

Founder Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur

# BHAGAVATA

The e-magazine of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math

Issue No.36

May 2022

## DHARMA

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Since Sri Sri Radha Krishna is our ultimate protector, some devotees may wonder about the need to worship Lord Nrisinghadev and may ask themselves “why do we need His mercy to protect us?”. The reason is that the path to devotional practice is full of obstacles, and in order to protect our devotion towards the Divine Couple (Sri Sri Radha Krishna), and to chant the Hare Krishna Mahamantra free of offences, we need Lord Nrisinghadev's mercy. Without His protection, our mind will wander away from devotion due to the influence of material energy. Lord Nrisinghadev's mercy will focus our mind on rendering service to Sri Sri Radha Krishna without causing offences.

Nitai-Gaur Haribol!

*His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaj*

*President, Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math*

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## THE REASON BEHIND LORD NARASINGHDEV'S APPEARANCE

In order to understand why Lord Narasinghadev appeared, we have to look back at the main reason behind His appearance. Once upon a time, Lord Vishnu (who is the opulence form of the Supreme Lord), desired to enjoy His power (*vīra-rasa*). Lord Vishnu resides in Vaikuntha, and Vaikuntha means 'no obstacles.' Just as the Lord having the desire, Lord Brahma's mind-born sons, the four Kumaras, (*catur-kumara*) Sanak, Sanatan, Sanandan and Sanatkumar came to the gates of Vaikuntha with the desire to meet with Lord Vishnu. The four Kumaras are extremely calm and soft-hearted by nature. Anger does not touch them, but that day, something unusual happened. As the four Kumaras were entering Vaikuntha, the two gatekeepers namely Jay and Vijay stopped them from entering. The four Kumaras, not expecting to be stopped, immediately became enraged. They cursed Jay and Vijay, saying that "Vaikuntha means 'no obstacles', yet both of you are stopping us from entering. We curse you both to go and take birth in the material world."

We know from reading the sastras that the Supreme Lord's abode is full of bliss. Once a living entity reaches there, it will never want to come back down to the material world. Jay and Vijay became disturbed and pleaded with the Kumaras to retract their curse. The Kumaras felt remorse for cursing the two guards and they also suffered mentally. We know that when pure devotees feel miserable, it makes the Lord unhappy and He appears in front of them all. Then the Lord appeared in front of the kumaras and explained to them that they should not lament because all that was happening was due to His desire. He explained that He desired to enjoy His power and in order to fulfill this desire, the Kumaras cursed Jay and Vijay. The Lord gave the two guards an

option. They could take seven births in favor of the Lord, or three births in which they will be antagonistic towards the Lord. Jay and Vijay chose to take three births, and as a result, they appeared as the two brothers, Hiranakshya and Hiranyakashipu.

Both the brothers were extremely powerful and ferocious demons. Fighting is fun only when there is equal power, and so the Lord gave them both great might and power so that He could fight with them. Once Hiranakshya kidnapped mother Earth and hid her under the ocean. Mother Earth is a woman and women are the ornaments of society. If anyone disobeys or disturbs women, then the Lord will not let them go free. To free mother Earth and punish Hiranakshya, Lord Vishnu appeared from the nose of Brahma as a wild hog (Varaha avatar). His small size suddenly increased to a gigantic form. Varaha Dev entered the ocean and took mother Earth on his tusks and freed her. Hiranakshya came forth to attack Varaha Dev. A big fight ensued and Hiranakshya was eventually killed and delivered by Varaha Dev.

After the death of his brother Hiranakshya, Hiranyakashipu set his mind on avenging his brother's killer. He consulted with his guru Shukracharya for advice on how to do this. Shukracharya advised Hiranyakashipu to meditate on Brahma and ask for eternal life. That way, no one could kill or defeat Hiranyakashipu. In accordance with his guru's advice, Hiranyakashipu started his meditation by standing on one toe with his arms raised in the air. After 10,000 years of his meditation, Brahma appeared and Hiranyakashipu asked to be blessed with immortality. Brahma replied, "I am not immortal; then how can I grant you the boon of immortality?" Hiranyakashipu tried to outsmart Brahma. He asked Brahma, "please give me the boon that no one can kill me in this three-fold universe (swarga, martya, and patala), no one can kill me either inside or the outside of the house, no one can kill me either in the day or in the night, no living



entity created by Lord Vishnu can kill me and finally, I shall not be killed by any weapons.” Brahma granted all his wishes and Hiranyakashipu was internally rejoicing that indirectly he had been granted immortal life by fooling Brahma.

When Hiranyakashipu had left for his meditation, his wife Kayadu was pregnant with his child. Indra, the king of heaven thought that she must be carrying a demoniac child, so Indra kidnapped Kayadu and made his way to heaven with her. On the way, Narada Muni appeared and assured Indra that the child will be beneficial to everyone in the universe and that he will be a great devotee of the Lord. After convincing Indra, Narada Muni took Kayadu to his ashram where she stayed for 10,000 years. Every day Kayadu listened to Narada Muni's recitation of the Srimad Bhagavatam. When Narada Muni gave Harikatha, the child in Kayadu's womb would listen to the Harikatha. Whilst the baby was listening to the glories of the Supreme Lord from the womb (and would be born to be a great devotee of the Lord), his father, Hiranyakashipu was accumulating great power to fight against Lord Vishnu. It was the desire of Kayadu that her baby should be born once her husband returned home from his meditation, and so, the baby stayed in his mother's womb for 10,000 years.

Hiranyakashipu returned to his kingdom, and the child, Prahlad was born at the same time. Hiranyakashipu was delighted to have Prahlad as his son. He planned to teach his son to be hostile towards Lord Vishnu and see Him as their enemy. However, things did not go according to Hiranyakashipu's desire. Narada Muni's teachings had left deep impressions on Prahlad and all attempts to turn Prahlad against Lord Vishnu proved futile. Prahlad was sent off to the gurukul to be given education on how his father is the Lord of everything. He was taught by Shukracharya's sons, Sanda and Amarka, but all their efforts to teach Prahlad were in vain. Out of affection for his son Prahlad,

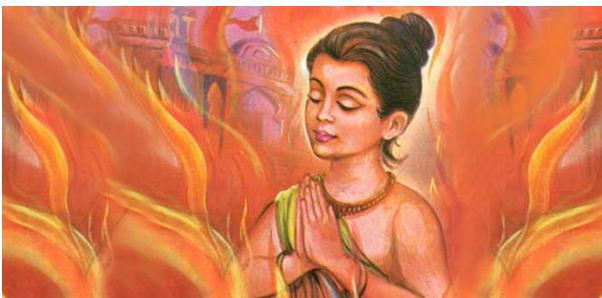
Hiranyakashipu called his son back home for a few days. Lovingly, Hiranyakashipu placed Prahlad on his lap and enquired about what he had learned about God at the gurukul. Hiranyakashipu asked, “what is the best way to live in this material world?” Prahlad answered, “the best way to live is live in the forest and worship Lord Vishnu because He is the Supreme Lord.” Enraged by this reply, Hiranyakashipu threw Prahlad from his lap and ordered the guards to kill him. We know from the scriptures that when the Supreme Lord protects someone, no one can kill them. Prahlad was protected by the Supreme Lord and was not harmed at all. Hiranyakashipu ordered Sanda and Amarka to look after his son properly and to provide robust teaching which would change Prahlad's thought process. Hiranyakashipu thought that maybe some gods or goddesses are secretly coming to poison Prahlad's mind.

Several days passed when Hiranyakashipu, out of curiosity, called for his son to check on how his learning at the gurukul was progressing. Like before, the same saga took place. Prahlad gave the same answer to his father's questions, and again, out of anger, Hiranyakashipu threw Prahlad away from him and ordered the guards to fry Prahlad in boiling oil. As soon as Prahlad was thrown into the hot oil, by the protection of the Lord, the oil turned cold. Hiranyakashipu tried to kill Prahlad in many different ways. Hiranyakashipu ordered his guards to take Prahlad far away from the kingdom and to drop him off a cliff and into the ocean. They followed the order of the demon king but as Prahlad was thrown off the cliff, the Lord in His Varaha form appeared and caught Prahlad. Hiranyakashipu was astonished to see Prahlad return to the kingdom. Hiranyakashipu thought hard about how to be successful in killing his son. He ordered his guards to mix poison with the milk that Kayadu was going to feed Prahlad, without her knowledge, and in this way, Prahlad would be killed. The Lord sent Shiva to take the poison away from the milk in the same



way Shiva took the poison that appeared from the churning of the ocean. When Lord Shiva took the poison, his throat (kantha) turned blue (*nīla*). This is why he is called *nīlakanta*. So again, this time, no harm came upon Prahlad. Hiranyakashipu started to become distressed with all his failed attempts to kill his son. Holika, Hiranyakashipu's sister, came and reminded Hiranyakashipu that long ago he closed all the Vishnu temples. They are uninhabited now and the temples have become old and dirty. They planned to fill the temples with poisonous snakes which would bite Prahlad and he would die from the venom. When Prahlad entered the temple, the snakes saw Vishnu's Sudarshan chakra protecting Prahlad. They became fearful of him and stayed away. When the guards entered the temple the next day, hoping to find the dead body of Prahlad, they saw that he was sitting nicely in the temple praying to Lord Vishnu. The news reached Hiranyakashipu and he was left feeling extremely confused as to how Prahlad is still alive. He thought, "who is protecting my son Prahlad?"

Then his sister Holika came up with another plan. Holika reminded her brother that she has a boon from the god of fire. "The flames will not burn me, brother. I will hold my nephew in my lap and enter a burning pyre. I will not be affected by the fire, but Prahlad will burn to ashes." Hiranyakashipu arranged a burning pyre and Holika sweetly invited Prahlad to sit in her lap. When she entered the pyre, people were astonished to see that after some time Prahlad walked out of the fire unharmed, and Holika had burned down to ashes.



Another time, Sanda and Amarka decided to place a mad elephant on the way to the palace from the gurukul. They hoped that Prahlad would be trampled by the mad elephant and all their problems would thus come to an end, but as Prahlad walked past the elephant, both his teachers were shocked to see the elephant bowed down to Prahlad instead of attacking him. In this way, they had devised many futile plans to kill Prahlad.

One day, around midday, Hiranyakashipu asked Prahlad, "who is giving you so much power? Everyone in this kingdom accepts me as God, except you. You accept Vishnu as God, who is my enemy. You do not fear me. I am trying to kill you, but who is protecting you?"

Prahlad replied, "oh greatest demon, from where are you getting all this power to force people to accept you as God and fear you? I do not fear you because the Lord's desire will always come to pass. Lord Hari is protecting me in every aspect."

Hiranyakashipu asked, "where is your Lord Hari?"

Prahlad replied, "Everywhere. In fire, in water, and in the air. He surrounds us. He is everywhere."

Pointing at a pillar, Hiranyakashipu asked, "is your Lord Hari inside this pillar?"

"Yes" replied Prahlad.

Hiranyakashipu, enraged by Prahlad's answer, picked his mace and struck the pillar with all his strength. To preserve the words of His devotee, the Lord immediately appeared from the pillar as Lord Narasinghadev. Hiranyakashipu saw the figure of a half lion (navel up) and half-human form of the Lord. Lion is called singha and human is called nara in Sanskrit, and therefore, the Lord is called Narasinghadev.





The Lord always gives opportunities for anyone who tries to harm a pure devotee, to rectify his/ her mistakes. But in the case of Hiranyakashipu, he did not want to correct himself. His pot of bad karma had filled to the brim, and so the Lord appeared to punish him for his misdeeds. We must also remember that it was the will of the Lord to enjoy His *vīra-rasa* and so this situation was created for His desire to be fulfilled. Hiranyakashipu's antagonistic behavior and activities were actually his way of serving the Lord.



The Lord was playing a fight with Hiranyakashipu the way a cat fights with a mouse. When twilight came, Narasingadev grabbed Hiranyakashipu in the same way a cat catches a mouse, and pulled him towards the door. The Lord kept Hiranyakashipu in His lap and reminded him of all the boons he had received from Brahma. The Lord roared, "Hiranyakashipu, you had asked for several boons to make your life eternal. You asked that no one can kill you in the three folds of this universe (swarga - heavenly planets, martya – Earth, or patala - the lower planets).

Look, you are in my lap. It is neither swarga, martya, nor patala."

Hiranyakashipu said "I cannot be killed inside or outside, I cannot be killed in the day or the in the night, no living entity created by Vishnu can kill me, and I cannot be killed by any weapons."

The Lord replied, "look, you are at the doorway. It is neither inside nor the outside. Now is twilight, it is neither day nor night. You asked not to be killed by any living entity created by Vishnu. Look, I am not created by Vishnu. I am Vishnu! I will not use any weapon but my claws to rip open your chest."

Saying this, the Lord killed Hiranyakashipu by digging His nails into Hiranyakashipu's chest and ripping it open. He took the intestines out to examine the inside of Hiranyakashipu's body to see if any more seeds remained from where Prahlad came.

Narasinghadev's fierce form and angry mood put fear in the hearts of all who were present there. Even Lakshmi Devi who is the eternal consort of Vishnu, feared to approach the Lord. Finally, all the gods and goddesses requested Prahlad to approach Lord Narasingadev. The Lord was pacified after seeing Prahlad and out of happiness told Prahlad to ask for something from Him. Prahlad replied, "oh Lord, I am not a businessman." When the Lord insisted that He wished to give something, Prahlad replied, "if You really want to give me a boon, then please deliver my father."

The Lord said, "Prahlad, as soon as you took birth in this family, a hundred generations of your ancestors were delivered."

This is the nature of pure devotees. They are full of kindness even towards those who are hostile towards them. They are the well-wishers of all and want the Lord to deliver everyone.



Lord Narasimhadev is important for all Gaudiya Vaishnava. He protects our devotion from all kinds of material dangers. My spiritual master, His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakur gave great importance to Narasingadev's prayers. Before going anywhere, he taught us to always pray like this, "all glories to Gurudev, all glories to Prabhupada Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur, all glories to Prahlad Maharaj, and all glories to Lord Narasingadev."

Nitai-Gaur-Haribol.

Yours in the Service of Sri Krishna  
Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Mission,

B.B.Bodhayan Swami

*Written by HDG Srila Bhakri Bibudha Bodhayan  
Goswami Maharaj, on the occasion of Narasingha  
Caturdasi, 2022.*



## KEY VAISHNAVA FESTIVALS: MAY – JUNE, 2022

Date	Festival
15 May	Narasingha Caturdasi (Appearance Day of Lord Narasinghdev)
15 May	Buddha Purnima (Appearance Day of Lord Buddha) Appearance Day of Srila Srinivas Acharya
20 May	Disappearance Day of Srila Ramanada Ray
26 May	Apara Ekadasi
27 May	Appearance Day of Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur
9 June	Sri Ganga Puja Disappearance Day of Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan Prabhu
10 June	Nirjala Ekadasi
12 June	Festival of Srila Raghunath Das Goswami at Panihati
15 June	Disappearance Day of Srila Shyamanda Prabhu
19 June	Appearance Day of Srila Vakreshwar Pandit
24 June	Yogini Ekadasi
29 June	Disappearance Day of Srila Gadhadhar Pandit
30 June	Gundicha Marjan

### Bhagavata Dharma

A free e-magazine published in service to the mission of Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya, by:  
Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math,  
Isodhyan, Sri Mayapur  
Nadia, West Bengal, India 741313

On behalf of:

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja, President & Acharya of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math;

Dedicated to:

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakur, Founder Acharya of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math, and  
His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanata Saraswati Goswami Thakur PRABHUPADA.

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