

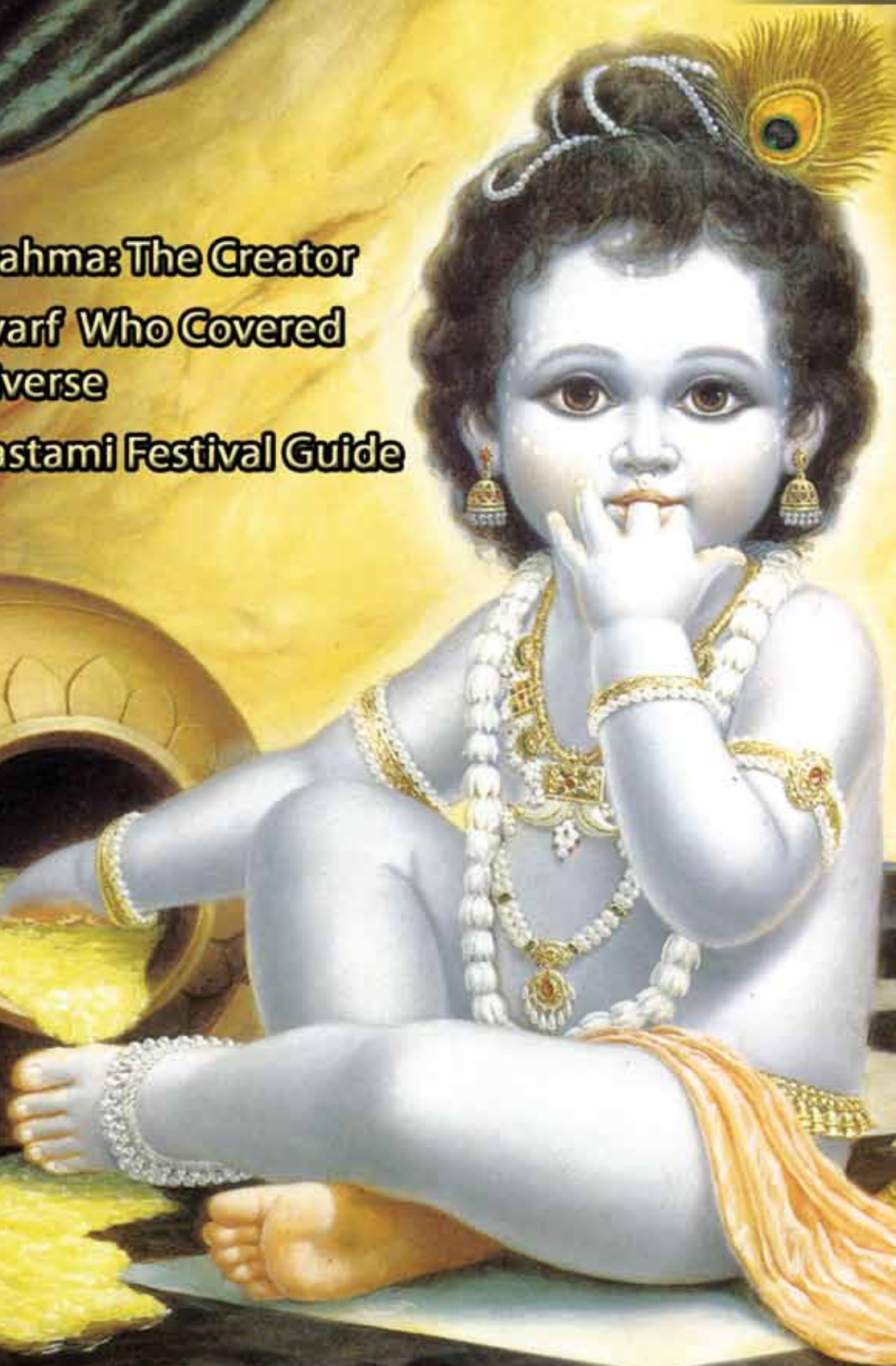


International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

HARE KRISHNA NEWS

JULY / AUGUST 2012

Lord Brahma: The Creator
The Dwarf Who Covered
the Universe
Janamastami Festival Guide



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On the Cover

Krishna, The Butter Thief

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Festival Fever Editor's Note

August and September; the third school term, consists of busy bodies cramming in the last few bits of the years syllabus before final exams. Universities begin their final phase for assessments. The workaholics start counting down till the year-end bonus and the much anticipated annual leave. The Hare Krishnas bring out the fireworks and their quarter ton pots in great anticipation of some of the largest festivals of the year—Janmastami, Shrila Prabhupada's Vyasa Puja and Radhastami, to name a few.

Festival means: an occasion for feasting or celebration; and the Hare Krishnas are renowned for their elaborate and colourful celebrations enveloped by sumptuous feasts.

Everyone loves a good story, so this issue is filled with beautiful and sweet narrations of Lord Krishna's pastimes. Our brilliant and creative writers bring you narratives like *Nanda Maharaja's Celebration*, which falls on the day after the appearance of Lord Krishna, and the appearance of Lord Vamanadev, the dwarf incarnation. The *gopis* of Vrindavan are celebrated as the topmost spiritual teachers. The *God and Demigods* column covers Lord Brahma and is the first of a two part series. Our new series on *Universal Laws* discusses *Types of Activities*.

Look out for our festival adverts with details of when, where and what's happening over the next few weeks. Stanger will be hosting their first Ratha-yatra (chariot procession), so please come and be a part of this experience, which is sure to enrich the lives of you and your family. The Shri Shri Radha Radhanath Temple will be hosting the Vyasa Puja (birthday) celebrations of some of our esteemed spiritual masters, so be sure to mark those important dates on your calendar too.

Looking forward to bumper celebrations.

Haripriya Devi Dasi



Letters to the Editor

Share your temple experience, spiritual, service related realisations or ask questions by writing to Haripriya Devi Dasi: haripriya@nitai.co.za or Rasa-sthali Dasi: rasasthali@nitai.co.za.

Follow us



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Design and Layout by Lashika Ravjee - 082 309 2396

Letters to the Editor

Dear Devotee of Krishna,
I have noticed in your newsletter that all food is referred to as *prasad*. I am not a vegetarian or practicing Hare Krishna devotee, but I like the idea of everything vegetarian I eat being *prasad*. Please give me a simple guide on how to offer my food to Krishna. Thank you.
From Mrs. Veni Govender

Dear Veni,
Prasad is food that is offered to Krishna and blessed by Him. It not only nourishes the body, but also the soul. Guidelines for a most basic offering:

- Get a plate and cup especially for Krishna.
- Serve the cooked food on the plate together with a cup of water and place it before a picture of Radha-Krishna.
- While ringing a bell chant the Hare Krishna maha-mantra: *Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare / Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare*.
- After chanting the mantra 3 times, pray to Krishna that He accepts your devotion and blesses the food and the water.
- Leave the offering in front of Krishna for at least 10 minutes. In that time you can read devotional scripture, like *Bhagavad-gita*, or continue to chant the *maha-mantra*.
- After 10 minutes offer obeisance to Radha-Krishna and ring the bell signifying that you are removing the offering. The food and water has now become *prasad*.
- You can empty the different food preparations into their respective pots and wash Krishna's plate and cup, and keep it in a clean place.

This simple devotion will bring you closer to Krishna. Hare Krishna.

Rasa-sthali Dasi

Dear Editor,
I subscribe to the *Back to Godhead* magazine and receive your newsletter in the post along with the magazine. When family members visit they look through your colourful newsletter and ask where they can get one from. Please give a list of where we can get the newsletter. Thanks.
From Rajen (via the internet)

Dear Rajen,
Thank you for your query. The newsletter is available on our website: <http://iskcondurban.net/>
And the following places:
Shri Shri Radha Radhanath Temple Book-table,
Govinda's Restaurant, Fabric and Habby (Chatsworth Centre), Vrushik's Restaurant (Durban Beach Front), Krishna's Cuisine (Durban), Gauranga's Restaurant (Durban), Veg Express (Clairwood), Westcare Pharmacy (Chatsworth), Manilall Ratanji

(Chatsworth), Beauty Basics (Havenside), and Spice Emporium (Pine Street).

Haripriya Devi Dasi

Dear Editor,
Thank you for writing about the gods from the Hindu scriptures. I have always thought that all the gods make up the whole and it does not matter who you worship. But, I have noticed in all the articles about the Hindu gods, that they are servants of Krishna. Please can you write about the Goddess of Learning, Saraswati? Thank you.
From Wanting to Learn More

Dear Wanting to Learn More,
I am glad that you now have the proper understanding of the demigods in relation to Krishna, the Supreme Lord. It is a common misunderstanding among Hindus about this subject, therefore, we are happy to present the Vedic philosophy from bona fide Vedic literature, which Shrila Prabhupada spread to the world.

We hope to feature an article on Goddess Sarasvati shortly after our Lord Brahma articles as she is the consort of Lord Brahma. Hare Krishna.

Yours in service to Shri Krishna
Nikunja Vilasini Dasi

Cake with Krishna

Women's Day Tea Party

Thursday, 9 August 2012

9:30am- 12:30pm

Dear Ladies
Spend a lovely morning
with us discussing:

Balancing Daily Duties & Devotion,
Spiritual Responsibility to Our Family,
Honouring Women of Vedic Scripture,
Raising God Conscious Children,
Building & Strengthening Relationships,
Healthy Body, Healthy Mind,
Exciting Surprises.



Bring a Friend Along
Free Admission
Bookings Essential
072 4171750

Message from the Co-President of Shri Shri Radha Radhanath Temple Managing the Future

Vibhu Chaitanya Das

“My path is very difficult. I am blind, and my feet are slipping again and again. Therefore, may the saints help me by granting me the stick of their mercy as my support.” (Cc. Antya 1.2)

This year I undertook teaching an overview of *Shri Chaitanya Charitamrita*, a biography on Shri Caitanya Mahaprabhu written by Shrila Krishna Das Kaviraj Gosvami. My aim was to discuss the purpose of the Lord appearing in five features as well as other prominent devotees who appeared with Lord Chaitanya. These devotees are all worshipful and played important roles in Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s movement. They have shown us, by their teachings, that in order to be successful, one really needs the mercy and blessings of the Lord and His devotees.

“By the mercy of the Lord, a lame man is able to cross mountains and a dumb man is able to recite

poetry.” We may think that these are simply sweet words but these words are actually the life of the devotees. Therefore, devotees are eager to fall down at the lotus feet of the Lord and His devotees and to ask for blessings in devotional service.

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the Vaishnava devotees of the Lord. They can fulfil the desires of everyone, just like desire trees, and they are full of compassion for the fallen souls.”

I have been assisting as the Temple vice-President for many years and recently have been appointed the Temple co-President. I have been thinking of how I can become a better leader, and I realised that this is only possible if I become a better servant. Position and title can be detrimental to spiritual life so we need to tread on our path carefully. Many devotees are depending on and looking to me for guidance, which I am offering and will continue to offer to the best of my ability. However, as in any service, not much can be done alone, but a lot can be achieved as a family.

The Shri Shri Radha Radhanath Temple does not belong to one person but this is our temple. Our temple is not just a place of worship or socialising; in reality it is our home and shelters us from the material world, a home where we welcome more and more people to our ever increasing family. Shrila Prabhupada created ISKCON as a home in which the whole world can live, therefore Shrila Prabhupada depends on us to continue to bring more people home. Through a spirit of co-operation and enthusiasm we can learn valuable lessons and achieve great depths in service to Shrila Prabhupada and this service will help us become stronger in our own spiritual lives. Let us all dive into the nectar of devotional service together.

My spiritual master recently told me that a good leader manages the future, a bad manager manages the present and a useless manager manages the past. We all, in one way or another, are Shrila Prabhupada’s leaders. Let us spread Krishna consciousness and sing the glories of Shri Shri Radha Radhanath, Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and Shrila Prabhupada all over Kwa-Zulu Natal, all over South Africa, and all over the world.

**STANGER
FESTIVAL OF
CHARIOTS**

**4th August • 12:30pm • Stanger Country Club
(Recreation Grounds)**

**Food Court
Gift Shop
Kids Carnival
Cooking Demo
Soul Discussions
Musical Festival
(at the Town Gardens)
Spiritual Hip Hop Music**

& Sri Krishna Janmastami Celebration

Chariot Procession • 4 August • 11:00am • Shoprite

Free transport will be provided
For more information call 082 404 8602 • 083 314 2939
harekrsna@telkomsa.net • Follow us on Facebook/Twitter-Stanger Ratha Yatra.

Past Spiritual Teachers

The Gopis: An Ambrosial Dance Crew or Something More?

By Venu Gopal Das

A day in the life of Shri Krishna is filled with numerous activities: tending cows, playing pranks on the women of the village, feasting on sumptuous food with the cowherd boys and vanquishing an ill-fated demon whose misfortune brings him wandering into Krishna's abode. Considering all this, one might ask why Krishna would choose to lose sleep over dancing with a group of mere milkmaids.

The *Adi Purana* narrates a conversation between Krishna and Arjuna. The Supreme Lord, Shri Krishna, describes the *gopis* as follows: "Oh Arjuna, there are no greater receptacles of deep love for Me than the *gopis*...Oh Partha, the *gopis* know My greatness, My loving service, respect for Me, and My mentality. Others cannot really know these. Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, the goddess of fortune and even My own self are not as dear to Me as the *gopis*."

The *Brahma-samhita* 5.37 reveals that there are sixty-four activities which the Lord commonly shares with the *gopis*. Apart from dancing, these activities are both diverse and intricate, some of which include: staging theatrical performances, jewellery making and the study of botanical medicine. However, the deeper reason for Krishna's attachment to the *gopis* is the purity of their service attitude. Lord Krishna's eternal consort is Shrimati Radharani, and the *gopis* are responsible for arranging all Their interactions. The *gopis* quickly complete their daily duties and engage all their time in making these arrangements. They set the time of meeting, search for the perfect location, manage all food preparations, decorate the site and determine what mood will suffice. They select the musical style needed, along with other entertainment. The *gopis* teach us how to utilize all our energy, facility and skills to please the Lord, but most importantly they teach not to expect anything in return. This is the highest spiritual milestone realized in the Vedas and all religious scriptures—to use all qualities and benedictions, regardless of how small, to selflessly serve the Lord.

The consciousness of the *gopis* is exemplary. The entire day they think of how to serve Krishna. Their minds are not focused on material desires or selfish delusions. When they meet amongst each other, instead of going on about themselves, they constantly glorify the Lord and teach His message without discrimination. These are indicators of those who have surrendered themselves to God. Their actions, thoughts and words are never independent of the Lord.

From the *gopis*, we are taught an essential lesson on how Krishna reciprocates with His devotees.

The *gopis* had no brahmanical training, nor had they studied the Vedas, yet they still won the favour of the Lord. Our situation in the Kali-yuga, the age of quarrel, is quite similar. Most of us don't have access or opportunity to be trained *brahmins*, let alone study the Vedas. However, Krishna states in *Bhagavad-gita* 9.26, that these methods are not necessary: "If one offers Me with love and devotion, a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I will accept it." Therefore the only qualification one needs to serve the Lord is love and devotion. Krishna further states, "To those who are constantly devoted to serving me with love, I give the understanding by which they come to me." (Bg. 10.10) This statement implies that spiritual knowledge can be realized intrinsically, as long as one is sincere about making progress in this endeavour.

Both these statements are practically instructed from the lives of the *gopis*...if ever you have doubt in performing some activity for the Lord, think of the *gopis*, and remember, in the eyes of Krishna, no action goes unnoticed.



God and Demigods

Lord Brahma: The Creator—Part 1

By Nikunja Vilasini Dasi

A brigade of ants march in a systematic file into their anthill kingdom; the bees in their beehives transform nectar into delicious honey; the insects and worms create their own homes of comfort; countless species of birds and animals create remarkable systems of defence, migration and techniques of survival. We can simply marvel at how perfectly nature works. However, the human being has surpassed all other forms of life in using his developed intelligence to create a world of his own. His thirst to create new ways of excelling in all fields of life has led him from one invention to the next. From the paraffin lamp to the light bulb, the automobile to the aeroplane, the computer to the iPad, the space ship to the space satellite, and the recent technological advances in communication, medicine, science, warfare, and entertainment are extraordinary discoveries of the human mind. It would be absurd to think that these inventions have no designer or creator. Consequently, man is so proud of his material achievements that he thinks himself to be the lord of all he surveys.

The Vedic scriptures
give us an idea of
our

insignificance. The material creation consists of millions of universes in which infinite numbers of planets are manifest with innumerable living beings far superior in ability and power. Their complex design must have a highly ingenious creator. He is Lord Brahma, the engineer of the material universes and the progenitor of mankind. He resides in Brahmaloka, and possessing four heads and riding on a white celestial swan, he is called Pitamaha, the original grandfather of man. Yet we learn from the *Shrimad Bhagavatam* and other holy texts, that although Brahma is unborn, he dies after one hundred years. Of course, the perception of time in Brahmaloka far exceeds earthly time. One day of Brahma is equal to a thousand of the four ages on earth. The four ages are made up of 4 320 000 years, so each of Brahma's day and night is made up of 1000 times 4 320 000 years—inconceivable to our measly human existence. But, time is relative according to our individual worlds; just as the insect's concept of time is different but complete in which it undergoes birth, growth, dwindling and death, we similarly go through the different stages of life in our own perception of time. Lord Brahma, the most powerful being, with the longest lifespan is also fearful of death. If he were the original person, the cause of all causes, and the Supreme Godhead, he would not be prone to death. Then, how does Brahma come into being and who is his creator?

At the beginning of creation, the infinite universes are produced from the pores of the body of Maha-vishnu. Shrila Prabhupada explains that just as innumerable atoms are coming and going through the holes in a window, innumerable universes emanate from Maha-vishnu's body and breathing. Thus He is the origin and the master of the universal creation and annihilation. The second Vishnu incarnation known as Garbhodakasayi Vishnu expands and enters into each universe. With perspiration from His own

body, He creates an ocean, and using the celestial serpent Ananta Sesa as a bedstead, He lies down on the surface of the ocean. A lotus flower sprouts from His navel wherein the first living being, Brahma, is born. The creation of our universe happens once in a day of Brahma.

After Brahma appeared, he began to contemplate on how to execute his duty of creation. He heard a sound vibrating the word *tapa* meaning penance.



Thus, he performed penance through meditation for 100 years of the demigods. The Lord was pleased with Brahma and imparted divine knowledge about His transcendental form, abode, qualities and the soul's eternal relationship with Him. This supreme knowledge is revealed in the *Shrimad Bhagavatam* and the *Brahma-samhita*, wherein Lord Brahma describes what he had heard, seen, and realized.

Lord Brahma glorified the Lord, “*Govindam adi purusam tam aham bhajami*, I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord who is adept in playing on His flute, with blooming eyes like lotus petals, with head decked with a peacock's feather, with the figure of beauty tinged with the hue of blue clouds, and His unique loveliness charming millions of Cupids.” (*Brahma-samhita* 5.30)

How is it that Lord Brahma, who had emanated from the lotus flower of Lord Vishnu, saw the vision of Lord Krishna? Brahma understood that the origin of Vishnu and His expansions is Shri Krishna. *Brahma-samhita*, like the *Bhagavad-gita*, confirms Krishna to be the origin of the creation, and all incarnations and expansions of God. “I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who perfectly know this engage in My devotional service and worship Me with all their hearts.” (Bg.10.8) Lord Brahma further describes all the important demigods as eternal servants of Krishna, and their dependence on Him to manage the affairs of the material world.

Lord Krishna through his expansion of Vishnu directed Brahma to create the fourteen divisions of planetary systems in our universe. Lord Brahma, as the secondary creator, and a stalwart devotee of the Supreme Creator, delivered the divine knowledge that he had received from the Lord to his son Narada. Narada in turn delivered this message to Vyasadeva, and Vyasadeva to Shukadeva Goswami, who spoke the *Shrimad Bhagavatam*. Thus, this unadulterated knowledge was passed down in disciplic succession (*parampara*) from Lord Brahma to the great saints in our line. In this way, our *sampradaya* (line of spiritual teachers) has been named after Lord Brahma as the Brahma Madhva Gaudiya Sampradaya.

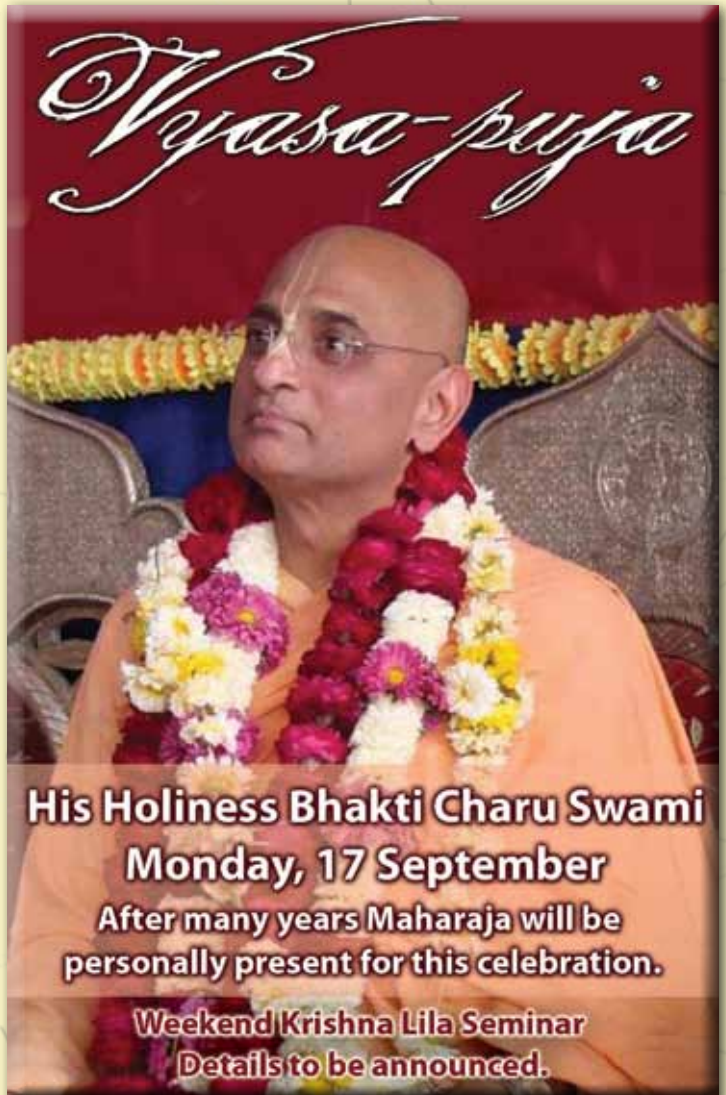
Once, Brahma visited Lord Krishna in Dwaraka. When he arrived at Krishna's palace, Krishna's servant wanted to know which Brahma he was. Brahma, confused, told the servant that he was the four-headed Brahma, the father of Narada and the four Kumaras. When Brahma was allowed to enter, he asked Krishna, “Oh my Lord, why did you want to know which Brahma I am? Are there other Brahmas besides me?” In answer to his question and to Lord Brahma's amazement, thousands of Brahmas entered. With their glittering crowns, they offered their obeisance at Krishna's lotus feet in great reverence. To add to Brahma's astonishment, he saw

that these Brahmas possessed many heads, some with eight, sixteen, twenty, a hundred, a thousand, and a million heads. Four-headed Brahma was humbled and felt like a mosquito amongst mighty elephants. Krishna explained to him that there are universes much larger and they each require a Brahma who is more powerful. Lord Brahma could not begin to comprehend Krishna's wonderful opulence and simply fell at Krishna's feet in humility and love.

“I adore the primeval Lord Govinda from whom the separated subjective portion Brahma receives his power for the regulation of the mundane world, just as the sun manifests some portion of his own light in all the effulgent gems that bear the names of *surya-kanta*, etc.” (Bs.5.49)

Just as a diamond has the power to illuminate by interaction with sunshine, Lord Brahma inherits his power from Lord Krishna. Therefore, one cannot compare Lord Brahma's position to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose supreme opulence and energies are inconceivable to our limited minds. So the next time we become proud of our minute creations, achievements or position, let's think of ourselves in relation to Brahma, the creator, and Krishna, the supreme creator.

To be continued in the next issue.



Vyasa-puja

His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami
Monday, 17 September
 After many years Maharaja will be personally present for this celebration.
 Weekend Krishna Lila Seminar
 Details to be announced.

Shrila Prabhupada The Greatest Revolutionary Leader

By Yamuna Devi Dasi

A Dream

Once, in a striking dream, I saw Shrila Prabhupada walking briskly along a path in the morning. Against a crimson sky edged with blue, he suddenly stopped and smiled. His smile radiated like a million rays of light and the twinkle in his eye glistened like a diamond in the moonlight. Placing his stick firmly on the ground, the universe trembled making a crackling sound...

Ever since the deep impact from this beautiful vision, I have been struck and captured by Shrila Prabhupada's personality and unconditional love. It is impossible to describe all of his phenomenal activities and miraculous achievements but I will highlight a few.

The Mission

Who was Shrila Prabhupada and what was his mission? Prabhupada (meaning the feet at which all masters sit) arrived in New York in 1965 on the order of his guru (spiritual master) to spread the *sankirtan* movement (chanting of the holy names of God). Raised in a traditional and strict Vaishnava (devotee of Krishna) family as Abhay, which means one who is fearless, he fully imbibed the worship and teachings of Lord Shri Krishna. In 1969, leaving his humble home in India, he travelled to America carrying the seed of devotion to Krishna; a seed that he planted in the Western countries and eventually spread to the entire world.

Mr. Ruben, a Turkish Jew, and subway conductor in New York, described Shrila Prabhupada's vision: "I met Shrila Prabhupada on a park bench and I sat and talked with the Indian holy man. He seemed to know that he would have temples filled up with devotees. He would look out and say, 'I am not a poor man, I am rich. There are temples and books, they exist, they are here, but the time is separating us from them.'" (*Shrila Prabhupada Lilamrita, Chapter 4*) It seemed Prabhupada was a beggar, but this was quite the contrary.

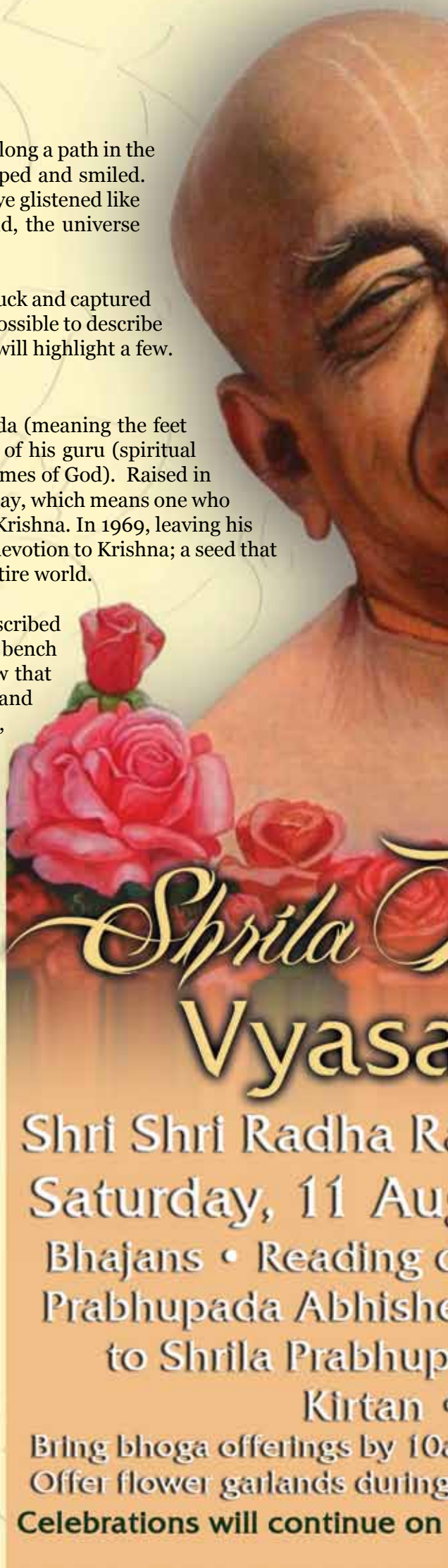
Empowered Leader

After his passing away in 1977, many described Prabhupada as an empowered messenger of God. Otherwise, how could he have done what he did? Always rapt in devotional remembrance of Krishna, his many hardships and struggles were not those of ordinary men. Yet he never deviated from his sole purpose in spreading God consciousness. Lovingly known as "Swamiji" in the lower east side of New York, he strongly taught the message of Lord Krishna, and delivered the process of chanting Krishna's names. Thus he gave a higher taste.

Prabhupada would often say, "I want to build a house in which the whole world can live in." Fulfilling this statement, in July 1966, he became the founder and acharya (leader) of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Thus began his journey of a spiritual revolution which till today resonates in every town and village of the world.

Dancing White Elephants

Shrila Prabhupada's qualities of humility, compassion, love, intelligence and purity are most attractive and amongst these, his love and compassion was foremost. He said that the Krishna Consciousness Movement is meant to deliver living entities from the cycle of birth and death. He wanted to give Krishna to everyone, a permanent solution to the repeated sufferings in the world. Once asked why everyone loved him so much, he replied, "Because I love everyone."



Shrila
Vyasa

Shri Shri Radha R

Saturday, 11 Au

Bhajans • Reading o

Prabhupada Abhishe

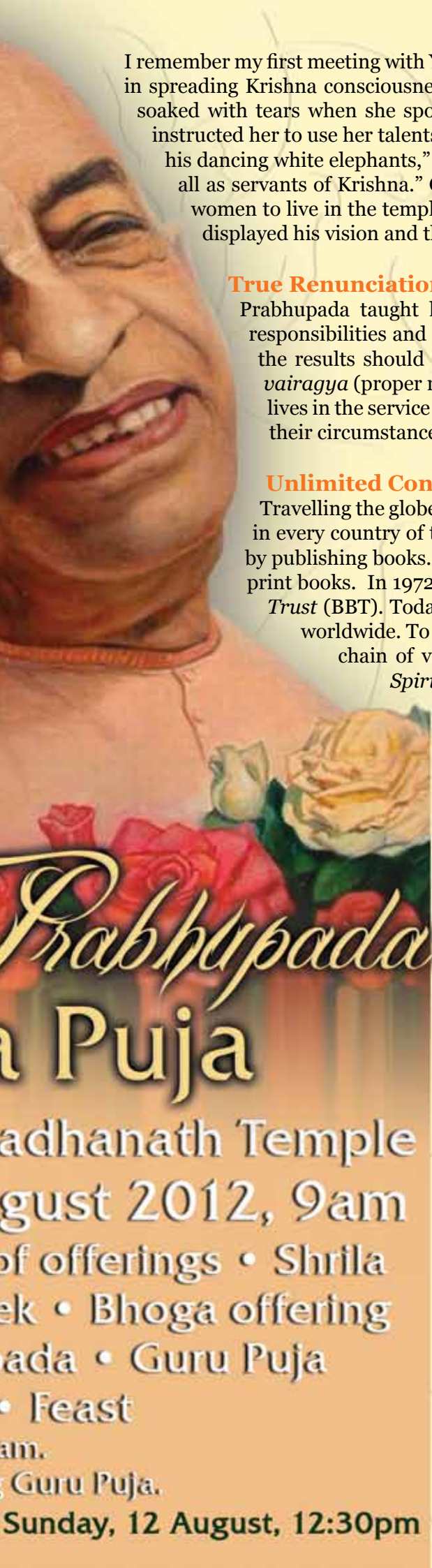
to Shrila Prabhup

Kirtan •

Bring bhoga offerings by 10a

Offer flower garlands during

Celebrations will continue on

A close-up portrait of Shri Prabhupada, a spiritual leader, smiling and looking slightly to the right. He has a white beard and is wearing a white garment. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

I remember my first meeting with Yamuna Devi Dasi, a senior disciple of Shrila Prabhupada and pioneer in spreading Krishna consciousness. Her love for Shrila Prabhupada was overwhelming and her eyes soaked with tears when she spoke of her “Swamiji”. I saw Prabhupada in her. She related that he instructed her to use her talents of singing and cooking in serving Krishna and the society. “We were his dancing white elephants,” she said, “He never discriminated between men and women and saw all as servants of Krishna.” Contrary to Vedic tradition, Prabhupada was the first to allow single women to live in the temple and worship the deity. He saw all beings equally. Meeting Yamuna displayed his vision and the indelible impression he had left in their lives.

True Renunciation

Prabhupada taught his disciples that it was possible to maintain a job and material responsibilities and at the same time remain detached from the fruits of such labour. All the results should be offered to Krishna for His pleasure. The principle called *yukta-vairagya* (proper renunciation) allowed devotees to dovetail the material aspect of their lives in the service of Krishna. In this way, anyone could chant and serve Krishna despite their circumstances.

Unlimited Contributions

Travelling the globe 12 times in a short span, he established ISKCON centres and temples in every country of the world. He delivered a spiritual paradise of literature to the world by publishing books. His guru had instructed him that whatever money he gets, he should print books. In 1972, he fulfilled this instruction by establishing the *Bhaktivedanta Book Trust* (BBT). Today the BBT has served to publish and distribute millions of literature worldwide. To highlight a few of his other contributions, he created the world’s first chain of vegetarian restaurants called *Govinda’s*; an incense industry named *Spiritual Sky*; an international magazine *Back To Godhead*; farming communities to teach the principle of simple living, higher thinking and cow protection; numerous *gurukulas* (schools), teaching Vedic knowledge and culture; the *Bhaktivedanta Institute of Science*; an Apple record with George Harrison and the Beatles, and the first ever word for word transliteration and purport to *Bhagavad-gita*. Most of all, he transformed people’s lives with the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* and gave the gift of a personal concept of God.

Simply by following the process of chanting and remembering Krishna one could experience the opportunity to eat, play, talk, and cook for the Lord. God was now accessible in a different and personal way. Soon ISKCON became a universal shelter for all people regardless of creed and colour. Shrila Prabhupada said, “I have not come to beg something, but to give something.” Here was a man who brought a message to America at an advanced age, who made so many sacrifices. He spent all his time translating, travelling, lecturing, managing and inspiring people by his example of devotion to Krishna. In short, Shrila Prabhupada’s acts of service to this world are extraordinary and inconceivable and I feel as though I have touched only the ripples of a vast and mighty ocean.

A Miracle

A man asked Shrila Prabhupada, “Can you show me a miracle.” Gesturing to his Western disciples, Prabhupada replied, “This is my miracle.” By his purity, Prabhupada had convinced thousands to chant the holy names and turn away from their sinful life. He had changed them from hippies to “happies”. In comparison to performing illusions or cheap antics, Prabhupada had given the world a permanent process to achieving real happiness. I feel deep gratitude to Shrila Prabhupada for his spiritual revolution, the impact it has in my life; and that for me, is a true miracle.

Prabhupada
Puja

Radhanath Temple

August 2012, 9am

of offerings • Shrila

ek • Bhoga offering

ada • Guru Puja

• Feast

am.

Guru Puja.

Sunday, 12 August, 12:30pm

Nanda Maharaja's Celebration

By Krisangi Radhe Dasi

The birth of a baby is a joyous occasion. I recall the delight of my family and friends as they welcomed both my daughters to the world. Together with festivities in the home of a newborn child, there are important *samskaras* performed for the benefit of the baby. The Sanskrit word *samskara* means perfect deed and it is also a rite of passage, prescribed at every phase of life.

Whilst captive in Kamsa's prison, Vasudeva and Devaki were struck with wonder at the birth of their eighth child. The baby had four arms, wore a jewelled necklace with the Kaustubha stone around His neck and was decorated with the mark of Shrivatsa (a tuft of white hair on His chest). Vasudeva's heart was filled with joy as these were indications of Lord Krishna's appearance in His four-armed form.

Within the Vedic system whenever there is a celebration in the king's palace, the king offers ornately decorated cows to the *brahmins* and sages. Vasudeva was bound by shackles and had all his possessions seized by Kamsa. This brought him unhappiness. To uphold this ritual, Vasudeva, within his mind, performed this *samskara* by offering thousands of cows to the *brahmins*. Thereafter, Vasudeva miraculously became free from the shackles and journeyed to Vrindavan where he entered the home of Nanda and Yashoda. There, he exchanged his son with Yashoda's newly born baby girl.

Soon after, the cowherd men and women of Vrindavan were elated at the news of the birth of Nanda and Yashoda's baby. Nanda Maharaj immediately began celebrations and observed the *samskara* prescribed for the birth of a baby. He invited learned *brahmins* and astrologers to perform the ceremony. Since Lord Krishna appeared in Nanda and Yashoda's home, the Goddess of Fortune was obliged to manifest her opulence and therefore Vrindavan was rich in every respect. Family members adorned in beautiful garments participated whilst *brahmins* recited

auspicious mantras to invoke good fortune for the child. The atmosphere was enlivened by the sweet sounds of birds, bugles, kettle drums and laughter. The village was transformed into a festive playground for the cowherd men and women. Scented water was sprinkled through the groves and cobbled roads, and houses were decorated with rice pulp paintings, flags and flower garlands. The cows, bulls and calves were also engaged in the festivities as they were smeared with oil and turmeric and wore peacock feather garlands.



Adding to their effulgence the *gopis* puffed *kumkum* on each other and were exquisitely dressed with earrings, pearls and jewelled lockets. With enthusiasm the damsels offered gifts to the newborn. They lovingly bathed baby Krishna with a mixture of turmeric powder, oil, yoghurt and milk. With gaiety they splashed this mixture on all present.

Inspired by the jubilation of the *gopis*, the cowherd men responded to the celebration. Pleased by the intense love shown for his son, Nanda Maharaj presented fine garments, ornaments and cows to the singers who recited verses from the *Upanishads* and *Puranas*. In keeping

with this *samskara*, Nanda Maharaj further offered the *brahmins* 200 000 cows, each bedecked with gold-bordered cloth and ornaments, and hills of grains. Being the ideal father, Nanda Maharaja performed the *samskara* of offering of charity to the *brahmins* in the most opulent and perfect manner. It is explained that such offerings are meant to please the *brahmins* thereby pleasing Lord Vishnu.

Today, the offering of cows to *brahmins* may be impractical. So, at the birth of my daughters, we performed a special *namakarana* (name-giving) where Vaishnavas, *brahmins*, friends and family were invited. We offered a sumptuous feast and asked everyone to bless the newborn. One can also make offerings of money or ornaments in charity. This *samskara* forms part of the purificatory process blessing the newborn child to have a successful future with good health and happiness.

The Dwarf Who Covered the Universe

By Dwijamani Dasi

In 1996 I was on pilgrimage in India with my spiritual master and 100 Western devotees. We were travelling from Orissa to South India and visiting various temples along the way. In Kanchipuram, a town graced with many magnificent temples, I found myself at the Shri Ulagalanda Temple (the Lord who measured the world with His steps). I was expecting to see the deity of Lord Vamana as a young dwarf *brahman* boy, brightly effulgent, holding a water pot in one hand and an umbrella in the other.



The inner sanctum of the temple was densely dark save for two oil lamps. A priest was circling the deity with a long torch. My eyes took a while to adjust and I stepped back for a better view. There was Lord Vamana, in all his glory and splendour at nearly eleven metres high. His right foot was behind Him in a lifted position indicating that the Lord had already covered the earth and heaven. His left foot was forward, pressed upon the head of Bali Maharaja.

I was in awe to be blessed with such a powerful vision of the Lord in this His universal form. Then, realization of Lord Vamana's manifestation filtered through my consciousness. Bali Maharaja, the grandson of Prahlada Maharaja, was born in a royal demon family, and was king of the demons. He was empowered by the *brahman*s with *brahma-tejas* (supreme spiritual power). Bali conquered the abode of the demigod Indra. The demigods were now bereft of their kingdom and their mother Aditi was greatly afflicted. Her husband, the great sage Kasyapa Muni, instructed her to worship Lord Krishna. Aditi undertook the process of worship known as *payovrata* (the vow of drinking only milk). Krishna, being most pleased with Aditi, appeared before her in full opulence and agreed to become her son. The Lord appeared from the womb of Aditi, first as Lord Vishnu, and then assumed the form of Vamana, a *brahman* dwarf and a celibate student. *Brahma-samhita* advises us that although the Supreme Lord appears in various incarnations, They are not different from one another. He is the same person, with the same potency, the same eternity and the same spiritual existence.

Bali Maharaja was performing 100 *asvamedha* sacrifices when Vamana appeared. Thinking Him to be a *brahman*'s son, Bali dutifully granted Him charity. The Lord requested only three paces of land, to the measurement of His steps. Bali pressed

the Lord to request more but Vamana was an ideal beggar, accepting charity only according to His needs. "The Personality of Godhead said: Oh my dear King, even the entirety of whatever there may be within the three worlds to satisfy one's senses cannot satisfy a person whose senses are uncontrolled." (SB 8.19.21)

Bali was cautioned by his spiritual master, Sukracharya, against fulfilling Vamana's desires. But being a liberated soul, Bali couldn't renege on his offer. Vamana expanded His body and covered the entire surface of the earth with one footstep. With His second step, He covered the heavenly planets and there was nothing left for Vamana's third step. Bali humbly asked the Lord to place His third step on his head. Bali Maharaja's devotion had attracted the Lord's mercy. Thus it came to pass that the demigods regained their kingdom and Bali was banished to the Sutala planet along with his associates. Lord Vamana promised Bali His personal protection and stayed with Him in Sutala.

To relish this pastime in its completeness, I recommend reading *Shrimad Bhagavatam*, Canto 8 or google key words like Vamana or Temples of Vamana.

We celebrate Lord Vamana's appearance on Wednesday, 26 September.

LET'S PARTY

You're Invited to Krishna's Birthday

Sunday, 5 August 2012
10:30am-2pm

FACE PAINTING
PUPPET SHOWS
FUN GAMES
TREATS
GIFTS
& MUCH MORE

Dress in
character from
Krishna's pastimes

Bring your children, grand-children,
nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends

Krishangi Radhe Dasi 072 4171750

BYS Winter Escape

By Rukmini Devi Dasi

Forty young minds from universities across the nation
Pretoria, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein and Durban
All converged at the temple of understanding
in search of wisdom, love, fun and a new beginning.

Devotees embraced them with arms open wide
Incredible prasada and Radha-Radhanatha's smile
The spoken language was kirtan, it speaks to the soul
Dissolves all barriers and makes the battered spirit whole

So many burning questions, so many curious eyes
Satiated by Nrsingananda's logic—perfect and wise.
Buckled up and holding their seats, the internal journey began
Shaping the heart with 'soul qualities' in Anuradha's session.

Krishna consciousness is fun! Spiritual life is an adventure!
They explored the art of cooking (Manasi Ganga)
and learned that spirit has colour (SvetaManjari).
It's the holy name that links us and japa keeps us strong
As told by Savyasaci, on beach with harinama.

The real wealth was new friendships, and no-one was left the same
The heart touched with a desire to somehow be back again
Put your ear to the ground and feel the earth's vibration
EARTHQUAKE!
Lord Caitanya's mercy in every city and nation.

Universal Laws: Types of Activities

By Ramvijay Das

The law of karma simply refers to a natural law where for every action there is an appropriate reaction. We are the most intelligent species on this planet, and need to understand the various types of activities and their concomitant reactions.

There are three categories of activities. Karma in general refers to any activity but, in this context specifically, I am using *karma* to refer to pious activity, and *vikarma* to refer to sinful activity. There is also *akarma*, which are spiritual acts of the soul in relation to the Supersoul.

Some examples of pious acts are distributing food to the poor, free medicine, and constructing hospitals. These are good material activities which result in positive material effects. Some examples of positive results can be position, power, beauty, fame, prestige, and intelligence, etc.

Sinful acts include stealing, cheating, raping, murder, intoxication, and killing animals (especially the cow),

and bring negative results. Sooner or later, the person performing the sinful activity will suffer the same fate he inflicts on others. Sinful activities generally bring distress to us at some future time.

Both *karma* (pious acts) and *vikarma* (sinful acts) bind us to this world. When we perform pious acts, we accumulate reactions which can be enjoyed in this life or future lives. Still, in order to enjoy those results, we must come back to this world. It can be compared to a man who works hard to accumulate some money. At the end of the year, he goes on holiday with his family, and they have a wonderful time. However, when his money is spent he has to return to work. Similarly, we may enjoy the fruits of our pious activities in this life or future lives, on this planet or the heavenly planets. However, when our cumulative piety is exhausted, we have to return to the earthly plane to again accumulate pious credits. Therefore pious activity, although attractive, can only yield temporary beneficial results.

This is the same for impious activities. One may get caught for stealing and be sentenced to jail. As



Devotee Focus

They Don't Make 'em Like this Anymore

By Krishnachandra Das

Growing up in the eighties, I cannot help but observe “the times...they are a changing”, as Bob Dylan sang. Today, life whizzes past us like a kid delightfully chasing a kite. Time is virtually a blur, when you're standing in a queue at Govinda's restaurant in the Shri Shri Radha Radhanath Temple and a tall, robust, sixty-something lady glides past with the lightest of ease. Watching Rasaleeka Dasi almost float off the floor as she keeps the well oiled Govinda's machine running seven days a week, leaves me in awe of this truly capable woman.

Growing up on a farm on the North Coast, she's no stranger to hard work. This ethic has shaped her character steadily and those close to her will laud her boundless well of determination and honesty. Rasaleeka began her spiritual life proper in the late seventies. From those spiritual beginnings she was always cooking up a perfect storm, either in the kitchen or on a wood fire under the open sky. I've had first-hand experience back in 1996 when I travelled



one serves his sentence, he diminishes his stock of reactions. After serving his sentence, he is released from prison and returns to society to live normally. When we perform sinful acts we suffer various reactions in our current or future lives, and by suffering those reactions, we deplete our stock of *vikarma*. We may even go to hellish planets to work off our reactions before eventually returning to the earthly plane.

Only in the human form of life can we discriminate between the different types of activities. The best action for the human being is *akarma* or spiritual activity, which help us connect to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. These acts are chanting the Lord's holy names, worshipping the Lord, visiting the temple, and reading scripture. They have the capacity of burning all our reactions, disentangling us from the material world, and allows us entry to the transcendental realm. It opens the gateway to tasting the wonderful experiences of pure love in relation to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In the next issue we will discuss Karma Timelines

on the Tent Campaign with several other boys through the North Coast. She would treat us to the most gratifying food we had ever tasted. In my books she's one of the most expert cooks, especially in the tricky art of getting the taste right when cooking for over a thousand people. Talk about a woman who doesn't sweat the small stuff.

Rasaleeka cut her teeth in the food business decades ago by single-handedly running a vegetarian take-away in Tongaat. This is a woman, who five years ago, decided to move lock, stock and two biscuit barrels (aka Tupperware—she was an agent) into the temple to do what she does best—cook for Krishna. She's been captain at Govinda's since and has made changes to the menu, the varied eating options and the much appreciated new look dining space. Steering a ship of Govinda's magnitude

is no small feat. I've had the privilege of being her assistant and I gladly confess she's one tough, no-nonsense, motivating, and soft-hearted woman. She's the perfect contradiction—hard as nails yet soft as a marshmallow (yes, she knows how to make those coconut-dusted spongy goodies as well).

Being a seasoned cook she is often asked to cook for visiting *sannyasis*, who weary from their international travel, are huge fans of her culinary skills. Hundreds of times, I've stood next to Rasaleeka fascinated, watching her juggle a huge pot of perhaps forty *rasagulas* (syrupy milk powder balls) on the fry and a tiny pot of apple chutney for a *sannyasi*. A normal day for Rasaleeka is being on her feet from seven in the morning until Govinda's closing (thirteen hours later). She's at her fully-functional best when she's buzzing around like a drone bee toggling between three kitchens, keeping her staff on their toes and taking a few moments to mingle with customers. She's a real chatter, a people's person and the customers love exchanging stories about her passion for good food, spirituality and devotion, and her travels to Europe where two of her children live. She is a grandmother, a mother (especially to those residing in the temple), a friend and to me, one of the brightest inspirations in my life. She rarely has 'sing the blues' kind of days, she soldiers on like no other and genuinely has one of the kindest hearts...and the healthiest (no deep-fries for her, she sticks to olive oil over sunflower).

Word Search

By Krishange Radhe Dasi

Birthdays are special. We all look forward to celebrating the special day with family and friends. When Lord Krishna was born there were many festivities. Read the article titled Nanda Maharaja's Celebration on page... and find the words listed below. The words can be found horizontally, diagonally, vertically and backwards.

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

Astrologer

Kumkum

Samskara

Shrivatsa

Kaustubha

Upanishad

Vrindavan

Yashoda

Gopi

Vasudev

Kamsa

Devaki

Charity

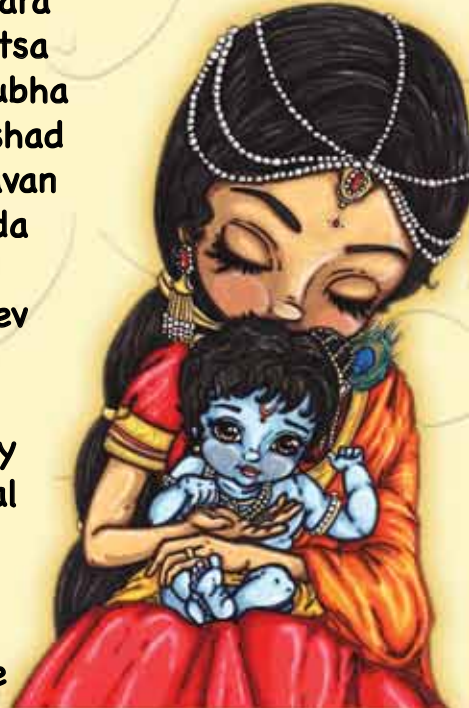
Festival

Cows

Grains

Nanda

Village



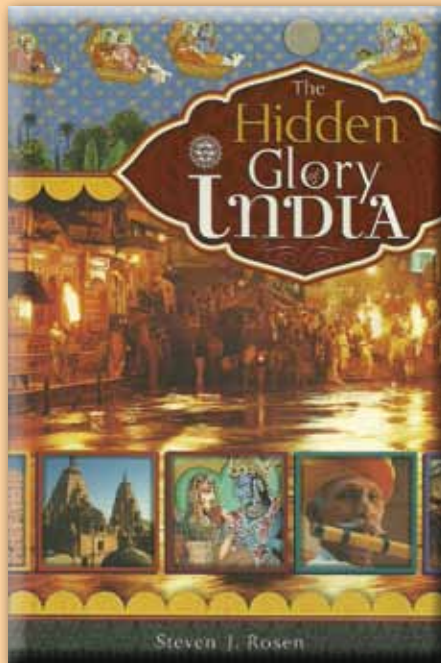
Book Review

Hidden Glory of India

Bhaktin Saras Naidoo

Travel channels and magazines present India as the ultimate destination, with the Hill Stations, Pink City, Blue City, house boats of Kerala and the Taj Mahal. Stephen J. Rosen (Satyaraja Das) instead, unveils India's real treasure. His book *Hidden Glory of India* expounds the Vaishnava origins of sacred texts, the Godhead and incarnations, sacred places, and devotional practices and teachings.

This concise, exquisitely illustrated book gives us insight into the age old practice of Vaishnavism (devotion to Lord Krishna and His incarnations). Of India's many treasures, the most valuable of all are the authorized spiritual teachers; amongst whom is Shrila Prabhupada. Satyaraja explains, "Shrila Prabhupada carried within himself an intense desire to bring the balm of God consciousness to a materialistic world" (p. 143). Teachers, who yearned for popularity and who feared rejection, propagated the more popular impersonal theory. Prabhupada



established the worship of Krishna in his *archa vigraha* (deity form), a central aspect of Vaishnavism. The *shilpa-shastras* give exact prescriptions for the sculpting of deities with specifications for proper hand gestures, bodily proportions, etc. I appreciated the interwoven facts of studies based on research and citing of scholars in the field of philosophy and theology.

Thomas Hopkins, a professor of religion at Franklin and Marshall College, suggests that if Heliodorus (a Greek ambassador to India) was a Western devotee of Krishna, there must have been many others. Thus, the interaction of Vaishnavism and the West has a long and note worthy history. The author, an American, is a renowned disciple of Shrila Prabhupada, and bears testament to the power of the *parampara* (knowledge passed from teacher to disciple).

The book also comprehensively covers other traditional aspects of music, drama, dress, yoga and meditation, detailing the practices (not in isolation) but as a process to develop devotion to the Supreme. It serves both as referential and inspirational, a treasure to be valued and shared.

You can get a copy for R160 from the temple.

Vaishnava Calendar

29 July - 2 August	Radha-Govinda Jhulan Yatra
2 August 2012	Lord Balaram's Appearance (Fast till noon)
	Second month of Caturmasya (Fast from yoghurt for one month)
10 August 2012	Shri Krishna Janmastami (Fast till midnight)
11 August 2012	Shrila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja (Fast till noon)
	Nandotsav
13 August 2012	Ekadasi
14 August 2012	Break fast time: 06:30-10:10
18 August 2012	Purushottama Masa begins
27 August 2012	Ekadasi
28 August 2012	Break fast time: 06:15-10:03
12 September 2012	Ekadasi
12 September 2012	Break fast time: 05:56-08:30
15 September 2012	Purushottama Masa ends
20 September 2012	Appearance of Shrimati Sita Thakurani
21 September 2012	Appearance of Shri Lalita Devi
23 September 2012	Appearance of Shrimati Radharani (Fast till noon)
26 September 2012	Fasting for Ekadasi Appearance of Lord Vamana Appearance of Shrila Jiva Gosvami (Fast till noon for Lord Vamana and Shrila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, with feast tomorrow)
27 September 2012	Appearance of Shrila Bhaktivinoda Thakur
28 September 2012	Disappearance of Shrila Haridas Thakur
29 September 2012	Shrila Prabhupada accepted sannyasa Third month of Caturmasya (Fast from milk for one month)

Note: Fast from all grain, beans and legumes on Ekadasis.

Notice Board

Ombudsman Balaram Das PSDG can be contacted on 0828770753 or balaram@absamail.co.za

If you would like to receive SMS or e-mail notifications about various happenings and updates, e-mail us at: kzn@pamho.net

Take Care of Krishna bookings and College queries should now be made to Bhakti Katha Dasi. Contact her from Monday to Friday from 7am-2pm, 031-4033328 or bhaktikatha@iskcondurban.net.

The Bhaktivedanta College is offering a course on the Nectar of Devotion, starting Saturday, 4 August, in the *prasad* room.

Krishna Swarup Das passed away on Friday, 8 June. The Vaishnava community will miss him and offer our deepest condolences to his family.

For general queries call the temple at 031-4033328 between 9.30am-5pm.

Vaishnava Kitchen

Chockits

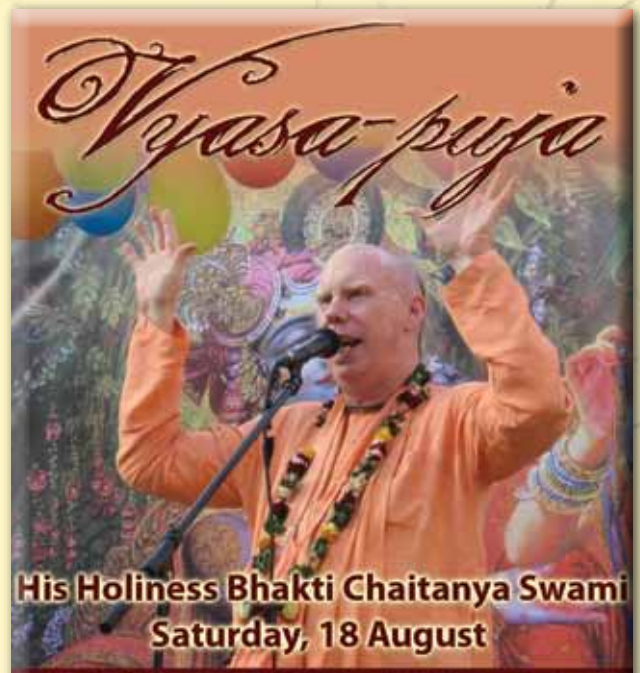
Submitted by Citra Devi Dasi

Ingredients

250g butter
¾ cup castor sugar
1tsp vanilla
1tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 Tblsp boiling water
3 cups fine jungle oats
1 cup coconut
2 tsp baking powder
+- 2cups cake flour

Method

Cream butter, sugar and vanilla essence. Mix in coconut, oats, bicarb and baking powder. Add boiling water and finally cake flour to make a dough. Roll out and cut dough with a biscuit cutter. Place on greased tray and bake at 180 degrees for +-8 minutes or until golden brown. Once biscuits are cooled, sandwich with melted chocolate or carob.



KRISHNA JANMASTAMI

Krishna Lila Discourses

5-11 August

6:30pm-8:30pm

With Nrsinghananda Das

Bhagavad Gita Conference

8-10 August

6:30pm-8:30pm

10 August 2012

Shri Shri Radha Radhanath Temple

Offerings to Shri Krishna

Live Entertainment

Cow Protection

Free Food

Bhajans

Janmastami Float

4-5 August

10am-3pm

Beautifully decorated trucks with breathtaking paintings of Lord Krishna, lively kirtans & children depicting Lord Krishna's pastimes touring Chatsworth & surrounding areas.

Aerial Fireworks Display

10 August • 10:30pm

Vedic Arts & Culture Festival

Learners:

Monday & Tuesday

6 & 7 August

Seniors:

Friday, 10 August

