

American Hindu Association

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HINDU CONNECTIONS

May, 2006

Hanuman Jayanti celebration and Sundarkand recital on 16 April 2006:



In recognition of Hanuman Jayanti, the American Hindu Association conducted the Sundarkand Path and puja on April 16, 2006 at Body in Balance (6333 Odana Rd., Madison-WI). Whole event was graciously sponsored by Naren Sharma and his family. All the devotees narrated Sundarkand Path very enthusiastically for two hours followed by related Hanuman Chalisa and Arati.

About Sundarkand: Maharshi Valmiki wrote Ramayan in Sanskrit about c.3000 BC, describing about divine Lord Ram and his journey of life. Similar to Valmiki's Ramayana, Goswami Tulsidas wrote Ramacharitamans in Awadhi, a dialect language of central Uttar Pradesh. His scripture is popularly known as Tulsikrita Ramayan, which consists of seven chapters namely Bal Kand, Ayodhya Kand, Aranya Kand, Kiskindha Kand, Sundar Kand, Lanka Kand and Uttar Kand.

Fifth chapter of this Ramcharitamans, Sunderkand, mainly focus on depth of Bhakt Hanuman's devotion and dedication for his divine Lord Ram. Sunderkand commences with the departure of Hanuman in search of Sita and ends with Ram ready to cross the ocean for Lanka in order to liberate Sita. The real beauty of Sunderkand lies in its revelation of spiritual truth and the path of a successful life of worldly existence, devoted and dedicated to Rama who is the Divine Consciousness itself in human form. Legends say by reading the Sundrakand one attains fame and wealth.

The Origin of the Vedas Shree S. K. Das
www.americanhindu.net/Vedas.doc

When discussing the origin of the Vedas, we must keep in mind the fact that the Vedas are eternal transcendental sound vibrations. Therefore we cannot use the word create in its general usage to describe the source of the Vedas. At the same time everything has a cause except for the Lord. That

is the meaning of the verse *anadir adir govindah, sarva kaarana kaaranam*, "Govinda has no beginning, yet He is the beginning of all. He is the cause of all causes."

When speaking of the spiritual realm, we must always remember that there is no limitation of time. Time practically does not exist in that realm. Only when you come down to the level of creation of the material world can we actually say that time is acting on anything. So any discussion of something constitutionally beyond the realm of material world is by nature free from the influence of time. Therefore there is no room to bring in the idea of a point of creation. With that in mind, when we speak of something spiritual such as the Vedas, we can never bring in the concept of a point of creation. i.e. "it was created at this point in time".

Therefore nothing spiritual was ever created in the general sense of the word. But still everything has a source, something on which it is dependent. Vishnu is the only *sva-tantra* (self-dependent principal) and all others are *para-tantra* (dependent on another).

Everything has a cause, and that cause is directly the category of the Supreme God. But this dependence is eternal dependence. Never was there a time when it did not exist. So, though Vishnu is the cause of everything, everything eternally existed beyond time.

One may ask, "How to understand this?" If you don't already understand it there is no mental gymnastics that will make you understand it.

The Srimad Bhagavatam clearly states right in the first shloka: *om namo bhagavate vasudevaaya janmaadyasya yato 'nvayad itartash charthesv abhijnah svarat tene brahma hrda ya aadi kavaye*.

(Translation : O my Lord, Sri Krishna, son of Vasudeva, O all pervading Supreme Person, I offer my respects to you. I meditate upon you because you are the absolute truth and the primeval cause of all causes of the creation.) Why the statement "*tene brahma hrda ya aadi kavaye*" is linked directly to the statement of

janmadyasya yatah? Because everything is an emanation of Krishna, including the eternal spiritual sound vibrations (brahma) of the Vedas. Furthermore, we should remember that the Vedas are describing Him, the Supreme God.

The Vedas are also called Shruti - learning by only hearing. In the earlier yugas the vedic knowledge was passed on from guru to disciple by just recitation and hearing. In this age of Kali (kali-yuga) our memories are comparatively duller and hence for our benefit the Vedas were compiled in written form. There are many suggestions about the exact time they were compiled but they still remain the oldest scriptures in this world.

Hindu Heritage Camp is on July 8, 2006:

The 4th Annual Hindu Heritage Camp has become one of the most awaited events of the year. Within a family atmosphere of affection and discipline, you will experience fun and joy of playing and staying together. Location: Governor Dodge State Park, Dodgeville, WI. Time: 3PM on Saturday, July 8th to 5 PM on Sunday, July 9th, 2006. For More Information, Contact: VenuGopal 831-5474 venusandi@yahoo.com
Madhav 244-2786 emadhav@hotmail.com

Quotes & Quips

The greatest service one can do for people is to help them experience God. **Swami Omkarananda** - Omkarananda Ashram, Rishikesh

Life is like photography. You use the negative to develop. **Swami Beyondananda**

What extracts from the Vedas I have read fall on me like the light of a higher and purer luminary, which describes a loftier course through purer stratum. It rises on me like the full moon after the stars have come out, wading through some far stratum in the sky. **Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)**, *American author, poet and philosopher*

Red Chili Pepper and Ginger Join the Ranks in Preventing and Treating Cancer - Hindustani Times

April 9, 2006: First it was turmeric, now the red chili pepper and ginger are being targeted for their medicinal properties in preventing and treating cancer. Dr. Sanjay Srivastava has lead the study at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine on the chilli pepper. The news release explained, "The findings on chilli pepper are based on studies in mice which were grafted with human pancreatic tumors.

The study found that capsicum, the compound that makes chilli pepper hot, caused cancerous cells in pancreas to die through a process called apoptosis - the body's normal way of disposing of damaged or

unwanted cells. However, it did not affect healthy cells." Srivastava added, "Capsicum triggered cancerous cells to die and significantly reduced the size of tumors. " The study at the University of Michigan was completed on ginger by Dr. Rebecca Liu. The article said, "In what was the first successful step to test the idea, dissolved ginger powder was added to ovarian cancer cells in a lab dish. According to researchers, the rate at which ginger killed cancer cells was similar to or better than that of platinum-based chemotherapy drugs." Both studies were presented in papers at the American Association of Cancer Research in Washington during the association's annual meeting.

Story of Tulsidas By Ashanee Singh

www.americanhindu.net/Goswami_Tulsidas.htm

When Pundit Atmaran Dubey was told to abandon the child his wife died giving birth to, he was distraught. An astrologer declared the boy would bring evil and destroy the entire family. As Pundit Atmaran was instructed to desert the child, his maid, Chunia, overheard and could not let this happen. So she took the castaway baby into her care even though the whole village knew of the astrologer's foretelling. Ten days later, Chunia's husband came home with news of Pundit Atmaran's death. He believed the boy actually was a curse. It was not long until Chunia herself died of a poisonous snakebite. As a result, he immediately kicked the seven-year-old boy out.

Alone in the world, the boy turned to the village temple. Saint Naraharidas came there that evening. Hearing of his sad story, Naraharidas took pity on him. He told him the tales of Ram and how he should take refuge in him, since Ram takes care of everyone and is immortal. Interested, the little boy followed Naraharidas to his hermitage to learn more about Lord Ram.

From that day onward, the saint gave him the name Rambola. As the years went on, Rambola heard of Lord Ram's epic and decided to worship him. He tried to read Valmiki's Sanskrit "Ramayana" all by himself but found it very difficult. So Saint Naraharidas sent him to Acharya Shesh Sanatan to learn Sanskrit. The acharya took interest in the keen and eager young boy. After many years, he became a master of the Vedas and other holy scriptures. When Rambola asked how he could repay his guruji, the acharya replied, "Go forth and spread far and wide the lord of Rama" (10).

Rambola returned to his home and began solemnly giving discourses on Ram's life. Then they called him Tulsidas. When he was married, he became deeply attached to his wife, Ratna. She was the first person

in his life to which he could call his own. One day after not finding her at home, he became agitated and indefatigable. It was in a dreadful storm in the middle of night when he decided to go to his father-in-law's house to get her. To reach there he had to cross a river, but no one would take him in such a ghastly spate. Just then, he saw a dead body floating across and jumped on it. Using the corpse as a boat, he reached the other side of the river. Tulsidas arrived at the house and went to Ratna's window. It was too high, but he saw something hanging from the window. Mistaking a lethal snake for a rope, he towed himself up on it. Ratna was taken aback. He told the story of his trip, with the motivation of his love for her to keep going. She stood up and declared, "Had you loved Rama as intensely as you do to this bundle of flesh and bones, you would have overcome all mortal fears" (17). Tulsidas was speechless. He left her house and did not look back.

He went to the banks of the Ganga and abandoned the world. Through his wife's insulting yet profound words, Tulsidas realized his duty of spreading the gospel of the Ramayana. He began in Rajapur with dialogue of Ramayana in Hindi, the language of the people in the region. Many orthodox Brahmans found this sacrilegious. They believed because Ramayana is sacred it must be read only in its original language, Sanskrit. They allowed him to

explain it in the local language. Tulsidas politely refused. How can the common man know the Ramayana is sacred it must only be read in its original language, Sanskrit. They allowed him to magnitude of Lord Ram unless spoken to in their language? After long travel, Tulsidas built a hut in Varanasi and wrote "Ramcharit-manas" – the story of Lord Ram in Hindi. The Varanasi Pundits were infuriated. They found Tulsidas' work disrespectful and wrong. They asked him to drown his work in the Ganga, but Tulsi refused. They agreed to put the Ramcharit-manas and other religious book by a linga of Lord Shiva.

The verdict was now up to Lord Shiva. The next morning, they found Tulsidas' literature right on top!

I disagree with the conjecture that what Tulsidas did was irreverent. I do not believe the words of God should only be restricted to Pundits and Brahmans. Thankfully, God blessed us with a man who believed the gospel of Ramayana should reach every home in every language.

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