

Vedanshi

The part of the sacred knowledge

Therefore, always conscientiously perform good material actions (karyam) and spiritual actions (karman) without attachment. By doing all actions without attachment, one attains the highest.

Chapter 3, Verse 19; Bhagavad Gita

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue No 42: June 2017

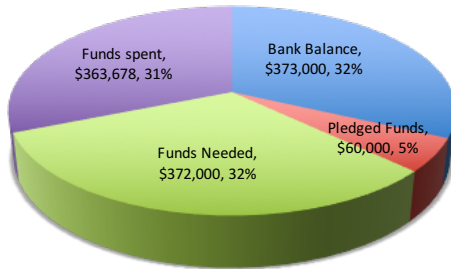
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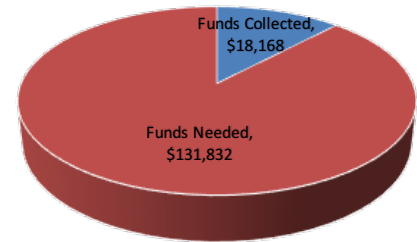


Temple - Fundraising Campaign

Total Estimated Cost: \$1,168,678



Fund Raising Challenge : \$150,000

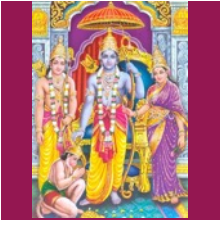


Land Cost	\$200,000
Land Preparation	\$26,745
Architectural and Civil Engineering Services	\$43,433
Temple and Annex Building Construction including Parking Lot	\$548,500
Deities Statues Cost	\$50,000
Shikars (Gopuram) Cost including installation	\$200,000
Lighting, Security and Fencing	\$75,000
Operating Costs (4th Quarter 2017)	\$25,000
Total Cost	\$1,168,678

Challenge Update

For the second year in a row, Mr Ajay Patel put forth another challenge similar to 2016. This challenge was initiated in a Trustee Meeting conducted on March 12th, 2017. For every \$3 that is donated towards SHSK Temple, there will be a \$1 match. The matching contribution will max upto \$50,000 therefore taking the challenge amount to \$150,000. SHSK request all the supporters to fulfill this challenge to obtain the funds needed for the temple to the amount of \$200,000, to get a step closer to the overall funds needed for the Temple project. Thanks to our generous supporters who came forward to contribute \$18,168 so far after initializing the challenge on March 12th, 2017. This challenge excludes already committed \$60,000 donation made prior to March 12th, 2017. This challenge will end on December 31st, 2017. SHSK Board sincerely thank Mr Ajay Patel for his continued support to SHSK Temple Project.

Sita Ram



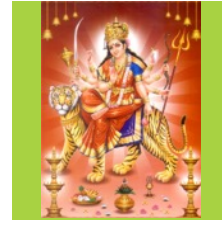
Ganesh



Krishna



Durga



Shiva



How to Celebrate Guru Purnima

Hindus attach paramount importance to spiritual gurus. Gurus are often equated with God and always regarded as a link between the individual and the Immortal. Just as the moon shines by reflecting the light of the sun, and glorifies it, all disciples can dazzle like the moon by gaining from their Gurus.

What is Guru Purnima?

The full moon day in the Hindu month of Ashad (July-August) is observed as the auspicious day of Guru Purnima, a day sacred to the memory of the great sage Maharshi Veda Vyasa.

All Hindus are indebted to this ancient saint who edited the four Vedas, wrote the 18 Puranas, Mahabharata, and the Srimad Bhagavatam. Vyasa even taught Dattatreya, who is regarded as the Guru of Gurus.

Significance of Guru Purnima

On this day, all spiritual aspirants and devotees worship Vyasa in honor of his divine personage and all disciples perform a 'puja' of their respective spiritual preceptor or 'Gurudev's'.

This day is of deep significance to the farmers, for it heralds the setting in of the much-needed rains, as the advent of cool showers ushers in fresh life in the fields. It is a good time to begin your spiritual lessons. Traditionally, spiritual seekers commence intensifying their spiritual 'sadhana' from this day.

The period 'Chaturmas' ("four months") begins from this day. In the past, wandering spiritual masters and their disciples used to settle down at a place to study and discourse on the Brahma Sutras composed by Vyasa, and engage themselves in Vedantic discussions.

The Role of the Guru

Swami Sivananda asks: "Do you realize now the sacred significance and the supreme importance of the Guru's role in the evolution of man? It was not without reason that the Bharat of the past carefully tended and kept alive the lamp of Guru-Tattva. It is therefore not without reason that Bharat, year after year, age after age, commemorates anew this ancient concept of the Guru, adores it and pays homage to it again and again, and thereby reaffirms its belief and allegiance to it.



For, the true Bhaarata knows that the Guru is the only guarantee for the individual to transcend the bondage of sorrow and death, and experience the Consciousness of the Reality."

At the Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, the Guru Purnima is celebrated every year on a grand scale.

1. All aspirants awake at Brahmamuhurta at 4 o'clock. They meditate on the Guru and chant his prayers.

2. Later in the day, the sacred worship of the Guru's Feet is performed. Of this worship, it is said in the Guru Gita:

Dhyaana moolam guror murtih;

Pooja moolam guror padam;

Mantra moolam guror vakyam;

Moksha moolam guror kripa

"The Guru's form should be meditated upon; the feet of the Guru should be worshiped; his words are to be treated as a sacred Mantra; his Grace ensures final liberation".



3. Sadhus and Sannyasins are then worshiped and fed at noon.

4. There is continuous Satsang during which discourses are held on the glory of devotion to the Guru in particular, and on spiritual topics in general.

5. Deserving aspirants are initiated into the Holy Order of Sannyas, as this is a highly auspicious occasion.

6. Devout disciples fast and spend the whole day in prayer. They also take fresh resolves for spiritual progress.

The Guru's Advice

Swami Sivananda recommends: "Wake up at Brahmamuhurta (at 4 a.m.) on this holiest day.

Meditate on the lotus feet of your Guru. Mentally pray to him for his Grace, through which alone you can attain Self-realization. Do vigorous Japa and meditate in the early morning hours.

"After the bath, worship the lotus feet of your Guru, or his image or picture with flowers, fruits, incense, and camphor. Fast or take only milk and fruits the whole day.

In the afternoon, sit with other devotees of your Guru and discuss with them the glories and teachings of your Guru.

"Alternatively, you may observe the vow of silence and study the books or writings of your Guru, or mentally reflect upon his teachings. Take fresh resolves on this holy day, to tread the spiritual path in accordance with the precepts of your Guru.

"At night, assemble again with other devotees, and sing the Names of the Lord and the glories of your Guru.

The best form of worship of the Guru is to follow his teachings, to shine as the very embodiment of his teachings, and to propagate his glory and his message."

<https://www.thoughtco.com>

July 2017 Dates

Based on Lafayette, Louisiana, US Time

04 Tuesday	Devshayani Ekadashi
08 Saturday	Guru Purnima
15 Saturday	Karka Sankranti
19 Wednesday	Kamika Ekadashi
25 Tuesday	Hariyali Teej
27 Thursday	Nag Panchami
29 Saturday	Tulsidas Jayanti

For more details please refer DrikPanchang.com

Chaturmas and its importance

Chaturmas is reserved the year for penance, austerities, fasting, bathing in holy rivers and religious observances for all. Devotees resolve to observe some form of vow, be it of silence or abstaining from a favorite food item, or having only a single meal in a day. Let's explore Chaturmasya and its importance through this interesting article.

The rutus (seasons) of Varsha (monsoon), Sharad (autumn) and Hemant (winter) fall in the period of Dakshinayan (the southernly declination of the sun). In these three seasons the days of Holy festivals are relatively more, especially in the monsoons.

Due to the rains, the incidence of diseases is high, hence more attention needs to be paid to health. The Holy festivals result in occasional fasts and consumption of sattvik food, in addition to a restriction to a certain extent on outside food. According to Spirituality, lesser availability of sunlight in the rainy season increases the strength of negative energies, thereby increasing the Tama component. This increase in Tama component is harmful for us and hence, to counter that, we need to increase our Sattva component. Celebrating festivals helps in increasing the Sattva component. Also, the period of Dakshinayan is otherwise unfavorable from sattvikta point of view. Hence, in the name of Holy festivals we in fact get an opportunity of increasing sattvikta.

'Chaturmas' is the period of four months from Ashadh Shukla Ekadashi (Eleventh day of the bright fortnight of the Hindu lunar month of Ashadh) to Kartik Shukla Ekadashi (Eleventh day of the bright fortnight of the Hindu lunar month of Kartik) or Ashadh Pournima (Full-moon day) to Kartik Pournima.

1. Time and Deities

One year of man is equivalent to one day and night of the Deities. 'As one travels from one dimension to another, the scale of measurement of time changes'. This has been proven by the experience of astronauts who have returned from the Moon.

Dakshinayan is the night and Uttarayan (summer solstice) is the day of Deities. On the occasion of Kark Sankranti (passage of the sun into the zodiac

sign of Cancer), Uttarayan is completed and Dakshinayan, that is the night of Deities begins. Kark Sankranti falls in the month of Ashadh. Hence, Ashadh Shukla Ekadashi is called Shayani



Ekadashi because it is believed that on this day the 'Deities go to sleep'. On Kartik Shukla Ekadashi the Deities wake up from their sleep. Hence, it is referred to as Prabodhini (and also Bodhini, Devotthani) Ekadashi. Actually since Dakshinayan consists of six months, the nights of the Deities too should last for six months. However, only four months are completed till Bodhini Ekadashi. This means that the Deities wake up and begin their activities when one third of the night is still remaining.

'While the work of 'Nav-shrushti-nirmiti' (Creation of new world) of Deity Brahma is going on, the Sustainer, Shrivishnu is inactive; hence the four months of Chaturmas are referred to as the Vishnushayan (sleep of Shrivishnu). It is said that at that time Shrivishnu sleeps in the Kshirsagar (Celestial ocean). Vishnushayan is celebrated on Ashadh Shukla Ekadashi while Vishnuprabodhotsav is celebrated after Kartik Shukla Ekadashi, that is on the Dwadashi (Twelfth day).

2. Importance of Chaturmas

During this period of sleep of the Deities, demons become active and begin harassing humans. The scriptures say that, 'to protect oneself from these demons each one should undertake some vrat (Vowed religious observance)'. A quote says –

वर्षिकांश्चतुरो मासान् वाहयेत् केनचिन्नरः ।

व्रतेन न चेदाप्नोति किल्मिषं वत्सरोद्भवम् ॥

Meaning : Every year during chaturmas, we should undertake some vrat otherwise we will incur the sin of samvatsarodbhav (having missed the opportunity that year).

3. Special characteristics of Chaturmas

A. Because of the rainy season during this period, the appearance of earth is different.

B. Traveling is difficult because of the peak rainy season. Hence, the custom of undertaking Chaturmasya vrat while stationed in one place became prevalent.

C. During this period, our mental state also undergoes a change. Various systems in the body, such as the digestive system, operate in a different manner. With due consideration to this fact, it has been advised that food such as tubers, brinjals, tamarind etc. be forbidden during this period.

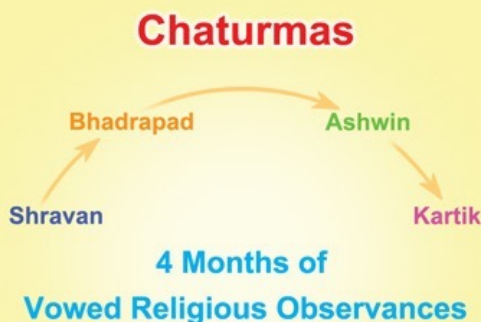
D. The characteristic of the Chaturmasya, is performing acts which are conducive for Spirituality and avoiding those which are harmful to life.

E. The month of Shravan (Hindu lunar month) included in the Chaturmasya is of special significance. In the dark fortnight, in the month of Bhadrapad (Hindu lunar month), Mahalay shraddha (Rituals to appease departed ancestors' subtle bodies) is performed.

F. Reason for a large number of festivals and vrat during Chaturmasya: During Chaturmasya, that is, the months of Shravan, Bhadrapad, Ashwin and Kartik, a greater proportion of the Tama-predominant Yama frequencies reach the earth. To be able to bear the effect of these, it is essential to increase the Sattva component in ourselves. Since festivals and vrat help increase the Sattva component, they are celebrated in larger numbers during the Chaturmasya period. In his research, Prof. Dr. WS Koeger, Gynaecologist at the Chicago Medical School, found a greater incidence of uterus related problems in women, particularly in Bharat, during the four months from July to October.

G. A vrat should be undertaken in the four months of Chaturmasya.

- Continued on Page 4



SHSK Temple Upcoming Events

Guru Purnima - July 9th

Krishna Janmashtami - August 15th

Ganesh Chaturthi - August 25th

More details of the event will be emailed

Check out SHSK Library for more spiritual articles

<http://sanatanlft.org/shsk-library/>



Chaturmas and its importance - Continued

4. Vrat undertaken in Chaturmas

Average people undertake vrat during Chaturmasya. One should follow some rule when taking a meal from the various patterns of meals, such as parna-bhojan (eating on a leaf), ek-bhojan (eating only one meal), ayachit (eating only what is provided), ekavadhi (eating only one helping of food) or a mixed meal (eating food served once, after mixing it) etc.

Several women undertake the vrat known as 'dharne-parne' in the Chaturmasya. In this, one should eat and fast on alternate days for four consecutive months. Many women sustain themselves on one or two types of food grains during the Chaturmasya. Many subsist on only one meal during the day. Various patterns of conduct during Chaturmasya are seen depending on the region.



5. Acts prohibited during Chaturmas

A. Prohibited

1. In the Chaturmasya one is forbidden from consuming lime prepared from animal ash, water from a leather vessel, lime, the citron fruit, food not offered to God as oblation through fire (vaishvadev) and food not offered to Shrivishnu, lentils, meat, white beans, beans, kidney beans, pickles, brinjals, watermelons, multi-seeded or seedless fruits, radish, ash gourd, berries, gooseberries, tamarind, onion and garlic.
2. Sleeping on a bed.
3. Intercourse with a woman, in the period excluding the sixteen nights after the first menses following marriage.
4. Eating food cooked by others.
5. Getting married or other related tasks.
6. Ascetics are forbidden from shaving in Chaturmasya. It has been recommended by Dharmasindhu and other scriptures, that they should stay in one place during these four months and if that is not possible, at least for two months.

B. Not prohibited

It is advised that during Chaturmasya, havishyanna (food fit to be offered through fire) be consumed. Rice, lentils, barley, sesame seeds, grams, wheat, sea salt, cow's milk, curd, ghee, jackfruit, mango, coconut, banana etc. are the food items that are havishyanna.

www.sanatan.org

Dear All,

As we are moving towards our temple construction process, we need your support to spread the word to your friends and family for temple fundraising. To facilitate the fundraising we have created a gofundme link <https://www.gofundme.com/shskfundme>, we request each one of you to be an active voice in raising funds for our dream temple project. You can share the gofundme link through your Facebook, WhatsApp and email to your friends and family.

You will also find the latest update on the funds needed and the details of the temple layout and deity information in the gofundme link <https://www.gofundme.com/shskfundme>.

We hope with your collective effort we would be able to reach our target before end of this year.

Thank you for your continued support and blessings.

Sincerely,
SHSK Board

Thank you for your support and blessings.
Srinivasan Ambatipati, Editor