

DASHAVATAR - PARASURAMA AVATAR



Lord Parasurama was the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Parasurama was believed to be an Avesha Avatar. It is believed that after fulfilling the purpose of Avatar, Lord Vishnu left the body of Parasurama and Parasurama lived as a normal human being thereafter. Parasurama is considered to be chiranjeevi (immortal). Parasurama was a contemporary of Lord Rama as well as Lord Krishna, and is still believed to be wandering the earth.

Mother Earth (Bhudevi) could no longer carry the burden of the sinful, destructive, and irreligious monarchs that spoiled its resources, and neglected their duties as kings. They posed a serious threat to the pious, religious, and scholarly people those who wanted to lead a life of moral, peaceful, and good conduct. Lord Vishnu promised Bhudevi to take an avatar to destroy the evil and restore peace on earth.

Accordingly, Lord Vishnu was born as Parasurama to Maharishi Jamadagni and Renuka Devi. Parasurama was a strange combination – a learned sage, but always with a parasu (axe) in hand. He was a great devotee of Lord Shiva. Under Shiva's command he killed several demons without any weapons. Shiva was pleased with his valor, and presented him the parasu (axe). His original name was Bhargava Rama. Since he was always holding a parasu, people named him Parasurama. Parasurama also learnt dhanur vidya (archery) from Shiva, and became perfect in archery. Parasurama was highly dedicated to his parents and extremely obedient. His courage, warfare tactics, valor denoted his character as Kshatriya. He knew the Vedas and underwent extreme penance to get various boons. Though He was an avatar of Lord Vishnu, He never exhibited his true powers, but instead lived a simple ascetic life and set an example to the humans.

There was a king named Kartaveeryarjuna, a heroic personality. He had worshipped Lord Dattatreya and been blessed with invincibility. He possessed the strength of a thousand hands. Puffed with ego due to the new found powers acquired by him, he became arrogant and began tormenting every one. One day Kartaveeryarjuna went on hunting to the forest accompanied by his huge army. After the expedition had progressed for some time he began to feel hungry and thirst, and they sighted the ashram of Jamadagni.

When the king arrived there the sage extended him a warm welcome. Once Lord Brahma was pleased with Sage Jamadagni's penance, and gifted him a cow called "Kamadhenu" which would give unlimited food. The sage requested the divine cow to oblige him by helping to arrange for a sumptuous lunch to treat his royal guests. Soon, the ceremonial lunch was ready. After such a wonderful feast, the king asked him how he could arrange such a festive meal at such a short notice. "O king, this is the grace of Kamadhenu. The cow can bestow any favor instantly. All these are her blessings", replied Jamadagni.

A strong selfish desire gripped the king and he demanded Sage Jamadagni to hand the cow over to him. In return, he offered the sage many gifts. Jamadagni refused as the cow was presented to him by Brahma himself. The arrogant king was angry. He ordered his soldiers to take the cow by force and they tied her and drove away to his kingdom Mahishmati. Jamadagni was distressed. Parasurama was away from the Ashram at that time. He learnt about the king's actions after he returned to Ashram, and grew extremely angry. He decided to go in pursuit of Kartaveeryarjuna and bring Kamadhenu back. Armed with his sharp axe and bow and arrows, he left on war. First he defeated all Kartaveeryarjuna's soldiers. Finally the king himself appeared before Parasurama and the two were engaged in a fierce battle. Parasurama axed down the king's thousand hands and killed him. King's sons and remaining soldiers ran for their lives. Parasurama brought Kamadhenu back and respectfully handed her over to his father.

Meanwhile, the sons of Kartaveeryarjuna were waiting to seek revenge for their father's death. But having once faced the wrath of the axe-wielding Parasurama, they were afraid to confront him again, so they conceived a secret plan. When Parasurama, accompanied by his brothers, had gone out on an errand, the sons of Kartaveeryarjuna attacked the hermitage of Jamadagni. The sage was sitting in meditation. Renuka pleaded them to spare the life of her husband. But her plea went unheeded. Jamadagni was beheaded and his skull was taken away by his attackers and the ashram was destroyed. Hearing their mother's wails, Parasurama and his brothers rushed to the place, and were shocked to see the body of their father lying in a pool of blood with his head missing. Their mother wept and narrated

the happenings. Parasurama did not sit quietly and cry. Reddened with anger, Parasurama picked up his axe and hurried towards kingdom.

He destroyed the whole army, killed all the princes, picked up his father's head and returned to the ashram. There the children performed all the rituals in honor of their departed father.

Even after this, Parasurama's wrath did not subside. He felt uneasy and full of anguish whenever he saw his sorrowful mother. He thought that all the kings are evil. Finally, Parasurama vowed to destroy the entire kingly class. He blamed them for his father's death and for his mother's suffering. Carrying the axe on his shoulder, he traversed the earth twenty-one times and defeated all the arrogant Kshatriya kings, wiping out the entire royalty.

He prayed for peace to his father's soul. He conducted 'ASHWAMEDHA', 'VAJAPEYA', and other Yagnas to purify him, and gifted the land he had acquired to the priestly men who had come to these sacrifices.

Though bloody, Parasurama's rebellion contains many instances of his submission to 'Dharma'. He did not kill those kings who performed religious sacrifices (yagnas) and he did not kill married princes. He did not attack women.

Questions:

- Why did Lord Vishnu take Parasurama incarnation?
- Is He still alive?
- Is He obedient to his parents? How?
- What is Kamadhenu? Does it give anything you want?
- What is Parasurama's weapon?
- Who is Kartaveeryarjuna? How many hands he has?
- Is Kartaveeryarjuna a good person? Why?

Asthalakshmi Stotram - *Santana Lakshmi*: In the family life, the children are the greatest treasure. Those who worship this particular form of Sri Lakshmi, known as a Santana Lakshmi, are bestowed with the grace of mother Lakshmi and have wealth in the form of desirable children with good health & long life.

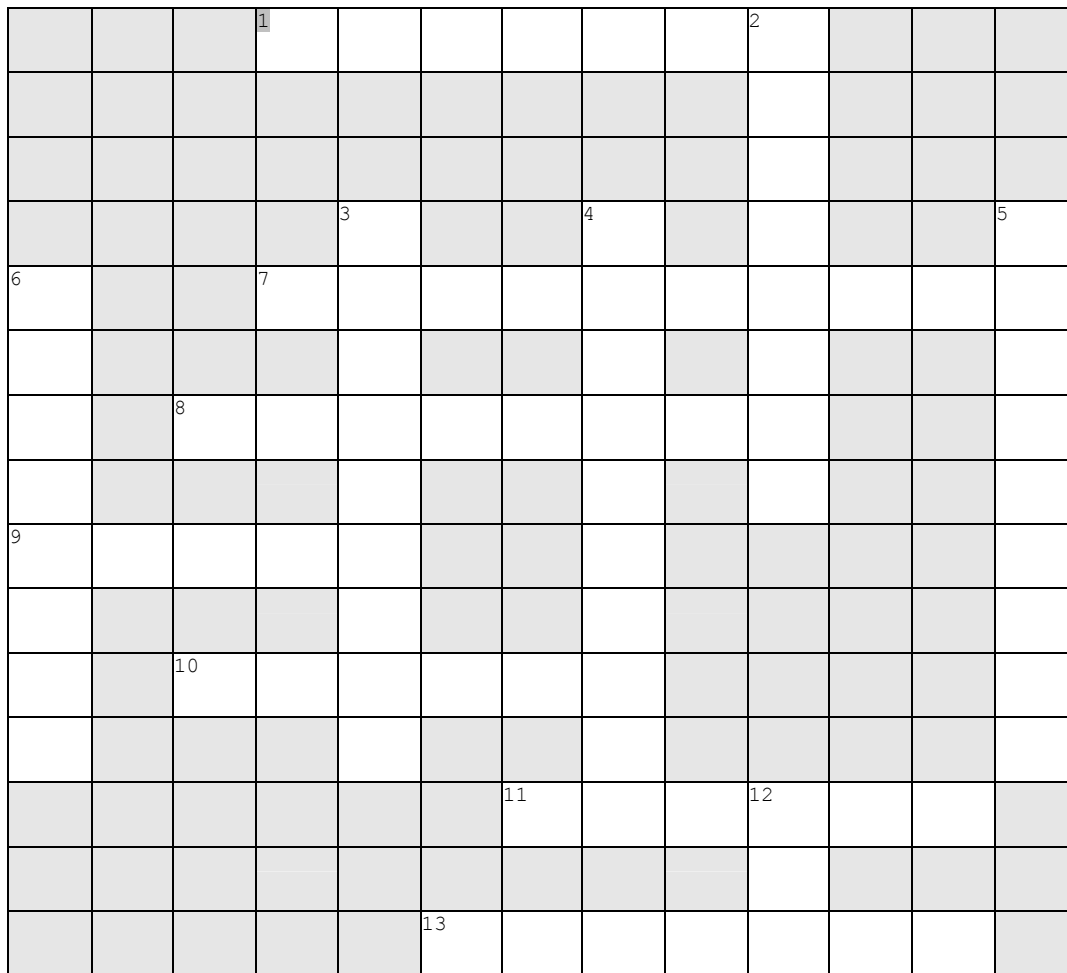
Ayi kagha vahini, mohini, chakrini,
raga vivrdhni, jnanamaye,
Gunagana varidhi, loka hithaishini,
Swara saptha bhooshitha gana nuthe,
Sakala surasura deva muneeswara,
Manhava vandhitha padayuthe,
Jaya jaya he madhusoodhana kamini
Santhanalakshmi sada palaya maam.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDCPQvmNwOc>

Meaning:

*Victory and victory to Santhanalakshmi
Oh, darling of the killer of Madhu,
Who rides on the bird,
Who is an enchantress,
Who is the consort of he who holds the chakra,
Who pacifies emotions,
Who is pervaded by knowledge,
Who is ocean of good qualities,
Who has her mind in the good of all the world,
Who is worshipped by the music of seven swaras,
And who is worshipped by all devas, asuras,
Sages and all humans,
Please protect me always*

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Mother Earth
- 7 Who gave boon to Karthveeryarjuna?
- 8 Parasurama's original name (ends with rama)
- 9 Parasurama is a devotee of
- 10 Parasurama's mother
- 11 Parasurama's weapon
- 13 Dhanur Vidya

DOWN

- 2 Chiranjeevi means
- 3 Parasurama's father
- 4 Sixth incarnation of Vishnu
- 5 Sacred Cow
- 6 How many hands Karthveeryarjuna has?
- 12 Parasu means

Coloring Exercise



© EnchantingKerala.org