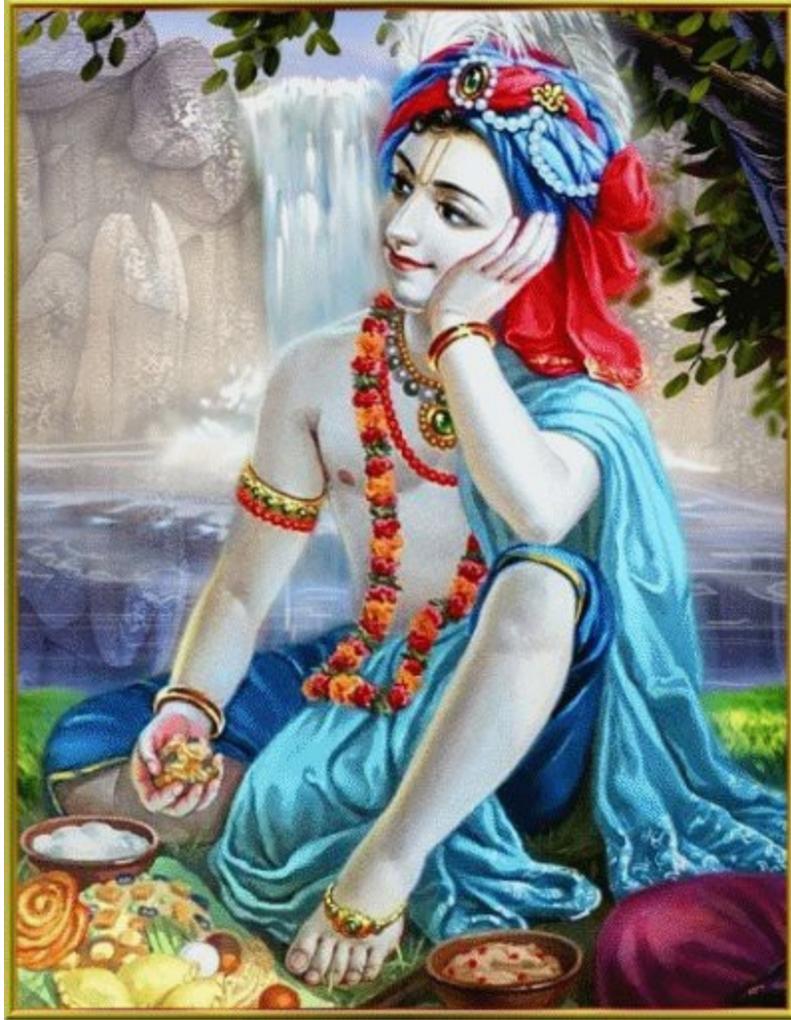


Lord Balarama Appearance day 12th August 2022



Lord Balaram

On Purnima or Full moon of the month of Sridhar/Shravan (July/August) Lord Balarama, the elder brother of Lord Krsna appeared on this Earth planet. This year this very auspicious day falls on **12th August**.

This day is celebrated primarily in Vrndavana and Mathura region in India, particularly at the Dauji Temple, where Lord Balaram resides with His consort Srimati Revati-devi.

The Srimad Bhagavatam explains how Lord Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead from Whom everything emanates. In doing so, His first expansion is Lord Balarama. From Lord Balarama all other incarnations of God appear. Of the three transcendental elements (sat, cit and ananda), Lord Balarama is in charge of sat (Sanskrit: eternity or truth), cit (Sanskrit: knowledge or consciousness). Hence He worshipped as the Supreme Teacher or Adiguru (the first Guru). Lord Balarama was conceived as the son of Vasudeva and Devaki. Asura Kamsa, the brother of Devaki, was intent upon killing all the progeny of Devaki, because of a prediction that Kamsa would die at the hands of the eighth son of Devaki. Kamsa threw his sister Devaki and her husband Vasudeva into jail, and proceeded to kill each of their children as soon as they were born.

In due course of time, Devaki became pregnant for the seventh time. However, This child was not destined to meet the fate of the six previous infants. The unborn child was miraculously transferred from the womb of Devaki to the womb of Rohini, who had desired a child of her own. Thus Lord Balarama's other name is also Lord Sankarshana, which describes the transfer of the child from the womb. The child was formally named Rama, but because of His great strength He was called Balarama (The Rama Who has great strength).



Lord Krsna (right) and Lord Balaram (left) in Dwaraka in full splendour.

FYI there are three Rama's in Vedic scriptures. Shree Ramachandra, Lord Balarama and Shree Parashurama. All three of the Rama's are discussed in detail in the Srimad Bhagavatam. Please view these beautiful kathas on this link.

www.srimadbhagavatam.org

Srila Prabhupada was once asked which of the Rama's do we consider when we are chanting the Maha mantra (Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare) and Srila Prabhupada said anyone that you are more attracted to.

Thus, Rohini-devi actually gave birth to Lord Balarama and raised Him. After Lord Balarama's birth though He was extremely beautiful, everyone was extremely anxious because He was mute and inactive. No one could get Him to make a sound or move. Once when Yashoda was pregnant, she picked Him up and carefully placed Him on her lap next to her heart where Shree Krishna was residing, Shree Balarama immediately began to laugh and play like a blissful child. But when Mother Yashoda would set Him down, again He would become inactive. He remained in this condition until the appearance of His younger brother Shree Krishna.

Lord Balarama spent His childhood as a cowherd boy with His brother Shree Krishna and Their friends. He later married Srimati Revati-devi, the daughter of King Raivata. Gaudiya Vaishnavas acknowledge that Lord Balarama is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. He is worshipped as equal in supremacy to Shree Krishna Himself, yet wherever

Shree Krishna appears; Lord Baladeva appears as Shree Krishna's brother, sometimes elder, sometimes younger. Lord Balarama is constantly serving Shree Krishna in every respect, in all of Lord Krishna's incarnations and manifestations. In Shree Raam-lila, Lord Balarama serves Lord Ramachandra as His younger brother, Shree Lakshman-ji. In Kali-Yuga, Lord Balarama spreads the 'Sankirtana movement' of Lord Caitanya as Lord Nityananda. The only theological difference between Shree Krishna and Lord Balarama is that the bodily hue of Shree Krishna is dark and that of Lord Balarama is fair. Shree Krishna is the Creator, and Lord Balarama is His creative potency, but They are both worshipped as the Supreme Primeval Lord.

Lord Balarama is almost always depicted as being fair skinned, especially in comparison to His brother, Lord Krishna, who is shown as dark blue or black in hue. His weapons are the plough and the mace. Traditionally Lord Balarama wears blue garments and a garland of forest flowers. His hair is tied in a topknot and He has earrings, bracelets and armlets. Lord Balarama is described as being very physically strong; in fact 'bala' in Sanskrit refers to 'strength'. Lord Baladeva is famous as being Krishna's dearest friend.

Lord Balarama famously taught both Duryodhana of the Kauravas and Bhima of the Pandavas the art of fighting with a mace. When war broke between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, Lord Balarama was equally affectionate to both parties and so decided to be neutral. Eventually when Bhima (of greater strength) defeated Duryodhana (of greater skill) by dealing a blow below the navel with his mace, Lord Balarama threatened to kill Bhima. This was only prevented when Lord Krishna reminded Lord Balarama of Bhima's vow to kill Duryodhana by crushing the very thigh he exposed to his wife Srimati Draupadi-devi.

In the Srimad Bhagavatam Maha Purana it is described that after Lord Balarama took part in the battle that caused the destruction of the rest of the Yadu dynasty, and after He witnessed the disappearance of Lord Krishna, He then sat down in a meditative state and departed from this world by producing a great white snake from His mouth, and thus He was carried by Shree Sesha in the form of a serpent.

On this day devotees observe a (Nirjala - no water) fast for Lord Balaram until Noon... During the fast devotees prepare vegetarian food for the pleasure of Lord Balaram. Then at around midday the food is offered to Lord Balaram and thereafter the offered food (prasada) is eaten remembering the glories of Lord Balaram...

Lord Balarama loved the following beverage called Varuni and thus this beverage is only made for this day. It is prepared a few days before so that it ferments. If you are having Varuni it has to be offered to Lord Balarama first and then consumed but PLEASE DO NOT CONSUME a lot as this beverage can make you go quite tipsy-turvy. There are many variants to how to make it but this is one of the ways to prepare it.

The Varuni Beverage (for the pleasure of Lord Balarama.) Recipes supplied by Fiona Naidu.

5 limes

2 pineapples

2L soda water

Half cup of sugar

Half cup of honey

2 inch of ginger

1 can ginger beer (optional)

ZEST (grate the rind but not the white pith of 1 lime and set aside). Squeeze the juice of the lime and remove all seeds and membranes. Place the minced ginger and zest into a 5

litre bucket. Mix the lime juice, pineapple pulp, soda water, sugar and honey together. Immerse in the bucket and leave for a few hours. Add a third of juice to a glass, top with fresh ice and mint and offer to Lord Balarama first and then one can consume.

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