

The background is a full-page image with a color gradient from deep purple at the top to bright pink at the bottom. Silhouetted against this background are several ancient Indian temple structures, including domes and pillars, and distant mountain peaks. The overall mood is spiritual and serene.

# *sage*

june 2025 edition

## *sri devi om*

where ancient wisdom  
meets modern life

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# The King Who Chose Goodness

A long time ago, there lived a wise king named Satyadeva. He was loved by everyone in his kingdom because he treated people with respect and never hurt anyone with his words or actions.

One morning, just as the sun was rising, King Satyadeva stepped out of his room and noticed a beautiful lady walking out of the palace. He had never seen her before and was quite surprised. With gentle curiosity, he walked up to her and bowed politely.

“Excuse me, dear Lady,” he asked softly, “Who are you? I don’t think I’ve ever seen you around the palace.”

The radiant woman looked at the king and said, “I am Lakshmi, the bestower of wealth. I’m leaving your palace.”

The king was sad to hear this. “But why are you leaving?” he asked kindly. “Please stay.”

Goddess Lakshmi shook her head. “It’s time for me to go.” And with that, she walked away.

The king sighed. He didn’t try to stop her. He simply said, “As you wish, Mother Lakshmi.”

Just then, a cheerful young man followed after her. The king stopped him, too. “Who are you?” he asked.

The man smiled and replied, “I am Daan—Charity. Wherever Mother Lakshmi goes, I go too. Without wealth, how will you give to others? So I must leave now.”

The king nodded thoughtfully and let him go as well.

Soon after, another man began to leave. He looked strong and proud. The king asked, “And who are you?”

“I am Yash—Fame,” he said. “Where Charity goes, I go. Since Mother Lakshmi has also left, it is my time to go as well.”

Once again, the king didn’t argue. “As you wish,” he said.

Finally, one more woman appeared. She looked calm, kind, and full of light. As she turned to leave, the king stopped her, folded his hands, and asked, “And who might you be?”

The woman replied gently, “I am Susheela—Good Conduct. I, too, must leave now.”

This time, the king became upset. “No, please don’t leave me,” he said. “I’ve never harmed anyone. I’ve tried to be kind and honest. I value you the most. If you leave me, too, I will have nothing left.”

Hearing the king’s heartfelt plea, Good Conduct smiled and said, “King, because you treasure goodness above all, I will stay.”

And suddenly, something magical happened.

The moment Good Conduct stayed, Goddess Lakshmi returned. Charity returned, and so did Fame.

“Fear not, dear King! This was just a test,” Mother Lakshmi said. “When someone chooses goodness, I always find my way there.”



# A Sacred Name

*om*

## **Invocation to the Source**

Spirituality is a journey of discovery. It's an expedition into the unknown, where neither the path nor the destination is clearly defined. This uncertainty poses a monumental challenge: how can we seek something we cannot fully understand or describe?






The ancient sages, known as the *Rishis*, found a solution. After all, they weren't only poets and mystics but also mathematicians. To navigate this mystery of spirituality, they introduced a concept inspired by math. Just as variables in algebra denote the unknown, they used a similar approach in their search for the divine.

In Hinduism, this symbolic variable is Om—a sacred sound that represents the Source, the Formless, the Divine Energy. Though its essence is beyond grasp, Om is a subtle yet powerful focal point.

By meditating on Om, spiritual seekers call upon the unknown Source. And once invoked, the Source begins to guide them on their inner quest. Hence, almost all sacred hymns start with Om.

# Vedic Maze

F	U	U	G	U	Q	B	O	M	K	A	R	F	Q	M	C	Q	C	T	F	W	Q	E
J	E	G	U	Q	L	I	Y	C	O	C	C	F	V	D	M	K	F	M	N	Z	T	H
K	N	U	R	X	K	H	V	D	Q	R	W	Y	K	E	Y	V	B	Z	P	G	M	E
P	P	K	U	K	I	S	S	Q	X	Y	B	K	L	F	D	B	F	Y	S	J	M	Y
X	O	Y	P	N	N	I	Y	D	X	Q	U	B	M	I	Q	A	H	M	L	I	M	G
R	S	D	G	G	C	R	V	F	C	L	J	K	A	S	T	I	N	P	W	D	L	G
N	E	O	R	Q	M	X	I	Q	N	Z	H	R	N	V	N	E	T	T	N	Z	U	U
Y	Z	N	H	L	A	I	K	G	Y	I	P	H	D	H	D	P	G	Z	A	F	B	S
K	Z	K	U	P	N	Y	G	X	Z	L	Z	G	A	O	H	U	Y	K	O	I	I	D
O	K	K	Y	C	T	O	J	I	E	Y	B	X	L	S	Q	J	F	T	L	N	H	C
P	N	F	M	V	R	G	V	H	P	D	U	X	A	O	Y	A	I	S	H	Q	B	O
J	V	W	Z	K	A	A	N	E	Z	C	D	N	R	D	C	P	C	Y	F	D	S	Y
W	W	N	P	C	W	X	T	X	X	P	K	F	X	B	N	Q	A	U	N	L	S	V
X	B	X	G	Z	N	S	J	S	A	N	S	K	R	I	T	W	X	G	H	E	O	N
H	C	L	A	C	J	H	P	T	V	Z	K	C	R	Y	L	L	J	R	T	H	T	T
A	U	R	C	Z	G	U	A	U	H	B	S	Y	W	D	R	W	K	F	Q	L	B	F

Find the following words in the puzzle.  
Words are hidden , , , , and .

1. **Vedanta:** Hindu philosophy, at the end of the Vedas
2. **Mantra:** Sacred sounds that give results upon repetition
3. **Omkar:** Name of sound (Om) symbolizing the Source
4. **Guru:** Spiritual teacher or enlightened guide
5. **Puja:** Ritual offering or act of worship
6. **Rishi:** Ancient sage or seer of Vedic hymns
7. **Yoga:** Spiritual exercises for the union of body and mind
8. **Sanskrit:** Classical language of Hindu scriptures
9. **Mandala:** Geometric spiritual art

*Want the solution? It's waiting for you towards the end, just before the "About the Author" section.*



# Sri Rama's Chariot of Victory

In the Ramayana, the battlefield was set. The tension in the air was palpable as the armies awaited the final and decisive clash. It was between Sri Rama and the mighty Ravana.

Vibhishana, Ravana's brother, was concerned. He had chosen righteousness over relationships to ally with Rama. Yet, he saw no signs of the victory of Dharma. His eyes couldn't miss the disparity.

Ravana towered high on a special chariot, in mighty armor, and with an arsenal of sophisticated weapons. In contrast, Sri Rama stood barefoot on the ground, in the clothes of a forest dweller, holding just a bow and a quiver of arrows.

Vibhishana's voice trembled. "Lord, my brother has a special chariot... and you..." He trailed off, fear evident in his unspoken words. "This war doesn't seem to be in your favor."

Rama turned to him, his expression calm as ever. And with his signature smile, he replied:

*The wheels of my chariot are valor & fortitude;  
The flags of victory on it are truth & good conduct.  
Horses are inner strength, discernment, self-control, & care for others;  
Their reins are made of forgiveness, compassion, & equanimity.*

— Sri Rāma-Carita-Mānasa VI-79-iii

## Social Comparison Theory

The anecdote from Ramayana mirrors a common anxiety: Social Comparison. In 1954, psychologist Leon Festinger coined a theory that states: *We often evaluate our worth by measuring ourselves against others.*

Vibhishana didn't doubt Sri Rama's valor. He was plagued by social comparison. And just like that, in comparing, worry crept in.

Today, we continue to face the same battle. It may not be with chariots and armor, but with social media. A friend's promotion. A relative's perfect vacation. Curated "real" social lives. We compare and feel like our world is not good enough. Not because we lack anything we need, but because appearances blind us.

Rama's response offers timeless wisdom: Shift your focus from social validation to inner strength. From comparison to conviction.

Vibhishana's fear was natural. But as Rama reminded him, and us, the true battle is never against anyone else. It is always with our own insecurities. Our chariot of victory isn't elsewhere; it's in us. The day we realize this, we become *Sridhar*, the bearer of success and wealth—a name of Lord Vishnu, whose avatar was Sri Rama.

So, the next time you catch yourself comparing... pause.

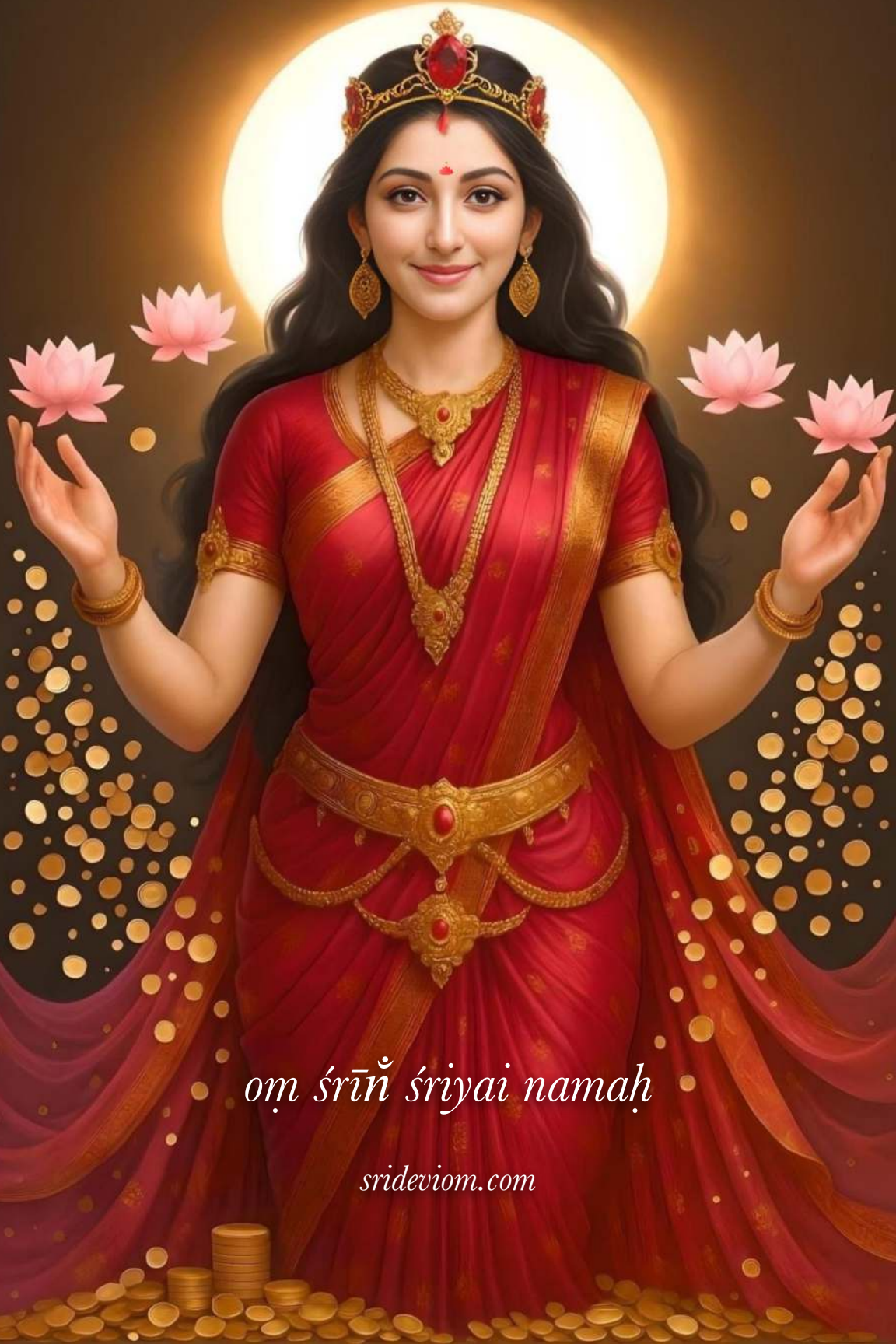
Ask yourself:

### **What kind of chariot do I have?**

The one swayed by glitter, or the one made up of virtues?

The latter always wins.





om śrīṅ śrīyai namaḥ

[srideviom.com](http://srideviom.com)



# The End of a Nemesis

## *The King of Kings: Chapter 1*

*Serialized story begins...*

Prince Aditya sat in solitude, staring at the raging river that reflected his own agitated mind. The inner strife he experienced paled compared to the grave wounds on his war-torn body.

Pounding his fist on the sandy shore, he gazed at the idol of Lord Shiva<sup>1</sup> that the locals had installed in the shade of an adjacent tree. “Where on earth did they hide him? How will I fulfill my vow and do my duty?” He lamented, recollecting his recent turn of events.

Not too long ago, he had trounced the army of the neighboring Pandya Kingdom and captured their land. That monarchy had dared to launch an attack on the mighty Chola Empire, and Aditya had wiped them off the map. Still, the battle was far from over.

His nemesis, the Pandya King Veera, had vanished for the second time. Aditya, the Chola Crown Prince, was under oath to end that slippery eel.

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<sup>1</sup> **Lord Shiva:** Also known as Mahadeva and Hara, he is a primary deity in Sanatana Dharma (SD or Hinduism), who personifies Time, which destroys everything. In Sanskrit, the word *Shiva* has many meanings, including auspiciousness and liberation. Literally, *Shi* means peace, and *Va* means water or ocean. Thus, Shiva means an ocean of peace.

The Crown Prince shook his head, astounded that he had let the Pandya ruler's bodyguards rescue their injured king. Dejected and uncertain of his next steps, Aditya stood up groggily and dragged himself toward his military base.

Unawares, a voice startled him out of his thoughts. "From here, you can see the temple of Lord Vishnu<sup>2</sup>. Go to the cottage next to it. You will not be disappointed," it directed.

"Who is talking?" Aditya growled, shattering the quiet around. He searched in the direction of the voice but found nobody there. "God! Have I started hallucinating? Am I losing my mind?" He grumbled, scrutinizing his surrounding.

Suddenly, his eyes spotted the tracks of a lone horse on the shore. Wondering how he had overlooked it, the Crown Prince began following it. Those led him to the same charming cottage next to the Vishnu temple.

Walking like a cat, Aditya snuck through the entryway and crossed the lush green yard. Standing before the serene home, he gently pushed the main door. Left ajar, the door opened effortlessly, and he peered inside.

A dazzling woman sat on a cot. Her saintly clothes of yellow and white enhanced her unearthly radiance. The Crown Prince was stunned to see a known face from his past.

"Aditya!" The woman shrieked, shocked by her unsolicited visitor. "You scared me!"

"Sorry... I'm sorry to disturb you. Do you live here?"

"Yes. I serve Lord Vishnu," she said, still dazed from the shock, pointing towards the Vishnu temple.

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<sup>2</sup> **Lord Vishnu:** Also known as Narayana and Hari, he is a primary deity in SD who personifies Space, in which this creation exists. In Sanskrit, *Vish* means to spread or pervade, and *Nu* is a suffix with many meanings like now, indeed, all, and so on. Thus, Vishnu means all-pervading.

Unwilling to cause any further trouble, Aditya bid her goodbye. He closed the front door and smiled at finding her by chance. Feeling light at heart, he started exiting her home.

At that moment, the purpose of his visit came back to him. He returned to the cottage with renewed vigor, searching for King Veera. “Who else resides in this house with you?” he questioned the frightened woman.

“Just an elderly person. He is sleeping. Please don’t disturb him,” the woman requested. Her breathing became rapid, yet she spoke softly.

Respecting her words, Aditya walked out and closed the door behind him. Nevertheless, suspicion had crept into his mind. He peered through a window, and his worst fear came true. That woman was assisting King Veera. Her face glowed with love, and Aditya burned in a fury.

Kicking open the front door, he stormed inside like a hurricane. Confronting the woman, he gave her an intense stare. He turned his back on her and raised his sword to slay his foe.

Preventing the Crown Prince from moving ahead, the woman rushed forward and kneeled in front of him. With sorrowful eyes, she looked up at his face. Pressing her palms together, she shed tears. “He is fighting for his life. Please don’t murder him now,” she pleaded.

Aditya moved a step back from her. “What are you doing with King Veera? Who is he to you?” The Crown Prince roared, then writhed.

“He is my beloved. My God,” she replied, her voice quivering in terror.

Her love for the Pandya king inflamed Aditya's temper and sapped his compassion. He shoved her aside mercilessly. Becoming iron-hearted, he brandished his sword. With one mighty swish, the Chola Crown Prince beheaded the barely alive King Veera.

The woman screamed and buried her face in her hands. Distressed, she collapsed to the floor and broke into a violent sob. She abruptly stopped crying and stared at him with eyes that spewed fire.

Stepping out of the cottage, Aditya glared at her. He had fulfilled his oath and served his empire, but his association with the woman had ended. Forever.

*Stay tuned... this story continues in the next issue!*

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# Hymn by Him

## *Srimad Bhagavad Gita*

### ***Dhritarashtra said:***

*In the Dharmic land of Kurukshetra,  
Assembled with a wish to fight,  
My people and the sons of Pandu,  
What exactly did they do, Sanjaya?*

### ***Sanjaya said:***

*Seeing the Pandava army's  
Military formation, Duryodhana  
Approached his Acharya (Drona).  
The king then spoke these words.*

### ***(Duryodhana said:)***

*Behold the mighty army of  
Pandus sons, O Acharya,  
Arranged by Drupada's son,  
Your wise disciple (Dhrishtadyumna).*

—Verses 1.1 to 1.3

## A Brief Background

The Mahabharata is an Indian epic that chronicles the story of two clans from the same royal family. Their long-standing differences ultimately led to a catastrophic war on their ancestral battleground of Kurukshetra. *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* is an excerpt from this epic, set just before the war, as the armies awaited orders for the clash.

There is no conclusive proof for this, but it's widely believed in scholastic circles that Adi Shankaracharya played a key role in recognizing the priceless *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* as a standalone text.

## Who's Who in the Verses

Below are the characters mentioned in the verses:

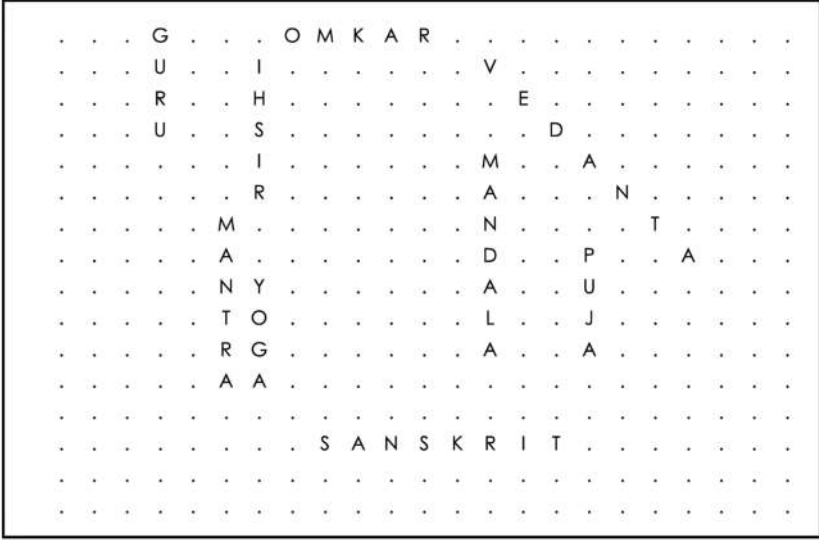
- *Kauravas*: Led by the visually impaired King Dhritarashtra. His son, Duryodhana, was the acting king.
- *Pandavas*: The five sons of late King Pandu, who was King Dhritarashtra's younger half-brother.
- *Sanjaya*: Dhritarashtra's charioteer and advisor. Gifted with a divine vision by Sage Veda Vyasa, he narrated the unfolding events and battle formations to Dhritarashtra.
- *Drona*: The teacher (*Acharya*) of both clans. He had great affection for the Pandavas, but personal attachments and political loyalty bound him to the Kauravas.
- *Drupada*: King of Panchala and father of Draupadi, the Pandava queen. An estranged friend of Drona, Drupada became a Pandava ally. His son Dhristadyumna—trained by Drona—served as the Pandava army's commander-in-chief.

*om tat sat*



# Vedic Maze:

## *Solution*



## About the Author



Sri Devi Om is a Sri Vidya Upasak, Zen coach, author, former corporate manager, and graphic designer—but beyond all labels, she is a renunciate at heart, deeply in love with the Divine.

Her life has been anything but ordinary: a whirlwind of changes that have taken her from the hustle of corporate life to the silence of inner peace. Now living quietly, outside the spotlight and without ambition or grand plans, she has found contentment in simplicity. Life continues to throw its challenges, but she meets them with grace and surrender.

Through her writings (books & magazines), Sri Devi Om shares her wisdom, rooted in Hinduism, to inspire and uplift followers of this faith.

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