

## Chaturmasya Vrata - Special Edition.



Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahasannidhanam along with His Uttaradhikari Shishya Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Sannidhanam will observe this year's Chaturmasya Vrata at Narasimha Vanam in Sringeri from July 5th to 2nd September. Commencing from the 'Ashadha Purnima' which is widely known as Guru-Purnima or Vyasa-Purnima with the Vyasa-Puja the Jagadguru will stay at Narasimhavanam at Sringeri for two months and conduct all special pujas like Sharavana Somavara, Krishna Janmashtami etc. at Guru Nivas. The Completion will be marked by the Uma Maheshwara Vratam on September 2nd 2020.

## ABOUT VYASA-PURNIMA

In the course of this Puja, worship is offered to three groups of Acharyas, each group consisting of five Acharyas. These three groups are mentioned below separately. The “Yati Dharma Sangraha” of Visweshwara Saraswati, otherwise known as “Visweshwara Samhita” gives in detail the procedure to be adopted for the Puja.

व्यूहः पुनस्तत्र एव कृष्णव्यासभाष्यकाराणामेव समाचरेत् ।

व्यूहत्वं च तत्परिवारयोगात् ।

परिवारश्च पुराणादिषु दृष्टः ।

तत्र कृष्णस्य सनत्कुमारसनकसनन्दनसनत्सुजाताः ।

व्यासस्य सुमन्तुजैमिनिवैशंपायनपैलाः ।

भाष्यकारस्य पद्मपादविश्वरूपतोटकहस्तामलकाचार्याः ।

तत्र मध्ये कृष्णपञ्चकम् ।

तस्य दक्षिणतो व्यासपञ्चकम् ।

वामतं आचार्यपञ्चकमिति ।

न्यायादाचाराच्च गुरुपरमगुरुपरमेष्ठिगुरुपरात्परगुरवोऽन्ये च ब्रह्मविदाचार्या यथासंनिवेशं भगवतः पुरतः पूज्याः ।

vyūhaḥ punastraya ēva kṛṣṇavyāsabhāṣyakārāṇāmēva samācarēt |

vyūhatvaṃ ca tatparivārayōgāt |

parivāraśca purāṇādiṣu dr̥ṣṭaḥ |

tatra kṛṣṇasya sanatkumārasanakasanandanasanatsujātāḥ |

vyāsasya sumantujaiminivaiśampāyanapailāḥ |

bhāṣyakārasya padmapādaviśvarūpatōṭakahastāmalakācāryāḥ |

tatra madhyē kṛṣṇapañcakam |

tasya dakṣiṇatō vyāsapañcakam |

vāmataṃ ācāryapañcakamiti |

n'yāyādācārācca guruparamaguruparamēṣṭhiguruparātparaguravōṅ'yē ca brahmavidācāryā yathāsannivēśaṃ bhagavataḥ purataḥ pūjyāḥ |

## KRISHNA PANCHAKAM

Sri Krishna and four others, namely Sanatkumara, Sanaka, Sanandana and Sanatsujata consist of Krishna Panchakam. Sri Krishna is placed in the centre and others to the east, south, west and north of Lord Sri Krishna. The Lord is worshipped with Sri Krishna Asthottara Satanama Archana. For each Panchaka, after the Puja, Arati is waved after Special Naivedya.

## VYASA PANCHAKAM

Veda Vyasa Bhagavan is placed in the centre. His four disciples namely Sumanthu, Jaimin, Vaisampayana and Paila are placed in the four quarters to the east, south, west and north of Vyasa respectively.

## SHANKARACHARYA PANCHAKAM

Sri Shankara Bhagavatpada is placed in the middle and His four shishyas, namely, Padmapadacharya, Sureswaracharya, Totakacharya and Hastamalakacharya are placed in the four directions.

Separate Pujas and Arati are offered by His Holiness to the three sets of Panchakams mentioned above. After the Pujas, the Sringeri Jagadguru Parampara Stotra is recited and worship is offered to Sadasiva, Shankaracharya and to the illustrious Acharyas who gracefully adorned the Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham up to Jagadguru Sri Sri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha Mahaswamiji.

The Chaturmasya Sankalpa is then performed by the Acharya of the Peetham, Jagadguru Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji.

प्रायेण प्रावृषि प्राणिसङ्कुलं वर्त्म दृश्यते  
अतस्तेषामहिंसार्थं पक्षा वै श्रुतिचोदनात् ।  
स्थास्यामश्चतुरो मासानत्रैवासति बाधके ॥

**prāyēṇa prāvṛṣi prāṇisaṅkulaṃ vartma dṛśyatē**

**atastēṣāmahinsārthaṃ pakṣā vai śruticōdanāt |**

**sthāsyāmaścaturō māsānatraivāsati bādhakē ||**

Stating that according to the Vedic dictum “पक्षा वै मासाः” “pakṣā vai māsāḥ” the Vrata is observed for two months according to tradition (three months in case of Adhika maasa), staying at one place to avoid injury to moving insects during rainy season. To this, the disciples pray in chorus —

निवसन्तु सुखेनात्र गमिष्यामः कृतार्थताम् ।  
यथाविहितशुश्रूषां करिष्यामो वयं मुदा ॥

**nivasantu sukhēnātra gamiṣyāmaḥ kṛtārthatām |**

**yathāvihitaśuśrūṣāṃ kariṣyāmō vayaṃ mudā ||**

— promising the Guru, that to the best of their ability, they will serve the Guru and requesting Him to stay comfortably at the location of Chaturmasya. On their part, the disciples rest contented having accomplished the object, namely, the Jagadguru's Gracious Blessings.

## ABOUT CHATURMASYA VRATA

ॐ नमो ब्रह्मादिभ्यो ब्रह्मविद्यासम्प्रदायकर्तृभ्यो नमो गुरुभ्यः ।

**'om namō brahmādibhyō brahmavidyāsampradāyakartṛbhyō namō gurubhyaḥ |**

The Poornima (full moon day) in the month of Ashadha is called 'Guru Poornima'. On this sacred day, worship is offered to Brahma Vidyacharyas – the great luminaries of hoary antiquity, who through their Supreme grace, have handed over the knowledge of Brahman – Brahma Vidya – through a long, continuous and uninterrupted line of Acharyas, to the world of seekers of Self. Special pujas are performed to the hierarchy of Gurus, Parama Gurus, Parameshti Gurus, Parapara Gurus and all Brahma Vidya Acharyas, seeking their inestimable blessings to realise the Supreme Truth. This is also

called 'Vyasa Puja', for, Sri Vedavyasa stands foremost in the line of these preceptors. It was Vyasa who codified the Vedas into four divisions and integrated the messages of the Upanishads relating to Brahman, Jiva and the Universe in his great book, the Brahmasutras. He is rightly addressed as one of 'vast intellect' (विशालबुद्धे) (viśālabud'dhē) 'the ancient sage' (पुराणमुनिः) (purāṇamuniḥ) by whom was lit the lamp of knowledge, feeding it with the oil of Mahabharata.

येन त्वया भारततैलपूर्णः

प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः

**yēna tvayā bhāratatailapūrṇaḥ**

**prajvālītō jñānamayaḥ pradīpaḥ**

Suka, Gaudapada and Govindabhagavatpada kept this light burning; then came the Great Master Sri Sankaracharya, who carried it far and wide throughout Bharata Varsha.

A popular verse compendiously expresses the many dimensioned greatness of Veda Vyasa and Sri Sankaracharya and offers obeisance to them:

शङ्करं शङ्कराचार्यं केशवं बादरायणम् ।

सूत्रभाष्यकृतौ वन्दे भगवन्तौ पुनः पुनः ॥

**śaṅkaraṃ śaṅkarācāryaṃ kēśavaṃ bādarāyaṇam |**

**sūtrabhāṣyakṛtau vandē bhagavantau punaḥ punaḥ ||**

The term Chaturmasya means four months. The term Chaturmasya Vrata is a Vrata to be observed for a period of four months. But according to the Vedic dictum पक्षा वै मासाः one 'paksha' or a fortnight is taken as one month, and traditionally the Vrata is observed only for two months. During the rainy season, Sannyasins observe Chaturmasya and stay at one place to meditate on the Absolute Reality and instruct their disciples in the spiritual lore.

समागतैभ्योऽन्तेवसद्भ्यः औपनिषदं साङ्ख्यं प्रतिपादयन्तो वर्तमहे ॥

**samāgatēbhyaḥ antēvasadbhyaḥ aupaniṣadam saṅkhyam pratipādayantō vartāmahē |**

so expresses the Srimukha issued by the Acharyas of Sringeri Math.

Before observing the Chaturmasya Sankalpa, they perform Vyasa Puja and pay homage to Dakshinamurti, Sadasiva and to the Acharyas who came after him, to the framers of the canons of Brahma Vidya – the knowledge of Brahman – to the great seers of the parampara and to the preceptors. The Narada Parivrajakopanishad which codifies the conduct of the Sannyasins in detail, lays down that Sannyasins must be moving from place to place, to avoid getting entangled with the dealings and habits of the people of the village or town. But during the rainy season, they must halt at one place for a period of four months and observe the Chaturmasya Vrata.

एकरात्रं वसेद् ग्रामे नगरे पञ्चरात्रकम् ।

वर्षाभ्योऽन्यत्र वर्षासु मासांश्च चतुरो वसेत् ॥

द्विरात्रं न वसेद् ग्रामे भिक्षुर्यदि वसेत्तदा ।  
रागादयः प्रसज्येरँस्तेनासौ नारकी भवेत् ॥ (४-१४, १५)  
ग्रामान्ते निर्जने देशे नियतात्माऽनिकेतनः ।  
पर्यटित् कीटवद् भूमौ वर्षास्वेकत्र संवसेत् ॥  
ēkarātraṃ vasēd grāmē nagarē pañcarātrakam |  
varṣābhyōn'yatra varṣāsu māsānśca caturō vasēt ||  
dvirātraṃ na vasēd grāmē bhikṣuryadi vasēttadā |  
rāgādayaḥ prasajyēraṃstēnāsau nārakī bhavēt || (4-14, 15)  
grāmāntē nirjanē dēśē niyatātmānikētanaḥ |  
paryatēt kīṭavad bhūmau varṣāsvēkatra sanvasēt ||

The mendicant monk, except in the rainy season, may stay one night in a village and five nights in a city; during the rains, he may stay four months in a village or town. He shall not stay for two nights in a village; if he stays, affection, lust, etc., may find scope to deflect him and thereby he may go to hell. In the outskirts of a village, in a secluded spot, he may pitch his camp and go about for alms like a worm on the ground; during the rains, he shall stay at one place.

If, during the rainy season, the Sannyasins move from one place to another, they may cause injury to many insects and worms that breed and move about on the ground during the season. But as the Sannyasins have taken the vow of non-injury to all creatures (Ahimsa and Abhaya), they should refrain from causing harm to any living being. Moreover, constant travel will also come in the way of Sannyasins having any time for 'Brahma-vichara' or for continued profound meditation; (निदिध्यासन) (nididhyāsana). So, they halt at one place once in a year for four months and engage themselves in the meditation of the Supreme Brahman, in the company of their Gurus and other Sannyasins, clearing their doubts on complex metaphysical problems.

During the Chaturmasya Vrata, His Holiness observes various Vratas as listed below.

Shravana Somavara Vrata

Vara Mahalakshmi Vrata

Gokulashtami Vrata

Vamana Jayanti

Ananta Padmanabha Vrata and lastly

Uma Maheshwara Vrata, marking the conclusion of Chaturmasya Vrata.

### **GURU PURNIMA PARAYANA**

With the blessings and guidance of Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahasannidhanam and Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Sannidhanam, a programme has been conceived to conduct Parayana on the occasion of this very auspicious Guru Purnima to obtain the compassionate grace of the Acharyas.

This small compendium published by the Peetham, contains shlokas for Parayana, and the Ashtottara Shatanamavalis. It is titled Guru-Saparyaa, meaning worship of the Guru.

Every follower of Sanatana Dharma may wholeheartedly perform this Parayana on the sacred period of Chaturmasya and obtain the blessings of the Guru.

To enable the devotees from different states and region to involve themselves and chant this Parayanam the Stotras and Ashtottara Shata Namavalis are given in Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Devanagari scripts. This is available in Mobile, Tablet and Computer Viewable versions and Printable version in 1/8 demmy size.

[Link for Tamil version](#)

[Link for Telugu version.](#)

[Link for Devanagari version](#)

[Link for Kannada version](#)

(Courtesy :[www.sringeri.net](http://www.sringeri.net))



सदाशिवसमारम्भां शङ्कराचार्यमध्यमाम् ।  
अस्मदाचार्य पर्यन्तां वन्दे गुरुपरम्पराम् ॥

sadāśivasamārambhāṃ śaṅkarācāryamadhyamām |  
asmadācārya paryantāṃ vandē guruparamparām ||

Obeisance unto the hoary Guru Parampara, beginning from Lord Sri Sadashiva upto the present Acharya with Sri Shankaracharya in the middle.

In our Indian tradition, a very high position has been accorded to the Guru. Without the grace of the Guru, no one can attain fulfilment of the purpose of life. We all desire Moksha, and the sole means to its attainment is Jnana (knowledge). The Veda says: "It is only by knowing the Supreme Brahman that one attains immortality. There is no other path".

How can that knowledge be obtained by us? Can it be got by perusal of texts? No, this knowledge can be procured only from a Guru. In the Upanishads, we hear of holy ones going to Gurus who are well versed in the scriptures and established in the Supreme and making a request of the form, "O Guru! Please impart knowledge to me". Even though the Rishis seeking knowledge may have been scholarly, it is certain that their acquisition of knowledge was solely dependent on their seeking it from a Guru. Only that knowledge which is obtained from the lotus mouth of the Guru is potent. Sans a Guru, no matter how many texts we may delve into, we cannot attain that knowledge. There is a hoary tradition everywhere which can be learnt only from the Guru.

(Given above the Excerpts from the English translation of Jagadguru Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji Anugraha Bhashanam )

**The Hoary Guru-Shishya Parampara, avichchinna (unbroken) Guruparampara of Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Sharada Peetham is given below.**

## Lineage of Gurus

### Divine Group

Lord Sadashiva
Lord Narayana
Lord Brahma

### Semi-Divine Group

Vasishta Maharishi
Shakti Maharishi
Parashara Maharishi
Veda Vyasa

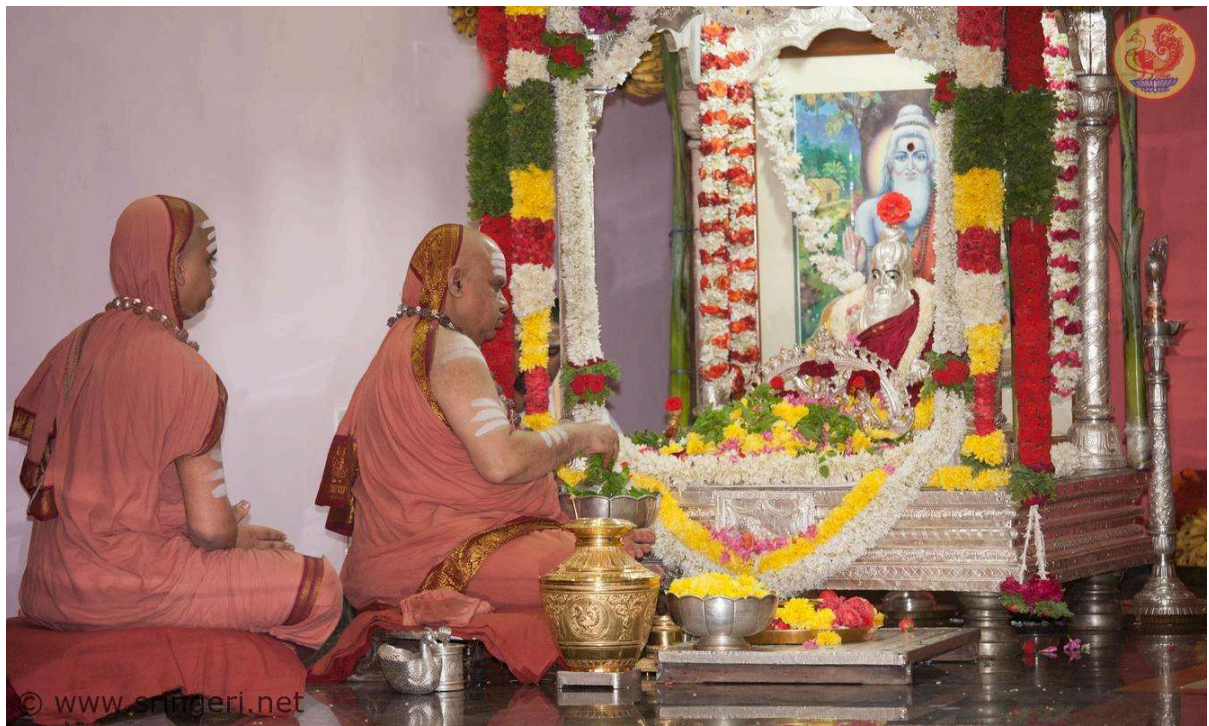
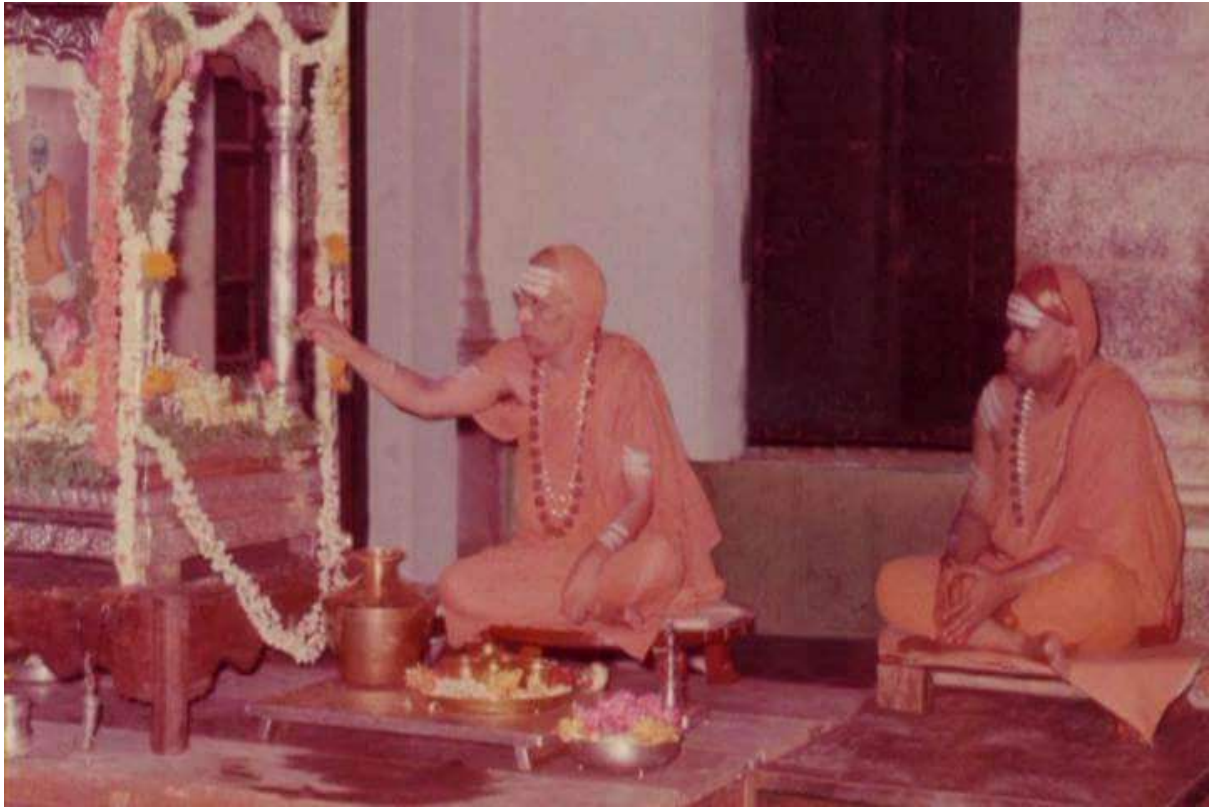
Sri Shuka Acharya
Sri Gaudapada Acharya
Sri Govinda Bhagavatpada
Sri Shankara Bhagavatpada

**Jagadgurus of the Sringeri Sharada Peetham**                      **Period of Reign (CE)**

1.	Sri Shankara Bhagavatpada	820 (videha-mukti)
2.	Sri Sureshwaracharya	820 – 834
3.	Sri Nityabodaghana	834-848
4.	Sri Jnanaghana	848 – 910
5.	Sri Jnanottama	910 – 954
6.	Sri Jnanagiri	954 – 1038
7.	Sri Simhagiri	1038 – 1098
8.	Sri Ishwara Tirtha	1098 – 1146
9.	Sri Nrisimha Tirtha	1146 – 1229
10.	Sri Vidya Tirtha	1229 – 1333
11.	Sri Bharati Tirtha	1333 – 1380
12.	Sri Vidyaranya	1380 – 1386
13.	Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati I	1386 – 1389
14.	Sri Nrisimha Bharati I	1389 – 1408
15.	Sri Puroshottama Bharati I	1408 – 1448
16.	Sri Shankara Bharati	1448 – 1455
17.	Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati II	1455 – 1464
18.	Sri Nrisimha Bharati II	1464 – 1479
19.	Sri Puroshottama Bharati II	1479 – 1517

20.	Sri Ramachandra Bharati	1517 – 1560
21.	Sri Nrisimha Bharati III	1560 – 1573
22.	Sri Nrisimha Bharati IV	1573 – 1576
23.	Sri Nrisimha Bharati V	1576 – 1600
24.	Sri Abhinava Nrisimha Bharati	1600 – 1623
25.	Sri Sacchidananda Bharati I	1623 – 1663
26.	Sri Nrisimha Bharati VI	1663 – 1706
27.	Sri Sacchidananda Bharati II	1706 – 1741
28.	Sri Abhinava Sacchidananda Bharati I	1741 – 1767
29.	Sri Nrisimha Bharati VII	1767 – 1770
30.	Sri Sacchidananda Bharati III	1770 – 1814
31.	Sri Abhinava Sacchidananda Bharati II	1814 – 1817
32.	Sri Nrisimha Bharati VIII	1817 – 1879
33.	Sri Sacchidananda Shivabhinava Nrisimha Bharati	1879 – 1912
34.	Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati III	1912 – 1954
35.	Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha	1954 – 1989
<b>36.</b>	<b>Sri Bharati Tirtha</b>	<b>1989 – Present</b>
37.	Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati	Successor-Designate





## ANUGRAHA BHASHANAM

### THE GLORY OF LORD VIGHNESHWARA

CHENNAI CITY MAY 27, 1995

Following is a translation of a succinct benedictory address delivered by His Holiness Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji in which He explains how hurdles inevitably crop up in all our endeavours and teaches that the means to overcome the hurdles is a sincere prayer to Lord Sri Mahaganapati.

**This Anugraha bhashanam was delivered in Tamil at the Sakthi Vinayakar Temple at K.K. Nagar, Chennai.**

श्रुतिशाखिपल्लवाभ्यां स्मृतिमात्रप्रापितार्थिसौख्याभ्याम् ।

गतिजितमत्तगजाभ्यां नतिरस्त्वेषा गणेशचरणाभ्याम् ॥

śrutiśākhīpallavābhyāṃ smṛtimātraprāpitārthisaukhyābhyām ।

gatijitamattagajābhyāṃ natirastveṣā gaṇeśacaraṇābhyām ॥

Every one of us is always engaged in some activity or the other, none remaining inactive for even a moment. The Lord says in the Bhagavad Gita,

न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् । na hi kaścit kṣaṇamapi jātu tiṣṭhatyakarmakṛt ।

Srimad Bhagavadgita



vighnāni ॥

Even a lunatic is always engaged in some activity. To us, what such a man does may seem foolish, but the fact is that he is engaged in some activity. In fact, he may even consider what he is doing as important. Similarly, everyone in this world is always occupied with some task or the other.

After commencing an activity, we often find that numerous obstacles crop up, hindering the completion of the task. As such, anxiety that a task that we commence should get completed without impediments, is but natural. Our ancestors have aptly said:

श्रेयांसि बहु विघ्नानि ॥ śreyāṃsi bahu

Impediments are much too common when it comes to noble activities that are aimed at doing good to people. We can attribute this phenomenon to the proclivity of humans to not only strive to earn fame for themselves but also to prevent others from earning a good name. As a result of this tendency, one desires the successful completion of one's own activities, but when it comes to tasks commenced by others, this desire is reversed, for one resents others' success. Since this mentality is seen in everyone, there will always be someone or the other to create problems in our path.

If a person plans to construct a temple, there will be people who think on the lines of, "I will send an anonymous petition full of complaints to the authorities concerned, and then watch the fun". If you ask them what they gain from such destructive activities, they will nonchalantly reply, "We do it just for fun! Let us now see how he constructs the temple!" The philanthropist who proposed to build the temple would never have imagined that obstacles of this kind would materialize.

How does one tide over such unexpected obstacles that are placed on one's path? Is it possible to approach every potential troublemaker and appeal to him to abstain from causing problems? Even if we do, will such people oblige us? The answer to both these questions is "No".

Let us take the example of an institution with numerous employees. If there is a problem in regulating the activities of the employees or in enforcing discipline or rules among them, it will not be feasible to give instructions or make requests to each one of them individually. The way to solve the problem is to request the intervention of the chairman of the institution, for, when orders are issued from the top of the institution's hierarchy, the desired objective is achieved without ado.

This world is an institution. God, the Paramatma, is its Chairman. Instead of wasting our energies trying to appeal to mortals around us to stop creating impediments to our good deeds, we should approach God and pray to Him to remove all hindrances in our path. In response to our prayers, the Supreme Lord will thwart the wicked thought in the troublemaker's mind by inducing aprerana, which will cause him to muse on the lines of, "It is true that I originally wanted to hinder this man's activity. However, I now realize that he is actually engaged in a noble task. Rather than causing problems, why don't I try to be of some assistance instead?" Only the Lord can cause such a turnaround in people's thinking. The Sastras declare,

न देवा दण्डमादाय रक्षन्ति पशुपालवत् |

यं हि राक्षितुमिच्छन्ति बुद्ध्या संयोजयन्ति तम् ||

na devā daṇḍamādāya rakṣanti paśupālavat |

yaṃ hi rākṣitumicchanti buddhyā saṃyojayanti tam ||

What does the statement, "Iswara protects us" mean? Does it mean that Iswara handles us like a shepherd herding his cattle with a stick in his hand? No, what is meant is that the Lord protects us by entering our minds and inducing appropriate thoughts in it. The following prayer finds a place in the Vedas: "May that Supreme Lord who is the sole cause of the entire cosmos and of even Hiranyagarbha, the creator, induce noble thoughts in my mind".

Noble thoughts generate good deeds while sinful ones have harmful consequences. As such, it is clear that unhindered progress of what we have commenced is indicative of the presence of

noble thoughts, which are in turn the effect of the prerana induced by God, otherwise known as God's grace. Hence, prayer to God before commencing any task is a sine qua non.

We must never forget that in reality, God is only one, though He assumes various forms such as those of Shiva, Vishnu, Devi and Subrahmanya. The Lord says in the Bhagavad Gita,

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।

प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥



ajo'pi sannavyayātmā bhūtānāmīśvaro'pi  
san |

prakṛtiṃ svāmadhiṣṭhāya  
saṁbhavāmyātmamāyayā ॥

(Though I am actually unborn, am the immutable Self, and am the Lord of all beings, I take birth, as it were, through My power of Maya.)

One of such numerous forms assumed by the Lord is that of Lord Vigneshwara.

Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness  
Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tirtha  
Mahāswāmiji in the month of July 2007,  
Mumbai

Before starting any task we must first worship Lord Maha-Ganapathy, to ward off obstacles. Even before we commence any worship, we perform Ganapathy Puja. Why, even on the day of Vinayaka Chaturthi, where worship of Lord Maha-Ganapathy is primary, we perform a short Ganapathy Puja in the beginning for the Puja to go on unhindered! It is our deep faith that any work commenced after worshipping Lord Ganapathy will definitely be successful, that drives us to do this.

Bhagavan Veda Vyasa authored eighteen puranas and eighteen upa-puranas, the Ganesa Purana being one of the latter. In this work is contained a description of the various leela-s of Lord Ganapathy.

The story goes that there was once a competition between Lord Ganapathy and Lord Subrahmanya. The quarrel between Them was over the possession of a particular sacred fruit, and it was stipulated that the fruit would go to the one who first completes a trip around the three worlds. Lord Subrahmanya wasted no time in setting off on His peacock to complete the task. On the other hand, Lord Ganapathy simply circumambulated His parents, Lord Parameshwara and Goddess Parvati, thrice, only to be presented with the fruit as the prize for finishing the race first! Lord Subrahmanya questioned this decision by pointing out that Lord Ganapathy did not even leave the place, let alone go around the three worlds. The clarification given at that point is that

since the three worlds are considered as being within one's parents, Lord Gan apathy's circumambulation of His parents amounts to His circumambulating the whole world.

Lord Ganapathy has, through this leela, taught us the importance of our parents and also demonstrated to us that they should in fact be considered our supreme Gods. All of us perform puja to Lord Ganapathy, all of us pay frequent visits to His temples. Yet, alas! We do not listen to what our parents say!

There is another episode related to Lord Ganapathy. Lord Shiva blessed the demon Ravana with the sacred Atma Lingam. Petrified, the celestials approached Lord Ganapathy and prayed, "If Ravana manages to take the Atma Lingam to Lanka and installs it there, he will become invincible. He must be prevented from reaching Lanka with it". Lord Ganapathy agreed to help the celestials.

While blessing Ravana with the sacred Atma Lingam, Lord Shiva had cautioned him, saying, "Once you place this Lingam on the ground, it will not be possible to remove it from that spot. Therefore, do not keep it anywhere until you reach the place where you want it installed". When Ravana was travelling to Lanka with the Lingam in his hand, the time for his Sandhya worship arrived. Ravana was in a fix, for he had to offer oblations to Lord Surya at that time, but could not place the Lingam on the ground. At this juncture, Lord Ganapathy appeared there in the garb of a small boy. Spotting the boy, Ravana called to him and said, "Come here and hold this Lingam in your hands until I come back and collect it from you". This was precisely what the Lord had been waiting for! The lad agreed to oblige Ravana, but on a condition. The condition was that the boy would call out to Ravana only thrice, and if the latter failed to come after the third call, he would place the Lingam on the ground. Ravana agreed to the condition and left for his Sandhya worship.

The boy called out to Ravana thrice, deliberately when the latter was offering oblations. As such, Ravana could not come, and as per the condition, the boy placed the sacred Lingam on the ground. Try as he might, Ravana could not remove the Lingam from the spot. Lord Shiva had chosen to reside there in the place that would come to be called Gokarna Kshetra.

The lesson that we learn from this episode is that an evil man must be prevented from acquiring great powers, for such prevention would only amount to protecting the virtuous. In the story, since Ravana was cheated, millions of virtuous people stood to gain. As such, it is not a sin to cheat an evil-minded person when the aim is to protect virtuous people. This is the subtle aspect of Dharma that was demonstrated by Lord Ganapathy.

When we read the life sketches of great souls we learn that they do not have to explicitly spell out how we should conduct ourselves. Their lives themselves act as beacon lights to guide us and to teach us the way to lead a virtuous life. The Lord has mentioned this in the Bhagavad Gita:

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेनरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

yadyadācarati śreṣṭhastattadevenaro janah ।

sa yatpramāṇaṁ kurūte lokastadanuvartate ॥

Whatever a great one does, others follow.

Similarly, it is through His manifestations constituting His divine sport, that the Lord has taught us so many valuable lessons. Moreover, in His manifestation as Lord Ganapathy, He removes all impediments to the good deeds we undertake and bestows great good on us. This is why great saints worship Him.

Someone once pointed out that the form of Lord Ganapathy serves as a perfect illustration of the Advaita philosophy adhered to by Sri Adi Shankara, according to which there is only One without a second. Though man and elephant seem like two different beings, the Lord manifested in the man-elephant form only to demonstrate the fact that both beings are intrinsically one and the same.

May we sincerely pray to Lord Ganapathy, that He bless us with prosperity by removing every possible obstacle in all our undertakings.

हर नमः पार्वतीपतये हर हर महादेव |

जानकीकान्तस्मरणं जय जय राम राम ||

hara namaḥ pārvatīpataye hara hara mahādeva |

jānakīkāntasmarāṇaṃ jaya jaya rāma rāma ||

--- Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tirtha Mahāswāmiji

(Source : ww.sringeri.net)

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Our humble pranams at the holy lotus feet of Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Śrī Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tirtha Mahāswāmiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Śrī Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Vidhuśekhara Bhārati Mahāswāmiji. The Voice of Jagadguru e magazine team under the guidance of Pujyasri Swami Omkarananda Saraswati, Founder Acharya, Śrī Swami Chidbhavananda Ashram, Vedapuri, Theni (Chief Editor of this e magazine Unit) entering into the third year of Chodanaa e magazine

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