

nama djaar

A monthly journal glorifying Sanatana Dharma from the portals of Bhakti

Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare , Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare

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Mind the Mind!

Let us talk about physical strength. The gait of a man walking with free hands is natural and easy. But when carrying a burden, his walk slows down to the extent of the weight that he carries. When the burden is heavy he is unable to walk a long distance; when it is too heavy he may even be pulled down. However a person used to carrying heavy loads may carry it without much ado.

Physical strength depends on the physique of the individual. One blessed with good physical strength is able to carry out any physical work effortlessly. But one with a weak body is unable to do any physical work easily. In the same way, there is difference in mental power too. Just as the body works only to the extent of its ability, so too, does the mind work only to the extent of its ability.

The strength to withstand joy and sorrow is not the same in all. Some are unable to face even small failures in their lives and take wrong steps to overcome their grief. For example, the short tempered and those who are seized with pointless fears are weak minded. Such emotions weaken their



minds.

But there are people who are able to face and overcome all trials and tribulations and attain their goals. Some are sagacious enough to feel that joy and sorrow are part and parcel of life. Even when struck with great sorrow they are not affected deeply. Such people are strong minded.

The chain of sorrow and joy affects the mind and weakens it. As a result, confusion prevails; the mind is unable to take any decision in the matter. The level of distress or exhilaration due to sorrow or joy depends on the strength of the mind. The effect of joy and sorrow on one whose mental power is high is very less and he is verily considered to be strong minded.

A man requires not only a strong physique but also a strong mind. Just as exercise is needed to maintain a strong body, so too, exercise is required for possessing a strong mind. Just as food restrictions and regulation in one's habits are obligations for good physical health, so too, are there rules and regulations for the mind. One who follows these enhances his mental strength. By strengthening the mind through spir-

The mind and the moon

Our Scriptures portray the moon to be the 'mind' of the cosmic form of the Lord. And this is no imagination, says modern science! There is a strong scientific correlation between the moon and the human mind. The gravitational force on the moon (experienced clearly during full/new moon days) causes not only the water in the seas to soar, but also the liquid in the human brain to gush up. This happens for everyone. While the mentally strong people are affected to a lesser extent, the mentally sick are unable to bear it and become deeply disturbed.

Lunar effects and the term 'lunatic' – does this ring a bell now?

itual exercises the power to withstand sorrows is increased.

In this Age, performance of Nama San-kirtan (singing the Divine Names of God) is the only easy exercise to strengthen the mind!

*Excerpts from the discourses of Sri Muralidhara Swamiji of Chennai, India***

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A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THE KIDS WHO PARTICIPATED IN LAST MONTH'S CROSSWORD CONTEST! (Crossword Solution on Page 3)



The Grand Prize winner is
POOJITHA KOWLIGI, 11 years, CERRITOS, CA

The other winners are:

Shivam Dave, 13, Houston, TX; Tejas Dave, 15, Houston, TX

Yogasre Manasvini, 11, Muscat, Oman; Muktha Nair, 11, Houston, TX



**There may appear to be variations in the 'tense' of the language. This is due to the fact that great effort has been taken to maintain the original style of the lecture. Any discrepancy/lapse in the translated version is the sole responsibility of the person/s who translated the work from Tamil into English.



Greatness of a Guru

—Remembering the Guru on Guru Poornima

It is said that the Vedas are the lifeline of the entire mankind, not just of the land of Bharat. The very fact that the Vedas still exist amongst us in the gross form of sound is due to the foresight of the great patriarch of Sanatana Dharma, Sage Veda Vyasa.

Of all the incarnations of the Lord, the incarnation of Sage Vyasa is the greatest. Why? We get to know about all of God's exploits in His avatars only through his authorship of the 18 Puranas and the Itihasas.



Sri Muralidhara Swamiji performing Vyasa Puja

The most apt Dharma for this age – Bhagavata Dharma – that comprises of chanting the Divine Names of the Lord, submitting ourselves to the will of God, and living a life of compassion, love, and devotion, finds its authority in the Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana, and the entire credit goes to Sage Vyasa.

Guru Poornima or *Vyasa Poornima* (which falls on July 7 this year) is an auspicious day to remember Veda Vyasa and our own respective Gurus. It is a practice to offer Vyasa Puja on this day, and it marks the beginning of *Chaturmasya*, the four months during which ascetics halt their wanderings and undertake austerities.

Divinity is one; tastes and attitudes are many. So to cater to all, that divinity takes different Names and comes down as different forms, to lead us

back to the hallowed source. These different forms are the different Gurus, instituted in their respective traditions.

A Guru is not a commodity nor can we ourselves find one. It is only the Guru who finds us and He does so only because of His mercy. Some may deem it

to be a fruit of their merits, but the fact is, a Guru's mercy is simply causeless.

One might ask, "Why do I need a Guru? Can I not acquire devotion or *jnana* (Divine knowledge) or attain God

through books and scriptures?" It is important to understand that books can only teach us about God, about devotion and about *jnana*. That is entirely different from knowing God and acquiring devotion or *jnana*.

Will any mother forbid her son from reading a book on bacteria for fear of his catching an infection? We can pore over books on bacteria and yet never get infected. But the moment we come in contact with an infected person, we catch it without our effort or desire. Likewise, devotion and *jnana* can come by only by association with an Uttama Guru, who is immersed in devotion and *jnana*. So these cannot be taught, but can only be caught! This happens the very instant that our Guru is pleased with us.

Srimad Bhagavatam says that it is com-

Guru's Grace

Giri was a deeply devoted devotee of Sri Adi Sankara. Though dull headed, Giri loved his Guru very deeply and served him with deep love. One day Giri was late in returning from washing his Guru's clothes. Though it was time for the class to begin and all the students had arrived, Sri Sankara waited for this beloved disciple of his. When the disciples wondered and questioned about the delay in beginning the class, Sri Sankara said that he was waiting for Giri. The whole class burst out laughing. The compassionate heart of the Guru melted as others laughed at his dear disciple, and the Grace sprung forth from him and engulfed Giri who was still on the banks of the river. The class of scholars was wonderstruck when in a few minutes, the 'dull head' came into the hall clapping and singing the praises of his Guru in the difficult Sanskrit *Totaka* meter. Since that day Giri became a great scholar – Totakacharya.

No amount of intellect or genius can help as does Guru's Grace. Guru's Grace can bestow knowledge on a person in no time.

ical to try to repay our debts to a Guru, simply because a Guru's grace is unmatched. The only way to show our gratitude is to follow His words and act in a way that pleases Him. Whatever we do in our daily lives, we should do it for the happiness of our Guru and offer it unto His feet.

On the auspicious day of Guru Poornima, let us renew our pledge to sincerely follow His *upadesa* (advice) and earnestly remember His grace and love, every moment of our life.

Narayanan Sathiamoorthy, Boston, MA
(Adapted from a discourse by Sri M. K. Ramanujam.)



June Crossword contest SOLUTION

Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamigal (Kanchi Maha Periyava)

Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamigal (1894–1994), the 68th pontiff of the Kanchi Sankara Mutt is considered to be one of the greatest saints of India. His entire life can be characterized simply as one of divinity and humility. He was affectionately called Paramacharya and Maha Periyava (Great Elder) by his devotees. Maha Periyava stressed the importance of a Guru and the need to follow a dharmic path. His Jayanti was celebrated on June 7 this year.

Here are a few questions that can

Bharata Pradakshina 3 — Karnataka

The divine soil of Bharat has been fertile with innumerable saints from time immemorial. Such rare gems have been born all over Bharat. Many of them sang the glories of the Lord and were a living embodiment of Bhakti. The remarkable aspect of this is that although many of these saints were born in different centuries, their sayings have been consistent. Their only preaching to mankind is to chant the names of the Lord.

As part of this ongoing series of articles, we will briefly see how every Indian state has been graced by 'bhakta' saints who glorified the easiest and the most effective path of chanting the Lord's Names.

Purandara Dasa

In the holy soil of Karnataka was born Srinivasa Nayaka in 1484 AD. By the age of 16, he was proficient in Kannada, Sanskrit, and music. At the age of 20, he inherited his father's money-lending business, where he was very successful. But despite his wealth, he was a greedy miser. However, a divine lila of the Lord (where his wife's nose-ring, which had been given away in charity, reappeared miraculously to save her from his wrath) changed his life forever. He realized the futility of wealth and gave it all away. He began composing kirtans on the Lord and became a wandering minstrel. In the course of his wanderings he met the holy sage Vyasatirtha who initiated him formally and named him Purandara Dasa. He then traveled extensively through the length and breadth of the Vijayanagara empire composing and rendering soul stirring songs in praise of God.



Purandara Dasa was the founder of musical pedagogy. For the enormous influence that he had on Carnatic music, musicologists call him Sangita Pitamaha (patriarch) of Carnatic music. Purandasa Dasa is said to be an incarnation of Sage Narada, and has sung several songs on the glory of the Divine Names of God. Given below is one of Purandara Dasa's kirtans exhorting everyone to utter the Name of Krishna.

Narajanma bandAga nAlige iruvAga KrishnA ena bArade

KrishnA endare sakala kashtavu parihAra

When you have got a human birth, and when you have a tongue, will you not say "Krishna"? If you say "Krishna", all problems will get solved.

SnAna pAna japa tapa mAdutha KrishnA ena bArade

ShAlyanna shatrasa thindu thripthavanagi KrishnA ena bArade

While taking your bath, while practicing japa or tapa, will you not say "Krishna"?

When you have eaten your fill and are satisfied, will you not say Krishna?

Kanthana pigithappi muthadutha KrishnA ena bArade

ManthagamanekUDI sarasavADuthalomme KrishnA ena bArade

While hugging and fondling your child, will you not say Krishna once?

When you are with your wife, will you not say Krishna?

Aravind Thathachari, Orlando, FL

1. Birthplace of Maha Periyava:

- A. Kanchipuram
- B. Villupuram
- C. Sriperumbudur

2. Which famous song did Maha Periyava compose for world harmony?

- A. Bhaja Govindam
- B. Maithreem Bhajatha
- C. Kurai Ondrum Illai

3. Name the publication that contains Maha Periyava's discourses in Tamil:

- A. Deivathin kural
- B. Ammudha Uraigal
- C. JnAnaneshwari

4. What was the former name of Maha Periyava before he became pontiff of the Kanchi mutt?

- A. Purushothaman
- B. Vittalanathar
- C. Swaminathan

5. What is Maha Periyava's birth star?

- A. Makam
- B. Swathi
- C. Anusham

Ramya Srinivasan, San Jose, CA
Answers

1-B, 2-B, 3-A, 4-C, 5-C

Houston

A *Gopa Kuteeram* summer retreat was organized for the young minds of Houston Satsang from June 4-6 at the residence of Smt. Daya and Sri Narayan Dave. It was a great success as all the kids took part actively in the events and had lots of fun while doing it. The activities included an art project based on stories from the Bhagavatam, project presentations, group discussions, a Sanatana Dharma quiz, a skit presentation, outdoor activities, board games, and Nagara sankirtan, apart from Prabodhanam, Dolotsavam and Nama sankirtan. The kids who participated in the retreat were Muktha, Mukund, Kruthi, Keerthana, Vishnupriya, Vishnuvardhan, Shivam, Tejas, Dilan, Rani, Harsha, Ananya, Karun, Bharat, Madhura, Meenakshi, Chetan, and Rohan.



Krishna Jananam art project by Team Hanuman that was adjudged the best entry.



Chicago

The third monthly edition of the *Gopa Kuteeram* kids' program was held in Chicago on June 7 at the residence of Smt. Saritha Gottoor. The nine kids who participated in the event were Aparajita, Anusmara, Akshita, Aparna, Rajeev, Raghav, Atma, Shunya, and Nithila. The theme for this edition was Goddess Lakshmi and the kids enjoyed learning slokas, bhajans and stories about her. They also performed a role-play of a story of a king and the Ashta Lakshmis. Finally they learned how to perform puja and concluded with Nama Sankirtan.



A Hanuman-themed kids' program was held in Dallas on 25 June at the residence of Smt. Booma and Sri Raguraman to celebrate the third birthday of their daughter Haritha Maadhuri. About 20 kids and their parents participated with great enthusiasm.

Dallas



Upcoming Events

July 3, 7-9 PM, Cambridge, MA

Ashada Ekadasi satsang at the residence of Sri Narayanan Sathiamoorthy. Ph: (617) 820-2968

and Sri Aravind Thathachari.
Ph: (321) 214-3424

July 12, 5:30 PM, Seattle, WA

Guru Poornima special satsang at the residence of Smt. Priya and Sri Bala Subramanian. Ph: (425) 246-0009

July 12, 4 PM, Woburn, MA

Guru Poornima special satsang at the residence of Smt. Nithya Rajesh. Ph: (617) 820-2968

July 19, 4 PM, Mansfield, MA

Satsang at the residence of Smt. Ranjani Rajasekar. Ph: (617) 820-2968.

Weekly satsangs are held regularly in the following cities:

Bay Area, CA ; Boston, MA ; Chicago, IL ; Cortlandt Manor, NY ; Dallas, TX ; Houston, TX ; Los Angeles, CA ; Orlando, FL ; Seattle, WA

A weekly national telecon satsang is held every Friday evening at 8:30 PM CST.

Srimad Bhagavatam study circles are conducted in various cities.

Email newsletter@godivinity.org for more information.



(Above) Photos from Divya Nama Kirtan during the Ratha Kalyanam Utsav celebrated by the Bay Area GOD satsang on May 23 and 24.



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