

Name: _____ Date: _____

Narsimha Avatar

The Fourth incarnation of Lord Krishna

The demon, Hiranyaksha (who fought with Lord Varaha), had a twin brother named Hiranyakashipu. He performed severe austerities for one hundred years to please Lord Brahma. He received a boon from Lord Brahma that he could not be killed by a man or beast, during the day or night, inside the house or outside, on the land, sea, or in the sky, or by any weapon or by the hands of any man. Now he thought he could live forever and he became very puffed up with his power.

Hiranyakashipu had a son named Prahlāda. Even though Hiranyakashipu was the greatest demon, somehow his son was born a great devotee. His father was always trying to change him and teach him to be a demon but Prahlāda never stopped remembering and loving Krishna.

Hiranyakashipu became so angry at Prahlād's devotion that he decided to kill him. He threw him from a cliff but Krishna caught him. He put Prahlāda in a pen with mad elephants but an elephant picked him up and put him safely on his back. Hiranyakashipu tried to poison him but Prahlāda offered his food first to Lord Krishna and the poison had no effect. He tried to burn him in a fire but Prahlāda came out without being burned at all. He tried to kill Prahlāda in so many ways but Krishna always protected his dear devotee.

Hiranyakashipu became so frustrated and angry. He asked Prahlāda where he got his power. Prahlāda replied that he got his power from the Lord. This made Hiranyakashipu even more furious and he began challenging Prahlāda, saying, "Where is your Lord? Is He here? Where is He now?! Is He here in this pillar?!"

Saying this, he angrily struck a pillar and from the broken pillar a fierce, frightening, half-man, half-lion incarnation of the Lord appeared. This was Lord Narasimhadeva. Hiranyakashipu and Lord Narasimhadev began a raging battle with each other.

The Lord fought with the demon for some time. In early evening, as the sun was just setting, He captured the demon, put him on His lap and killed him by piercing his stomach with His strong claws. The Lord killed Hiranyakashipu without breaking the boon he had received from Lord Brahma. He wasn't killed in the day or night, but at dusk. He wasn't killed inside or outside, but in the doorway of Hiranyakashipu house. He wasn't killed by weapons or by the hands of any man or beast, but by the claws of a half-man, half-beast. He was not killed in the land, sea or sky, but in the lap of the Supreme Lord. In this way, Lord Narasimhadeva destroyed the demon and protected his dear devotee, Prahlāda.

