Radha’s Birthday Month Week 4

Topic

Week 1- Balaram Purnima- Balaram’s Birthday

Week 2- Janmasthami Krishna’s Birthday

Week 3- Prabhupad Vyasa Puja-Prabhupad’s Birthday

**Week 4- Radhasthami- Radha’s Birthday**

# Week 4 August 28- September 2

Next month is the Radha month, so this month just gives a little intro with Radharani’s appearance. Also, I have included the pastime where Krishna eats dirt and Mother Yashoda sees the universe (again- the first time was after He defeated Trinavarta.) After a month about Radharani, we will move back to Krishna’s pastimes with Damodar Lila in Kartik. This week has two recipes- because Radharani cooks for Krishna and I think a nice activity on Radhasthami is to make a cookie party- everyone gets to decorate cookies for Krishna.

Radharani is so esoteric- I feel like all other religions can be great and all for loving God- but as Gaudiya Vaishnavas we get to know what Krishna is *really like-* He loves to have relationships! And the most pure relationship is His counterpart Radharani. There is so much to dive into in regards to Radha tattva if you feel inspired. Actually I am not entirely sure we are really monotheistic… God seems to be Two- Krishna *and* Radha…!

## **Resources and Links**

Radha Darshan- You can look at different Temple websites to see amazing pictures of Radharani and Her Lotus Feet- <http://www.mayapur.tv/>

Krishna.com has a whole gallery of Radha paintings: <http://files.krishna.com/cgi-bin/ImageFolio42/imageFolio.cgi?search=Radharani&cat=Krishna_Conscious_Paintings&bool=and>

* *The Yellow Pond* by Taraka Devi Dasi- published by Chakra Press, an imprint of Bhaktivedanta Books Inc.
	+ Available in the US **only $4!!** : <http://www.vedicsky.net/the-yellow-pond.html>
	+ Available in Europe only **3 Euro!!** : https://blservices.com/product/the-yellow-pond-2/
* *The Pearl Story* also by Taraka Devi Dasi:
	+ Available in the US **only $5!!**  <http://www.vedicsky.net/the-pearl-story.html>
	+ Available in Europe only **3 Euro!!** : https://blservices.com/?s=the+pearl+story&post\_type=product

## **Recipe- Sugar Cookies with Decoration Icing**

I got this recipe online from <https://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/browse-all-recipes/sugar-cookies-1>. Let me know how it goes for you! If you are going to make this for a Radhasthami party, I would definitely double or triple this recipe. As it is it says it makes 36 cookies but I don’t believe that for one minute. I would say that it might make 20-24. Let me know how it works for you! If you are hosting a party, you want to have about 3-6 cookies per kid to decorate.

* 2½ cups all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled, plus more for the work surface
* ¼ teaspoon baking soda
* ¼ teaspoon salt
* 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature- or salted butter- just omit the salt.
* ¾ cup sugar
* 2 Tbs Yogurt or one mashed banana (to replace the egg)
* 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
* Coarse sanding sugar or turbinado sugar (optional)

You can do all of this with your bare hands if you don’t have a mixer. It will get gooey though!

**Step 1** In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, and salt.

**Step 2** Using an electric mixer, beat the butter and sugar until smooth. Add the yogurt or banana and beat until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the vanilla.

**Step 3** Reduce the mixer speed to low and gradually add the flour mixture, mixing until just incorporated (the dough will be stiff). Shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm, at least 1 hour.

**Step 4** Heat oven to 350° F. On a floured surface, roll the dough to ¼ inch thick. Using cookie cutters, cut into shapes. Place on parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing them 1½ inches apart. Sprinkle with the sanding sugar, if using.

**Step 5** Bake until just beginning to brown at the edges, 10 to 12 minutes. Cool slightly on baking sheets, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

**Icing Recipe-**This icing is super easy but it will be messy! You can make a few different bowls and use a spoon or butter knife to decorate the cookies. Decorations will be Jackson Pollock style probably- not a lot of scope for flowers and hearts.

All you need is to mix **1 cup of powdered sugar** with **2-3 Tbs of milk**, a **tsp of vanilla** and **a little food coloring** and you are good to go!

**A Much Simpler Recipe from Sudevi-Germany**

**3-2-1 for the European folk-**

**300 g White Flour- 2 Cups**

**200g Sugar- almost a Cup**

**100g Butter- ½ a Cup.**

I made the quanity bigger for a party as follows:

3 Cups Flour

1 1/3 Cup Sugar

¾ Cup Butter

If the dough is too crumbly, just add a tiny bit of water.

Bake at 350 for about 10 minutes, till they are slightly brown on the bottom.

## **Songs for Week 1**

This is a translation to Radhe Jaya Jaya Madhava Dayite. It is sung in the same melody and is in the attached mp3.

You can teach kids the word “Thee” for the last line. ☺

Radhe Jaya Jaya Madhava’s Dear One,

Gokula’s Gopis worship Your lotus feet!

For Damodara’s pleasure, You serve Him always!

You dress up beautifully in different clothes for each day.

Radhe Jaya Jaya Madhava’s Dear One.

Vrishabhanu’s daughter, bright like a moon ray,

Together with Lalita and Vishakha You play.

Radhe Jaya Jaya Madhava’s Dear One.

Ocean of compassion, have mercy on me,

Great sages Sanaka and Sanatana praise Thee.

Here’s the original:

 (refrain)
rādhe jaya jaya mādhava-dayite
gokula-taruṇī-maṇḍala-mahite

(1)
dāmodara-rati-vardhana-veśe
hari-niṣkuṭa-vṛndā-vipineśe

(2)
vṛṣabhānūdadhi-nava-śaśi-lekhe
lalitā-sakhi guṇa-ramita-viśākhe

(3)
karuṇāḿ kuru mayi karuṇā-bharite
sanaka-sanātana-varṇita-carite

## **This Week’s Activity**

I hope by Radha’s grace we will have a cookie decorating party for Her glorious birthday. To make it easier, you could ask everyone to bring a topping for the cookies, or to bring some bhoga cookies so the organizer doesn’t have to do everything herself/himself. It is nice to have a filling drink available for the kids to sip on so they don’t get too hungry and feel tempted to eat the cookies. You could go for a flavored milk, or a lassi or a smoothie/milkshake type drink. I like to have a permanent marker to mark everyone’s drinks so they know whose’ whose.

Please share photos if you do this activity!

You could also do a little Jhulan Party if you missed out in the Balaram Month and make/decorate a little swing for a picture of Radha and Krishna or some dolls/deities of Them.

You might find that kids really enjoy singing this week’s song as they make cookies or swing Radha and Krishna.

We made a party like this:

4pm-

* Cookie decorating
	+ We put ½ Cup of icing sugar and 2 spoons of milk in a bowl for each kid, with a popsicle stick and let them decide which color they wanted to add. They got to mix it all up with a popsicle stick and decorate their cookies. The finished cookies were arranged on paper plates.
* Offering
	+ We set up a small table with a picture of Radha and Krishna and arranged the platefuls of cookies in front of them. Then we made an elaborate offering- some kids knew the prayers so we chanted them together loudly.
	+ While Radha and Krishna were given time to enjoy Their offering, we sang the song of Radhe Jaya Jaya Madhava Dayite.
* Story
	+ I told the story of Radha’s appearance with lots of participation from a couple of girls who already knew the story. I am sure we could have told more stories as well.
* Games
	+ It wasn’t even 5 pm yet so we decided to play some games. A pretty good one was about Radharani and can be found on ISKCONdesiretree.com. It is called Cowherd Damsel, but we changed the Cowherd Damsel to Radharani. She does cook for Krishna after all.
	+ As we were playing, I thought a fun treasure hunt game could involve an enactment of the Rasa dance pastime, where the gopis are looking for Krishna. They can look to the trees and flowers etc for clues and then piece them all together to find their Krishna.
* Prasad-Dinner
	+ Kids drank lemonade, ate pasta, and had some popsicles along with their colorful cookies. It was really great!

## **This Week’s *Lila Katha***

If you want to hear some philosophy on the appearance and tattva of Radha- there is a short and good article on dandavats.com:

<http://www.dandavats.com/?p=4348>

The story I have adapted is from Krishna.com

<http://d6.krishna.com/srimati-radharanis-appearance>

# Srimati Radharani's Appearance



One night in the middle of the monsoon, King Vrishabhanu came to the Jamuna river to bathe, and found himself covered in a golden light made of pure love. The light was coming from a lotus, and in the middle of that big lotus flower, he found a beautiful baby girl. When Vrishabhanu came back to his home, his wife Mother Kirtida was overjoyed! They held the most beautiful girl in their arms but when She opened Her eyes, they were shocked that She was blind.

Mother Kirtida and Mother Yashoda were good friends, so when Mother Yashoda found out that Kirtida had a baby girl, she came to see her along with Nanda Maharaj, and her little boy. (Who is her little boy? ;-) When they got to Kirtida’s house, baby Krishna, who was only one year old, crawled up to the cradle and pulled Himself up to look inside. At that same moment, Srimati Radharani’s eyes fluttered and opened wide and blossomed like lotuses. It seems that she did not want to see anything of this world, only the form of Sri Krishna. Everyone was delighted!

As They grew up, They had many wonderful pastimes together, indeed They are always eternally immersed in transcendental love, and are the original source of all love in this world.

 “Srimati Radharani is the mother of the universe, the spiritual mother of all souls. Mothers are full of love- they give us so much love and teach us also how to love others. That is why we chant the Holy Names of Krishna, to learn from Radha how to love Krishna. One of Radha’s names is Hara- and in Sanskrit when we say “Oh Hara! We say- Hare!” Just like “Oh Radha!” turns into “Radhe!”

Just like when you are feeling sad, or bad, or hurt or anything like that, babies call out, “Mommy!”- actually we can all call out “Hare” or “Radhe” and call our universal mother for any problems we need help with.

# Gargamuni Performs the Name Giving Ceremony

Sorry- I didn’t have time this week to paraphrase.

After this incident, Vasudeva asked his family priest Gargamuni to visit the place of Nanda Mahārāja in order to astrologically calculate the future life of Kṛṣṇa. Gargamuni was a great saintly sage who underwent many austerities and penances and was appointed priest of the Yadu dynasty. When Gargamuni arrived at the home of Nanda Mahārāja, Nanda Mahārāja was very pleased to see him and immediately stood up with folded hands and offered his respectful obeisances. He received Gargamuni with the feeling of one who is worshiping God or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He offered him a nice sitting place, and when he sat down, Nanda Mahārāja offered him a warm reception. Addressing him very politely, he said: "My dear *brāhmaṇa,* your appearance in a householder's place is only to enlighten. We are always engaged in household duties and are forgetting our real duty of self-realization. Your coming to our house is to give us some enlightenment about spiritual life. You have no other purpose to visit householders." Actually a saintly person or a *brāhmaṇa* has no business visiting householders who are always busy in the matter of dollars and cents. If it is asked, "Why don't the householders go to a saintly person or a *brāhmaṇa* for enlightenment?" the answer is that householders are very poor-hearted. Generally householders think that their engagement in family affairs is their prime duty and that self-realization or enlightenment in spiritual knowledge is secondary. Out of compassion only, saintly persons and *brāhmaṇas* go to householders' homes.

**Krishna Eats Dirt**

This is actually a separate pastime from when Mother Yashoda looked in His mouth after He defeated Trinavarta.

Another day, when Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were playing with Their friends, all the boys joined Balarāma and told mother Yaśodā that Kṛṣṇa had eaten clay. On hearing this, mother Yaśodā caught hold of Kṛṣṇa's hand and said, "My dear Kṛṣṇa, why have You eaten earth in a solitary place? Just see, all Your friends including Balarāma are complaining about You." Being afraid of His mother, Kṛṣṇa replied, "My dear mother, all these boys, including My elder brother Balarāma, are speaking lies against Me. I have never eaten clay. My elder brother Balarāma, while playing with Me today, became angry, and therefore He has joined with the other boys to complain against Me. They have all combined together to complain so you will be angry and chastise Me. If you think they are truthful, then you can look within My mouth to see whether I have taken clay or not." His mother replied, "All right, if You have actually not taken any clay, then just open Your mouth. I shall see."

When the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa was so ordered by His mother, He immediately opened His mouth just like an ordinary boy. Then mother Yaśodā saw within that mouth the complete opulence of creation. She saw the entire outer space in all directions, mountains, islands, oceans, seas, planets, air, fire, moon and stars. Along with the moon and the stars she also saw the entire elements, water, sky, the extensive ethereal existence along with the total ego and the products of the senses and the controller of the senses, all the demigods, the objects of the senses like sound, smell, etc., and the three qualities of material nature. She also could perceive that within His mouth were all living entities, eternal time, material nature, spiritual nature, activity, consciousness and different forms of the whole creation. Yaśodā could find within the mouth of her child everything necessary for cosmic manifestation. She also saw, within His mouth, herself taking Kṛṣṇa on her lap and having Him sucking her breast. Upon seeing all this, she became struck with awe and began to wonder whether she were dreaming or actually seeing something extraordinary. She concluded that she was either dreaming or seeing the play of the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. She thought that she had become mad, mentally deranged, to see all those wonderful things. Then she thought, "It may be cosmic mystic power attained by my child, and therefore I am perplexed by such visions within His mouth. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead under whose energy bodily self and bodily possessions are conceived." She then said, "Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Him, under whose illusory energy I am thinking that Nanda Mahārāja is my husband and Kṛṣṇa is my son, that all the properties of Nanda Mahārāja belong to me and that all the cowherd men and women are my subjects. All this misconception is due to the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord. So let me pray to Him that He may protect me always."



## **Mayapur Adventures**

My darling little helper has not finished her story yet- I can send one when she is done. ☺