

KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2024



THE SUPREME NECTAR OF
CHANTING IN A DEVOTIONAL AND
FAVORABLE MOOD WILL GRADUALLY
THICKEN UNTIL IT BREAKS
THROUGH YOUR TWO BODIES—
THE GROSS AND THE SUBTLE.

SRILA BHAKTIVINODA THAKURA

THE REVEALER OF OUR TRUE IDENTITY

Welcome to our *Kartik Inspirations*.

Today I chanted my rounds at the side of Giriraj. It was quite a scene. There were parrots flying over me, and within moments, two monkeys came. One of them, seeing me chanting, started making noises as if he, too, wanted to chant the holy name. It reminded me of something I've seen before on the banks of the Ganga—it's "Inspiration through sound." Then, a herd of buffaloes broke through the forest and came right next to me.

Finally, I left my place because it had become dark. And then, I saw an unusual sadhu. He had light in his eyes, white hair that stood in all directions. He gazed into my eyes and spoke to me in perfect English, "Do you know who you are?" I knew what he meant. He wasn't asking about my passport identity; he wanted to know if I knew my spiritual identity—the one who is always observing, who is there within the body and mind, the one who is yearning for Krishna. I smiled at him and said, "This will be revealed to me by the holy name. It is the Lord who knows, and He will let me know." The sadhu seemed somewhat satisfied with my friendly answer. He had seen me chanting for a few hours—or one hour, I don't know when he arrived—and based on my reply he knew that I had studied this subject. What he may not have known is what was in my mind.

I was thinking of a beautiful purport by Bhaktivinoda Thakura, where he says, "The supreme nectar of chanting in a devotional and favorable mood will gradually thicken until it breaks through your two bodies—the gross and the subtle."

Let's stop here for a moment. When we chant in a devotional and favorable mood—that is, in an affectionate mood—this mood will thicken like river full of nectar. That 'nectar river' will become more concentrated and will break through the coverings of the soul—the gross body and the subtle body. And then, finally, it will awaken your eternal spiritual form, your *aparakrit sarīra*, your *siddha deha*.

In Germany, we have a fairy tale of the princess who was cursed to sleep for all time until a prince came and awakened her. It's just a fairy tale, but it points to a wonderful truth in chanting the holy name. The holy name, when chanted in a devotional mood, has the power to awaken or reveal our eternal spiritual identity. And when you chant at the side of Giriraj, or in a very focused, happy, and wonderful devotional mood, you can already feel the stirrings—the awakenings of the soul—by the wonderful desires, realizations, inner feelings, and aspirations that arise from a place where human reason can never enter. These come from the soul place.

So, during this Kartik vrata, I want to see if my devotional mood can thicken, by Lord Krishna's and Radharani's mercy, and wash through the coverings to awaken my real self. I recommend this to you as well. It's not always recommended to increase the number [of rounds]; stay with your number but increase the quality. Make it intentional chanting, connected chanting, devotional chanting—where your soul's voice addresses the Lord for its one true need: the Govinda necessity!

Śacīnandana Prāsa

ŚACĪNANDANA SWAMI