

## Sri Swamiji's Message , Vighna Niva:raka Chaturthi

Priya Bhagavad Bandhus !

Jai Srimannarayana !

Vighna Niva:raka Chathurtthi !

All our festivals have great significance each, in its own dimension and parameter, only for the well being of the society. They constantly remind us the glory of our great culture and inspire us to live in Peace and Harmony with the Nature and also with the Natural Forces. On the 4th day (chathurtthi) of the waxing moon in the month of Bha:drapadam (usually during september) Gane:sa Puja is performed in almost all the parts of Bharath. People join together and celebrate this auspicious occasion with family members, relatives and friends. People worship Him for success in their endeavour and for removing all the obstacles. Basically, every day has a unique importance according to Vedic Scriptures; as most of the westerners observe fathers day on a particular date, mother's day on another date so on. When a seeker needs success in his efforts and wants to get rid of the obstacles the fourth day of the Bhadrpada month paves the way says the scriptures. So God Supreme is worshipped on that day, to have the ability to solve the problems and get enriched in strength. That is why this day is called Vighna Niva:rana Chathurtthi. As many people worship Ganapathi on that day, they started naming it Gane:sh Chathurtthi.

Battallions are called Gana:s. Ruler of these Gana:s is called Gane:sa or Ganapathi. Gaja:nana means the one who has elephant face.

People worship God in different forms like that of Vishnu, Siva etc. Worshippers of Lord Vishnu worship Sri Vishwakse:na who is the Gane:sa or Gana Na:yaka (or Ganapathi ), the commander-in-chief of Lord Vishnu's battallions called Kumuda Gana:s. Ganana:yaka is one of the names of Vishwakse:na. The name Vishnu in the famous sloka below, is also one of the names of Vishwakse:na only.

sukla:mbaradharam vishnum sasi varnam chathurbhujam  
prasanna vadanam dhya:ye:th sarva vighno:pasa:ntthaye: ||

It is said in our scriptures that, under the command of Vishwakse:na there are hundreds of elephant headed commanders having two tusks. The sloka

yasya dwirada vakthra:dya:h pa:rishadya:h parassatham  
vighnam nighnanthi sathatham vishwakse:nam tham a:sraye: ||

reveals this fact. These Gaja:nana:s keep themselves always alert in removing the obstacles.

Who ever worship the form of Lord Siva, they approach Him through Lord Siva's machinery. Vina:yaka is the one who interceded with Lord Siva's devotees. So on this day, devotees of Lord Siva worship his son Vina:yaka (one with elephant face and one tusk) who is Gane:sa (or Ganesh or Ganapathi), the leader of Lord Siva's (Pramadha) Ganas.

Some people might argue that on this day it is only Vina:yaka, the son of Pa:rvathi has to be worshipped and he is the only one who is the remover of all the obstacles for every one. It is obvious from the above slo:ka:s that this notion has to be corrected.

After doing Ganapathi Pu:ja in the form of Vina:yaka or Vishwakse:na, the common practice that every body does is listening to the story of Lord Krishna in relation to Syamanthaka Mani ( a big unique jewel) which is mentioned in the 55th chapter of 10th canto in Srimad Bha:gavatham.

Thus, it is clear about whom to worship and celebrate this festival. For more

details you can read further.

People say that one should not see Moon on this day and if they happen to see him without doing Vina:yaka Pu:ja, even by accident, then, they have to face many false allegations/accusations. Some people didn't know or didn't understand why this Krishna's story has to be remembered here. So, they started relating that Krishna accidentally saw Moon in his milk on this day and hence he has to face the false allegation / accusation that he stole the Syamanthaka Mani. But, there is NO evidence or any mention of such an event relation in any Pura:na:s or in our original scriptures. This story has nothing to do with Ganesh Puja. Ganesh Puja is celebrated to pray for the removal of obstacles to one's endeavour. Then, WHY remembering this story is recommended as a tradition on this day, is the question ?

The blame or accusation may be of any magnitude and may it be on any person, if it is a false accusation then the person should not give up or weep for that and succumb to the allegation or lose heart in noble pursuit. One should then pool up the courage and remain with bold heart, go ahead with the solutions, which ultimately lead that person to success. "sathyame:va jayathe:" - Ultimately only Truth Wins. This is what Lord Krishna's story of Syamanthaka Mani reveals us. To emphasize this fact and make people face the obstacles boldly whence, the remover of obstacles does the job, this story is to be remembered on this occasion of praying the remover of obstacles.

This story also reveals that, obstacles may arise even to great persons, how anyone with a bold heart and strong will can face the problems and solve them. At the end it says no one need to run away from the problems. All that we need to do is to pursue with perseverance, be hooked to God in the heart and go ahead with the solutions resolving the problems.

When we worship a form, we ought to respect all its rules and subjects. Though there are so many forms of God, You worship one that you were blessed with, respecting all the rules and its subjects. Thus, worship Him the Supreme, through that form with pure devotion.

Do you know, according to our scriptures there are so many Gaja:nana:s. Let us know the three popular forms of Gaja:nana:s.

1) Vina:yaka, Son of Pa:rvathi, the consort of Lord Siva is a Gaja:nana(elephant faced one). He was created by Pa:rvathi with the bathing paste. That Vina:yaka was later appointed as the commander of all the battallions of Lord Siva. He is having only one tusk, holding the second one in the hand. So he is also called " E:ka dantha ".

2) There are so many elephant headed and horse headed commanders under the command of Vishwakse:na who is the supreme controller of Paramapadam, the divine abode of Lord Vishnu. They all have U:rdhwa Pundram(vertical mark). All these elephant headed commanders, it is said are having two tusks. There are several hundreds of such Gaja:nana:s always alert in removing the hurdles.

3) According to Ma:ndu:kya:panishad, the worship of Lakshmi: Ganapathi is recommended daily, where this Gaja:nana is none else than Lord Vishnu Himself. In this form there will be 19 faces of which the main face is that of an elephant. Many details were given in the Upanishad. We human beings be in any one of the three stages viz., awakened, dreaming and deep sleep. A particular form of Lord Vishnu controls each stage. Realised souls worship that particular form for Siddhi during those stages. For the awakened state it is said that Lord Vishnu has to be worshipped in the form of Gaja:nana ie., with elephant head, along with goddess Lakshmi and that form is Lakshmi Ganapathi as recommended by the Upanishad. In this form, Lord Vishnu will have U:rdhwa Pundram (vertical mark on his head) Sankham (divine conch), Chakram (divine discus) and other ornaments decorated in his hands.

Now we know that there are many Gaja:nana:s and which form should we worship and

why.

On this Bha:drapad Sukla Chathurtthi day people worship Gaja:nana with fresh lotuses, honeyed fragrant flowers, greeny shoots and leafy stems of various medicinal plants and trees brought from pure forest shrubs. They use Maize candles, sugarcane, banyans, unhybrid & natural sweet juicy fruits etc., to worship God.

The function in a nut shell enlightens us that we shouldn't disrespect or ill treat animals, plants and trees. We should also worship them with an attitude realising that they are also different forms put in His service.

We offer our Mangalasanams to you all on this auspicious occasion for worshipping Gaja:nana with heartfelt devotion and thus always be in His wonderful service without obstacles of any sort.

Jai Srimannarayana !

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Speaking on the significance of Viswaksena's worship on BhAdrapada sukla Ekadasi, HH Sri Tridandi Jeear Swamy discussed the importance of the Commander in Chief of Periya Perumal in our sampradAyam, and how he is one of four dEvathas who have the power of removing obstacles. While popular Hinduism sees these obstacles as those obstructing good education and material success, Sri Jeear Swamy pointed out that for a SriVaishnava the obstacles that must be dispelled are those that stand in the way of doing nityakainkaryam to SrimanNarayana.

The most popular and well known of the Ganapatis is Vinayaka, recognized by his gaja mukham (elephant head), which is adorned with Vibhuti(sacred ash), and Ekadantham (one tusk). This is the popular god of Hinduism that was brought to life in a clay doll by Parvathi, and then was beheaded and restored to life as the lovable elephant headed Deity by Siva. This Ganesha is the Deity that is worshipped by Saivas on the Vinayaka Chaturthi Day.

The Remover of Obstacles worshipped by SriVaishnavas is Viswaksenar (sEnai mudiliyAr), the Commander in Chief of Perumal's Military Forces who is also recognized as an AchAryan in our paramparai. He is the one whom we should directly beseech to remove all obstacles that stand in the way of our kainkaryam to the Lord. It is said that while the Lord is enjoying the company of ThayAr in the lovely gardens surrounding paramapadam, Sri Viswaksenar is guarding the Divine Couple and is also taking care of all of the matters of state for them, in a mood akin to Lakshmana. Sri Viswaksenar's nature is such that He survives solely on the sEsham of emperumAn Alone. His form is similar to the

Lord's, but he has been seen taking on a elephant headed form, as well. In this form, however, Sri Viswaksehar, contrary to his saiva counterpart, has two tusks (dviradAs) and dons Thiruman on his forehead.

Before describing the third "Ganesha," HH touched on a rather mysterious fourth, Sri Prasna, who is described in pAncharAthra Agamam. He is said to have emerged out of a great yAgam to Perumal that was being performed by Indran.

The Third Remover of Obstacles is the Most Powerful of All - and really is the only One that we need - having 19 heads, each adorned with Urdhvapundram, and 4 arms. MAndukya Upanishad goes into great detail on describing this 4th and only true Remover of Obstacles as being Sriman Narayana Himself. Perumal Himself as the Protector and Benefactor of each and every soul, removes the obstacles that stand between Him and His Devotees. This avathAran of the Lord is always seen standing with ThAyAr as Sri LakshmiGanapathi. Sri HH touched upon how the ignorance of the masses has led to a severe misrepresentation of this Avatharan, and how we should not let this sway us from our recognition that Sri LakshmiGanapathi is Sriman Narayana Himself.

Sri HH went on to analogize how the three Ganeshas (other than Sri Prasna) are each a controller of one of three states of an individual's consciousness, jAgrath dasa, swapna dasa, and shusupthi dasa. In the first state, the waking state, we are responsible for the performance of karmas, the adherence to proper conduct, and the fulfilment of both material and spiritual pursuits. Consequently, it is this stage that is most important to the path of the spiritual aspirant. While the other two Ganapathis protect us in the other two stages under the direction of the Lord, the Lord Himself as Sri LakshmiGanapathi protects and helps us in each and every aspect of our waking state, whether or not a jivan knows His presence or not.