

# KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2024

## THE LIBERATORS FROM DEATH

Welcome to our *Kartik Inspiration*.

I am sitting outside in front of a Tulasi plant, which I worship every morning. You might even hear the chirping of the beautiful birds living with me here.

Yesterday, we returned from the Govardhan *parikrama*. Along the *parikrama* path, I saw a scene that deeply touched me and made me let go of all my upset with the monkeys. I came across a large group of them sitting in silence with very sad faces. As I came closer, I saw why: among them lay a dead monkey, with the others seated quietly around it.

Gone was their mischievous nature, the usual restlessness, the constant monkey business. They were gathered there, as we do when someone dear has left the body. And they were grieving, mourning, saying goodbye to a dear friend. They seemed to look at us humans with eyes that almost asked, 'Can you offer us some comfort for our friend?' It felt real—a communication between species.

Death is all around us. The *Bhagavatam* says that everyone in this world is like a person condemned to be executed, simply walking to the appointed end. Some may have fifty steps left, others perhaps only twenty—yet eventually, each one will reach that point and lose their life. This is the fact of life, and the question that arises is this, "Is there anything we can do to avoid death or rebirth?"

Yes! The *Garuda Purana* in the *Saroddhara* section mentions six things that can give us liberation from death:

1. Ekadasi.
2. The immortal words of the *Bhagavad-gita*.
3. The leaves of Tulasi Devi.
4. The water from the lotus feet of the Lord, *caranamrita*.
5. The water of Goddess Ganga Devi.
6. The holy names of the Lord.

What do Ganga and the holy name have in common? They both descend from beyond this world, entering our realm to offer liberation—in other words, to free conditioned souls from the bondage of material life.

In fact, each of these—the *Bhagavad-gita*, Tulasi Devi, *caranamrita*—carry this transcendental potency. Only something or someone that exists beyond this world can grant us freedom from the grip of death. The holy names we chant carry this effect.

Let me end by sharing a beautiful verse in the glorification of the holy name:

"O my tongue, suffering from thirst. Please mix the delicious, fresh, enchanting nectar of the name Radha with the wonderfully sweet, condensed milk of the name Krishna. And then add the fragrant, delightful ice of pure, intense love and drink this charming drink at every moment."

See you for the next *Kartik Inspiration*!

*Śācinandana Swami*

ŚACINANDANA SWAMI

WE CANNOT AVOID DEATH  
ON OUR OWN; ONLY THOSE  
WHO ARE CARRIERS OF  
TRANSCENDENTAL POTENCIES  
CAN FREE US FROM ITS GRIP.