



Granth - Krushnaashrayah

One of the core tenets of Pushtimarg is the concept that one must have the *bhaav* (Emotion) to consider Shri Krishna as one's only and exclusive shelter. According to the teaching of Shri Mahaprabhuji, one should consider Shri Krishna to be everything, including one's husband, son, wealth, and home. With this *shraddha* (trust), one should worship Shree Krishna. Shri Mahaprabhuji composed the *Krushnaashrayah* scripture for the guidance of the Pushti followers in V.S. 1570 (approximately 1514 CE) at Adel (a village in Gujarat, India) to express this key principle in Pushtimarg. Additionally, the *Krushnaashrayah* was written in confrontation of the conditions that prevailed in India five hundred years ago, where corruption and invasion ran rife, threatening the practices of Hindus as a whole. Therefore, Shri Mahaprabhuji authored this text for his follower Bula Mishra, which is now recited in front of Thakorji during Rajbhog Darshan in homes and Havelis across the world.

According to Shri Mahaprabhuji, *Sharanagati* (surrendering yourself completely) to Lord Shri Krishna and staying under his shelter is '*Krushnaashrayah*'. Having deep faith that we, as Vaishnavs, are wholly surrendered to the Lord and that he cares for us ultimately allows us to become dependent on God's mercy and be carefree of all worldly stresses, which is *Krushnaashrayaha*.

According to Shri Mahaprabhuji, all the four aims of human life - *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Moksha* (duty, righteous earning, desires, and liberation) are all achieved within Shri Krishna - *Dharma* is the feeling of service towards the supreme. Shri Krishna is wealth, treasure, and everything. The desire to see the Lord is *Kama*, and attaining Shri Krishna is *Moksha*.



Krushnaashrayah Stotram meaning:

**Sarva-maargeshu nashteshu, kalau cha khala-dharmini
Paashanda-prachure loke, Krushna eva gatrimama ||1||**

In this age of Kali, when all paths are corrupted and religious practices are lost, and the world is filled with hypocrisy, Krishna is and should be my ultimate shelter. All the spiritual paths are rendered or corrupted in Kali Yuga, highlighting the moral and spiritual decline in the world. In this era, there is a proliferation of *pashanda* (Those who are irreligious and use religion for their gain). Despite the corruption of all paths and practices, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Mlechchha-kraanteshu desheshu, paapaika-nilayeshu cha
Satpeeda-vyagra-lokeshu, Krushna eva gatrimama ||2||**

In lands influenced by uncivilised (*Mlecchas*), where sin has taken root, and in those places where the spiritual essence is disturbed, Krishna alone is and should be my ultimate shelter. "*Mlechchas*" refers to the group of barbarians' who deviate from and disrupt the societies from Dharma and original spiritual order where *paap*(sin) has pervaded, and spiritual practices have corrupted.

"*Satpida*" refers to the place where pure spiritual essence has been destroyed and "*vyagra*" metaphorically referring to a tiger as an uncontrolled force or chaos. Amidst all the corruption, chaos and moral decay, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Gangaadi-teertha-varyeshu, dushtairevaa-vruteshvihaa
Tirohitaadhi-daiveshu, Krushna eva gatrimama ||3||**

Even at the holy places like the Ganges and other revered pilgrimage spots, where they are surrounded by the wicked, and the deities themselves are veiled or lost to worldly influences, Krishna alone is and should be my ultimate shelter. As holy pilgrimages such as the Ghat of the Ganga, where devotees visit to purify themselves and seek blessings, even those places are now surrounded by corrupt people. The true essence of divinity has been hidden due to corruption and distraction and amidst all these corruption and distortion of sacred places, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Ahamkaara-vimoodheshu, satsu paapaanu-vartishu
Laaabha poojার্থa-yatneshu, Krushna eva gatrimama ||4||**

In those who are deluded by ego, who follow the path of sin, and those who strive for material benefits and rituals for fame or gain, Krishna alone should be my ultimate shelter. Those who are deluded by ego which clouds their judgements, refraining from spiritual path; and those despite their physical presence, avoid engaging in spiritual practices and engage in actions that leads to adharma. Those who get involved in spiritual practices just for their own material gain, fame, and benefits and not for the sake of pure devotion. Despite the ego-driven, sin-centred, and materialistic nature of these practices, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Aparignaana-nashteshu, mantreshva-vrat yogishu
Tirohitaartha deveshu, Krushna eva gatrimama ||5||**

They have lost their knowledge of the mantras and the yogis who have not observed the vows. Among the gods of disappearing meanings, Krishna alone should be my ultimate shelter. Lack of proper understanding or spiritual knowledge, and those with little or insufficient knowledge can be spiritually misguided. Their true understanding of the divine is obscured but despite this, to attain spiritual liberation, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Naanaavada-vinashteshu, sarva-karma-vrataadishu
Paashandaika prayatneshu, Krushna eva gatirmama ||6||**

Various arguments destroy all rituals, vows, and other rituals. In the single attempts of heresy, Krishna alone is and should be my ultimate shelter. People may get involved in various spiritual practices and rituals, without proper guidance, which leads to confusion or deviation from the true purpose. Spiritual practices are misguided and to transcend all the spiritual mistakes, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Ajaamilaadi doshanaam, naashakonubhave sthitah:
Gnaapitaakhil maahaatmyah, Krushna eva gatirmama ||7||**

A person like Ajāmila, who was once overwhelmed by his sins but simply by chanting the name of Krishna, is redeemed. Krishna's supreme power and even forgiving people no matter their past actions, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Praakrutah sakalaa devaa – ganitaa-nandakam bruhat
Poorna-anand Haristasmat, Krushna eva gatirmama ||8||**

Krishna is the original source of all divine beings, and the ultimate source of bliss and happiness. The perfect bliss and the ultimate bestower of joy and happiness, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Vivekaa-dhairya-bhaktyaadi – rahitasya visheshtah:
Paapaaskatasya deenasy, Krushna eva gatirmama ||9||**

Vivek means one who is able to distinguish between the spiritual world and the material world. A person who lacks this quality might be confused and distressed. A person who lacks *dhairya* (patience) to acknowledge obstacles in life and face them, who is devoid of Bhakti is burdened with lots of sins and stress. To find the ultimate liberation, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Sarv saamarthyah sahitah, sarva traivaa-khilaartha krut
Sharanasthaa samuddhaaram, Krushna eva gatirmama ||10||**

Krishna is capable of having all the power to accomplish anything, either in the material world or spiritual world. Krishna is the cause of everything, from creation to sustenance and dissolution. Krishna accepts the devotees who surrender to him and uplifts them from all their sorrows and worries. Hence, the devotee declares that Krishna alone is their ultimate refuge and saviour.

**Krushnaa-shray-amidam stotram yah pathet Krushna-
sannidau
Tasya-ashrayo bhavet-Krushna, iti Shree Vallabhoabavit ||
11||**

When recited in Krishna's presence, this *granth* (scripture) of surrender to Krishna will always keep the reciter under Krishna's shelter and protection. This is the promise made by Shri

Tirth - Gokul

Gokul is a town in the Mathura District of Uttar Pradesh in India. Lord Krishna's father Vasudevji brought Him to Nandbaba's home in Gokul the night He was born, from Mathura. Shri Thakorji spent his childhood in Gokul with His parents, Nandbaba and Yashoda Maiya, who brought Him up. Gokul is

also where Shri Thakorji performed His early childhood *lilas* (episodes). Gokul is, hence, the place of paramount importance in Pushtimarg.



Nand Bhavan

Nand Bhavan (Shri Nandbaba's abode) is a significant place to visit in Gokul as Shri Thakorji's *naam sanskaar* (naming ceremony) was performed here. It is known for its *Chauryasi Kumbhs* (84 Pillars), which represent the 84 kos (unit of measurement) of Vraj.

Another place to visit in Gokul is Raman Reti. At this location, Radhaji and Krishna met and enjoyed various pastimes. The sand in this area is believed to have the footprints of Shri Krishna, and Vaishnavs receive blessings by rolling over the sand.

After Shrinathji and Shri Mahaprabhuji's *pragatya* (appearance) on the earth, Gokul also became the abode of significant Bethakji's of Shri Mahaprabhuji, Shri Gusainji, their descendants, Shri Navnitpriyaji and also Shri Damodardasji.

Shri Mahaprabhuji's Bethakji: It is situated below the Chokartree in Govindghat on the banks of the river Yamuna. Here, Shri Yamunaji had given *darshan* (appeared in person) to Shri Mahaprabhuji and, Shri Mahaprabhuji first recited the Yamunashtak in order to praise Her in Her presence. It is also the place where Shri Thakorji Himself appeared in front of Shri Mahaprabhuji on the night of Pavitra Ekadashi and gifted Him the Brahmasabandh mantra. Hence, at this place, the Bethakji of Shrinathji and Shri Mahaprabhuji are located together.



Mahaprabhuji Baithakji – Thakurani/Govind ghat

Badi Bethak: Is situated near the temple of Shri Dwarkadhishji. Here, Shri Mahaprabhuji spoke on the Shrimad Bhagvatam regularly and ate His meals. One Vaishnav from Vrindavan wanted to test Shri Mahaprabhuji. He had hung a bag with *Shaligramji* (a stone symbolising Shri Thakorji) on the branch of a tree and went to meet Mahaprabhuji. When he returned after darshan, he could not find it, so he told Shri Mahaprabhuji that this bag might have got stolen by the *sevaks* (followers). Shri Mahaprabhuji assured him that His *sevaks* would not do this and asked him to check again. He then saw multiple similar-looking bags and he could not identify his own deity. Shri Mahaprabhuji asked him to look at the tree again, and his bag miraculously hanging there again. Here, Shri Navnitpriyaji's Bethakji and Shri Gusaiji's Bethakji is also located.

Shaiya Mandir Bethak: This Bethak is situated where the Dwarkadish temple was later established. Shri Mahaprabhuji used to rest at this location. Here, a *Rishi*(ascetic) had done severe penance for thousands of years underground, waiting for the arrival of Shri Thakorji. When Shri Mahaprabhuji came to this place, the Rishi emerged from his penance and appeared in front of Him. He told Shri Mahaprabhuji about his vision that Shri Mahaprabhuji would have seven sons who would then have seven temples in Gokul.

Sandhya Vandan Bethak: It is situated at the backside of Govindghat. Here, Shri Mahaprabhuji used to regularly perform Sandhya Vandan and perform Shri Thakorji's seva. He had also given Shri Damodardasji the initiation of Brahmasambandh at this place and explained to him the *granth*(scripture) of Siddhant Rahasya after composing it here. Shri Gusaiji always visited this place to do Sandhya Vandan; hence, His Bethak is also located here. In this shlok "SaayanKunjalay", a description of Shri Gusaiji's *Swaroop* (form) of Sandhya Vandan is located within this place. Behind this Bethakji, Shri Damodardasji's Bethakji is also situated. Shri Mahaprabhuji used to do *Bhagvatvarta* (conversations about Shri Krishna) with him here.



Gusaiji's Baithakji- Govind Ghat Shri Gusaiji's Bethak:

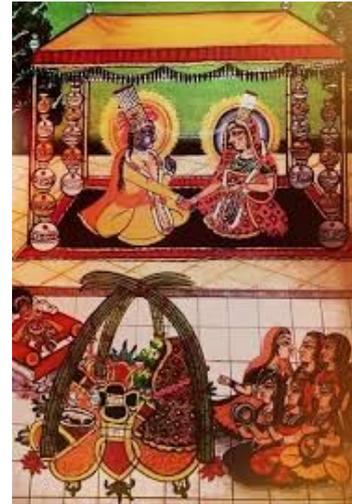
Shri Gusaiji had initially installed His seva deity Navnitpriyaji here and settled in Gokul. After Shri Gusaiji, Shri Giridhariji was the *Acharya* (Head), but He never used to sit in the same seat as Gusaiji. He used to sit in front instead in order to complete his SandhyaVandan. Once, Shri Gokulnathji asked him the reason, and he replied that he could have Shri Gusaiji's darshan whilst facing Shri Gusaiji's Bethakji; Shri Gokulnathji, then also sat in front and obtained darshan of Shri Gusaiji.

Also, the Bethakjis of descendants of Shri Gopinathji and Shri Gusaiji -Shri Giridhariji, Shri Balkrishnaji, Shri Gokulnathji, Shri Raghunathji, Shri Ghanshyamji and Shri Harirayji, are situated in Gokul.

Utsav - Dev Prabhodini Ekadashi

Dev Prabhodini Ekadashi, also known as *Dev Uthani Ekadashi*, falls on *Kartik Sud Ekadashi*. *Dev Prabhodini Ekadashi* is one of the few festivals in Pushtimarg that do not originate with Vrajeleela; however, it finds its roots in the *Vedas*. The *Vedas* record that Lord Vishnu rests in a sleep-like state for four months during *Chaturmas*, commencing on *Dev Shayani Ekadashi* in the *Ashad* month and arising again on *Dev Prabhodini* in *Kartik*. This is because Lord Vishnu would not sleep for years to protect and defend his devotees from evil, which impacted his sleeping habits, leading him to fall asleep for years unintentionally. This worried Lakshmi, who requested Lord Vishnu to normalise his sleeping patterns, and therefore, he decided to regularly sleep for four months in the year. This day thus marks the awakening of Lord Vishnu, which now means that auspicious tasks like marriages can commence after they were prohibited during *Chaturmas*.

Dev Prabhodini Ekadashi also marks *Tulsi Vivah*, the marriage of the Goddess Tulsi to Lord Vishnu in his form as a Shaligram. The reasoning behind this is that Tulsi was married to a demon king known as Jalandhar in her previous life as Vrinda. Jalandhar was a son of Lord Shiva, which resulted in him demanding the treasure of the demigods, which he saw as his inheritance. Indra, the king of the demigods, refused this request. To avenge Indra, Jalandhar worshipped Brahma and underwent penance; Brahma was pleased with Jalandhar and gave him a boon that he would be immortal so long as his wife remained faithful to only him.



Therefore, Jalandhar only grew in his power as his wife, Vrinda, was renowned for her faithfulness. Jalandhar became egocentric, believing himself to be the most powerful, resulting in him waging a war on Indra and the heavens. Fearing Jalandhar's might, the demigods implored Lord Vishnu for help. In accordance with the requests of the demigods, Lord Vishnu took Jalandhar's form and went to Vrinda. Vrinda had been deceived moments prior by someone informing her that Jalandhar had died. On seeing Lord Vishnu in the form of Jalandhar and overcome by her grief, now happiness, she embraced him. However, through touching Lord Vishnu, she broke her vow of virtue, resulting in Jalandhar's death on the battlefield. Vrinda came to realise the trick that had been played on her and cursed Lord Vishnu to turn into a black stone, known as Shaligram, which is worshipped in Havelis during *panchamrut snan* (the bathing of five nectars) on certain *pragatya utsavs* (days when Thakorji incarnated in different forms). In turn, Vrinda was cursed into becoming a Tulsi plant. Lord Vishnu promised to marry her annually in this form. Thus, celebrating Tulsi Vivah arose as the union of Lord Vishnu and the Tulsi plant.

In Pushtimarg, Tulsi Vivah is celebrated by creating a beautiful *mandap* (canopy) made of sugar cane and filled with different *Rangoli* patterns of auspicious symbols such as a conch shell, discus, lotus and *swastik*. There are two heaps of wheat and barley in which *diyas* are lit, and the *mandap* is decorated with pots, fruits, etc. In the middle of the *mandap*, Thakorji is seated in a *sangamachi* (a smaller throne), and *panchamrut snan* (the bathing of five nectars) is conducted to Shri Shaligram with the auspicious sound of the conch and gong. Thakorji's throne is lifted three times, representing the waking up of Shri Vishnu. In most Mandirs, *Jagran* (staying up all night) is observed throughout the night; however, in Pushtimarg, His regular bedtime remains as Thakorji's comfort is a priority. Additionally, the marriage of Shri Thakorji and Tulsiji is conducted enthusiastically, with Vaishnavs aligning themselves on the groom and bride's side and enjoying the divine union of Tulsiji and Thakorji.



In the Vallabhkul, there is the story of Shri Gopinathji (Shri Gusainji's elder brother) having a daughter who was married at a very young age. However, before she moved to her husband's home, he passed away. However, as Betiji was very young, she did not understand what had happened. Shri Gusainji involved her in serving Shri Thakorji. Once, whilst in seva, she asked Shri Gusainji when she would be married and sent to her husband's home. Shri Gusainji, being the most graceful, didn't have the heart to tell her why she would never live with her husband. From that day, Shri Gusainji initiated the practice of including a *Vivahhaldi* (a turmeric ceremony) and four *bhogs* (offerings) during *Dev Prabhodini Ekadashi*. This enabled the young Betiji to celebrate Shri Thakorji's wedding with love and devotion instead of waiting for her own, thus easing her pain.

Kirtan - Din Dulhe Mero Kuwar Kanhaiya
 Din dulhe mero kunvar Kanhaiya
 Nitya uthasakhashringarbanave, nityahi Aarti utaratMaiya
 Nitya utha aangan chandan lipave, nityahi motin chowk puraiya
 Nityahi mangal kalash dharave, nityahibandanvarbandhaiya
 Nitya uthabyaahgeet mangal dhvani, nitya sur-
 narmunivedpadhaiya
 Nitya nitya anand hota vaar nidhi, nityahi Gadadhar leta balaya

Having the Vivah-khel darshan of Prabhu, the Bhakt's are saying
 Let every day, our Kanhaiya become a bridegroom
 Every day, let the Sakha's make Prabhu wear Shringar just like a
 bridegroom and let every Yashodaji perform His Aarti.
 Always let the courtyard be smeared with *Chandan* (sandalwood),
 and every day, let the floor be decorated with pearls.
 Every day, let the auspicious kalash be placed, and always there
 be a garland of flowers and leaves tied above all doors.
 Let always the sound of wedding songs be heard and let every
 day, the gods and sages praise Prabhu by singing hymns from
 Vedas.
 The joy of such Leela of Prabhu is never-ending and worth
 bestowing all the wealth in the world upon, says Gadadhardasji
 while making a gesture to ward off any evil from Prabhu.

Meet the Youth

Name: Hemal Shah

Committee Role: Technical Support: Provide technical assistance as well as managing the VSUK website with regular updates regarding VSUK and VYG events. Assisting with the forefront communications of VYG

What I do: Pharmacy Technician

What I enjoy: Exploring nature and historic sites

Something I couldn't live without: My bicycle

Favourite food/colour/person: Chilli Paneer / Blue / Hrithik Roshan

Fun fact: I love to challenge myself and learn new skills

What I love about Pushtimarg: Surprises me that how relevant the scriptures are according to today's times. I blindly open Shikashpatra and find the solutions to my obstacles

What I'm looking forward to with the youth group: To build a sense of community within the Youth

What I enjoy about the youth group: To do Seva at VSUK or VYG led events with like-minded people



Questions & Answers

Q. Why are Pushtimarg temples called "Haveli"?

A. Pushtimarg temples are often called "Haveli" because the term "Haveli" refers to a grand residence of Nandbaba. In the context of Pushtimarg, the term "Haveli" is used to describe these temples which are designed to resemble royal residences, with intricate architecture, ornate decorations, and multiple chambers. "Haveli" signifies the grandeur and magnificence associated with the abode of the divine, where devotees can experience a sense of intimacy and offer their seva and stay connected with the deity. Additionally, In Pushtimarg it is believed there is only one place of worship considered as a Mandir, in which Shrinathji resides, which is in Nathdwara, all other Pushtimargya places of worship are therefore considered Havelis, signifying Thakorji's home – similar to Nandbabas residence.

Q. Why does Yamunashtak have a description of Yamunaji's appearance?

A. The swaroop that appeared in front of Shri Mahaprabhuji was the swaroop that was preparing to go for Raas. Shri Yamunaji is doing *Sod Shringaar* (Sixteen forms of getting dressed) to get ready for Raas and hence, Shri Mahaprabhuji describes Shri Yamunaji with all the Shringaar.

Q. Why is Shrinathji adorned with dresses of both male and female?

A. This is because *VaamBhaag* (left-hand side) of Shrinathji is Shri Swaminiji (Shri Radhaji) and *UrdhvaBhaag* (right-hand side) is Shri Krishna Himself. This way, one can obtain darshan of Lord Krishna and Shri Radhaji in the same swaroop, thus giving the *Bhaav* (Emotion) that Shri Radha and Shri Krishna are one and inseparable.

Game - Anagrams

These are ten words which have been found in this month's newsletter which have been rearranged - let's see if you can guess the words!

1. dear vip bond hi -
2. visual tv hi -
3. rail ha msg -
4. apart much -
5. rush any shark -
6. aim tag ram -
7. dna map -
8. gap hi joint -
9. van hi a vs -
10. van rid -

Answers for Yamunaji Crossword from Newsletter Issue 30

Yamunaji Word search



SURYADEV
JAL
THAKURANI
VISHRAM GHAT
YAMUNASHTAKAM
LOTIJI
MUKUT KANCHANI
KAMAL
MAHARANI
YAMRAJ
KALINDI

Upcoming Events

National Youth Satsangs - online via zoom

SUK Vaishnav Youth Group (National) invites you to

national youth satsangs
ONLINE VIA ZOOM

Satsang topics
Granth: Madhurashtakam
Tirth: Barsana and Gahvervan
Utsav: Vasant Panchami

SUNDAY 16TH FEBRUARY
8PM TO 9.30PM
Meeting ID: 853 6449 1157 | Passcode: vsuk

MANORATHI NYOCHAVAR - £21

Vicki Mehta. 07972 211 622 Chirag Tanna. 07829 712 549
Kruti Dattani. 07959 542 775 Yash Kashiwala. +355 899 622 569

Save the date for this years mahadahotsav

Vadhai || Shree Gopalprabhu Vijayete || Vadhai

Vaishnav Sangh of UK proudly organises
Making Vaishnavacharya Shri Dwarkeshlalji's 50th Suvarna Jayanti, a divine journey unfolds across 50 countries to promote "Proud to be a Vaishnav" campaign

Save The Date

Shreemad Bhagwat Katha Raspan Mahotsav
With 108 Pothiji Pujan

Pothiji Manorathi Nyochavar: £1101

From 2nd to 8th August 2025

Venue:
Byron Hall, Christchurch Ave, Harrow HA3 5BD

To become manorathi and other information

Minaben Popat 07958 436 586 Shiluben Patel 07828 208 181 Devyaniben Vora 07896 680 920

" Proud to be a Vaishnav "

Making Vaishnavacharya Shri Dwarkeshlalji's 50th Suvarna Jayanti, a divine journey unfolds across 50 countries to promote "Proud to be a Vaishnav" campaign