



# SANDARSHAN

Monthly Newsletter

2021 December

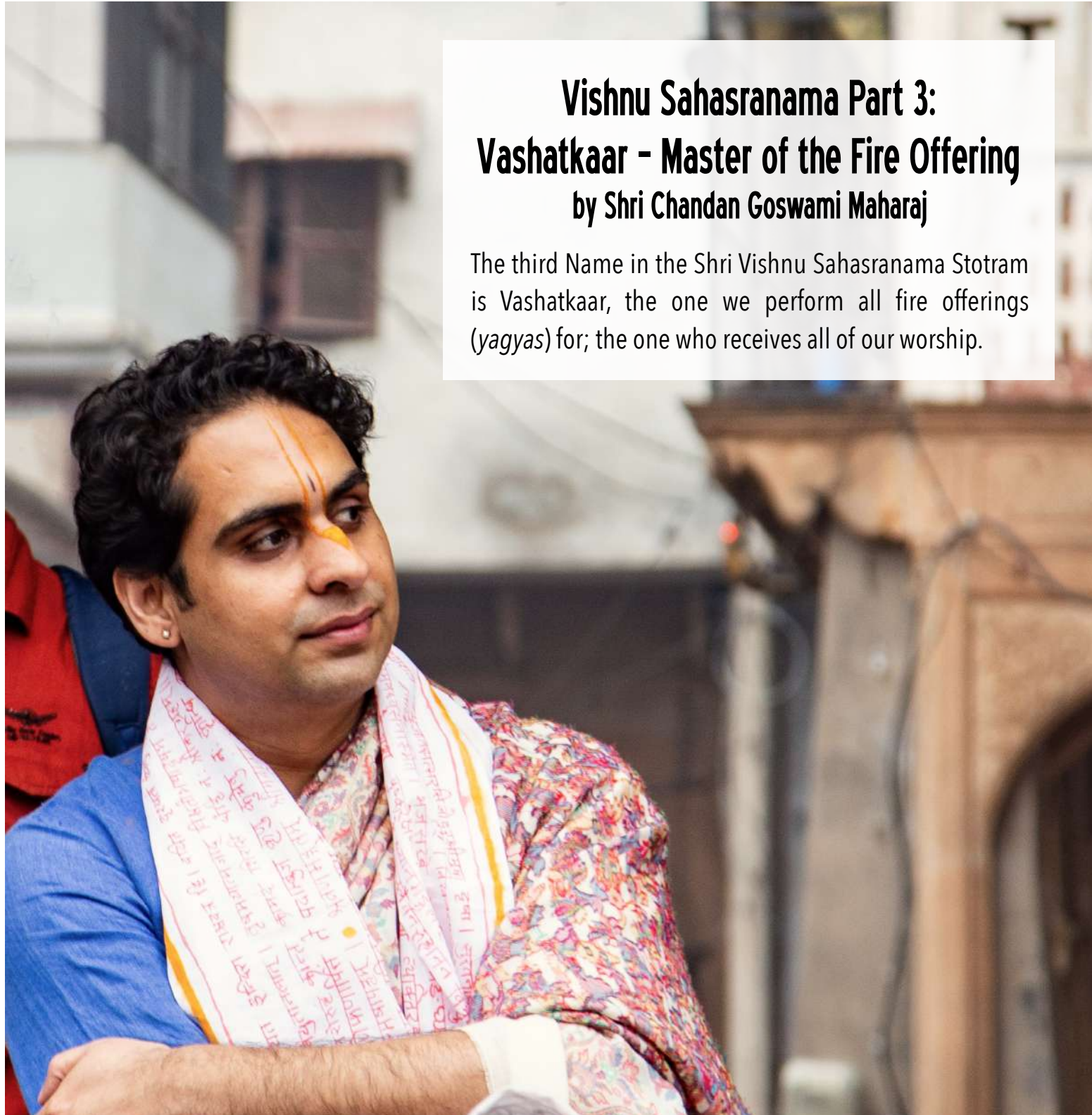
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## Vishnu Sahasranama Part 3: Vashatkaar - Master of the Fire Offering by Shri Chandan Goswami Maharaj

The third Name in the Shri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotram is Vashatkaar, the one we perform all fire offerings (yagyas) for; the one who receives all of our worship.



*Vashat* is a *mantra kriya*, a type of ritual used in a *yagya*. Because all the *ahutis* or offerings in this ritual are for Shri Krishn, he is described as *yagya vashatkaar*.

Shri Baldev Vidyabhushan also interprets *Vashatkaar* according to his cherished *bhav*, saying "Shri Krishn is the Lord of all *yagyas*."

विष्णोः शम्योर् अहं देवयज्यया यज्ञेन प्रतिष्ठां  
गमेयम् इत्य् आह

यज्ञो वै विष्णुर् यज्ञ एवान्ततः प्रति तिष्ठति ।

*viṣṇoḥ śamyor ahaṁ devayajyayā  
yajñena pratiṣṭhāṁ gameyam ity āha  
yajño vai viṣṇur yajña evāntataḥ prati  
tiṣṭhati ।*

"Bhagwan Vishnu is the Lord of all *yagyas*. Each offering that is placed into the sacred fire

is taken by the fire god and offered by him to Bhagwan Vishnu." (*Taittiriya Samhita*)

यज्ञैस्त्वमिज्यसेऽचिन्त्य सर्वदेवमयाच्युत ।  
त्वमेव यज्ञो यष्टा च यज्वनां परमेश्वर ॥

*yajñāistvamijyase'cintya  
sarvadevamayācyuta ।  
tvameva yajño yaṣṭā ca yajvanām  
parameśvara ॥*

"O Achyut (Krishn)! You are beyond all logical thought, and all the the gods reside in you. You are the receiver of all *yagyas*, the fruit of all *yagyas* and the *yagya* itself." (*Vishnu Puran*)

In the same way, if everything we do becomes an offering, then the fruit of our life's *yagya* will be Shri Krishn himself.



## Raskhan - Part 1 The Treasure House of Love



Raskhan was born to a Muslim family in Delhi under the name Sayed Pathan. In India, the word Pathan describes people of Pashtun ancestry, thus we know Raskhan's ancestors were from modern-day Afghanistan or nearby areas.

When Sayed came of age, he fell desperately in love with a Hindu merchant's son. He was so lovesick that he refused to eat anything but the boy's leftovers, and his thirst was only quenched by the drops of water at the bottom of the boy's cup.

Sayed's unorthodox passions, and that too towards a Hindu boy, were not accepted by his Muslim peers. They excluded him from their community and called him a *kafir* (infidel).

But whenever someone found faults in him, Sayed would just draw his sword and say, "I am what I am, and if you have a problem with it, I will kill you." This was enough to keep his disapproving peers out of his life. Thus Sayed's courtship of the young Hindu man continued for a long time.



Shrinathji and Raskhan

One day, two devotees saw Sayed passing by. One of them whispered excitedly, "Sayed's passion is so sincere! He doesn't care what anyone thinks of him, and he is ready to risk everything for his beloved! If only we had that kind of attachment for Shri Krishn!" The other devotee was shocked by the thought, leaving him with a strange expression on his face.

Noticing this interaction, Sayed stormed towards the pair with sword in hand. "Why are you whispering and making faces at me?" he demanded.

"We weren't! We were just talking . . ."

"If you tell me the truth, I might forgive you. But if you keep lying, I will slaughter you right now!"

Somehow controlling his fear, one of the devotees sweetly told Sayed, "We were just saying, if you loved *our* boy the way you love *that* boy, then your life would be truly blissful!"

"Well, who is your boy?" asked Sayed.

"He is the divine Beloved, Shri Krishn."

"What does he look like?"

Tucked in the folds of the devotee's turban was a small painting of Shrinathji, a form of Shri Krishn. He gently removed the painting and showed it to Sayed. Krishn was depicted stunningly with a dancing skirt and a peacock-feather crown. In that sacred moment when Sayed laid his eyes on the Lord for the first time, his whole heart detached from the boy and attached to Shri Krishn's lotus feet.

The 17th-century saint Hariray comments here that even worldly attachment can lead to divine attachment if it is deep and true. In other words, because Sayed's love was so sincere, Shri Krishn diverted it away from the boy and onto himself.

Sayed then asked, "Where does this divine Beloved live?"

"He lives in the sacred land of Braj."

"Then I will go to Braj and find him! Please give me his picture so I can recognise him."

Understanding that something special was happening, the devotee gifted his painting of

Shrinathji to Sayed, and Sayed set off on foot for Braj. He was determined to meet Shri Krishn and win his eternal love.

Here it should be mentioned that a relationship with Shri Krishn does not depend on our worldly gender identity or sexual orientation. Anyone can seek the Lord as their divine Beloved, because the soul transcends everything impermanent, including our physical body and all the desires associated with it. Further, in his *Raag Vartma Chandrika*, Shri Vishwanath Chakravarti explains that we must take another birth in order to join Shri Krishn's eternal *lilas*. The gender of this new, divine form depends on the mood of sacred love we cherish towards the Lord.

Sayed did not know any of this at the time, but without considering any possible barriers, he embarked fearlessly on the path.

*To be continued . . .*

#### References

*Do Sau Bavan Vaishnavan ki Varta* with the *Bhavprakash* commentary of Shri Hariray Raskhan, *Ras ki Khan* by Vrajakishori Publications



## Braj Animal Care



### A Volunteer's Experience

Braj Animal Care welcomes volunteers who wish to come and serve our animal friends with us out on the streets of Vrindavan. Here, Kirtida Anuragini, a dear devotee of Radharamanji and a microbiologist from New Delhi, shares her experience of volunteering with the team:

"I finally got the opportunity to volunteer with Braj Animal Care, a longtime wish of mine. The case involved five very sick puppies living in the Radharaman Temple campus. We received calls about them late in the night, and by all accounts, these puppies were not well at all. When we arrived at the scene, one had already died, two were really struggling to survive, and the other two were in a better condition than their siblings.

"The Braj Animal Care vet, Dr. Shrivastav, confirmed what we suspected already. The puppies had parvovirus, a deadly disease which kills them very quickly. The puppies were administered medication and saline, but I could see that their condition was deteriorating rapidly. We kept fighting to give the puppies any possible chance of survival, unwilling to leave them in their time

of need. While our emotions were swinging between a flicker of hope and fear of the eventual outcome, we asked the children who had gathered around to sing *kirtan* with us and bless the puppies' souls. We also got some *prasadi* tulsi of Shri Radharamanji from the temple and placed it in the mouths of the dead and dying.

"By morning, only the strongest puppy remained with us, and despite having already been exposed to parvovirus, he was vaccinated against the disease. More than a week later, that puppy is still alive and doing well. The Braj Animal Care team said that given the seriousness of the situation, the survival of even one puppy is a positive outcome.

"This experience will remain with me for the rest of my life. The most important lesson I learned is to always try my best, no matter how difficult the situation is and without fearing the outcome. I thank Braj Animal Care for this wonderful opportunity and hope to do more *seva* with this amazing team in the future."



Kirtida with a different puppy patient

Since Kirtida came to volunteer with us in Vrindavan, the team has continued to visit the remaining puppy in Radharaman Ghera to treat him. At present, the puppy is doing well and we will continue to look after him the best we can.

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## Maharajji's Latest Updates



The holy month of Kartik was very busy and blessed for Maharajji's team in Vrindavan. Each day, approximately 100 ghee lamps were offered in the Shri Radharaman Temple. Each lamp was sponsored by devotees who were unable to make this offering in person. Any funds in excess of the cost of the lamps will be used in Radharamanji's *seva* during the next Premotsav. Many devotees also sponsored prayers and *pujas*, and *prasad* distribution for *sadhus* and Brajwasis. It was an honour to be a medium for their love-offerings to Radharamanji. We regularly receive requests to make offerings on behalf

of devotees throughout the year. A list of current *sevas* that are available can be found [here](#).

### Kartik Purnima Procession

Kartik Purnima was celebrated on November 19th, 2021. This marks the day when Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu visited Vrindavan around five centuries ago. Similarly, the ancient deity of Shri Amiya Nimai Mahaprabhu arrived in Vrindavan on this day in 1936 C.E. and came under the loving care of Shri Chandan Maharajji's family.



Devotees singing *kirtan* as part of the Kartik Purnima procession

For the last 85 years, this blissful day has been celebrated with a grand *kirtan* procession, during which a special *chitrapat* or painting of Mahaprabhu is placed on a richly-decorated chariot and taken for *parikrama* around Vrindavan. All along Mahaprabhu's path, devotees who have waited all year for this moment come out of their homes and temples to offer him *puja*. As we witness their tears of love, it feels as if they are really seeing Mahaprabhu in person. The experience is so touching that devotees from all over India and beyond attend the event every year.

## Shri Gopi Geet Katha in December

Shri Chandan Goswami Maharaj will fill our hearts with the nectar of *Shri Gopi Geet* from December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The timings and venue will be announced soon. The *katha* will also be live on Facebook. We invite you to follow Maharajji on social media for updates:

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## Vaishnav Calendar

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

