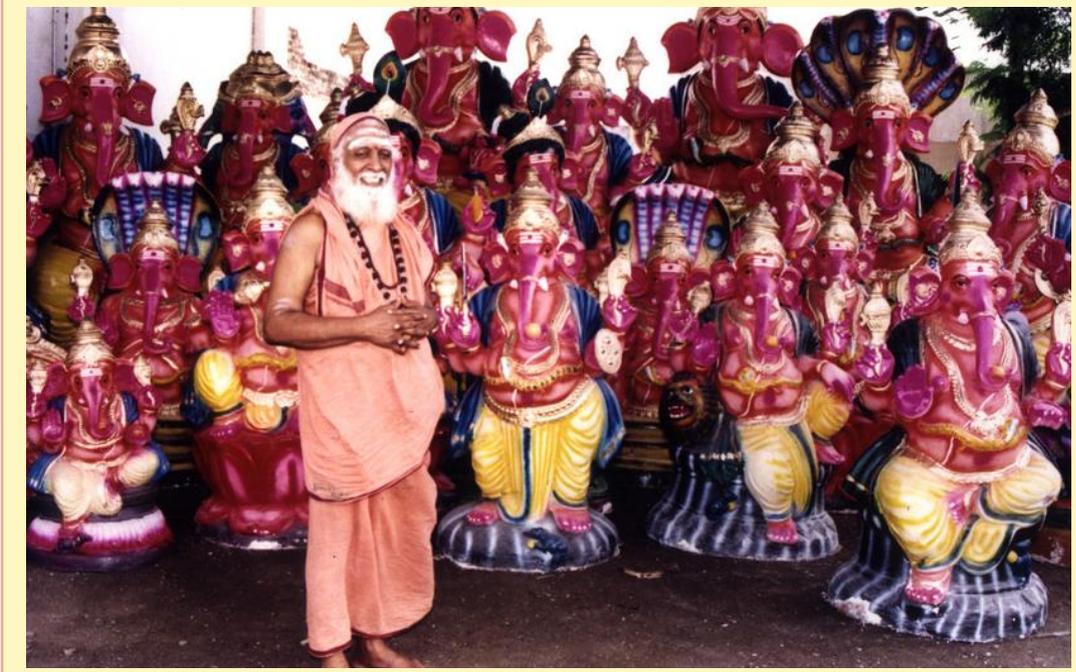


Message for Ganesh Chaturthi

*By Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj,
09 September, 2013*



Message for Ganesh Chaturthi

Today is Vinayaka Chaturthi, the 4th day of the lunar moon, which is especially dedicated to Lord Ganesh.

Lord Ganesh is famous for completely removing, dispelling and destroying any sort of impediments on the way of your achieving the goal.

Our goal is to get finally the Ultimate Truth, the ultimate Lord you cannot call Him solid or liquid energy; rather He is a living and loving energy. He is a living energy like you and I and that's why when He comes into us, our eyes begin to see and ears begin to hear.

Various people have various images of the Lord. Hence, He has given various aspects of the one Lord. The one Lord has become Ganesh, Krishna, Shiva, Divine Mother - He has become all.

The form as Vinayaka represents the form of Om and Om denotes everything. Om denotes the entire world, the three Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Sankara. It denotes highest, lowest truth, and everything is contained in it. Taittiriya Upanishad has one paragraph on Om.

Likewise every Upanishad has a paragraph on Om. Om is the form in which Vinayaka or Ganesha is present.

Lord Ganesha removes all impediments. These impediments are our desires for the objects of the world. There is no object which can remain forever. Do you want happiness only for two minutes? I want happiness forever. And you yourself are going to die one day. But when I am free, free from the objects of the world, I don't die - it is my body, a container which dies. Like a container containing fruits, the tin container thinks it is the fruit but it is not so. It is only the content that represents the Atman, the Ultimate God which is everywhere – Ram, Krishna, He is Ganesha, He is all.

So when you call Him by any name, any form, He comes.

Once when I went to Anandashram some years ago, 15-20 years perhaps, a family from Sri Lanka had come – 10-15 people were visiting and in size they were roughly about three times our stature. They suddenly came into my room and asked if I could talk. They said, “We are from Sri Lanka and once in a way come to Anandashram. We have a doubt to clarify. Here Raam Naam chanting goes on for the entire day. But we do not find anywhere the photo of Raam – so what is the secret?” I said to them, “You are not worshiping the form of Raam – when we say Raam, we mean the highest entity – He was there even before Raam was born. Raam, the son of King Dasharatha was born much later. Actually He also represented the same Lord which had no beginning and end and He was represented by Raam. He is a representative of that Raam.”

The first message:

Where was Krishna born? He was born in a jail – where he is kept under bars. He is bound and cannot move to a separate place. He is kept locked. He is bound by things, time, space and he cannot move elsewhere. He is completely slave-like. Bhagawan knows that we are all slaves to the world, the objects. Bhagawan wanted to say that I am your colleague, I am in the same position and hence it will be more acceptable for the people to relate to the Lord. If a king was to teach that don't bother about body, people will not be able to understand. Once you become a beggar and explain, it will carry weight. So Bhagawan was born inside a jail.

Where is the jail? It is inside our human heart - around which are the 5 senses of perception – eyes, ear, nose, tongue, etc. We also call the senses of perception gyanendriyas.

If we get a thing, we will not be able to understand and describe it fully unless the senses of perception perceive the object. Say for example, when one comes in contact with a gulab jamun [an Indian sweet], the eyes see and feel it as beautiful; the nose perceives the smell

of the gulab jamun, the hand touches it and feels it hot. So, all senses together give an idea what a gulab jamun is like.

Similarly, we also have the five senses of action –eliminating, reproducing, moving, grasping and speaking.

So in relation to both these senses, you are under their control. The moment the smell of gulab jamun comes, you are under its control and a thought crosses your mind, “My mother used to make exactly like that.” Then the desires start and that is why you are in a jail.

You should be free. This does not mean that you don’t eat the gulab jamun. Do have it but don’t become a slave to it. You should be a master of all the senses. To show that the Lord is our colleague, He Himself was in jail and His mother and father were also in the jail.

The second message:

When a child is born, you like to present it something. Vasudeva, the father of Lord Krishna, was not in a position to gift Krishna anything on His birth. The Lord knew that poor people will be highly worried that they cannot give any reward or gift on such an occasion. So, the compassionate Lord in order to reduce the worries of his parents, himself came with a cloth (pitambara) and a locket (kaustaba). Further, the parents would usually be concerned how to safeguard the child. Lord Krishna comes with full arsenal – shankha, chakra, gadha, and padma. Which child will come like that? It is a peculiar child. He knew what disappointment parents could have, so He comes all equipped.

Lord Krishna or Lord Ganesha, He is in our hearts. As we are unable to think of Him in our hearts, we externalise Him. So naturally when you think of Him in a stone, He comes there. When you think in your heart, He comes there. Wherever you think of Him, He comes in that form.

So now Lord Krishna is born inside the jail. Who will release Him to take away all impediments and bars? Secretly, Ganesha comes to release Krishna. He is now free, He is in Nanda Gaon and He lives with cowherds. In the Old Testament of the Bible, it is stated that we are all the sheep, and the shepherd is the Lord. In the same way, like a shepherd comes to graze you, give you food, take you to your house; the Lord has come to take you to your goal. It is Lord Vinayaka or Ganesha who helps Lord Krishna side by side to get Him released and His ultimate goal is to take you all to your home to liberation.

****Hari Om Tat Sat****

Website: <http://www.swamishantanandapurimaharaj.org/>