



STEPPING STONES

a transcendental activity book for children

Gandhari Devi Das

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Stepping Stones to Krishna

Readers interested in this subject matter are requested to contact
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5000 copies

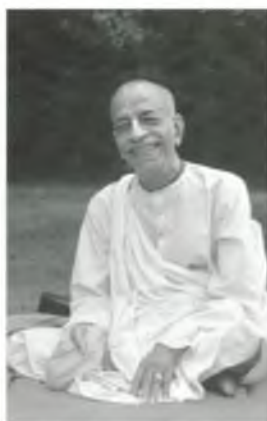
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This book is a humble offering

at the Lotus Feet of

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Prabhupada,

*who has given us this opportunity of stepping
on the first stone towards Lord Krishna.*

*This book is also lovingly offered to
His Holiness Sridhar Swami.*

*Who has always encouraged and guided me to work with
enthusiasm for children This fun-filled activity book is written
with love for Nimai, Saachi and Asmita who are tireless in
their zeal and enthusiasm to keep learning and absorbing.*

BIRTH OF LORD KRISHNA

Long long ago there lived King Surasena. He was the leader of the Yadus. He ruled over the Kingdom of Mathura.

His son Vasudeva married Devaki, the daughter of another king, Ugrasena. When Devaki left to go to her husband's house after marriage, her brother Kamsa went along to leave them. He rode their chariot as their driver.

Suddenly on the way they heard a voice from the sky.

"Kamsa! You are such a fool! The eight child of your sister is going to kill you. And you are driving her chariot?"

Kamsa got very angry and dragged his sister by her hair and pulled out his sword to kill when Vasudeva stopped him.

He said, "Please stop, Kamsa. How can you kill your own sister? How can you trust any voice from the sky? And even if it is true I promise you that I will give you all the children born to us."

Soon a baby boy was born to Devaki. As promised, Vasudeva handed over the baby to Kamsa. But Kamsa returned the baby with Vasudeva because he knew that danger to him would come from the eight child, not the first.

Soon after, Narada Muni visited Kamsa. He told him that in his previous birth he was a demon named Kalanemi who had been killed by Lord Vishnu. He also told him that Lord Vishnu was going to take birth soon as the son of Devaki and Vasudeva and would kill him again. This angered Kamsa so much that he killed every child born to them thereafter.

STEPPING STONES TO KRISHNA



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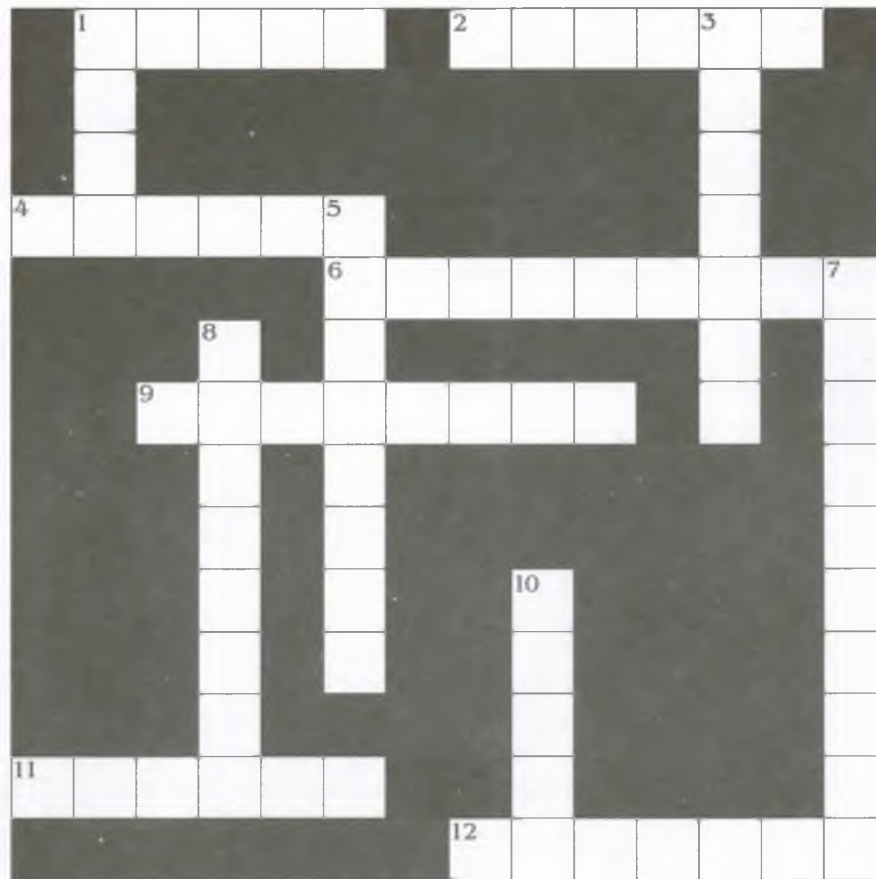
Foreword

Children are so restless by nature! They need to do something all the time. Children of today are known for repeating at all times, "I am bored!" Yes, there is definitely something special about children today. They are exposed to too much too soon- too much technology, too much television, too much computer (especially games). They need a creative and safe outlet for their abundant energies.

Scriptures tell us that reading and discussing any activity that is related to Lord Krishna puts one on a transcendental platform. So an activity that also tells stories of Lord Krishna's pastimes will not only serve the purpose but will also occupy children's restless minds and bodies. The activities presented here are very simple. All you need to do is read the story carefully and get yourself equipped with pencils and crayons to fill in the plain black and white pages with a myriad of colors. Enjoy yourself with this activity book and do give me a feedback so I can keep churning out more nectarian activities for you.

I'd like to give a million thanks to my dearest Chaitanya Priya for getting all the stories together and warm thanks to my friend Hema Gujjar for the wonderful artwork of this book. A special word of gratitude for our dear friend Vijaya Govinda Das prabhu who gave a foothold for my creative leanings. Thank you all for making this book see the light of day.

Gandhari devi dasi



Clues:

Across

- 1. Lord Krishna's greatest devotee always on the altar with Him
- 2. Lord Krishna's mother, but not in Vrindavan
- 4. The snake demon
- 6. The mighty mountain that Lord Krishna lifted
- 9. The heron demon
- 11. The demoness who came to kill all babies in Vrindavan
- 12. Lord Krishna's mother in Vrindavan

Down

- 1. An incarnation of the Lord
- 3. The Supreme Lord Himself
- 5. The demon who tried to swallow Krishna and His friends
- 7. One of the Arjuna trees in Nanda Maharaj's courtyard
- 8. The father of Lord Krishna imprisoned by Kamsa
- 10. The demoniac uncle of Lord Krishna

(Please turn page 29 to see the answer)

When Devaki was pregnant the seventh time, it was none other than Ananta Sesa, an expansion of Lord Vishnu. So Lord Krishna transferred the baby from the womb of Devaki to the womb of Rohini, another wife of Vasudeva who lived with Nanda Maharaja and Yashoda in Vrindavana. Meanwhile Lord Krishna prepared to appear as the son of Devaki and Vasudeva. He then appeared in His four-armed Vishnu form each holding a club (gada), Conch (shankha), Disc (charka) and Lotus (kamal). Vasudeva was worried that if Kamsa saw Him in this form he would recognize Him and harm him. Then Lord Krishna changed Himself into the form of a beautiful baby that was a shade of blue, the colour of a rain-filled cloud. We celebrate this time of midnight on the eight day of the Shravan month as Janmashtami or the birth of Lord Krishna

The things that Lord Krishna can do are so mysterious that sometimes it is difficult to understand them!



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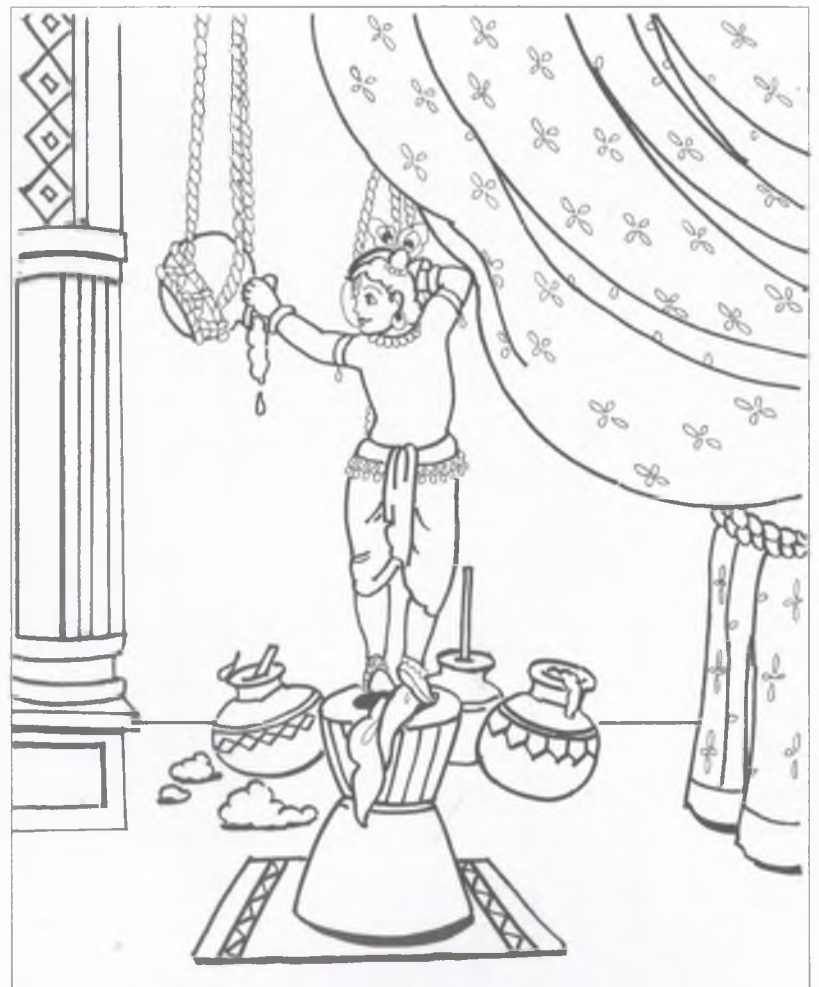
PUTANAS DEFEAT

One day the demoness Putana descended from outer space into Gokula, the house of Nanda Maharaja. She was sent by the cruel king Kamsa to kill all the babies in the Vrindavan area. Putana had mystic powers and hence she assumed the form of a very beautiful woman. She then boldly entered Krishna's bedroom without permission. Yashoda thought she was one of the resident Gopis of Vraja. Keeping Krishna under care she left the room.

The demoness picked Krishna from his cradle when she saw that no one was around. She then carried him to the nearby forest area and offered him her poison smeared breast to drink. She was hoping that as soon as he would drink her milk, he would die. But baby Krishna became very angry with Putana. He then took hold of her breast and began to suck out poison and her life. Putana could not bear the pain anymore. She raised her arms and legs wildly and cried out "Please leave me leave me! Suck my breast no longer!" But Krishna did not leave. She then turned into her original huge form and fell dead on the ground with great noise. Her body was about 12 miles long!

Baby Krishna was fearlessly playing on the breast of Putana. All the inhabitants of Vraja immediately rushed and gathered there to see what had happened. Nanda Maharaja and Yashoda were shocked to see such a sight. Yashoda and other Gopis immediately ran to pick up baby Krishna from the body of the demoness. As they took Krishna in their hands, tears of joy rolled down their cheeks. They were happy to see Krishna safe. As far as Putana was concerned, she attained liberation as she was killed by Krishna. Therefore we can see what an extraordinary baby Lord Krishna was!





Find the six differences between the two pictures

KRISHNA – THE BUTTER THIEF

One day, Mother Yashoda was churning butter in the courtyard of her house. As she churned, she made up songs and sang about her dear little son Krishna. She looked very beautiful as she pulled on the churning rope.

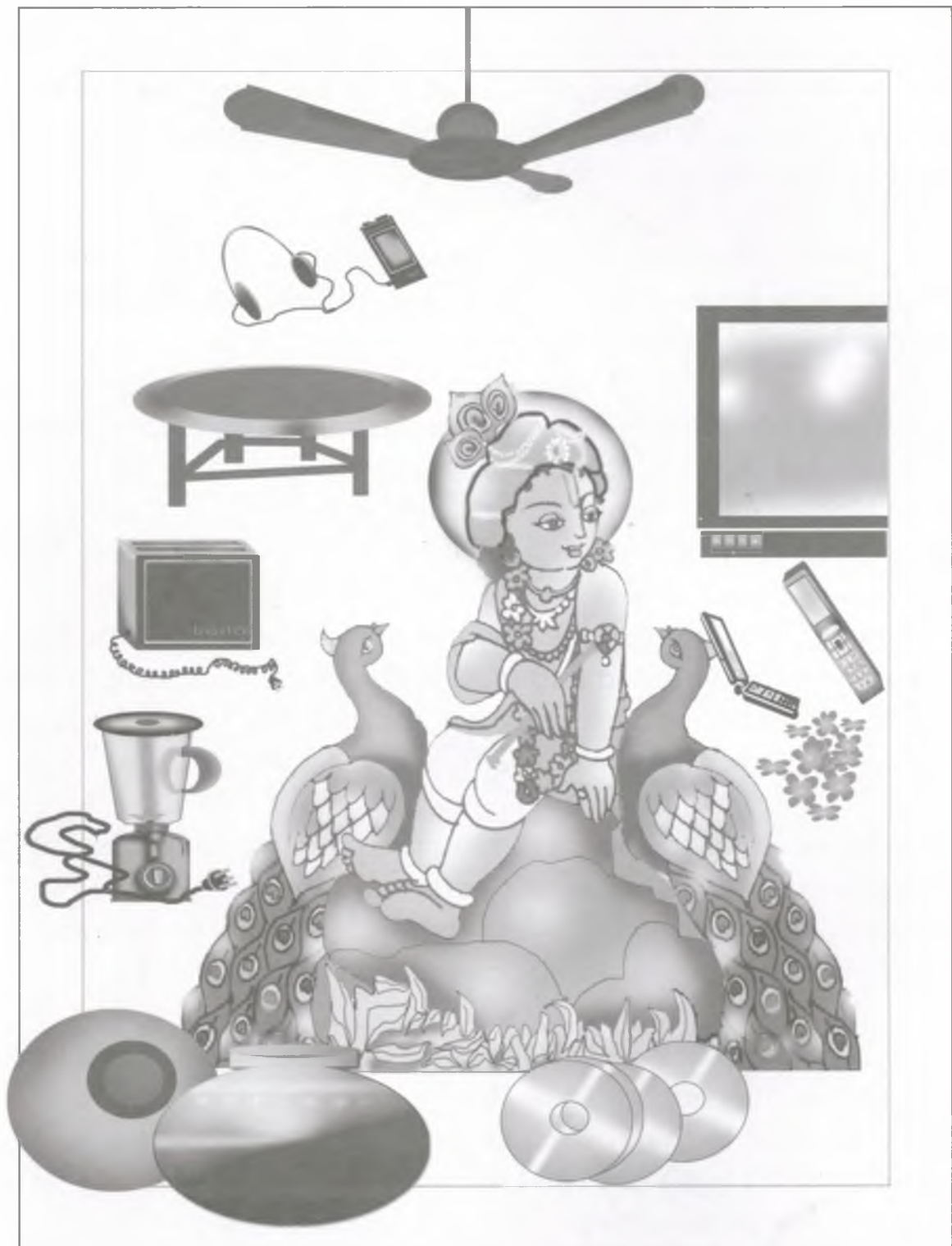
As she was busy working Krishna came up to her. He was really hungry and he wanted to be fed. Mother Yashoda loved Krishna very much and was always happy to take care of him.

She stopped her work and hugged her darling Krishna. She made him sit on her lap and looked at his face with great affection. While Mother Yashoda was feeding Krishna, she all of a sudden remembered the pan of milk she had left to boil on the stove. She left Krishna quickly and ran to take care of the milk. When Yashoda left, Krishna became very angry. In a fit of anger he broke the pot of freshly churned butter. Quickly he ran to another room to eat it. After taking care of the boiling milk Mother Yashoda returned and saw what naughty Krishna had done.

She followed his butter smeared footprints and found him in the storage room. He was doling out butter and yogurt to the monkeys. As he heard his mother approach he quickly ran away. Yashoda chased him and finally caught him.

Mother Yashoda took Krishna by the hand said “Krishna you have really been a naughty boy today, you must be punished.” She tied him by his waist to the wooden mortar. When Yashoda was busy back at work, Krishna saw two trees standing side by side. He went crawling towards those trees, pulling the wooden mortar behind him. As he passed between the trees the wooden mortar got stuck. Krishna pulled the rope very hard, and the two trees fell down with a deafening sound!

Circle everything that does not belong to Krishna.



Toaster, Fan, Remote control, Television, Mixie, CD, Walk-man, Cellphone, Table

Out of the trees appeared two beautiful men, shining brightly. These two men had a glowing effulgence and were shining brightly. These two men were the sons of Kuvera. Their names were Nalakuvera and Manigriva. Long ago they had been cursed to become trees, but now they had been freed by Krishna. They offered obeisances to baby Krishna, thanked him, and then they left.

After hearing the sounds of the crashing trees, everyone rushed to the spot and looked in astonishment. Mother Yashoda rushed there. The children who had been playing nearby told them how Krishna had pulled down the two trees. They also told her that how two wonderful looking men had appeared and spoke with him. Krishna's father Nanda Maharaja smiled upon hearing about his son. He untied the rope around Krishna's waist and hugged him. In the courtyard of his house many residents of Vraja gathered. They began to clap and sing while Krishna danced in joy. Simply by loving Krishna, everyone became happy.





Join the dots
numerically and see who

Krishna
has captured



KRISHNA CONQUERS THE BAKASURA DEMON

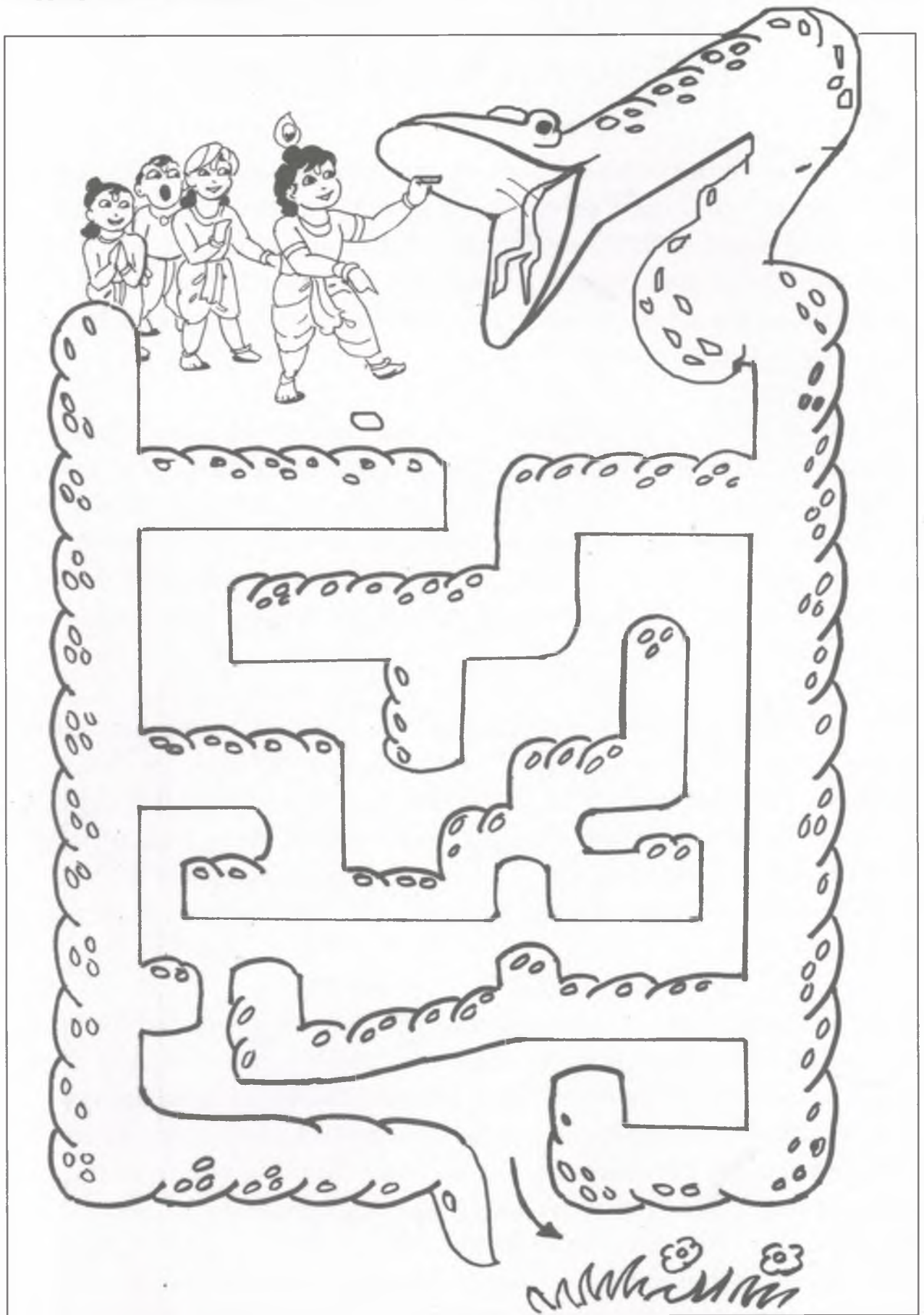
One day all the cowherd boys went to the banks of river Yamuna. They went so that their calves would be able to drink the cool and refreshing water of the river Yamuna. After drinking they all sat on the bank of the river playing and talking with each other. All of a sudden they saw a huge animal which looked something like a heron. But it was as big as a hill!

They were shocked to see such an unusual animal. The cowherd boys became afraid of it. The name of this beast was Bakasura. He was a friend of Kamsa. He came there by the order of Kamsa to kill Krishna. He appeared in front of them and attacked Krishna. With his pointed, sharp beak he quickly swallowed Krishna. When Krishna was swallowed all the boys became almost breathless. It seemed as though they had died.

When the demon was swallowing Krishna, he felt a burning sensation in his throat. This was actually due to the glowing effulgence of Krishna. The demon quickly threw Krishna up and tried to kill him by pinching him with his beak. Bakasura did not know that although Krishna was playing the part of a child of Nanda Maharaja He was still the original father of Lord Brahma and Lord Brahma is creator of the Universe.

Krishna caught hold of the great gigantic heron and opened his beak. He then split his beak just as a child very easily splits a blade of grass and Bakasura the demon was dead. Flowers showered from the sky. The cowherd boys were struck with wonder and amazement when they saw this. When they saw Krishna free from the mouth of the great demon all of them were very pleased. It seemed as if they regained their life. One after another they hugged Krishna. After this they all gathered their calves and began to return home.





KRISHNA KILLS AGHASURA

One fine day Krishna prepared to go to the forest early in the morning with his cowherd friends. There they were supposed to have a picnic lunch together. As soon as he got up from his bed he blew his buffalo horn bugle and called all his friends. They all immediately left along with their calves to go to the forest. All the boys were jolly and happy while going.

As they reached there they all began to play. Some boys followed the shadows of the birds flying in the sky and imitate them. Some of them caught the tails of the monkeys and played with them. Seeing all this a demon named Aghasura became very impatient. He was the younger brother of Putana and Bakasura. He was unable to see Krishna play so happily. He therefore appeared before the boys wanting to kill all of them. Aghasura thought "Krishna has killed my brother and sister. Now I shall kill him along with all his friends and calves."

By his mystical powers he expanded himself up to eight miles and assumed the shape of a very fat serpent. He stretched his mouth open just like a mountain cave and he wanted to swallow all the boys at once including Krishna and Balarama.

At first the boys thought that the demon was a statue. But after examining it they saw that it was a big serpent lying down on the road with his mouth open. The boys began to talk amongst themselves. They thought, "If we all enter his mouth at once it won't be possible for him to swallow all of us". Thus they entered the mouth of the gigantic serpent.

SCRATCH OUT ALL THE
X,Y,Z AND SEE WHAT
YASHODA HAS TO SAY...

L X Y I T X X Y T X Y Z L L X E X Y K X R Y Z I Z Y S X Y H X X
Y A X X L Y Y O X X V Z E N S X Y Z B X Y Y C X T Y T Z Z N E Y R
H Y Y A X X L Y Y O X X V Z E N S X Y Z B X Y Y C X T Y T Z Z N E Y R

Meanwhile Krishna knew that this big unusual figure was a demon. He began to plan how he could stop the demon from killing his friends. Bakasura was waiting for Krishna. Krishna entered his mouth and as the demon was trying to smash him and his companions, Krishna immediately began to expand himself within the throat of the demon. The demon was choked by the expanding of Krishna and burst as a hole was made in the upper part of his head. Thus he met with an end. Lord Krishna was just five years old when he killed Aghasura. The demigods became overwhelmed with joy and showered flowers on Krishna.





1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

All the
cowherd boys
and calves
look the same
and are yet
slightly different.
Look carefully
and match
the numbers.

STEALING OF THE BOYS AND CALVES BY LORD BRAHMA

After saving his friends from the mouth of Aghasura and killing the demon, Lord Krishna brought his friends to the banks of river Yamuna. He told them "My dear friends this spot is very nice for taking lunch and playing on the soft, sandy Yamuna bank." He told them to quickly take out their lunch packs as it was already late. They let loose their calves to eat soft grass sat down on the ground keeping Krishna in the center. They then opened their lunch boxes brought from their homes. Each boy wanted to impress Krishna by giving him their lunch pack. Krishna accepted everyone's preparation. Each friend fed Krishna with his own hands. Krishna too exchanged his preparation made by Mother Yashoda. Although Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead he was laughing, joking and enjoying lunch with his friends. The demigods were enjoying the Lord's transcendental pastimes.

At that time Brahma observed and thought, "How can this little cowherd boy be the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is eating all the remnants of his friends. He is feeding them with his own hands. Let me see more of his glorious pastimes." Thinking this he stole all the calves and cowherd boys in Krishna's absence. He took all of them to some different place.

Lord Krishna searched for his calves and cowherd friends all over but he could not find them. As he was the Supreme Lord he immediately understood that all the calves and boys had been stolen by Brahma. Krishna thought "Brahma has taken away all the boys and calves. How can I return to Vrindavan alone? The mothers will be really sad." Therefore in order to satisfy the mothers as well as to convince Brahma about the power of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he immediately expanded himself to look like all the cowherd boys and calves. Such are the mystical powers of Krishna!

SOLUTION:

Move upwards from 'I' and follow the alphabets to the next row moving backwards, then to the third row moving forwards.

Answer:

Save us from the anger of Indra oh dear Krishna or we will all drown and so will our cows and calves. Help us oh Gopal Hari

O	H	G	O	P	A	L	H	A	R	I	S	1
S	U	P	L	E	H	S	E	V	L	A	A	
O	U	R	C	O	W	S	A	N	D	C	V	
L	L	I	W	O	S	D	N	A	N	W	E	
E	W	I	L	L	A	L	L	D	R	O	U	
W	R	O	A	N	H	S	I	R	K	R	S	
F	I	N	D	R	A	O	H	D	E	A	F	
O	R	E	G	N	A	E	H	T	M	O	R	

Starting with No. 1 move in a straight line to see what the Brijbasis have to say

Soon he returned back to Vrindavan. The residents had no knowledge of what had happened. Everything seemed normal. The boys went to their respective mothers and homes. The calves entered their respective cowsheds. For one year continuously Krishna stayed as the calves and cowherd boys as well as, as himself.

One fine day Krishna, his brother Balarama and all his friends were playing. At that time Brahma returned after a moment's interval (according to the duration of his life). One moment of Brahma's time is equal to one year of earthly calculation. He had come back to watch the fun caused by his stealing. He saw that all the boys and calves were still playing with Krishna in the same way as he saw them when he had come earlier. Brahma went back to the place where he made the boys and calves lie asleep by his mystic powers. He saw that they all were present there. He was very puzzled!

Krishna wanted to convince Brahma that all those boys and calves in Vrindavan were not original. Thus the calves and boys who were playing with Krishna turned into Vishnu forms and Brahma just kept looking! He realized what a great mistake he had made. He immediately fell at the Lotus feet of the Lord. He washed Krishna's feet with the tears flowing from his eyes. He offered his prayers to the Lord and returned to Brahmaloaka. After Brahma left, Krishna returned to the banks of Yamuna. There he rejoined his original calves and cowherd boyfriends. They were situated just as they were when they had vanished.





colour 1. BLUE 2. YELLOW 3. RED 4. LIGHT BLUE 5. BROWN 6. LIGHT GREEN 7. DARK GREEN

KRISHNA AND KALIYA

Cne fine morning Krishna and his friends got their cows together to go to the forest. They milked them with love and care. Keeping Krishna ahead of the calves they all left for the forest. As Krishna played his flute melodiously his friends danced all the way.

Reaching deep in the forest they found a nice place to rest. They all were resting under the shade of a huge Kadamba tree. They left their calves to graze on the soft grass.

Suddenly one of the cowherd boys came running and began shouting “Please save us Krishna! Some of our calves are dead.”

It so happened that the cows had come to river Yamuna to drink water. But by drinking the poisoned Yamuna water the cows lay dead. This poison had been spread by the ferocious serpent named Kaliya. He lived in the river Yamuna due to the fear of Garuda. Garuda was Lord Vishnu’s carrier. Kaliya was now a terror to Vrindavan. Due to the poisoned water many of the trees along the banks too, dried.

Krishna thought “This Kaliya is becoming proud. He is creating an unnecessary disturbance in my home. I must teach him a lesson”.

Krishna immediately climbed upon the Kadamba tree and jumped into the fiery river. His friends were worried as he disappeared from their sight. They began praying for his well-being. Soon word of Krishna’s feat reached the village and the villagers came rushing because they were worried about their beloved Krishna. Yashoda fainted when she heard of what had happened.

SEARCH FOR 'KRISHNA' IN THE GRID

K	R	S	N	K	R	I	N	R	A
R	I	S	H	K	A	N	K	K	R
I	S	K	N	A	K	I	S	H	A
S	H	R	I	N	S	H	K	R	A
H	K	R	K	R	I	S	H	N	A
A	N	K	R	I	S	H	I	K	A
I	K	R	I	S	H	N	A	R	I
K	R	I	S	H	N	K	R	I	S
R	S	N	H	N	K	R	I	S	H
K	I	S	N	A	R	I	S	H	A
I	S	H	A	N	K	R	S	A	N

On the other hand, deep into the waters of Yamuna Krishna began to swim fast, all the while looking for Kaliya. When Kaliya saw that Krishna was swimming quickly in the deep. He caught him in his coils and tried to squeeze him with all his strength.

Krishna played with him for a while. After a long fight when Krishna was about to smash Kaliya, his wives appeared there. They asked for forgiveness. They said "Dear lord please forgive our husband. He is a fool. He did not recognize you".

Accepting their humble prayer Krishna was pleased and he forgave Kaliya. He then caught hold of Kaliya and began dancing on his head. Seeing Krishna rise on the hoods of Kaliya all the inhabitants of Vrindavan who had come on the banks of Yamuna exclaimed with joy. All the cows and Vrindavan was saved by Krishna's grace. Nanda Maharaj and Yashoda too rejoiced seeing their beloved son back with them safe and sound..





Help the calf to reach the Govardhan temple

LIFTING OF THE GOVARDHAN HILL

Once Krishna and Balarama saw that the Brahmanas were preparing for the performance of some vedic sacrifices. The cowherd men were also preparing a similar sacrifice in order to satisfy Indra, who was the king of heaven. He was responsible for supplying water in the form of rain to all living entities on earth.

Krishna decided to enquire about all this arrangement. He approached his father. He asked “My dear father what is this arrangement going on for a great sacrifice? What is the result of such a great sacrifice?” Nanda Maharaj explained “This is a sacrifice for King Indra. He is the king of heaven and he sends his clouds to pour down sufficient rain. And due to these rains we have successful agricultural activities. We can then grow crops to feed our families and animals. Therefore this is our traditional ceremonial function to satisfy him.”

Lord Krishna then spoke “I don’t think you need to worship any demigod for successful agricultural activities. The demigods will always be satisfied if we do our duty properly, just as we are satisfied living in this forest of Vrindavan. Our specific relationship is with Govardhan hill. Govardhan grows sweet grass and good vegetation for us and our cows. Our cows then give us sweet milk which is then converted to butter. And I love butter! Let us have nothing to do with Indra or his sacrifice”.

At first Nanda Maharaja and other cowherd men were confused. But later on they realised that Krishna was right. Hence Krishna began advising everyone about the preparation of Govardhan worship. He told the elder Gopis to prepare nice food. He told them to make all kinds of milk preparations such as kheer, sandesh, peda, etc. The cows were decorated beautifully. Brahmanas were given all kinds of grains in charity. They then worshipped Govardhan and circumambulated the hill. All the cooked food items were offered to

How many cows are there with
Lord Krishna!



Govardhan. Everyone sang and danced joyfully. In this way the worship of Govardhan was completed. King Indra saw all this and was very angry. He thought "How dare this little cowherd boy stop my worship. I shall show him my mighty strength. I will punish all the residents of Vrindavan." He ordered his darkest storm clouds to go and destroy Vrindavan with incessant rain. By King Indra's order, all the dangerous clouds appeared above Vrindavan and began to pour. The rain was accompanied by great winds. There were floods everywhere. Even the houses of the villagers began to submerge under the water.

Every living creature in Vrindavan turned to Krishna and prayed to him for shelter. They said, "Krishna, we believed you when you said we must not worship Indra and now look at the result of this! Indra is angry and will destroy us and our animals with this heavy rain. Please protect us Krishna, please find a way out." Lord Krishna the Supreme Personality of Godhead then performed the most amazing feat! He lifted the Govardhan hill on the little finger of his left hand just like a child would pluck a mushroom out of the ground and hold it in his fingers! He requested all the inhabitants to take shelter under the umbrella of Govardhan hill. The inhabitants of Vrindavan and their animals remained there for seven days. They were not affected by hunger, thirst or any other discomforts.

King Indra saw the extraordinary mystic powers of Krishna and was shocked. He then realized that this Krishna must be some special personality. He ordered his clouds to come back. The sky became cleared of all clouds and Krishna requested all the inhabitants to return to their respective homes.

King Indra appeared before him along with Surabhi cow. He brought the Surabhi cow from Goloka Vrindavan to please Krishna. Indra fell at the lotus feet of Krishna. The Lord who is so merciful forgave Indra. Indra offered his obeisances again and left.

Thus Krishna is also known as Girivardhari or the lifter of the Govardhan Hill.



WRITE THE NAME OF THE PICTURE SHOWN AND ADD ITS FIRST ALPHABET IN THE SQUARES TO FORM A NEW WORD. THE FIRST ONE IS ILLUSTRATED FOR YOU.

1. KALIYA

K						
---	--	--	--	--	--	--

ANSWER



Clues:

Across

1. Lord Krishna's greatest devotee always on the altar with Him
2. Lord Krishna's mother, but not in Vrindavan
4. The snake demon
6. The mighty mountain that Lord Krishna lifted
9. The heron demon
11. The demoness who came to kill all babies in Vrindavan
12. Lord Krishna's mother in Vrindavan

Down

1. An incarnation of the Lord
3. The Supreme Lord Himself
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7. One of the Arjuna trees in Nanda Maharaj's courtyard
8. The father of Lord Krishna imprisoned by Kamsa
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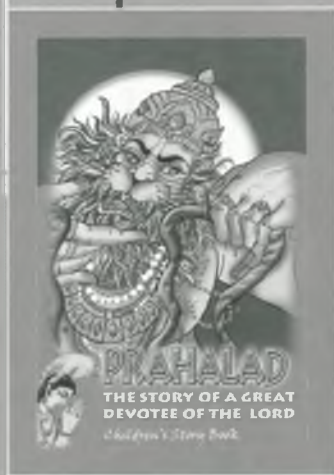
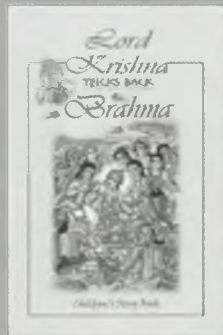
Congratulations!
you're just crossed
the first stone.

chant

HARE KRISHNA
HARE KRISHNA
KRISHNA KRISHNA
HARE HARE
HARE RAMA
HARE RAMA
RAMA RAMA
HARE HARE
and be happy



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