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## the story of lord krishna

Around 5000 years ago, King Ugrasen ruled the small Indian village of Mathura. He was loved by all of his people, and raised two very fine children, Kans and Devki. As his children grew older, they both went their own ways. Kans jailed his father, and was the new King of Mathura. He still loved his sister, Devki, with a lot of heart, and got her married to an army officer, called Vasudev. On the day of their wedding, Kans found out that Devki's eighth child would be born to kill him. For that reason, he though it would be wise to kill his sister Devki. Vasudev was very dear to Devki, and would not let this happen. They then came to an agreement that Kans will prison them, and let them live. But, they have to hand every child to Kans, so it can be killed. Kans had succeeded in killing all of Devki's six children, and her seventh child, was transferred into Rohini's womb. Being the second wife of Vasudev, Balram was then born to her, and Kans was fooled into thinking that Devki had a miscarriage.

Krishna, being the eighth child, was born on a stormy night in that same prison. As the guards fell asleep, the gates of the prison opened freeing the family. Vasudev hid Krishna in a basket covered with a blanket and made their way to Gokul, where his friend Nand lived. While passing River Yamuna, the waters had turned wild. As Krishna's foot touched the waters, the river parted making it easier for Vasudev to pass through. At that moment, Vasudev realized that Krishna was not a normal child but a divine human being.

Nand & Yashoda became Krishna's foster parents and Vasudev returned to the jail with Yashoda's newborn daughter. She was then passed to Kans, to be killed as the eighth child of Devki. However, while taking this daughter by the legs, ready to end her life. She disappeared into thin air, being just an illusion and leaving a message that 'the eighth child was born and is safe in Gokul'. Krishna grew up to be the son of Nand and Yashoda, and as destiny had predicted, he killed his uncle Kans, and all of Mathura was saved from his rule.

Janmastami By Ami Gadhia

## janoastaoi the festival

Janmastami comes 8 days after the full moon of the Shravan month and it celebrates the birth of Lord Krishna. Many devotees begin fasting from 'Sataam' till the midnight of Krishna's birth, where it is broken by tasting the 'Prashad' that was offered to him. There are two types of fasts; *Nirjal* fast is where they do not even have a drop of water on this day. They feel it will take them closer to God. The other fast is *Phalahar Vrat*, where only milk and fruits is eaten on this day. Salt and Cereals is also avoided on this day. People feel that it is the only thing that they can offer to God. Fasting is accompanied by singing bhajans throughout the day. Traditional sweets, made out of milk and butter are also eaten on this day, being one of Krishna's favorite dishes.

"Jhanki" means peeping into ones life. In this case, the moments of Krishna's life is relived. People or Dolls are dressed up as Krishna, Devki and Vasudev. There are five scenes that are usually reconstructed. These are the birth of Krishna, Vasudev carrying Krishna safely across River Yamuna, His return to jail, the killing of Yashoda's daughter and Little Krishna in his cradle in Gokul. The people that dress up are not seen as humans at this moment, but a representation of the Lord.

The festival of Janmastami can go on for a number of days, as per family tradition. So, on the second day, the ladies usually wake up early to make a paste out of rice flour, and imprint footsteps coming towards their door. This symbolises Krishna's footsteps into his foster home.

The 'Dahi Handi' ceremony also takes place later on this day. It consists of a clay pot being filled with milk, dry fruits and ghee, hung up on a rope above the ground. Many form a human pyramid to break the pot, and the people around throw water on them, trying to stop them. Many believe that a broken piece from this pot will keep away negative powers.



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