



KRISHNA VOICE

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Sri Gaura Purnima

Shubharambham

heralds Vedic New Year, Ugadi at ISKCON

The Shubharambham festival was held at ISKCON Bangalore on 22nd March, 2023. This was meant to give an opportunity to those devotees who wish to begin the New Year on a high note, by seeking the divine blessings of their Lordships Sri Radha Krishnachandra. About 100 families joined the festivities by taking part in the Harinama Yajna, chanting the Hare Krishna *mahamantra* 108 times. After the *yajna*, devotees had a chance to hear HH Stoka Krishna Swami, President, ISKCON Mysore, emphasize the need for investing faith in the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. Devotees who took part in this programme were also fortunate to treat their taste buds to a wide variety of *mahaprasadam*, exotic delicacies offered to Lord Sri Krishna.



Harinama Yajna



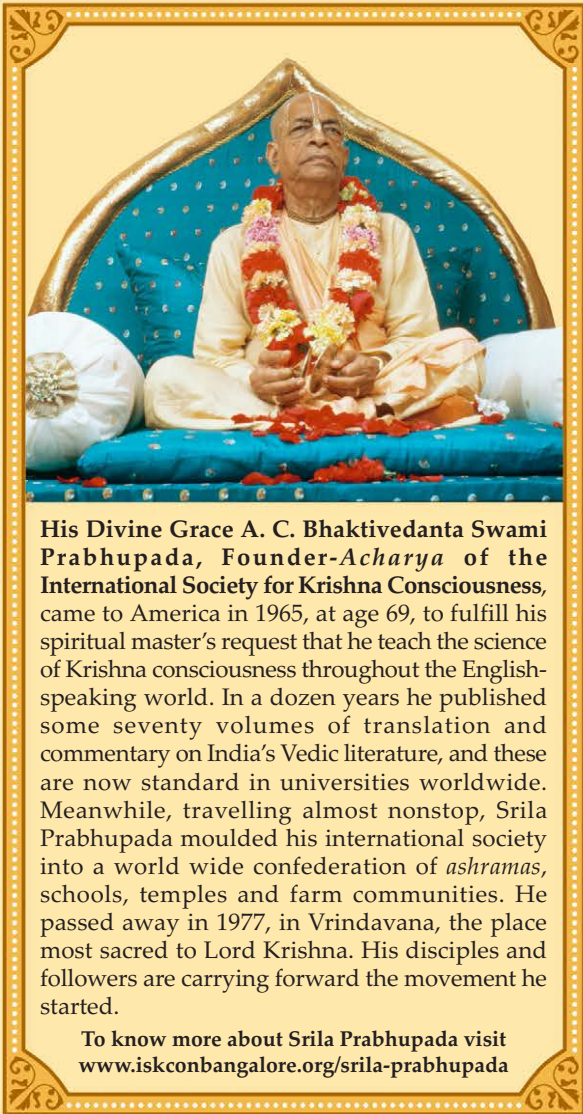
A view of the celebrations

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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

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CONTENTS

Reaching Krishna His Way	4
Srila Prabhupada Speaks Out	8
The Miracle of the Milk	10
Thirukurugudi Vaishnava Nambi Temple - Part 4	15

Pages-30

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Reaching Krishna His Way

*No need to guess
- Krishna lets us know which
method of reaching Him will work.*

A lecture given in New York City, on November 28, 1966

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

*na sadhayati mam yogo na sankhyam dharma uddhava
na svadhyayas tapas tyago yatha bhaktir mamorjita*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, said: “My dear Uddhava, neither through *astanga-yoga* [the mystic yoga system to control the senses], nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the *Vedas*, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of *sannyasa* can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me.” — *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11.14.20

(quoted in *Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila* 20.137)

Lord Chaitanya is speaking an allegory in which an astrologer tells a poor man where to dig to find a treasure. The treasure represents Krishna consciousness, or love of God, and the directions in which the man is told to dig represent different processes by which people search for the Absolute Truth.

The astrologer tells the poverty-stricken man, “You are actually a very rich man’s son, but you do not know this. Therefore you are suffering.”

To be poor in this world is a curse for ordinary people, those under the concept of material life, whereas the spiritually enriched have nothing to do with the poverty or wealth of this world. The living entities are not meant to be poverty-stricken, because they are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, the supreme proprietor. Every living entity has the birthright to enjoy God’s property, just as the son inherits the property of the father. That is the law. But under the spell of illusion we have forgotten our relationship with the supreme father; therefore we are suffering. That is the diagnosis.

Now we have to find out how to go back home, back to Godhead. That should be the mission of human life. Never mind why we are in contact with the material world. By the instruction of the astrologer-like Vedic literature we should come to the point of finding out how to go back to Godhead. Just as the astrologer is giving hints to the poor man, the Vedic literature gives us hints so that we can become the richest by reviving our lost relationship with our father.

There are different paths for reviving that relationship, but Lord Chaitanya says that no method but *bhakti* will work. The Vedic literature says the same thing. In today’s verse Lord Chaitanya is citing evidence from *Srimad-Bhagavatam: na sadhayati mam yogah*. Lord Krishna says, “The yoga process cannot achieve success in reaching Me.” *Na sankhyam*. *Sankhyam* means “philosophical speculation.” “That also cannot reach Me.” *Na ... dharma uddhava*. *Dharma* means “religious principles,” and *uddhava* means “O My dear Uddhava.”

Just as Lord Krishna instructed Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gita*, He also instructed his cousin-brother named Uddhava. Those instructions are found in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. In the course of those instructions Krishna says, “My dear Uddhava, yoga cannot achieve Me, neither can Sankhya, neither can dharma.”

The Meaning of Yoga

Real yoga means “connect, plus, addition.” In mathematics we have addition and subtraction. So at the present moment we are in subtraction—God minus myself. I have no sense of God; therefore I am in a “minus” condition. Yoga means God plus myself. That is the real meaning of yoga. For so long I was God-minus; now, through yoga, I become God-plus.

But you must always remember that in the spiritual, absolute sense, God plus me is God and God minus me is



also God. When I am “minus,” or separated from God, that does not mean God has lost some of His capacity. No. He is full. And when I am “plus,” or reunited with God, that does not mean God has increased in some capacity. No.

In the *Bhagavad-gita* a good example is given: *apuryamanam acala-pratistha*. During the rainy season millions of tons of water pour into the ocean from rivers, but the ocean stays the same. If an ordinary ocean does not increase when something is added to it, what to speak of God.

I say “ordinary” because millions of oceans are floating in the universe. Therefore we should not be very astonished to see the Atlantic Ocean. Within space are millions and trillions of oceans like the Atlantic. They are floating just as an atomic particle of water can float in the air. That is the potency of God.

For those too engrossed in the bodily conception of life, the yoga system is very good, because it is a practice to withdraw the senses to the inside from their engagement in the external world.

There are eight stages of yoga practice. The first two are *yama* and *niyama*. Under regulative principles one has to try to control the senses in eating, sleeping, and working. That practice is called *yama-niyama*. The first principle of yoga is to abstain from sex life. That is real yoga. Those indulging in sex life, intoxication, and so many nonsense things have no chance for any success in yoga.

Then one has to sit nicely in a secluded, sanctified place with the neck, head, and body in a straight line. Then you have to look at the tip of your nose with half-opened eyes. If you open your eyes, then the material manifestation will disturb you. And if you close your eyes, then you nap. [*Prabhupada imitates someone snoring.*] I have seen. So many yogis are doing that, sleeping. [*Laughter.*]

Then comes *dhyana*, concentration of the mind. What is the purpose of concentrating the mind? To find myself within the body and then find the Lord there. That is the perfection of yoga. Not that I do nonsense day and night but then attend a yoga class, pay five dollars, and think, “Oh, I am a great yogi.” That is all nonsense.

Yoga is not so easy. Many so-called yoga teachers are simply exploiting people. I say frankly that they and their students are a society of the cheaters and the cheated.

Although yoga is approved in the Vedic literature, it is very difficult to perform in the modern age. Even five thousand years ago—when the circumstances were more favourable, when people were not so polluted and were advanced in so many things—still, at that time such a person as Arjuna refused to practice yoga. When Krishna said to him, “You become a yogi like this,” Arjuna said, “It is not possible for me.”

So yoga is not at all possible now. It was possible in the Satya-yuga, when every man was in the mode of goodness. Every man was highly elevated. Yoga is meant for highly elevated persons, not ordinary persons.

But even if yoga is done very nicely and perfectly, it cannot take you to the Supreme Lord. That is stated here in this verse. What to speak of pseudo yoga, even if you perform correctly, perfectly, still you cannot reach God. That is stated here: *na sadhayati mam yogah*.

Analyzing Spirit and Matter

It is also said here, *na sankhya*: “Not by Sankhya.” Sankhya means to understand spirit and matter. The Sankhya philosopher analyzes the material world as made of twenty-four parts: the five gross elements, the three subtle elements, the five knowledge-acquiring senses, the five working senses, the five sense objects, and *pradhana*, the unmanifested modes of material nature.

The five gross material elements are earth, water, fire, air, and ether. Then come the subtle elements. Finer than ether is the mind, finer than the mind is the intelligence, and finer than the intelligence is false ego, the false conception that I am matter.

The five knowledge-acquiring senses are the eyes, nose, ears, tongue, and skin. The five working senses, by which we enjoy or suffer, are the voice, legs, hands, anus, and genitals. And the five sense objects are smell, taste, form, touch, and sound.

That analysis of the material world in twenty-four parts is called Sankhya. It is a full analysis of everything within our experience. And above the twenty-four elements is the spirit soul. And above the soul is God.

Sankhyaites cannot find the soul. They are like material scientists in that they simply study material objects. They have no information above that. Now I am talking with you; so the Sankhya philosophers cannot explain what is that thing which is talking. Similarly, the medical doctor, after dissecting the body, cannot find what is working, the

spiritual force. And because the materialists cannot find even the particles of the Supreme Lord—we living entities—what chance do they have to find God? So neither the yogis nor the Sankhyaites can find God.

By dharma, also, one cannot find God. Dharma here refers to rituals. The Hindus go to the temple, the Christians go to the church, and the Muslims go to the mosque with the idea “Here is God.” That is, of course, the beginning. It is nice. That conviction must be there. But because they are trapped in the rituals, they have no further knowledge. They do not try to advance further. They think, “Everything ends here.” So they too cannot attain God.

Then *svadhyaya*. *Svadhyaya* means “study,” study of the Vedic literature. And *tapah*. *Tapah* means “penance.” Fasting, meditating, living in a solitary place in the jungle—there are many processes of penance and austerity. And *tyaga*, “renunciation.” *Sannyasa*, the renounced order of life, is a kind of renunciation.

So the Lord says, “All these processes—yoga, Sankhya, rituals, study of the *Vedas*, penance, and renunciation—combined together or individually, are not suitable for achieving Me.”

Bhakti—the Only Way

So practically every process is condemned herewith by the Supreme Lord. The processes are condemned in this sense: those who follow them can approach the final goal to a certain extent, but they will never be able to achieve it unless the devotional process is added.

Devotion must be there because the end is Krishna, the Supreme Lord. Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-gita*, *bahunam janmanam ante jnanavan mam prapadyate*: “After many, many births, those who are actually intelligent come to Me and surrender, having realized that God is everything.”

One has to come to the point of Krishna consciousness. Maybe you go by the yoga process, maybe you go by the philosophical process, maybe you go by the ritualistic process, maybe you go by penances or by study. But unless you reach the point of Krishna consciousness, your attempt is successful only to a certain degree.

Unfortunately, people become satisfied with different degrees of success. Hardly anyone tries to reach the final goal. But if anyone wants to reach the final goal, then he has to take the process of Krishna consciousness, *bhakti mamorjita*. That process alone can take you to the Supreme Lord.

Those who are intelligent take to this simple process. In this age you cannot perform yoga perfectly, you cannot perform religious rituals perfectly, you cannot study perfectly. The circumstances are so unfavourable that these processes are not possible in this age. Therefore Lord Chaitanya, by His causeless mercy, has given us this process:

*harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha*

“In this Age of Kali, simply by chanting the holy name of Krishna one can attain the ultimate goal. There is no alternative. There is no alternative. There is no alternative.”

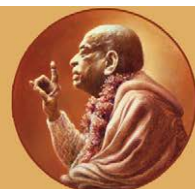
This verse is quoted from the *Brhad-Naradiya Purana*. And Lord Chaitanya is corroborating the verse. He has not manufactured something by recommending *bhakti* as the only means to the ultimate goal. He is quoting from authorized scripture so that people can accept the path of *bhakti*. We should accept this process—

*harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatir anyatha*

—and practically see that this is the only process for swiftly realizing the Supreme Truth, the Absolute Truth. So we should follow Krishna consciousness very seriously and sincerely.

Thank you very much. 🙏

Srila Prabhupada, the founder-*acharya* of ISKCON, has delivered more than 1500 lectures on Vedic scriptures like *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita*. The audio recording of his lectures are available in ISKCON centers. You can also hear some of these lectures in www.iskconbangalore.org/srila-prabhupada-lectures



“There is Only One Religion”

Here we continue an exchange that took place in Paris, on June 15, 1974, between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, two priests, and two Christian scholars.

Madame Siaude: Your Divine Grace, one who is not inclined toward study—can he or she attain God by directly surrendering unto Him?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. Certainly. It does not require education, scholarly knowledge, or anything. If one agrees to surrender to the lotus feet of God, then his life is perfect. That is stated in the Vedic literature. *Aradhito yadi haris tapasa tatah kim:* “If one has surrendered himself to the lotus feet of God and is worshipping Him, there is no more need of austerity and penances.” And by the same token, *naradhito yadi haris tapasa tatah kim:* “If one has not learned how to surrender to God and worship Him, then all his austerities and study are useless.”

Further, *antar bahir yadi haris tapasa tatah kim:* “If one can see God within and without, then where is the necessity of austerity?” And by the same token, *nantar bahir yadi haris tapasa tatah kim:* “If one has not learned to see God within and without, then where is the value of his austerity and penances?” Therefore, God realization is the only business of the human being.

Madame Siaude: We agree totally with what you are saying.

Father Fransad: At the same time, Your Divine Grace, we seem to have a contradiction.

A few minutes ago you were saying, “First we must learn about God, and then we will know how to pray to God.” But now you seem to be saying, “If one surrenders to God, one

has no need to learn about Him first.”

Srila Prabhupada: We say, “Religion means to love God—and you cannot love God unless you learn what God is.” That means you have to learn about God. Only then can there be real religion.

Father Fransad: So even if we are without scholarly knowledge, God can reveal Himself to us directly?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. That is a fact. If you are actually a devotee, then God will reveal Himself. That is stated in the Vedic literature. *Atah sri-krishna-namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyaih:* you cannot understand the form, name, attributes, and pastimes of God by these blunt senses. These present material senses cannot realize God. Then how can you realize God? *Sevonmukhe hi jihvadau:* when you serve Him with your tongue, then gradually God reveals Himself.

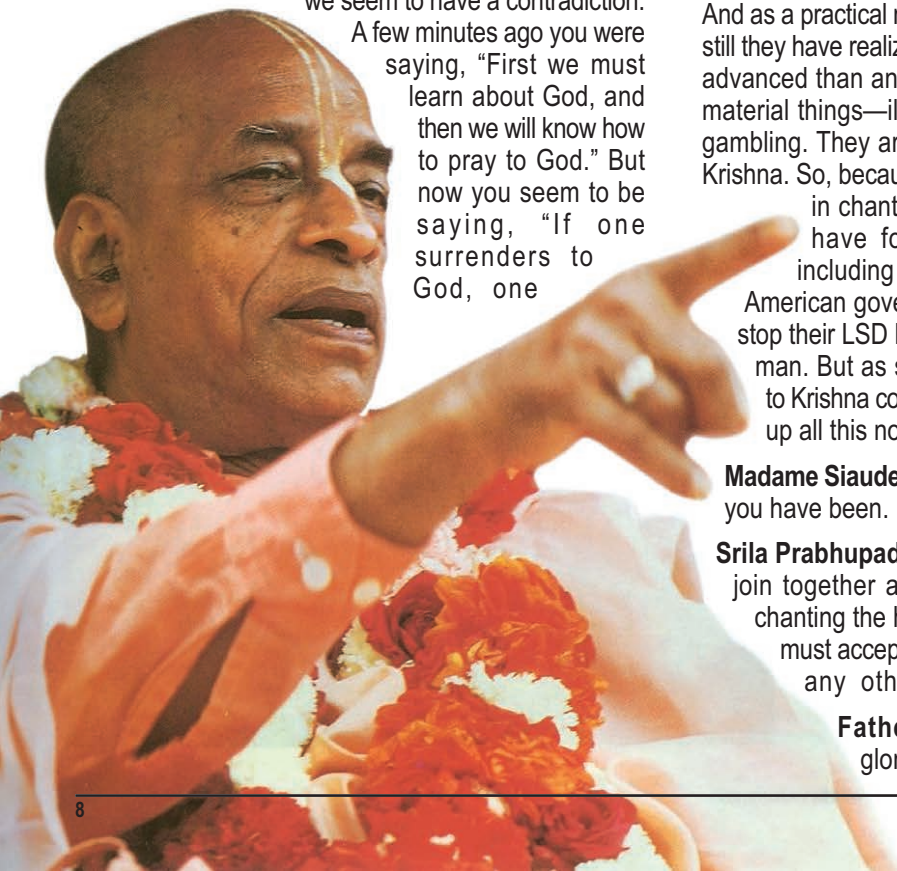
Now, you can do two businesses with the tongue. One is talking, and the other is eating. So if you engage your tongue in glorifying God, and if you eat only food offered to God, then you realize God. Therefore, these young boys and girls from Europe and America are being taught, “Use the tongue for Krishna. Chant Hare Krishna, and eat Krishna-*prasada*, food offered to Krishna.”

And as a practical result, although they are very young, still they have realized God, Krishna. They are far more advanced than anyone else. They have forgotten all material things—illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication, gambling. They are simply devoted to the service of Krishna. So, because they have engaged their tongue in chanting the Hare Krishna *mantra*, they have forgotten all kinds of nonsense, including meat-eating and intoxication. The American government spent millions of dollars to stop their LSD habit. Yet it could not stop even one man. But as soon as these young people came to Krishna consciousness, immediately they gave up all this nonsense.

Madame Siaude: We are glad to see how successful you have been.

Srila Prabhupada: Thank you very much. So let us join together and push forward this movement: chanting the holy name of God. I don’t say, “You must accept the name Krishna.” If you have got any other name, you can chant that.

Father Fransad: So when you are glorifying God, we hope you will think



of us—and when we are glorifying God, we will think of you.

Srila Prabhupada: Thank you very much.

Father Canivez: Yesterday evening, during your lecture, I was very sad when there were some people making noise.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, that is the difficulty. Gradually, the population of the world are becoming urchins. Very degraded. Before all of you arrived today, I was discussing the Twelfth Canto of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, which predicts how people in this age will become degraded. And this is due to a lack of God consciousness.

Father Canivez: Your Divine Grace, it seemed that the young people who made so much disruption were finding your lecture very hard to accept.

Srila Prabhupada: That is because the young people are gradually becoming degraded. They do not accept authority.

Disciple: Yes. When they saw, Srila Prabhupada, that you were speaking authoritatively, they rejected it. They reacted.

Srila Prabhupada: So that is due to their degradation. They cannot accept any authority. And one cannot advance in knowledge without accepting authority.

Father Canivez: Surely.

Srila Prabhupada: But one more thing I may say is that the disobedience to authority has begun from their fathers.

Father Canivez: From whom?

Srila Prabhupada: From their fathers. Yes. Because in the Bible it is said, “Thou shalt not kill.” And yet the fathers indulge in the killing business. So naturally the next generation has become degraded.

Father Canivez: Did many stay after the meeting last night?

Disciple: Oh, yes. They stayed until midnight. The total attendance yesterday was roughly two thousand people, and at least one thousand stayed until twelve o'clock.

Srila Prabhupada: Oh? Twelve o'clock?

Disciple: Yes, Srila Prabhupada. The manager of the hall was pleading with us to ask them to leave. He wanted to go home.

Father Canivez: It's very good that so many stayed to find out more information, to ask questions and discuss with your followers.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, any reasonable man will find this subject matter interesting. In *Chaitanya-charitamrita* it is stated, *sri-krishna-chaitanya-daya karaha vicara*: “Just ponder the mercy of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and then give your judgment.” It is never recommended to take it blindly. *Karaha vicara*: “Just consider with all reason and argument.” And *vicara karile citte pabe camatkara*: “If you consider it with logic and reason, you'll find it sublime.”

Disciple: So to understand a scripture, whether it be the Bible or *Bhagavad-gita*, we have to rely on logic and reason?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. For instance, in the Bible it is said, “In the beginning was the word.” So in the beginning there was only the Lord's word. Which means that *this* word is not a word of this material creation.


Disciple: Srila Prabhupada, many of the so-called spiritual teachers today say, “You cannot chant the name Krishna or any other of God's names, because any sound is simply a material sound.”

Srila Prabhupada: That's it. These rascals do not understand what *this* sound is. They do not see that even before the creation there existed this sound, the Lord's holy name.

Madame Devi (newly arrived): Your Divine Grace, do you think that in the future all religions will come together and form one group?

Srila Prabhupada: There is no “all religions.” There is only one religion. One who deviates—he creates another religion. Religion means there is God and we should be obedient to God. This is religion.

Madame Devi: So it is not necessary to go by one's special path?

Srila Prabhupada: No. There is no “special path.” There is only one path: that God is there, God is great, and we are all subordinate to God. That's all. 

Science: The Vedic View

The Miracle of the Milk

By Sadaputa Dasa

On September 21, 1995, Hindu communities all over the world were electrified by news of temple deities accepting offerings of milk. According to the stories, when deities of Ganesha, Lord Shiva, and others were offered spoonfuls of milk, the milk would mysteriously disappear. It seemed that the deities were showing their divine power by mystically drinking the milk.

In India, “The gatekeeper of the Birla Temple reported that at least 55,000 have visited the temple and they spoonfed about 125 litres of milk.” In America, “Thousands of awe-struck worshipers have swarmed into Hindu temples in Richmond Hill and Oakville to witness the remarkable phenomenon of milk-drinking statues that has baffled religious observers around the world.” In one London temple, “a deity of Ganeshji was reported to have swallowed 3,000 pints.”

Inevitably, there were skeptical rebuttals. Devotees in India discovered that if one touches a spoon filled with milk to the side of a smooth object, the milk will be drawn to the object by capillary attraction and will flow down from the point of contact in a thin stream. People who don't notice the stream of milk could imagine that the milk is literally disappearing before their eyes. The milk would not accumulate in a noticeable pool because it would be carried away bit by bit on the clothing and bodies of throngs of worshipers, or it would simply flow down a drain at the foot of the Deity. According to the debunkers, people were accepting a miracle simply on the basis of mass hysteria triggered by a simple misperception.

What is the truth? It is hard to say from few second-hand reports what really happened on September 21. But it is clear that as a social phenomenon the miracle of the milk is significant. Miracles and rumours of miracles clearly have a profound impact on human thinking. To make a few general observations about miracles, therefore, seems worthwhile.

Miracles and Nature

The word miracle comes from the Latin word *mira*, which means “to wonder at.” Miracles are wondrous events that seem to surpass the laws of nature and are therefore ascribed to a divine or supernatural cause. Miracles have traditionally been seen as evidence for the reality of divine power, and they have served as an inspiration for religious faith. At the same time, miracles have also served as a focus for skepticism and doubt.

For most people the “laws of nature” are simply the regular patterns of events perceived through ordinary experience. For example, in ordinary experience a fluid such as milk always retains the same volume and appearance unless affected by heat, chemical action, or living organisms. One certainly doesn't expect to see milk disappear when brought into contact with a stone or metal statue. If it does disappear, this suggests that some higher power is involved. One could then invoke religious doctrines concerning God and demigods to explain the unexpected phenomenon: the event confirms the doctrines.

Unfortunately, other explanations for many alleged miracles are also possible. Human beings are subject to four defects: our senses are imperfect, we tend to make mistakes, we fall into delusion, and we have an inherent tendency to cheat.

If an unusual event occurs, the defects of our senses can easily give rise to many false reports of similar events. For example, let us suppose that milk really did disappear when offered in some temple on September 21. As word of this wonder spread, people elsewhere could easily be deluded by the capillary effect later pointed out by skeptics. This delusion would generate more stories, and the cheating propensity would induce some people to exaggerate or even outright lie.

The ultimate result is that genuine miracles, if they really do occur, will tend to be surrounded by a cloud of false reports. The false reports will vastly outnumber the genuine and create an atmosphere of skepticism. Since miracles are often taken as proof of religious doctrines, doubts about miracles give rise to doubts about the doctrines.

Yogis and Siddhis

Although miracles apparently violate natural law, they can nonetheless be seen as manifestations of *higher* natural

laws. Thus the fourth-century Christian patriarch St. Augustine wrote, “Miracles do not happen in contradiction to nature, but only in contradiction to that which is known to us in nature.” (1)

Srimad-Bhagavatam, powers known as *siddhis* include the ability to nullify gravity (*laghima*), change the size of one’s body (*anima* and *mahima*), and acquire objects at a distance (*prapti*). (2) These *siddhis* are considered naturally existing, and a mystic yogi can acquire them.

Srila Prabhupada points out that with *prapti-siddhi*, “not only can the perfect mystic yogi touch the moon planet, but he can extend his hand anywhere and take whatever he likes. He may be sitting thousands of miles away from a certain place, and if he likes he can take fruit from a garden there.” (3) When the yogi takes the fruit from a distance, a person sitting in the garden would see the fruit mysteriously disappear.

A yogi might also cause milk to disappear mysteriously—without the direct intervention



of a demigod such as Ganesha. I do not say that this is how the miracle of the milk got started. But as a general rule, many wonderful phenomena that might be attributed to a divine agency can also be caused in material ways involving ordinary living beings. This is important to understand, since miracles tend to confirm religious faith.

To perform mystical feats, a person does not have to be highly elevated in yoga. Srila Prabhupada discouraged his disciples from taking an interest in miracles, because many unscrupulous persons have attracted and cheated people by a display of mystic powers.

The typical pattern in India is that a person will begin to exhibit genuine mystic powers. When praised by naive followers, he then develops an inflated ego and presents himself as a divine incarnation. In many instances the person later loses his powers, and he then resorts to cheap tricks in an effort to live up to his followers’ expectations. This, of course, provides a great opportunity for skeptics, who seize upon these cases to show the foolishness of religion.

The Paranormal

The mysterious disappearance of objects is sometimes linked to quite ordinary people who may have never practiced yoga. In poltergeist cases, unusual events tend to occur in the presence of a so-called target person. These events include spontaneous fires, mysterious sounds, unexplained movement of objects, and things’ mysteriously appearing and disappearing. Traditionally, these phenomena have been attributed to ghosts. (The word poltergeist is German for “noisy ghost.”) But some parapsychologists have argued that these phenomena are actually caused by the subconscious mind of the target person.

The parapsychologist Ian Stevenson has given an example of a poltergeist case from India that involves disappearing

food. (4) It seems that a woman named Radhika from the village of Degaon, south of Bombay, had the reputation in the village of being a sorceress. Food mysteriously disappearing in the village was turning up in Radhika's dwelling. The villagers thought she was stealing food by mystical means and offered to provide her with food if she would stop.

Stevenson's informant, one Swami Krishnanand, decided to put Radhika's abilities to the test. In one instance, "Swami Krishnanand ... pointed to a *lota* which he held in his hand and to a man who was milking a cow some distance away, and asked to have some of the milk put into the *lota*. Instantly the *lota* became filled with milk and at the same time the milker noticed that his own vessel had less, rather than more, milk in it. He looked up astonished." (5) Radhika believed that these effects were due to a discarnate spirit that was allied with her, and Stevenson was inclined to favour this interpretation.

There are many accounts of this nature, and if any of them are true, it follows that many miracles may be real even though not due to the direct action of God or the highly placed servants of God known as demigods. But are any of these accounts true? This brings us to the modern scientific treatment of miracles.

Science and Miracles

The modern scientific approach can be traced back to the development of mathematical physics by Isaac Newton in the seventeenth century. Newton introduced the strict mathematical formulation of the laws of nature known as the "laws of physics." Scientists highly value the laws of physics because by experimental measurements one can confirm the laws with great accuracy.

The laws of physics have undergone a number of revolutionary transformations since Newton's day, but they have always been completely incompatible with the kind of miraculous events I have been discussing. In particular, the law of conservation of energy does not allow for a macroscopic object to disappear without moving from point to point through three-dimensional space. (6) A miracle, in modern scientific terms, is something that is impossible because it violates the laws of physics.

The eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher David Hume offered a criterion for evaluating miracles that is still widely accepted. He declared, "No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to establish." (7)

This dictum shows that the validity of miracles ultimately must be decided by faith. Many scientists will conclude that large numbers of witnesses are lying rather than accept that a major violation of the laws of physics has taken place. For such scientists, miracles are ruled out. For others, the laws of physics are not sacrosanct, and the combined testimony of many responsible observers is enough to suggest that we still have much to learn about nature's laws.

Sri Chaitanya's Miracles

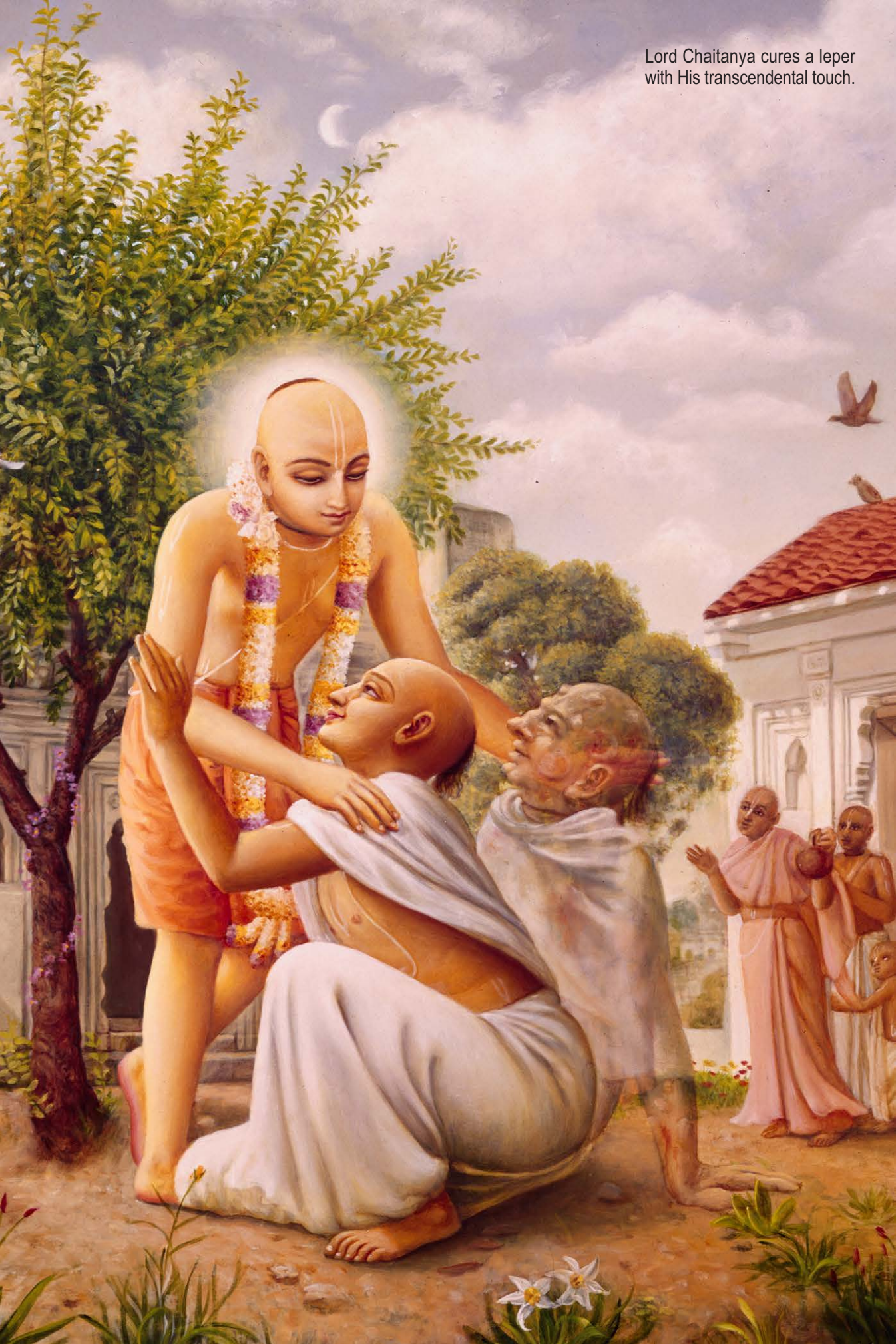
The points I have made so far might suggest that miraculous events should not be granted a serious role in religion. But this is not correct, as we can see by considering the role of miracles in the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition.

The pastimes of Lord Chaitanya are filled with miraculous events. Lord Chaitanya revived the dead son of Srivasa Thakura and healed sick persons such as the leper Vasudeva and the son-in-law of Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, who was dying of cholera. Lord Chaitanya revealed visions of His transcendental form to Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya and Ramananda Raya, and He influenced the Mayavadi *sannyasis* of Benares by manifesting a brilliant effulgence after entering their assembly. Lord Chaitanya would sometimes mysteriously exit locked rooms, and He appeared in several *kirtana* (chanting) parties at once during the Rathayatra in Jagannatha Puri.

There are at least three instances in which Lord Chaitanya made food disappear by eating from a distant place. While living in Jagannatha Puri, in the state of Orissa, He would sometimes mystically visit the home of His mother, Sachimata, in Bengal and eat the food she cooked for Him. He also mystically travelled from Jagannatha Puri to eat the offerings of Narasimhananda Brahmachari, also living in Bengal. During the chipped-rice festival He invisibly visited Lord Nityananda, who fed Him morsels of chipped rice. Most of the assembled devotees could not understand what Lord Nityananda was doing, but some were able to see that Lord Chaitanya was present.

The wonderful actions of Lord Chaitanya clearly play an important role in the *Chaitanya-charitamrita*, written by Krishnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami shortly after Lord Chaitanya's departure. After describing how Lord Chaitanya ate the offerings of Narasimhananda Brahmachari, Krishnadasa Kaviraja cites other examples of Lord Chaitanya's mystically appearing in the presence of His devotees. Krishnadasa concludes by saying, "Thus I have described the appearance of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Anyone who hears about these pastimes can understand the transcendental opulence of the Lord." (8)

Lord Chaitanya cures a leper with His transcendental touch.



Miracles as Evidence

This sounds very much as though Lord Chaitanya's miraculous activities are being presented as evidence proving His transcendental nature. In a sense this is true, but there are important distinctions to make between the miracles of Lord Chaitanya and miracles described in popular accounts.

First of all, the miracles described in the *Chaitanya-charitamrita* have been accepted by higher authorities—in this case Krishnadasa Kaviraja and his gurus Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami and Svarupa Damodara. One of the drawbacks of miracle accounts is that they are typically transmitted by ordinary people, forced to evaluate them on the basis of imperfect information. This results in the acceptance of false accounts as genuine, and it may also result in the rejection of genuine miracles. But this problem is avoided if the miracle accounts are presented by higher authorities who are competent to evaluate them and who have reliable sources of information. In this case, Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami and Svarupa Damodara were highly qualified observers who directly witnessed many of Lord Chaitanya's pastimes and were well acquainted with other witnesses.

For people in general, accepting miracle accounts from higher authorities reduces the problem of how to evaluate miracles to the deeper problem of how to decide who is a bona fide guru. Since the bona fide guru appears in disciplic succession, people are aided in solving this problem by established spiritual institutions and canonical texts. Although ascertaining who is a genuine spiritual authority may be difficult, it is easier than trying to sort out miracle stories one by one.

Another point is that Krishnadasa Kaviraja was not trying to demonstrate that because Lord Chaitanya exhibited mystic powers He is transcendental. Mystic powers are common attributes of practically all beings above the level of modern humans (and of some who are subhuman), and such powers play a natural role in spiritual pastimes. Gurus such as Srila Prabhupada who discourage interest in miracles are simply trying to protect people from the depredations of mystical cheaters.

Lord Chaitanya's activities are significant not because they involve mystic *siddhis* per se, but because they exhibit the transcendental loving reciprocation between the Lord and His devotees. Perhaps an intuitive longing for this reciprocation plays a part in attracting people so strongly to accounts of miracles.

NOTES

1. Augustine, *Against Faustus the Manichee*, Book 29, Chapter 2.
2. *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Canto 11, Chapter 15.
3. *The Nectar of Devotion*, pp. 11-12.
4. Stevenson, Ian, July, 1972, "Are Poltergeists Living or Are They Dead?" *The Journal of the American Society for Psychological Research*, Vol. 66, No. 3.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 243.
6. Subatomic particles can do this by a process known as quantum-mechanical tunnelling. A macroscopic object is one that is much larger than an atom, and for such objects, quantum-mechanical tunnelling is ruled out.
7. Hume, David, "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding," in *Enquiries Concerning the Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Second Edition, ed. L.A. Sleby-bigge (Oxford: 1902), pp. 115-116.
8. *Sri Chaitanya-charitamrita, Antya-lila*, 2.83. ☪

Fasting		Festivals	
Apr 2	Ekadashi	Apr 4	Their Lordships' 26th Brahmotsava celebrations begin (in ISKCON Bangalore) - Dhvaja Arohana
Apr 3	<i>break fast</i>		
Apr 16	Ekadashi	Apr 6	Hanuman Jayanti (in ISKCON Bangalore)
Apr 17	<i>break fast</i>	Apr 13	Brahma Ratha
May 1	Ekadashi	Apr 15	Brahmotsava celebrations end (in ISKCON Bangalore) - Dhvaja Avarohana
May 2	<i>break fast</i>		Beginning of Salagrama & Tulasi Jala Dana
		Apr 23	Akshaya Tiritiya
		May 1	Chandan Yatra of Sri Prahlada Narasimha begins (in ISKCON Bangalore)

Blessed by Nature, sung by devotees

Thirukurungudi Vaishnava Nambi Temple - Part 4

by Sampatkumara Ramanuja Dasan (Adv. Ashwin.S)

The abode

According to palm-leaf manuscripts, Mother Ganga compared the Gou Theertham at Thirukurungudi to herself, when she explained the greatness of Sr Kurunga Kshetram (Thirukurungudi) to Sage Narada. The Supreme Personality of Godhead Sriman Narayana, ever considerate, chose Thirukurungudi as one of His abodes to establish the Vedic tradition on earth. Sri Vaisampayana's father, Sage Vedavyasa, after hearing Narada's account, was enlightened by his son on the Lord's greatness here in Thirukurungudi.

It was in Thirukurungudi, forty kilometres (24 miles) to the west of Thirunelveli's train station down south, that four Azhwars - Periazhwar, Thirumazhisai Azhwar, Thirumangai Azhwar, and Nammazhwar - had sang in honour of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sriman Narayana.

This city of temples mentioned in the *Puranas* as Vamana Kshethram, Siddhashrama, Dakshina Badri and Sowgarava Kshethram, can be reached only by road.

A path meanders through the picturesque town. River Nambiaru, also called the temple river, Sindhu river, and Thiruparkadal river, may be found near the base of the towering Mahendra hill. The river originates in the deep woods of the Mahendra mountains which are reputed to be rich in medicinal plants. Silambaru river originating from this mountain is very sacred; it is said to have originated from Lord Vamana's anklet.

A devotee can have *darshana* of the Lord - the luminous Paripoorna, or Sundara - the Lord worshipped there, in all the three forms, as Nindra Nambi, Truntha Nambi, and Kidantha Nambi: seated, standing, and reclining within the temple respectively.

Of these three, Nindra Nambi or standing Nambi, also known as Thirukurungudi Nambi, Azhagiya Nambi, Vaishnava



Thirukurungudi Nambi in Sarva Bhū Pala Vahanam



Thirukurugudi Vaishnava Nambi with His 4 consorts

Nambi, and Sundara Paripoorna, stands head and shoulders above the others and is the main Deity of the temple.

Pancha samskaram (diksha in Sri Vaishnava sampradaya) was bestowed to the main Deity by Swami Ramanuja himself upon the former's request, thus the name Vaishnava Nambi is associated to the main Deity. As a result, Swami Ramanuja is worshipped in the main sanctum, unlike in other temples, where he is given a separate shrine, thanks to his status as an Acharya of the Lord Himself. The shrines of Satanathar (Shiva) and Bhairava are located to the left of this *prakara*. The presence of Shaivite shrines in the temple is very unusual for a

Vaishnava shrine. Lord Vishnu is said to have instructed Lord Shiva the Sudharshana mantra here. Kurungudi Valli Naachiyar is the name of the Mahalakshmi in this temple. Mahalakshmi and Bhoma Devi have Their own separate shrines.

The temple worship is conducted according to *vaikhanasa agama*.

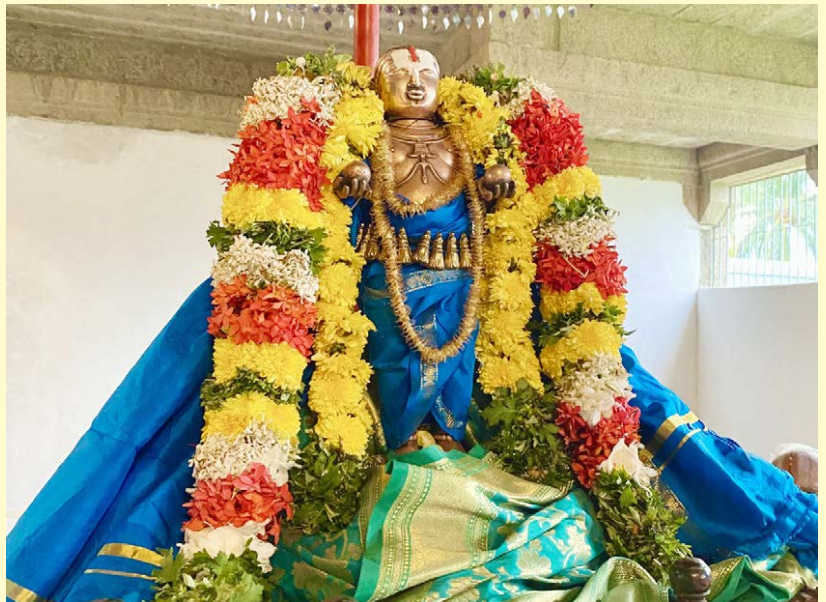
It is said that Lord Vaishnava Nambi Himself was born as the child of the Raja of Appan Kovil and his wife Udaya Nangai in answer to their prayers. This saintly child was Swami Nammazhwar.

Thirupaarkadal Nambi and Malaimel Nambi are two more Nambi shrines located in the southwest, far from the main temple.

Just outside of the town is a temple dedicated to Nambi, known as Thirupaarkadal Nambi, its sanctum sanctorum also known as Vamana Perumal.

Sri Ramanuja Thiru Parivatta Paarai is a beautiful temple not far away on a stony outcrop on the riverbank, downstream from Mahendra Parvatha. This rock is steeped in fascinating history.

Sri Ramanuja visited the city of Thiruvananthapuram on his journey to preach Sri Vaishnavism. Those who served as *archakas* (Tulu *brahmanas* and Namboothiris) at the Anantha Padmanabha temple were not in favour of Swami Ramanuja's reforms in the temple and they begged Lord Padmanabha to allow them to continue with the existing customs. The Lord who lies on Adishesha (whose incarnation is Swami Ramanuja) was in favour of His *archakas* who had been serving Him in the temple with sincere devotion. Garuda, the king of birds and Vishnu's vehicle, flew Sri Ramanujar to Thirukurugudi after the priests' prayers were heard. This was symbolic of Padmanabhaswamy's desire to continue with existing customs. Garuda chose to carry Sri Ramanujar while he was fast asleep



Sri Krishna with butter balls in both hands

at night. He placed the Acharya gently on the Parivatta Paarai. When he woke up in the morning, Sri Ramanuja was surprised that he was in the environs of Thirukurugudi.

As Sri Ramanuja arrived at Thirukurugudi, he called for his disciple Vaduga Nambi, who had accompanied him on this trip. Vaduga Nambi, however, was still in Thiruvananthapuram when Sri Ramanuja reached Thirukurugudi. Assuming the form of Vaduga Nambi, Lord Vaishnava Nambi of Thirukurugudi suddenly appeared before Sri Ramanuja, as if He had been waiting for this moment all along.

While applying the Sri Vaishnava symbol of Thiruman and Srichurnam (*tilak*) on his forehead after bath, it had been the daily practice of Ramanuja to draw a similar *tilak* on the forehead of his disciple Vaduga. He applied Thiruman on the forehead of Vaduga Nambi and asked his disciple to accompany him to the temple of Lord Nambi. Vaduga Nambi vanished after entering the shrine.

Sri Ramanuja was praying in the inner sanctum when he saw the new Thiruman *kaappu* he had just placed on his disciple's forehead. It didn't take long for him to discover that the person who had served him all the while until then was Sriman Narayana Himself!

The Lord explained to Sri Ramanuja that while He had assumed many forms throughout history, His incarnation as Vaduga Nambi was most important to Him, because it allowed Him to demonstrate the power of the Acharya-sishya *bhava* (teacher-disciple relationship). The Lord was Sri Ramanuja's follower, and it was Sri Ramanuja who gave the Lord the name Sri Vaishnava Nambi and initiated Him into the Sri Vaishnava sect.

It should be noted that applying of *tilak* by Acharya to disciple, one of the five ceremonies of initiation, is the most important aspect of initiation in the Sri Vaishnava *sampradaya*.

Figures of Swami Ramanuja and Vaduga Nambi are in a little cave-like basement on Parivatta Paarai.

Mala Nambi

The Mala Nambi shrine is located three kilometres from the main temple. This stunning temple site in the heart of a dense forest is a must-see for anybody travelling to Thirukurugudi. Before presenting oneself in devotion, a relaxing dip in the clear waters of the stream at the hill temple's base is recommended.

Thirumangai Azhwar, one of the 12 Azhwars, is one of the most prolific writers of *prapatti*. He is author of 1253 of the 4000 poems in *Naalaayira Divya Prabandham*.

Though he was a bandit chieftain to begin with, he was subsequently reformed and he devoted his entire energy to temple building, feeding Bhagavatas and singing the glory of the Lord.

Lord Ranganatha at Srirangam ordered Thirumangai Azhwar to serve, for a while, at His southern home at Thirukurugudi, when the latter pleaded with Him for *moksha*. When the Azhwar had done so, the Lord eventually escorted him to Sri Vaikunta.

There is a shrine to Thirumangai Azhwar in the middle of a paddy field to the north of the Nambi shrine. Rituals at the main temple occur on Karthigai *nakshatram*, the first day of the Tamil month of Karthigai, after prayers and the giving of *prasadam* to Azhwar.

The beauty of sculpture

The Nambi temple is located on an expansive 18-acre plot, and it has five *prakaras*, a large wall, and a five-tiered *gopuram*. The temple was endowed by the Vijayanagar kings and the Madurai Nayaks, hence



A festival procession in Thirukurugudi



Vaishnava Nambi



Nambi with Sridevi and Bhoodevi

it has some very impressive artwork, such the Gajendra Moksham, Gopi Vasthrapaharana, and others. There is a stone carving of the Trivikrama Avatara and another of four horses sharing a single head.

During the year, celebrations are held at the temple. Nevertheless, exceptional events include the Vasanthotsavam in the Hindu calendar month of Chithirai and the Nammazhwar utsavam in the Hindu calendar month of Vaikasi, Aavani Pavithrotsavam, Purattasi's Navarathri-Vijavadashami uthsavam, Aaipasi's Oonjal and Manavaala Maamuni utsavam, Kaarthikai's Katsika uthsavam, Maargazhi's Adhwayana uthsavam and Panguni's Brahmotsavam.

The temple has been sung about by various Azhwars.

Swami Nammazhwar says:

After seeing the beautiful Lord of Thirukurugudi, my heart yearns for His conch and His discus, His lotus eyes, and His coral lips. How now, Ladies, that you blame me?

Look through my heart's eyes; do not blame me. After I saw the Lord in palm-groved Thirukurugudi, His sacred thread, ear ornaments, strong chest, beautiful jewels and four arms appear before me everywhere.

Mother, you blame me saying, "She stands, she falters, she swoons." Ever since I saw the Lord in fall-mansioned Thirukurugudi, His victorious bow, mace, dagger, discus and conch appear before me everywhere, never leaving my eyes and heart.

Mother, you blame me for the tears that swell in my eyes endlessly. After I saw the Lord of nectar-groved Thirukurugudi, His beautiful garland of Tulasi flowers, His golden crown, His face, His silken threads and belt haunt my wretched self.

Mother, you blame me saying, "She stands and stares, she swoons." After I saw the Lord of great fame in Thirukurugudi, His glowing coral lips, His long eyebrows and His perfect lotus eyes have possessed my wretched soul!

After I saw the Lord of cool-groved Thirukurugudi, His beautiful slender nose, His lotus eyes, His coral lips, His blue frame, and His four shoulders have filled my heart. My mother, let no one see me and say, "She will bring further blame to our fair name!"

After I saw the Lord of great fame in Thirukurungudi, His beautiful golden form of exceeding radiance has filled my heart. He appears everywhere, wielding a discus in His beautiful hand. My mother says, "She is a great scourge on our house-hold!"

Ladies, you blame me saying, "She buries her face in her hands, she swoons." Ever since I saw the Lord in Thirukurungudi His red lotus eyes, hips, slender waist, face, long dark tresses, and broad shoulders appear before my sinful self.

Ladies! Sisters! You blame me saying, "You are a disgrace!" After I saw the Lord of Thirukurungudi, sweet as milk and sugar, surrounded by strongly built houses, His tall crown and His countless jewels never leave my heart.

My mother, let no one see me and say, "She is growing amorous day by day." After seeing the Lord of abiding fame in Thirukurungudi, a radiant form of flooding effulgence worshipped by hordes of celestials, He appears in my heart, hard for anyone's understanding.

This decad of the thousand well-known songs, by fair Kurugur's shatakopan on the Lord of Thirukurungudi, the incomprehensible discus bearer, is sung with flowers. Those who sing it with understanding will unite with Vishnu while on Earth.

What use singing the praise of these mortals who hold themselves and their wealth in great esteem, when the Lord of celestials, Krishna, my father, resides in Kurungudi surrounded by fertile fields?

Thirumangai Azhwar sings about the Lord of Thirukurungudi thus:

The spotless crescent moon, the wave-ridden ocean, the blossom-fragrant breeze, and the shrill cry of Anril birds, all have joined hands to break and wrench my heart. Through mist-filled days, I lie sleepless. Long ago the lotus-hued Lord stole my senses and my wellbeing. Alas! He does not pity me considering, "After all, she is a frail maiden." Carry me now to His abode in Kurungudi!

The cold and damp moonlight breeze, laden with fragrance of pollen-filled jasmine, blows everywhere, desiccating my soul, leaving me not a single night's sleep. Let the insensitive bangled sleepers sit here and speak what inanities they wish to. The Lord keeps the fragrant coiffured lotus-dame Lakshmi on His chest. Carry me now to His abode in Kurungudi!



Brahma ratha of Thirukurungudi



Thirumangai Azhwar in Thirukurungudi temple



Thirukurugudi Jeeyar, The head of matha of the temple, worships the Lord

The morning drags heavily into the evening. Every hour of the night stretches into eternity with the same destructive power. The damp breeze is like the leaping flames of the furnace. Alas, the gem-hued Lord has many such wonders. Before He unleashes them, carry me to His abode in Kurungudi, where beautiful peacocks dance in groves.

The benevolent Lord, that precious gem on the heads of celestials, is like a bull with a black hump and two black beads, sporting the white cows. The bell that hangs low on his soft dewlap sounds a knell to my heart. Alas, He occupies my thoughts and speech constantly, never letting me sleep even a single night. Carry me now to His abode in Kurungudi, amid streams that spill precious gems.

The sound of the strong humped bull's bell, the sweet sounds of the cowherd's flute, the evening, the breeze, the tender crescent moon of twilight, no more the ones of the past, all have joined hands to kill my soul softly, alas! Carry me now to Kurungudi, the abode of the Lord of gem hue and cloud hue.

Let them sit and criticise night and day if they wish to, those jewelled ones are good girls, we cannot match or counter them, we have no shame or reserve or fear. Even if they say clever things and laugh at us, we cannot forget our gem-hued Lord. Carry me now to His abode in Kurungudi, amid groves of fresh jasmine flowers.

A dark God with beautiful red eyes entered here, my limbs grew, my bangles fell, and said, "Is this not it?" then left. Alas, I cannot play a partner to the love games of Madana, the sugarcane-bow wielder anymore. Carry me now to His abode in Kurungudi, amid cool groves dripping with nectar.

Pray heed me, the roar of the sea is not alone! The cowherd's flute melody already throttles my soul. And then this deft archer Madana, god of love, has his flower-arrows aimed at me. Before he comes in and shoots, know the cowherd dancer's mind and carry me now to his abode in Kurungudi.

Even after I held His feet and begged, He did not relent. He took all my well-being and left me with a single golden shroud called paleness. To date, I do not even know where He went. Denied of His beautiful chest's embrace, my withered breasts are wasting away. Carry me now to His abode in Kurungudi, which the player, the Lord of gods, prefers.

The Lord of gods who burnt the city of Lanka, the benevolent Lord who is forever with the lotus-dame Lakshmi and yet graces my heart, the Lord who never leaves the heart and sight of the praise-singer Kaliyan, the Lord who rules the universe, resides in Kurungudi, so carry me there.

Kurungudi is the abode of the considerate Lord who stands with the skull-and-tiger-skin-bearing Shiva by His side. The baby crane perches itself on a low branch and eats on the Vellira fish from the mouth of its mother perched on high.

The waves of the roaring ocean come touching the feet of the pure Lord who reclines in its midst, on a serpent bed.



Sri Vaishnava Nambi is offered an elaborate abhisheka



*Thirumangai Azhwar
attained Sri Vaikunta in Thirukurugudi*



*The arayar enacts some pastimes of the Azhwars and
their praise of Sri Vaishnava Nambi*

His abode is Kurugudi, where swans with red feet nestle with their mates in beds of fragrant lotus blossoms amid cool lakes.

Devotees! We have found a way to live. Come here and see soft, red-footed water-hens search for worms for their mates, wading through ripe paddy fields with sharp eyes, in Kurugudi, It is the abode of the dark cloud-hued Lord with lotus eyes who came as a boar.

Night and day, the bees hum sweetly, while the fragrance of the Kuravu trees spreads everywhere in Kurugudi. It is the abode of the strong Lord who went to Lanka and cut the arms and chest of the ten-headed demon king.

The red berry-beaked parrots speak like the collyrium-lined bright-eyed dames in Kurugudi. It is the abode of the Lord who drove the chariot for the five, in the war that killed many elephant-seated mighty kings.

Devotees! Come pray and worship the Lord with praise, offering incense, water and fresh flowers, and be elevated. The ocean-hued Lord has His abode in Kurugudi, where mansions touch the moon.

Devotees! Give up you fixation with dames of creeper-thin waists. If you wish to see rows of beautiful teeth that match the berry lips of lotus-dame Lakshmi, come to Kurugudi where, in the backyards, jasmine creepers sprout tender white buds.

Devotees! With fresh flower garlands and hearts filled with love, come to offer worship to the Lord in Kurugudi ,where sharp-beaked water-egrets rejoice with their mates in fields filled with Tara water birds.

This garland of songs on the resident of Kurugudi, the Lord who wielded a bow and destroyed Lanka, then plucked the tusk of a dreadful angry elephant, has been sung by Kaliyan, the gifted poet of rare merit. Those who master it will be free from karmic account.

The Lord of Thirupper, the Lord of Thirukurugudi, the resident of Thiruttankal, the perfect one of Karambanur, the Lord who ate the seven oceans, the seven mountains, the seven continents and all else, I have seen Him in Southern Arangam amid cool waters.

O Lord of Thiruvinnagar! My Liege! Beautiful one of Thirukurugudi! Honey of Thirunaraiyur! Hit by the arrow-looks of moon-faced dames, I have come running to Your feet, wounded.

(This concludes the series on Thirukurugudi temple) ☪

Photo courtesy: Santhanakrishnan, Srirangam



Special Alankara (above) and Arati (below)





Abhisheka (above and below)





Hyderabad: Arati (above) and Abhisheka (below)





SRI BRAHMOTSAVA

April 4 - 15, 2023



Join celebrations live on

  / ISKCON BANGALORE

PROGRAMME

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Apr 3, Mon	6:00 PM	Garuda Pata Prathishta Vainateya Homa
Apr 4, Tue	8:00 AM	Garuda Abhisheka Dhvaja Arohana Ashta Dik Palaka Avahana
	6:15 PM	Ananta Shesha Vahana
Apr 5, Wed	6:15 PM	Chandra Prabha Vahana
Apr 6, Thu	6:15 PM	Hanumad Vahana
Apr 7, Fri	6:15 PM	Ashva Vahana
Apr 8, Sat	11:00 AM	Kalyanotsava
	5:30 PM	Maha Pallaki
Apr 9, Sun	6:15 AM	Surya Prabha Vahana
	5:30 PM	Garuda Vahana
Apr 10, Mon	6:15 PM	Kalpa Vriksha Vahana
Apr 11, Tue	6:15 PM	Hamsa Vahana
Apr 12, Wed	6:15 PM	Gaja Vahana
Apr 13, Thu	5:30 PM	Brahma Ratha
Apr 14, Fri	6:00 PM	Churna Abhisheka
Apr 15, Sat	6:00 PM	Pushpa Pallakki
		Theppotsava
	8:00 PM	Dhvaja Avarohana

NRITYA SEVA

Venue: Open Air Theatre Time: 6:45 PM

April 8, Sat : Krishna Kavyam by Sahrdaya Foundation

April 9, Sun : Bharatanatyam by Raadha Kalpa Dance Company

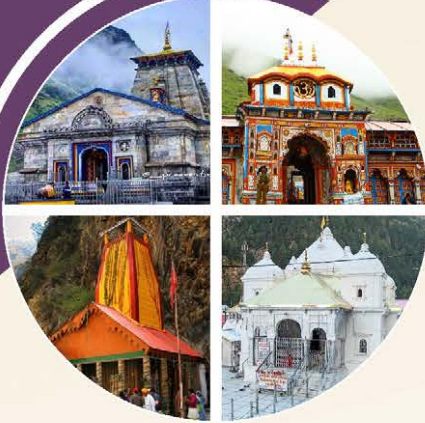
April 13, Thu : A Play by FOLK Team

Every evening at the culmination of the Vahana Utsava, the Lord's vahana is brought to a halt at the Open Air Theatre, where He receives Jhulan Seva.



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Char dham Pilgrimage 2023



**narayana-paro yogo narayana-param tapah
narayana-param jnana narayana-param gatih**

All different types of meditation or mysticism are means for realizing Narayana. All austerities are aimed at achieving Narayana. Culture of transcendental knowledge is for getting a glimpse of Narayana, and ultimately salvation is entering the kingdom of Narayana.

Himayalas are often referred as Devabhoomi, because even the Devatas come to worship the Supreme Lord at Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri, etc.

Holy places of visit

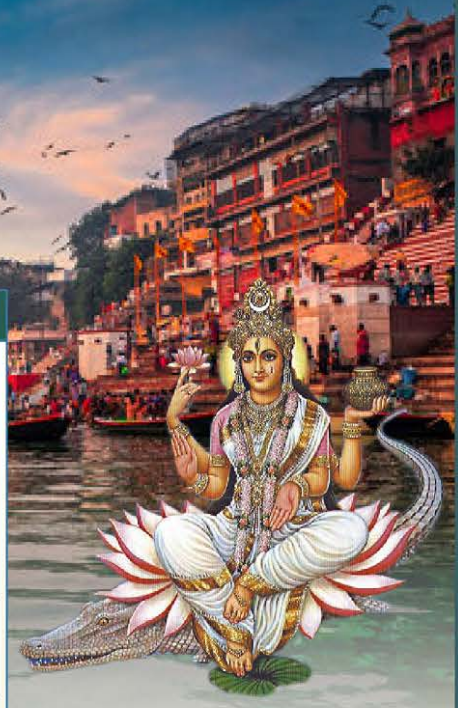
Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath, Rishikesh, Haridwar & more

ECONOMY PACKAGES (Land Route)	COMFORT PACKAGE (Land Route)
<p>Travel Dates Batch 1: May 15 - 26, 2023 <small>(Train travel days extra)</small> Batch 2: Jun 15 - 26, 2023 <small>(Train travel days extra)</small> Batch 3: Sept. 15 - 26, 2023 <small>(Train travel days extra)</small> Batch 4: Oct 15 - 26, 2023 <small>(Train travel days extra)</small></p> <p>Co-ordinator: Suguna Krishna Dasa</p> <p><small>* JOSHIMUTT - may be skipped as per the Govt. decisions. Alternate route to Badrinath will be opened very soon.</small></p>	<p>Travel Dates Batch 1 : May 1 - 12, 2023 Batch 2 : June 1 - 12, 2023 Batch 3 : Sept 1 - 12, 2023 Batch 4 : Oct 1 - 12, 2023</p> <p>Co-ordinator: Suguna Krishna Dasa</p> <p><small>* JOSHIMUTT - may be skipped as per the Govt. decisions. Alternate route to Badrinath will be opened very soon.</small></p>
<p>PREMIUM PACKAGE (by Helicopter)</p> <p>Travel Dates May 1 to Oct 28, 2023 (Exact dates will be fixed on registration of minimum 5pilgrims)</p> <p>DO-DHAM 4 days</p> <p>Amount: ₹1,50,000/- (All inclusive)</p> <p>Co-ordinator: Suguna Krishna Dasa </p> <p><small>* JOSHIMUTT - may be skipped as per the Govt. decisions. Alternate route to Badrinath will be opened very soon.</small></p>	<p>PREMIUM PACKAGE (by Helicopter)</p> <p>Travel Dates May 1 to Oct 28, 2023 (Exact dates will be fixed on registration of minimum 5pilgrims)</p> <p>CHAR-DHAM 7 days</p> <p>Amount: ₹2,50,000/- (All inclusive)</p> <p>Co-ordinator: Suguna Krishna Dasa </p> <p><small>* JOSHIMUTT - may be skipped as per the Govt. decisions. Alternate route to Badrinath will be opened very soon.</small></p>

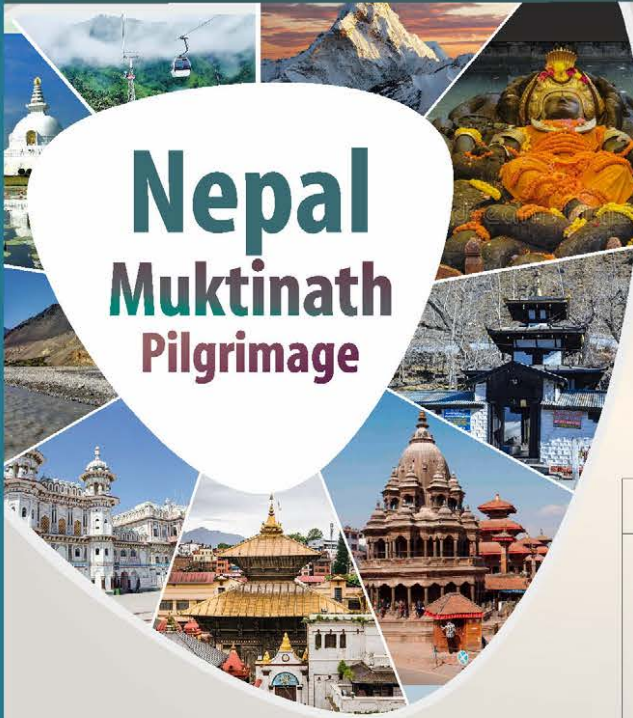
Ganga Pushkaram

Pilgrimage 2023

(Once in 12 years)



GANGA SAGAR	Uttarpradesh+Bihar	Uttarakhand
Travel dates: April 25 to 26, 2023	Travel dates: April 27, 28 & 29, 2023	Travel dates: May 1 - 12, 2023
Places of visit: Kolkata & Gangasagar Island	Places of visit: Prayagraj, Kashi, Ganga - Gandaki sangam	Places of visit: Yamunotri, Gangotri (optional Gomukh Trek), Kedarnath, Badrinath, Devprayag, Rishikesh, Haridwar & more
Amount: ₹21,000/- (incl. flight charges)	Amount: ₹27,000/- (incl. flight charges)	Amount: ₹90,000/- (incl. flights and Kedarnath Helicopter)



Nepal Muktinath Pilgrimage

Travel dates:
Batch 1: May 13 to 21, 2023
Batch 2: Nov 4 to 12, 2023

Places of visit:
Muktinath, Gandaki, Pokhara, Jomsom, Vyas, Kathmandu, Manakamana, Janakpur, Lumbini, Sitamadhi & more..

Amount:	
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Batch 2 Apr 17 - May 6

Batch 3 May 8 - May 20

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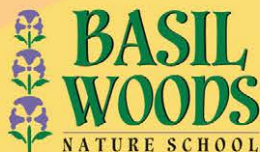
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