

God is Equal!

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God doesn't differentiate devotees based on birth, color, race, wealth, region or religion. He responds only to true love and devotion. Lord Vittal in Pandarpur has performed many lilas with His devotees, which proves this time and again.

The Lord says to Narada, "nAham vasAmi vaikunTe, na yogi hridayeravau| mad bhakthA: yatra gAyanti tatra tishTAmi nArada||" (oh Narada! I neither reside in Vaikunta nor in Yogi's hearts. I can be found wherever my devotees sing my Names!) The Lord of Vaikunta indeed, descended in Pandharpur to relish the incessant Nama Sankirtan of the sadhus and to play his divine lilas with his devotees in order to bring out the greatness of their devotion for Him. Numerous devotees like Namdev, Janabai, Tukaram, Senanayi had immense love for Vittal and spent their lives singing His Names and glories. These devotees belonged to various strata of society. Some were learned scholars and rich merchants while others were in abject poverty and made their living as boatmen, barbers, weavers, tailors, cobblers and so on. But their love for Lord Vittal was pure and blemishless and so was the Lord's love for them.

Koma Bai was a poor old lady who lived on the banks of Chandrabhaga river across Pandharpur. Her only wish was to visit the Pandharpur temple to have the darshan of the Lord. Since, she did not have any money, the boatman in her village refused to take her to the other side of the Chandrabhaga river. It was getting dark and she prayed to Lord Panduranga to help her. Just then, the boatman who had earlier refused, offered to take her across the bank. Her joy knew no bounds and she promised that she would pay him the next day. In Pandharpur, she had a wonderful darshan of the Lord. She sat there singing bhajans outside the temple and received alms. She went to the boatman to pay him for the ride. But, the boatman surprised her saying that he did not bring her across the river. She realized that Lord Panduranga himself came in the form of a boatman and helped her out.

Another time, the Lord came down as a

barber to save his devotee, Senanayi. Senanayi, a barber by profession, constantly sang the Names of the Lord and led a very honest life. When the king was searching for a royal hairdresser, the citizens unanimously voted in favor of Senanayi owing to his honest and sincere nature. Once, when Senanayi was heading to the palace to dress up the king, few sadhus passed his way singing the divine names of Lord Vittal. Senanayi instantaneously joined them and lost himself in Nama Sankirtan and missed turning up for his job. Some miscreants complained to the king that Senanayi had shirked his duty to join the Sadhus. The king became furious and ordered the arrest of Senanayi. As he went to get dressed, he was surprised to see Senanayi waiting for him patiently. As Senanayi placed his hand on the King's head to dress him up, the king had a very divine and calming experience and felt the presence of Lord Krishna. He was lost in this bliss for a long time. Just then, the actual Senanayi arrived and apologized for the delay. But the King's hair was already dressed. Both Senanayi and the king realized that it was verily Lord Vittal who had come down as a barber to save his devotee. Once again the Lord proved that he would go to any extent to save his devotees.

Another great Panduranga Bhakta was Chokamela who, despite hailing from a slum, led the life of a true vaishnava and always chanted the Divine Names of the Lord. Owing to his caste, he was denied entrance to the Pandharpur temple. He would stand all day long outside the temple compound and sing the Divine Names joyfully. Lord Panduranga relished every Nama he chanted more than even the puja performed by the priests in the temple. One night, after the priests had locked the temple, Lord Panduranga came to Chokamela's home to spend the night with him. Chokamela requested the Lord to take him inside the temple, as he had never been inside before. In a flash, the Lord took him inside the sanctum sanctorum of the temple and they talked all night long. In the morning, the priests opened the doors of the temple and were

shocked to find Chokamela inside. They cursed him and took him to the King. Though Chokamela pleaded that it was the Lord who brought him in, nobody was willing to believe his words. The king, without proper enquiry, punished him by banishing him from Pandarpur. Chokamela silently accepted this also as the will of God and settled outside the city.

Chokamela and his wife had a practice of fasting on Ekadasi days and breaking his fast on the following Dwadasi day by inviting home a guest to partake of the meals. On such a Dwadasi day, they had the most special visitor – the Lord himself! From then on, this became a routine affair. On one such Dwadasi, Chokamela chided his wife for spilling yoghurt on the Lord's garments while serving Him food. The learned ones who overheard this were amused and thought that Chokamela was out of his mind. But, when they went to the temple, they witnessed an unbelievable sight! The Lord's robes indeed, had stains of yoghurt! They realized their mistake and begged Chokamela for forgiveness. Everyone realized the greatness of Chokamela and hailed his bhakti.

It can be seen from these stories that Lord Panduranga doesn't distinguish between his devotees. He is the epitome of Saulabya or simplicity and comes down to mingle with his devotees bound only by their true affection and devotion.

Ashada Ekadasi which is very special to Lord Panduranga falls on July 27 this year. On this auspicious occasion, let us all sing the Names of the Lord and pray for true devotion to Him.

Anusha Ramesh, London UK

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Cherished Memoirs 26



This series chronicles interesting experiences recounted by the devotees of HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji. These articles are translations from the series, "Madhuramaana Mahaneeyar" that is published every month in **Madhuramurali Tamil monthly magazine**.

The Divine Glow

When we attend satsangs or when we read or listen to the life history of saints and devotees, we also yearn to lead such a pious life. But, we cannot comprehend the exalted state of those saints and Mahans. We cannot understand such divine experiences by reading any number of books or hearing about them. But, many a time, devotees have had experiences of Sri Swamiji being in such exalted states. One such incident happened recently. Sri Ramanujam, a devotee of Sri Swamiji was near Sri Swamiji when he was blessed with a divine vision.

On April 8, 2011, Sri Swamiji took Sri Ramanujam, Sri Hari and Sri



HH Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji

Ramakrishnahari to Bhagavan Yogiramsuratkumar's ashram located in Thiruvannamalai, India. En route, Sri Swamiji kept speaking about mahans and devotees. In particular, Sri Swamiji spoke at length about divine incidents that had happened in Sri Yogiramsuratkumar's life.

Continuously enjoying the nectarine words of Sri Swamiji brimming with love and knowledge, they reached Tiruvannamalai by noon time. The inmates of the ashram were extremely pleased to see Sri Swamiji there. All of them proceeded to the 'Pradhan Mandir' (the

main temple). Once inside, Sri Swamiji immediately sat in deep meditation. Even during the journey, Sri Swamiji had often been in deep thought. As He sat there motionless, all the devotees felt a sudden calm and peace surrounding him. Sri Ramanujam sat to Sri Swamiji's left, and was often looking at Sri Swamiji's face. Everybody realized that just looking at Sri Swamiji's face filled them with calm and peace. Around 45 minutes quickly passed, after which, Sri Ramanujam witnessed the

division vision. Sri Swamiji slowly opened his eyes. His eyes had a divine glow. A bright light surrounded the pupils of his eyes. On seeing this, Sri Ramanujam experienced infinite bliss in his heart and it spread to his entire body. Since Sri Ramanujam was sitting very close, he was able to witness this clearly. The glow was present for the entire time Sri Swamiji sat there.

Sri Swamiji often talks about eyes radiating a glow when one is in meditation. This is often misconstrued as a poetic metaphor to describe a Saint's greatness. Guru Maharaj's compassion had indeed, proved that these words are verily true and no poetic exaggeration.

On the way back to Chennai, Sri Ramanujam shared this experience with Sri Hari and Sri Ramakrishnahari, who felt very happy and repeatedly recounted their fortune. I share the above experience with you, hoping that you experience the same bliss and awe as I did when Sri Ramanujam narrated it to me.

**Original Tamil article by
Dr. Bhagyanathan,**

**Madhuramurali July 2011. Translated by
Viji Ramakrishnan, Dallas, TX**

Quiz - Adhika & Ashada Masa

1. To which Lord is Adhika masa auspicious?

- A. Lord Shiva
- B. Lord Brahma
- C. Lord Krishna

2. What is the other name for Adhika Masa?

- A. Purushottama Masa
- B. Chaturmasya
- C. Dhanur Masa

3. Once in how many months does the Adhika Masa occur?

- A. 52
- B. 42
- C. 32

4. Why does Adhika Masa occur?

- A. To make the lunar calendar occur first before the solar calendar
- B. To harmonize both lunar and solar

calendar

C. To make the solar calendar occur first before the lunar calendar

5. In which calendar is the Adhika Masa added?

- A. Solar Calendar
- B. Lunar Calendar
- C. Solar and Lunar Calendar

6. In a year, how many extra days does Solar calendar have when compared to Lunar Calendar?

- A. Nine
- B. Ten
- C. Eleven

7. How many days are typically there in a Lunar month ?

- A. 30
- B. 28
- C. 29.5

8. When did the Adhika Masa fall this year?

- A. May 15th – June 15th



B. June 15th – July 15th

C. July 15th – Aug 15th

9. The _____ Vratha is undertaken starting on the Ashada Ekadasi day.

- A. Navarathri Vratha
- B. Shivaratri Vratha
- C. Chaturmasya Vratha

10. The Ashada Ekadasi falling in the Ashada month is special to this deity.

- A. Lord Shiva
- B. Lord Panduranga
- C. Lord Muruga

11. The auspicious _____ falls in the month of Ashada.

- A. Bhisma Ekadasi
- B. Akshaya Tritiya
- C. Guru Poornima

Compiled by Ramya Srinivasan, San Jose CA

Answers:

1 - C, 2 - A, 3 - C, 4 - B, 5 - B, 6 - C, 7 - C, 8 - B, 9 - C, 10 - B, 11 - C



Madhura Geetam - Bharata Pradakshina 26



In this series, we will go on a pradakshina of Bharata desha as we present, each month, a kirtan composed by His Holiness Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji on a particular kshetra, starting from south India and then going north and back. This is the last temple/song we will be covering in the Bharatha Pradakshina series of Madhura Geetham. Next issue will mark the beginning of a new MadhuraGeetham series.

Tiruviheendrapuram

Last month, we visited the temple of Devanatha Swamy in Tiruviheendrapuram, a Divyadesam in Cuddalore district. Cuddalore is also the birth town of Sri Swamiji. Therefore, it seems fitting to conclude the Bharatha Pradakshina series in the birth town of Sri Swamiji.

The Devanatha Swamy temple has a separate shrine for Lord Hayagriva. Lord Hayagriva is an avatar of Vishnu with a horse face and human torso and is considered the embodiment of all knowledge and learning. It is believed the great devotee Vedanta Desika performed a penance praying to Lord Hayagriva and

with His blessing, composed several outstanding works in Sanskrit and Tamil.

Sri Swamiji has composed a beautiful song on Lord Hayagriva. The song and its lyrics are presented here for you to read and enjoy.

Hayagrivam

Raga: Desh

hayagrIvam Ashrayeham

lakshmyAlingita vAmabAgam
lokarakshakam yoga devam (hayagrIvam)

parvata vAsinam prasanna swarUpam
bavabayaharam jnAna swarUpam
(hayagrIvam)

sakalavidyaAnAm AdhArasthAnam
shAnta muraLidhara vidyAshIkshaNam
(hayagrIvam)



Meaning

I take refuge in (Lord) Hayagriva

The Lord who is embracing Lakshmi on his left side!

The Yogic Lord protecting the world!

The Lord with a pleasing form who lives on a hill!

The embodiment of knowledge who destroys the fear of worldly existence!

The foundation of all learning!

The One who bestowed knowledge to the serene Muralidhara

Sowmya Balasubramanian, Fremont CA

Kanhopatra

Story Time

Once upon a time, there lived a dancer called Shyama. Shyama earned her livelihood by dancing for rich men of the town. One day, she gave birth to a little girl called Kanhopatra. When she was young, she met a few devotees of Lord Panduranga who talked about the glories of the Lord. As she heard the qualities of the Lord, she became devoted to Him and forever, wanted to be in His service. From then on, she would constantly sing on Lord Panduranga and dance to it. As time flew by, Kanhopatra grew up to be an exceedingly beautiful woman and an excellent dancer. Her fame



spread far and wide. The king of Badar heard about her and desired to see her dance. He ordered his soldiers to fetch her.

The soldiers went to Kanhopatra and said, "Kanhopatra! The king desires to see your dance. Come with us."

Kanhopatra refused saying, "Please tell your king that I do not dance in front of humans. I dance only for the Lord!"

The soldiers then threatened her. They said,

"If you do not come with us, then the king will be very angry. He will punish you and your mother!"

Fearing the king's anger, Kanhopatra finally agreed to accompany the soldiers. But, she said, "Before you take me to the king, please take me to the temple of Lord Panduranga in Pandharpur." The soldiers agreed as they were happy that she was willing to come with them.

As promised, they took her to the temple of Pandharpur and said to her, "Come fast! We have a long journey."

Kanhopatra hurriedly went inside the temple and fell at the Lord's feet crying. She prayed, "Oh Panduranga! Ever since I was a little girl, I have been dancing only for you. How can I dance in front of the king now? Aren't you the Lord of the universe? Then, isn't it your duty to protect all beings? I am now standing here and begging for your protection. Won't you show any mercy on me?"

As she cried, her spirit rose from her body and merged with the Lord. The priests who

witnessed this were astounded. At the same time, they feared that the soldiers would punish them. So, they quickly buried her body close to the shrine of Lord Panduranga. Immediately, a tree sprouted in that place. Even today, one can see the tree when they visit Pandharpur.

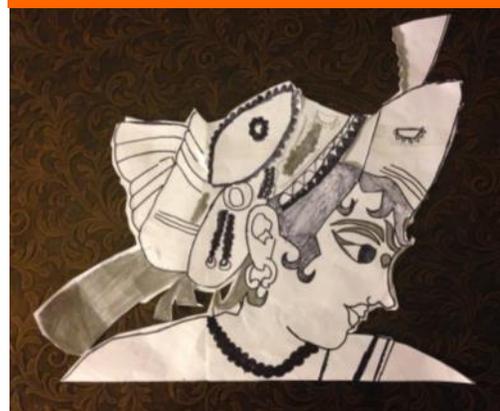
So, what does the life of Kanhopatra teach us? It teaches us that the Lord never forsakes His devotees. All we need is true devotion in our hearts.

Sowmya Balasubramanian, Fremont CA

Kid's Corner

Art work by

Krishna Prasad Ram, 10 yrs, Redding CA



Sri Krishna - The 8th incarnation



News & Events

"BHAKTHI SUGANDHAM" IN MINNEAPOLIS, MN

"RADHE RADHE" IN DETROIT, MI



MADHURA UTSAV IN RICHMOND, VA

SPECIAL SATSANG IN ORLANDO, FL



VIBRANT INDIA CAMP FOR KIDS IN HOUSTON, TX



Upcoming Events!

Namadwaar Houston:
'Guru Poornima Celebration' -
 From July 31st to Aug 1st.
 For details contact:
 Houston.god@godivinity.org

Apart from weekly satsangs in numerous cities across the USA, a Telecon satsang is held every Fri evening and Tele-Bhagavatam discourse is telecast every Tue evening, both at 8:30 PM CST. Anyone is welcome to attend. Ph: 605-475-4000, Passcode: 131581

Gopa Kuteeram (kids' programs) & Srimad Bhagavatam study circles are conducted in various cities.

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