

## Tulasi Worship

Tulasi plants and their leaves are very important in devotional service. Devotees are recommended to water the Tulasi tree every day and collect the leaves to worship the Lord. (Sri Prabhupada, SB 3.15.19p)

### Why devotees worship Tulasi

Tulasi gets its name from Srimati Tulasi-devi, one of Lord Krishna's dearest eternal consorts, a pure devotee in the form of a *gopi*, who lives in the spiritual world. The Tulasi plant is a manifestation or expansion of her.

Because Tulasi is so dear to Krishna, one gains all kinds of benefits by worshiping her. By attaining her mercy, one can more quickly make spiritual advancement and gain entrance into the spiritual world.

### The glories of Tulasi

"There is no better recipient of charity than a vipra, no better gift than cows, no better *tirtha* than the Ganga, and no better leaf than a Tulasi leaf. Whatever one can obtain by offering the Lord all types of flowers and leaves may be attained by simply offering Him one Tulasi leaf. An offering of flowers made of gold, jewels, and pearls is not equal to an offering of Tulasi leaves."

"Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Tulasi tree, which can immediately vanquish volumes of sinful activities. Simply by seeing or touching this tree, one can become relieved from all distresses and diseases. Simply by offering obeisances and pouring water on the Tulasi tree, one can become freed from the fear of being sent to the court of Yamaraja. If someone sows a Tulasi tree somewhere, certainly he becomes devoted to Lord Krishna. And when the Tulasi leaves are offered in devotion at the lotus feet of Krishna, there is the full development of love of Godhead." (*Skanda Purana*, quoted by Sri Rupa Gosvami)

The worship of Lord Narayana is not complete without Tulasi leaves.

Tulasi must be offered to Vishnu-tattva only.

### How to worship Tulasi

Tulasi-puja is relatively simple, consisting of only three articles: incense, a ghee lamp, and flowers. Sooner or later, you will probably get an opportunity to offer *puja* to Tulasi, so here are the steps that you need to know:

#### 1. Acamana (purification)

- Take the spoon from the *acamana* cup and purify both hands by sprinkling water onto them.
- A spoon full into your right palm, chant *om keshavaya namah*, and sip.
- A spoon full into your right palm, chant *om narayanaya namah*, and sip.
- A spoon full into your right palm, chant *om madhavaya namah*, and sip.

#### 2. Offering the incense

- Purify (sprinkle with a spoon full of water) the bell and the incense holder



- Light the incense.
  - Pick up the bell in the left hand; ring the bell throughout the *puja*.
  - Pick up the incense holder in the right hand and offer the incense to Tulasi with seven circles around her whole form.
  - Offer to Srila Prabhupada and then all the devotees.
3. Offering the ghee lamp
- Purify the ghee lamp.
  - Light it.
  - Offer it to Tulasi: four circles to the base, two to the middle, three to the top, and seven to the whole.
  - Offer to Srila Prabhupada and then all the devotees.
4. Offering the Flowers
- Purify the flowers.
  - Offer them to Tulasi with seven circles to the whole form.
  - Place one at her base (optional).
  - Offer them Srila Prabhupada and then all the devotees.
  - Now the puja is complete and you can serve the devotees by assisting them to purify their hands before watering Tulasi.

Planting, watering, protecting, maintaining, circumambulating, seeing, bowing down to, praying to, and glorifying are all ways of serving and worshiping Tulasi and are highly beneficial.



### Shri Tulasi Pradaksina Mantra

*yani kani ca papani  
brahma-hatyadikani ca  
tani tani pranasyanti  
pradaksinah pade pade*

Translation: "By the circumambulation of Srimati Tulasi Devi all the sins that one may have committed are destroyed at every step, even the sin of killing a *brahmana*."

### Sri Tulasi Pranama

*vrndayai tulasi-devyai  
priyayai kesavasya ca  
visnu-bhakti-prade devi  
satyavatyai namo namah*

Translation: "I offer my repeated obeisances unto Vrnda, Srimati Tulasi Devi, who is very dear to Lord Kesava. O goddess, you bestow devotional service to Lord Krishna and possess the highest truth."