

THE KĪRTANA ARROW

Five Powerful Tools to Bring the Chanting of the Holy Names to Perfection

A **Alignment** ~ Tune body, mind, and heart to achieve full presence and attention. Avoid *aparādha*.

R **Relationship** ~ Enter the awareness of your eternal relationship with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Infuse your practice with this connection.

R **Rendering Service** ~ Offer your chanting in the spirit of loving service. Share the glories of the holy names with others.

O **Opening the Heart** ~ Cultivate the *kīrtana bhāva* of separation and longing experienced by Gauracandra. Fill your chanting with genuine devotional feelings.

W **Welcome the Divine Gift** ~ Live in *śaraṇāgati* (surrender). Enter the receiver mood and patiently await your gift from Nāma Prabhu.



And Jagadānanda Paṇḍit says:

“If you wish to advance on the path of pure bhakti, not many rules in spiritual practices are necessary. Simply beg for the complete shelter of Kṛṣṇa-nāma and thus purify your heart and consciousness.”

(*Prema-vivarta*, chapter 7)

We find an example of such surrender in the life of Draupadī, when the Kauravas were trying to disrobe her in public. At that time she called out loudly the names of Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa took a long time to arrive – her aggressors were almost successful in their sinful endeavor.

Why did Kṛṣṇa take so long? Because even as she called His name she turned to Grandfather Bhīṣma, her husbands, the assembled kings, and all others present for shelter. Only when she finally lifted her arms to the sky and surrendered body, mind, and heart was her calling out to Kṛṣṇa imbued with the quality that immediately attracted Him to appear.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

“In the Mahābhārata Kṛṣṇa says: ‘When I was away from Draupadī, she cried with the words He Govinda! This call for me has

W – WELCOME THE DIVINE GIFT

The fifth step requires becoming a receiver. This is possible when we accept a mood of surrender – the confidence that the holy name will give us what we need. *Bhakti* is a gift from Kṛṣṇa; we cannot attain it ourselves. But is there anything we can do to move Kṛṣṇa to bestow it? Yes. Take shelter of Him. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura asks how to move the Lord’s heart:

*ṣaḍ-aṅga śaraṇāgati hoibe jāhāra
tāhāra prārthanā śune śrī-nanda-kumāra*

“Whose prayer does Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda hear? The prayer of one who submits unconditionally to the sixfold path of surrender. Śrī Nandakumāra hears the prayer of those persons.”

(*Śaraṇāgati*, introductory song verse 5)

