

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lord Nityananda

Lord Nityananda is the eternal associate of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu cannot be approached or understood without the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu. Lord Nityananda is none other than Lord Balaram himself.

Lord Nityananda appeared in Ekachakra. His father, Hadai Pandit and mother Padmavati, were pious Brahmans originally from Mithila. As a child, Nitai loved to enact the pastimes of Sri Krishna or Lord Rama. Nitai's favorite part was that of Lakshman, and He enacted it with so many apparently authentic scenes not described in the Ramayana, that people would wonder if He was making it up or actually relishing His own pastimes.



The village of Ekachakra was completely absorbed in the love of little Nitai, where He spend the first 12 years of his earthly life. In the 13th year, a travelling sannyasi, said to be the famous Lakshmiapati Tirtha, enchanted by Nitai's devotion and service, requested Nitai from his parents, as a travelling companion. His parents, bound by Vedic culture, could not refuse the request of a guest and reluctantly parted with Nitai. Nitai traveled with Lakshmiapati Tirtha for about 20 years, during which He visited all the holy places in the country.

Nityananda Prabhu met Chaitanya Mahaprabhu when He was 32 years old and the Lord 20 years. It is said that when Nityananda Prabhu reached the land of Nadia, He hid in the house of Nandanacharya, to heighten the ecstasy of meeting through separation. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu aware of the arrival of His eternal associate dispatched Haridas Thakur and Srivas Pandit to search out Nitai, but they failed. Finally unable to bear the separation any longer, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Himself went directly to Nityananda Prabhu and the ecstasy of the meeting was so transcendental that every one witnessing it were awed by the sublime experience.

Nityananda Prabhu's mercy knew no bounds. It was by His mercy that Raghunatha dasa, one of the six Goswamis started the famous Danda Mahotsava festival of Panihatti. He extended His mercy to even fallen souls like Jagai and Madhai, delivering them from the sinful lives and protecting them from the wrath of even Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. When Nityananda Prabhu returned to Bengal at the request of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, He decided to abandon His avadhuta status and become a grahastha (householder). He married Jahnava Devi and Vashudha, the two daughters of Suryadasa Sarakhel, who was the brother of Gauridasa Pandit.

Nityananda Prabhu had a son (Virchandara) and a daughter (Ganga Devi) from Vashudha. Soon after Vashudha passed away, Jahnava Devi looked after the children. She later initiated Virchandra, and also became an instructing spiritual master to many other - Shyamananda Pandit, Srivasa Pandit and Narottama dasa Thakur. Lord Nityananda winded up His earthly pastimes, by merging into the Deity of Krishna, known as Bankim Ray.