses should be cured of the material disease by our practicing Krishna consciousness. Then



we will be able to enjoy real sense pleasure by using our senses in the service of Hrishikesha [Krishna], the master of the senses. 🌸





ENTER MY SOUL

from unknown inmate

Beautiful is the view
when you surrender to
the pure and new
way of thought who
lies deep inside you
Miseducation and materialism
have robbed the world
of their mysticism
and have induced
a modern cataclysm
based off of selfish desire
leading you directly
into the fire
speaking damnation
through a blasphemous choir
It's impossible to climb out
Hare Krishna
Lord, bring about
grace and mercy
from Your heavenly spout
before we're lost
inside the flood
from the lake of Kali-yuga
bringing fire and blood
Hands outstretched
my breath holding rhythm
please enter my soul
and deem me forgiven



ABOVE: At the end of Kali-yuga, when human society is degraded and has lost all God-consciousness, the Lord comes in His incarnation of Kalki to kill all the demoniac people.

**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare**

Words of Wisdom

WE ARE NOT VEGETARIAN

“We are not meant for moving anyone's sentiment against animal slaughter, we are neither Buddhists or Jains. Whose main propaganda is against animal slaughter. **Even so-called vegetarians who do not take Krishna prasadam are as much sinful as the non-vegetarians.** Our propaganda is different, to make people Krishna Conscious, which automatically makes them sympathetic against any kind of animal slaughter. According to Srimad-Bhagavatam one living entity subsists on the life of another living entities, either on the life of another living entities, either vegetarians or non-vegetarians. We are neither of them. We are not vegetarians nor non-vegetarians. We are transcendental. We are concerned with Krishna prasadam. Try to popularize Krishna prasadam as you have already done. People will naturally become vegetarian without any ghastly propaganda. We may make propaganda against animal slaughter, but that will not advance our real cause. KC [Kṛṣṇa consciousness] is based on pure understanding, not by any sentimental provocation. People must be intelligent enough to catch up this KC movement without being carried away by any sentimental wave. We should always remember that we do not belong to any group like the karmis, jnanis, or yogis. We belong to pure devotional service group, following the footprints of great mahajanas. Our purpose should be that we are in one side all others they are on the side. We deprecate everyone, even one who is against animal slaughter.”

Prabhupada Letter to Rayarama Dasa -Los Angeles November 19th, 1968

TEN THOUSAND SOULS ARE SEARCHING

By The Harmony Collective | December 21, 2025

Following the intensity of the December Marathon 2024, we, in the snowy world of Michigan, began looking for a new target market for our “family



business”—book distribution. We stumbled upon a massive market that was hiding in plain sight: Amazon [the online store].

Through our year-long efforts, we have successfully pushed Srila Prabhupada’s magnificent translation almost to the top of the charts. Now, we need your help to finish this race and claim the #1 spot.

When we first looked, we were shocked to find that the *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* (BGAI) was nowhere to be found among the top 5 *Gitas* on the platform. However, we were inspired by the potential. Our research showed that more than 10,000 copies of the *Bhagavad-gita* are sold on Amazon.com every month. That represents 10,000 souls actively searching for Krishna’s message. Tragically, because BGAI was selling only about 100 copies a month, most of these seekers were ending up with impersonal or “New Age” commentaries.

A GIFT FOR A GROWING COMMUNITY

Why did we decide to take this on? The *Harmony Collective* is a relatively new community, still in what feels like its “toddler days.” We face the typical struggles of a young center, but we have found that Srila

Prabhupada is always there for us. He has sent us sweet devotees, good association, and exciting



projects throughout our decade-long journey, never letting our efforts go unnoticed. We saw this Amazon discovery not just as a coincidence, but as a special personal gift from Srila Prabhupada, to our tiny preaching efforts in Michigan—a chance for us to add the cherry on top of his glory.



We immediately took it upon ourselves to change the status quo. We revamped the listings with high-quality photos, updated the descriptions, optimized keywords, and took ownership of polishing BGAI and other Srila Prabhupada titles on Amazon.

These efforts boosted sales to a few hundred per month, but we soon faced a bigger hurdle: the price. We are competing against titles that are heavily subsidized or produced cheaply; in fact,

the current bestselling translation by Eknath Easwaran is produced in-house by Amazon.

Our goal became clear: Make *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* the #1 Bestseller in its category.

To achieve this, we reached out to larger



temples and generous devotees for support. Thanks to the incredible cooperation of ISKCON Los Angeles, ISKCON Silicon Valley, ISKCON Dallas, and individual supporters like Chaitanya Das and Paramesvara Das, we were able to stand toe-to-toe with the popular titles. They provided strategy, sponsorship, and encouragement.

The result of this collective effort? *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* is now a Top Three Bestseller in the Gita category and holds the #1 Bestseller spot in two other categories.

THE FINAL PUSH

In December, we took this effort to the next level. We want to claim the top spot and replace



speculative translations with the authorized word of Krishna, delivered through His dearmost representative, Srila Prabhupada.

WHAT IS OUR PLAN? We have launched a targeted ad campaign to bring BGAI directly to prospective buyers. We are actively soliciting reviews and refining the book description to be more attractive to the Western mind. 🌸

PLEASE HELP US! —urgent—

The Florida prisons have banned the *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*. Their explanation? That it is “written in code and is therefore a security risk.” They are referring to the Sanskrit texts. Of course, this is total nonsense and a violation of the inmates’ religious rights. Two lawyers have taken this case pro-bono and are about to file a lawsuit.

WHAT DO WE NEED FROM YOU?

We need all of you to write a letter about how reading the *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* while in prison has benefitted you. Keep it simple, write in your own words. We don’t need an essay, just your simple, personal, and sincere testimony.

Please address your letter to:

Thank you in advance!

Attn. *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*
ISKCON Prison Ministry
PO Box 2676
Alachua, FL 32616

The Symptoms of Kali-yuga

From Srimad-Bhagavatam, Canto 12 —chapter 2

This chapter relates that, when the bad qualities of the Age of Kali will increase to an intolerable level, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will descend as Kalki to destroy those who are fixed in irreligion. After that, a new Satya-yuga (golden age when everyone is pious) will begin.

As the Age of Kali progresses, all good qualities of men diminish and all impure qualities increase. Atheistic systems of so-called religion become predominant, replacing the codes of Vedic law. The kings become just like highway bandits, the people in general become dedicated to low occupations, and all the social classes become just like śūdras (laborers). All cows become like goats, all spiritual hermitages become like materialistic homes, and family ties extend no further than the immediate relationship of marriage.

When the Age of Kali has almost ended, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will incarnate. He will appear in the village Śambhala, in the home of the exalted brāhmaṇa Viṣṇuayaśā, and will take the name Kalki. He will mount His horse Devadatta and, taking His sword in hand, will roam about the earth killing millions of bandits in the guise of kings. Then the signs of the next Satya-yuga will begin to appear. In the order of Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali, the cycle of four ages rotates in the society of living entities in this universe.

Text 1: Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Then, O King, religion, truthfulness, cleanliness, tolerance, mercy, duration of life, physical strength and memory will all diminish day by day because of the powerful influence of the Age of Kali.

Text 2: In Kali-yuga, wealth alone will be considered the sign of a man's good birth, proper behavior and fine qualities. And law and justice will be applied only on the basis of one's power.

Text 3: Men and women will live together merely because of superficial attraction, and success in business will depend on deceit. Womanliness and manliness will be judged according to one's expertise in sex, and a man will be known as a brāhmaṇa just by his wearing a thread.

Text 4: A person's spiritual position will be ascertained merely according to external symbols, and on that same basis people will change from one spiritual order to the next. A person's respectability will be seriously questioned if he does not earn a good living. And one

who is very clever at juggling words will be considered a learned scholar.

Text 5: A person will be judged unholy if he does not have money, and hypocrisy will be accepted as virtue. Marriage will be arranged simply by verbal agreement, and a person will think he is fit to appear in public if he has merely taken a bath.

Text 6: A sacred place will be taken to consist of no more than a reservoir of water located at a distance, and beauty will be thought to depend on one's hairstyle. Men will think that by keeping long hair they become more beautiful. Filling the belly will become the goal of life, and one who is audacious will be accepted as truthful. He who can maintain a family will be regarded as an expert man, and the principles of religion will be observed only for the sake of reputation.

Text 7: As the earth thus becomes crowded with a corrupt population, whoever among any of the social classes shows himself to be the strongest will gain political power.

Text 8: Losing their wives and properties to such avaricious and merciless rulers, who will behave no better than ordinary thieves, the citizens will flee to the mountains and forests.

Text 9: Harassed by famine and excessive taxes, people will resort to eating leaves, roots, flesh, wild honey, fruits, flowers and seeds. Struck by drought, they will become completely ruined.

Text 10: The citizens will suffer greatly from cold, wind, heat, rain and snow. They will be further tormented by quarrels, hunger, thirst, disease and severe anxiety.

Text 11: The maximum duration of life for human beings in Kali-yuga will become fifty years.

Texts 12-16: By the time the Age of Kali ends, the bodies of all creatures will be greatly reduced in size, and the religious principles of followers of varṇāśrama [social order] will be ruined. The path of the Vedas will be completely forgotten in human society, and so-called religion will be mostly atheistic. The kings will mostly be thieves, the occupations of men will be stealing, lying and needless violence, and all the social classes will be reduced to the lowest level of śūdras (laborers). Cows will be like goats, spiritual hermitages will be no different from mundane houses, and family ties will

extend no further than the immediate bonds of marriage. Most plants and herbs will be tiny, and all trees will appear like dwarf śamī trees. Clouds will be full of lightning, homes will be devoid of piety, and all human beings will have become like asses. At that time, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will appear on the earth. Acting with the power of pure spiritual goodness, He will rescue eternal religion.

Text 17: Lord Viṣṇu — the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the spiritual master of all moving and nonmoving living beings, and the Supreme Soul of all — takes birth to protect the principles of religion and to relieve His saintly devotees from the reactions of material work.

Text 18: Lord Kalki will appear in the home of the most eminent brāhmaṇa of Sambhala village, the great soul Viṣṇuyāśā.

Texts 19-20: Lord Kalki, the Lord of the universe, will mount His swift horse Devadatta and, sword in hand, travel over the earth exhibiting His eight mystic opulences and eight special qualities of Godhead. Displaying His unequaled effulgence and riding with great speed, He will kill by the millions those thieves who have dared dress as kings.

Text 21: After all the impostor kings have been killed, the residents of the cities and towns will feel the breezes carrying the most sacred fragrance of the sandalwood paste and other decorations of Lord Vāsudeva, and their minds will thereby become transcendently pure.

Text 22: When Lord Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appears in their hearts in His transcendental form of goodness, the remaining citizens will abundantly repopulate the earth.

Text 23: When the Supreme Lord has appeared on earth as Kalki, the maintainer of religion, Satya-yuga will begin, and human society will bring forth progeny in the mode of goodness.

Text 29: The Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, is brilliant like the sun and is known as Kṛṣṇa. When He returned to the spiritual sky, Kali [not to be confused with Lord Kalki]

entered this world, and people then began to take pleasure in sinful activities.

Text 30: As long as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the husband of the goddess of fortune, touched the earth with His lotus feet, Kali was powerless to subdue this planet.

Text 33: Those who scientifically understand the past declare that on the very day that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa departed for the spiritual world, the influence of the Age of Kali began.

Text 34: After the one thousand celestial years of Kali-yuga, the Satya-yuga will manifest again. At that time the minds of all men will become self-effulgent.

Text 38: At the end of the Age of Kali, these two kings [Devāpi and Maru], having received instruction directly from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, will return to human society and reestablish the eternal religion of man, characterized by the divisions of varṇa and āśrama, just as it was before.

Text 39: The cycle of four ages — Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali — continues perpetually among living beings on this earth, repeating the same general sequence of events.

Text 40: My dear King Parīkṣit, all these kings I have described, as well as all other human beings, come to this earth and stake their claims, but ultimately, they all must give up this world and meet their destruction.

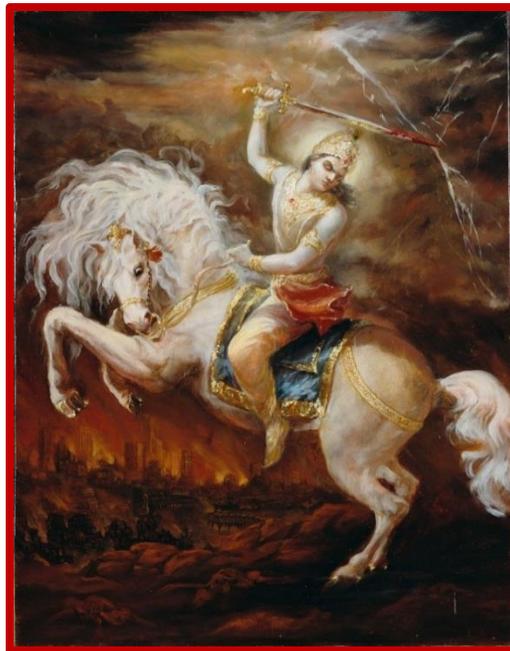
Text 41: Even though a person's body may now have the designation "king," in the end its name will be "worms," "stool" or "ashes." What can a person who injures other living beings for the sake of his body know about his own self-interest, since his activities are simply leading him to hell?

Text 42: [The materialistic king thinks:] "This unbounded earth was held by my

predecessors and is now under my sovereignty. How can I arrange for it to remain in the hands of my sons, grandsons and other descendants?"

Text 43: Although the foolish accept the body made of earth, water and fire as "me" and this earth as "mine," in every case they have ultimately abandoned both their body and the earth and passed away into oblivion.

Text 44: My dear King Parīkṣit, all these kings who tried to enjoy the earth by their strength were reduced by the force of time to nothing more than historical accounts. 🌸



What are the four yugas (ages)?

- **SATYA YUGA** – (the golden age) lasts 1,728,000 years. During this yuga the majority of the population is situated in the mode of goodness and the average life span at the beginning of the yuga is 100,000 years. Religion is complete, still possessing its four legs of truth, mercy, austerity and charity. The mode of goodness is predominant.

Main features:

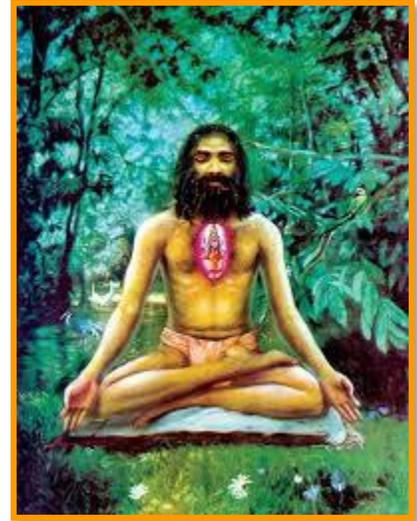
Virtue and morality are at their peak.

People are highly spiritual and live in harmony with dharma (the principles of religion).

There is no sickness, suffering and no corruption.

People live for thousands of years.

The recommended method for self-realization is meditation on Vishnu for thousands of years.



- **TRETA YUGA** – (the silver age) lasts 1,296,000 years. The average life span is 10,000 years and the principles of religion have decreased to three

fourth compared to Satya yuga. It is during this age that Varna-asrama-dharma is introduced. The mode of passion is predominant.

Main features:

Virtue and morality begin to wither away.

Humanity is still spiritually advanced, but there are already signs of corruption.

People become more inclined to material desires and attachments.

Lord Rama appears in this era.

The recommended method for self-realization is performance of elaborate and costly sacrifices (yajñas).



- **DVAPARA YUGA** – (the bronze age) lasts 864,000 years. the principles of religion have decreased by half compared to Satya yuga, and

the average life expectancy is only 1000 years. The mixed modes of passion and ignorance are predominant.

Main features:

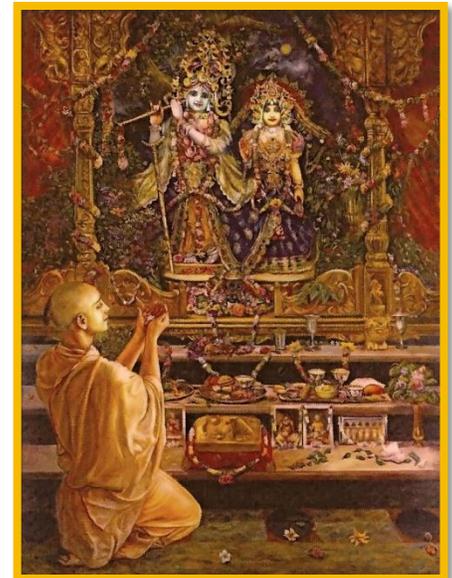
Virtue and morality deteriorate even further.

Vedic knowledge begins to decline and confusion increases.

The struggle between good and evil becomes more evident and Lord Krishna Himself appears to protect the dharma.

The recommended method for self-realization is temple worship of the Lord.

- **KALI YUGA** – (the iron age), the age of quarrel and hypocrisy, lasts 432,000 years. The principles of religion have decreased to one fourth compared to Satya yuga and life expectancy is only 100 years. Men in their thirties will be considered old men. By now already 5000 years of Kali yuga have passed There will practically be no more food available and people will have to resort to cannibalism. The mode of ignorance is predominant



Main features:

Virtue and morality have almost disappeared.
Corruption, violence and ignorance are widespread.
Human life expectancy is significantly shortened.
People are strongly attached to material possessions and sensory gratification.
Spirituality is almost nil, but the saving grace is that the simple repetition of the divine names (kirtan) will free one from birth and death.
The only recommended method for self-realization is chanting of the holy names of Krishna (sankirtan). Lord Caitanya came to inaugurate this sankirtan movement.

**Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare**

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

TRANSLATION

My dear King, although Kali-yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about this age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom"

Srimad-Bhagavatam 12.3.51



ABOVE LEFT: a sankirtan party headed by Lord Caitanya.

ABOVE RIGHT: a modern-day sankirtan party of the devotees of the Hare Krishna movement.

LEFT: Srila Prabhupada during Ratha-yatra in San Francisco, leading a vast crowd in a roaring kirtan.

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

TRANSLATION

“In this Age of Kali there is no other means, no other means, no other means for self-realization than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari.’

Caitanya Caritamṛta, Adi Lila, 17. 21

Calendar

FEBRUARY 2026

- 07 Feb 2026 - Appearance Day Narottama Das Thakur
- 06 Feb 2026 - **Appearance Day of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur** (fasting till noon)
- 13 Feb 2026- **Vijaya Ekadasi**
- 14 Feb 2026- Disappearance Day of Isvara Puri
- 18 Feb 2026- Disappearance Day of Srila Jagannatha Das Babaji
- 27 Feb 2026- **Amalaki Ekadasi**

MARCH 2026

- 03 Mar 2026 - **GAURA PURNIMA - Appearance of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu**
- 11 Mar 2026 - Appearance Day of Sri Srivasa Pandita
- 15 Mar 2026 - **Papamochani Ekadashi**
- 16 Mar 2026 - Disappearance Day of Sri Govinda Ghosh
- 23 Mar 2026 - Appearance Day of Sri Ramanujacharya
- 27 Mar 2026 - **Rama Navami (appearance day of Lord Rama)**
- 29 Mar 2026 - **Kamada Ekadashi**

APRIL 2026

- 02 April 2026 - Appearance Day of Sri Vamsivadananda Thakura
- 02 April 2026 - Appearance Day of Sri Syamananda Prabhu
- 09 April 2026 - Disappearance Day of Sri Abhirama Thakura
- 12 April 2026 - Disappearance Day of Srila Vrndavana Dasa Thakura
- 13 April 2026 - **Varuthini Ekadashi**
- 17 April 2026 - Appearance Day of Sri Gadadhara Pandita
- 25 April 2026 - Appearance Day of Srimati Sita Devi (wife of Lord Rama)
- 25 April 2026 - Disappearance Day of Sri Madhu Pandita
- 25 April 2026 - Appearance Day of Srimati Jahnava Devi (wife of Lord Nityananda)
- 27 April 2026 - **Mohini Ekadasi**
- 29 April 2026 - **Disappearance Day of Sri Jayananda Prabhu** (Prabhupada's pure disciple)
- 30 April 2026 - **Narasimha Caturdasi – Appearance of Lord Narasimhadeva**

MAY 2026

- 01 May 2026 - Appearance Day of Sri Madhavendra Puri
- 01 May 2026 - Appearance Day of Sri Srinivasa Acharya
- 01 May 2026 - Disappearance Day of Sri Paramesvari Dasa Thakura
- 07 May 2026 - Disappearance Day of Sri Ramananda Raya
- 13 May 2026 - **Apara Ekadasi**
- 14 May 2026 - Appearance Day of Srila Vrndavana Dasa Thakura
- 27 May 2026 - **Padmini Ekadashi**