A decorative border made of repeating segments of leaves and berries, forming a rectangular frame around the text. The leaves are detailed with veins, and the berries are small circles on stems.

Teacher's Guide
to
Lord Chaitanya's
Childhood Pastimes

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(Madhava Class)

Contents

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NIMAI



Lesson One **The Appearance of Lord Chaitanya**

Note: A good book for the teacher to have for this session is The Childhood Pastimes of Lord Chaitanya. The pictures will come in handy for the stories and there is a great picture of Pancha Tattva that can be used every week.

1. Begin by introducing the verse for the session. If the children are new, they can learn:

*sri krishna chaitanya
prabhu nityananda
sri adwaita gadadhar
srivas adi gaura bhakta vrinda*

If you have children who already know that verse, you could teach:

*namo maha-vandanyaya
krsna prema pradaya te
krsnaya krsna caitanyaya
namne gaura tvishe namah*

Translation: "O most munificent incarnation of the Lord! You are Krishna Himself appearing as Caitanya Mahaprabhu. You have assumed the golden color of Srimati Radharani, and You are widely distributing pure love of Krishna. We offer respectful obeisances unto You."

This should be written in advance on a large chart paper or chalkboard that can be seen by all the students. Teach it the same way we learn a Bhagavatam verse -- first having students repeat each word, then each line, as you lead. Chant three or four times with them responding, then ask for volunteers to lead the chanting. As students lead, the rest of the class chants responsively. Students then repeat the English translation after you.

If you are teaching *sri krishna chaitanya* have a large picture of the Pancha Tattva available each week and teach the translation by identifying each of the personalities. The children can point to the personalities as they repeat Their names.

2. Give an explanation of who Lord Chaitanya is. Some basic things you will want to include are:

*Krishna Himself who appeared 500 years ago

*Lord Chaitanya as a combination of Radha and Krishna -- explain how He wanted to experience the mood of Radha and has a golden complexion like Her.

*His purpose for coming (to spread the chanting of the Holy Name).

You can refer the the verse they learned in the last session, *harer nama harer nama...*, showing that he came to establish the yuga dharma."

*A simple overview of His life (marriage, sannyasa, traveling, preaching), explaining that in this class we are going the learn about some of the pastimes when He was a young boy.

3. Tell the story of Lord Chaitanya's appearance. This is written in their booklets. A very effective technique for this age is to have a few simple costumes for the children to dress up in. For this story, you could have Advaita Acharya, Mother Saci and Jagganatha Misra, some demigods and a doll for Baby Nimai. Tell the story first, instructing the children to listen carefully so they can act it out. Then with the children dressed up, tell it again, having the children act out their parts silently (with a little prompting and suggestions from you). The rest of the children can be the people bathing during the eclipse, shouting out "Hari! Hari! Haribol!" and the demigods.

In the book Sri Chaitanya Mangala, the section called "The Demigods Visit Nimai" gives a nice description.

If you prefer just to narrate the story, there are some good pictures in a children's book called The Childhood Pastimes of Lord Chaitanya. These can be shown as you're telling the story.

4. After the story ask a few questions to make sure they understood. On page 4 of their booklet, explain about Lord Chaitanya's family. Fill in the Family Tree together.

Note: When you pass out the booklets, you may want to instruct the children NOT to work ahead. That way you can do some of the activities in each lesson during class. Otherwise, you definitely will have kids who will finish the whole booklet in one week. Another option is to collect the booklets each week, passing them out at the beginning of each lesson. This would ensure that all students have their booklets for class, preventing the "forgotten book syndrome".

5. Lord Chaitanya's Names

Pass out a copy of Worksheet 1 to all students. Go over the names of Lord Chaitanya and the reason He is called that. Let the students match the names to their meanings.

Do
Quality

6. If you wish to have a Session Project, Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda Paper Deities are included (Worksheets 6 - 13). This project can be started in this lesson and continued throughout the session. Give some time at the end of each class period for the children to work on their deities.

Copy the figures and the clothing onto card stock paper (for durability). Pass out only the cards with the figures of Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda. When the 2 figures are colored, they can be cut out and mounted on construction paper or poster board. They can even make the background look like an altar before they glue their figures on. These can be laminated, providing a permanent "paper deity" which can be taken home at the end of the session and put on their wall. They can continue to play with these, changing their clothes and making jewelry, for quite some time.

After the figures have been finished, the children can begin to color and decorate the clothing for the paper deities. Encourage them to take their time and do a nice job. Having some gold and silver trim, sequins, beads, cloth, tiny silk flowers, etc. on hand will inspire them to be creative and decorate nicely.

The clothing can be stuck to the laminated figures using a small amount of Blue Tack. They can change the clothes this way by adding necklaces, garlands, beads, etc.

Like this, each week they can work on their project. Their work can be kept in separate large envelopes with their names on it. At the end of the session, you can send home their envelopes, mounted figures and a small amount of Blue Tack so they are all set to keep playing with these at home.

7. Included also is a drama, "The Brahman's Offering", which is the story told in Lesson Three. This drama is written with only a cast of four. It could also be the Session Project, with time being spent each week in practicing. Other children could be engaged in making some simple props, like big styrofoam trees, a house painted onto a sheet for a backdrop, etc.

Lesson Two

The Astrologer

1. Chant the verse for the session.

2. Review last week's lesson. Who was Lord Chaitanya? When did He appear? Why did He come? What was happening at the time of His birth? If you like, you can have one child retell the story letting different children act it out again.

3. Tell the story of The Astrologer. After the story, have the children recall the markings on Lord Chaitanya's feet while you list them on the chalkboard. They can complete Page 6 in their books and then draw the markings in and color the feet on Page 7.

4. Song: On Worksheet 2 you'll find a song, "All About Nimai," that can be taught to the children. You'll have to make up your own tune.
Give a copy of Worksheet 2 to each child. Start by teaching the first and second verse today. Sing it once for them and then sing it two or three times together. You can practice it and add on a verse or two each week. If your class is all good readers, you can do more verses. Collect the songsheets each week or be sure to have extras on hand if you let them take them home.

5. Session Project

Lesson Three

The Brahman's Offering

1. Chant the verse for the session.
2. Review last week's lesson. What markings were on Nimai's feet? What was the only way he would stop crying? What did the astrologer predict?
3. Tell the story of "The Brahman's Offering". This is a great one for the children to act out.

If you have a flannel board, this story can also be told using that. With just a few figures, you can effectively show the story. Afterwards, the children can retell it to you, with the help of the flannelboard.

4. On Page 11 of their booklets, you will find a drawing of the brahman's offering plate. The students can draw and label their "ideal offering" for the Lord. A more interesting way to use this picture would be to copy it onto card stock, perhaps enlarging it slightly. Different beans, rice, macaroni, corn, etc. can be provided and the children can glue them into each offering bowl, creating a three-dimensional, colorful plate. They can make puris out of brown construction paper, etc. and even cut tulasi leaves out of green construction paper to put on the top of each offering.
5. Pass out a copy of Worksheet 3 -- Word Search. When students finish their offering plate they can work on this.
6. Practice the song "All About Nimai".

7. Session Project

Lesson Four

The Two Thieves

1. Chant the verse for the session.
2. Review briefly all previous lessons.
3. Tell or act out the story of The Two Thieves.

4. Game: Lord Chaitanya and the Thief

This game requires at least 7 people. One player is chosen to be Nimai and another to be one of the thieves. The other players join hands and form a circle. The thief chases Nimai around the circle. The children help Nimai by raising their arms to let him in and out of the circle. They try to keep the thief out by lowering their arms. While doing so, all the children in the circle chant loudly the Hare Krishna mantra. When Nimai gets caught, the child playing the thief becomes Nimai and a new child is chosen to be the thief. The old Nimai joins the circle and the game continues.

5. Pass out a copy of the Worksheet 4 (Maze) to each child and give them time to complete it.
6. Practice the song.
7. The children may answer the questions given on Page 15. Check them together.
8. Session Project

Lesson Five **The Snake**

1. Chant the verse for the session.
2. Briefly review previous lesson.
3. Tell the story of "The Snake". Show the picture from the book The Childhood Pastimes of Lord Chaitanya so the children can visualize the scene.

In their booklets, Pages 16 - 18, the students can illustrate the portion of the story that is on each page. Have a volunteer read the first page so your non-readers will know what is narrated on that page. Give sufficient time to draw and color each page. You may want to provide additional items to glue on the pictures for added effect and interest, such as: sequins, leaves, grass, thin strips of red paper for the cobra's tongue, gold foil for Nimai's effulgence, etc.

4. Practice the song, adding a couple of new verses.
5. Session Project

Lesson Six

Teasing the Village Girls

1. Chant the verse for the session.
2. Briefly review the last five lessons.
3. Tell or act out the story of "Teasing the Village Girls".
4. Have the students answer the questions on Page 21. They can exchange books with a partner and check the answers together.
5. Pass out a copy of the Worksheet 5 (Word Scramble). Allow the children enough time to complete it.
6. There are some additional stories about the early pastimes of Lord Chaitanya that you can tell. From the book Sri Chaitanya Mangala, the puppy story, portions of "Nimai's Naughty Pranks and Pastimes", "Disappearance of Jagannatha Misra" and "Nimai Gets in Trouble", are all stories that the children will enjoy.
7. Practice the song.
8. Remind the children that they will have a quiz next week. Review with them the things that they will be expected to know on the test. If you have been keeping their booklets, let the children take them home now so they will have them to study during the week.
9. Session Project

Name _____

Date _____

**Lord Chaitanya's Childhood Pastimes
Final Quiz
(Madhava Class)**

1. Who is Lord Chaitanya?

2. Can you name Lord Chaitanya's father? _____

mother? _____

3. Why was Lord Chaitanya called Nimai when He was young?

4. What happened when the two thieves tried to kidnap Nimai?

5. Circle the markings that Mother Saci saw on Nimai's feet.

leaf

flag

conchshell

tilak

disc

fish

rose

thunderbolt

6. What color is Lord Chaitanya? _____

7. Draw a picture of something that happened in "The Brahmana's Offering".

The Brahman's Offering

Scene 1

Brahman enters, chanting and wandering around. He faces audience, takes Deity out of a bag around his neck. He puts it on a cloth on the floor and offers obeisances.

Brahman: Oh, my Lord Gopal. We've been to so many holy places together: Hrisikesa, Prayag, Kuruksetra, Vrindavan... Now let us sit here by the Ganges and I will offer you some sweet fruits.

(He takes fruit out and puts it on a leaf and offers it.)

Namo bramanya devaya
go bramanya hitaya ca
jagad hitaya krishnaya
govindaya namo namah

Let's go now, Gopal. We must find a place to stay for the night.

(He goes out singing...) Gopal govinda ram sri madhusudana...

Scene 2

Jagganatha Misra and Saci are outside their house. She is sweeping. He is chanting.

Saci: (Noticing the brahman.) Look, Prabhu. A sadhu. It's so late-- he may be tired and hungry.

J.M. (Approaching brahman) My dear brahman, please come to our house. I see you are weary from traveling. Come. You can rest awhile and we will cook for you.

Brah: As you like...

(They take the brahman over to their house, seat him nicely, making him comfortable, and rinse his feet.)

Saci: May we cook something for you now? What would you like?

Brah: I only take the prasad from my Gopal deity. Here he is.

(He takes the Deity from around his neck and places Him on a small table. All offer obeisances exclaiming, "Oh, he's so beautiful. What a wonderful Deity of Gopal!")

But you could get me some nice vegetables and rice and I will cook for my Gopal.

J.M. I will bring whatever you need. Please come in. My wife, Saci has cleaned our kitchen so you may use it. Oh, here is my son, Nimai. He will get your vegetables. (Nimai brings vegetables in a bowl and sets it in the kitchen. We will leave you now so you can cook peacefully. (J.M. Saci, and Nimai leave)

(The brahman starts cooking, makes an offering plate up and sets it before the Gopal Deity. He sits down and begins offering, ringing bell.)

Brahman: My Lord, I pray that you come and accept my humble offering.

(Nimai comes in and takes a handful of food and eats it.)

Brahman: (shocked) Oh, no!! It is ruined!! This boy has stolen the offering meant for Gopal!

(J.M. enters and sees his son eating.)

J.M. Nimai! Come here, you bad boy! How dare you eat the Lord's food.

(J.M. begins chasing after Nimai. They run around and JM is shouting and chastising Nimai. The brahman interrupts them and grabs JM's arm.)

Brah: No, no! Stop! He doesn't know right from wrong. Don't punish him.

(Nimai runs out. Saci comes in, observing. JM sits with his head in his hands, moaning.)

JM: Oh, what shall I do? (Stands up.) Please cook again. I will give you whatever you need.

Saci: Yes, please. You must cook again. Here, I've brought you more rice and vegetables.

(They leave as the brahman prepares to cook again.)

Scene 3

(The brahman finishes cooking and makes plate. He begins to offer, ringing a bell. Nimai comes in again and grabs a handful of food and puts it in his mouth.)

Brah: What?!? Not again! (He beats his chest and slaps his forehead.) He has stolen it again! **Again** he stole the offering!

(JM peeks in and sees Nimai. He rushes in, picking up a stick.)

JM: Nimai!! Such a bad boy! This time you **must** be punished! (he begins chasing Nimai) I'll get you, you thief! Come back here, you naughty boy! A thief in my own house!

(Saci runs in.)

Saci: (shouting) No, no, don't beat my son. (She runs after JM who is running after Nimai.)

Brah: (Catching the arm of JM) Please, No more. It is not the boy's fault. (Sighs) It seems that Krishna does not want me to eat today.

JM: Please, I beg you. Cook one more time.

Brah: I've already cooked twice. It is past one o'clock in the morning! I'm tired.

Saci: You must cook for Gopal once more. I will lock this naughty boy up so he cannot steal your offering.

JM: We'll make sure this time We'll watch him closely. (They take Nimai away and put him behind a door, locking it and sitting outside the door on guard.)

Scene 4

(The brahman cooks again. He begins the offering. We see Nimai scattering confetti over JM and Saci and they fall asleep. He sneaks out and comes over to the brahman.)

Brah: No, no, it cannot be! You again!? (He begins crying and sobbing) Why? Why are you doing this to me?

Nimai: Oh, my dear brahman, you called me so I came. You chanted my mantras so I came. You are always thinking of me so I decided to come to you. LOOK! (He steps behind something and reappears wearing a crown, a garland and playing a flute.) I AM YOUR LORD GOPAL!

Brah: Hare Krishna! (He bows at Nimai's feet.) Hare Krishna. My Lord, my Lord...

Nimai: Now this is our secret. Do not tell anyone about this.

(The brahman nods with folded hands and bows repeatedly. Nimai sneaks back to his room.)

Brah: (Loudly) Jaya Bala Gopal!!! Jaya Bala Gopal!!! Hare Krishna!! Jaya Gopal!!

(JM and Saci wake up, rubbing their eyes and looking bewildered. They go to the brahman.)

Brah: Come my friends! Chant the Holy Name of Krishna for today Gopal has been very kind to this poor brahman.

(All begin chanting and Nimai peeps over the top of his door, nodding and smiling.)

THE END

Worksheet 1
Nimai's Names

Lord Chaitanya has many different names. He is called Gauranga because He is a golden color. He is called Nimai because He was born under a neem tree. His parents named Him Visvambhar meaning that which can hold up the whole world. He is called Sacinandana because He is the son of Mother Saci.

Draw lines to match the name of Lord Chaitanya with the meaning of that name.

Nimai

Golden

Gauranga

Son of Saci

Sacinandana

Supporter of the world

Visvambhar

Born under a neem tree



Worksheet 2
Song

All About Nimai

Lord Krishna came in golden hue
To save all souls like me and you
Called Nimai while still a youth
He later was Caitanya 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

Amongst devotees Advaita was chief
He saw the godless people's grief
He begged the Lord to come and teach
Offering Ganges and Tulasi leaf

Haribol! They shouted when Nimai came
The moon hid its spotted face in shame
The perfect moonlike Lord appeared
While everyone chanted the holy name

While walking Nimai made prints of Vishnu
Thunderbolt, flag, conch, disc and fish, too
His wonder-struck parents thought Krishna was near
That child Krishna had come they agreed must be true

The Lord grew more beautiful day by day
He showed His pastimes of childhood play
Just as Lord Krishna did wonderful things
He played as a boy in an uncommon way

Worksheet 3
Word Search

BRAHMAN
NIMAI
EAT

OFFERING
KRISHNA

RICE
COOK

DEITY
SWEETS

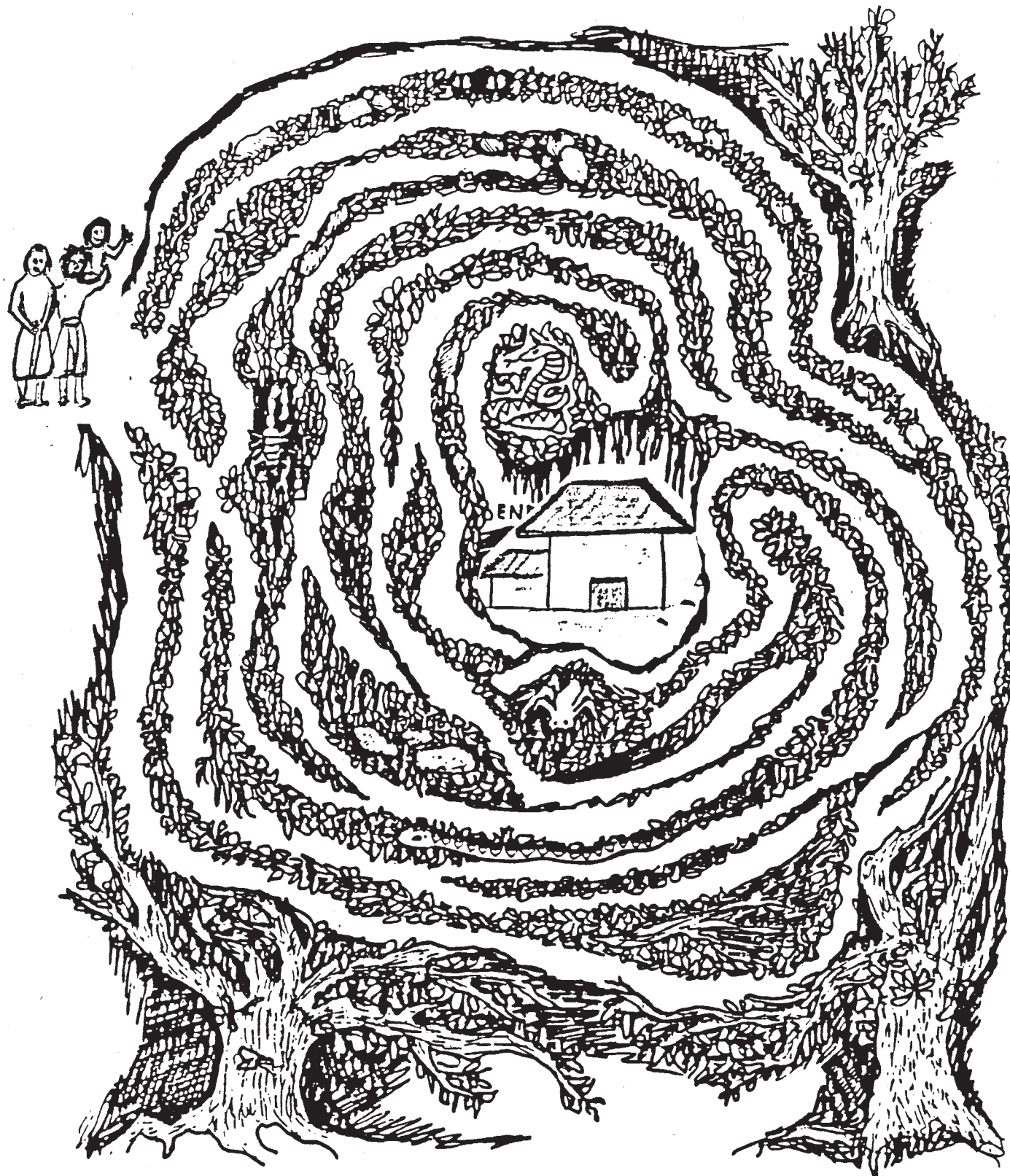
The Brahman's Offering

F N A E N Y S N M K E S Y
B E A R Y K I M E S I T T
A F E A T R I R I E K E Y
C I E W A A F A N C E E Y
G N I R E F F O O I F W I
A Y S I E O I E I R E S S
K R I S H N A A A H N G A
A I G B N N I M A I E R Y
O F T F Y I B R A H M A N
N K T I F K O A O C A E C
O C H K O O C A K E F A K
D I I N T E D E I T Y R R

Worksheet 4

Maze

Stop the thieves from taking Lord Chaitanya. Direct them through this maze back to the home of Jagannatha Misra.



WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble the following words to find words from this story.

1. HRWIPOS

1. _ _ _ _ _

2. IAINM

2. _ _ _ _ _

3. IRLSG

3. _ _ _ _ _

4. IFFRONGE

4. _ _ _ _ _

5. IBHG TAN

5. _ _ _ _ _

6. GADUR

6. _ _ _ _ _

7. GNSEGA

7. _ _ _ _ _

8. ETEAS

8. _ _ _ _ _

GIRLS
NIMAI
OFFERING

BATHING
WORSHIP
DURGA

TEASE
GANGES





