

Lord Chaitanya's Childhood Pastimes



HARE KRISHNA SUNDAY SCHOOL

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

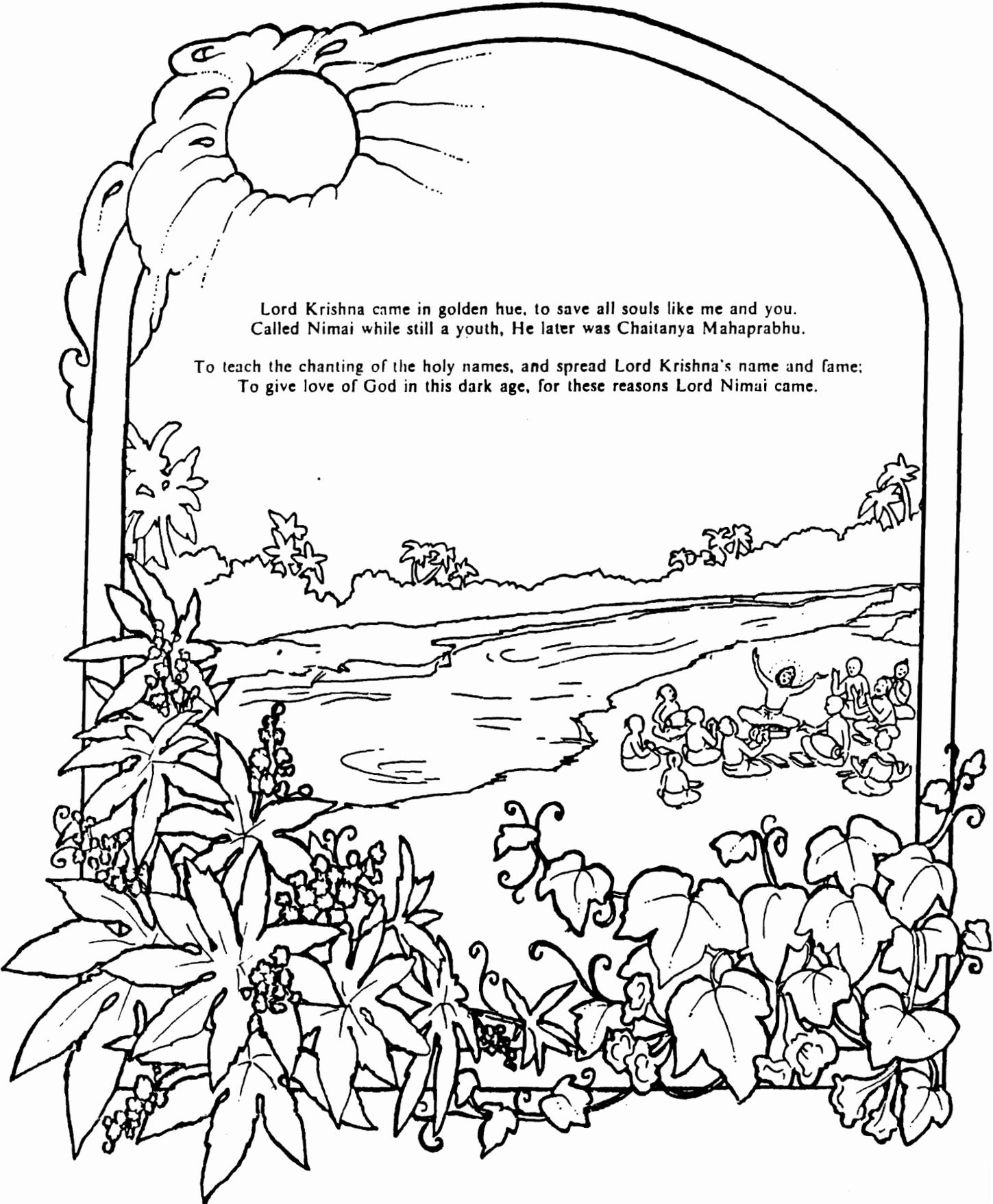
Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



*This book is dedicated to
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada,
the founder acharya of the Hare Krishna Movement.
He brought us the teachings of
Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu,
instilling within our hearts
a desire to serve Lord Krishna.*

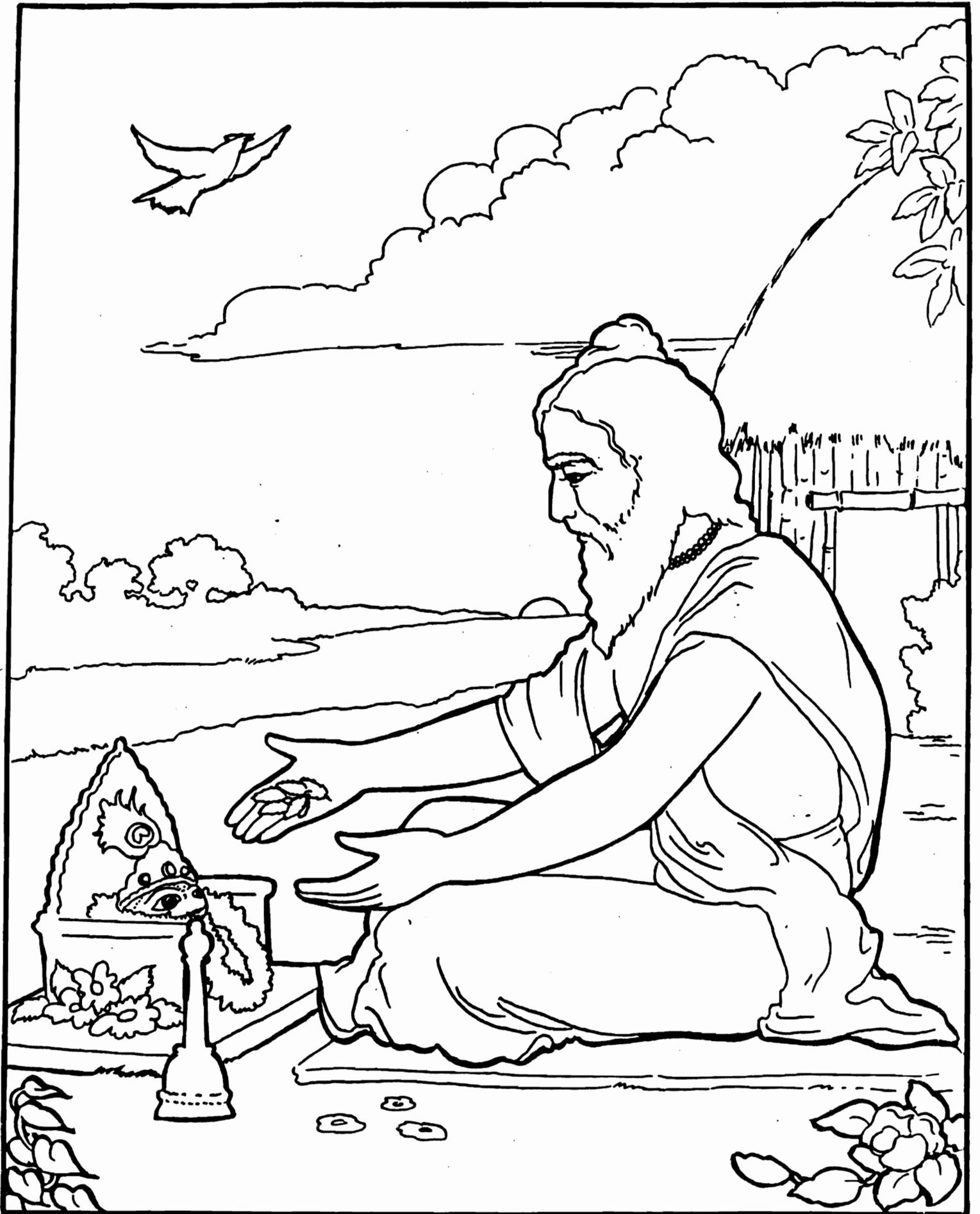
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Lord Krishna came in golden hue, to save all souls like me and you.
Called Nimai while still a youth, He later was Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

To teach the chanting of the holy names, and spread Lord Krishna's name and fame:
To give love of God in this dark age, for these reasons Lord Nimai came.



Lesson One

The Appearance of Lord Chaitanya

Adwaita Acharya was a great devotee of Krishna. He was an incarnation of Lord Brahma and Maha Vishnu. When Krishna comes to this earth, He comes with His friends and relatives. Some of the demigods also come. In this way, Krishna is always with His devotees.

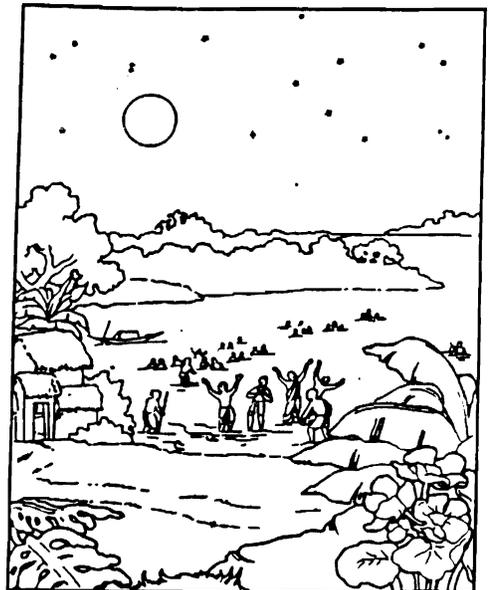
Adwaita Acharya noticed that hardly anyone was chanting Hare Krishna or serving Krishna. Everyone seemed to be busy doing many sinful things. He saw that the people were not interested in devotional service. He felt very sorry for them and wanted to help them all go back to Krishna somehow.

He thought, “If Krishna Himself were to come and show everyone how to be Krishna conscious, then I’m sure they all will listen. The only way to go back home, back to Godhead, in this age is to chant Hare Krishna. If Lord Krishna appeared and taught this chanting -- ***Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare*** -- then everyone would chant. So, I’ll ask Lord Krishna Himself to come down.”

Calling loudly to Lord Krishna, Adwaita Acharya offered tulasi leaves and Ganges water to his Deity in order to please the Lord.

“My dear Lord, please come down!” he cried. So, at the request of Adwaita Acharya, Lord Chaitanya appeared.

When Lord Chaitanya was born, there was an eclipse of the moon. At that time all the people were chanting, “Hari! Hari! Haribol! Hare Krishna!” In heaven, the demigods were dancing and playing musical instruments. Everyone was full of joy. Adwaita Acharya could guess that the Lord had appeared and he also began

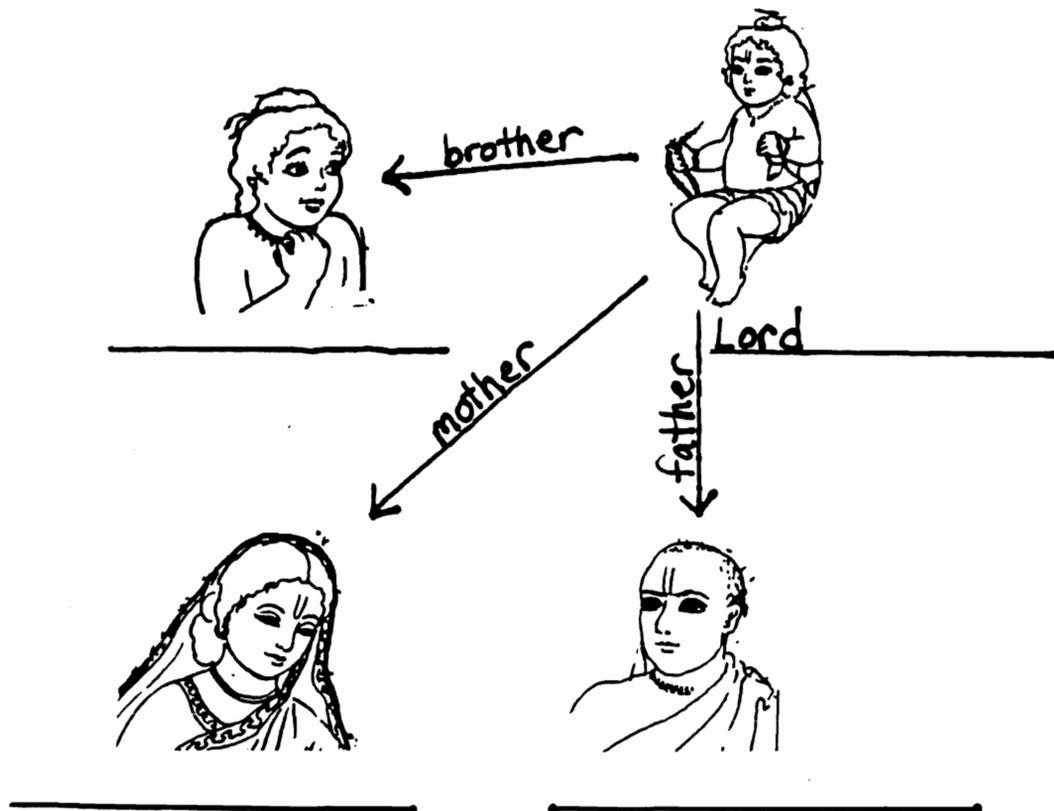


to chant and dance. All the devotees went down to the Ganges to take their bath during the eclipse. The Lord had come!

In the house of Jagannatha Mishra, everyone was very happy. His wife, Sachi, had just given birth to a beautiful baby boy. The newborn child shone like gold and his little body was perfect in every way. Many people came to see the child and were amazed at the brilliance of His body. Some knew that He was the Supreme Lord, Krishna, who had come in a golden form. In fact, Sri Chaitanya is Krishna Himself, but He is a golden color instead of blue.



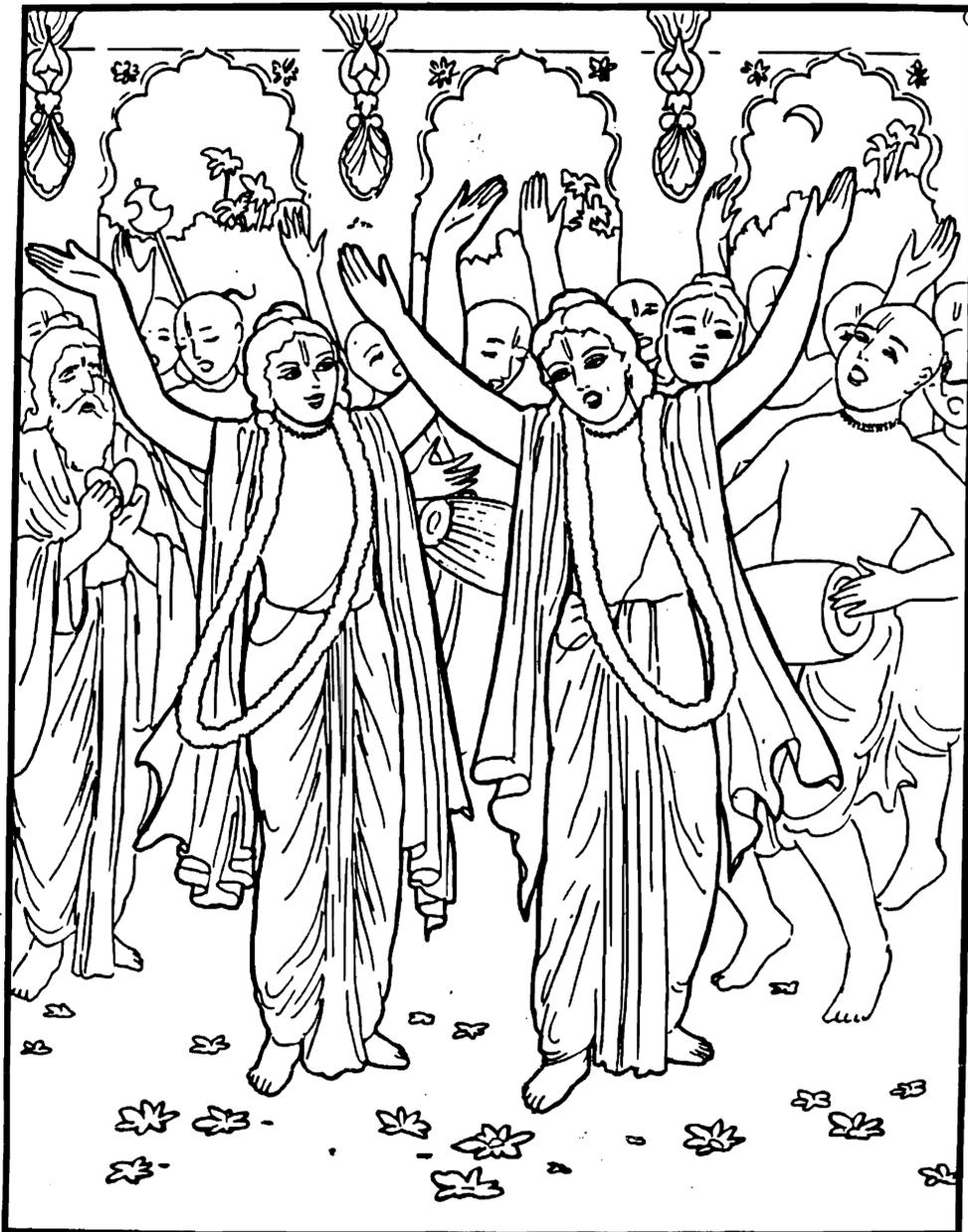
The new baby, son of Jagannatha Mishra and Sachi, was born under a neem tree. Because of this, He was called Nimai. He had one older brother named Visvarupa. Let's fill in the names of Nimai's family on this Family Tree.



There is a verse that we chant or sing everyday that glorifies Lord Chaitanya. Practice the following verse so you can memorize it.

*sri krishna chaitanya
prabhu nityananda
sri adwaita gadadhara
srivasa adi gaura bhakta vrinda*

In our next few lessons, we will learn some of the pastimes that Lord Chaitanya performed as a child.

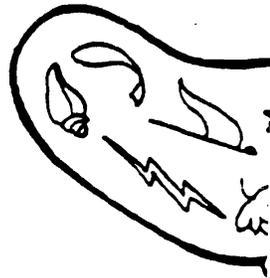
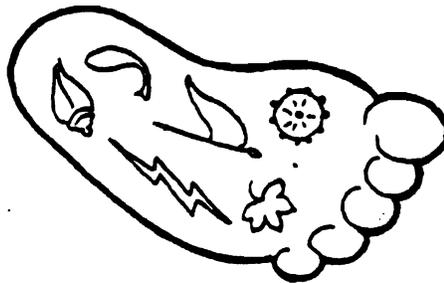
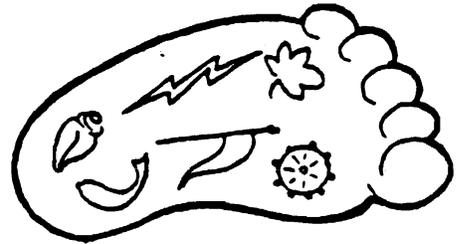
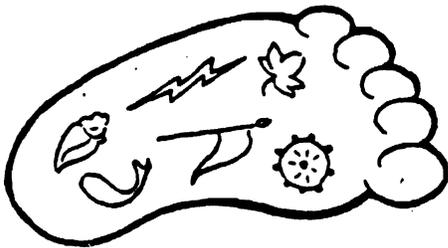


Lesson Two

The Astrologer

When Lord Chaitanya was a small baby, sometimes He would cry and cry and cry. Nobody would be able to stop him. But the ladies in the village soon found out that He would stop crying as soon as they started chanting Hare Krishna. When He heard them chant the holy name, He would quiet down and give them a big smile! In this way, even as a baby, Lord Chaitanya caused everyone in the neighborhood to chant Hare Krishna all the time.

Of course, Sri Chaitanya was no ordinary baby. He is God Himself. The Lord appears as a small baby just to give pleasure to His devotees who enjoy His childhood pastimes. He is like an actor playing the role of an ordinary baby.



One day Mother Sachi noticed footprints on the floor of her house. She was puzzled because the footprints had the markings of Vishnu on them. She couldn't understand where these footprints were coming from! She thought that somehow Krishna must be near. It was her little son, Nimai, that had made the footprints.

Another time, while Mother Sachi was feeding baby Nimai, she saw all the marking of Vishnu on the bottoms of His lotus feet. The markings of a flag, the thunderbolt, conchshell, disc, lotus flower, and fish were all there! She told Jagannatha Mishra, who called in an astrologer. When the astrologer saw the marks, he said, "Yes, this baby has all the markings of Vishnu on His hands and feet. He can save the three worlds. This child will preach to everyone about Krishna and teach them all how to get love of God."



Let's fill in the picture of Lord Chaitanya's lotus feet. First, list the six different markings that are on His feet. Then draw the markings on the picture on the next page.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |



Lesson Three

The Brahman's Offering

Once upon a time, a brahman came to Jagannatha Mishra's house. He had been touring the whole country and wanted to spend the night at his house. He was tired and hungry and Jagannatha Mishra was happy to let him stay.

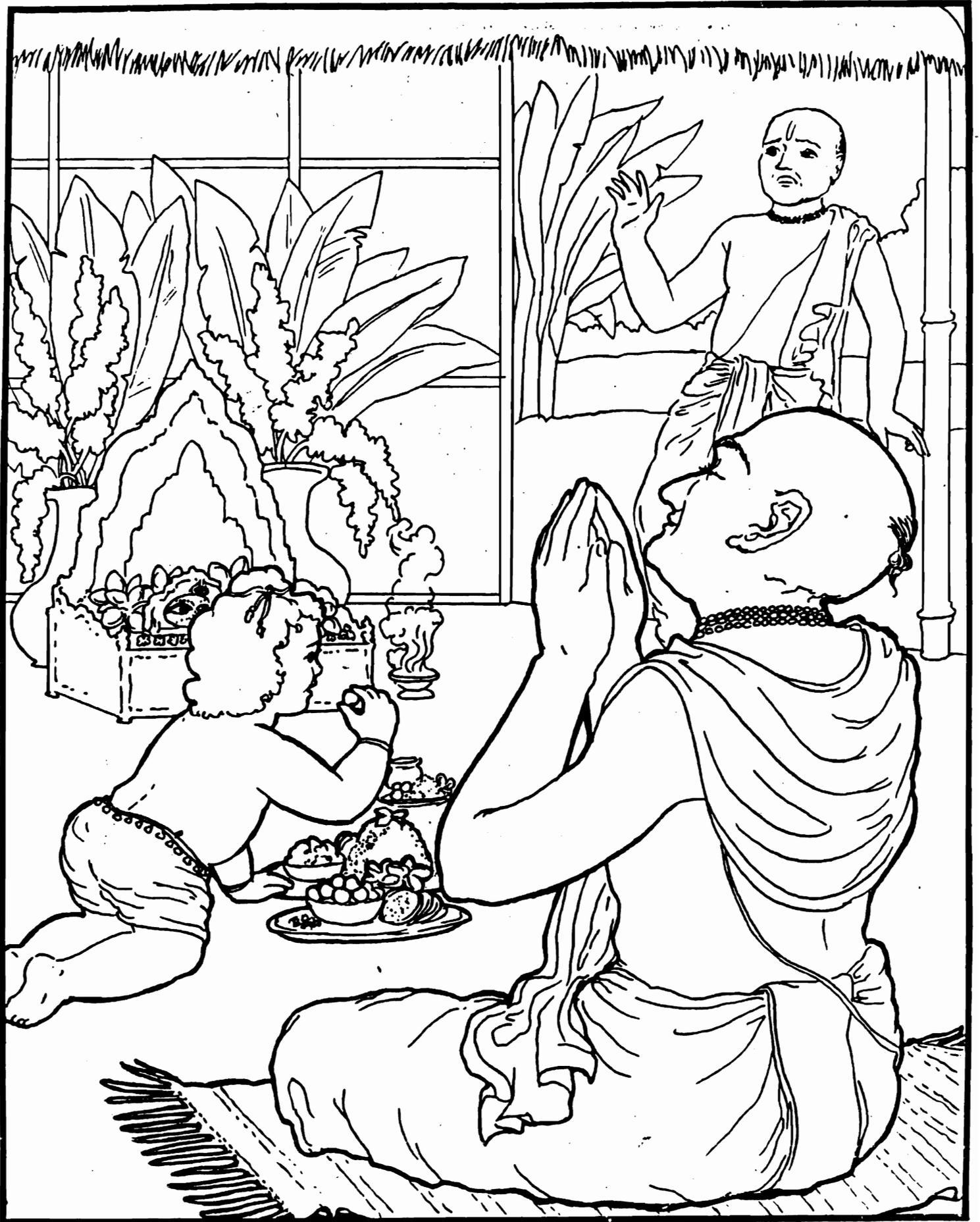
That night the brahman wanted to cook an offering for His Deity, Lord Gopal. He had carried Gopal with him on his travels and would worship Him every day. Jagannatha Mishra give him all the things he would need -- rice, vegetables, milk and dal. So the brahman started to cook. When he finished cooking, he offered the food to Gopal as usual, but as soon as he started chanting the mantras, little Nimai appeared. Nimai began to eat up the whole offering!

The brahman was very upset. He went to Jagannatha Mishra and complained. "Your son has spoiled my offering for Gopal!" he said. Jagannatha Mishra was very sorry. He asked the brahman to cook again.

Again the brahman cooked, and again, as he was uttering the mantras, Nimai appeared and ate the food. The poor brahman was heart-broken. Once again he had to tell Jagannatha Misra what his son had done.

"Please cook again," begged Jagannatha Mishra. "I shall lock the child in His room. We will all go to sleep."

Now it was very late. The brahman finished cooking in the middle of the night. He began to offer his food but as soon as he called to Lord Gopal, Nimai appeared. The brahman cried and cried but everyone was asleep and no one heard him.

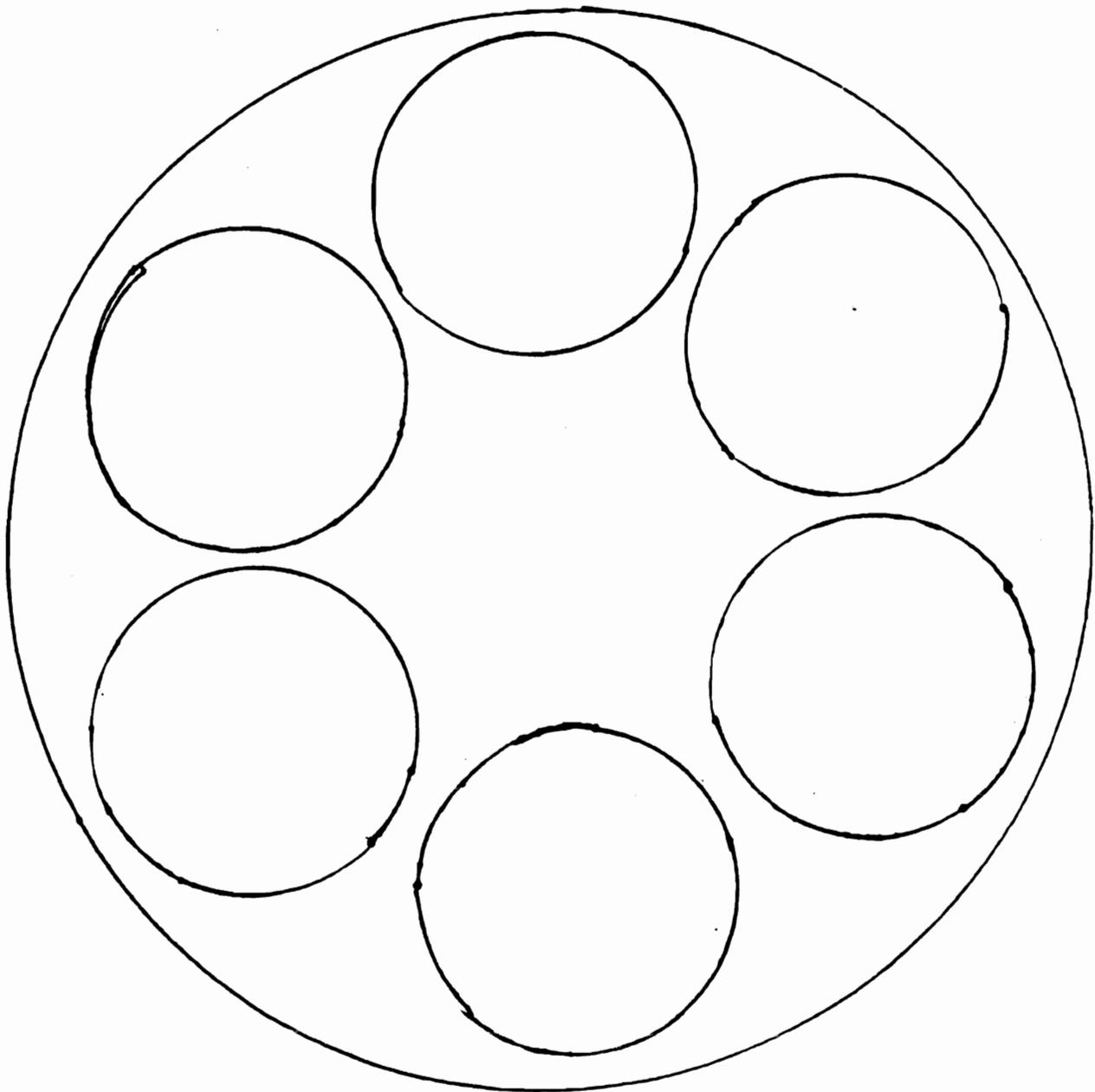


Then Nimai changed into Krishna, showing His real form as Gopal Krishna to the brahman! He showed not only His own form, but He showed him all of Vrindavan, including the cows, forests, cowherd boys, and gopis. The brahman was amazed! He was overcome with joy to see all this and he chanted and danced. He was so happy to have seen the Lord with his own eyes.



In this story, the brahman had to cook his offering three times! If you could cook an offering for Lord Chaitanya, what would you make? What are some very delicious foods that you could offer to Him?

Fill up the offering plate below by labeling and drawing in the food you would cook.

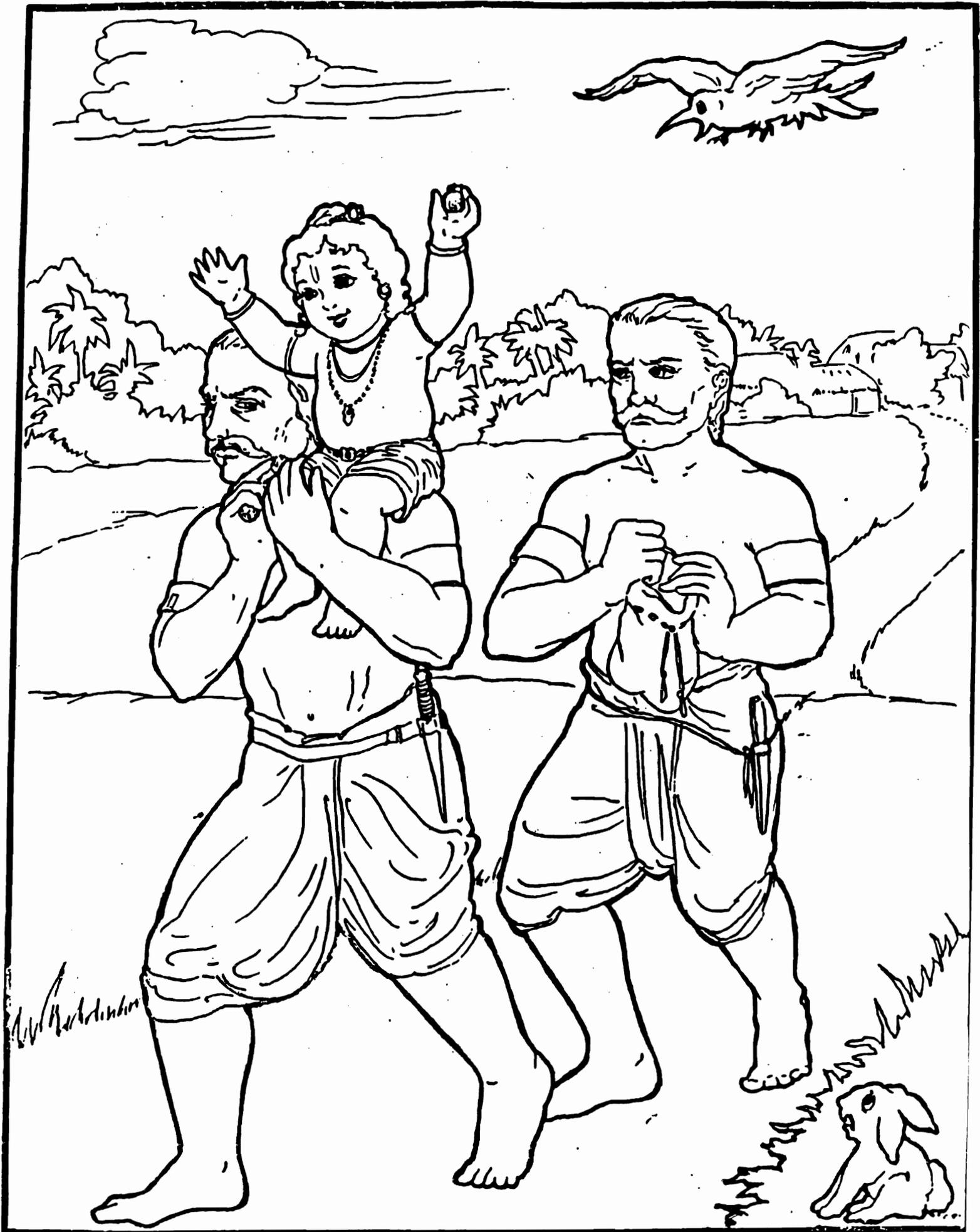


Questions

1. Why did the brahman have to cook his offering three times?

2. What did Jagannatha Mishra do to try to keep Lord Chaitanya from bothering the brahman?

3. What did Nimai prove to the brahman in this pastime?



Lesson Four

The Two Thieves

One day, when Lord Chaitanya was playing in the courtyard of His father's house, two thieves came by and saw the child. He was decorated with valuable ornaments, such as bracelets, earrings, footbells, and necklaces of gold and silver studded with precious jewels. Never before had they seen such a valuable catch on the body of one person!

They talked together and decided to tempt Him away with sweets. Then they would carry him off. The two thieves thought that then it would be easy to steal all the jewelry off His body.

No one was near, so the thieves offered the Lord some sweets and put Him on their shoulders. Off they went, with the Lord riding high, enjoying the view of the gardens and parks in the neighborhood. Sometimes the Lord became too heavy, and they would pass Him back and forth.

Lord Chaitanya knew very well what the thieves were planning on doing. He tricked them by casting His illusory potency over them. This made them forget where they were going. They ended up walking in a circle and coming back to Jagannatha Mishra's house.

Lord Chaitanya's father and mother had been looking for Him. They had been very worried. When they saw Him coming home on the shoulders of the two thieves, Jagannatha Mishra and Sachi thought that the thieves were bringing Him back home. Jagannatha Mishra rushed towards them crying, "Thank you! Thank you! We have been looking for Him everywhere!"

The Lord was lifted off their shoulders. The thieves knew that it was dangerous for them to stay there. Someone may find out that they were the ones that had kidnapped Lord Chaitanya! So the two sneaky thieves slipped through the crowd and went away.



Choose a word from the box to fill in the blank in each sentence.

clothes	jewelry	tricked
mother	father	sweets

1. The thieves wanted to take Lord Chaitanya away so they could steal His _____.
2. They lured Him away from His house by offering Him _____.
3. Lord Chaitanya _____ them by making them forget where they were going.
4. When the thieves brought Him back, Lord Chaitanya's _____ and _____ were so happy to see Him.

Lesson Five

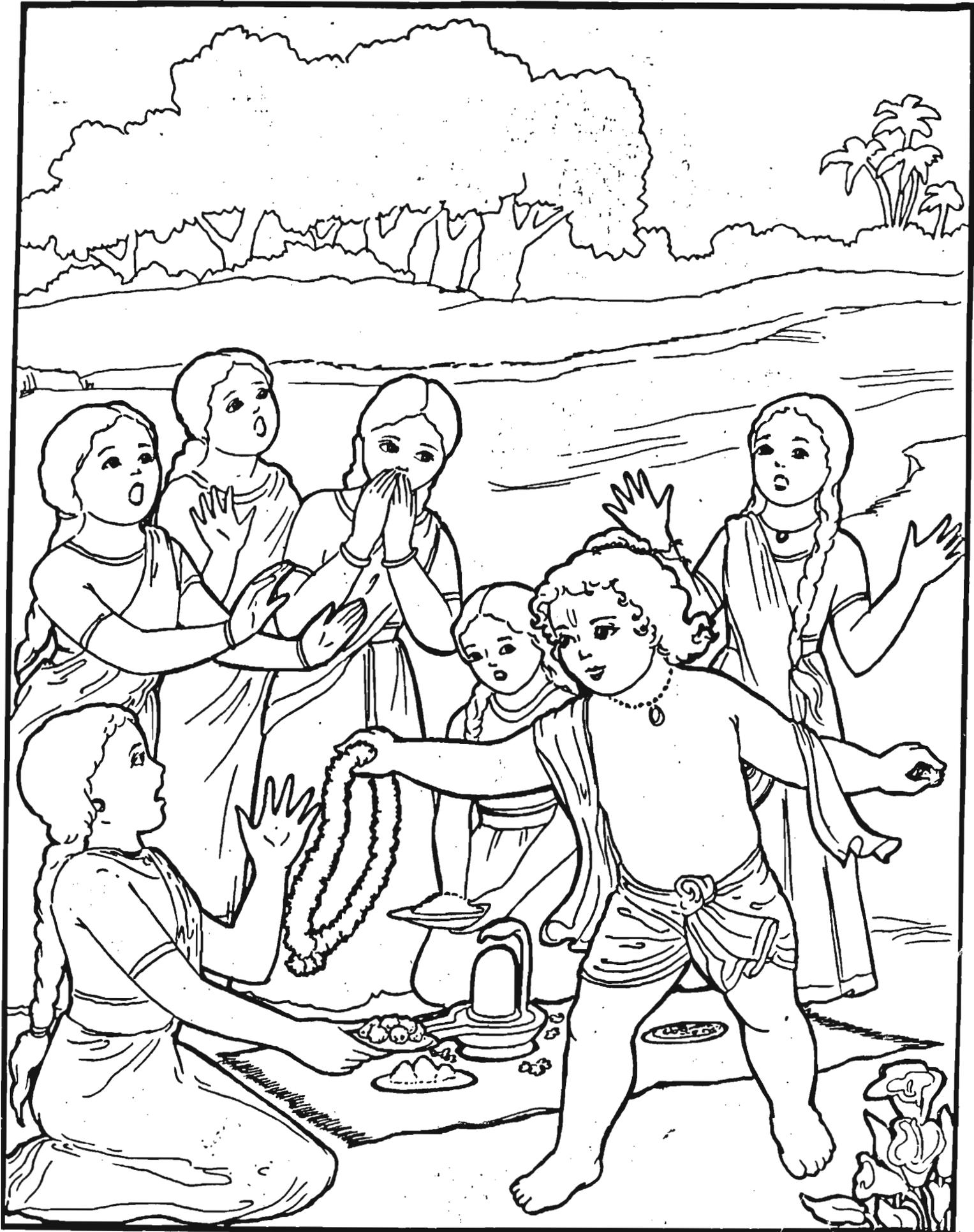
The Snake

Here is a pastime of Lord Chaitanya's for you to illustrate. Read the bottom of each page in the story and draw a picture to go along with each page.

One time, a very large and fearful cobra snake came to the courtyard of Jagannatha Mishra's house. The snake crawled around all over the yard, slithering through the grass and trees. It saw Nimai and curled its way along the path towards Him.

The snake was really Ananta Sesa, the divine serpent on whom Lord Vishnu sits down to rest. Nimai played with the snake, who was, in fact, His old friend. He laid down on the body of the snake like He was resting, just as Lord Vishnu lies on Ananta.

When His mother and father came out of the house and saw the Lord lying down on a big snake, they were terrified! They snatched up the Lord in horror. They wanted to protect Him. The snake saw how afraid they were and he just slithered away.



Lesson Six

Teasing the Village Girls

Sometimes the Lord, along with other children, would take His bath in the Ganges River. The neighborhood girls would also come there to worship different demigods. People usually worship the demigods so that the demigods will give them something.

The Lord would say to the girls, “Worship Me, and I will give you good husbands and many other boons. All the demigods, even Lord Shiva, are My servants.”

Then Lord Chaitanya would snatch the sandalwood pulp that the girls had brought for their worship. He would smear it on His own body and put their flower garlands around His neck. Then He would grab and eat up all the offerings of sweets, rice and bananas.

The girls were very angry. “Nimai! You are just like a brother to us. You shouldn’t do this. Don’t take away our puja lamps and our offerings. Stop it!”

The Lord said, “My dear sisters. I bless you that your husbands will be very handsome. They will be intelligent, young and rich. You will each have seven sons who will live a long time and also be very bright.”

The girls were really very happy to hear these things, but they pretended to be angry. Some of them ran away, pretending not to listen. The Lord called after them, “If you don’t give Me the offerings, I shall curse you to have a husband who is old and has at least four more wives.”

The girls then became afraid, thinking that He might have some special powers. So they brought their offerings before the Lord, who ate them and blessed the girls. Then the village girls were satisfied.

Choose a word from the box to fill in the blanks.

Krishna	sons	servants
powers	garlands	demigods

1. The village girls came to the Ganges River to worship the _____.
2. Lord Chaitanya took their _____ and put them around His own neck.
3. Lord Chaitanya blessed the girls to have seven _____.
4. The girls thought that Lord Chaitanya had special _____, so they did whatever He said.
5. Lord Chaitanya is really _____ Himself.