

By Śacīnandana Swami



KĀRTIKA – THE MONTH WHERE IMPOSSIBLE BECOMES POSSIBLE

By blessings, everything is possible. That we all know. Particularly during the month of Kārtika - which is solely dedicated to the pleasure of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī who is Krishna’s most dear and inseparable devotee –

extraordinary blessings are available. As Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is Karuṇāmayī (full with compassion), She has charged this month with special potency, but only for those who turn themselves into "ready receivers". Tuning oneself is required!

In sacred scripture (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu) observing this Kārtika month has also been called Ūrjā-vrata. “Ūrja” means spiritual strength, power, and “vrata” means a vow – something you do every day. So, by observing a specific vow during this month, one obtains special spiritual strength and empowerment. And who could be a more complete source of spiritual empowerment than Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the adi-shakti or original energy of the Lord? From Her all other energies – including this world and beyond – emanate. It is said that even the ray of one of the nails of Śrīmatī Radharani's lotus feet can destroy the accumulated darkness of the entire three worlds.

The ideal place to observe the Kārtika-vrata

The ideal place is Vrindavana. My spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda has mentioned: “Even an unserious person who executes the Kārtika vrata in Vraja Maṇḍala (another name for Vrindavana) is very easily awarded Lord Krishna’s personal service.” (Nectar of Devotion).

Why is Vrindavana the best place you might ask. The reason is that Vrindavana is the eternal pastimes place of Krishna in this world. But by Divine arrangement, all the agents who can give blessings like all holy places, holy rivers and lakes, take shelter in Vrindavana during the month of Kārtika. Vrindavana is, so to say, filled to the brim – with additional amazing shakti (energy) to deliver us from karmic reactions and grant attraction to Krishna!

The good news for those who can’t make it physically to come to Vrindavana is that the same or similar benefit can be received by mentally residing there at

that time. So, wherever you are becoming the best place if you make sure your heart is in Vrindavana.

During this time, my services to you all will be to supply you with various Kārtika meditations that I will be sending from Vrindavana itself (more on this later).

Kārtika-vrata suggestions:

- Rise early and offer your obeisances to Rādhā and Krishna, or if you can, offer a brief āraṭi ceremony.
- Each day offer a ghee lamp to Krishna who is known as Dāmodara and recite the Damodarastakam prayers by Satyavrata Muni. Best time for this practice is in the evening, just after sunset.

How to end your Kārtika observance

On the last day do Kīrtan and readings with others till late. The day after Kārtika you can distribute prasāda (sanctified food) and gifts to qualified brāhmaṇas and devotees for completing your vows.