Sri Brahmotsava 2015
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, came to America in 1965, at age 69, to fulfill his spiritual master’s request that he teach the science of Krishna consciousness throughout the English-speaking world. In a dozen years he published some seventy volumes of translation and commentary on India’s Vedic literature, and these are now standard in universities worldwide. Meanwhile, travelling almost nonstop, Srila Prabhupada moulded his international society into a world-wide confederation of ashramas, schools, temples and farm communities. He passed away in 1977, in Vrindavana, the place most sacred to Lord Krishna. His disciples and followers are carrying forward the movement he started.

To know more about Srila Prabhupada visit www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada
Govinda—The Original Person

If personal qualities were absent from the origin of everything, they would not be present in the material world.

By His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

The word Govinda refers to one who gives pleasure to the cows and the senses. There are many incarnations of Godhead, but Govinda [Krishna] is the adi-purusha, or the original person. As such He is not technically an incarnation of God but is God Himself, the source of incarnations. Govinda is not some impersonal effulgence or void but a person complete in every respect.

Unless the origin of everything is a person, how can so many persons or individual living entities—be they men, animals, demigods, trees, or plants—exist all over the universe? Every living entity is an individual spirit soul, and every individual spirit soul is a person. How, then, can the origin of everything be impersonal and nothing more? Personal qualities must be there in Him; otherwise they cannot be reflected in this material world. This, then, is the conclusion of Lord Brahma in the verse govindam adi-purusham tam aham bhajami. Lord Brahma is the original creature in this universe, and in Brahma-samhita he states that his origin is also a person. "I worship that original person," he states throughout Brahma-samhita.

The whole world is labouring under the impersonal conception. No one actually knows anything, of course, but they have developed an impersonal philosophy by means of speculation. But how can this impersonalism stand? It is contradicted at every step of our experience, for every individual entity is a person, and the complete whole from which all entities emanate is also a person. Adi purusham.

Lord Brahma's Knowledge

This is the verdict of Lord Brahma, who, having created the universe, knows well what is within this universe. We have very little knowledge of what is within this universe, and what is beyond is totally unknown to us. This is not the case with Lord Brahma, however. Lord Brahma is adi-kavaye, which means that he is the original learned person, the creator of this universe. Tene brahma hrda ya adi-kavaye muhyanti yat surayah [Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.1.1]. The origin of everything, the Absolute, the summum bonum, cannot be impersonal, for He is the origin of the person Brahma. We have no experience of a person coming from something impersonal; because my father is a person, I am also a person. If we trace back through our family trees, we will find that one person comes from another person, and somehow, if it were possible to trace our origins back to the beginning of creation, we would find the original person whom Brahma is praising. The origin of the universe is not void, nor is it some primeval muck, but the origin is a learned person.

Brahma, being the first creature, received his knowledge from the original person, and that is described in Srimad-Bhagavatam. The word brahma means jnana, or knowledge. One may question how Brahma could learn from another person if he is the original creature in the universe. Who was the spiritual master who imparted knowledge to him?

In Srimad-Bhagavatam it is indicated that that knowledge came from within the heart of Brahma. God is situated in everyone's heart, and although Brahma was the first and only creature at the time, the other person, the adi-purusha, was within his heart. It is also stated in Bhagavad-gita (18.61) that ishvara, the Supreme Lord, is situated within everyone's heart and is giving directions to everyone.

isvarah sarva-bhutanam
hrd-dese 'juna tisthati
bhramayan sarva-bhutani
yantrarudhani mayaya

"The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated as on a machine, made of the material energy."

Those who are not devotees cannot understand how it is that Krishna or God is giving instructions within the heart, but those who are devotees can understand. The devotees therefore are trying to hear the Lord from within, but in order to hear properly, this special qualification is needed. One must be at a certain stage of spiritual advancement.
In Bhagavad-gita (10.10) Krishna indicates that to those who are devoted to Him, He gives the means whereby they can understand Him:

tesam satata-yuktanam
bhajatam priti-purvakam
dadami buddhi-yogam tam
yena mam upayanti te

"To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me."

The words tesam satata-yuktanam mean "to be engaged." The devotees of Krishna engage full time in devotional service out of love (priti-purvakam). The devotees always enjoy thinking, "Here is an opportunity to serve Krishna." The more they engage in service, the more they are pleased and the faster they make advancement in spiritual life. There is no question of retirement. When we perform some material service, we get tired and think, "Oh, I have worked so much. Now let me take a vacation." However, when one performs spiritual service, he actually gets more energy and says, "Let me serve more." To such a sincere devotee, the Lord, sitting within the heart, gives instructions: "Do this, and you will very soon come to Me."

He also gives different instructions to others who do not want to turn to Him. "You want to do this? Here is your opportunity then. If you want to steal, then go ahead." If we wish not to turn to Krishna, if we wish to forget Him completely, He will give us that facility, for He is always satisfying our desires.

Consequently it is stated in the Bhagavad-gita (15.15) that He gives us remembrance of Himself and also allows us to forget, if that is our desire.

sarvasya caham hrdi sannivisto
mattah smritir jnanam apohanam ca
vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyo
vedanta-krd veda-vid eva caham

"I am seated in everyone's heart, and from Me come remembrance, knowledge, and forgetfulness. By all the Vedas I am to be known; indeed I am the compiler of Vedanta, and I am the knower of the Vedas."

Not a Person Like Us

Ordinary persons cannot understand how God can be a person because they think, "God must be a person like me." Therefore in some of the scriptures a personality is denied, for as soon as the foolish accept a personality, they think, "God is a person like me." Therefore it is said, "God is not a person," and in some religions, like the Judaic religion, even images of God in the form of pictures or statues are not allowed. But this is not to say that God is not a person at all. When it is said that God is not a person, we should understand that He is not a person like us. In actuality, He is a person, but He is a different kind of person. Isvarah paramah krishnah sac-cid-ananda-vigrahah: His personality is eternal; His body does not die like ours. His body is full of bliss, whereas our body is full of misery. His body is full of knowledge, whereas ours is full of ignorance. And He is ishvara, the controller, whereas we are the controlled. How, then, can God be a person like us?

Because we are incapable of understanding how the Absolute Truth can be a person, we have to take lessons from Brahma, the supreme poet and sage of the universe who is the first created person. We are in the Brahma-sampradaya, or the disciplic succession starting from Lord Brahma; therefore we accept Brahma's statements and worship adi-purusham, Govinda.

We may not know that adi-purusha, but if we follow in the footsteps of the acharyas, great spiritual teachers, we will not have difficulty. Govinda gives Brahma instructions from within his heart, and Brahma gives instructions to his disciple Narada, and Narada gives instructions to his disciple Vyasa. Vyasa's disciple Madhvacharya repeats the same message, then Isvara Puri, and then his disciple Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, then the Gosvamis, and so on. In this way knowledge is received by parampara, step by step in the disciplic succession. When the same message is repeated without deviation, the knowledge is transmitted perfectly.

Incarnations of Godhead

From the shastras, or scriptures, we learn that the adi-purusha, or original person, expands Himself in many incarnations. These incarnations are diverse, and their activities are described in Srimad-Bhagavatam. On one occasion Lord Krishna incarnated as a boar, Varaha, and lifted the world up when it was merged within the waters of the Garbhodaka Ocean. The demon Hiranyaksha pushed the earth within the watery half of the universe, and
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deny God's personality, then He will be present before us as cruel death. In Bhagavad-gita there are instructions teaching us how we can gradually understand God and see Him personally, face to face. In Bhagavad-gita the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself states, "I am the taste of water, I am the sunlight, I am the moonlight, I am the vibration of sound in the sky, and amongst great personalities I am the greatest." If anyone is actually serious about understanding God, or the science of God, he can follow the injunctions given in Bhagavad-gita and realize God in so many ways. Everyone is tasting water daily, so if we remember that God is the taste of water, then God realization begins. Who has not seen the moon or the sun? And who has not heard sound vibrating in the air? In so many ways we can see, feel, and hear God. Everyone sees God at every moment, but the atheists claim they do not see Him because He does not exist.

Without God consciousness, or without Krishna consciousness, there cannot be any peace. Everyone is hankering after peace, but no one knows how to achieve it. Therefore this Krishna consciousness movement is promoting the greatest welfare work in the world. The process of understanding this science of Krishna is made very easy in this age by Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu through the chanting of the holy names of God: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. In the Vedas it is stated that in this age people are so fallen that they cannot realize God by any of the prescribed methods; therefore it is
Lord Krishna, in the shape of a boar, not only delivered the planet but annihilated the demon. On another occasion the Lord appeared as a small fish in a water pot, and as time elapsed this fish got bigger and had to be taken to a reservoir.

The fish kept increasing in size, and when He was quite huge He informed Manu, "Devastation is coming. Take all the Vedas and put them in a boat, and I shall protect them."

Therefore Jayadeva Gosvami sings in his prayer, "My Lord, in the shape of a fish You saved the Vedas when there was devastation."

The incarnations of Godhead are described in prayers offered by Jayadeva Gosvami, a Vaishnava poet who appeared about seven hundred years before Lord Chaitanya. Jayadeva was a great devotee, and he wrote a very famous song about the Lord called Gita-govinda. He offers another prayer to the tortoise incarnation. Once the demons and demigods were using a great hill as a churning rod and were churning the ocean with it. The resting place of the churning rod was the shell of the tortoise incarnation.

Jayadeva therefore prayed: "You appeared as a tortoise just to be a resting place for the churning rod. Your back itched, and You accepted this hill as a rod to scratch the itch."

In another incarnation, Narasimha-deva, the Lord appeared in order to save Prahlada Maharaja, a five-year-old boy who was being tortured by his atheistic father. The Lord appeared from a pillar of the father's palace as a half-man, half-lion. Prahlada's father, Hiranyakashipu, had received a benediction from Lord Brahma that assured him that he would not be killed by any man or animal, so the Lord appeared neither as man nor an animal. We often think that we can thus cheat the Lord by our intelligence, but the Lord is more intelligent than we.

In another incarnation the Lord appeared as a dwarf. Lord Vamana appeared before Bali Maharaja, who had conquered all the universal planets and had thus disturbed the demigods.

Bali Maharaja said, "I am a Brahmana, and I have come to beg from you."

Bali Maharaja said, "Yes, I'll give You what You want."

The dwarf asked for only three feet of land, and Bali Maharaja granted His wish. Vamanadeva then took one step and covered half the universe, and then He took another step and covered the other half. Bali Maharaja then said, "There is no place for You to take the third step, so please place Your foot on my head."

In another incarnation, as Parashurama, the Lord killed all of the kshatriya kings twenty-one times because of the kings' dishonesty. From the history of the Mahabharata, it can be understood that at that time some of the kshatriyas fled and took shelter in Europe, and consequently modern Europeans are descendants of those kshatriyas.

As Lord Rama, the Lord fought with Ravana, a demon with ten heads, and ruled the earth as an ideal king.

As Balarama, the elder brother of Krishna and the incarnation of Sankarshana, the Lord was very beautiful, white in complexion, and He wore blue garments. Once He became angry with the Yamuna River, and He threatened to dry it up. Out of fear of Balarama, the Yamuna agreed to cooperate with Him.

As Lord Buddha, the Lord destroyed the Vedic principles with flawless logic and is therefore considered an atheist. Lord Buddha, however, was an incarnation of Krishna, and He denied the Vedas in order to save animals that were being sacrificed according to the injunctions of the Vedas. In the name of Vedic sacrifice, people were improperly killing animals, and the Lord, as Lord Buddha, appeared to preach nonviolence.

At the end of this age, Kali-yuga, the Lord will appear as Kalki. According to the Vedas, Kalki will appear 427,000 years from now, and His mission will simply be to kill. Lord Krishna gave instructions in the form of Bhagavad-gita, but Lord Kalki will not give any instructions. At the end of Kali-yuga people will be so degraded that they will not be able to understand any instructions; therefore the only recourse will be to kill them. One who is killed by the Lord attains salvation. This is one of the Lord's all-merciful qualities; whether He protects or kills the result is the same. Thus Kalki will appear at the last stage of Kali-yuga and annihilate everything, and after that time, Satya-yuga (the Golden Age) will begin again.

In this way we can see that God is not only a person as the adi-purusha, the original person, but that He manifests Himself throughout the universe in innumerable incarnations and expansions that are also personal in quality.

Seeing God

Despite all this, we often challenge the Lord and say, "There is no God," or "I am God," or even "I don't care for God." Despite this attitude, which is typical of this age, God is there, and we can see Him at every moment. If we
recommended that by chanting the holy names of God in this age one can get all the benefits derived in previous ages from meditation, temple worship, and sacrifice.

Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who is Krishna Himself, instructs us that the holy name of God is nondifferent from the Supreme Lord; therefore all the energy that God has is also there in His holy name. On the absolute platform there is no difference between the holy name of God and God Himself.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said that there are no hard and fast rules for chanting the name of God, and therefore the names can be chanted anywhere and everywhere. In this age the blind are following the blind, for no one knows the aim and objective of human society or the perfection of human life. Life is perfected through self-realization and the reestablishment of our lost relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This Krishna consciousness movement is attempting to enlighten human society on this important point. According to Vedic civilization, the perfection of life is to realize one's relationship with Krishna. From Bhagavad-gita we can understand that all living entities—not only human beings, but animals and lower life forms—are parts and parcels of God. The parts of anything are meant to serve the whole, just as the hands are meant to serve the body. Similarly, as living entities that are part of God, we are duty bound to serve Him.

Actually our position is that we are always rendering service to someone. We are always serving our bodies and the extensions of our bodies in the form of family, society, country, and so on. If a person has no one to serve, he sometimes keeps a pet cat or dog and renders service unto it. Constitutionally we are made to render service to the Supreme Person, but when we deny that person we are forced to render service to something else. In any case, the rendering of service will be there, and that rendering of service is called sanatana-dharma, or the eternal activity or occupation of the living entity.

On the material platform, despite rendering service to our best capacity, we are never satisfied. In the material conception, everyone is frustrated, because the service rendered is not properly directed. If we want to render service to a tree, we must water its roots, not just its branches and leaves. Similarly, if the stomach is given food, all the other parts of the body are nourished. We should understand therefore that if the Supreme Personality of Godhead is served, all His parts and parcels will be satisfied also. Therefore all welfare activities, including all service to society, family, and nation, are perfected by serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In a conversation with his disciple Narada Muni, Lord Brahma made the following statement: “The Vedic literatures are made by and are meant for the Supreme Lord. The demigods are also meant to serve the Lord as parts of the body, the different planets are also meant for the sake of the Lord, and different sacrifices are performed just to please Him. All different types of meditation or mysticism are meant to realize Him. All austerities are aimed at achieving Him. Culture of transcendental knowledge is for getting a glimpse of Him, and ultimately salvation is in entering His kingdom.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.5.15-16) By following in the footsteps of Lord Brahma, we can attain that ultimate salvation and glimpse that Supreme Person worshiped by Lord Brahma and all other demigods in the universe.

Thank you very much.

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Interviewer: Your Grace, this is being recorded on videotape, so it will be broadcast later.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes.

Interviewer: Not right now, but later on. I, of course, know very little about this subject.

Srila Prabhupada: [Laughing.]

Interviewer: Yes. So if I ask questions which, you know, sound sort of ignorant . . .

Srila Prabhupada: [Laughs.] Yes. I shall . . .

Interviewer: I ask your indulgence. Thank you.

Srila Prabhupada: Hare Krishna. [Laughing.]

Interviewer: You are the expert, and I know very, very little about this.

Srila Prabhupada: The expert is Krishna. He is the expert. [Chuckles.]


Srila Prabhupada: [Chanting the Hare Krishna maha-mantra softly on his beads.] One who fully accepts that Krishna is the expert—he is authorized.

Interviewer: So you are authorized.

Srila Prabhupada: I or anyone that follows Krishna’s instructions. My book Bhagavad-gita As It Is is authority.

Interviewer: Yes, I know.

Srila Prabhupada: MacMillan publishes every year fifty thousand copies. You can inquire from your side about any reading matter from this original Bhagavad-gita. That will be nice. Then I can explain.

Interviewer: All right. [To a member of his television production team:] You’re going to cue me, right?

[Beginning his presentation:] Lord Krishna is the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as confirmed by all the Vedic scriptures and by the great sages in disciplic succession. He has a body made of eternity, bliss, and all knowledge. God has infinite forms and expansions, but of all His forms, His original form, His transcendental form, is as a cowherd...
boy, a form which He reveals only to His most confidential devotees. So go the teachings of Krishna, as laid down in the Vedic literature. And of the sages in the disciplic succession, which I mentioned, one is our guest for this conversation today. He is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, foremost teacher in the West of the Krishna philosophy, which, moreover, he teaches not only by word but by example. He came to this country in 1965, on orders of his spiritual master. As a Krishna disciple, he is the present human exponent of a line of succession going back five hundred years, to the appearance in India of Lord Chaitanya, and beyond that to a time five thousand years ago, when Lord Krishna Himself was on this planet and His words were recorded.

[To Srila Prabhupada:] Welcome, sir. What is Krishna consciousness?

Srila Prabhupada: Krishna consciousness means that every living being is part and parcel of Krishna. Krishna has got many expansions. They are called personal expansions and separated expansions. So, separated expansions are we—we living entities. But although we are very intimately connected with Krishna, somehow or other we are now separated by contact of material nature. So we have practically forgotten that we are part and parcel of Krishna. Actually, that is a fact, but the living being forgets. Just as a rich man's son—somehow or other, he has forgotten his father, and he's loitering in the streets like a poor man. But actually, that is not his position. He has forgotten, simply.

So this Krishna consciousness movement means we are trying to invoke that original consciousness that the living being is part and parcel of Krishna. Why should he remain in this material world and suffer the threefold miseries? So we want to revive our original consciousness. The original consciousness is Krishna consciousness. Just like a man born of a lord's family—his title should be that of the lord's family, but unfortunately, forgetting his own home, he's accepting some menial title. So our whole Vedic literature is meant for that purpose, to revive everyone's original consciousness. Aham brahmasmi—"I am spirit."

Interviewer: You came, sir, to this country in 1965, as I said, on instructions or orders given you by your spiritual master. By what, the way, was your spiritual master?  

Srila Prabhupada: My spiritual master was Om Vishnupada Paramahamsa Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Prabhupada.

Interviewer: Now, in this line of succession that we were talking about earlier—this disciplic line which goes way back, all the way back to Krishna Himself, right?—was your spiritual master the previous one before you?  

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. The disciplic succession has been coming from Krishna over the past five thousand years.

Interviewer: Is your spiritual master still alive?  

Srila Prabhupada: He passed away in 1936.  

Interviewer: So you are, at this particular time, then, sort of the world head of this movement? Would that be correct?  

Srila Prabhupada: I have got many Godbrothers, but I was particularly ordered to do this, from the very beginning of my association with my spiritual master. So I am trying to please my spiritual master. That's all.

Interviewer: Now, you were sent to this country, to the United States of America. This is your territory. Is that correct?  

Srila Prabhupada: Hmm. "My territory." What my spiritual master said was, "You go and speak this philosophy to the English-knowing public."

Interviewer: To the English-speaking world?  

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. And especially to the Western world. Yes. He told me like that.

Interviewer: When you came, sir, to this country, you did not come to a part of the world where religion as such was lacking. In the United States of America we have many religions, and I think a great majority of people in this country like to believe that they are religious—people who believe in God, you know, who devote themselves to some form of religious expression. And I wonder what your thinking was. What did you think that you could add to the already living religious expression in this country by coming here and adding your own philosophy to it?  

Srila Prabhupada: When I first came to your country, I was guest of an Indian friend at Butler.

Interviewer: In Pennsylvania?  

Srila Prabhupada: Pennslyvania. So although it was a small county, I was very much engladdened that there were so many churches.

Interviewer: So many churches? Yes, yes.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, so many churches. And I spoke in many of the churches there. My host arranged for that. So I did not come here with the purpose of defeating some religious process. That was not my purpose. Our mission is—Lord Chaitanya’s mission is—to teach everyone how to love God. That's all.

Interviewer: But in what way, sir, may I ask—in what way did you think, and do you think right now, that the teaching of the love of God which you are doing is different and perhaps better than the teachings of the love of God which already were being conducted in this country, and have been conducted in the Western world for centuries?  

Srila Prabhupada: We are following in the footsteps of Lord Chaitanya. He's accepted by us according to the authority of the Vedic literature. He is personally Krishna. ☄
The Deity or archa vigraha is the form that the Supreme Lord resides in, to accept the offerings of His devotees and to give them an opportunity to personally relate with Him in this material world. Although the Supreme Lord is transcendental to matter and His form is spiritual, He permeates all matter, including stone, wood and metal. Worshipping His deity form is non different from worshipping the Lord directly. Vedic scriptures mention a variety of materials that may be used to create the Deity.

Every year, the Brahmotsava festival is held on Hare Krishna Hill to commemorate the appearance of the Deities here – Sri Sri Radha Krishnachandra, Sri Sri Krishna Balarama, Sri Sri Nitai Gauranga, Sri Srinivasa Govinda and Sri Sri Prahlada Narasimha.

From April 3 to 15, the colourful Brahmotsava celebrations with vahana utsava, dolotsava, kalyanotsava and churna abhisheka were celebrated. Every evening the devotees participated in the vahana utsava and with the Lord they witnessed dance and music performances that were held for the pleasure of Their Lordships. The festival culminated with the churna abhisheka ceremony when all the utsava vigraha of the temple received a ceremonial bath together, an event that takes place only once every year. After ten hectic days of exciting festivities followed by a relaxing churna abhisheka, Their Lordships Sri Radha Krishnachandra were taken on a tranquil ride on a flower decorated barge in the temple kalyani, during the Theppotsava.
Dhvaja Arohana

Ananta Shesha Vahana
Lakshmi Narayana Alankara
Garuda Vahana
Satyabhama Krishna Alankara

Ashva Vahana
Rukmini Vijaya Alankara
Hamsa Vahana
Mohini Alankara

Maha Pallaki
Radha Raja Gopala Alankara
Kalpa Vriksha Vahana
Radha Kunja-vihari Alankara

Chandra Prabha Vahana
Radha Rasa-vihari Alankara
Gaja Vahana
Rukmini Dwarakadhisha Alankara

Brahma Ratha
Radha Krishnachandra Vishesha Alankara
Hanumad Vahana
Sita Rama Pattabhisheka Alankara

Churnabhisheka
Theppotsava

Kalyanotsava
Dance Drama by Vempatti Chinna Satyam's Kuchipudi Art Academy

Dance Drama by Shijith Nambiar and Group

Dance Drama by Sheejith Krishna and Group
Distinguished Visitors

H H Sri Shivamurthy Shivacharya Swamiji, Taralabalu Sirigere

H H Sri Subudhendra Tirtha Swamiji, Mantralaya

His Excellency Sri Vajubhai Vala, Governor of Karnataka
Bangalore

_Utsava vigraha of Sri Sri Radha Krishnachandra in Sita Rama Pattabhisheka alankara, during pallaki utsava (left). Devotees perform Rama Taraka Homa (below)._
Hare Krishna Mandir Opens in Ahmedabad

The Hare Krishna Movement-Ahmedabad’s Sri Radha Madhav Mandir was inaugurated on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, by the Honourable Chief Minister of Gujarat, Smt. Anandiben Patel (pic below). The presiding Deities, Sri Sri Radha Madhav, as well as Their utsava vigrahas, and smaller Deities of Sri Narasimha and Ananthashesha, were installed in ceremonies that lasted for a week. The temple kalashas were also consecrated and installed during this time.

Their Lordships were taken on a ratha yatra around the temple grounds and a nauka vihara (boat ride) in the temple pond by devotees after the installation. The imposing temple complex (pic above) has a temple hall that houses the Deities and Srila Prabhupada’s vigraha, an ashrama for full-time missionaries, offices and other utilities. There is also a goshala in the temple premises.

A detailed report with more photographs will be featured in the June issue of Krishna Voice.
Devotees participate in the installation ceremonies which took place in the grand temple hall.
Located in the Nagapatinam district of Tamil Nadu is the charming temple of Arimeya Vinnagaram. This serene temple is home to the Deity of Vishnu as Gopala, the cowherd.

**Pastime**

Sage Uthanga was a great devotee of the Supreme Lord and a learned brahmana. He was called Vipra Rishi. Vipra Rishis are very learned and wise Vedic scholars and are mostly brahmanas.

There is an interesting pastime of Uthanga Rishi, which is elaborately described in the Vayu Purana. Sage Uthanga was very pious, and performed penance for the welfare of mankind. He was a regular visitor to Dwaraka and Krishna was very dear to him. Krishna had a special affection towards him. After all Krishna is gau brahmana hita, the protector of the cows and brahmanas. In those times, brahmanas were very pious and strict in executing their duties. Sage Uthanga used to wander in secluded areas and had no fixed residence. He was an avadhuta and stitapragnya. He had no desire, no lust, no hatred, and no greed. He was absorbed and fixed in another realm—pure devotional service of Krishna.

Lord Krishna was very happy with the sage’s penances and prayers. He showed the sage His universal form or virata rupa and granted him any boon. Sage Uthanga told Krishna that he desired to see the universal form of the Lord and he just prayed to Krishna with trembling hands; he had no interest in petty material boons. But Lord Krishna insisted that the sage ask for some boon to be granted to him as a reward for his penance. As Lord Krishna insisted, the latter asked for a boon that whenever he was in need of water and whenever he felt thirsty, water may be provided to him. Lord Krishna granted him the boon and disappeared. Sage Uthanga knew that in Bhagavad-gita Krishna says, “I am the taste of water.” In short, Sage Uthanga asked for Krishna Himself. For pure devotees, everything is connected with Krishna.

One day, after Sage Uthanga walked for a long distance in the desert area, he felt thirsty, but there was no trace of water. Then he remembered that Lord Krishna had granted him a boon that he would find water. As the sage recalled this, he saw a hunter dressed in torn rags accompanied by furious dogs, carrying water in a leather pouch. The hunter asked him, “Oh sage, would you like to drink some water?” Looking at the apparent condition of the hunter and being a staunch brahmana, the sage felt repelled. He politely refused. The hunter again approached him to drink the water, but in utter disgust and anger the sage told the hunter to go way and that he was not interested in the water. The hunter and the dogs disappeared. Witnessing this, the sage realized that the hunter may have been Krishna Himself in
disguise, come to quench the sage’s thirst. He felt hurt at how Lord Krishna had sent water to him through a chandala. How could He expect a brahmana to accept and drink water from the leather pouch?

Meantime, Lord Krishna appeared, smiled and asked him, “Who was the chandala?” Krishna had asked Indradeva to fetch the water. But instead of water, Indra had actually brought nectar that makes one immortal, but only on condition that one can see the Divinity in all. Sage Uttanga understood the meaning of it and begged pardon. He insisted that he did not desire for immortality and would only be interested in serving Lord Krishna as long as he lived.

The pastime connected to the appearance of the Supreme Lord in Arimeya Vinnagaram took place when Sage Uthanga was a pupil. Legend has it that Sage Uthanga learned the Vedas during his childhood from Sage Vaidhya. It was a practice that when a student left the hermitage of his guru after completing his studies, he would make some dakshina or offering to the lotus feet of the guru. Thus the child Uthanga asked his guru what he would like to have as guru dakshina, as it would be wise to offer what the teacher wanted than to offer what the student wanted. The guru patni (guru’s wife) expressed her desire to have the earrings of the queen whose husband ruled that city. Uthanga approached the Queen with his request to have her earrings to offer as guru dakshina. Kings always fulfilled the desires of the brahmans. So the Queen offered him the earrings without any hesitation; she had already heard about Uthanga’s truthfulness.

Uthanga happily returned to the hermitage of the guru. On his way back he was fatigued with hunger and thirst, so he decided to rest for a while. Immediately there appeared an attractive cowherd with a mud pot on his head and a bamboo stick in his hand, dancing to his own tunes, surrounded by his cows. Uthanga solemnly requested the cowherd to give him something to drink from his pot. The cowherd mischievously answered that the pot contained cow dung and urine that was accepted by his guru Vaidhya. Since it is very difficult to get the mahaprasadam of the guru, as soon as Uthanga heard this, without any further thought, he immediately put down his belongings and accepted the contents of the pot. Suddenly there appeared out of nowhere, a boy who cleverly seized Uthanga’s belongings and slithered off. Uthanga chased the boy, but the boy vanished into a hole in a tree trunk. Uthanga desperately requested the cowherd boy to help him get back his belongings. At once there arrived a man on horse back. The cowherd boy suggested that
Instead of air and mucus, fire and heat came out of the horse’s nose. The boy who was in hiding came out because of the unbearable heat. He returned the belongings of Uthanga and begged for forgiveness. Uthanga expressed his gratitude to the cowherd boy and the horseback rider. He happily returned to the hermitage of his guru.

Uthanga narrated all the events to Sage Vaidhya. After listening to Uthanga, Sage Vaidhya replied that the cowherd boy was none other than Lord Vishnu, the horse was Lord Agni and the man on horseback was Lord Indra. They had all come to test Uthanga’s devotion towards his guru. The cow dung and urine were the divine medicine which helped Uthanga to remain safe and sound. Thus Uthanga’s desire to have darshana of Lord Vishnu in the form of a cowherd boy, Gopala, grew more and more after listening to his guru Sage Vaidhya.

The most compassionate Lord gave darshana as Sri Kudamadukuthan (kudam-adu-kuthan) to Sage Uthanga on this sacred land. In Tamil kudam means pot, adu means play and kuthan means dance. The Supreme Lord playfully appeared as a dancing boy with pot, known and worshipped here as Kudamadukuthan Perumal. The place has since then been referred to as Harimeya Vinnagaram or the place where Hari danced.

Temple

The temple has a single prakara. The rajagopuram is impressive and simple. The central shrine houses the Deity of Krishna seated with His feet on a pot, as if dancing. The bewitching beauty of the Lord is a feast to the eyes! The main Deity is made of a special kind of burned clay and therefore no abisheka is performed for Him except for fragrant oil massage. The festival Deity is called Gopala or the cowherd boy of Sage Uthanga. There is a separate shrine for Amrutha Kadavalli, the consort of the Lord. Brahmotsava and other annual festivals are celebrated with much pomp in this temple.

Thirumangai Alwar sings about the Lord of Arimeya Vinnagaram in ten beautiful songs:

Gopal resides in Arimeya Vinnagaram with Lakshmi and Bhoomi devi on both sides. He removes all sins of His servants and blesses them. He is worshipped and His glories are sung by eternal residents of Vaikuntha and the people of seven worlds. This place is beautiful with plenty of flowering plants and trees in the forests,
lotuses in all ponds and well versed brahmanas who spread the fame everywhere. Thirumangai asks his mind not to go stupidly after worldly things but to worship Him.

My very sweet nectar resides in Arimeya Vinnagaram where brahmanas sing hymns with seven swaras and chant Vedas, teach ithāsas and Puranas and who possess excellent gunas that speak of the wealth of the city. Our Lord who resides here is the one who killed Narakasura with His discus, churned the milk ocean with Mandara mountain to give nectar to the devas. Oh! My mind! Worship and meditate on His form.

He is the sweet boy who once swallowed Brahma and devas, seven worlds and seven seas. He is the boy who once killed the wild bull whose head looked like a pot and who pulled Kamsa from his throne and killed him, causing relief and happiness to the devotees. He resides in Arimeya Vinnagaram in Nangoor where there are champaka trees whose buds look like white pearls and whose full bloomed flowers look like gold. The women of this city are very beautiful with hood-like hips and arrow-like eyes.

He who split open the chest of Hiranya with His sharp nails and protected his son Prahlada, resides in Thirunangoor where there are forests full of champaka, punnai, and jasmine dispersing their variety of aroma in the air. Added to it is the aromatic smoke from the sugarcane cottages where jaggery is made by boiling the sugar cane.

The Supreme Lord took a charming Vamana avatara for the sake of Indra and begged Bali only three feet of land. When He got it He measured with His huge Trivikrama form, the whole of the upper regions, the Bhoomi, the oceans and all other objects. He resides in Arimeya Vinnagaram where the sound of the playing of musical instruments, the sound of Vedic chanting, the sound of the buzzing of bees and the jingling sound of women’s anklets when they dance and walk—all of these together produce a sound similar to the roaring of the sea during pralaya when the waves rise sky high.

The son of Dasharatha (Sri Rama) fought with Ravana, the king of Lanka and cut off his ten heads and twenty arms since he abducted Sita devi and put her in a secluded place. He is my sole asylum since He is the saviour, as He is the chief of even eternal residents of Vaikuntha. He resides in Thiru Arimeya Vinnagaram where there are big lotus ponds full of different kinds of fish.

The Supreme Lord killed the rakshasas called Dhenuka and Puthana who were sent by the wicked Kamsa to kill Krishna. He is dark in colour, having Manmatha (Cupid) as His son. He resides in Arimeya Vinnagaram—where brahmanas chant four Vedas, meditate on His gunas, perform sacrifices, do pancha maha yajnas, teach Vedangas, discourse on ithāsas and Puranas, having moksha as their final goal.

Sri Krishna, who killed Kapitasura by throwing Vatsasura on him causing the fruits to fall for the Vraja boys to eat; who lifted Govardhana mountain to prevent the heavy rain tormenting the men and animals of Vraja; who played the pot dance; who is dark like clouds and who possesses all auspicious gunas—resides in Arimeya Vinnagaram. The city is rich with great mansions, forts with flags flying on their walls, public halls with gem-studded walls, brahmanas who chant Vedas, wide roads, thick forests where birds chirp and flowers shed honey which the bees drink and then buzz with joy.

Sri Krishna, the ever youthful one, consumed the life of Puthana, the life of Kamsa, the curds and butter and the whole world (during pralaya). He resides in Arimeya Vinnaharam where the brahmanas offer flowers praying “Oh Hari! You are our sole refuge!”; where the Cauvery flows, bringing sandalwood trees and gold along her current; where the river irrigates the forests and fields bringing wealth and prosperity to the city. 😊

Photo courtesy: Santhanakrishnan, Srirangam

To read online visit: http://goo.gl/xocgpR
Featured Article : Five Things You Must Do on Akshaya Tritiya

Akshaya Tritiya is celebrated on the third day of the bright fortnight in the month of Vaishakha (vaisakha-sukla-paksha-tritiya). Aksaya (Sanskrit) means inexhaustible, that which never diminishes. It is considered to be the most auspicious day to start a new venture. Akshaya Tritiya has special significance as on this day many important historical events took place according to the scriptures. There are some things that you are recommended to do on this day to derive its full benefit. Here are the five things that you can do on Akshaya Tritiya.

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18th Brahmotsava Celebrations
The 18th Brahmotsava festival was celebrated at ISKCON Sri Radha Krishna Temple, Bangalore from April 3 to April 15, 2015 in a grand way.
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Krishna Katha

Parama Karuna - Part 4
The kirtana is heard feebly in the background. Jagai and Madhai are completely drunk; they enter the stage and walk towards the bathing ghat.
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Timeless Wisdom

Four Regulative Principles of Freedom
When I saw this picture, portraying people aspiring for freedom moving from one cage to another, I just wanted to share my views.
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Pilgrimage

Bhuvarananatha Swamy Temple, Kallahalli
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Seven less known facts about Akshaya Tritiya

What is the significance of Akshaya Tritiya? Apart from the rush to purchase gold, there are many other reasons why this day is very significant. Some of the commonly known aspects are listed below. However, we also give you a list of 7 least known facts.

**Significance of Akshaya Tritiya**

1) Lord Parashurama appeared on this day
2) Ganges descended to Earth on this day
3) This day marks the beginning of Treta-yuga
4) Sudama visited Krishna at Dwarka
5) Pandavas received Akshaya Patra from Sun God
6) Vyasa deva started composing Mahabharata on this day
7) Adi Sankaracharya composed Kanakadha Stotram on this day
8) Kubera received his wealth and position as custodian of wealth
9) It is said that Goddess Annapoorna Devi appeared on this day.

1. Simhachalam

Simhachalam (Andhra Pradesh) is the abode of Lord Narasimha. The Deity of Lord Narasimha is always covered with sandal paste. On the day of Akshaya Tritiya (which occurs 11 days before Narasimha Jayanti – the appearance day of Lord Narasimha), the sandal paste is removed and abhishekam is performed. This is the only day the devotees get to see the form of the Lord. On the same evening, the Deity is again covered with sandal paste.

2. Jagannath Puri

Every year the Ratha Yatra festival is celebrated at Jagannath Puri. The three chariots of Jagannath (Nandhighosha), Baladeva (Taladhwaja) and Subhadra (Darpadalana) are newly constructed every year with the wood of specific trees. The construction of the chariots for Ratha Yatra begins on the day of Akshaya Tritiya.

3. Remuna (Kshira-chora Gopinatha)

In the temple of Kshira-chora Gopinatha (Remuna, Odisha) the Deities of Madana-mohana, Govinda and Gopinatha are smeared with sandalwood pulp on this auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya. This tradition is being followed from the time of Sri Madhavendra Puri, one of the acharyas in the Gaudiya Vaishnava Sampadraya, who travelled from Vrindavana to Jagannath Puri on the order of the Gopala Deity to collect sandalwood and camphor. On his way back, the Deity of Gopala ordered Madhavendra Puri to grind the sandalwood with camphor and apply it to the Gopinatha Deity because the Deity of Gopala and Gopinatha are non-different. This Deity of Gopinatha stole a sweet rice pot for His dear devotee Madhavendra Puri and hence the name, Kshira-chora Gopinatha.

4. Badrinath

In Badrinath, the temples of Gangotri and Yamunotri are closed during winter. On the day of Akshaya Tritiya the shrines re-open for the pilgrims.

5. Kumbakonam

Kumbakonam, the temple-city, celebrates Garuda-vahana Seva for Vishnu Deities (Perumal) from 12 different temples: Chakrapani, Sarangapani, Varadaraja, Valvil Raman etc. Garuda, also known as Vainateya (the son of Vinata) is the bird-carrier of Lord Vishnu. He is the king of the birds (Khagendra). In the Vedic literature it is stated that the two wings of Garuda are two divisions of the Sama Veda (brhat and rathantara). The vibration generated by the flapping of his wings form the basis of Sama Veda mantras. Visit Kumbakonam on the auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya to witness Dvadasha Garuda Seva.

6. Guru Pushya

There is a mad-rush for purchasing gold on Akshaya Tritiya. People believe that if they purchase gold on this auspicious day it will never diminish. But did you know that the scriptures recommend Guru Pushya (Pushya Nakshatra falls on Thursday) as the auspicious day for purchase of gold. In 2015, the Guru Pushya yoga falls on July 16 and August 13.

7. Srila Prabhupada Incorporated The League of Devotees

Srila Prabhupada is the founder-acharya of ISKCON, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Before starting ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada incorporated a society in India called The League of Devotees at Jhansi on the auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya (16th May) in the year 1953.

https://www.iskconbangalore.org/blog/seven-less-known-facts-about-akshaya-tritiya/
Online Presence of ISKCON Bangalore

Official Website: www.iskconbangalore.org

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