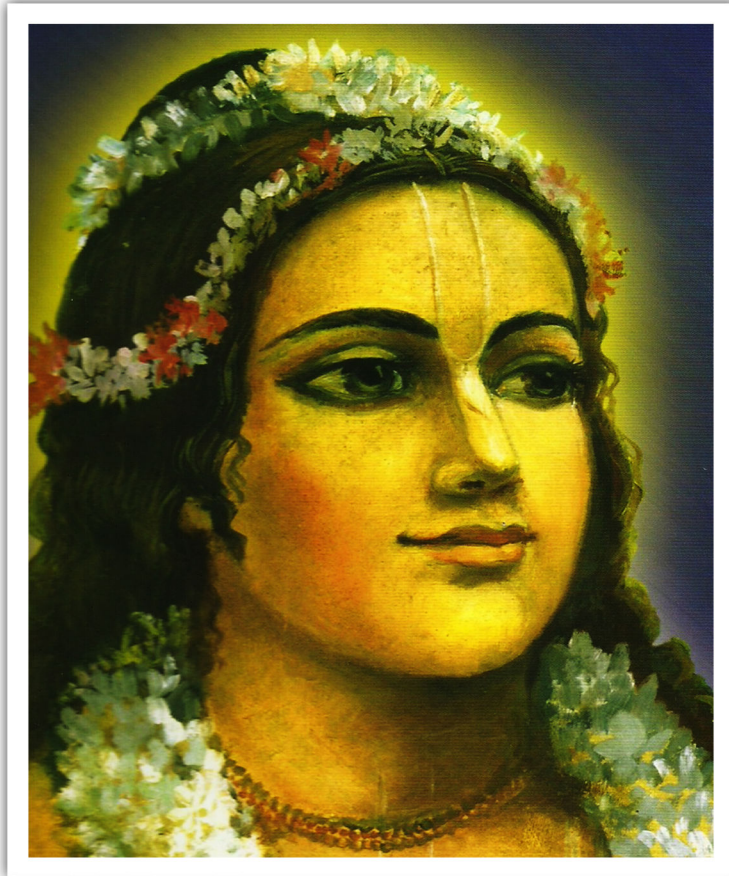


Name: _____ Date: _____

Lord Nityananda

Lord Nityananda's Childhood Pastimes



As a child, Nitai had a close circle of friends, and together they used to imitate the pastimes of Vishnu and His associates. Once, they dressed themselves as demigods and petitioned the Lord to alleviate the burdened Earth of Kali-yuga. Nityananda Prabhu and a playmate who was dressed as the ailing Earth, along with the other children, took their game to the Ganges, where they addressed Lord Vishnu. At that time, one of the children hid behind a rock and spoke in a grave voice, "I will soon be born in Mathura to lighten the oppression of the Earth." The boys enjoyed themselves, as children do, while becoming completely absorbed in Krishna lila.

On another occasion, Nitai and His friends gathered in an imitation "village" to celebrate the marriage of Vasudeva and Devaki, the parents of Krishna. The following day, they made their playhouse into the prison of Kamsa and enacted the entire story of Krishna's birth. Once, while acting out this episode, Nitai transformed the area into a cowherd settlement and took "Krishna" there, deceiving Kamsa by substituting Yogamaya for Krishna within the prison.

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Hare Hare

He enacted the slaying of Putana, the breaking of the cart, Krishna's butter stealing pastimes, the slaying of the demons, Dhenuka, Agha, and Baka. He also displayed the pastimes of the pasturing of the cows, the lifting of Govardhan hill, the stealing of the gopis clothes and the Lord's bestowal of mercy upon the wives of the sacrificial brahmanas. He performed the pastimes of sending secret advice to Kamsa in the guise of Narada, the killing of the Kuvalaya elephant and the wrestlers Chanura and Mustika, and the killing of Kamsa. Nityananda Prabhu also enacted the pastime of Vamana Deva's cheating Bali of the three worlds, and took the role of Ramachandra. His friends acting the part of monkey soldiers pretended to build a bridge of floating stones across the ocean, in imitation of the pastimes of Rama. Once, Nityananda took the part of Lakshman, and, bow in hand, would storm the palace of Sugriva. Once he took the part of Rama Himself, enacting the pastime of breaking Parashurama's pride. Once, taking the role of Lakshman he pretended to kill Indrajit and then swoon, hit by the powerful arrows of Ravana, the demon-king. He would enact the pastime of having the medicine from Gandamadana Hill brought by Hanuman and would recover from his wounds after receiving the medicine.

All the adults of Ekachakra adored Nitai. They were fascinated by this unique little boy, and they loved Him as their own. Seeing His total absorption in Krishna and the avataras of Vishnu, they suspected that He might be some sort of Incarnation Himself. His acting was so authentic that it made all who watched question whether He was merely acting or in some way experiencing the part He played. This was true whether He was playing Krishna, Balarama, or even Vamana, or other Incarnations of the Lord. "Nitai, where have you learned all this?" one of the neighborhood ladies asked. Nityananda enjoyed her question. "They are My own divine pastimes," He said, "and I am allowing you to see them." Everyone laughed, shaking their heads. They did not know what to make of Him.