

## HARE KRISHNA

ISKCON belongs to the Gaudiya Vaisnava sampradaya (denomination or tradition), a monotheistic tradition within Vedic or Hindu culture. Hindu culture is vast, and the term Hinduism encompasses numerous theologies, philosophies, religious traditions, and spiritual cultures.

Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the great



apostle of love of God and the father of the sankirtan movement (congregational chanting), advented Himself in the city of Navadvipa in West Bengal, India in 1486 with the mission of delivering the fallen souls from the clutches of material existence by the chanting of the Holy Name of the Lord:

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna

Krishna Krishna Hare Hare

Hare Rama Hare Rama

Rama Rama Hare Hare.

These sixteen names of the Lord are mentioned in many Vedic scriptures known as Puranas and Upanisads. It is stated in these sacred scriptures that chanting the holy names of the Lord with no offense can deliver a fallen soul from material bondage. There are innumerable names for the Lord both in India and elsewhere, and all of them are equally good because all of them indicate the Supreme Personality of Godhead. For instance,

KRISHNA means The All Attractive. Why The All Attractive? Simple, He is God, He is the Only Being with all the beauty, wealth, fame, influence, knowledge, and renunciation. Being God, Krishna has innumerable qualities. By hearing of how Krishna displays these qualities in His innumerable pastimes, we can get a glimpse of His greatness and of His power to attract all souls, hence the All Attractive.

The great acaryas (spiritual teachers) have especially recommended the chanting of this Maha Mantra for this age of kali also known as the dark era or age of quarrel. Maha means Great and Mantra means to deliver the mind (man=mind and tra=deliver).

While chanting the Maha Mantra, we acknowledge both the Supreme Energetic (Krishna) and the Supreme Energy (Radha). We cannot have One without the Other. In the Mahamantra, Hare or Hara refers to Radha, Krishna's energy and through this energy we ask Her to connect us to Krishna, to engage us in the service of Krishna.

ISKCON  
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