



# SANDARSHAN

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## Vishnu Sahasranama Part 17: Akshar – One Whose Greatness Never Fades

by Shri Chandan Goswami Maharaj

The 17<sup>th</sup> Name in the Shri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram is Akshar:

एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं ब्रह्म एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं परम् ।  
एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं ज्ञात्वा यो यदिच्छति तस्य तत् ॥

*etaddhyevākṣaram brahma  
etaddhyevākṣaram param ।  
etaddhyevākṣaram jñātvā yo  
yadicchati tasya tat ॥*



"This akshar is Brahm and it is Supreme. There is nothing outside of it or beyond it. One who knows this, gets all that he desires." (*Kathopanishad*, 1.2.16)

There is also another meaning of *akshar*:

क्षि क्षय इति धातोः क्षं नाशः ।  
न विद्यते क्षं यस्य तदक्षं वैकुण्ठादि तद्राति ददाति इति अक्षरः ॥

*kṣi kṣaya iti dhātōḥ kṣam nāśah ।  
na vidyate kṣam yasya tadakṣam vaikuṇṭhaadi tadrāti dadāti iti akṣarah ॥*

"Those whose supreme abodes are Vaikunth and Vrindavan are never destroyed. They are known as Akshar."

At the time of the Naimittik Pralay,<sup>1</sup> a demon called Shankhasur stole the *Veds* from Brahma whilst he slept. He then took refuge in the sea. Krishn took the form of a fish and killed Shankhasur. He then returned to Prayag<sup>2</sup> with the other gods and gave all four *Veds* to Brahma. Krishn gave Prayag the status of Tirtharaj, the king of all pilgrimages, and all the holy places of Jambudweep performed a *puja* for Tirtharaj Prayag (Prayagraj).

Then, Naradji visited Prayagraj and said, "All the main holy places came to you and made their offering, but Vrindavan didn't and has dishonoured you."

So Prayagraj went to Krishn and said, "You have made me a *tirtharaj*, but the famous pilgrimage, Vrindavan, has not honoured me."

The Lord replied, "I have made you the king of all the holy places on Earth. But I never made you the king of my Abode. Yet you desire to rule over it. Under the Mathura division, Vrindavan is my Supreme Abode. It is beyond the three worlds, and is not destroyed even during the apocalypse."

1. When Narayan lies down upon the bed of Anant Shesh and absorbs the entire Universe within himself while Brahma sleeps.
2. Prayag, at present known as the city of Allahabad, is the land where the three holy rivers meet: Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. In this story, the city was named Prayagraj, the king of all holy places. When the gods carried the nectar from the Samudra Manthan, one of the drops fell on Prayag. This is why the Kumbh Mela is held here every 12 years.

From the *Shri Vyas Vani*, the poet Hariraam Vyas writes:

श्री वृन्दावन की शोभा देखत मेरे नैन सिरात ।  
कुंजनि कुंज पुंज सुख बरसत हरखत सबके गात ॥  
राधा मोहन के निजु मंदिर महा प्रलय नहिं जात ।  
ब्रह्म तें उपज्यों न अखंडित कबहूँ नाहिं नसात ॥

*śrī vṛndāvana kī śobhā dekhata mere naina sirāta ।  
kumjani kumja pumja sukha barasata harakhata sabake gāta ॥  
rādhā mohana ke niju maṇdira mahā pralaya nahim jāta ।  
brahma tem upajyom na akhaṇḍita kabahūṁ nāhim nasāta ॥*

"By seeing the beauty of Vrindavan, my eyes receive so much bliss! The *gopijan* sing of the happiness that rains in every *kunj* and *nikunj*. Even during the apocalypse, which ends the existence of Brahma, Radha-Krishn's Vrindavan is never destroyed because it is not created by the formless God, Brahm. Vrindavan is Krishn's heart and can never be annihilated by the apocalypse."

Shri Baldev Vidyabhushan says, "Thakurji's beauty is eternal. It never diminishes. In fact, it increases with each moment. Thakurji's nature is also the same. It never worsens. It becomes greater with each moment."

In his statement, Baldevji describes two things:

## 1. Appearance

In the *Brhad-gautamiya-tantra*, Krishn's eternal age in Vrindavan is 15 years, nine months and seven days. He never ages a day beyond this figure. He is an eternal youth, and his body never deteriorates.

## 2. Nature

Here, Shri Baldev talks about a particular characteristic of Krishn: just as a magnet always attracts

iron, similarly Shri Krishn performs *lila* all the time; this never diminishes.

In the *Brahma Vaivart Puran*, Krishn says:

स्वच्छन्दं विहरिष्यामि नित्यं वृन्दावने वने ॥

*svacchandam viharisyāmi nityam vṛndāvane vane ॥*

"I readily perform pastimes in my Eternal Abode, Vrindavan."

In the *Padma Puran*, 52.3-5, Shiv says to Narad:

दासाः सखायः पितरौ प्रेयस्यश्च हरेरिह ।  
सर्वे नित्या मुनिश्रेष्ठ तत्तुल्याः गुणशालिनः ॥  
यथा प्रकटलीलायां पुराणेषु प्रकीर्तिः ।  
तथा ते नित्यलीलायां सन्ति वृन्दावने भूवि ॥  
गमनागमने नित्यं करोति वनगोष्ठयोः ।  
गोचारण वयस्यैश्च बिनासुर-विघातनन ॥

*dāsāḥ sakhāyah pitarau preyasyaśca hareriha |  
sarve nityā muniśreṣṭha tattulyāḥ guṇaśalinaḥ ॥  
yathā prakaṭalīlāyām purāṇeṣu prakīrtitāḥ |  
tathā te nityalīlāyām santi vṛndāvane bhūvi ॥  
gamanāgamane nityam karoti vanagoṣṭhayoḥ |  
gocāraṇa vayasyaiśca bināsura-vighātanana ॥*

"Shri Krishn's servant, friend, mother, father and lover are all eternal. He is always present in his manifest and unmanifest pastimes. Krishn and his eternal friends sometimes graze the cows and sometimes they roam in the forests of Vrindavan."

The nature of Krishn never changes. He is always present in one form in the past, present and the future.



# Holi



Holi in Braj begins on Vasant Panchmi and lasts for 40 days. Radharaman Lal wears a greenish-yellow (*vasanti*) coloured dress. In the evening, he sits on a golden throne. Special *bhog* of saffron-accented fudge (*barfi*) and clay pot sweets (*kuliya*) is offered. This marks the start of Holi Braj. A special Utsav Aarti takes place in the evening. From Vasant Panchmi until last day of Holi, brightly-coloured powder is offered to Radharamanji after Rajbhog Aarti along with Holi songs<sup>1</sup> accompanied by *dhp vadān*.<sup>2</sup>

## Holi Pad by Gunmanjari Das Goswami

श्रीराधारमण संग खेलहि होरी अतिहि उमंग भरी ।  
धन्य दिवस है आज को हेली धनि निस जाम घरी ॥

ले पिचकारी कर कमल सुकुमारी भरत सुरंग ।  
केसर की अति ताक में छोड़त पिय के अंग ॥

बरषत गौरघटा नव हेली पोषत श्याम तमाल ।  
अति उमंग सो लेत उर यह देखौ अद्भुत ख्याल ॥

मूठ गुलाल की नागरी भरभर मारत पीय कपोल ।  
कंकण झंकण बजतही हरिमल जु भयौ उतरोल ॥

नागरि मुखहि भिजोयवे पिय पिचकारी पुनिलेत ।  
प्रिया बचावत नील पट मुरि मुसिकन सुखदेत ॥

होहो होरी बोलहीं सब सखी देत हैं ताल ।  
कोऊ बजावै ढपहि लै कोऊ गावत रुचिर धमाल ॥

कबहुँक लाल भिजोवहीं सब पिचकारिन को छोर ।  
भीजे अंग पिय के लखे तब तिय बरजत दृग कोर ॥

नवल बसन अंग पोँछके नव बागे दुहुं पहराय ।  
नवभूषण पहराय रुचि पकवान देत पवाय ॥

श्रीजमुना जल प्याइके पुनि पुनि बीड़ी देत सहाय ।  
करत प्रेमसों आरती वारत तऊ न अघाय ॥

सिंहासन बैठे दोऊ हेली धरी सोंज पुनि खेल ।  
गुणमंजरी पिचकार अतर तब भरत चतुर मणि छैल ॥

1. Also known as *rasiya*.

2. A tambourine without bells.

shri radharaman sang khelahi hori atihi umang bhari ।  
 dhanya divas hai aaj ko heli dhani nis jaam ghari ॥  
 le pichkaari kar kamal sukumaari bharat surang ।  
     kesar ki ati taak mein chodat piya ke ang ॥  
 barshat gaur-ghataa nava heli poshat shyaam tamaal ।  
     ati umang so let ur yaha dekhau adbhut khyaal ॥  
 muth gulaal ki naagari bhar-bhar maarat piya kapol ।  
     kankan jhankan bajatahi harimal ju bhayau utrol ॥  
     naagari mukhahi bhijoyve piya pichkaari punilet ।  
     priyaa bachaavat neel pat muri musikan sukhdet ॥  
     hoho hori bolahin sab sakhi det hain taal ।  
 kou bajaavai dhapahi lai kou gaavat ruchir dhmaal ॥  
     kabahunk laal bhijovahin sab pichkarin ko chor ।  
     bhije ang piya ke lakhe tab tiya barajat drig kor ॥  
 naval basan ang ponchke nava baage duhun paharaay ।  
     navabhushan paharaay ruchi pakwaan det pavaay ॥  
 shri jamunaa jal pyaiken puni puni bidi det sahaay ।  
     karat premson aarti vaarat tau na aghaay ॥  
     sinhaasan baithe dou heli dhari sonj puni khel ।  
     gunmanjari pichkaar atar tab bharat chatur mani chail ॥

O *sakhi*, today is the most beautiful day! Because of the Holi holidays, Shri Priya-Lalju can spend every moment together! Taking a *pichkari* in her lotus hands, our darling Shri Priyaju showers her Lover in a cloud of sparkling saffron droplets. He feels just like a thirsty *tamaal* tree soaking in the rain of her blissful colours. And when he rushes up to catch her in his arms, *sakhi* I swear, I can never forget that moment in all my life. Shri Priyaju fills one lotus palm with a mountain of pink powder, as she gently pats Shri Lalju on his cheek, the sweet jingling of her bangles nearly knocking him unconscious. Collecting his wits as best he can, he somehow manages to find his own *pichkari*. Then, snatching the corner of his Sweetheart's blue veil, he soaks her lotus face with amber water. As she tries with all her might to twist out of his grasp, her cheeky smile completely melts him and all of us too. The Lovers' play is richly embellished by their dear *sakhis* singing the most enchanting *dhamaar*,<sup>3</sup> backed by the rhythm of the *daph*,<sup>4</sup> joyful clapping, and shouts of

3. A type of Holi song.

4. A large flat drum played only during the Holi season.

"Ho ho ho ho, holi hai!" Then, in a surprise attack, the *sakhis* too pull out *pichkaris* and empty them all over Shri Lalju at once! Shri Priyaju looks so endlessly adorable as she shyly drinks in his fully-soaked beauty in small sips from the corner of her eye. Sensing the Divine Couples' fatigue, the *sakhis* bring fresh towels and help them change into new clothes and jewellery. With great love they feed them the best fried snacks and sweets, accompanied by a generous serving of

Yamuna water to replenish their strength, finished off with fragrant *biri* (*paan*). Finally, the *sakhis* seat their beloved Couple on their *singhasan* and offer *aarti*, but nobody feels fully satisfied. And so once more, they bring back all the Holi items to play again! As Shri Gunmanjari fetches a *pichkari* for Shri Priyaju, our naughty Shri Lalju snatches it from her hands to drench his Beloved in his love once more.

## The Spring of Mahaprabhu's Birth

Phalguni Purnima marks the auspicious day of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's appearance. This year, the festival falls on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2023. In his *Shri Chaitanya Mahakavyam*, Shri Kavi Karnapur describes Mahaprabhu's birth as follows.

When Shri Krishn ended his *prakat lila*, love departed with him. Without real love, it was as if the world itself had ended. For the next 4,500 years, the Earth goddess and all souls could only weep in longing for his return, until at last he answered their prayers by coming again in the form of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

In preparation for his coming, the town of Navadwip in West Bengal began to embody its true nature as a secret form of Vrindavan.

The divine Ganga too flowed down from Shivji's matted locks, encircling the village to protect it.

In anticipation of her Beloved's coming, the goddess of Spring (Vasant Lakshmi) quickly applied *sindoor* in the form of *ashok* flowers, smiled with blossoming fields, called out to him in the song of the cuckoos and ran to him with jingling anklets in the form of buzzing bees. Goddess Earth too prepared for his arrival by decorating her whole body with the powerful dust from the lotus feet of great Vaishnavs.

It was night when he arose from the ocean of Sachi's womb. An enraptured Rahu thought to himself, "O moon! What good are you when the real and perfect Gaurang moon is rising?



He has come bringing sacred love with him, and at this precious moment of his birth, all creatures should do nothing but chant Harinaam to please him," and so he covered the moon with his shadow.

Entranced by the divine Child's beauty, all lotuses became the servants of his eyes, all bees offered themselves unto his handsome black eyebrows, and the moon itself vowed to forever serve his smile. And thereafter, when the proper date and time came, Mahaprabhu's father gave him a Name:

भविष्यतीदं  
निजकीर्तनादिभिर्विलासलावण्यसुधामयैर्जगत् ।  
इतीव विश्वम्भर इत्युदारधीरचीकल्पनाम

मनोरमाशयः ॥

*bhaviṣyatīdaṁ nija-kīrtanādibhirvilāsa-  
lāvanya-sudhā-mayairjagat ।  
itīva viśvambhara ityudāra-  
dhīraciklpannāma manoramāśayah ॥*

"As a blessing for his child's future, Mahaprabhu's father lovingly named him Vishwambhar, for he would soon fill (*bhar*) the Universe (*vishwa*) with *amrit* in the form of his beauty, *sankirtan* and sacred love." (*Shri Chaitanya Mahakavyam*, 2.62) And when the Lord of mercy placed his lotus foot on the Earth for the first time, goddess Earth found peace at last.



## Braj Animal Care



### Simba's Story

Location: Shri Krishna Sharanam

Cause/Concern: weakness and low temperature

Treatment: administered injection for infection, pain, inflammation and multi-vitamins given

This little pup was affectionately named Simba by the children in his local area. He was always smaller and weaker than the other puppies and he never had anything other than milk or water. Simba always refused *chapatti*, toast or biscuits. Braj Animal Care gave him deworming treatment and the first dose of the vaccine



Simba

schedule for puppies.

A few weeks later Simba was playing around the children and snoozing under the sun – nothing seemed off. The next morning, he was in bad shape and some local people took him into their home and kept him warm but he wasn't drinking any milk. Concerned, they called us to check on him. His temperature was really low and we think he might have been out in the cold all night without shelter. We treated him and left for our next case. Within an hour, were informed to come and check on him again as his condition wasn't improving. As we were rushing back to

administer a drip, we received another call informing us that Simba had taken his last breath. We checked to make sure there were no vital signs then we placed some Tulsi leaves in his mouth and buried him nearby.

For more information about Braj Animal Care's programs and services, please follow us on social media at:

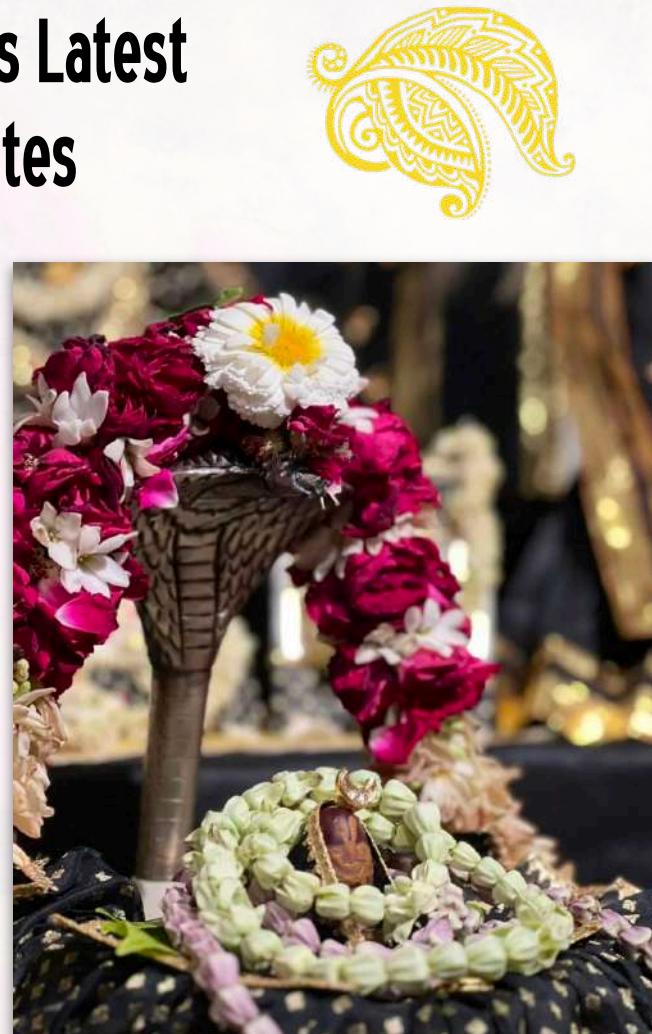
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## Maharajji's Latest Updates

Maharajji recently spent an evening with devotees in Delhi for the occasion of Mahashivratri. He explained that although Shiv can give his finest devotees supernatural powers, the greatest benediction he can bless them with is Harinaam. And this is why Vaishnavs worship Shiv.

Maharajji will be celebrating one of his favourite festivals, Holi, with disciples and devotees at the Radharaman Ghera (campus). Those of you who are in Vrindavan on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2023 are most welcome to join. The program will start at 10 am.

It is also Gaur Purnima, the appearance day of



Puja on Mahashivratri

Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Maharajji and his family will perform *abhishek* of the *utsav* deity, Mahaprabhu, at the Amiya Nimai Mahaprabhu Temple, Gopinath Bazar, from 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm.

## Spiritual Questions and Answers with Maharajji

**Q:** What should be our mood/feeling when we meet Shriji in Vrindavan for the first time?

**A:** Follow the mood given to you by your Guru. If you don't have a Guru, have the common mood, which is the *dasya bhaav*, then take Shriji's *darshan*.

For more information about Maharajji's upcoming programs, please contact us via the following channels:

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## Vaishnav Calendar

For upcoming festivals and Ekadashi dates, please click [here](#) to view our Vaishnav calendar.

