

The story of **Alarnath**

Even today, when you go to Odisha on the eastern coast of India, you can visit this temple. It is about 25 Kms from the famous Jagannath temple in Puri, Odisha. When you visit Alarnath temple, the temple priest points out several scars on Lord Alarnath's body where He got scalded by the sweet rice. You can get to honor the sweet rice prasad of Alarnath.

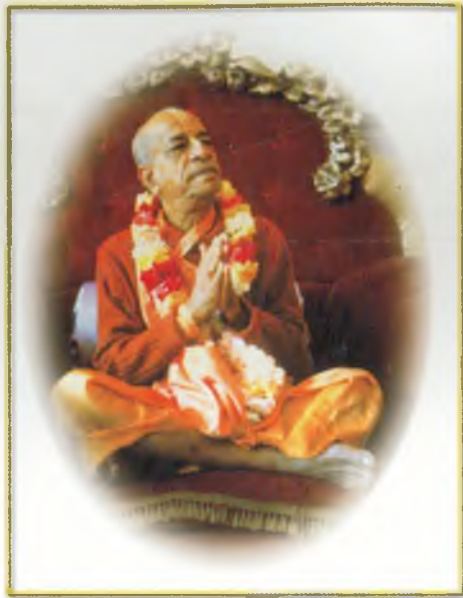



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Children's Story Book



Dedicated to 
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Swami Prabhupada
Founder acharya: ISKCON

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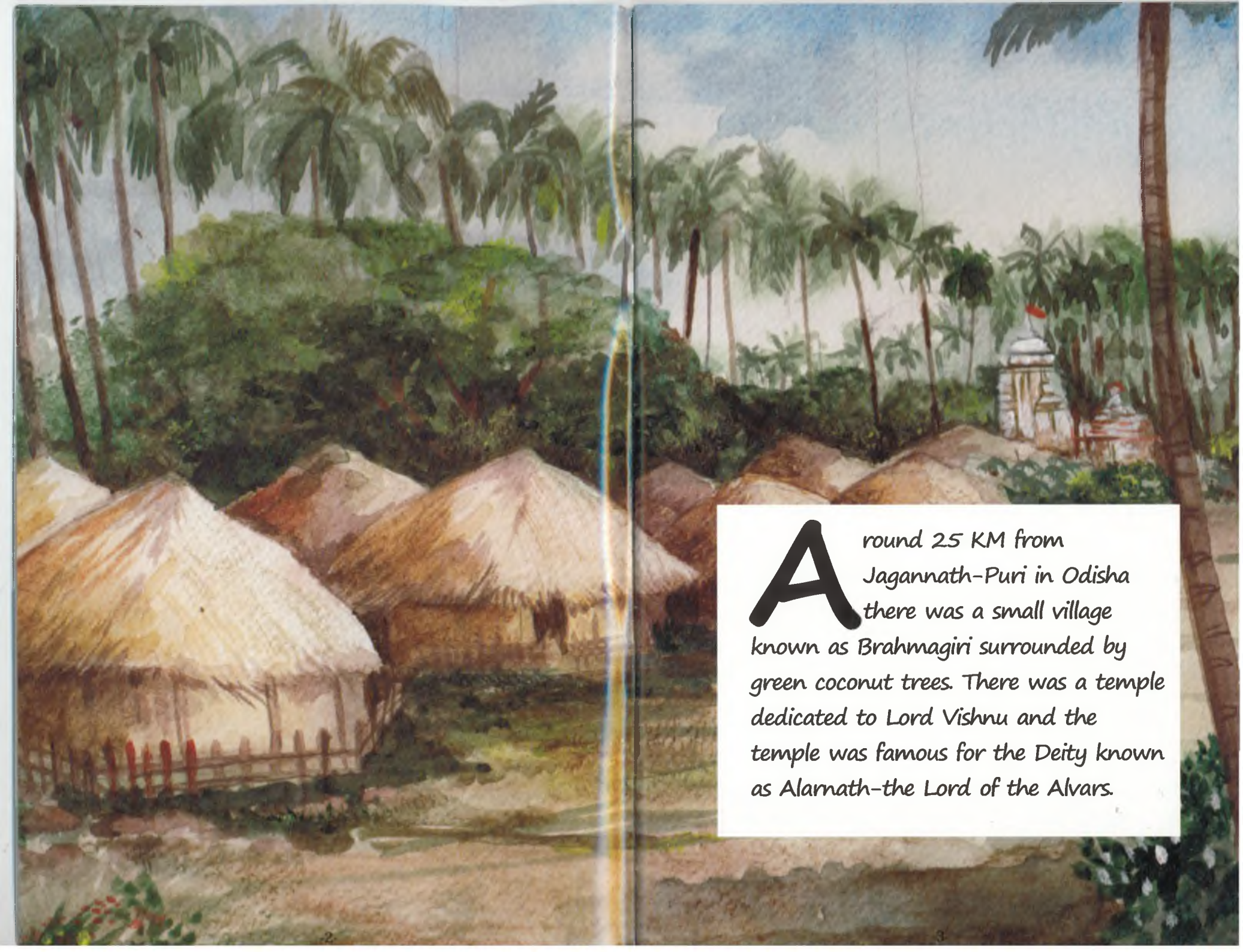


The story of Alarnath



The present day temple was built about eleven hundred years ago and the worship then was performed by South Indian Brahmins. Because the pujaris were disciples in the line of great spiritual teachers known as the Alvars, the deity became known as Alvarnath or "Lord of the Alvars", which in time became Alarnath. Today, the place is commonly known as Brahmagiri.

Children's Story Book



Around 25 KM from Jagannath-Puri in Odisha there was a small village known as Brahmagiri surrounded by green coconut trees. There was a temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu and the temple was famous for the Deity known as Alarnath—the Lord of the Alvars.



There lived in this village a brahmin, Sriketana, with his wife and children who served Lord Alarnath. The Brahmin would cook nice food everyday and offer it to Lord Alarnath.

namo brahmanya-devaya
go-brahmana-hitaya ca
jagad-dhitaya krishnaya
govindaya namo namah*



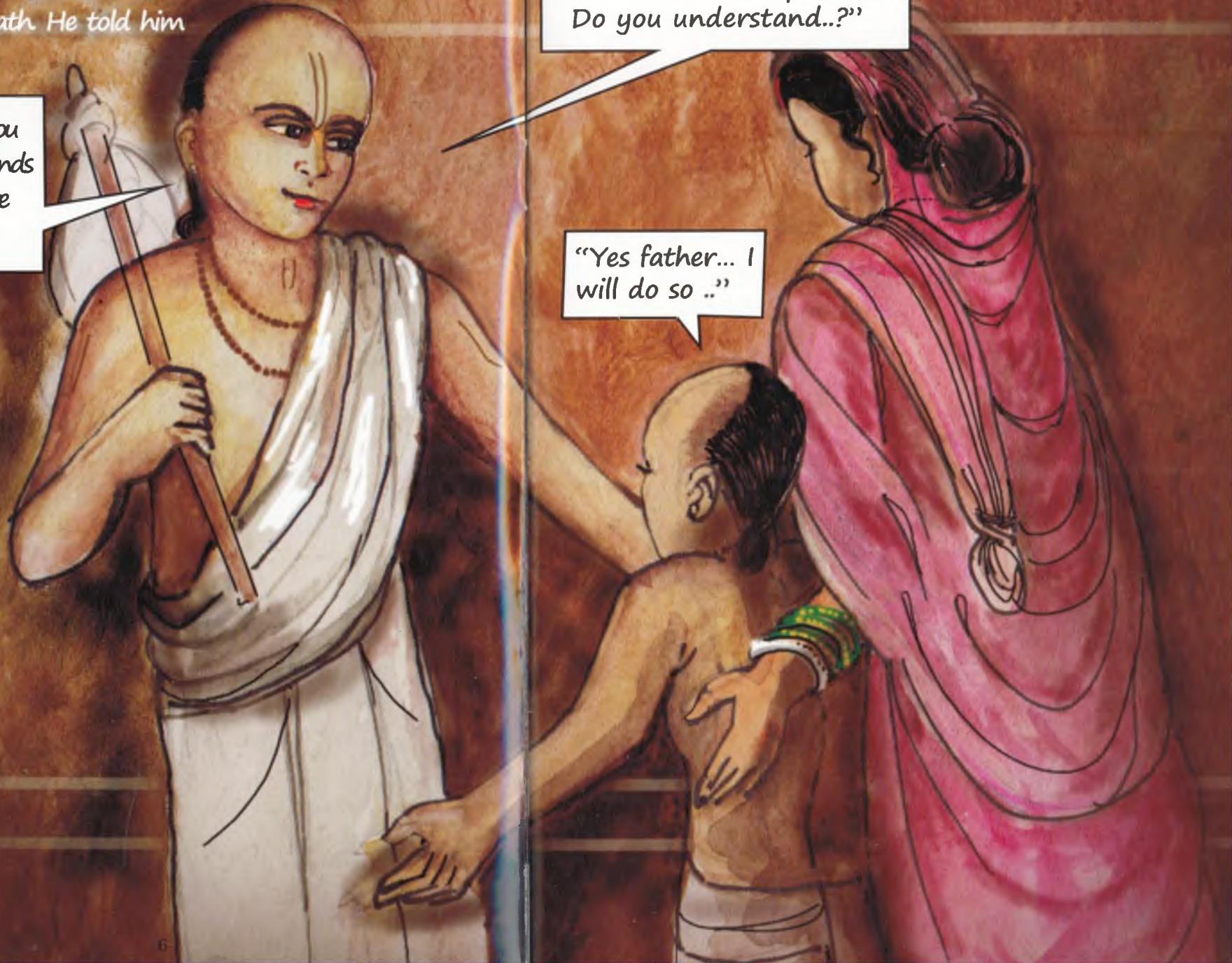
* I offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Krishna, who is the worshipable Deity for all brahmanas, the well-wisher of the cows and the brahmanas, and the benefactor of the whole world. I offer my repeated obeisances to the Personality of Godhead, known as Krishna and Govinda."

One day the brahmin had to go to the nearby village for some work. So he instructed his son Madhu to offer the food to the Lord Alarnath. He told him

"Make sure you wash your hands and feet before offering".

"Place Alarnath's meals before Him and pray to the Lord to accept them. Do you understand..?"

"Yes father... I will do so .."



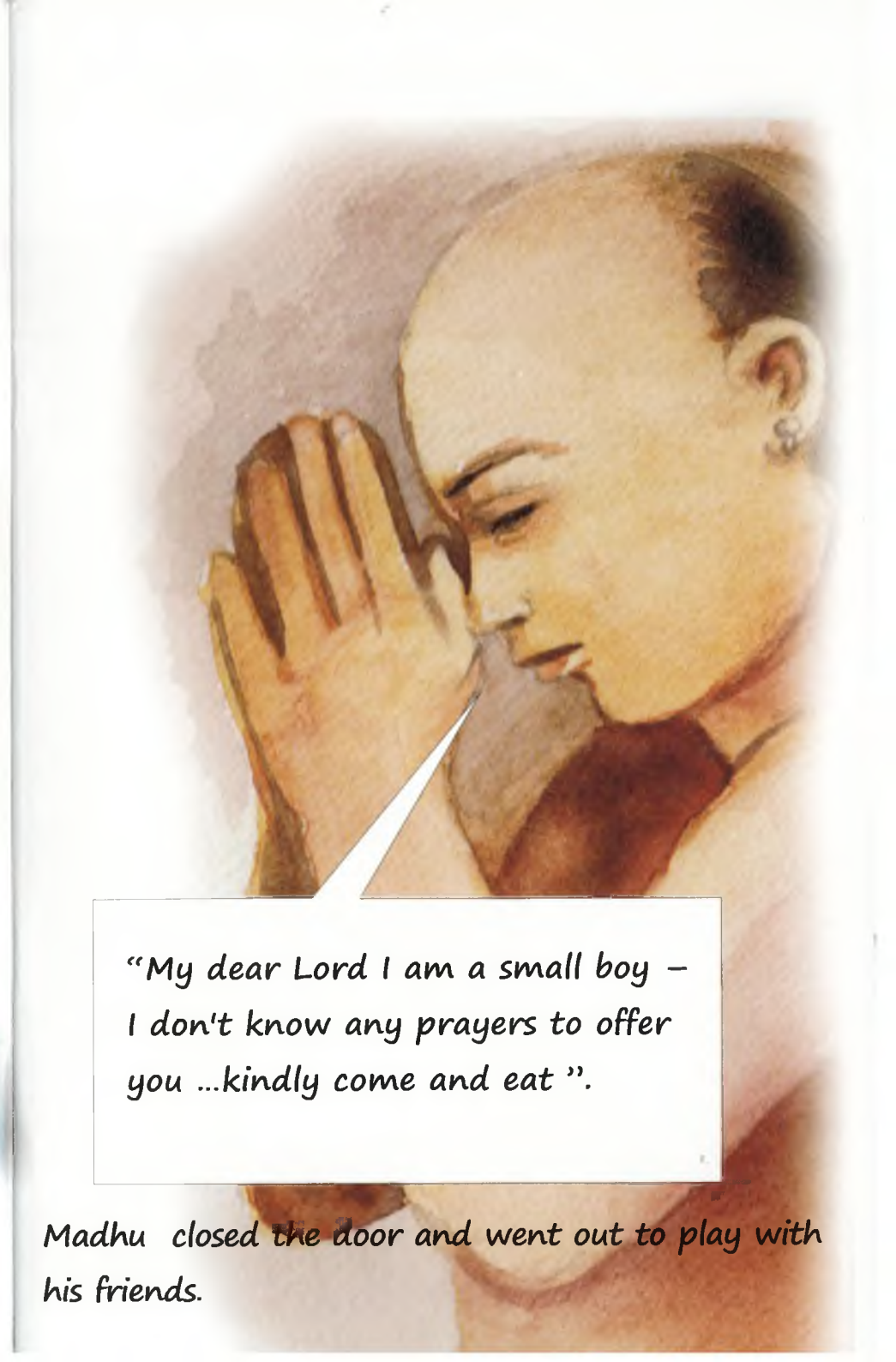
The next day when the time came for offering....Madhu's mother gave Madhu the plate with the days preparation to offer to Lord Alarnath.

As instructed by his father Madhu placed the leaf plate before the Lord. He offered hot rice, dal, sabji*, kheer** and water in fresh mud cups. He placed a Tulasi leaf on them and prayed....



* cooked vegetables

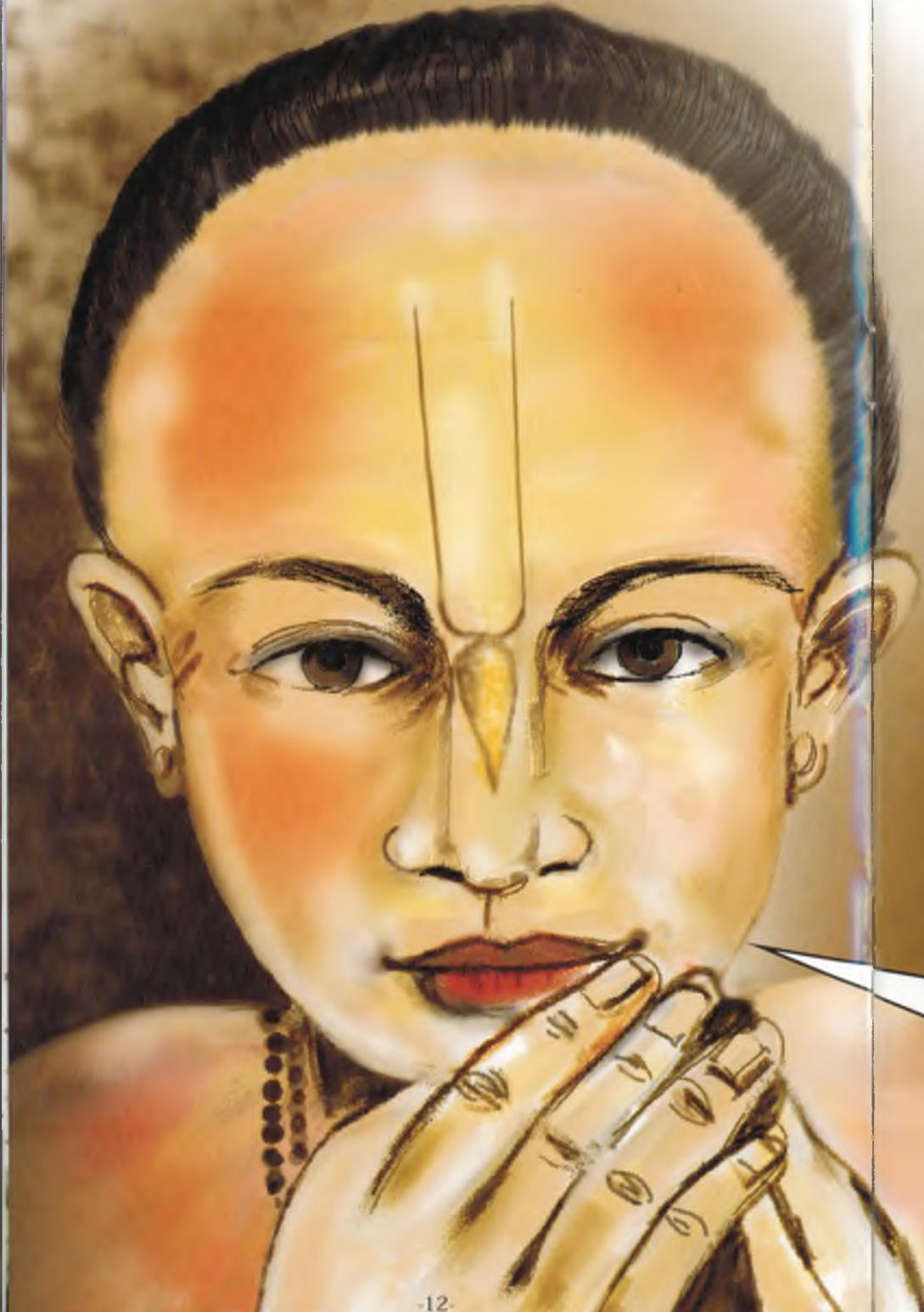
** sweet rice made from condensed milk



"My dear Lord I am a small boy - I don't know any prayers to offer you ...kindly come and eat".

Madhu closed the door and went out to play with his friends.





After sometime Madhu came back to check the offering he had made to Lord Alarnath. He was shocked!

The offering was as it is. He looked at Lord Alarnath and said

“My dear Lord, You are supposed to eat this... Kindly eat...”

Saying this he went to play again.



Again Madhu returned to see the food - it was still there. Now with tears in his eyes he started begging the Lord ...

“Please kindly accept this ... if my father comes to know about this he will be very angry with me.... If I have made any mistakes please forgive me. But please ...kindly accept the food...”

When Madhu came
back this time ... the
plate was empty!



He became happy and
went out to play.....again



When Madhu finished playing...
his mother asked him

"Madhu, what
happened to
the prasadam?"

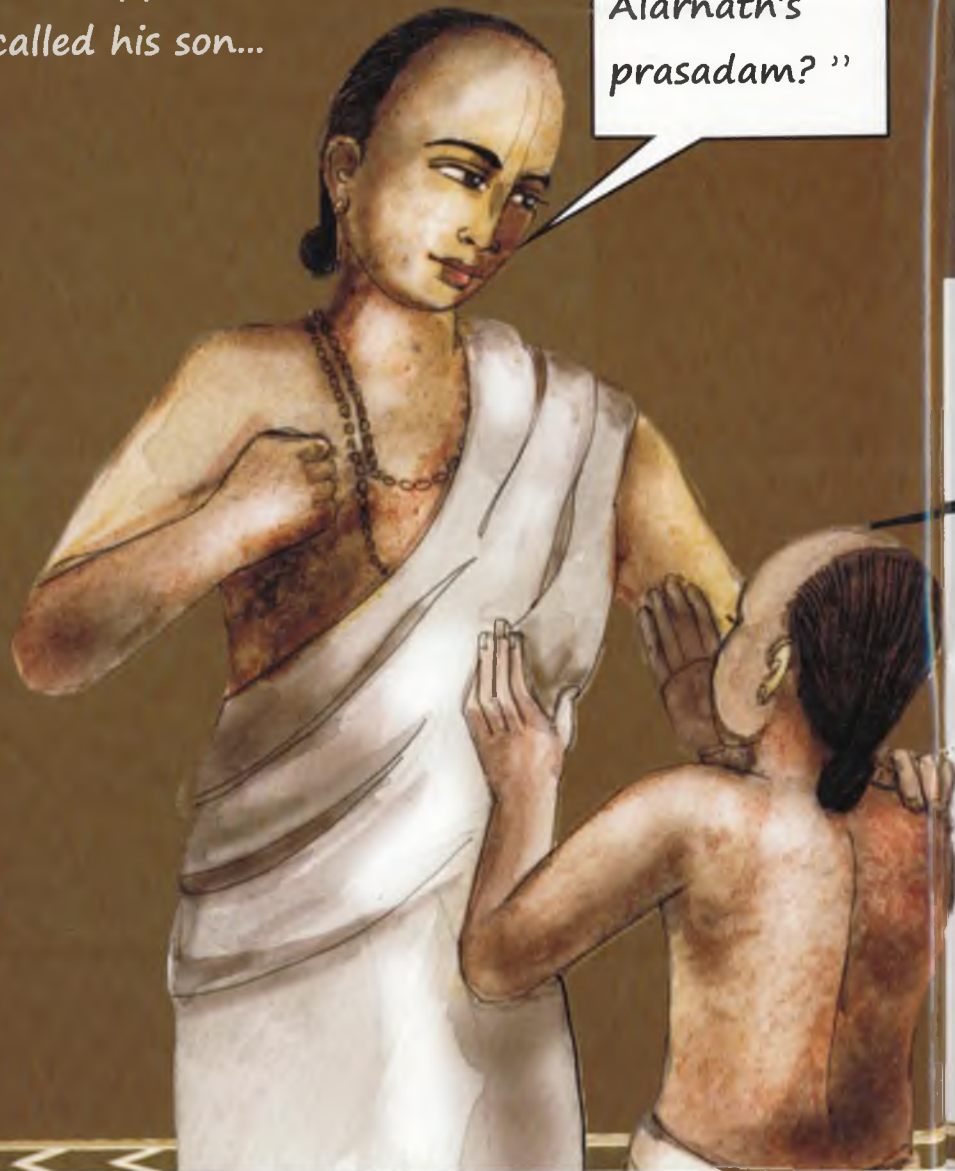
He brought the
empty leaf and showed
it to his mother !

"Maa...Alarnath
ate it all !"

This went
on for
three days ...

When Sriketan returned, he was surprised to hear from his wife about what was happening... He called his son...

"Madhu..What is happening? Where is Alarnath's prasadam? "



"Father, Alarnath ate it up I did what you taught me."

His father could not believe this. He raised his

voice.....



"How this can happen? Let me see for myself."

Next day

Sriketan hid behind a pillar and watched ...

His son Madhu came and kept the offering ..hot rice, dal, sabji, kheer and water with a Tulasi leaf on it.

He prayed as usual.



Then Madhu left, closing the door behind him. Soon the Lord appeared and stretched His hand to reach the hot cup of kheer.

Sriketan pounced from behind the pillar and caught the Lord's hand

"My LORD.. How can you do this.?"

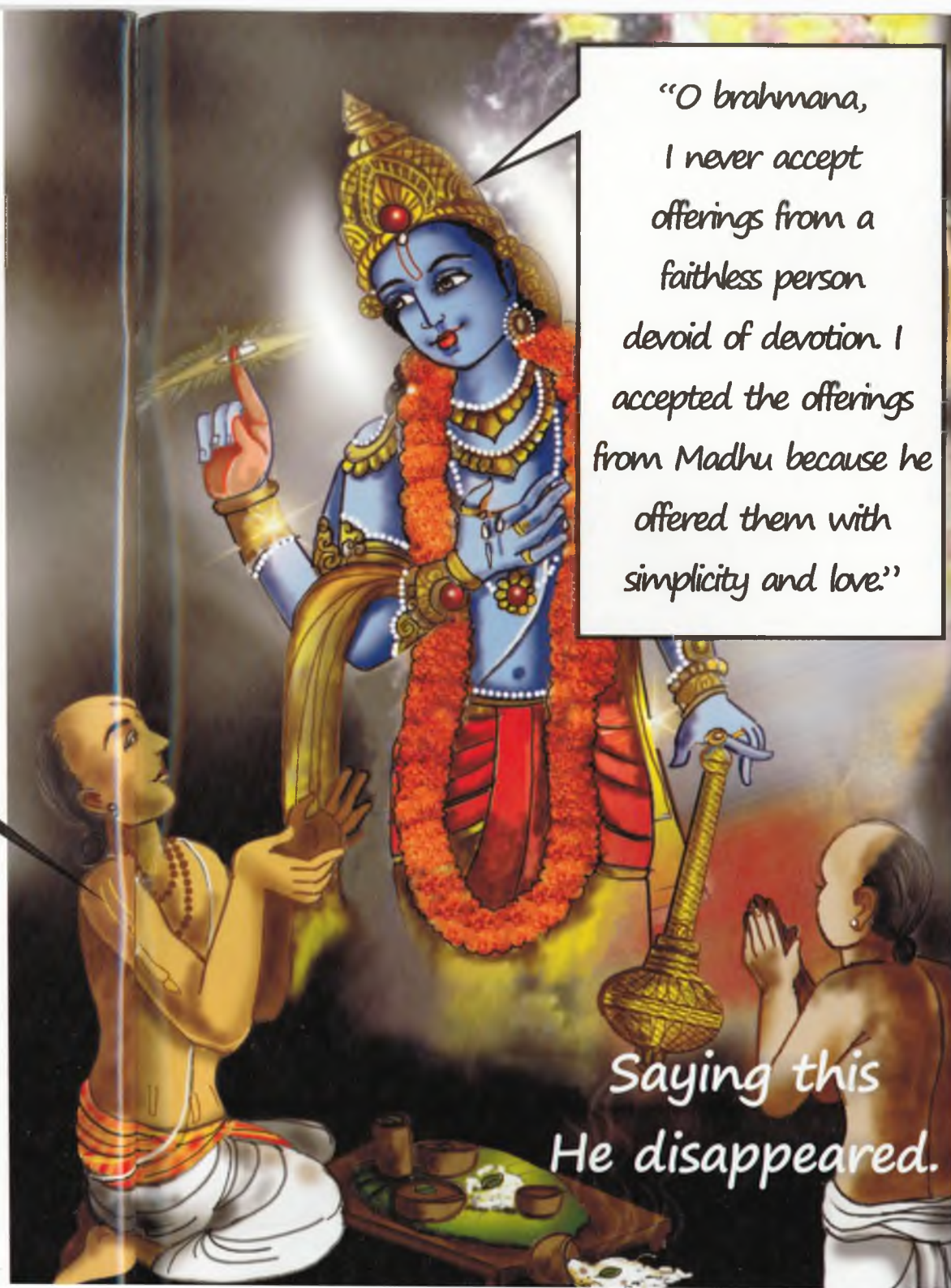


In the melee hot kheer spilled over the Lord's hand.

Hearing the commotion Madhu rushed in...and saw his father arguing with the Lord. Upon seeing the Lord he paid his respects

“Who ever heard of a Deity eating? If You eat everything, how will we live?”

“O brahmana, I never accept offerings from a faithless person devoid of devotion. I accepted the offerings from Madhu because he offered them with simplicity and love.”



Saying this
He disappeared.

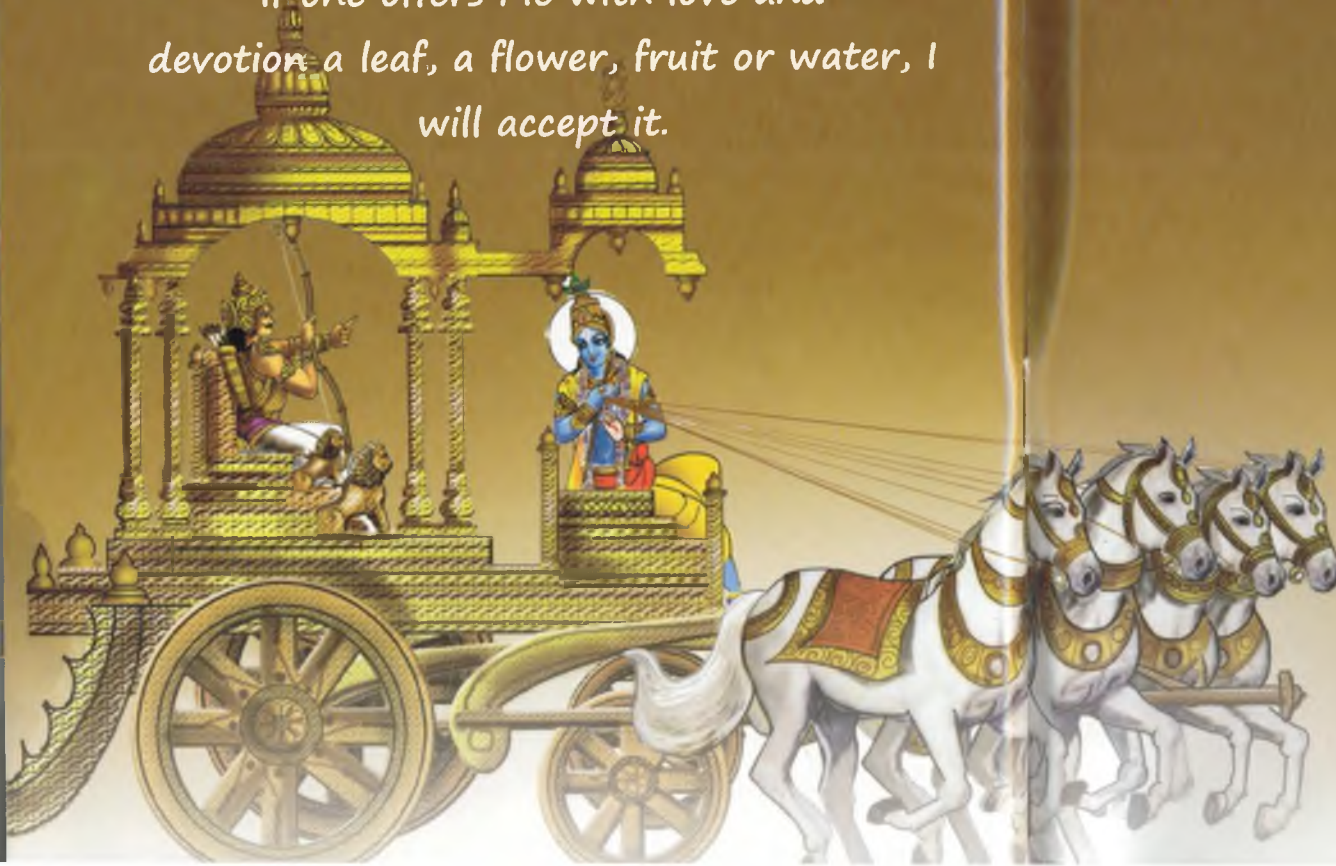
In BHAGAVAD GITA

chapter 9 verse 26

Krishna says to Arjuna

patram pushpam phalam toyam
yo me bhaktya prayacchati
tad aham bhakty-upahritam
asnami prayatatmanah

If one offers Me with love and
devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I
will accept it.



Only the devotee, who accepts Krishna as
He describes Himself, without
interpretation, can understand that the
Supreme Absolute Truth can eat food
and enjoy it.



-Srila Prabhupada