

GOKUL BHAJAN & VEDIC STUDIES

GOKUL KIDS



**No caste, No color, No religion
One God, One Mantra, One Dharma**

Dedicated to:

Srila Gurudeva, the Yuga Acharya:
Nitya līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata śrī
srīmad bhakti vedānta Nārāyaṇa Goswāmi
Mahārāja

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

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This book belongs to:

Preface

Gokul Bhajan & Vedic Studies (GBVS) is a unique non-profit service organization to spread Krishna Consciousness everywhere in this world. It has no affiliation or control by any other organization. Our only goal is to practice pure bhakti under the footsteps of six goswamis and guidance of guru parampara coming under Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

GBVS has a unique place in spiritual development. Under the direction and inspiration from Srila Gurudeva, Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Goswami Maharaja, it is positioned in such a way that children, parents, adults and devotees can all benefit by developing and growing in Krishna Consciousness. Gokul Bhajan gives the guidance to grow from a beginning stage to advanced devotees. The main purpose of this book is to help any one who is interested in developing devotion to Lord Sri Krishna the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

This hand book describes the growth of one's Krishna Consciousness from the basic level to advanced level. It covers the philosophy of the path to becoming an advanced devotee by describing the various stages of devotion such as 'Growing Stage', 'Budding Stage' and 'Blooming Stage.' Thus, GBVS is positioned as a "bridge" to develop single pointed devotion (ananya bhakti) to Lord Sri Krishna in stages.

We hope that this book shall be helpful and fulfill the needs of those who wish to develop single pointed devotion to Lord Sri Krishna with the mercy coming from Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Dedication



om ajnāna timirāndhasya, jnānānjana salākaya
caksur unmimiltam yena, tasmai sri gurave namah

nama om viṣṇu-pādāya rādhikayāh priyātmane
srī srīmad bhaktivedānta nārāyaṇa iti nāmine

nama om viṣṇu-pādāya krishna-prashthaya bhu-tale
srimate bhaktivedanta-swami iti nāmine

vānchā kalpa tarubhyaś ca krpā-sinhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namah

he krishnā karunā sindho, dina bandho jagat pate
gopesha gopikā kānta, rādhā kāntā namo 'stu te

tapta kāncana gaurāngi, rādhe vrindāvaneshvari
vrsabhānu sute devi, pranamāmi hari priye

srī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda
srī-advaita gadādhara srīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda

Hare krsna hare krsna, krsna krsna hare hare
Hare rama hare rama, rama rama hare hare

Aims and Objectives

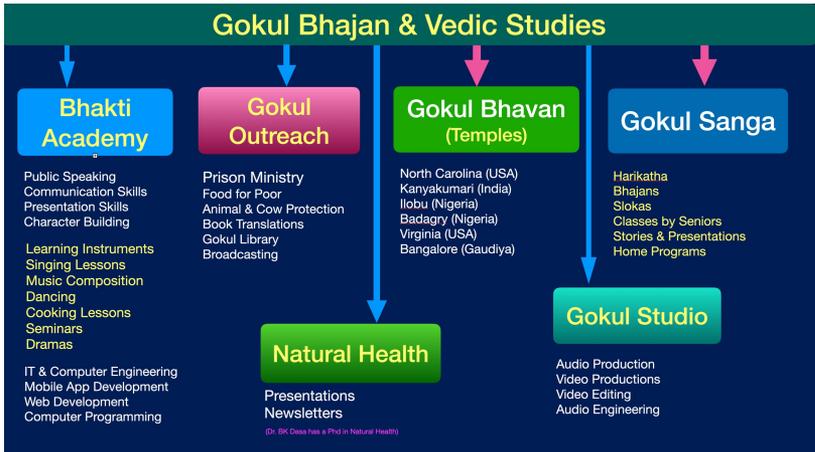
- 1) Independent and not controlled by any external organization
- 2) Help building the future of the children with good character and discipline
- 3) Create an environment for parents and children to spend time together engaged in devotion
- 4) Help the children to be motivated and excel in their present life and education, and also prepare the best for the next life
- 5) Help the children to take responsibility, leadership, and perform best in their studies as well as in devotion
- 6) Cultivate Vedic tradition and family values in our children
- 7) Educate the children to know what is right and what is wrong.
- 8) Grow the family in devotion and love with God keeping Sri Radha Krishna at the center of our lives
- 9) Print devotional books, perform nama sankirtan, produce devotional media and distribute the Vedic knowledge and teachings of our acharyas
- 10) Provide moral and emotional support to families & children
- 11) Develop farm communities that can live with self-sustenance growing natural food, protecting cows and other animals
- 12) Reach out to the world by broadcasting our programs
- 13) Celebrate religious functions associated with Krishna consciousness
- 14) Conduct camps and gatherings to promote Krishna Consciousness.

Contents◌

Preface.....	3
Dedication.....	4
Aims and Objectives.....	5
About Gokul Bhajan & Vedic Studies.....	8
PART - 1.....	16
THE WISDOM.....	16
Understand Krishna is not an avatar.....	17
First Expansions of Sri Krishna.....	17
Expansions of Lord Balarama.....	17
The Summary.....	20
PART - 2.....	22
THE GOKUL KID.....	22
Three Stages of Growth.....	23
1. Growing stage.....	26
1. Live Clean.....	27
2. Be Selfless and Kind to Others.....	27
3. Honor Elders and Parents.....	28
4. Be a Vegetarian.....	28
5. Be Organized, Disciplined and Punctual.....	31
6. Have Self Control.....	32
7. Be Free from Intoxication.....	33
8. Do not Gamble.....	33
9. No Illegal marital Relation.....	34
10. Never waste time.....	34
11. Avoid Gossiping.....	37
12. Start to Follow Ekadasi Vrata.....	39
13. Daily Chant Maha Mantra.....	40
2. Budding stage.....	43
14. Be a pure Sattvic Vegetarian – No onion no garlic.....	44
15. Avoid eating outside and in open places.....	47
16. Have a temple room in your home.....	47
17. Every day Read Sattvic scriptures.....	48
18. Worship Sri Radha Krishna.....	50
19. Observe Vrata for every Ekadasl.....	52

20. Sing bhajan and kirtan every day.....	54
21. Accept a genuine guru and get Hari Nama.....	54
22. Wear Tulasi and apply tilak every day.....	59
23. Chant fixed rounds regularly on japa mala.....	60
3. Blooming stage.....	63
24. Get diksha from a genuine guru.....	64
25. Develop ananya bhakti to Radha Krishna.....	65
26. Worship Radha Krishna deities Daily.....	69
27. Eat only the prasadam.....	70
28. Observe Ekadasi to the fullest extent.....	71
29. Associate with high class devotees.....	72
30. Hear Srimad Bhagavatam every day.....	72
31. Listen to Hari Katha every day.....	74
32. Adopt to chanting, bhajans and kirtans.....	75
33. Go to sleep and wake up thinking Guru & Krishna	76
Typical Day of Gokul Kid.....	77
PART - 3.....	82
GOKUL KID SONGS.....	82
G-04. I am a little Gokul Kid.....	83
G-09. No to Vaikuntha!.....	85
G-12. Once upon a time I was a happy soul.....	86
G-14. What is the use of my education.....	87
G-22. Once upon a time there was a man of wise.....	88
G-23. Once upon a time there was a black crow.....	89
G-24. Once upon a time there was a Yogi.....	91
G-25. Once upon a time there was a Parrot in Cage.....	92
G-26. Once upon a time there was a Frog in the Well.....	93
G-27. Once upon a time there was a race in Heaven.....	95
G-28. Once upon a time there was an orphan dog.....	97
G-29. Once upon a time there was a great king.....	98
G-30. Ignorance and Knowledge.....	99
G-31. Krishna went to a Gopi's House.....	100

About Gokul Bhajan & Vedic Studies



Gokul Bhajan & Vedic Studies (GBVS) is a unique bhakti yoga satsang organization that focuses on children and families together practicing single pointed devotion to Sri Radha Sri Krishna and learning to follow devotional Vedic culture in our daily lives.

Besides our main goal of living a life enriched with devotion, we also focus on preparing the children for a suitable devotional base in life. Thus we teach them to develop good character, discipline, leadership, responsibility, effective communication, time management, task management and so on.

We help the children by giving motivation and understanding of our Vedic culture and family values and the importance of caring and loving of our parents. As they steadily progress, they shall be able to live a balanced life and eventually the devotional living becomes an integrated part in them. They learn and understand what is right and what is wrong so that they themselves can decide on the right choices in their lives.

We are an independent and registered non-profit organization. Our satsanga is run like a school where the curriculum is planned in advance for every semester of the year. Like in a school, we emphasize commitment and regularity in attendance. As one of our main goals is to bring children and parents 'together' with love and devotion to Lord, regular attendance of parents with their children is very crucial.

Even though our teachings are primarily based on Gaudiya Vaishnava Siddhanta under the direction of Srila Gurudeva in the line of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and six goswamis, we equally honor and respect every sampradaya engaged in developing pure devotion to Sri Radha Krishna. The primary scriptures we follow are Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, Sri Caitanya Caritamrta, and all the scriptures revealed by six goswamis and acharyas under Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Our sanga is open to everyone irrespective of caste, creed or religious background. Our primary focus is to develop devotion to Sri Radha Krishna yugala.

As we have a special focus on our children, we use special methods and styles to teach them by utilizing multi-media and latest technologies.

Keeping Sri Radha Krishna at the very center of our lives is the topmost goal of our devotional lives. We meet every week and hold satsangas in our Gokul Bhavan halls and also at the homes of participating families, or other facilities. Families take turns to host and support our programs every week.

The programs start with children invoking our special deities we use in the programs. Every child as well as parents in rotation lead bhajans and sankirtans. They learn the philosophy and new slokas every week, which they memorize and recite them in the subsequent classes.

The main part of our program is the Hari Katha. These feed new bhajans, slokas and presentations. They are prepared from the planned curriculum that includes discussion of philosophies, tattvas and pastimes related to Sri Radha Krishna and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. We record and archive the harikathas and presentations so that the children can review the classes when needed. Our materials are also widely used in other satsang programs elsewhere.

Every year is divided into two semesters having unique curriculum. Every week, the children will be given tests and homework to complete based on what they learned. All the hari-kathas are also posted on youtube and on our web site to access.

For the interest of our children, we have developed a special interactive game called 'Gokul Jeopardy!'. We play this periodically to test what the children have learned.

We use a point-based system where the children earn points for attendance, sloka recitation, test submission, presentations and other special achievements. Each semester ends with a sloka competition and an award ceremony where we recognize and honor every child as well as the outstanding children.

In every semester, our children are expected to prepare and give at least one presentation on any Krishna Consciousness related topic. These presentations help them in building self-confidence, communication skills, getting rid of stage fears and thus they will be also doing best in their schools and colleges. All the presentations are recorded and hosted in the youtube.

Every semester we invite Vaishnava sadhus from different places mainly from Vrindavan. These sadhus conduct weekend programs in the conventional traditional style.

Most of our children and parents observe Ekadasi. Children are able to track their observances and every time a child completes observing ten ekadasis, a special gift is awarded in appreciation and for encouragement.

All of our children and parents are expected to chant the holy names of Lord , the maha mantra every day:

*hare krsna hare krsna, krsna krsna hare hare
hare rama hare rama, rama rama hare hare*

Our children also lead several projects for the welfare of the community, some of which include Book Distribution, Charity for Cow Protection, Food for the Poor, Gokul Library, Prison Ministry, Health & Environment and so on. Every semester they setup goals and work on achieving the goals.

Prison Ministry is a special project under IPBYS founded by Srila Gurudeva. Under this, we communicate and help the prison inmates by sending them books, course materials and by writing to them. This project is drastically changing the lives of many prison inmates. Volunteers from our organization also directly visit local prisons and conduct programs for the benefit of prisoners.

“Bhakti Academy”, previously called ‘iGokulam’ is an educational division specially designed for the need of our children and parents. Through this we teach our children to develop various skills which also include character development, leadership skills, time management, effective communications, learning sanskrit and others.

Through Bhakti Academy, our children also develop mobile apps on Krishna Consciousness. They are developed for iOS and Android devices.

As annual accomplishments, our children stage dramas and

dances as public events. Every year they produce yearly bhajan CD albums from the bhajans they have learned in the classes. We have a dedicated studio (Gokul Studio) to compose bhajans, record sloka tunes, and record tracks for dramas and to produce annual CD albums.

We engage our children to participate very closely in our regular weekly programs so that they have a sense of ownership and get recognized for their efforts. This helps them to learn leadership, punctuality, and responsibility. Unique responsibilities are assigned to the children and the volunteering parents. Our children are very unique because not only they are very high achievers in educational activities, but are also dedicated in serving Krishna and devotees.

Our children and parents also learn how to play various music instruments for singing bhajans and kirtans. We also conduct courses for learning mridanga, keyboards, tabla and other musical instruments so that they can actively participate in the satsang programs by playing with their instruments they have learned.

We have a special group called 'Vadya' is similar to an orchestra of Gokul Bhajan. They routinely perform in our local programs and also in public programs.

We also have an honorary group called Bhajaneeya to which the members are selected by their singing skills and interest. They also produce special youth bhajans and are the main contributors of our yearly bhajan CDs.

Our organization has the following web sites and other public hostings to support our satsang and programs:

- 1. www.gokulbhajan.com**

This is our central web site for the public with most of the information such as:

- Our philosophy and sadhana
- Hari Kathas
- Classes
- Children Presentations
- Bhajans
- Slokas
- Ekadasi Schedules and Guidelines
- Media Productions
- Dramas
- Dances
- Books
- Hostings and Events,
- Outreach programs, and so on

2. www.mygokulam.com

This website serves as the management system for our organization. Only the authorized members of GBVS can use this web site to manage various aspects of our programs such as Semester Planning, Hostings, Registrations, Student records, Events, Income & Expenses and so on.

3. www.bhakti-academy.com

Bhakti Academy is our training division of Gokul Bhajan & Vedic Studies. Various classes are conducted every week in a dedicated training center equipped with modern technologies to make the learning fun and efficient. Following is a list of sample classes:

Public Speaking
 Communication Skills
 Presentation Skills
 Character Building
 Learning Instruments
 Singing Lessons
 Music Composition

Dancing
Cooking Lessons
Seminars
Dramas
IT & Computer Engineering
Mobile App Development
Web Development
Computer Programming

Our children have developed/developing following iOS apps:

- Gokul Darsan
- Gokul Quiz
- Gokul Jeopardy
- Gokul Handbook
- Gaudiya Giti-guccha (the bhajan book on palm)
- Bhakti Base (all GVP books on palm)

Our children have developed/developing the following Android apps:

- Gokul Match (a game)
- Gaudiya Giti-guccha (the bhajan book on palm)
- Gokul Chanter (a chanting aid)
- Gokul Calander (of holy days and reminders)
- Gokul Quiz
- Bhakti Base (all GVP books on palm)
- Karmi Numerology
- Gokul Jeopardy!
- Gokul Quiz

4. www.prisonseva.org

Of several projects we are engaged in, the prison seva is one of the topmost. We communicate to the prison inmates attracting them to engage in devotion and to be a better person. We are successful in making the lives of many prison

inmates. This web site is the public facing of this project.

5. GBVS Radio and Television

We have a plan to broadcast our programs via the radio and television to the public. We have many bhajans, harikathas, classes and presentations that can be used for the broadcasting to spread the Krishna Consciousness.

PART - 1



THE WISDOM

Understand Krishna is not an avatar

Many people are misled or think due to wrong understanding from some puranas that Krishna is an avatar. But the fact is that Krishna is the source of all the avatars.

Srimad Bhagavatam, which is the most pure and authentic scripture, also declares “krsnas tu bhagavan svayam” – Sri Krishna is the original personality of Godhead from whom every one and everything came from. In Srimad Bhagavatam or Gita Govinda or any high scriptures, Lord Krishna is never mentioned as an avatar. Bhagavan Krishna is the avatari from whom all the avatars and expansions come as we see in the following sections. All these details are from Srimad Bhagavatam, Brahma Samhita and Caitanya Caritamrta. Please read this section with more attention to understand.

First Expansions of Sri Krishna

From Swayam Bhagavan Sri Krishna, the very first two expansions that came eternally are Lord Balarama (for leela of creations) and Srimati Radha Rani (for leela of pastimes). Lord Balarama is His svarupa sakti and Radha Rani is His purna sakti or hladini sakti. All the goddesses including Lakshmi, Parvati and Durga all came from the purna sakti, Smt Radha Rani. From Lord Balaram many expansions came and in fact one of them is Lord Narayana as we will see below.

Expansions of Lord Balarama

Lord Balarama then eternally expanded Himself into Vasudeva, Moola Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha as the first quadruple expansion. At that very same time, like a carbon copy, a second quadruple expansion also came out and they are also called almost the same: Vasudeva, Maha

Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. Only Sankarshana has slightly different names.

We need to now understand what is a brahmanda. Brahmandas are the material universes situated in uncountable galaxies. Each brahmanda also includes planets like our own earth. There are unlimited brahmandas emanating from Maha Vishnu who is also an expansion from Sri Krishna (covered below).

All the four forms of the first quadruple expansion occupy the Dwaraka, and Mathura regions of the upper spiritual sky. They are situated below Goloka but higher than the Vaikuntha planets. The Vasudeva of the first expansion is Lord Krishna of Dwaraka, and the Sankarshana of the first expansion is the Balarama of Dwaraka. Even when Lord Krishna appeared in this earth 5,000 years ago, we see this same pattern.

From this first quadruple expansion thousands of other expansions come. One notable expansion is Ram Parivar of Ayodhya (also called Saketh) in the spiritual sky located above Vaikuntha but below Dwaraka. Vasudeva becomes Lord Rama, Sankarshana becomes Lakshma and others become Bharata and Satrukana. The scriptures say that chanting one name of Lord Krishna is equivalent to chanting three names of Lord Rama. As we also see, Lord Rama is the third level expansion from Lord Krishna (Krishna -> Balarama, Balarama -> Vasudeva (of first quadruple expansion), Vasudeva -> Lord Rama).

The Vasudeva of this second quadruple expansion is Lord Narayana. So Lord Narayana is the carbon copy of an expansion of the expansion of Lord Krishna. Lord Narayana takes charge of the lower part of all the Vaikuntha planets commonly called Vaikuntha where dasya bhava which is worship in the mood of opulence predominates. Even in the madhurya bhava there only married relation becomes predominant. Such is also in Dwaraka but not in Goloka.

Maha Sankarshana (of the second quarduple expansion) becomes Maha Vishnu, also called Karanodakasayi Vishnu, and lie down in the Viraja River, which is the border between the spiritual and material worlds (CC. Madhya 20.268-271). This Maha Vishnu breathes out unlimited brahmandas. Thus, Maha Vishnu is the first creator. All the baddha jivas from the belly of Maha Vishnu occupy these brahmandas. Maha Vishnu is also the source of thousands of avatars. He is also sometimes called Narayana, as Narayana means shelter of all the jivas.

Pradyumna becomes the Garbhodakashayi Vishnus of each Brahmananda. There is one expansion of Garbhodakashayi Vishnu in each Brahmanda and often simply called Lord Vishnu. From His navel comes the lotus stem containing all the 14 levels of planets of the brahmanda arranged in seven planes and Lord Brahma is situated at the top lotus like place called Satya Loka. One famous incarnation of this Lord Vishnu is Lord Balaji.

Aniruddha becomes Ksirodakashayi Vishnu who resides in the milk ocean and enters into every jivatma as paramatma. He is also the one who pervades in every atom of the universes. All the great yogis struggling to find in their hearts is this same Aniruddha as Paramatma!

Lord Balarama has many more expansions. He expands into the great serpent known as Ananta. This Ananta-Sesha is the devotee incarnation whose only aim to serve to Lord Krishna. With His thousands of mouths, He always sings the endless glories and pastimes of Lord Krishna. He also expands Himself to serve as Lord Krishna's paraphernalia such as the umbrella, slippers, bedding, pillow, garments, resting chair, residence, sacred gayatri thread, and throne in the palaces of Lord Krishna.

Maha Sankarshana (of the 2nd quarduple expansion) is the

source of Lord Sada Siva from whom unlimited expansions of Lord Siva have come - one for each brahmanda. That is why Sada Siva, who is in Vishnu Tattva is said to be always in meditation on Maha Sankarshana. From Lord Siva comes rudras. In our brahmanda there are eleven rudras. The number of rudras vary depending on the size of the brahmandas.

The Summary

We have seen that even Lord Narayana, Maha Vishnu and all the Vishnus of the brahmandas actually come from Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna lives in Goloka, an abode which is way beyond all the Vaikuntha planets in the spiritual sky. Just because He happens to come down to the earth once in a day of Lord Brahma (once in 4.32 billions earth years) to any Brahmanda via the particular Lord Vishnu who is maintaining that brahmanda, the Vishnu purana lists this rare occurrence also along with other avatars from Lord Vishnu.

Only those who properly understand all the scriptures know the real truth. For example, just because a president of a nation comes down to a prison through the prison door (akin to Lord Vishnu of the Brahmanda) to show his mercy, we cannot say that the president comes from the prison itself and belongs there. He comes from outside and far above. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu who is none other than Lord Krishna has explained this fact very clearly.

When Svayam Bhagavan Sri Krishna descends to the earth once in a day of Lord Brahma, Lord Sri Caitanya also descends in the same Catur Yuga cycle. He comes in the Kali Yuga that immediately follows the very same Dwapar Yuga that Svayam Bhagavan Sri Krishna appears. So, Svayam Bhagavan Sri Krishna and Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu do not appear in every catur yuga. Rather they appear only once in one thousand cycles of catur yugas!

One Lord Brahma, one Lord Siva and one Lord Vishnu manage each brahmanda. Thus there are unlimited Lord Brahmas, unlimited Lord Sivas and unlimited Lord Vishnus – one set for every brahmanda. While Lord Vishnu holds His brahmanda on the stem of His navel, Lord Brahma (as secondary creator) creates the creatures, plants and living beings, Lord Siva at the end destroys it as part of the life cycle of each brahmanda.

One important point to note is that Lord Vishnu is the entry point to any corresponding brahmanda. Just because some one is coming via Lord Vishnu does not mean that the personality actually has the source from Lord Vishnu. Thus, even when Lord Krishna or any one from higher abode wants to come to a brahmanda, naturally the door is Lord Vishnu of the brahmanda.

If we understood all these then our devotion to Lord Krishna will become strong and steady. Do not listen to others who have only the limited vision of the complete fact. Their acharyas can give only the truth they know or allowed to reveal. Take shelter from a genuine guru from the line of Lord Caitanya and make your spiritual journey really successful.

PART - 2



THE GOKUL KID

Three Stages of Growth

A Gokul Kid is a representation of progression of any one coming from materialistic platform to enter into the spiritual platform. It represents a soul gradually advancing from basic devotional endeavor to the highly advanced pure form of devotion to Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

Unlike our modern schools where the primary focus is to get a good job and comfortable living, the Vedic Gurukula system primarily focused in God consciousness and to prepare for the next life. In fact god consciousness was the very goal of every one in the Vedic age and not for making money or make a comfortable living in this life. Most of the Gurukulas in the Vedic age were run under shaded trees.

In our Gokul Bhajan & Vedic Studies, we try to make a balanced life. Keeping the preparation for the next life to be the topmost and ultimate goal as in the Vedic times, we first help to establish a foundation in this life as well. In this aspect the life of Srila Bhakti Vinoda Thakura is an example to keep our material life and spiritual life at balance.

In this modern world, with the influence of Kali Yuga, there are many religions with many books written for common people. They target for this life and enjoy to the fullest extent forgetting the fact that this world is temporary and unreal. They confuse and mislead the people trying to convince with their false philosophy and unfortunate people fall victim to their beliefs. As the Srimad Bhagavatam, the pinnacle of all the Vedic scriptures points out, any religion that is based on satisfying one's selfish desires – even including the desire to achieve moksa or liberation - is a cheating religion and should be thrown out. Only the religion that helps one to develop unmotivated and unalloyed devotion to the Supreme Lord is the real religion, which should be promoted.

Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Six Goswamis who came from the highest spiritual dimension gave us these most rare jewels of this truth. They propounded and taught us the highest form of devotion that no one ever could give before. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu is none other than the Supreme Lord Krishna appeared about 500 years ago. He appeared in the mood of Srimati Radha Rani so that the highest devotion can be brought and taught to us. He also came to inaugurate the Yuga dharma of this Kali Yuga which is chanting the holy names of Lord Sri Krishna.

The following section has been written aiming to help and fulfill the needs of those who wish to develop single pointed devotion to Sri Radha Krishna under the shelter and mercy of Srila Gurdeva. It is presented in simple form so that even a small child should be able to read and understand. No complex slokas or complex language is used. A Gokul Kid can be any one, irrespective of age. It does not actually pertain only to a child.

The three stages described in this book covering the devotional development are:

Growing Stage

This is the stage compared to a plant growing from a seed. A child or aspirant gets attracted to living a disciplined and meaningful life. This attraction comes by their accrued merits (sukrti) due to good deeds performed in their previous lives or due to fortunate association with pure devotees. Then they slowly develop devotion to Sri Radha Krishna.

Budding Stage

At this stage the child or aspirant feels joy in the devotional life and spends more time in perfecting the spiritual activities (sadhana). He understands that this material life is actually miserable and there is no joy in this material world. With one

leg in the material life and the other leg extending to the spiritual living, he looks for more help in further spiritual advancement and accepts a guru.

Blooming Stage

This is the advanced stage where the aspirant is now fully engaged in devotion. Even though one may be living in the material world perfectly disposing all the material duties, he/she lives a detached life and does not belong to this world. As they progress further, the interest in material desires completely stops. More than this stage is beyond the scope of this book.

In order to pass the mercy and teachings of Srila Gurudeva to our children, this book is an attempt to do some service and offering to Srila Gurudeva.

We hope that not only the young children but also adults can make use of this book. We suggest each parent give a copy of this book to their children so that they understand the real goal of life and won't get lost in the jungle and clutches of this dangerous modern world under maya.

1. Growing stage



Following are the things when followed by a serious aspirant indicate to be situated in the growing stage. This sadhaka is considered higher than a dharmic or karmic person.

1. Live clean
2. Be selfless and kind to every one
3. Honor elders and parents
4. Be a vegetarian
5. Be disciplined, organized and punctual
6. Have self-control
7. Be free from intoxication
8. Do not gamble
9. No illegal marital relation
10. Never waste time
11. Avoid gossiping
12. Start to Follow Ekadasi Vrata
13. Chant Maha Mantra daily

1. Live Clean

Get up early

One should be trained to get up early in the morning. The modern living is contaminated where the children go to bed late and get up late. In the early morning as the ozone is rich, we should make use of it by using for the real goal – attaining devotion to Lord Krishna

Take Bath Every morning

Many people in this modern world do not take bath regularly and even if they do, they may not take bath in the morning. They spray some perfume and runs to work. This is an animalistic life. In fact Vedic culture says that we should take bath three times a day, one before every meal. What we are asking is that one should take bath at least once a day and that should be in the morning.

Wear Clean Clothes

Every day, one should wear a set of "clean" dresses. They need not be expensive or colorful, but rather simple and pleasing. Our goal should be to live a simple life with highest goal.

2. Be Selfless and Kind to Others

Modern living does not teach us how to live a selfless life or how we should be tolerant and kind to others. Devotional life becomes fruitless if one becomes self-centered and not honoring and not kind to others.

A selfish live indicates animalistic instincts in us. Actual happiness comes only when we give and sacrifice our life to

others and not when we run like a dog driven by our uncontrolled desires. A desiring mind is actually a disturbed mind. We should be matured and understand this very fact.

3. Honor Elders and Parents

At this age of Kali, we can see how children neglect elders and parents. Modern living has created so many dumping places to throw their parents when they get old. This was not the case in the Vedic ages where elders were always respected and cared for at their homes. Elders should never be called by their names, but should be always called by some relation. In Vedic times even a wife does not call her husband with name.

Children should never shout at their parents for any reason. You should understand that your parents have given everything for the sake of bringing you up. If you do not give respect to your parents, later when you become parents your children are not going to respect you. This is a simple law of karma.

4. Be a Vegetarian

In this most cruel age of Kali, people even in the name of religion kill innocent animals and eat their flesh to satisfy their tongues. In the Bible, it is said, "Thou shall not kill". We, the human beings are supposed to rule over this world and protect every living being. Instead, we are killing them to satisfy our tongues.

Killing innocent animals to satisfy our tongue or hunger is a demoniac philosophy and any religion supporting these and slaughter houses is a demonic religion. Arguing that one can eat flesh after draining blood is pure cheating. Blood and flesh are inseparable even in tissue level.

As our Vedic scriptures say, every living being has the same soul as ours. Under the same God who created every one, they are all like our brothers and sisters. Unfortunately, due to their previous karma they have taken an inferior body. Which father will allow one to kill the brother or sister and eat just because he/she is dumb and cannot talk like us?

We should understand the cruelty and sin behind eating meat, fish and eggs. If we kill and eat another being, under the very strict laws of karma, we will be surely punished without any mercy. The responsibility of a human being is to understand the law of karma and control the senses. We are not animals who live by instincts.

So, if I kill an animal and eat, in the next birth I will be born like that same kind of animal and eaten by the same ones that I killed and ate. There is no exception. Even if any religion (most of them are man-made) that is even big but promotes eating meat or fish or egg, simply throw those religions in the trash. As Lord Caitanya proclaimed, any religion that supports killing of animals even for fire sacrifice should be rejected.

Our body is meant to eat only the vegetarian foods. Unlike meat eating animals whose saliva is acidic, our saliva is alkaline. Unlike meat eating animals who have a shorter intestine to digest meat, our intestines are longer to digest vegetarian food. There are so many facts to this.

In fact being a vegetarian has many advantages. Being a vegetarian makes us healthy, have a cleaner and lesser disease prone body, and gives us good thoughts. The gross food we eat has three parts. One nourishes the gross body, another nourishes the mind and the rest goes as waste.

We are what we eat. If we eat flesh, only bad and negative thoughts will come. Cows and elephants who never eat meat live together peacefully whereas the animals who eat meat fight and mostly live in isolation. Eating meat will make one

lust and angry. Eating meat will produce only a dangerous world with greed, lust and wars.

Also producing meat requires so much of water, grazing land (made by cutting forests) and produces unmanageable waste. If every one in this world becomes vegetarian, this world can sustain even 16 times of the current population of the world. Then why do we say we have severe shortage of food? The root of the cause is meat eating! So, if you want to do a favor to you and this entire world, be a strict vegetarian!

One baseless argument that some parents make is, that by feeding their children with meat makes them healthy and strong. Never ever believe this. There are so many creatures like elephant, whales and so on who are so strong and huge compared the meat eating species. In this corrupted age of Kali, every one is in illusion. If your parents tell you wrong things like this, you should explain and correct them! Remember that you are a Gokul Kid!

Eating sattvic food is a must for entering into a devotional life. Sastra says, "ahara suddhau sattva suddhih" – Eating clean and sinless food is the very first thing for devotional awakening.

Disguising themselves as great saints and scholars, many have translated the higher scriptures like Bhagavad Gita wrongly and mislead the common people. While Bhagavan Krishna says that the best food is sattvic food (fruits, vegetables and grains), these impersonalists give wrong propaganda. Even though there are more than two hundred translations of Gita, only a handful have been written by devotees of Lord Krishna. All others are written by impersonalists and non-devotees.

Lord Krishna clearly says that He is very satisfied by our offering of a leaf, flower, water or fruit but with bhakti (BG 9.26). But many translators cheat the common people by

describing offering meat in bhakti. They even write that the Kurukshetra war is not real but a symbolism of war against evil. Thus they themselves prove to be the very evil. So we should be very careful of what we read. If we want Krishna bhakti, we should read the "as it is" translations of His dear devotees. Krishna proclaims that only His devotees can really understand His teachings, and no one else.

Arising from the very root of satisfying their tongues and stomachs, meat eaters always come up with all kinds of justifications for supporting their sinful activities. All their arguments are baseless and the entire world is now realizing and trying to become vegetarians. Eating meat is sinful. Meat means "Me-Eat." If I eat you now, you eat me later. No one can escape from this most sinful karma! If one eats meat, there is no place for Krishna or Krishna Bhakti. Never!

5. Be Organized, Disciplined and Punctual

With our human birth, we should first understand that we cannot live like animals. We have been given the power to differentiate. An animal lives only by instinct and hence the law of karma does not apply to the animals. They do not have a justice system like we do.

We the human beings have rules and regulations because we have a higher purpose in our lives. God has given this rare human body to be used only in achieving the goal of going back to God. Thus we have responsibility and hence whatever we do, we are responsible for the result. We should not waste this rare human birth.

Being born in this world as a human, we automatically inherit responsibilities, debts and duties. We cannot avoid any of these and live like animals. In order to perform our duties, we should have an organized, disciplined life. Without these our duties cannot be performed effectively.

Those who are parents should be the examples by becoming the model. If they themselves are not disciplined, not organized and not punctual, then how can they expect their children to be better? Children copy and inherit the qualities from their parents.

6. Have Self Control

The main challenge behind this growing stage is to get above the animalistic living. Those who have got this human body just after their previous animal birth(s) will have their lives mostly around their instincts and uncontrolled desires to enjoy with their bodies. They are even below the level of basic dharma.

Even otherwise, controlling the senses is not easy. Vedic scriptures tell us about many kinds of self-controls we should have as a human being. The Upadesamrta says in its very first verse that we should control our speech, mind, anger, and urge of tongue, belly and genitals. But how is it possible?

It comes with proper food (ahara suddhau) and good association. What are the things that our children are exposed to? Their peers at the school, and the TVs and endless video games at the homes, all these pull them. Even their own parents force them by buying them video games as gifts! All these only contribute to the exploitation and away from sense control. We do not understand that our senses can never be satisfied. Pouring more ghee into the fire to satisfy the fire only increases the fire more and more. Lack of self-control makes one spiritually bankrupt.

Peaceful mind and hence peaceful living comes only by sense control because all the senses are attached to our mind. Proper intelligence and discrimination are the key things here. But it requires one to have sufficient mental strength, which usually comes by fasting for Ekadasis and eating those foods, which are conducive to calm our minds. If

we eat only the foods that are offered to the deities, they are the best medicine for self-control.

7. Be Free from Intoxication

While this problem is not there for small children, elder children and adults can get trapped in this. Intoxication includes consuming alcohol, tobacco or even coffee or tea. Anything that can affect or stimulate our mind is an intoxicating substance.

In olden days, if any one drinks alcohol, that person will be labelled as worst and barred from the society. No one listened to that person. But in this Kali Yuga, drinking alcohol has come to the public in open tables. Even in churches they use wine in the ceremonies and parents drink in front of their own children. Out of the four bad things to avoid in Krishna Consciousness, intoxication comes next to meat eating. It is very dangerous to our spiritual life.

For elder children, peer pressure from bad friends is a challenge. For the working adults, association with other workers may trap them. In all the cases, one should use their intelligence and strictly avoid consuming any of these intoxicants.

Consumption of tobacco leads to many health complications such as developing cancer and so on. Even consumption of coffee and tea should be eventually stopped. There are so many people who have become slaves to these petty little things. Consumption of any intoxicant is detrimental to devotional life.

8. Do not Gamble

Gambling takes several meanings here. It includes:

- Engaging in gambling with money

- Engaging in speculations
- Stringy and manipulative

One who has a gambling mind can never live in peace and never can develop devotion. Many people are addict in betting their money in lotteries, casinos, card games and so on.

Even putting money in stocks based on speculation is a kind of gambling. As long as there is any speculation involved, that activity is called gambling. Another but more subtle and worst is to be so stringy and manipulative in saving money. While even a camel can go through the eye of a needle, a miser or a rich man can never enter the kingdom of God as it is often said.

The sadhaka at this stage should feel free from a speculative and gambling mind.

9. No Illegal marital Relation

While this topic is applicable only to the elder children and adults, this topic is very crucial in keeping oneself in Krishna Consciousness. In this modern world, the society is going through major changes due to the influence of western culture and because of which so many disturbances are being caused.

Obstinence and self-control is very important to be exercised until marriage. Any unnecessary contacts with opposite sex should be avoided by all means. Until marriage one should never ever have any physical contact with opposite gender.

10. Never waste time

In this world, there are few things once missed can never be

gotten back. One of them is time. Any amount of money can never get it back.

In a day of twenty-four hours we have got, how many hours are we actually using for our goal of reaching our real destination – the spiritual world? If we do a calculation, it is very surprising. Every day, we sleep eight to ten hours and work for eight to ten hours. This gives only four to eight hours remaining. Of this, people have to also use it for maintaining the body, eating, traveling, entertainment, gossiping, watching television, playing games, or even simply busy doing nothing. On the holidays, we go to parties and sleep more. So, where is the time for devotion? Even if we put some time for devotion, we waste it in worshipping devatas (demi gods) instead of Supreme Bhagavan Sri Krishna.

Nowadays every one has a smart phone and we can see them punching on them all day long! They find so many ways to waste time - chatting, texting, playing games and so on. When we ask anyone, they all say that they are very busy. Even if we ask a dog which runs here and there on the street naked is busy. Busy doing what? That is the question! Are we spending our times for the right thing or wasting time on self invented duties?

From the time the sun rises and until it sets, one full day is given to us to use. When the sun sets, it reminds us that another day has been subtracted from our life. Every time we celebrate our birthday, it actually reminds that we have actually wasted another whole year busy doing nothing and have progressed one more year towards our grave yard that is waiting for us.

At our young age, our life span is spent in studying. We get so busy and this takes one-fourth of our life span. No time to spare! Then we get married and work so hard like a donkey to feed the wife, family and home. In the remaining time if any, we try to enjoy the life. No time to spare! Then we work so

hard to take care of the children's education and their lives. Then come the grand children who will be dumped on us. Now we get more attached and totally entangled. We will have so many things to take care and thus have so many worries. We can't sleep at night without sleeping pills. No time to spare!

As we keep wasting more and more time and exploiting our senses and organs, diseases eventually come as unwanted guests. Even if we say "no", they will come. We cannot stop. Then comes the retirement age, but by this time our heart has developed problems, and can't hear without hearing aid and can't see without powerful glasses, and can't drive at night. Blood sugar goes high and so is the blood pressure. Every day we become so busy in catching up the medications and checkups. Some times even checking into a hospital for days. Our organs become weaker as these so called medicines actually try to kill with so many side effects. Now we need more checkups and treatments. We heavily rely on medicines and our shelves are filled with more and more medicines.

Starting from morning we have hourly medications as we age. "Idam sariram parinama pesalam". Our body consisting of hundreds of joints now starts to wear down. The nuts and bolts are about fall down. Even tightening won't work! No medicine will help now and the doctor declares that you now have terminal disease such as cancer or some thing. Now you become panicked and worried that you may die very soon. You can't do anything now. Your days are now really counted! Do we have any time or mood to do any spiritual sadhana as we should have done in our early ages?

While we are healthy now, we should make use of our time and use it only for the real goal. This human birth is like midnight oil given to us to be burnt only for the important thing.

When we leave our body and see Yamaraja face to face one

important question will be asked: “How did you use the most rare human body given to you?” What will we say? Will you tell him that you got a double doctorate and spent time on accumulating wealth or to become a CEO? Will he accept our answer? We should be prepared to face this final exam that is sure to come.

Do we have time to think about our next life? No! Instead, we wonder, “I still have more time to live and catchup and enjoy more. I can live a devotional life later when I am about to die”. But the fact is that it is too late! We never lived that kind of life and our mind will not co-operate. This is why Prahlad Maharaj tells that one should practice devotion from very young stage. He says: ‘Do not waste time! Start your devotional life now!’

11. Avoid Gossiping

Unlike in ancient days where the communication facilities were very minimal, our modern age is filled with so many gadgets that make us like leashed animals. While in olden days gossiping was done at the front of the houses, now it happens via the cell phone, internet or via many kinds of gadgets. It is the same thing! Gossip, gossip and more gossip!

Every one loves gossip. Our ancestors lived a peaceful living having ample time for spiritual endeavors because they had far less distractions. But the people in the modern world are confused, anxious, doubtful, greedy, angry, having no memory and addicted to so many gadgets. Many people waste even whole day just in answering their phone calls. If some one is taking more than five minutes in talking in telephone, it is mostly gossip. There are so many materialistic people who can drag you for hours. When they call you, you can mention that you have to finish your chanting. As soon as you start

chanting they will leave you. Hearing maha-mantra is like poison for them. They cannot chant and do not want to chant. There are so many social networks and free telephone times that can literally kill our valuable time and us.

Everyone is attracted to gossiping and love to hear what others are doing or saying. Like soap operas, this is another entertainment to many people. Gossiping is very dangerous to devotion. More you gossip, more you fall down from devotional practices.

Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and all the goswamis repeatedly said that this is the biggest danger that can destroy one's bhakti especially when one criticizes Vaishnavas and devotees even by mind. Lord Caitanya compared criticizing Vaishnavas to a wild mad elephant that will uproot and do havoc to your plant of devotion. Our Gurudeva has said about the 3 'C's we should follow: no **C**riticizing, no **C**omplaining but always **C**hant.

Other forms of this gossiping are unnecessary chatting from phones and listening to the soap opera serials broadcasted. Even if they chant and perform sincere worship, as soon as they sit in front of the soap opera, like a newly bathed elephant that throws mud on itself, they spoil all the devotional merit they had just accrued. So, they are back to square one! They cannot progress. Their material desires for sense gratification will never go away.

As the sastras say, one simple way to measure one's spiritual progress is just by looking at how much material desires they still have with them.

The time people spend on gossiping can be nicely used for chanting and other spiritual activities that also calm our mind and soothes our soul. Most of our acharyas chanted 128 rounds every day. As Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu has declared, without one chanting at least 64 rounds, Lord

Krishna does not accept our offerings. It does not matter how well we offer and how tasteful and how carefully they are offered!

So, it is important to use our spare time in chanting the glorious names of Lord Krishna instead of gossiping. Please remember again and again – any form of gossiping is extremely dangerous! It will drastically bring down your interest in chanting. Throw this devil out at any cost.

12. Start to Follow Ekadasi Vrata

Ekadasis are not ordinary days. As the moon passes thru its phases from no moon to full moon and again from full-moon to no-moon, the central focus of our mind also moves along the chakras in a synchronized manner.

As the moon influences our mind and chakras, on Ekadasi days the center of our mind comes either at the Ajna Chakra (behind the eyebrow) or at the Anahata Chakra (in the heart). Here, our mind feels peaceful and at home. Any spiritual endeavor we do on Ekadasi days bring the maximum spiritual benefit and progress.

On the Ekadasi days, we should fast fully or at least avoid eating grains and beans as a bare minimum to observe. It gives Krishna Bhakti (bhakti-janani) and attracts Krishna (krishna-vasati). Padma Purana says that on the Ekadasi day, all the sins from all the three worlds reside in grains and beans. So, on Ekadasi days, we should not eat any grain or bean.

As it is also the day of Lord Hari when He turns to a different side in His sleep, Ekadasi is considered to be very auspicious. A great advantage of fasting on Ekadasi is that one's sins that have been committed are eradicated.

While fasting for Ekadasi eradicates the sins, the real purpose for observing should be to get Krishna Bhakti. Increasing one's faith and love for God must be the real purpose behind. While observing Ekadasi by fasting we should minimize the demands of the body and instead engage our time in the spiritual practices. Every one who is healthy should follow Ekadasi Vrata to the full extent. Any one who is 7 years or older more should fast on the Ekadasi days.

The rule of thumb is to stay away from grains and beans. The diet should be simple and plain and preferably only once in the day. The food one can eat are: All fruits (fresh and dried), all nuts, oils made from nuts - coconut, olives, etc. potatoes, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, cucumber, squash, lemon, avocado, olives, coconut, buckwheat, sugar, black pepper, fresh salt, fresh turmeric and so on.

Restrictions include tomatoes, eggplants, cauliflower, lettuce, broccoli, bell pepper, peas, chickpeas, spinach, salads, cabbages, leafy herbs and more.

Another possibility is to stay on water alone.

How to fast and observe Ekadasi is given in more details in our web site (gokulbhajan.com) under the EKADASI tab.

13. Daily Chant Maha Mantra

By following all the above-mentioned guidelines, one can come to a stage where the chanting and singing maha-mantra becomes attractive. As the anarthas (unwanted endeavors) die out slowly, the devotion to Lord Krishna sprouts and slowly one comes to the platform of regular chanting.

Chanting for even one hundred rounds occasionally is not a problem. But chanting on a regular basis is not that easy. It requires constant association with advanced devotees and inspiration and mercy from a genuine guru.

The Maha-Mantra given by Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the only means for deliverance in this Kali Yuga. It is not an ordinary mantra like others. While every other mantra has the influence of Kali in this Kali Yuga, this is the only mantra that cannot be touched by Kali.

The Brhan Naradiya Purana and several scriptures proclaim that “for the deliverance in this Kali Yuga, there is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way, except chanting the holy names of the Lord.”

Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu who is none other than the combined form of Sri Krishna and Srimati Radha Rani, gave this mantra freely to every one to chant. When one chants this mantra daily without fail will surely attain the mercy of Lord Krishna.

There are also many misconceptions about what is the real maha-mantra. Some religious sects have even mutilated the maha mantra by adding fictitious syllables. This is very sinful. No one has the authority to mutilate the original maha-mantra or any sacred mantra. If we do, it loses the potency and incurs only sin.

Some sects chant the maha-mantra by starting with “Hare Rama Hare Rama” instead of ‘Hare Krsna Hare Krsna’. They say that Lord Rama came before Krishna. This is from their utter ignorance. Lord Krishna is the Supreme Lord and is always there. As He says in Bhagavad Gita, He is the most original and source of everything.

Some also say that in Ram temple one should start with “Hare Rama” and in Krishna temple we should start with ‘Hare Krishna’. This is utterly baseless. In fact the “Rama” in the maha-mantra represents “Ramana” which is the name of Lord Krishna even though Lord Rama is also included when we chant the full maha-mantra.

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu gave the very original maha-mantra as it is ever vibrating in all the spiritual worlds. It is:

**Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare**

The syllable “Krsna” in the maha-mantra means “All Attractive” and “Hare” means “The energy of the Lord” who is Srimati Radha Rani. Also we should remember that when we chant the “Rama” we should think ‘Ramana” which means one who gives spiritual bliss.

By chanting this maha-mantra we are crying to the Lord to engage us in serving the Lord. We should not chant it to receive material benefits.

Hare Krsna!

2. Budding stage



Following are the things when followed qualifies one to have reached the budding stage and considered higher than the previous stage.

14. Be a pure sattvic vegetarian – no onion no garlic
15. Avoid eating outside and in open places
16. Have a temple room in your home
17. Every day read Sattvic scriptures
18. Worship Sri Radha Krishna
19. Observe vrata for every Ekadasi
20. Sing bhajan every day
21. Accept a genuine guru and get Hari Nama
22. Wear Tulasi mala and apply tilak every day
23. Chant fixed rounds regularly on japa mala

14. Be a pure Sattvic Vegetarian – No onion no garlic

While becoming a vegetarian is the first step towards spiritual elevation, being a sattvic vegetarian is a must for further progress. It is said that 'We are what we eat'. As stated in our Vedic scriptures, foods are classified into three categories: Sattvic foods - foods in the mode of goodness, Rajasic foods - foods in the mode of passion and Tamasic foods - foods in the mode of ignorance.

Sattvic foods are the first level foods (primary) from the earth. They are fresh, juicy and healthy and come directly from plants and trees. Secondary foods are those come from animals who eat the primary foods. The third level foods, which are the worst and most contaminated as those come from those animals that eat other animals. Examples of first level foods are vegetables, fruits and grains. Examples of secondary foods are the flesh from cows, goats, deers, etc that eat primary foods. Examples of third level foods are the flesh from animals such as lion, tiger and so on who eat secondary foods. For human beings, eating only the first level foods is recommended.

Foods that are too cold, too hot, pungent and spicy are the rajasic foods. They are often cooked for taste and thus eaten for enjoyment. Foods that are decomposed, stored over night, preserved in cans and bottles, stale or rotten are tamasic foods. Meats are in the category of tamasic foods. Among vegetables, onion and garlic are also in the mode of tamasic. They make the brain dull and make one lazy and ignorant. It is also to be noted that when a cooked sattvic food is left more than three hours or by over night it becomes tamasic.

The foods we eat are the very root that gives the quality to our body and mind. Sattvic foods make our body healthier and make our mind calm and peaceful. Rajasic foods cause

diseases and make our mind aggressive and greedy. Tamasic foods spoil our body in so many ways including causing chronic and fatal diseases. They also make the mind dull and lazy. We can see that those species such as cows and elephants who live on sattvic foods live together in peace while those who eat secondary and third level foods do not.

Eating only sattvic foods incur the very minimum sin as trees and plants have the lowest developed nervous system. Eating animals, birds and beasts incur more sin as their nervous systems are more developed and hence suffer from pain when killed. Killing human beings incur the highest sin as their nervous system is highly developed. As cows have the most developed nervous system among animals, killing cows is considered equal to killing a human being.

While killing an animal by a human being is considered as act of violence (himsa), when an animal kills another animal is not considered as sin. The law of karma is applicable only to human beings. It is not applicable for the animals who live by their instincts.

For human beings, even eating sattvic foods incur some sin and hence in the Bhagavad Gita (3.13) Lord Krishna says that only when it is offered to Him and then consumed as prasadam the sins are removed and touched with mercy from the Lord. Eating prasadam causes the organs to be enlightened and gives peace and clear thinking to our minds.

Rajasic foods are spicy, pungent, too hot or too cold, processed or over cooked. These also include flesh from some animals, which are secondary foods. Eating these kinds of foods cause aggressiveness, discomfort and diseases. It agitates our mind and causes uncontrollable desires. These foods are not suitable for spiritual development.

Tamasic foods are the worst. These are often putrified, or preserved overnight, even for days and months. These

include processed or preserved or canned foods, flesh of animals, and also certain vegetables such as onion and garlic. These foods make our mind dull and cause laziness and act negatively to our body and mind also causing fatal diseases.

According to the Vedic scriptures, those who eat sattvic foods are elevated to higher levels of consciousness in higher spiritual planets while those who eat rajasic foods will be born again in this world in various forms of species. Those who eat tamasic foods will be pushed down to lower forms of living beings and cause the most downfalls in their spiritual development.

Even when one consumes only vegetables and fruits, there are certain tamasic foods such as onion and garlic to be avoided. Scientists and health advisors may point to some of the good things such as healing properties of these foods. However, they are very dangerous to our mind and in contrary to their claims they make the body to develop bad odors.

Onion and garlic families contain a chemical called Sulphone Hydroxyl, which is highly poisonous. Like DMSO, which is a poison, this chemical has the power of penetrating even the blood-brain-barrier to make the brain dull. This has been proven scientifically. When we perform an ECG after eating onion or garlic, the brain activity is clearly seen affected.

In 1950s when commercial airplanes were first used, due to lack of computers and advanced instruments in those days, quick responses were crucial for the pilots. As they knew the harmful effect of onion and garlic, the chief officer used to check and ban any pilots who ate onion or garlic in the last 72 hours of flight. Even when we join a simple yoga club they tell us to stop eating onion and garlic. Even when one has spiritually advanced after many months of regulated sadhana, eating just a little of onion or garlic damages everything, It is that dangerous!

15. Avoid eating outside and in open places

It is often said, 'you are what you eat' which mainly mentions about our mind. In every food we eat, there is a subtle constituent that comes from the way the food was prepared. Foods absorb the thoughts of the person who cooked the food. This means when any food is prepared by a person who has sinful or negative thoughts, their thoughts will be absorbed in the food. Even if the food appears to be sattvic, if the cooking is not done around good and positive thoughts, that food should not be consumed, as it will affect our mind negatively.

This is the reason we should avoid eating outside in restaurants and public places. Instead, we should prepare the foods with devotion to Lord Krishna, offer to Him and then have the remnant from the Lord. It is called prasadam. As we offer to the Lord, it becomes the most purified food called prasadam. Prasadam is free of any sinful reactions and will make our mind attracted to higher spiritual development.

We should also avoid eating food in open places that are visible to non-devotees or animals. If you are traveling consume the prasadam in a closed place with other devotees and families. Also never eat in the temple room in front of the deities even if it is prasadam.

16. Have a temple room in your home

Every one who aspires to progress spiritually must have a temple room at their home. This temple room should be the main focus of the entire home. In many houses, a small space is given in the kitchen for the Lord, but a better option is to give a dedicated room. This room can also have all the spiritual books and storage place to keep the items used in the worship.

In the temple room, if you can get a nice set of deities and installed for worship that will be the best. But in order to worship installed deities one should have taken proper initiation under a genuine guru. Only an initiated devotee is allowed to serve any installed deities.

Every morning, noon and evening we should offer naivedyam (sattvic foods), water and flowers to the deities. We should also sit in the room and be with the Lord, meditating, singing or reading scriptures. The more time we spend in the temple room and with our deities the more tremendous lift we will get in our devotional life.

17. Every day Read Sattvic scriptures

One question that often comes to many is: “There are so many scriptures. Which scriptures should I read?”

Like the classification of foods that we covered earlier, Vedic scriptures are also divided into three divisions. Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic Scriptures. Those who are in sattvic mode will naturally get attracted to the sattvic scriptures and those who are in rajasic mode will naturally get attracted to the rajasic scriptures. Those who are in tamasic mode will have natural attraction to the tamasic scriptures.

Of the eighteen puranas, Vishnu Purana, Naradiya Purana, Padma Purana, Garuda Purana, Varaha Purana, and Srimad Bhagavata Purana are the sattvic puranas. Brahmanda Purana, Brahmavaivarta, Markandeya Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Vamana Purana, and Brahma Purana are the rajasic puranas. Matsya Purana, Kurma Purana, Linga Purana, Shiva Purana, Skanda Purana, and Agni Purana are the tamasic puranas.

Only the reading of sattvic scriptures can slowly lead one towards Lord Krishna and eventually bestows the rare divine

love. Among all the sattvic puranas, Srimad Bhagavatam is considered as the topmost and is actually a suddha-sattvic purana – the purest of all and situated above all the sattvic puranas. It is the only one called Maha-Purana. When one regularly reads Srimad Bhagavatam, pure devotional love for Lord Krishna will manifest.

Reading rajasic scriptures lead one to perform actions oriented worship including rituals and dharmic activities. Impelled by their mode of passion, they pray primarily for satisfying selfish desires. Similar to the result of rajasic food it brings them back to this same world. Thus, the focus of rajasic scriptures is just to give comfortable living in this world and in other brahmandas, but not to uplift one to higher spiritual worlds.

Tamasic scriptures do not even provide correct understanding of the facts. In fact, they even explain the opposite of sattvic puranas. Reading tamasic scriptures should be avoided at any cost for those who are desiring Krishna bhakti.

Those puranas that are related to Lord Sri Hari are the sattvic puranas, and those that are related Lord Brahma and other gods in action are the rajasic puranas. Those that are related to Lord Siva are the tamasic puranas.

According to Padma Purana (236.21), "... among these puranas, Sattvic Puranas lead one to liberation, Rajasic puranas do not cause anything good but the tamasic puranas lead one to hell."

Like we have seen that foods and scriptures are categorized by their modes of nature, it will be surprising to see that even the religions of the worlds are also categorized in the same way.

Those religions that torture and kill others and instill fear of god are the tamasic religions. They are attracted by the false

believes which are in the tamasic mode and do opposite of what sattvic religions say. While the sattvic religions say not to kill cows, the tamasic religions tell to kill cows. We also see religions that are primarily based on satisfying ones selfish desires. They are the rajasic religions. Their worship will be self-centered and with passion and opulence.

It is very important that one should be attracted to the sattvic puranas. Beyond all the sattvic puranas is Srimad Bhagavatam. Lord Caitanya declared that we do not have to read any other purana or scripture except Srimad Bhagavatam, which is the most nectarian of all. He said even if we lost all the vedas, upanishads and puranas but just have Srimad Bhagavatam, we have not lost anything at all. Sri Caitanya Caritamrta is even higher and is considered as the cream of Srimad Bhagavatam.

Every day, we should make it compulsory to read at least a verse from Srimad Bhagavatam or Srimad Bhagavad Gita. It is a pity that in this age of Kali, no one has time to spare for the spiritual benefit. However, even if one reads a verse or even a line from these scriptures will get great benefit for one's spiritual development.

18. Worship Sri Radha Krishna

In this world, we find very few who are interested in living a life following the laws of dharma. These include those who work and serve for the humanity. They say that 'Nara' seva is 'Narayana' seva. They are performing the seva thinking of reaping the results of their punya as rewards.

Even higher than that are those who are karma yogis. They perform religious duties but without expecting any results back. They offer all the results to Lord Krishna. Even higher than karma yogis are the jnana yogis who renounce all the activities and devote their lives in meditation and try to understand God by their own intellect. Even though Lord

Krishna says that one cannot understand Him via any knowledge, they still try to do so.

Out of such jnanis hardly one - one in a million - gets liberation (mukti). However, out of those who are liberated it is extremely difficult to find a real bhakta of Lord Krishna!

We may ask the question as why that is so. The simple reason is that while every one is selfishly seeking for their benefit, a Krishna bhakta is doing the opposite. While the dharmis, karmis, and jnanis have selfish motives to receive favors, a Krishna bhakta in contrast gives himself to the Lord (atma-nivedana). He does not aspire for any benefit for himself. He is in unconditional love with the Lord and engages his entire life and soul only to serve, satisfy and make the Supreme Lord happy expecting nothing in return.

A pure bhakta of Lord Krishna possesses 'ananya bhakti' which means that they take only Sri Radha Krishna in their hearts and no one else. While all other forms of gods are also actually the angas of Lord Krishna, all serving Him, these devotees do not worship them. They only offer respects to demi-gods from far. For them Sri Radha Krishna Yugala becomes the only one always in their heart, in their thoughts and in their worships. This kind of sentiment is extremely difficult to obtain except by the mercy of pure unalloyed devotees of Lord Sri Krishna.

Some may even argue as why can't we worship Lord Narayana, or forms of Lord Vishnu? The answer is simple. Unlike common people know, all these are actually the expansions of Lord Krishna. Worshipping these expansions is only a preliminary stage and is propounded only by the four sampradayas.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, up to canto 9 it presents Lord Vishnu and Lord Narayana as the supreme. Each canto as we go up gives another higher step in vaidhi bhakti and so on, but when

coming to canto 10 it over turns everything. There it says 'Krsnas Tu Bhagavan Svayam' and all others so far covered (up to canto 9) are actually His expansions and thus preparing for the ultimate truth. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings further clear any doubts in this.

Some may ask what is wrong in worshipping Lakshmi Devi. For those who wish to get devotion to Sri Radha Krishna, worshipping Lakshmi Devi should also be avoided. It is said in the sastras that even though Lakshmi Devi comes from Srimati Radha Rani, when one has inclination to worship Laxmi Devi, Radha Rani turns Her face away!

As we also see in Vrindavan (in Baelvana), Lakshmi Devi is still performing tapas to enter to be part of the rasa leela. Lakshmi Devi was never part of any rasa leela with Krishna. There are so many high tattvas that one should hear from advanced devotees. These are not to be discussed with the public.

Sri Raghunatha Dasa Goswami, one of the six goswamis under Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, in his Manasa Siksha (text 4) writes that he does want to worship even Sri Lakshmi Narayana and the reasons are very deeper. Vaikuntha is not the desired destination for a pure Krishna Bhakta.

19. Observe Vrata for every Ekadasi

In the previous stage (Growing Stage), we mentioned to start observing Ekadasi. But in this stage (Budding Stage), the sadhaka without fail observe every single Ekadasi.

Ekadasi means the eleventh day of the phase of the moon. This day is very special for several reasons. As mentioned before, moon has a direct influence on our mind. When the moon travels thru different phases, the center of our mind also travels thru the different chakras in our body. Of the chakras in our body, the ajnana-chakra that is located at the

middle of our eyebrows, and the anahata-chakra, which is located at the heart, are very special for the spiritual development. On the day of Ekadasi, the mind's concentration comes either of these two chakras. The mind and soul feel at home at these two chakras. Any endeavor we do on this day has tremendous effect on one's spiritual development.

As per a provision arranged by Lord Hari for the papapurusha (the personality of sins in all the worlds) on the day of Ekadasi, all the sins reside in grains and beans and hence we should never eat grains and beans on the day of Ekadasi.

As this day is very special to Lord Hari, Ekadasi day is also called 'Hari Vāsa', 'Madhava Titi', 'Bhakti Janani' and 'Krishna Vasati'. By observing this vrata - for the sake of developing Krishna Bhakti - one becomes highly elevated in their spiritual development.

There are many ways one can follow Ekadasi. Complete fasting without even sleeping for the Ekadasi night but singing Krishna bhajans all night is the top most way of following Ekadasi. The next way is to abstain from eating anything or even drinking water but sleeping at night. Another way is just to drink water alone. If one cannot follow that strictly, one can simply eat the allowed vegetables and fruits but strictly avoiding grains and beans.

Following Ekadasi gives many benefits:

- Bhakti and Devotion develops
- Sins are washed away
- Develops will power
- Makes our body and mind healthy
- Toxins are flushed out and extra fats burned out
- Gives clear thinking and increases concentration power
- Body works on curing diseases

It is also possible to give the punyas of observing Ekadasi to

any others such as the ancestors who passed away, or even to the living persons. However, when following the Ekadasi, if the goal is to obtain only Krishna Bhakti, that will be the best of any other reasons. At this budding stage of devotion, a sadhaka should be aware of this.

20. Sing bhajan and kirtan every day

As one spiritually advances, performing hari bhajans becomes the root of every day life. It is also the basis for temple worship at home. Of the nine angas of bhakti, hearing hari-kathas and singing bhajans and kirtans come very first. Without these, constant remembrance of Lord Hari is not possible.

As a routine, every day one should perform bhajans for Sri Radha Krishna. A real Gokul Kid at this stage feels immense pleasure and great satisfaction when singing bhajans every day – morning and night. When singing bhajans, it is better to use instruments such as kartal and/or mirudanga. Even playing a very simple instrument such as kartal makes the bhajan enriched. While singing the bhajans for the Lord, the love and feeling in separation from Him is the topmost bliss which makes the Lord also very happy.

21. Accept a genuine guru and get Hari Nama

In fact, without accepting a guru, whatever endeavors one may perform won't be perfect. It is the spiritual master who brings light in our devotional life. Otherwise the devotion does not progress and bear the expected fruit.

When one approaches and surrenders to a genuine guru, the very first thing he provides is an initiation into chanting hari nama. He gives the maha-mantra in the right ear where the pingala nadi runs through.

Many people often ask this question: Do we really need a guru to reach Krishna? Krishna belongs to every one. Why can't I do it by myself – kind of a self-service? But what we do not understand is that we have not even seen or know about the spiritual world. We are like a frog in a well trying to understand the ocean.

Even in this material world, no one learned even the a-b-c-d by oneself. Some one had to teach always. If we want to learn music, we seek for a guru; in fact, we look for some one who is coming in a famous succession. For our medical problem, we consult a doctor, sometimes for second or even third opinion. But when it comes to spiritual path, we foolishly argue that we can do it ourselves without any guide. It is actually the EGO that makes one to ask these kinds of questions.

Even though one may chant without accepting a guru, only the chanter who has been initiated gets the real benefit. Otherwise it brings only sukrti. Srila Gurudeva says that one may chant for millions of lives without taking initiation from any guru but has no real benefit. Along with the initiation, the guru gives the seed of bhakti and the connection (sambandha) to Lord Krishna. It is with that single connection we commune with the Lord. Chanting without initiation is like connecting a bulb to an electric socket that has no connection to the real electricity station! There is no real use except for its show. So, when one feels that the time has come, should pray for getting a genuine guru. Only an authorized guru can give sambandha to the Lord.

If one cannot surrender to a guru, Krishna cannot be obtained. The ego of jivas thinking that there is no need to surrender to a guru is a very fundamental defect of all the baddha jivas. Unless one overcomes from this ego and self-prestige, Krishna stands far away. We must remember the very fact that even when the Supreme Lord comes down, he takes up a guru as a way of teaching us that every one needs

to accept a guru.

Guru comes from the spiritual world. He does not belong to this mundane material world. He either comes directly from the spiritual world or empowered by the Lord to become a guru. The guru comes from the spiritual world does the pulling while the empowered guru pushes us up. Guru is the only one who has the whip that can wake us up from the sleep of spiritual ignorance. It is due to the mercy of the supreme lord that He sends His associates to this world or engages His dear devotees.

Also another question may come in. Who is more important - the guru or the Lord? The scriptures say: 'Krishna krpa guru miley, Guru krpa krishna miley.' With the mercy of Lord Krishna one gets a Guru and with the mercy of a Guru one gets Lord Krishna. It is like a catch-twenty-two. Both need to help together. But we simply ignore this truth due to our own ignorance.

Guru means one who drives away the darkness of ignorance by bringing the knowledge of light. He also must be a spiritual master coming in an un-broken lineage as a chain. In a chain, even if one link (guru) breaks (falls down), the chain becomes useless. In the modern world, it is extremely difficult to find a genuine spiritual master. In the Kali Yuga, as the scriptures say, most of the gurus are fake.

The only way to get a genuine spiritual master is to genuinely cry to the Lord from our heart. If we are genuine, Krishna will send us a genuine spiritual master. If we are not genuine or our heart has interests in anything other than Krishna, He will send a fake guru. So, the intention or the root desire in our hearts decides if one gets a genuine guru or not. As most of the people have different intention other than the Lord, they end up in getting only fake gurus.

How to identify if one is a genuine spiritual master. Lord has

given a yardstick for that. If any one posing as guru has even the slightest inclination to wealth (kanaka), women (kamini) or fame (pratishta), he should be considered fake. We have heard even renounced sanyasis falling down due to association with women. The last and the most important one where many fake gurus fail is pratishta. Pratishta is the desire to get fame, name, accumulate disciples, make many buildings and temples and so on. Even renounced sanyasis may not be free from this defect.

Guru business is growing in this Kali Yuga. If any one reaches out to give initiation to grow and be an emperor, you can blindly reject him as fake. A genuine guru will never be interested in taking any disciples by his own will. Then how can one get initiation? It is only by begging and crying. For example, in the case of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Sarasvati Thakur, he even decided to kill himself because his guru refused to take any disciples. Only because of this determination the guru bestowed his mercy and initiated him.

Now another question comes up. How can I know who is a genuine spiritual master? The answer is very simple. When a student gets ready a guru will manifest. Looking for a guru by us should not be in our endeavor. We simply cry to the Lord and it is then His duty to send one for us. When Lord Krishna connects us with him, our heart will automatically run to him. You cannot stop it because it is a spiritual connection. Nothing in this world has the power to break that connection.

Another question comes then. Should that guru coming from an authorized sampradaya? This is a question many used to argue. The sastras such as Padma Purana say that one should get a guru coming only in one of the four sampradayas. Everything outside these four paramparas is not real initiations, but may be just a preparation to eventually get into one of these four sampradayas. That is the reason even though Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu came down from Svetadwipa (the part of Goloka higher than Vaikuntha), He

took initiation under Brahma Madhva sampradaya.

We should also realize the greatness of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu under whom the six goswamis served and propagated Prema Bhakti to Sri Radha Krishna. While all the four authorized sampradayas start from the realms of Brahmanda aiming for liberation, Lord Sri Caitanya came to give something that none of the four sampradayas can give.

All the four sampradayas have Lord Sri Krishna as the root. Sri Lakshmi Devi the consort of Lord Vishnu is the head of Sri parampara. Lord Brahma is the head of Brahma sampradaya. Lord Siva is the head of Rudra sampradaya. Four kumaras are the head of kumara sampradaya. However one fundamental truth behind all these four sampradays is that they all are mainly confined only at the Brahmanda level. The highest destination bestowed by these four paramparas is only mukti (liberation) in Vaikuntha. This is not the goal of Brahma Madhva Gaudiya sampradaya.

Lord Sri Caitanya does not belong to any Brahmanda. He comes from the topmost place higher than Vaikuntha. So, he need not take initiation under any Brahmanda based sampradayas as above. But He did take initiation from one of the sampradayas (Brahma Sampradaya) of this Brahmanda in order to satisfy the rule mentioned in Padma Purana. This also clearly proves that taking a shelter under a genuinely authorized sampradaya is necessary. Only then the genuine seed of bhakti can be given to us. Only those seeds coming from the original can give the right fruit. Fake seeds never sprout or do not give the right fruit. It does not matter how much water we pour (chanting) but the pure bhakti will not arise.

So, in summary, we understand that we need a genuine guru to guide us in devotion and to reach the spiritual world of Sri Radha Krishna that is higher than Vaikuntha. We also understand that only if we genuinely cry for a spiritual master

we can get a real guru who will be from any of the authorized sampradayas.

22. Wear Tulasi and apply tilak every day

Holy tulasi is not an ordinary plant. People who think that tulasi is just a plant are actually ignorant. tulasi has a spiritual origin that is way high than one can even understand. Irrespective of what the scientists say about the glorious medicinal and pollution control effects of tulasi, we should take them just as side-benefits and the spiritual benefits are the most important for us.

The scriptures say that Tulasi Devi is one of the expansions of Srimati Radha Rani who is eternally serving Lord Hari. Thus, she has the origin from the highest spiritual world. Out of her causeless mercy and compassion on the fallen souls, tulasi Devi manifested as the holy tulasi plant on this earth so that we can worship her very easily and gets devotional progress to serve Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna always consults her to bestow any favors to the jivas.

Wearing a tulasi mala, also called kanti mala, brings so much of auspiciousness. It is said in the scriptures that those who wears tulasi mala will never be taken to the world of Yamaraja. Yama-dhutas can never enter near the houses of those who care and worship holy tulasi. She grows in the places where Hari bhakti is present. It is also a known fact that at the place where Jesus Christ was crucified, magically so many holy tulasi plants appeared. She appears wherever there is devotion to Lord Hari.

Wearing a tulasi mala given by a guru gives the maximum protection and mood to worship Lord Krishna. Wearing a tulasi mala can be compared to a crude example of a dog with collar tag of its owner. These dogs are not like the street dogs that may be killed and thrown out by the town management. On the other hand, even if the collar dogs are

roaming out they will be given back to the owner.

While the main purpose of wearing tulasi mala is for spiritual benefits, it also has several other side benefits. It has been found that wearing tulasi brings down the blood pressure and makes our mind calm and peaceful. A spiritually advancing soul who wears tulasi mala naturally gets bestowed with highest devotion to Lord Krishna. One who has taken initiation under a guru should wear tulasi without fail around the neck all the times.

Similar to wearing tulasi mala, wearing tilak is also a very important aspect in spiritual progress. All the holy scriptures declare that similar to wearing tulasi, those who wear tilak also will never go to the jurisdiction of Yamaraja. Yama dhutas cannot go near any one who wears tilak on their forehead. Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu told that if one does not wear tilak on the forehead, that person is considered as nothing but a dead body – a corpse!

In this modern world, some times wearing tilak marks on our body may have to be silenced. One example is the public schools and the other is where we work in the offices. In those situations, one can simply have just one round of tulasi mala or have it hanging long under the top garment so that tulasi is not visible to others. For tilak, one can use just the holy water by chanting the Ganga mantra and make the mark of the tilak.

If a sadhaka wears the tulasi mala given by a genuine spiritual master and applies tilak obtains immense benefits in their spiritual progress. They provide the best mood for chantings and singing bhajans.

23. Chant fixed rounds regularly on japa mala

The sadhaka at this stage should clearly understand that

obtaining Krishna Bhakti is extremely difficult. This bhakti is not to be confused with the chaya-bhakti – the bhakti yoga that general people know about. Chaya-Bhakti means shadow of real devotion. They are not the real bhakti but only a reflection.

Even great gods are not able to get Krishna Bhakti. It can be obtained only by the mercy of pure devotees of Sri Radha Krishna. Even Lord Krishna does not give this. Only His pure devotees can give but they are extremely difficult to find!

Sastras say that when a soul possessing Krishna Bhakti is born in a family, all the ancestors living in the different worlds will dance in ecstasy because this single Krishna Bhakta will liberate all of them – in fact 7, 14 or even 21 generations! It is like a whole village getting liberated. Such is the power of a Krishna Bhakta!

However, growing this plant of Krishna Bhakti is not at all easy. This needs daily watering called 'Chanting'. Regular chanting is like regular watering. If we do not chant daily, this plant will die. So every day one must chant fixed rounds of maha-mantra as prescribed by the spiritual master who gave the maha-mantra.

There are several rules to be followed when chanting the maha-mantra on the beads and here are few important ones to follow:

- Sit straight when chanting on beads
- Chant each syllable aloud and clear
- Think only about Lord and His pastimes
- With attention, hear what you chant
- Never keep beads or bag to touch floor
- Keep the beads always inside chanting bag
- Do not take beads or bag to unclean places like bathrooms
- Beads & Bag should not go below the navel

- Avoid chanting the beads out of the bag
- Never touch beads with left hand
- Keep index finger out of the bag
- Never chant on the crown bead
- Chanting near tulasi Devi is the best

Now a question: Can I chant many rounds all one time and then leave it in rest for some days? The answer is no. Like a plant that needs water regularly, one must chant regularly every day. While chanting more rounds grow the bhakti plant big and tall, regular chanting is a must to keep it alive. As the sadhaka advances further, chanting sixty-four rounds daily on beads will come naturally. Lord Caitanya has repeatedly told that Lord Krishna will never accept any offering unless the devotee chants at least sixty-four rounds daily!

One should be also very careful not to commit any Vaishnava aparadhas. Committing aparadhas will literally stop the interest in chanting.

3. Blooming stage



Following are the things when followed qualifies one to have reached the blooming stage and considered higher than all the previous stages described earlier.

24. Get diksha from a genuine guru
25. Develop ananya bhakti to Radha Krishna
26. Worship Radha Krishna deities daily
27. Eat only the prasadam
28. Observe Ekadasi to the fullest extent
29. Associate with high-class devotees
30. Hear Srimad Bhagavatam every day
31. Listen to Hari Kathas every day
32. Adapt to a life full of chanting, bhajans and kirtans
33. Go to sleep and wake up thinking Guru & Krishna

24. Get diksha from a genuine guru

When entering into this advanced stage of devotion, the soul of the sadhaka hangers to surrender to a spiritual master fully – by body, by mind and by word. As intimately serving and accepting personal instructions from a genuine guru is very important to advance spiritually, the sadhaka at this stage formally accepts and takes diksha initiation from a guru.

Getting a formal diksha initiation involves much more commitment than just getting hari-nama initiation. Hari-nama initiation gives the authority to chant along with the seed of bhakti. When diksha is taken, the guru takes full responsibility of the disciple. He also burns all the sins of the disciple.

During diksha, the initiating guru gives several mantras (usually nine) and also provides a sacred threads for the men. The disciple owes to follow several daily routine duties such as the following:

- Worship one's guru as the very first thing at every worship
- Chant all the diksha mantras (sandhya mantras) at proper times – in the morning at sunrise, in the mid-noon and at the sunset.
- Formally worship installed deities of Sri Caitanya, Sri Radha and Krishna at home.
- Offer naivedyam to the deities at least three times daily and eats only the prasadam which is the remnant and mercy from Lord
- Regularly read scriptures and associate with high class devotees
- Avoid mixing with worldly minded people
- Solely serve to the instructions given by the guru

25. Develop ananya bhakti to Radha Krishna

Unlike most of the people have their understanding of devotion, there are several levels of bhakti and Krishna Bhakti is way higher than any one can imagine. Usually people worship gods (devatas) for any of the following reasons:

- 1) Asha (to satisfy one's material desires)
- 2) Bhaya (out of fear of punishment)
- 3) Kartavya Buddhi (Mundane rituals)

All the religions we see in this world have one or more, or combinations of the above as the main root. However, 'Krishna Bhakti' also called 'pure-bhakti' and does not come under any of the above but is beyond all these. It has no conditional reason as above but is based only upon pure love to Sri Radha Krishna. This unconditional love, with the only aim of serving Sri Radha Krishna Yugala and make Them happy, is called Raga Bhakti. It does not have even a tinge of selfishness.

While other worshippers are in the mode of receiving favors including moksha, Krishna Bhaktas are only in the mode of giving everything to Krishna. While all the other forms of bhakti involve vaidhi sadhana (strict following of rituals), the raga marga does not have such restrictions and is propounded only in the line of Lord Sri Caitanya. No other parampara can bestow this form of pure love. However, one can progress to Raga bhakti only by following Vaidhi Bhakti first.

Scriptures say that out of millions of dharmis, one may become a karma yogi and out of millions of such yogis one becomes a jnani (jnana yogi). Out of millions of such jnanis, one may get mukti (liberated). But even in millions of muktas, it is extremely rare to find a pure Krishna Bhakta. So, developing anayna bhakti is the pinnacle of Krishna Bhakti Yoga and is extremely rare.

In this Kali Yuga, people get degraded more by worshipping siddhas whose main goal is to get yogic power. Siddhas come in many names as babas and so on. There are so many babas. Some even call themselves with designation of 'Bhagavan'. Just because they perform some cheap tricks to fool the people, the ignorant people run to them. Getting thrilled by their cheap tricks these people even surrender and worship those siddhas. No one can save them.

One who is attracted to siddhis follows the mystic yoga systems such as kundalini yoga. They utter the om and get thrilled by the results. When one becomes more serious, they undergo proper initiation and practice with the help of a siddha and push the kundalini sakti from the muladhara to all the way to the sahasrara. When one takes this route, there is no devotion to Krishna. When they come to the stage of 'dharana' (before the samadhi stage), Krishna throws the ashta-siddhi on them. It is like throwing a dog-bone to a dog that gets attracted to it and forgets everything. Once this happens they declare themselves as God and they can never ever get Krishna! So, be very careful. If you want Krishna, then you should not even think about these siddhas or babas even in dream.

At this stage, the devotee will realize that worship of any other gods (called devatas) except Supreme Lord Sri Krishna is actually dangerous. People worship devatas due to their selfish desires and ignorance. It is not authorized to worship any devatas. The only one to worship is Supreme Lord Krishna. We also see many hindus worship spirits and ghosts which is very degraded.

As Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita, when one worships any devata, all the prayers actually reach Sri Krishna, as He is the only recipient. But the worshipper does not go to Krishna. This is clearer in Srimad Bhagavatm. When you post your tax to the local agency, it eventually reaches the main treasury of the government and you the taxpayer do not go

there!

There are many who mislead the people by writing that one can worship any devata or spirits, and like all rivers flowing to the same ocean every one will reach the same place. This is not correct. Spiritual dimension has unlimited destinations and extremely difficult to understand or realize. What they are referring to as ocean is the 'brahman', which is nothing but the effulgence coming from Bhagavan Sri Krishna. Reaching Brahman is like doing spiritual-suicide that all the Hindus and Buddhists want to do. The real spiritual abodes actually start after and beyond brahma-jyoti. The abodes of devatas are situated even before this Brahman realization. When one merges in Brahman, he loses his identity and consciousness and becomes void (nirvana). Do not wish to go there unless you really want to kill yourself, your soul! Merging in Brahman is like spiritual suicide.

And what about those who worship any devata but with intense ananya bhakti? As Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita, all those who worship devatas, spirits or ghosts will reach the abodes of those devatas, spirits or ghosts. Only those who worship Sri Krishna will reach Him and do not return to the material world. All others will eventually have to come back to the earth again. What a waste!

Does that mean that we should blaspheme the devatas? No. Devatas are the servants serving in the government under Lord Krishna executing the tasks of managing the brahmandas. In our brahmanda, their head quarter is heaven, also called Indra Loka. Lord Indra is like the chief minister and Lord Brahma is like the president. They are the ones who run the world. There are 330 million such devatas in our brahmanda. In other brahmandas, the structure and the number of devatas running them may be different.

Any soul who performs pious activities is given chance to stay there in the heaven as a reward but they all have to come

back when those punyas are exhausted. It is like going to Hawaii for a luxury vacation and when the money runs out, we have to return back! Any elevated soul can become a devata and serve the Lord from the heaven.

We give devatas proper respect but keep them away from our worship of Sri Radha Krishna yugala. Never think about devatas. They are like office workers and have assigned duties. They do not need our worship unless you want any selfish favors from them. Also remember that like office workers who get retirement, these devatas also get retirement! For example when muchukunda worked as the army chief for Lord Indra, when he retired, his post has been now given to Lord Kartikeya.

Our worships, dandavats, singings, bhajans, chantings all should be only for our eternal Sri Radha Krishna yugala. Once you get the taste of ananya bhakti to Sri Krishna, which comes only by the association and mercy from pure devotees of Krishna, you will never be able to think about anyone else!

Now a very important question arises. Yes, it is agreed that we should not worship any devatas. Then what about the pure bhaktas and associates of Lord Krishna? Can we worship them? The answer is surprisingly 'Yes'. In fact, worshipping the pure devotees of Lord Krishna is even better than worshipping Lord Krishna. Why is that so?

Volumes of scriptures have been revealed on this. Unlike devatas, these bhaktas are in the heart of Lord Krishna. Devatas have their works and associated 'honorary' positions. But a Krishna bhakta does not have or want any possession at all, except his unlimited love of devotion to the Lord.

Lord Krishna has declared that His dear bhaktas are superior to Himself and He secretly worships His own dear bhaktas. It includes Lord Siva. In Srimad Bhagavatam it is mentioned that Lord Siva is the very first Vaishnava (vaishnavanam

yadha sambhuh). We also hear that Krishna even worshipped Lord Siva in Dwaraka in pretense to get a son as to give honor.

But Krishna Bhaktas always think that they are the lowest in bhakti to Krishna. When Narada Muni was searching for the best bhakta, Lord Siva told, "I am not a great bhakta, but Prahlad is superior to me."

One should position himself as the servant of the servant of the servant of the dear bhakta of Lord Krishna. When one satisfies a Krishna bhakta, Lord Krishna becomes happy. But if we try to worship Krishna directly, He is not happy. These are the secrets of Krishna Bhakti.

So, as a summary, do not worship devatas who have work and position, but worship the pure bhaktas of Sri Radha Krishna as part of worshipping Sri Radha Krishna yugala!

26. Worship Radha Krishna deities Daily

Not every religion allows people to perform deity worship. In all the non-vedic religions, deity worship is strictly prohibited, as they are not qualified. Even when some attempted as we see from the history, the prophets prohibited them to worship. Deity worship is not for every one. Many Hindus do not even know the difference between a deity and an idol.

It is a shame that people even refer to the deities of the temples as idols. Deities and idols are not the same. Idols should not be worshipped. Even though it is impossible to make anything closer to the Supreme God, deities are made as per sastric rules and installed by powerful mantras begging the Lord to make presence for worship.

Once a deity is installed, it is same as the Lord because His power is manifested in the deity and hence can be used to serve and develop closer relation to the Lord. As we use our

post box, anything we offer to the deity directly reaches the Lord. Worshipping deities at home is a very special thing, which comes only by the mercy of the Supreme Lord.

At this stage of bhakti, the sadhaka makes the deity worship as the main part of the daily schedule. In the morning, after taking bath and wearing tilak marks at twelve places on the body, the worship starts from the early morning and goes on in intervals until the night when the deities are put to sleep. Following are the main activities of deity worship at home:

- Waking Guru and Deities
- Offering Seat, Acamanam and Danta to them
- Giving bath and dressing the deities
- Worshipping the Guru before worshipping the deities
- Mangala Arati for the deities
- Worshipping Tulasi Devi
- Offering Bhogas to the deities and then to guru
- Singing Bhajans for the deities
- Putting the deities to sleep

Always remember that all the worship should be done on-behalf of gurudeva. Our mood should be that we worship thru our gurudeva. Never think that we can approach Krishna directly.

27. Eat only the prasadam

We have seen that what we eat becomes our body and mind. It is important to note that the type of food we eat influences the state of mind. When food is cooked, the impression of the person who cooks gets absorbed in the food.

This is very subtle to understand. We even see in the history as how soldiers were fed with milk taken when the cows were made angry. As the anger of the cows gets into the milk the soldiers who drink the milk fight in great anger.

Eating foods cooked by materialists or cooked by non-devotees will surely spoil our devotion that we might have developed with great care and sadhanas for months. While it is very important to eat only vegetarian sattvic foods, for an advanced bhakta, eating only offered prasadam becomes a norm and the rule.

A sadhaka at this stage should eat only the prasadam offered to the deities and then to Sri Guru. When we offer naivedyam to the deities, it becomes maha prasadam. Prasadam means mercy of the Lord. When we offer the maha prasadam to Sri Guru and all the associates and servants of the Lord before we take, it becomes Maha Maha Prasadam.

We do not 'eat' prasadam but 'honor' the prasadam by consuming. We should not waste prasadam and should not consume prasadam directly in front of the deities.

Some times when we travel we may not be able to get prasadam to eat as we may not take our deities with us. In that case, one can obtain pure fruits and vegetables, offer to the Lord mentally and then consume.

28. Observe Ekadasi to the fullest extent

At this stage, the sadhakas make fasting for ekadasi a topmost priority. At this blooming stage, it gives so much of pleasure for the sadhakas to observe all the Ekadasis. They always look for the ekadasi days to come. From the following levels of observing, they will choose to observe the higher levels:

- Taking only fruits, vegetables and water
- Taking only water
- Not even drinking water
- No water and no sleep on Ekadasi night

At this stage, the sadhakas strongly hold that the only reason they observe is to develop devotion to Sri Radha Krishna Yugala. While there are so many wonderful side benefits of observing Ekadasis, getting Krishna Bhakti becomes the one and the only reason to observe Ekadasi.

29. Associate with high class devotees

Unlike other yogas such as Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga, entering into Bhakti Yoga is very easy. There is no pre-qualification required. However, maintaining to advance in Bhakti Yoga is the most difficult thing!

The quality and personality of a person depends on the persons he is associating with. It is sometimes said in plain words that when a calf associates with a pig, it also eats stool as the pig does. So, it is extremely important that we associate only with advanced devotees in order to keep our devotional life progressing.

Regular satsanga and bhajans we perform is like the water we pour to grow the creeper of bhakti. As one cannot grow a plant without water, we cannot grow our devotion without associating with advanced devotees and hearing from them. They will give all the aspirations, mercy and help. Sastras proclaim that even a moment of association with a pure devotee (sadhu) has tremendous spiritual benefit.

30. Hear Srimad Bhagavatam every day

Srimad Bhagavatam is not an ordinary scripture. It is full of nectar. Once one develops taste to on Srimad Bhagavatam, any other scripture will appear tasteless. Lord Sri Caitanya declared that even if we lost all the scriptures but we just have Srimad Bhagavatam, we do not miss anything at all.

Veda Vyasa was the literary incarnation of Sriman Narayana.

After he compiled all the four vedas, wrote mahabharat and all the puranas, he felt miserable. Deciding to kill himself, he meditated on his spiritual master Narada Muni who appeared before him and saw the pathetic condition of his disciple.

Seeing the condition, Narada Muni told the reason for his miserable condition. "O, Vyasa, you wrote many scriptures, but they are not perfect. They are all subjected to the three modes of nature (sattvic, rajasic and tamasic). When you wrote any purana you declared that the primary deity of that purana alone as the topmost. Even though you wrote in such a way to instill faith in the worshippers, you actually cheated the whole world. To rectify this mistake, I order you to meditate on Bhagavan Sri Krishna and write a separate purana about Him alone. There you specifically mention that you are revealing this Bhagavatam as the topmost and to nullify all your previous scriptures. You will be then freed from this miserable condition."

Hearing the instruction from his gurudeva Sri Narada Muni, Vyasa Deva sat in meditation and revealed Srimad Bhagavatam. Thus, the Srimad Bhagavatam was revealed at the very matured stage of Veda Vyasa and is the most pure scripture.

All other puranas become insignificant in front of Srimad Bhagavatam. Following the order of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, we should listen to Srimad Bhagavatam every day. It could be a chapter; it could be a verse or even a line or phrase. Every home should have a copy of Srimad Bhagavatam, which is Sri Krishna Himself.

As Srimad Bhagavatam itself boldly declares that most of the mundane religions in this world are nothing but cheating religions, because the root of their worship is selfishness and not unconditional love for Lord Krishna. All the so-called religions deal only with dharma, karma, jnana or combinations of these. Pure Krishna bhakti has nothing to do with any of

these. In fact, if one has even a little inclination to any of those religions, Krishna Bhakti does not arise or stay in the heart!

There are two kinds of Bhagavatam:

(1) the grandh bhagavatam, which is the scripture itself,
(2) the bhagavat bhagavatam, which are the hearts of pure devotees.

It is said that Srimad Bhagavatam should be only heard from such a maha bhagavat and should not read by ourselves. Also it is said that we should not hear it from any one reciting as a profession making money and fame out of it. It will be like drinking the milk touched by a poisonous snake.

While one should only hear Srimad Bhagavatam from advanced devotees and not to read by ourselves, then how can we engage in hearing it every day? The compromise is that we can read the grandha as if we are hearing from the maha bhagavat who has given to us. We should not think that we are reading by ourselves.

At this blooming stage, the sadhaka finds hearing Srimad Bhagavatam a permanent part of his daily routine and feels immense happiness. It is declared in Srimad Bhagavatam itself that when one hears Srimad Bhagavatam, Lord Krishna is automatically sucked into his heart.

31. Listen to Hari Katha every day

Of the nine angas of bhakti, the sravanam, which means hearing the glories, qualities, holy names and pastimes of Lord, is very important. It is the very first and super most of all the angas. Sravanam then feeds to the kirtanana and smarana and subsequently other angas of bhakti. When a sadhaka comes to this blooming stage, he does not want to spend even a single moment without hearing hari-kathas.

Hearing hari-katha directly from a sadhu gives the best result. However, if we do not have such a rare facility, one can listen to the recorded lectures and bhajans from the advanced bhaktas. Our web site also hosts the recorded lectures of great acharyas and gurus.

32. Adopt to chanting, bhajans and kirtans

As mentioned in the previous sections, chanting is the most important aspect of devotional life following the line of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu who came to initiate the yuga dharma of chanting and performing the nama sankirtan yajna in this kali yuga.

From the very auspicious sravanam (described above), the kirtan automatically follows. The sadhaka at this stage fully engages in chanting (at least sixty four rounds) and engaged in singing bhajans and kirtans every day. The words, “bhajan” and “bhakti” have the same root “bhaj” which means bhakti.

Every morning when the sadhaka is routinely performing worship at home with bhajans and kirtans starting with guru vandana and then followed by proper deity worship, they feel bliss and ecstasy. But without a guru and initiation, this will not stay for long.

One may ask this question: “How do I know that I am really advancing spiritually, and how do I know if my chanting is even working?” A simple yardstick is this.

- 1) Do you feel that your desires for material sense enjoyment have subsided?
- 2) Do you enjoy sitting in front of your deities all the time forgetting everything in this world and talking to them as a mad person and cry?
- 3) Do you feel pleasure in discussing about Sri Radha Krishna and singing for them?
- 4) Do you feel delighted when seeing the devotees of Lord Krishna?

5) Do you feel that you can sacrifice anything including all your valuable times even important duties just to meet and be with the dear devotees of Lord Krishna and hear from their lotus lips?

If you perceive any of these changes, then your devotional activities including your chanting are really working.

The chanting and the emotion we feel with the Lord are not connected with this material world and hence naturally they will cut you off from all the traces of our desire to enjoy anything in this material world. This is bound to happen.

33. Go to sleep and wake up thinking Guru & Krishna

At the end of the day, after putting the deities to sleep in the puja room, the sadhaka goes to sleep. But how? Only by thinking about his guru and Krishna. He feels indebtedness for getting another day in his life that could be engaged in serving Sri Guru, Krishna and His devotees.

He brings a sweet pastime of Lord Krishna in his heart and feel a strong separation from Him. He utters in his heart that Lord Krishna is the one and the only goal and destination for him – no one else.

He utters the sweet names of the Lord and in his mind sings the maha-mantra in his mind in any tune he likes, or with no tune at all. He would let that stay always in his mind at the background while going to sleep.

If you also do like this, Goloka is not far from you! You will live in eternal bliss with Sri Radha Krishna serving them permanently. Our real sweet home is actually there – not here in this perishable and miserable material world. It does not matter whether the home is facing a beautiful beach or

nically built on a beautiful mountain or hill. These do not belong to you and you cannot take anything with you to the next life.

Typical Day of Gokul Kid



For a Gokul Kid wishing to advance in Krishna Bhakti, here is a checklist for every day life. For those who work, simply substitute the word “school” by “office” and adjust and follow in appropriate context.

Do not think that these will take more of your time. Once it becomes a routine, you will see them easy to follow and see the results.

1. Get up early in the morning before Brahma Muhurta, which is an hour, and forty-eight minutes before sunrise.
2. When waking up, the very first thing to remember should be Sri Guru, Gauranga and Lord Krishna.
3. Brush up and finish the morning nature calls.
4. Have a full head bath. Use water at room temperature or even little colder. It should never be hot. Taking bath in hot water will slowly weaken our nervous system.
5. Wear clean set of dresses. Every day the dress should be changed.
6. Prepare Ganga water by chanting the mantra:

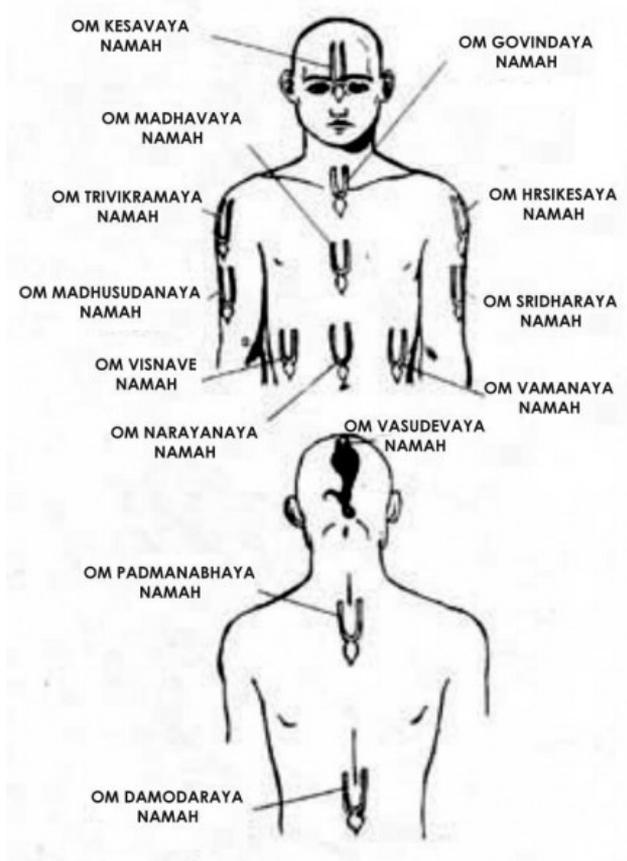
om gange ca yamune caiva,
 godavari saraswati
 narmade sindho kaveri,
 jalesmin sannidhim kuru
7. On weekdays as you have to go to school, make tilak just with the Ganga water. On weekends make real tilak. When putting tilak, say the following holy name:

om keshavaya namah

Then apply the small tilak marks (or ganga water) on twelve places of our body as below chanting these holy names:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| om narayanaya namah | (navel) |
| om madhavaya namah | (chest) |
| om govindaya namah | (throat) |
| om vishnave namah | (right side body) |
| om madhusudhanaya namah | (right hand low) |
| om trivikramaya namah | (right hand upper) |
| om vamanaya namah | (left side body) |
| om sridharaya namah | (left hand low) |
| om hrshikeshaya namah | (left hand upper) |

om padmanabhaya namah (back top)
 om damodaraya namah (back bottom)
 om vasudevaya namah (on the top head)



8. Enter the temple room after a little knock on the door and give obeisances to the picture of guru first, and then to Lord Gauranga and Sri Radha Krishna.

9. Chant a round of maha mantra on beads sitting in the temple room (Tulasi beads can be used only by the initiated, and neem beads can be used by any one).

10. Help your parents to wake up the deities and prepare for the morning puja.
11. If initiated with Diksha, with the picture of guru at front and facing the deities chant all your diksha mantras given by your guru with great attention.
12. Perform guru vandana
13. Then perform the mangala arati with incense, deepa and flower ending with singing the Maha Mantra.
14. Complete the puja by reciting the Jaya Dvani.
15. Then worship Tulasi Devi with Tulasi Arati ending with vandana to Sri Guru and Vaishnavas.
16. Water Tulasi Devi and remove any dead leaves. Water all the flower plants that give flowers for the puja.
17. Pick and offer fresh flowers to the deities. It will be very nice if garlands could be made and offered to the deities.
18. Read a verse from Bhagavad Gita, or Srimad Bhagavatam
19. Help parents to offer naivedyam and honor the prasadam.
20. Go to school with packed prasadam.
21. At the school, associate only with good children. Do not criticize any one (Only a guru has the authority to chastize)
22. At the classes, give your full concentration to the lessons.
23. Coming back from school, first finish all the home works and assignments on the very same day – do not postpone any of them even due later. If you are regularly chanting

maha-mantra, your brain becomes sharper and you will be able to finish all your works very quickly. This is a proven fact.

24. Study for your tests or exams.

25. Do not watch TV, or soap opera or play video games. They will steal away all the bhakti you have accrued. Never be tempted in those. Instead, read devotional books whenever you have time.

26. At night chant one or more rounds of maha mantra depending on how much time you have.

27. Sing a bhajan or two, and listen to any of your favorite Radha Krishna bhajans. Do not listen to any materialistic songs, as they are composed only for material sense gratification.

28. At night, participate in the evening puja with parents.

29. Go to sleep early so that you can get up early.

30. Before getting sleep, first remember your guru in your heart who is guiding you with affection. He is also bound to come in your dream (or in spurti form) and will instruct you if you are not physically with him. Spurti form is a special appearance that looks half real and half dream.

31. Then remember any sweet pastimes of Lord Krishna and you should feel the separation from Him.

32. Utter in your heart that Lord Krishna is the one and the only destination for you and go to sleep.

If you do all these, Goloka is near to you!

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare

PART - 3



GOKUL KID SONGS

G-04. I am a little Gokul Kid

I am a little Gokul Kid
I am a little flower to my Krishna
I worship my Gurudeva (2)
Who can take me to Goloka ... (I am)

I do chant my Krishna Nama
I do offer sweet rice Bhoga
I do sing nice bhajana Geeta (2)
I do take maha maha Prasada ... (I am)

I don't care for Jnana Karma
I don't want Paramatma Bhrahman
I don't want any Ashta Siddhi (2)
I don't want any Bhukti Mukti ... (I am)

Krishna is my Mata Pita
Krishna is my Prana Natha
I love Krishna I love Krishna (2)
I give my very life to Krishna ... (I am)

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare

G-05. Gurudeva O' Gurudeva

Gurudeva, O' Gurudeva
I have some questions Gurudeva!
Gurudeva my Gurudeva
I want to know these Gurudeva! ... (Guru)

Am I the body Gurudeva?
Am I the mind O' Gurudeva?

Who am I O' my Gurudeva?
What is this world O' Gurudeva? ... (Guru)

Why should one die my Gurudeva?
Where do they go O' Gurudeva?
Why do they get old Gurudeva?
Why can't they live ever Gurudeva? ... (Guru)

Where did I come from Gurudeva?
Where will I go my Gurudeva?
What should I do O' Gurudeva?
I want to know these Gurudeva! ... (Guru)

G-06. Let us go, let us go!

Let us go, Let us go, Let us go
Krishna is calling us Let us Go..
Calling with His little flute, Let us go, Let us go
To His sweet Goloka Let us go! ... (Let)

Come to play with Govinda, Let us go
Take all the cows to herd Let us Go..
Pack the lunch to eat with Him, Let us go, Let us go
Milk all His little cows, Let us go! ... (Let)

Come to play in Yamuna, Let us go
Run around the Govardan Let us Go..
Sing with Him, Play with Him, Let us go, let us go
Dance with Him forever Let us go! ... (Let)

G-09. No to Vaikuntha!

No to Vaikuntha
Never to Vaikuntha
Only Goloka - Krishna
Only to Goloka! ... (No)

In Vaikuntha,
I can't play with You
I can't laugh with You
I can't eat with You! ... (No)

In Vaikuntha
I can't dance with You
I can't joke with You
I can't run with You! ... (No)

In Goloka,
I can play with You
I can laugh with You
I can eat with You! ... (No)

In Goloka
I can dance with You
I can joke with You
I can run with You! ... (No)

G-12. Once upon a time I was a happy soul

Once upon a time, I was a happy soul
Then upon a time, looked at maya whole
Wanted to enjoy her wild, became-her very child
Came to this world, came to this world!

I was eating meat, arguing it was neat
I was drinking wine, saying it was fine
Going to party and club, Gossiping all the while
Thinking it was cool, thinking it was cool

Blinded by my greed, blinded by my brain
I was gambling cold, making so much gold
Saints when came and told, never to eat that stool
I told them in bold, no you are fool

Eat and sleep and mate, offend that I hate
Cat and dog and hog, all they do the same
Serving to my sense, serving to my mind
Wasted all my life, wasted all my life

Why I looked at her, I am sick at here
How I go back home, and be happy there
Saints told me once, the way to home
Is to cry for Him and, He will take us home!

Hare Krsna Hare krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare

G-14. What is the use of my education

What is the use of my education?
What is the use of my distinction?
If I don't chant, if I don't sing,
What is the use of my very living? ... (what)

What is the use of my six figure job?
What is the use of serving that Bob?
If I don't chant, if I don't sing,
What is the use of my very living? ... (what)

What is the use of my luxury home?
What is the use of my great nice car?
If I don't chant, if I don't sing.
What is the use of my very living? ... (what)

What is the use of my great honor?
What is the use of my great beauty?
If I don't chant, if I don't sing,
What is the use of my very living? ... (what)

G-22. Once upon a time there was a man of wise

Once upon a time, there was a man of wise
Then upon a time, dreamed a life that nice
Working all the day, harder every way
Saving all the wage, for that happy day!... (Once)

Went to uncle john, in his rural ville
Asked to keep his wage, later get it all
Every week and then, saved his wage away
Thinking for the then, coming happy day!

Oh now he was old, felt that he would die
Went to uncle john, asked his money that day
Oho oho there, something happened bad
Trusted friend john, ran away too sad! ... (Once)

When the wise man knew, that his friend flew
Cried and cried and cried, didn't know what to do
All his years work, all his savings hard,
Gone with no no trace, died of broken heart!

Like that foolish man, like an ass we work
Greedy all the way, make a massive wealth
Yama when comes for sure, have to go in bare
Leaving all we have, not a penny there! ... (Once)

Live a simple life, happy you will feel
Spend the day and night, chant and sing by soul
Real wealth is that, really really cool
All that comes with us, otherwise you are fool!

Only if we chant, every single day

Only if we sing, Lord in every way
When we leave this world, all these come sure
For that real life, happy happy ever! ... (Once)

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

G-23. Once upon a time there was a black crow

Once upon a time, there was a black crow
Then upon a time, saw a white swan
Flying every day, eating every way
Lived a happy life, until saw the swan!

Black crow went to swan, cried & told in brief
Best is swan in white, worst is crow in black
Wished it were white, happy it would be then
Wishing to be a swan, cried and cried in grief!

Aha but that swan, told it was too sad
Seeing a parakeet, lost its happy mood
Para keet it saw, had more colors
Just its white color, was a big curse! ... (Once)

Then the crow and swan, met the parakeet
Told that they were sad, happy was the keet
Wished if they were, born with more colors
Life would have been, happy for ever!

But the para-keet, told it was too sad
Seeing a pea cock, made its mind go mad
He said that the peacock, was a happy galore
With its nice wings, dances in color(s) ... (Once)

Then the crow and swan, with the para-keet
Went and met the peacock, deep in the forest
They said that the peacock, sure was the best
Wishing that they too, were born like that

But the peacock told, it was too sad
Born with great beauty, was a big curse
Every moment then, living in fear
That it soon be caught, for its nice feather! ... (Once)

Looking at the crow, peacock told in tears
Born as black crow, was the best of all
Flying all the day, eating every way
With no no no fear, happy every day!

If one is content, with what he has got
He's a happy man, in all the three worlds
Greed that makes the mind, mad and mad and bad
Drives the happiness, far and far away ... (Once)

Thank the Lord for, what he has given
Sing the Lord for, mercy he showered
Chant his holy names, for his love for sure
Real happy life, surely ever there!

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

G-24. Once upon a time there was a Yogi

Once upon a time, there was a yogi saint
Then upon a time, sat under a tree
Doing great tapas, in his yogic river
Tamed his body mind, got siddhic power!

Once he was in trance, a crow was on that tree
In its native way, it sang with sweet voice
When it sang in tune, ka ka ka ka kee
Made the saint to wake, broke his trance in piece!

The yogi got anger, yelled at poor crow
Don't you know me? I am a yogi saint
As you broke my trance, I will curse you now
Yogi stared at crow, the crow burned to ash! ... (Once)

After he was angry, then he became hungry
Took his begging bowl, went to a village far
Standing front of a home, yelling for some food
Thinking in his heart, mighty power he got!

Saw a woman in home, deep in her prayers
Singing Lord's names, she was in tears
Seeing no no food, coming in the near
Yogi yelled at loud, stared at her in anger! ... (Once)

Woman came to sense, told the angry saint
I am not that crow, that you burnt to ash
Only when I am done, after serving my Lord
I can come to you, you should so wait

When the yogi heard, what the woman told
Wondered how this poor, woman knew that crow
Being in shame of his, lowly little power
Ran away from there, never to see him ever! ... (Once)

Yogis jnanis sidhis, are not Krishna's dear
Because what they want, is name and power
They may have name, they may have power
Those are like poison, to the love of Lord!

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare!

G-25. Once upon a time there was a Parrot in Cage

Once upon a time, there was a parrot in cage
Then upon a time, a wise man came and bought
Taking it to his home, giving it all his time
Making the cage the best, so good and shine!

For the parrot's fair, cleaned the cage with care
For the parrot's galor, painted the cage with color
For the parrot's beauty, covered the cage with gold
Sprayed with costly scents, wiped with silken cloth....(Once)

Days and days went by, gone now even a week
While the cage looked great, the parrot became weak
Aho, aho ho! Two weeks now gone!
Sad and sad and sad, the parrot died and gone! (Once)

Neighbors ran and came, when he cried and cried

Shocked to see the parrot, died with no no food
Asked the wise man, ever he fed the parrot
Wise man then cried, 'I didn't feed the parrot' (Once)

Like that parrot in cage, we the soul live
Like that foolish man, body is what we care
Wearing gold jewels, wearing colored dresses
We care only the body, forgetting our soul (Once)

Soul wants the food, that is the love of God
Without that very love, it can't live at all
Only goal in life, is to make our soul
Connected to that Lord, happy ever that's all (Once)

Hear the story of Lord, making the soul happy
Sing the name of the Lord, making the soul in bliss
Chant the names of the Lord, making it bath in love
That the love in bliss, is the food to soul

Hare krsna hare krsna, Krsna krsna hare hare
Hare rama hare rama, Rama rama hare hare

G-26. Once upon a time there was a Frog in the Well

Once upon a time, there was a frog in the well
Then upon a time, a sparrow came to that well
Living at bottom of well, eating jumping sleeping
The frog lived along, believed the well was world ... (Once)

When the sparrow told, that his well is not world
Frog then yelled at her, "No no you are a fool"
One day the angry bird, flew to bottom of well
Brought the frog out, letting to see the truth!

When the frog saw, what was standing so tall
The bird then told the frog, that it was a hill
When the frog saw, what was shining so large
The bird then told the frog, that it was the sea ... (Once)

When the frog saw, what were dancing in colors
The bird then told the frog, that they were the flowers
When the frog saw, what were tall and green
The bird then told the frog, that they were the trees

Bird then asked the frog, if he believed the bird
The frog in shame told, he was the real fool
The bird then asked the frog, if to return to well
The frog then told the bird, no no I am not! ... (Once)

Scriptures from the Lord, tell us all the truths
It is we the fool, don't believe them all
When a guru comes, shows the mighty worlds
Then we see the truth, clear and in color!

Hare krsna hare krsna, Krsna krsna hare hare
Hare rama hare rama, Rama rama hare hare

G-27. Once upon a time there was a race in Heaven

Once upon a time, there was a race in heaven
Then upon that time, gods came for the run
Whoever flew around, all the worlds once
And returned first, would be worshipped first! ... (Once)

Wanting to be the first, and be worshipped first
All the gods ran, it was a great sight!
All the 33 crore gods, lined up to the sun
Indra head of the gods, even wanted to run!

Chandra vayu agni, varuna ganesha mitra
Surya kartik kubera, vasus sakra rutra
Every one with machines, flying over the clouds
Heaven was full of roar, shaking all the worlds .. (Once)

Ganesha on his rat, not even able to sit
Tried to run the race, but not moving a bit
Greedy to be the first, could not go a feet
Ran on leg with belly, thinking of a trick!

Thinking of any trick, Narada muni came
Ganesha asked the muni, was there a way to win
Narada told Ganesh, chanting 'rama' nama
Nine times means, going around the worlds! .. (Once)

Ganesha did the same, won the great race
Defeated all the gods, got the worship first
Kartik too wanted, to be the first god
But failed by the trick, of his own brother!

Every heavenly god, greedy for the name
Every heavenly god, greedy for the fame

Why should the mighty god, fight for His glory
Why should even He, run a race in fury .. (Once)

Look at how the supreme, Lord thinks of Him
Look at what the supreme, Lord does from Him

Krishna became a driver, to his dear friend
Washed the legs of guests, others feel offend
Krishna even carried, draupadi's foot wear
Worshipped dust of feet, of the gopis dear

Did my sweet Lord, hanker for any honor?
Did my sweet Lord, hanker for any fame?
Did my Lord ever, run a race to win?
Do you see the real, god of all the gods?

Hare krsna hare krsna, krsna krsna hare hare
Hare rama hare rama, rama rama hare hare!

.....

(Above is based on Padma Purana)

G-28. Once upon a time there was an orphan dog

Once upon a time, there was an orphan dog
Then upon a time, a man took her to home
Feeding bathing and patting, giving all the care
The man loved his dog, that was cute and fair!

Days and weeks and months, years now have gone
Then the cute dog, became old and sick
Costing too much then, to keep her still alive
Master thought and thought, what could be done!

One day the master took, old dog in his car
Covering her eyes, drove it too way far
Reaching a dead beach, letting her to run
Before the dog saw, master left and ran!

When the covering fell, dog then there found
That her master was, no where to find
Hoping to go to home, waving her little tail
Waited for her master, sitting there ever!

Without food and sleep, tears filling in eyes
Ran to each who came, waving her little tail
Seeing all the ones, none was her master
Hoping still one day, he would surely come

Days and months gone, even a year went
Master never came, but she had the hope
Aho sick and old, one day fell and died
A sweeper took her body, threw it in the trash!

Like that poor dog, we are in this life
Real master is, sitting in our heart

Calling us everyday, weeping with real love
Waiting for us to take, to His sweet home!

Hare krsna hare krsna, Krsna krsna hare hare
Hare rama hare rama, Rama rama hare hare

G-29. Once upon a time there was a great king

Once upon a time, there was a great king
Then upon a time, on the death bed to die
Scared of facing the death, scared of dying alone
Asked his four queens, who could die with him ... (Once)

First queen told the king, she couldn't go with the king
Because she had to stay, here with so many things
Second queen told the king, she couldn't die with the king
Hiding she had to marry, another after the king

Third queen told the king, that she had many friends
But she promised for sure, come for his last rites
Fourth queen told the king, who was neglected ill
Surely die with the king, see him tortured in hell ... (once)

Who is the first queen, she is the body we care
Who is the second queen, the wealth that we dare
Body can never come, with us when we die
Wealth will change hands, as soon as we say bye

Who is the third queen, relations and the friends
Who will come with flowers, leave after funeral rites
Fourth queen is ignored, parama atma of soul
Coming as blind judge, ready to punish in hell ... (Once)

Only the nishta in heart, for our guru deva
Make him come and take, all the lucky jivas
All the sastras say, guru has more mercy
Than even the Lord, that may sound crazy.

O my guru deva, O my guru deva
I am at your door, begging for your grace
I have no strength, without your will
Just a dust of your feet, make me sing and dance

Hare krsna hare krsna
Krsna krsna hare hare
Hare rama hare rama
Rama rama hare hare

G-30. Ignorance and Knowledge

(Raga: Ragupathy Raghava Raja Ram)

'I am this body' is ignorance
'I am a spirit soul' is the knowledge!
'I am the master' is ignorance
'I am a servant' is the knowledge

'Worlds came from nothing' is ignorance
'They came from Krishna' is the knowledge
'World is for mine' is ignorance
'Krishna is its owner' is the knowledge

'Animals have no soul' is ignorance
'All souls are divine' is the knowledge
'Eating meat' is very ignorance
'Honoring prasadam' is the knowledge

'Krishna came from maya' is ignorance
'Maya is His servant' is the knowledge
'Krishna is avatar' is ignorance
'He is the supreme' is the knowledge

'We have one life' is ignorance
'We had many lives' is the knowledge
'Worshiping demigods' is ignorance
'Worshiping Krishna' is the knowledge

'Praying for our sake' is ignorance
'Giving us to Krishna' is the knowledge
'Living for myself' is ignorance
'Living for Krishna' is the knowledge

Hare krishna hare krishna
Krishna krishna hare hare
Hare rama hare rama
Rama rama hare hare

G-31. Krishna went to a Gopi's House

Krishna went to a gopi's house
With His little dear friends
To steal butter in that house!

Krishna Krishna Krishna hey
Krishna the butter thief!
Krishna Krishna Krishna oh hey!