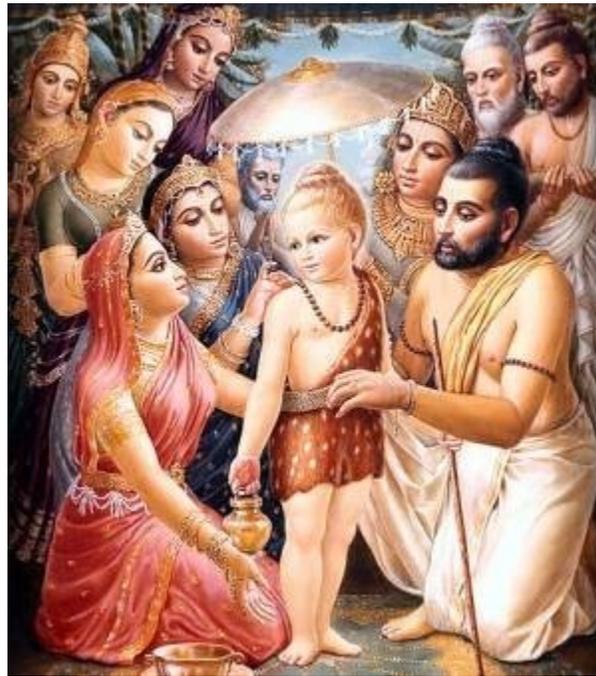


## **The Appearance Day of Lord Vamanadeva**

**17<sup>th</sup> September 2021**



**Lord Vamana (in the middle) Aditi-devi (left) and Kashyapa Muni (right)**

This year the appearance day of Lord Vamanadeva the 5<sup>th</sup> of the 10 (Das) main avatars (incarnations) of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Shree Krsna is celebrated in the Vaishnava month of Hrishikesha on **17<sup>th</sup> September**. Lord Vamanadeva is the first incarnation of the Second Age, or Treta Yuga. Also Lord Vamanadeva is the first Avatar of Lord Krsna which appears with a completely human form, though it was that of a dwarf Brahmin.

Lord Vamana was born to Aditi-devi (The mother of many devas) and the great sage Kashyapa Muni – the son of Lord Brahma. Lord Vamanadeva is the twelfth of the 12 Adityas (sons of Aditi-devi and Kashyapa Muni). Lord Vamana is also known the younger brother of Indra-dev the king of the heavens. In the Srimad Bhagavatam 8<sup>th</sup> canto chapters 15-23 narrates the katha of Bali Maharaj and Lord Vamanadeva. You can view/read the entire katha on Lord Vamanadev in detail on this link <http://www.srimadbhagavatam.org/canto8/c8-contents.html>. We shall due to space in this humble rendition, provide you below with the summary of each of the chapters.

**Srimad Bhagavatam 8<sup>th</sup> Canto 18<sup>th</sup> Chapter Summary:** Lord Vamanadeva appeared in this world from the womb of Aditi completely equipped with conchshell, disc, club and lotus. His bodily hue was blackish, and He was dressed in yellow garments. Lord Vishnu appeared at an auspicious moment on Shravana Dvadashi when the

auspicious Abhijit star had arisen. At that time, in all the three worlds, all the devas, the cows, the brahmanas & even the seasons were happy because of God's appearance.

When the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appeared as the son of Kashyapa and Aditi, both of His parents were very astonished. After His appearance, the Lord assumed the form of a dwarf (Vamana). All the great sages expressed their jubilation, and with Kashyapa Muni before them they performed the birthday ceremony of Lord Vamana. At the time of Lord Vamanadeva's sacred thread ceremony, He was honored by the Sun-god, Brihaspati-dev, Mother Earth, the deities of the heavenly planets, His mother, Lord Brahma, Lord Kuvera, the seven Rishis and others. Lord Vamanadeva then visited the sacrificial arena on the northern side of the Narmada River, at the field known as Bhrgu Kaccha, where brahmanas of the Bhrgu dynasty were performing Yajnas. Wearing a belt made of munja straw, an upper garment of deerskin and a sacred thread and carrying in His hands a danda, an umbrella and a water pot (kumandalu), Lord Vamanadeva appeared in the sacrificial arena of Maharaja Bali. Because of His transcendently effulgent presence, all the priests were diminished in their prowess, and thus they all stood from their seats and offered prayers to Lord Vamanadeva. Even Lord Shiva accepts on his head the Ganges water generated from the toe of Lord Vamanadeva. Therefore, after washing the Lord's feet, Bali Maharaja immediately accepted the water from the Lord's feet on his head and felt that he and his predecessors had certainly been glorified. Then Bali Maharaja inquired of Lord Vamanadeva's welfare and requested the Lord to ask him for money, jewels or anything He might desire.

**Srimad Bhagavatam 8th Canto 19th Chapter Summary:** Guru Shukracharaya (left) trying to dissuade King Bali Maharaja from donating land to Lord Vamanadeva. When Bali Maharaja, thinking Vamanadeva to be the son of a brahmana, told Him to ask for anything He liked, Lord Vamanadeva praised Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaksha for their heroic activities and after thus praising the family in which Bali Maharaja had been born, He begged the King for three paces of land. Bali Maharaja agreed to give this land in charity, since this was very insignificant, but Shukracharaya, who could understand that Lord Vamanadeva was none other than Lord Vishnu Himself, the friend of the devas, forbade Bali Maharaja to give this land. Shukracharaya advised Bali Maharaja to withdraw his promise. He explained that in subduing others, in joking, in responding to danger, in acting for the welfare of others, and so on, one could refuse to fulfill one's promise, and there would be no fault. By this philosophy, Shukracharaya tried to dissuade Bali Maharaja from giving land to Lord Vamanadeva.

**Srimad Bhagavatam 8th Canto 20th Chapter Summary:** After hearing the instructive advice of Shukracharaya, Bali Maharaja became contemplative. Because it is the duty of a householder to maintain the principles of religion, economic development and sense gratification, Bali Maharaja thought it improper to withdraw his promise to the brahmacari. To lie or fail to honor a promise given to a brahmacari is never proper, for lying is the most sinful activity. Everyone should be afraid of the sinful reactions to lying, for Mother Earth cannot even bear the weight of a sinful liar. The spreading of a kingdom or empire is temporary; if there is no benefit for the general public, such expansion has no value. Previously, all the great kings and emperors expanded their kingdoms with a regard for the welfare of the people in general. Indeed, while engaged in such activities for the benefit of the general public, eminent men sometimes even sacrificed their lives. It is said that one who is glorious in his activities is always living and never dies. Therefore, fame should be the aim of life, and even if one becomes poverty-stricken for the sake of a good reputation, that is not a loss. Bali Maharaja thought that even if this brahmacari, Vamanadeva, were Lord Vishnu, if the Lord accepted his charity and then again arrested him, Bali Maharaja would not envy Him. Considering all these points, Bali Maharaja finally gave in charity everything he possessed. Lord Vamanadeva then immediately extended Himself into a universal body. By the mercy of Lord Vamanadeva, Bali Maharaja could see that the Lord is all pervading and that everything rests in His body. Bali Maharaja could see Lord Vamanadeva as the supreme Vishnu, wearing a helmet, yellow garments, and the mark of Shrivatsa, the Kaustubha-mani jewel, a flower garland, and ornaments decorating His entire body. The Lord gradually covered the entire surface of the world, and by extending His body He covered the entire sky. With His hands He covered all directions, and with His second footstep He covered the entire upper planetary system. Therefore there was no vacant place where He could take His third footstep.

Lord Vamanadeva taking His 2<sup>nd</sup> step.

**Srimad Bhagavatam 8th Canto 21st Chapter Summary:** With the second step the Supreme Personality of Godhead reached the topmost planet of the universe, Brahmaloaka, which He diminished in beauty by the effulgence of His toenails. Thus Lord Brahma, accompanied by great sages and the predominating deities of all the higher planets, offered humble prayers and worship to the Lord. They washed the Lord's feet and worshiped Him with all paraphernalia. When Bali Maharaja was deprived of all his possessions, the demons were very angry. Although Bali Maharaja warned them not to do so, they took up weapons against Lord Vishnu. All of them were defeated, however, by Lord Vishnu's eternal associates, and, in accordance with Bali Maharaja's order, they all entered the lower planets of the universe. Understanding Lord Vishnu's purpose, Garuda, the carrier of Lord Vishnu, immediately arrested Bali

Maharaja with the ropes of Lord Varuna. When Bali Maharaja was thus reduced to a helpless position, Lord Vishnu asked him for the third step of land. Because Lord Vishnu appreciated Bali Maharaja's determination and integrity, when Bali Maharaja was unable to fulfill his promise, Lord Vishnu ascertained that the place for him would be the planet Sutala, which is better than the planets of heaven.

**Srimad Bhagavatam 8th Canto 22nd Chapter Summary:** Bali Maharaja was extremely truthful. Being unable to keep his promise, he was very much afraid, for he knew that one who has deviated from truthfulness is insignificant in the eyes of society. An exalted person can suffer the consequences of hellish life, but he is very much afraid of being defamed for deviation from the truth. Bali Maharaja agreed with great pleasure to accept the punishment awarded him by Lord Vamanadeva. Bali Maharaja specifically remembered the determination of Prahlada Maharaja in devotional service. Considering all these points, he decided to give his head in charity as the place for Lord Vishnu's third step. Bali Maharaja also considered how great personalities give up their family relationships and material possessions to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Indeed, they sometimes even sacrifice their lives for the satisfaction of the Lord, just to become His personal servant. Accordingly, by following in the footsteps of previous Acharyas (Guru's) and devotees, Bali Maharaja perceived himself successful. While Bali Maharaja, having been arrested by the ropes of Lord Varuna, was offering prayers to the Lord, his grandfather Prahlada Maharaja appeared there and described how the Supreme Personality of Godhead had delivered Bali Maharaja by taking his possessions in a tricky way. While Prahlada Maharaja was present, Lord Brahma and Bali's wife, Vindhyavali, described the supremacy of the Supreme Lord. Since Bali Maharaja had given everything to the Lord, they prayed for his release. The Lord then described how a non-devotee's possession of wealth is a danger whereas a devotee's opulence is a benediction from the Lord. Then, being pleased with Bali Maharaja, the Supreme Lord offered His disc to protect Bali Maharaja and promised to remain with him.

**Srimad Bhagavatam 8th Canto 23rd Chapter Summary:** The great soul Bali Maharaja experienced that the highest gain in life is to attain devotional service under the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet in full surrender. Being fixed in this conclusion, his heart full of ecstatic devotion and his eyes full of tears, he offered obeisance's to the Personality of Godhead and then, with his associates, entered the planet known as Sutala. Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead satisfied the desire of Aditi and reinstalled Lord Indra as King of the Heavens. Prahlada Maharaja, being aware of Bali's release from arrest, then described the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in this material world. Prahlada Maharaja praised the Supreme Lord for creating the material world, for being

equal to everyone and for being extremely liberal to the devotees, just like a desire tree. Indeed, Prahlada Maharaja said that the Lord is kind not only to His devotees but also to the demons. In this way he described the unlimited causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then, with folded hands, he offered his respectful obeisances unto the Lord, and after circumambulating the Lord he also entered the planet Sutala in accordance with the Lord's order. The Lord then ordered Shukracharaya to describe Bali Maharaja's faults and discrepancies in executing the sacrificial ceremony. The Demon's Guru Shukracharaya became free from fruitive actions by chanting the holy name of the Lord, and he explained how chanting can diminish all the faults of the conditioned soul. He then completed Bali Maharaja's sacrificial ceremony. All the great saintly persons accepted Lord Vamanadeva as the benefactor of Lord Indra because He had returned Indra-dev to his heavenly planet. They accepted the Supreme personality of Godhead as the maintainer of all the affairs of the universe. Being very happy, Lord Indra, along with his associates, placed Lord Vamanadeva before him and reentered the heavenly planet in their airplane. Having seen the wonderful activities of Lord Vishnu in the sacrificial arena of Bali Maharaja, all the devas, saintly persons, Pitas, Bhoota's and Siddhas glorified the Lord again and again.

The chapter concludes by saying that the most auspicious function of the conditioned soul is to chant and hear about the glorious activities of Lord Vishnu. Lord Vamana taught King Bali that arrogance and pride should be abandoned if any advancement in life is to be made, and that wealth should never be taken for granted since it can so easily be taken away. He was pleased by King Bali's determination and ability to keep his promise in the face of his spiritual master's curse and the prospect of losing all his wealth. Lord Vishnu named the King Mahabali since he was a Mahatma (great soul).

According to the Adhatya Ramayana It is also said that Lord Vamanadeva is the guard of the gate of Bali Maharaja's planet Sutala and will remain so forever. Tulsidas' Ramayana too declares that Vamana became the "dwarpal" (gate-defender) of Bali.

### **How to observe Shree Vamana-deva Jayanti?**

On this auspicious day one should at least abstain from meat. Many devout devotees abstain from salt or even water until noon. I would highly recommend this. For those that are diabetic well try your best to observe the fast to the best of your abilities. In the morning on this very auspicious day after having a bath and wearing clean clothes offer Lord Vamana incense, lamp and flowers. Offer these items seven times in a clockwise direction around His picture/Deity form. Then offer Lord Vamana sweets. Thereafter read these pastimes on Lord Vamanadeva. You can after that, visit your

local temple in the morning or in the evening. Offer Lord Vamana prayers with faith and devotion that He may remove all the obstacles that you may have in your path.

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