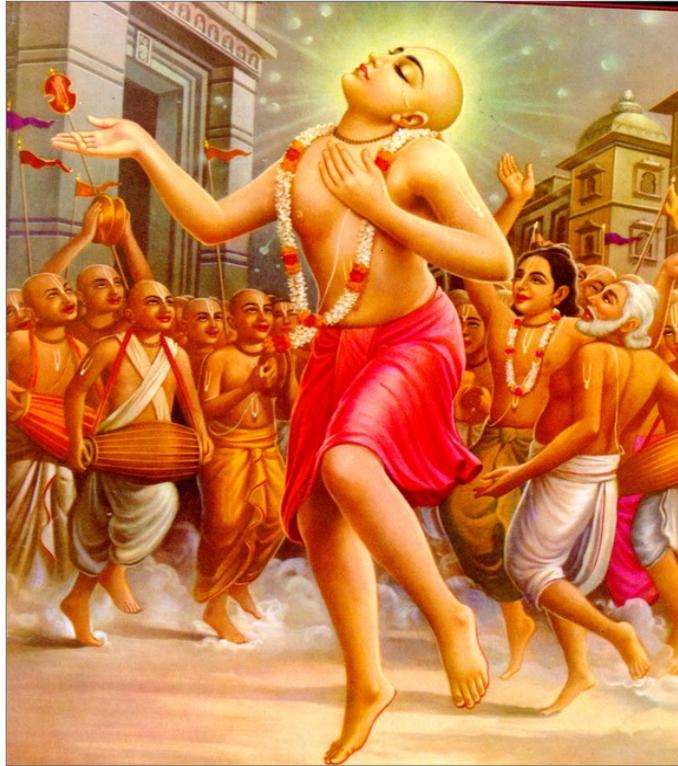


Gaura Purnima

20th - 21st (South Africa) March

(The Appearance Day of Shree Caitanya Mahaprabhu)



On 20th March / 21st in South Africa is one of the most important days on the Vedic/Hindu calendar for Gaudiya Vaishnavas. This day is the appearance day of Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Yet Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu or as He is simply known as Mahaprabhu is not well known at all. Even many of the residents of India are not aware of this very important avatar of Lord Krsna so what to speak of those living outside of India. Shastras mention that Mahaprabhu is a channa avatar (a hidden incarnation) of Lord Krishna. In this very humble article we hope to clarify and as well shed some light on Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

[A very short sketch of the life of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.](#)

Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the great teacher of love of God and the founder of the congregational chanting of the holy name of the Lord, advented Himself at Shridhama Mayapur (this place is about 130 km north of Kolkata) on Full Moon evening in the year 1407 (corresponding to February 1486 by the western calendar). When the Lord appeared the whole of India was roaring with the holy names of Lord Krishna and millions was bathing in the holy Ganga (the Ganges river). It was an extremely auspicious time to be born.

He was the 10th and the youngest child and was named as Vishvambhara, and later became known as Nimai Pundit, and then after accepting the renounced order of life, Shri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu. After taking sannyasa, Mahaprabhu traveled continuously all over India and especially South India preaching about Sanatan Dharma (the eternal religion). Mahaprabhu not only preached about Srimad Bhagavatam but also propagated the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita as well in the most practical way. Unfortunately, despite Lord Krsna's direct order and the teachings of the Gita, less intelligent people misunderstood Him to be nothing but a great historical figure, and thus they cannot accept Him as the Original Personality of Godhead. Many non-devotees mislead such people with a poor fund of knowledge. Thus even great scholars misinterpreted the teachings of the Gita. After the disappearance of Lord Krsna (3102 B.C) there were hundreds of commentaries on the Gita by many erudite scholars, and almost every one of them was motivated by self-interest.

So this same Mahaprabhu is the self same Lord Krishna. This time however He appeared as a great devotee of the Lord in order to preach to the people in general, as well as to religionists and philosophers, about the transcendental position of Shree Krishna, the primeval Lord and the cause of all causes. The essence of Mahaprabhu teachings is simply that Lord Krsna who appeared in Vrndavan as the son of Nanda Maharaja is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is therefore worshipping by all. During His brief stay on this planet of 48 years He preached widely and His preaching was most effective.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu left only eight shlokas (verses) of His instructions in writing, and they are known as the Shikhsaa-shtaka (which are given below). These eight verses are the condensed version of all the Vedas, Puranas, Bhagavad Gita, and other Vedic scriptures combined. That's why it is so important – and yet very few people are aware of it. The movement started by Mahaprabhu is richer than any other, and it is the living religion of the day with the potency for spreading as the universal religion.

Shikhsaa-shtaka (The Eight verses)

(These eight verses devotees of the Lord chant or read every morning)

1) Glory to the Shree Krishna sankirtana, which cleanses the heart of all the dust accumulated for years and extinguishes the fire of conditional life, of repeated birth and death. This sankirtana movement is the prime benediction for humanity at large because it spreads the rays of the benediction moon. It is the life of all transcendental knowledge. It increases the ocean of transcendental bliss, and it enables us to fully taste the nectar for which we are always anxious.

2) O my Lord, your holy name alone can render all benedictions to living beings, and thus You have hundreds and millions of names, like Krsna and Govinda. In these transcendental names You have invested all Your transcendental energies. There are not even hard and fast rules for chanting these names, O my Lord, out

of kindness You enable us to easily approach You by Your holy names, but I am so unfortunate that I have no attraction for them.

3) One should chant the holy names of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street, one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and should be ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant at the holy name of the Lord constantly.

4) O Almighty Lord, I have no desire to accumulate wealth, nor do I desire beautiful women, nor do I want any number of followers. I only want Your causeless devotional service, birth after birth.

5) O son of Nanda Maharaja, I am Your eternal servitor, yet somehow or the other I have fallen into the ocean of birth and death. Please pick me up from this ocean of death and place me as one of the atoms at Your lotus feet.

6) O my Lord, when will my eyes be decorated with tears of love flowing constantly when I chant Your holy name? When will my voice choke up, and when will the hairs of my body stand on end at the recitation of Your name?

7) O Govinda! Feeling your separation, I am considering a moment to be like twelve years or more. Tears are flowing from my eyes like torrents of rain, and I am feeling all-vacant in the world in Your absence.

8) I know no one but Krsna as my Lord, and He shall remain so even if He handles me roughly by His embrace or makes me broken-hearted by not being present before me. He is completely free to do anything and everything, for He is always my worshippable Lord, unconditionally.

Proof of Shree Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Scriptures

Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.32

“In the age of Kali, intelligent person performs congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Lord Krsna. Although his complexion is not blackish, He is Krsna Himself. His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions accompany him”

Mahabharata (Vishnu-Sahasra-nama-stotra)

“The Lord in the incarnation of Gaurasundara has a golden complexion. Indeed, His entire body, which is very nicely constituted, is like molten gold. Sandalwood pulp is smeared all over His body. He will take the fourth order of Spiritual life (sannyasa) and will be very self-controlled. He will be distinguished from Mayavadi Sannyasis in that He will be fixed in devotional service and will spread the sankirtana movement.”

Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.38

“In this way, my Lord, you appear in various incarnations as a human being, an animal, a great saint, a deva, fish, a tortoise, thus maintaining the entire creation in different planetary systems and killing the demoniac principles. According to the age, O my Lord, you protect the principles of religion. In the age of Kali, however, You do not assert Yourself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore You are known as Triyuga, or the Lord who appears in the three yugas. “

Shvetaashvatara Upanishad 3.12

“Mahaprabhu is indeed the Supreme Personality of Godhead”

Padma Purana (72.335)

“Lord Shiva addressed his wife, O Devi, I chant the holy name of Rama Rama Rama and thus constantly enjoy this beautiful sound. This holy name of Ramachandra is equal to one thousand names of Lord Vishnu.”

Brahmanda Purana

“The pious results achieved by chanting the thousand names of Vishnu three times can be attained by only one utterance of the holy name of Krsna.”

Brahma Rahasya

“The holy name of Krsna Caitanya is the topmost even amongst all the important primary holy names of the Lord Krsna. By chanting this name just once, a person attains the results of chanting all the other holy names of the Lord.”

So from the above three very important verses we can easily come to the following conclusion that

1000 names of Lord Vishnu = 1 name of Lord Rama
3 names of Lord Rama = 1 name of Lord Krsna
(Or 3000 names of Lord Vishnu) =
1 name of Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu
= Is the sum total of all the names of Lord Krsna, Rama, and Vishnu.
- Vishnu-yaamala Samhita

“Those who chant the name of Krsna Caitanya even once, become free from all offences and purify all the worlds by their very presence.”

How to observe this most auspicious day:-

On Gaura Purnima, one should fast entirely from all foods and even water, up until the evening (Moon-rise) when the Lord appeared. Of course this should be performed within reason and according to one's health. The appearance day of Mahaprabhu one should fast until moon rise and then have an Ekadashi feast, although Srila Prabhupada said this was not compulsory.

Moonrise for the 20th March:-

Durban:- 18h05

Johannesburg:- 18h15

Pretoria:- 18h14

Cape Town:- 18h59

Bloemfontein:- 18h24

Moonrise for the 21st March:-

Durban:- 18h45

Johannesburg:- 18h57

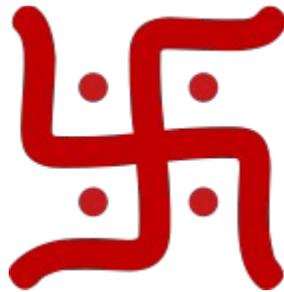
Pretoria:- 18h56

Cape Town:- 19h37

Bloemfontein:- 19h05

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Compiled for the upliftment of Sanatan Dharma

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