



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS
Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

HARE KRISHNA NEWS

March/April 2023

Festival of Chariots

ONE DAY ONLY

**DANCE
DRAMA • MUSIC
CHARIOT PARADE**

7 APRIL

**DURBAN
AMPHITHEATRE
NORTH BEACH**

Kadamba Kanana Swami
–The South African Story

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

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Vaishnava Calendar

5 Apr We	Sri Balarama Rasayatra Sri Krsna Vasanta Rasa Appearance of Radha Kunda
16 Apr Su	Ekadasi
17 Apr Mo	Break fast 06:15 - 10:02
20 Apr Th	Sri Gadadhara Pandit's Appearance
22 Apr Sa	Akshaya Tritiya
29 Apr Sa	Srimati Sita Devi's Appearance (Consort of Lord Sri Rama) Srimati Jahnava Devi's Appearance (Consort of Lord Nityananda)
1 May Mo	Ekadasi
2 May Tu	Break fast 06:25 - 10:03
3 May We	Sri Jayananda Prabhu's Disappearance
4 May Th	Nrsimha Caturdasi: Appearance of Lord Nrsimhadeva (Fast till dusk)
5 May Fr	Sri Sri Radha-Ramana Devaji's Appearance Sri Madhavendra Puri's Appearance
10 May We	Sri Ramananda Raya's Disappearance
15 May Mo	Ekadasi
16 May Tu	Break fast 06:33 - 10:06
31 May We	Pandava Nirjala Ekadasi
1 Jun Th	Break fast 06:43 - 10:10
2 Jun Fr	Panihati Chida Dahi Utsava

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**Durban Festival of Chariots Drama:
The Divine Song
Written & Directed
by Bhaktimarga Swami**

Performance: Friday 7 April 7:20pm
Venue: Durban Festival of Chariots, Durban
Amphitheatre – North Beach

We've all been there before – woke up one morning not particularly excited about going through the usual grind, and more-so, worried to death about tackling the day's colossal assignment at work or school. The mind declares, "This could break me. I think I'll quit."

The above scenario, more or less, is the inner monologue for a distressed warrior named Arjun who appears to have all odds stacked against him in this short drama *The Divine Song*.

The Divine Song is based on a throwback to at least fifty centuries past in the days of horses and chariots, but has all relevance to our modern day life when in the most difficult of challenges. The bulk of the *The Divine Song* is enshrined by a soothing but provocative dialogue – a therapy session, actually. Would directors and actors of the theatre dare to attempt an ancient dialogue between a shaky warrior and solid mystic. I mean, what do you do with a chat

in the flats of northern India? Can it make it to the stage?

Somehow, by the wave of the mystic's magic wand, or in this case, by the otherworldly flute of Krishna, we have something for an audience's eyes, ears, and intellect.

This will not be my first presentation of this energetic and athletic introspection for a gratified audience, and will be put under the lights at the Durban Festival of Chariots. Because *The Divine Song* touches on life matters and is physical, it's compelling for all. There's something in it for everyone, even the kids. It's clean, it's brave, and it's fun; actors actually get downright silly on the stage!

Viewers of the play, *The Divine Song*, just as readers of the ancient text in full called *Bhagavad Gita*, receive strength not only from its performance, but also its powerful message, whether embraced metaphorically, or as a literal historic reference. Whether the nourishment arrives in small portions as an inner strength, or in epic proportions as in "let's battle evil together," it's worth milling over. For some people, just getting up in the morning is a chore and a score.

"Let's arise, Arjun," is the tune. We shall overcome.

–Bhaktimarga Swami

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Durban Amphitheatre • North Beach • Friday 7 April

Cultural Entertainment Stage

- 1:00pm Kirtan by Hari Kirtan
 1:35pm Kathak Dance
 by Kumari Shiksha Dance School
 1:55pm Nityananda's Chant Party
 Kirtan with iolin
 2:25pm South Indian Classical Music
 by Kalay Naicker & Troupe
 3:00pm Fusion East-West Bharatanatyam
 by Natya Bhakti Nilayam School
 3:20pm Local Dance
 by Kwa Mashu Dance School
 3.55pm Dance Medley
 by Param Athman Dance Theatre
 4:15pm Voice of Angels – Opera, Gospel,
 Classical, Traditional
 By Youth from Inanda
 4:50pm Golden Age Musical
 by Prem Vikash & Rasaraj
 5:00pm Poetry by Kwazi Ndlangisa,
 multi award winning poet
 5:20pm Krishna Rock Music
 by Aden Hinds, SAMA
 nominated singer/songwriter
 5:55pm African Music of Isicathamiya
 & Zulu Warrior Dance
 by Love World Production
 6:45pm Rubbish Orchestra
 by Mhayise Productions led
 Musa Hlatshwayo

– an interactive performance that will see the audience participate in a collaborative music and movement creation

- 7:20pm The Divine Song – Drama
 Written & directed
 by Bhaktimarga Swami
 8:00pm Wisdom from Bhakti Caitanya
 Swami, Bhakti Brhat Bhagavata
 Swami & Savyasaci Das
 8:30pm Final kirtan

9:00pm Ariel Fireworks Display

Retail Fair 11am-8pm

Browse through the wide selection of stylish devotional apparel and paraphernalia: jewelry, hemp bags, anarkalis, gopi outfits, saris, cool & comfortable block print 100% cotton kurtis, palazzo pants, ready-made cotton blouses & stretch blouses with lace, and cotton dupattas. For worship: tulsi and neem japa beads, tulsi and neem neckbeads, blowing conch shells, peacock fans, and oils. For men: 100% cotton kurtas, T-shirts & dhotis. For young ones: a range of soft Krishna dolls; cotton skirts; T-shirts; and story & activity books. Keep an eye out for the unique range of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath jewelery and Radha Radhanath branded aprons and bags.

Body Art 11am-8pm

Be a little adventurous with glitter face paint, temporary trendy tattoos and intricate henna designs done by skilled artists. All materials are non-toxic.

Food Court 11am-8pm

If you want to skip the wood-fired breyani, then the food court offers a variety of light meals and snacks: pizza, burger & chips, roti rolls, cakes, biscuits, cupcakes, and frozen yogurt ice cream.

Wisdom Books 11am-8pm

Browse through our wisdom books store with its wide range of books on bhakti-yoga for the beginner, curious, interested, inquisitive and serious practitioner. Keep an eye out for new book titles: The Saffron Path, Bhakti Shakti, Prema Kirtan, Forever Present & more.

Jumping Castle 11am-8pm

For kids under 12

Festival of Chariots

2023 Highlights

Chariot Parade @3pm Friday 7 April

Starting opposite Tropicana Hotel on Upper Marine Parade at the car park, proceeding north towards Mini Town. At Mini Town, turning right going down into Lower Marine Parade and finally entering the festival site – Durban Amphitheatre. This route is 2km.

Shuttle Service to Parade

There will be a shuttle service from 1:30pm from the festival site to the parade starting point, Tropicana Hotel. Lord Jagannath, Baladeva & Subhadra Devi will arrive at 2:30pm, we encourage you to be present to welcome Their Lordships.

Meet Lord Jagannath

Come greet Lord Jagannath on his chariot when he returns to the festival site. Their Lordships will remain on the chariot and everyone is welcome to bring your own offerings from home or offer incense. Their Lordships will leave around 8pm. Note: Lord Jagannath will only stay if the weather permits.

Bus Service

Temples to Festival

Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple & New Jagannath Puri Temple are offering FREE transport to and from the temples to the festival site. Departure from temples at 12pm. Return from festival at 9pm.

Q&A: 30-minute Conscious Contemplation

1:00pm	The Goal of Life Jaisacinandan Das
1:30pm	Mindfulness, Meditation & Mantra Rukmini Devi Dasi
2:00pm	Devotional Service Ram Govinda Swami
2:30pm	Chant and Be Happy Raghunath Bhatta Das
3:00pm	Who are you really? Gangamata Goswamini Dasi
3:30pm	The Basis for Vegetarianism Champakalata Dasi
4:00pm	Become Free from Suffering Ramanujacharya Das
4:30pm	Imperfect Senses – Imperfect Knowledge Gaura Bhumi Dasi
5:00pm	The Need for a Spiritual Teacher Smita Krishna Das
5:30pm	Recipe for Happiness & Peace Narottama Das
6:00pm	Karma & Reincarnation Bhakti Brihat Bhagavata Swami
6:30pm	The Power of Association Bhakti Caitanya Swami
7:00pm	Leadership in the Modern Age Savyasaci Das
7:30pm	The Real Meaning of Charity Partha Sarathi Das Goswami



SADHU SANGA

SATURDAY 8th April

- 4:30 am Mangal Arati & Japa
7:00am Deity Greetings
7:10am Srila Prabhupada's Guru-puja
7:30am New Jagannath Puri Temple
The Essence of
Srila Prabhupada Lila
His Holiness Bhakti
Brhat Bhagavat Swami
- 7:30am Sri Sri Radha
Radhanath Temple
Lord Jagannath
& Caitanya Mahaprabhu
His Grace Savyasaci Das
- 9:00am Breakfast
10:00am Maha Harinam
on Durban Beachfront
12:30pm Arati & Kirtan
1:00pm Lunch
2:00pm Kirtan
2:30pm The Nine Devotions
(Session 1)
His Holiness
Bhaktimarga Swami
- 3:30pm Kirtan
4:00pm The Priceless Gift
(Session 1)
His Holiness Bhakti
Caitanya Swami
- 5:00pm Supper
6:30pm The Divine Song – Drama
Written & Directed by
His Holiness
Bhaktimarga Swami
7:00pm Gaura Arati & Kirtan

SUNDAY 9th April

- 4:30 am Mangal Arati & Japa
7:00am Deity Greetings
7:10am Srila Prabhupada's Guru-puja
7:30am New Jagannath Puri Temple
The Essence of Caitanya Lila
His Holiness Bhakti
Brhat Bhagavat Swami
- 7:30am Sri Sri Radha
Radhanath Temple
Pastimes of Jagannath,
Baladev & Subhadra Devi
His Holiness
Bhakti Caitanya Swami
- 9:00am Breakfast
- Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple
Love Feast @11am
Lord Jagannath's Mercy
by His Grace Narottam Das**
- 11:00am Srila Prabhupada's
Guru-puja
11:30am The Lila of Lord Jagannath
His Holiness
Ram Govinda Swami
- 12:30pm Arati & Kirtan
1:00pm Lunch
2:00pm Kirtan
2:30pm The Nine Devotions
(Session 2) His Holiness
Bhaktimarga Swami
- 3:30pm Kirtan
4:00pm The Priceless Gift (Session 2)
His Holiness
Bhakti Caitanya Swami
- 5:00pm Supper

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6:00pm ISKCON: Our Shelter
His Holiness
Partha Sarathi Das Goswami
7:00pm Gaura Arati & Kirtan

MONDAY 10th April

4:30 am Mangal Arati & Japa
7:00am Deity Greetings
7:10am Srila Prabhupada's Guru-puja
7:30am New Jagannath Puri Temple
The Essence of Krishna Lila
His Holiness Bhakti
Brhat Bhagavat Swami

7:30am Sri Sri Radha
Radhanath Temple
His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada

9:00am Breakfast
10:00am Krishna Consciousness:
Our Ultimate Goal
Maha Class by all the
Sannyasis

12:30pm Arati & Kirtan
2:00pm Lunch

**Sri Sri Radha
Radhanath Temple
Shuttle Service
Saturday & Sunday**

**Depart SSRRT 12pm to NJP
Depart NJP 8:30pm to SSRRT
Monday 11 April
Depart SSRRT 9am to NJP
Depart NJP 3pm to SSRRT**

Fantastic Friends

@Sadhu Sanga

For Under 12s

1pm-6pm

8-10 April



Body Art
Laser Tag
Bubble Lab
Floor Piano
Foam Party
Splash Paint

Animation Studio

Main Attraction

Junior MasterChef

Mini Ratha Yatra

Collect points
for each activity,
redeem points
and collect a
prize. Loads
of prizes to be
won!





Save
The Date

FOREVER PRESENT

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LIFE OF HIS HOLINESS

Kadamba Kanana Swami

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Kadamba Kanana Swami – The South African Story By Rukmini Devi Dasi

All in one shot

The bullet entered through his back, its trajectory mystically avoiding all vital organs and exiting from his left lower abdomen. First thought: "I've been shot." Second thought: "Don't black out or you will die on the bathroom floor." He steadied his breathing and crawled out to an open space. "Shot," he screamed. It was barely a whisper. "Did he get an electric shock?" asked the puzzled bystanders outside the Krishna Balaram Mandir in Vrindavan, afraid to touch him. "This is the end," he thought, "...but not yet. Duty first!"

Holding in exposed intestines, he shakily climbed the stairs. He knew that he had ruffled the feathers of the local mafia when he fought to maintain the purity of Srila Prabhupada's temple and this was the price. Two flights up, he entered his simple room. In a safe were legal documents that would jeopardize the temple if they in the wrong hands. He placed them in reliable hands and lay on the bed. The framed picture of Srila Prabhupada leading *kirtan* in Tompkins Square Park floated before his eyes. Next to it was a picture of the Pancha Tattva dancing. A few days ago, when leading a fiery *kirtan* in front of Gaura Nitai's altar, he saw Them flex their muscles as if about to jump off. A sign that it was time to leave Vrindavan? He closed his eyes accepting divine fate.

Home away from home

October 1995, eight months later, Kadamba Kanana Swami landed at the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple in Durban. The warm weather brought him here. Warm hearts kept him coming back for the next 28 years. South Africa would allow him time, space, and the medical help needed to recover. And he reciprocated. His classes were fresh, honest and tastefully humorous. His energetic exuberance appealed to the youth and his *kirtan* became the bedrock of every Ratha Yatra.

He fit well in a country with a melting pot of cultures. Two decades in India made him more Indian than the South African Indians; he spoke better Hindi. Born in Holland, he was more Dutch than the Afrikaners. And for the African majority of South Africa, he connected with them through rhythm, dance, and mantra, communicating better than words could. Outside of Vrindavan, South Africa became home.

Riding the 3rd Wave

Krishna consciousness in South Africa was established in waves. The first wave of devotees were direct disciples of Srila Prabhupada. They entered into apartheid South Africa and established roots despite

constant government threats. The political climate forced them to cultivate predominately Indian areas and they arranged for Srila Prabhupada's South African tour despite his passport stating, "Valid for all countries except Rhodesia and South Africa."

The second wave built an empire upon this foundation. With great sacrifice, they constructed iconic temples and established an active community. ISKCON South Africa gradually earned its place as one of our largest Krishna conscious communities in the world.

Yet Srila Prabhupada's vision for the continent was still to be achieved. When Brahmananda Dasa pioneered Krishna consciousness in Kenya, he leaned on the piety of the Indian populace but Srila Prabhupada emphasized that he should connect with the indigenous people. "If you don't do it, I will!" demanded Srila Prabhupada. The third wave of devotees in South Africa have the primary mission of breaking racial boundaries and allowing Krishna consciousness to take root amongst all South Africans.

Kadamba Kanana Swami entered South Africa within the 2nd and 3rd waves. Where he saw spiritual potential, he invested time, energy and heart, forging relationships and building trust. Amongst others, many young African seekers were drawn to him. He initiated them, cared for them and if the circumstances called for it, he even financed their education. He encouraged African devotees to accept leadership roles and mentored them. Srila Prabhupada's final instruction to Brahmananda Prabhu was, "In Africa, I want that Indians, Europeans and Africans to dance together." It was often in a chant-your-lungs-out, dance-your-feet-off Kadamba Kanana Swami *kirtan* that all boundaries dropped.

Bhurijana Prabhu narrates the story of how during an unrest in an African township, Kadamba Kanana Maharaj was surrounded by an antagonistic group of locals. "What are you doing here? You are not black. What is your purpose?" they questioned. With trademark honesty and earnestness, he responded, "My forefathers came to your country and they exploited the land. They made your people their servants. They raped your wives. Now I've come to try to pay back some of that debt."

On the shoulders of giants

Born in Heemstede, an upper-class suburb near Amsterdam, Maharaja was the heir to a successful global textile business. It never intrigued him. He saw through the boisterous promises of a capitalistic future from an early age. Instead, as a young seeker and musician, he poured his internal musings into song and vowed never to own a

house. He had received the *maha-mantra* in a jam session with Burton Greene. He received Srila Prabhupada's *Bhagavad Gita* from a friend and reading it challenged him. It called for surrender on every page. Could he walk away from it and still claim to be sincere? He left Holland to travel to India over land. He did keep some things Dutch; innate stubbornness, a pioneering spirit and a love for cheese.

In 1978, following a white stream of cows upon a dusty road, he found himself in front of the altar of Sri Sri Radha Shyamasundara. Vrindavan captured him. On his second day he was the Govinda's Restaurant manager. He met Srila Prabhupada through his loyal disciples and through various services.* In time he would marry Isani Devi Dasi and become a disciple of His Holiness Jayadvaita Swami. In that first year though a bout of jaundice and an expiring visa forced him to return to Europe.

It was a difficult adjustment. Krishna consciousness felt natural in India. In the Amsterdam temple at that time, "How are you?" was sometimes lost to "How many books did you distribute?" Being sick, there was little that he could eat on the temple menu. A kind African American devotee, Mahavirya Dasa, would bake loaves of banana bread and leave it in his locker with a note saying, "Your dog-servant." He encouraged Maharaja to chant extra rounds and read a chapter of *Bhagavad Gita* in the morning – a pattern he would later perennially return to as a source of strength. But temple life got too difficult for him to bare in those initial stages and one morning he quietly left.

Mahavirya decided to fast until he would return. Maharaja heard of this. It took three days before he returned. Mahavirya's kindness and personal care and commitment conquered him. These qualities became an emblem in his own character. He felt indebted to Mahavirya. Sometimes he would say that his focus on South Africa was in payment of that debt.

Africa is ready

"I heard that these devotees in Soweto, who always come for all the Ratha Yatras, that when they received Bhakti Caitanya Maharaja's Ratha Yatra video, they took especially the *kirtan* DVD, and as soon as they got it hot off the press, they put it in the video slot and they played it the whole night and they danced in front of the TV! Now, that did something to me. I don't usually cry tears when I hear stories of Srimati Radharani; I'm like that you know, I don't know, I'm too fallen, I'm not so advanced. When I hear stories of *rasa-lila* – no tears; I like the stories but no tears. But when I hear stories of African people dancing in front of the TV watching the *kirtan*, then I cry tears..."

Soweto is not just another African suburb in Gauteng. The Soweto Uprising of 1976 showed us that it is a hub of change. When students in Soweto mobilized a peaceful demonstration against the use of Afrikaans as a compulsory medium of instruction in schools, the government responded with a bloody retaliation. Pictures of the brutal treatment of civilians and children circulated internationally. Was it a crime to be taught in your own language? It was the beginning of end of apartheid. In 2007 Kadamba Kanana Swami was determined that Soweto would have its own Ratha Yatra.

Vibhu Caitanya described that Maharaja used various means to finance that Ratha Yatra, including personally going from door to door in the Gauteng small business district, requesting donations. He also commissioned a flyer to advertise the opportunity for monthly donations. The initial text beseeched people to offer their "good Samaritan" contribution to those spiritually in need. It was unconsciously but subtly demeaning. He rejected the text. "Africa is ready for Krishna consciousness," he said, "the problem is that we are not ready for them."

The first Soweto Ratha Yatra

Firing on all cylinders, Maharaja arranged to bring three buses of students from Durban and a team of Sowetan devotees, led by Mahaprabhu Das, who booked the famous rainbow stage at Mofolo Park. He organised a dynamic stage program with an international devotee rock band (Dhira), and Bhaktimarga Swami's theatre production, "The Age of Kali," together with local artists. It was a cloudy morning with dismal rain on the festival day. His saffron figure marched about, personally ensuring everything was on track. Devamrita Swami stood upon the chariot, decorated with mealie cobs and other traditional African artifacts, and announced to the people of Soweto that on the spiritual dimension, "The party has come to Soweto and this party never stops!" The clouds parted, the holy name resounded and Soweto danced.

It was not "just another festival." It was a tidal wave, with far reaching effects. It proved to the African devotees their potential when united with a spiritual goal. It showed the world that Africa was indeed ready for Krishna consciousness. The need for the third wave was well known. Kadamba Kanana Swami stepped up and acted upon it. "Every town and village," he texted, quoting Lord Caitanya's words for a worldwide spiritual revolution, "Now let's do it again." Soweto Ratha Yatra was an annual event.

Motivated by mercy

These bold acts of kindness were not a mere philanthropic outpour. They stemmed from a deep meditation on the mercy of Lord Caitanya

Mahaprabhu. In Vrindavan at *mangal arati*, he would stand in full view of Radha Shyamasundar and Krishna Balarama but over time he shifted towards Gaura Nitai.

nitai-pada bine bhai, radha-krishna paite nai
Without the lotus feet of Lord Nityananda one cannot attain Radha and Krishna.

It might have begun in 1984, when Maharaja secured his first one-volume *Caitanya Caritamrta*. He moulded his life such that he could still study it in depth for hours in spite of a full service schedule. It was not simply a scholastic pursuit, it penetrated his being. Lord Caitanya's generosity in affording mercy without judgement of worth nor expectation of return inspired him. He didn't want to only read the *Caitanya Caritamrta*, but live it.

In Jayadvaita Swami, Krishna sent him a guru who was bold enough offer him the order of *sannyasa* in 1997 and request him to initiate disciples in 2001. In that era of ISKCON both acts caused an outcry. It made him the first guru in ISKCON who was not directly initiated by Srila Prabhupada. It set him up to be a channel of Lord Chaitanya's mercy for others.

yare dekha, tare kaha 'krishna'-upadesa
amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa
"Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Sri Krishna as they are given in the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Srimad Bhagavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land."
(CC Madhya 7.128)

In response, Kadamba Kanana Maharaja spent 25 years zipping across the planet, often a different country every month. He offered practical advice on applying the principles of *bhakti* in an individual's life and chanted millions of *maha-mantras* in unforgettable *kirtans* where knowledge becomes realised. His meditation of the mercy of Lord Chaitanya was earthed in humility bearing profound compassion.

"So, this spirit is the spirit that I like to call Vaishnava generosity. How the Vaishnava is not only giving his possessions in a calculated way but the Vaishnava gives everything; the Vaishnava gives himself and relies on Krishna. And Krishna is purchased."

A vision for the future

Lord Chaitanya's teachings of Krishna consciousness are the intrinsic nature and need of every living entity, whatever their race, gender or specie, and this meditation was at the core of his South African mission.

Kadamba Kanana Swami's vision for South Africa therefore warranted expansion outside of a yearly festival. He saw the need in African communities for spiritual and material education side by side in a protective environment. He wanted to establish a residential college run by devotees and linked to a local university. He began scouting for a property that would be suitable. In 2022 he was diagnosed with stage four cancer and the possibility of not being able to see this dream manifest became real. He arranged for the Kadamba Foundation, which would collate all proceeds from the sale of his books and music albums, the profits of which would ensure the continuation of the Soweto Ratha Yatra and facilitate projects that make Krishna consciousness accessible in African communities.

A Warrior's stance

It was time to return to Vrindavan. He had faced death many times before; car accidents, firing squads, illness like malaria, typhoid and a previous bout of cancer. "Naturally a devotee thinks of Krishna," he said when reflecting on his attempted assassination in 1995, "but next time I'd hope to approach it with a little more love."

"Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kunti, that state he will attain without fail." (B.G 8.6)

Approaching Vrindavan, there was never fear. "Death is simply a change of service. If at the spiritual world Krishna says you cannot enter then I'll simply say, 'I have no-where else to go.'"

To keep clear consciousness, he avoided analgesics in spite of pain. Without sleep or food he rigidly kept to his vow of chanting 16 rounds aware that he had initiated 1100 others into those same vows. "If I don't struggle they won't struggle. If I don't fight they won't fight." Jayadvaita Swami reflected, "We are reminded of a great warrior: smash his chariot, cut his sword, break his bowstring, but still he'll keep fighting," That was his *ksatriya* spirit. His Vaishnava heart? In living he gave his body, mind, and words and in dying, he gave the gift of example.

Mission

"Mission." The last words of Kadamba Kanana Swami uttered with incredible effort. If ever a single word spoke volumes! The mission of Lord Chaitanya was his constant meditation. The mission of Srila Prabhupada that he bled for. The mission he inscribed in his will, leaving the continuation of his projects in the hands of his disciples, including his vision for South Africa. "They conquered my heart," he said, holding hand of a visiting African devotee in his final days.

"Death is simply a change of service. If at the spiritual world Krishna says you cannot enter then I'll simply say, 'I have no-where else to go.'"

On March 9th 2023, two days after the anniversary the appearance of Lord Chaitanya, under the loving gaze of his worshippable deities, Sri Giriraja and Sadbhujā, in the presence of his spiritual master and the Vaishnavas, amidst roaring *kirtan*, Kadamba Kanana swami departed. He gestured towards Sri Giriraja during His arati, moving his arm in a circle as if offering the sum total of his life in one motion. More than a little love.

"His smile was so broad, his face was so radiant, he looked like a person who's every possible desire was fulfilled. As though a hundred thousand people were chanting on the main square in Amsterdam and the demigods were showering flowers with him in the middle of the scene. Or as if at the last point, now that he was leaving this world, Srila Prabhupada and Lord Chaitanya were showering upon him, in great happiness, every benediction." (Jayadvaita Swami)

The final message

To date the final message of Kadamba Kanana Swami has had more than ninety-thousand views. Dedicated followers, friends and strangers were touched by his recorded words.

"Through thick and thin. When all is blissful, when all is struggle, do not waver. You got the greatest treasure. Never forget. No where in this world is there such wealth. The wealthiest man in this world is a pauper. You have the real wealth. Cherish it. Relish it. Hold it close. Don't become slack. Neglectful. Hold it close. Chant everyday. Hear everyday. Carve these principles in stone. Let them be there everyday. And your life will be wonderful."

He gave glimpse of a hopeful future.

"I'm saying good bye to you for just a short time...I'll be with you on the path and waiting for you on the other end to meet you in person. Soon. Soon. Miracles will happen. Soon we will see love. We will see bliss. We will see fulfillment beyond our imagination. Beyond our expectation. Stay on the path. Don't get lost. Come quickly. Let us join this festival of Krishna. The festival of unlimited ever-growing love."

**ISKCON Environmental Initiative:
The Ecotheology of our Tradition – Part 4
Experience Godhead through elements of our
Earth planet
Krishna Kishore Das (Christopher Fici, PhD)**

The Ecological Elements of Chaitanya Vaishnava
Theology (continued)

3. We are able to serve, access, and experience the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the elements of our Earth planet and the elements of universal creation

The elements of our Earth planet and of universal creation facilitate our service, access to, and experience of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Indeed, in some aspects, we directly worship the Supreme through worship of specific natural living systems like the Ganges and Yamuna River and Govardhan Hill. Devotees who engage in worship of the Ganges, Yamuna, and Govardhan Hill understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is immediately present within these rivers and silas (sacred stones). By worshipping these rivers and silas one is immediately worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead. We can also consider our care and worship of Srimati Tulasi Devi in the form of the tulasi plant as another example of how the elements of Earth facilitate our service and worship. Our japa beads are made of tulasi wood and we hear the maha-mantra with our ears and chant with our tongue made up of the elements of our bodies. All foodstuffs we grow, prepare, and offer to the Supreme and which we consume as sacred prasadam comes from the soil of Earth. We play mridanga drums made out of clay. We worship Deities made out of wood, metal, stone, or clay.

In our traditions we understand and experience the natural world through the reality of personhood. While we understand that certain plants, such as Srimati Tulasi Devi, and certain stones, like salagram silas from Govardhan Hill, are considered to be incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and/or pure devotees of the Lord, we also strive to relate to all living beings as individual personal beings.



The language and personhood of our tradition is rooted in personhood, which allows us to transcend any conceptions of the natural world which are rooted in impersonalistic, mechanistic conceptions. Quite simply put our sadhana as individuals and as a community cannot be done without a personal relationship to the beings and elements of Earth.

Various Earthy metaphors are used to describe the experience and result of our sadhana. The chanting of the maha-mantra allows us to “cleanse the mirror of the heart.” (Antya-Lila20:12) In practicing our sadhana we are said to be watering the root and tending to the soil of our bhakta-lata-bija, our “creeper of devotion,” which represents the jiva’s blooming devotional self-realization and intimate relational reconnection with Radharani and Krishna. As Chaitanya Mahaprabhu teaches: “When a person receives the seed of devotional service, he should take care of it by becoming a gardener and sowing the seed in his heart. If he waters the seed gradually by the process of sravana and kirtana [hearing and chanting], the seed will begin to sprout.” (Madhya-Lila 19:152). As further described in the Srimad-Bhagavatam “by giving water to the root of a tree one satisfies its branches, twigs, and leaves, and by supplying food to the stomach one satisfies all the senses of the body. Similarly, by engaging in the transcendental service of the Supreme Lord one automatically satisfies all the demigods and all other living entities.” (4.31.14). Our sastras and the teachings of the guru and the sadhu give us no shortage of creation-related meditations which help us to directly connect to the Supreme Personality of

Godhead. For further example, in the Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna tells us that “I am the taste in water, the light of the sun and the moon...I am the original fragrance of the earth, and I am the heat in fire. I am the life of all that lives...know that I am the original seed of all existences.” (7:8-10). As Srila Prabhupada explains in his purport to verse 7:9, “the uncontaminated flavor, the original flavor, which permeates everything, is Krishna...in Krishna consciousness we become aware that earth, water, fire, and air and every active principle, all chemicals and all material elements are due to Krishna. The duration of man’s life is also due to Krishna. Therefore by the grace of Krishna, man can prolong his life or diminish it. So Krishna consciousness is active in every sphere.”

Voluntary Heart Surgery

By Pranada Dasi

“Have strong faith that only Krishna can protect you. Admit him as your only guardian.”

~Srla Bhaktivinoda Thakura

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: His Life and Precepts

When we're given an opportunity to increase our level of self-surrender and we embrace it, we're propelled quickly forward in spiritual development and the formation of the higher self. But this fact is not always immediately apparent, so don't look for it. You'll only set yourself up for disappointment, which can sabotage the work you need to do. In the future you'll understand all the gains you made.

Self-surrender (accepting what is) entails emptying ourselves of personal desire. Completely. Our desires block surrender. They clog the heart, which wants to beat for Krishna. They are our enemies, and they are formidable. Our likes and dislikes, our wants, our “my's” – all of them must go so that we become a purified offering. This requires an ego death. It's the dying that is much more difficult than the death of the physical body.

Our heart surgery is never going to be easy or fun. But if you genuinely want to love Krishna, if you want to attain the land of perfected beings, you need to submit to the surgery – voluntarily. You may not voluntarily sign up for your situation, but how you choose, voluntarily, to respond to it determines whether the suffering is simply abject and for naught or whether you will benefit by purifying the heart of anarthas. How much do you want to attain the ideal you've been offered? This is really the question: How much do you want it?

When you're ready to give up everything, to accept anything (at least theoretically), you're ready to be lifted to new breathtaking heights in your Krishna consciousness.

Accepting what is, is a crucial component to the act of accepting Krishna's will and letting go of ours. Aligning the self with Krishna means making one's desires one with his. This is not something abstract. It is quite tangible. It means directly dealing with what's in front us right now. Your current situation is never an accident. But, of course, we must use the circumstances in a way favorable for cultivating cooperation with and love for Krishna. This means accepting what is.

It means implicitly trusting Krishna and acting on that trust. When we're called to a high degree of surrender, we discover we need to trust more. That trust thickens as we do the inner work, ask for help, and receive it. We experience how Krishna responds to us, and we come to trust that he will respond next time, too. Experiencing this reciprocal exchange is required to further develop trust. We can theoretically trust, but it becomes real when we

have to live it. To live it means we have to first trust, in little measure, and then build on it.

One thing we can do as we are working on developing trust is to speak with other devotees about their experience with trusting Krishna. I've found, and others concur, that the majority of devotees have had mystical experiences in their lives. Hearing about these experiences is faith building. Devotees have undeniable experiences of the direct presence of Krishna in those moments that change their lives, or call them to proceed, or are confirmations of all that they were learning at that time. They are real and tangible, and hearing of other's experiences is reassuring and can help us.

Internal work is much like tuning an instrument so that it can be played – properly and beautifully. We are an instrument to be played for our Lord's satisfaction. It's a fine process, a delicate process, that requires our full attention and our care. In tuning ourselves we must tune out all extraneous, distracting noises coming from the mind about what we like, what we dislike, what we want, what we don't want, who we think we are, what we want to do. It may look like we're living a small life. In fact, we're living a large life by doing the internal work.

All these high ideals are beautiful and inspiring.

But as we embark on dealing with our immediate challenging circumstances, we soon find out we're actually not up for the task at hand. We discover we're very small and dependent and our urgent job is overwhelming. We become desperate for mercy. We're very needy, much more needy than we realized.

We reach a juncture between our sincerest, best effort (which is honestly never enough and never will be) and our extreme need for mercy. We cried many tears as we faced the situation and wrestled to accept what is and let go. We had to deal with all the psychological obstacles that reared their awful heads just when we least wanted to see them and had the least strength to deal with them. But now, utterly hopeless, feeling humbled, we fall flat, acknowledging how much mercy we need. Now more tears flow, not fewer!

But these tears are different. They are purer, and they call the attention of our Beloved. They are not tears of pity, but an acknowledgement of our true condition as finite atmas, as Krishna's property in need of assistance. These honest realizations have brought on a deep humility and genuine begging. Krishna will respond. He shows up in simple, surprising, and mystical ways. Acknowledge them. They will sustain you and give you courage and hope.

Excerpt from When Illness Takes Hold by Pranada Dasi (ACBSP) & Archana-siddhi Dasi (ACBSP). You can download/view this book for free here: <https://www.pranadacomtois.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/When-Illness-Takes-Hold.pdf>



Ramayana Short Story

For the Kids

From Srimad Bhagavatam – A Comprehensive Guide for Young Readers (Canto 1)

On the day that Lord Rama was going to be coronated as King, he was banished to the forest by his stepmother, Kaikeyi, who wanted her own son, Bharata, to become King. Upon hearing Kaikeyi's request, he went with His chaste wife, Sitadevi, and younger brother, Lakshmana, to reside in the forest.

An evil king, named Ravana, heard about the beauty of Rama's wife and wanted Her for himself. So he kidnapped Sita, with the help of a mystic, called Maricha, who disguised himself as a golden deer. Rama and Lakshmana set off for Ravana's kingdom to rescue Sita. On the way, they made alliance with an army of monkeys headed by Hanuman. Ravana lived on the island of Lanka and, in order to get there, Lord Rama had to cross the ocean, so He constructed a bridge over it by throwing into the

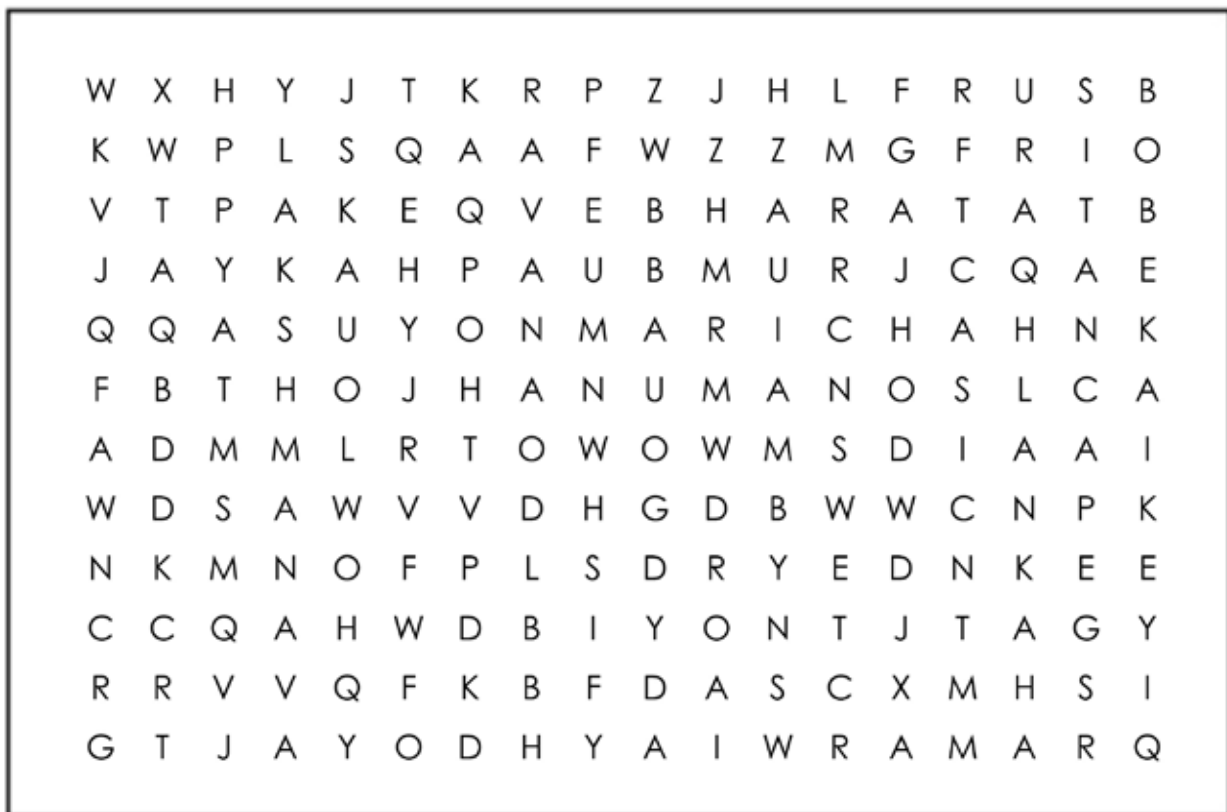
water mountain peaks, which mystically floated. Rama and His army of monkey soldiers attacked and defeated the soldiers of Ravana, which made Ravana very angry. Ravana then tried to personally attack Lord Rama, and so, Lord Ramachandra fixed an arrow to His bow, aimed at Ravana's heart and killed him. After giving Vibhishana, the brother of Ravana, the power to rule the population of Lanka, Lord Ramachandra placed Sitadevi on an airplane decorated with flowers and returned to Ayodhya.

Srimad Bhagavatam Study Guide for Children

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Rama Word Search



Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

AYODHYA
BHARATA
HANUMAN
KAIKEYI

LAKSHMANA
LANKA
MARICHA
RAMA

RAVANA
SITA



Crispy Fried Seitan

The Vaishnava Chef

By Ananga Sundari Dasi

Ingredients

Seitan (cut into desired pieces)

Buttermilk

Salt

Pepper

Paprika

Mixed herbs

1 cup plain flour

1 Tbls cornflour

Oil for deep frying

Method

Add the salt, pepper, paprika and mixed herbs to the buttermilk to make a marinade.

Marinate the seitan pieces in the buttermilk mixture.

Mix the flour and cornflour.

Dip the marinated seitan in the flour mixture and immediately deep fry until golden and crispy.

Variation

For a taste variation add Tikka or Cajun spices. Hot sauces can be added into the buttermilk marinade.

Festival of Chariots

CHARIOT PARADE

Friday 7 April @3pm

Starting opposite Tropicana Hotel on Upper Marine Parade at the car park, proceeding north towards Mini Town. At Mini Town, turning right going down into Lower Marine Parade and finally entering the festival site - Durban Amphitheatre. This route is 2km.

Shuttle Service to Parade

There will be a shuttle service from 1:30pm from the festival site to the parade starting point, Tropicana Hotel. Lord Jagannath, Baladeva & Subhadra Devi will arrive at 2:30pm, we encourage you to be present to welcome Their Lordships.

