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SEEKING KRISHNA'S PROTECTION

His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



On this advent day of Krishna we shall seek protection at the lotus feet of Krishna. Then we will be able to cross over this ocean of illusory energy.

*samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṇi
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ paraṁ
padaṁ paraṁ yad vipadāṁ na teṣāṁ [SB 10.14.58]*

We should read how Krishna protects the demigods or the devotees. We should seek Krishna's protection. This world is so dangerous. It is said, *paraṁ paraṁ yad vipadāṁ* — at every step there is danger. But, *samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṇi mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ* — if we take shelter of the lotus feet of Murari, under whose lotus feet the whole *mahat-tattva*, cosmic manifestation, is resting, then we can very easily cross this big ocean of birth and death. "*Vatsa-padam*" means an impression made by the hoof of a calf and the water contained in it. The vast ocean becomes like a small spot created by the impression of a calf's hoof.

The Krishna consciousness movement is for this purpose. We are requesting and training the bewildered living entities that have forgotten Krishna to revive their Krishna consciousness so that they may be saved from the onslaught of material nature. This

Krishna consciousness movement is the greatest welfare work for human society. Take it very seriously and be happy. ❀

— Lecture on *Janmāṣṭamī*, Vrindavan, 11 August 1974.

ORIGIN OF THE FESTIVAL OF JANMASTAMI

Adapted from

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 15.248-265

In the *uttara-khaṇḍa* of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Yudhisthir Maharaja asked Krishna, "O infallible Lord, please describe to me in great detail the observance of *Janmāṣṭamī*. When did this observance commence? What are the benefits of following it and what are the rules for its conduct?"

Krishna replied, "O Yudhisthir, when the wrestling match was over, Devaki entered into the arena. At that time the members of the Kukura and Andhaka dynasties all surrounded her and began to praise her and Vasudev. She then placed me on her lap, and with great affection she began to cry, saying, 'My dear son! My dear son!' With tears in his eyes and a choked voice that was filled with humility, Vasudeva came, embraced Balaram and me, and said, 'Today my life has become successful and glorious because I have been able to see my two sons, the glories of the Yadu dynasty!'

"O king, seeing my parents' happiness, everyone else became happy. Bowing before me, they all said, 'Today we are happy. Today Krishna is born. Today the demon Kamsa has been killed in this wrestling arena. O Madhusudan, Krishna, be

pleased with us and kindly remove all the doubts within our mind.’ They continued:

yasmin dine prasūyeta devakī toām janārdana tad-dinaṁ dehi vaikunṭha kurmas te tatra cotsavam samyag-bhakti-prapannānām prasādaṁ kuru keśava

“O Krishna, O Lord who removes all sufferings, please tell us the day when Devaki gave birth to you. We will celebrate a festival in your honor. O Krishna, please be kind to your surrendered devotees.’ (Text 257)

“Vasudev was astonished to hear their words. He joyfully looked at Balaram, and with the hairs of his body erect in ecstasy, he said, ‘Let the desire of the people be fulfilled. Please tell them what they want to know.’

“O son of Pritha, then, on my father’s order, I revealed the observance of *Janmāṣṭamī* to the people of Mathura, as follows:

paurāś ca taj-janma-dinaṁ varṣe garbhāṣṭame gate punar janmāṣṭamīm lokāḥ kurvantu brāhmaṇādayaḥ kṣatriyā vaiśya-jātīyāḥ śūdrā ye ‘nye ‘pi dharmināḥ

“The *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, *śūdras*, and all others who are pious, from the age of eight years and older, should observe *Janmāṣṭamī*. (Text 261) [Sri Sanatan Goswami comments: The same is true for observing *ekādaśī*. In *sāstra* it is said: *aṣṭa-varṣādihiko bālaḥ* — “Children eight years and older should also observe *ekādaśī*.”]

siṁha-rāśi-gate sūrye gagane jaladāgame māsi bhādra-pade ‘ṣṭamyām kṣṇa-pakṣe ‘rdha-rātrake śasāṅke vṛṣa-rāśi-sṭhe prājāpatyarkṣa-samyute vasudevena devakyām ahaṁ jāto janāḥ svayam

“During the monsoon season, on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of the month of *Bhādra*, when the sun had entered Leo, and when the moon was in Taurus conjoined with the star *Rohiṇī*, at the halfway point of the night, I was born as the son of Vasudev and Devaki. (Texts 262 to 263)

evam etat samākhyātām loke janmāṣṭamī-vratam bhagavatyaś ca tatraiva kurudhvaṁ su-mahotsavam mathurāyām tataḥ paścāl loke khyātīm gamiṣyati

“This observance will be known in this world as *janmāṣṭamī-vrata*. On this day, celebrate a great festival honoring the goddess Devaki also. You can begin this festival in Mathura, and soon it will spread all over the world.’ (Text 264) [Sri Sanatan Goswami comments that the word “*bhagavatyaḥ*” (goddess) here may refer to both Devaki and goddess Durga.]

ity ākarṇya yathākhyātām tathā lokair anuṣṭhitam śāntir astu sukhaṁ cāstu lokāḥ santu nirāmayāḥ. iti

“After hearing these words, everyone began to observe as they were instructed. As a result, there was peace, happiness, and good fortune everywhere.” (Text 265) ❀

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THE FIRST SIX SONS OF DEVAKI

Adapted from *Hari-vaṁśa Purāṇa* *Viṣṇu-parva 2.9-30*

Vaishampayana Muni tells Maharaja Janamejaya about the previous birth of the first six sons of Devaki.

After Kamsa was informed that the eighth son of Devaki would be the cause of his death, Kamsa became very frightened and started making various arrangements to destroy any future babies that Devaki might give birth to. His endeavors for his protection caused great disturbances for the people of the world. When Lord Vishnu heard about Kamsa’s activities, he contemplated, “Kamsa will surely kill the first seven newborn babies of Devaki. I think that I should appear in this world as her eighth son,”

While contemplating in this way, the Lord’s attention was suddenly drawn to Patala-loka, where the demons named *Sad-garba* formerly

Nāma-tattva

CONQUERING THE UNCONQUERABLE

Viṣṇu-dharma Purāṇa quoted in
Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.449

jitam tena jitam tena jitam teneti niścitam jihvāgre vartate yasya harir ity akṣara-dvayam

[Prahlaḍ Maharaja proclaims:] “He is conquered! He is conquered! He is conquered! Krishna is certainly conquered by one who keeps the two syllables of the name Hari on his tongue.” ❀

— Translated by Sri Kusakratha Das. Krishna Library. Culver City, California. 1992.

resided. These demons were very powerful and possessed strength equal to that of the demigods who drink nectar. They were sons of Kalanemi and displayed immense prowess during battle.

Long ago, following in the footsteps of their grandfather Hiranyakasipu, these demons worshiped Brahma, the grandfather of all living entities. They underwent severe austerities, and as a result their hair became matted. Being pleased by their penance, Brahma appeared before them and awarded them a benediction.

Brahma said, “You all are great heroes who have appeared in the family of demons. I am very pleased by your austerities. Each of you may ask for a benediction and I will grant it.”

The intention of all six demons was similar. They prayed, “O respected lord, if you are pleased with us then kindly grant us this benediction. Let us be incapable of being destroyed by demigods and serpents. May we never become influenced by the curses of great sages. O lord, if you are actually satisfied with us then kindly insure that we may never be killed by Yaksas, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Caranas, or human beings.”

Brahma replied with a smiling face, “Whatever you have asked for will be granted.”

After granting this boon to the Sad-garbhas, self-born Brahma returned to his own abode. Meanwhile, Hiranayakasipu became annoyed when he heard about this incident. In an angry mood, he told his grandsons, the Sad-garbhas, “Why have you approached Brahma for benedictions instead of me? By doing so, you have lost my affection. From now on you are like my enemies and I reject you. When you next appear in the womb of your mother, you will be killed by your father, one by one. You are famous as great demons and well known as the Sad-garbhas. All of you will be born from the womb of Devaki. In that birth your father Kalanemi, who will be known as Kamsa, will kill you, one by one.”

As soon as Lord Vishnu remembered those demons, He immediately went to Patala-loka where they were undergoing austerities while remaining within water. There, Lord Vishnu saw all six demons fast asleep, by the influence of Nidra-devi, within the deep water at Patala-loka. Vishnu entered their bodies, forcibly took away their souls, and handed them to Nidra-devi, the predominating deity of sleep.

Lord Vishnu, who is always fixed in the truth, then said to Nidra-devi, “By my order, take these spirit souls to the house of Devaki. They are fearful demons known as the sad-garbhas. You must implant them, one by one, in the womb of Devaki. When these demons are born and then killed by Kamsa, they will go to the abode of Yamaraja. Only then will Kamsa’s endeavors become useless and Devaki’s hard labor bear fruit. From that time onwards you will also become very famous, by my mercy, being respected and worshiped by all in this world.” ❀

— The Hari-vaṁśa Purāṇa. Sanskrit with English translation by Bhumipati Das. Rasbihari Lal & Sons. Vrindavan. 2006.

THE FESTIVAL AT NANDA’S HOME

Srila Narahari Chakravarti

Bhakti-ratnākara 13.358-365

(Kāmoda-rāga)

rāṇī yaśomatī kahe nanda prati
kṛṣṇa-jaṇma-tithi ithe
kari’ nimantraṇa āna bandhu-gaṇa
e sādha upaje cite

Queen Yasoda said to Nanda, “Today is Krishna’s birthday. We should invite all our friends and kinsmen. This desire has come to my heart.”

śuni’ nanda-ghoṣa ha-iyā santoṣa
upananda sute āni’
vṛṣabhānu-ghare pāṭhāyena tāre
kahiyā binaya-bāṇī

Hearing these words, Nanda-gopa became happy. Speaking sweet words, he sent Upananda’s son to Maharaja Vrishabhānu’s home. [Rupa Goswami says in his *Radha-kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, 1.39-40, that Upananda had two sons, named Kandava and Dandava.]

śuni’ sei kṣaṇe bhānura bhavane
kailā nimantraṇa giyā
vṛṣabhānu-gaṇa sahita gamana
kare nānā-dravya laiyyā

Hearing Nanda’s words, Upananda’s son at once went to Vrishabhānu’s palace and gave them the invitation. Accompanied by his associates, and bearing many gifts, Vrishabhānu went to Nanda’s home.

ānande kṛttikā rāṇī premādhikā
rādhikā la-iyā sāthe
yaśomatī pāṣe yāite ullāse
yaśodā mililā pathe

As Queen Kirtida with Radha, overflowing with affection, joyfully went to see Yasoda, Yasoda met them on the way.

kata nā ādare *laiyā gelā ghare*
āsane vasā'lā rāñī
vṛṣabhānu nande *mililā ānande*
ha-ila maṅgala-dhvani

Yasoda Rani took them into the palace and gave them glorious seats. Vrishabhanu and Nanda also met with great happiness and spoke auspicious words.

varaja-nagare *prati ghare ghare*
raṭaye utsava-kathā
gopī-gaṇa nehe *cale nanda-gehe*
gāyī māṅgala-gāthā

There was talk of the great festival in all the homes of Vraja. Singing auspicious songs, the *gopīs* affectionately went to Nanda's house.

nānā ābharaṇa *pari' gopa-gaṇa*
haraṣe sarasa hiyā
haridrā-sahita *dadhi dugdha gṛṭa*
ḍāle nandālaye giyā

Decorating themselves with a variety of ornaments, and bearing gifts of yogurt, milk, ghee, and turmeric, with joyful hearts the cowherd people went to Nanda's palace.

nandādika saṅge *sabe nāce raṅge*
vividha taraṅga tāya

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bāje yantra-gaṇa *ghanaśyāma ghana*
nanda-mahotsava gāya

Musical instruments played. Nanda, his family, and his guests all joyfully danced. Many great waves of bliss flooded the celebration. Thus Ghanashyam Das [a name of Narahari Chakravarti Thakur] sings of the great festival in Nanda's home. ❀

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PRAYERS TO THE LOVER OF THE GOPIS Sri Rupa Goswami's Stava-māla 82.6

kānanārabdha-kākalī-śabda
pāṭavākṛṣṭa gopikā-drṣṭa
cāturī-juṣṭa-rādhikā-tuṣṭa
kāminī-lakṣa-mohane dakṣa
bhāvinī-pakṣa mām amuṁ rakṣa

O Lord who attracts the *gopīs* to the forest with the sweet sound of your flute, who is very pleased by intelligent Radha, who is expert at delighting thousands of beautiful girls, and who is the lover of a great multitude of affectionate *gopīs*, please protect me!

ajarjara-pativratā-hṛdaya-vajra-bhedoddhurāḥ
kaṭhora-vara-varṇinī-nikara-māna-varma-cchidaḥ
anaṅga-dhanur-uddhata-pracala-cilli-cāpa-cyutāḥ
kriyāsura aghavid viṣas tava mudam kaṭākṣeṣavaḥ

May the arrows of Lord Krishna's sidelong glances, which are shot from moving eyebrow-bows more proud than the bow of the god of love, which pierce the hard armor of the pride of the most virtuous girls, and which become thunderbolts breaking the hearts of the most chaste young girls, bring transcendental happiness to you. ❀

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