Gurudeva Introduces Colorful New Prasadam Program
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Addition to the Inspired Talks Series Will Present Past Talks, Children's Stories & More

In a March 5th interview Master Subramuniya spoke about the Prasadam Program now being designed to complement the Inspired Talks published by Saiva Siddhanta Church. 'Prasadam' is a pamphlet series that was initiated in 1977 in South India. Master recalled that it was during a visit to the Mahalakshmi Temple outside the city of Madras, where eight images of Sakti in the form of Goddess Lakshmi are enshrined, that he got the vision of a complete series of simple and colorful pamphlets on many useful subjects going out to Hindus around the world. 'The Guests is God,' and 'How to do Pujas in the Home Shrine Room' are sample titles.

Gurudeva saw the great need for short and informative pamphlets for Hindus living in the modern world. Most people nowadays don't have sufficient time or opportunity to read and study about the Hindu religion deeply enough to pass on the fullest heritage of the Sanatana Dharma to their children, and this is especially true for those Hindus living in foreign countries. There are too many other kinds of books read, and there is television and school and every other kind of diversion for Hindu children living abroad.

In India the children learn about their religion just by their daily life in the smaller cities and villages. They don't have to be formally and hopefully taught all about their religion for they simply absorb it from the traditional village community. In the West they receive none of the exposure. No one there speaks their native tongue, no one there *** their literature, no one there follows their faith. Instead they receive constant exposure from a culture and heritage that is foreign and the Sanatana Dharma. Therefore, the most important duty of the Hindu mothers and fathers living abroad is to educate their children more than well in their faith and heritage. In India one merely has to live the Hindu religion. In the West one must defend it, make a place for it and pass it on unadulterated to the younger generation.

The children need good teachers to learn their faith and be fully aware of its reality and ageless truths. To help provide Western Hindus the basic knowledge they need in a form that they can easily read and understand the Prashadam Program was begun. Each pamphlet contains only one idea, clearly and simply explained, that can be read and passed on to another.

Prasadam is to share; many people enjoy very much having a small list of names in their local area and regularly mailing out the latest pamphlets to the immediate Hindu community as their sadhana and as a needed service to the members of their religion. The pamphlets needed for such a distribution program may be readily obtained by simply writing to the Church. It is hoped that many independent distribution centers will spring up around the world. There will be pamphlets on many subjects, including excerpts from the Upanishads. Tirukural, Agamas and other scriptures and epics, children's stories with a moral that can be applied to daily life and some will offer good advice learned and shared by other Hindus who have lived abroad for years.

Master Subramuniya initiated the Prasadam Program in 1977 at Sri Subramuniya Ashram in Sri Lanka, with the aid of Dr. S. Sanmugasundaran of Colombo. The first pamphlets had Lord Ganesha's picture on them. The Prasadam series in turn inspired another publication from Sri Lanka, "SIVANERI" which is now printed and freely distributed from there by the Eelathu Thiruneri Tamil Manram for the Western reader and Hindu living outside his country.

The swamis of Siddhanta Press - voice of Kadavul Hindu Temple - have now taken up the Prasadam Program, redesigned it in a new format and will publish and distribute it freely, to be interspersed with the Inspired Talks booklets and to accompany the New Saivite World in its monthly mailings. Future editions will include wise statements from Hindu swamis, stories, quotes, selections from scriptures and some of the finest will be those pamphlets that offer assistance for specific needs that Hindus in foreign lands encounter in trying to practice and pass on to their children the depth and majesty of the Hindu religion. For that we need to gather ideas and suggestions. If there is something you want to know or teach your children and you need to have the full facts, write to the Prasadam Desk at Saiva Siddhanta Church. Your question may be the basis for a future Prasadam pamphlet from which you can teach in confidence. That's what Prasadam is for, so write often and share with other Hindus your knowledge, your questions, your ideas and advice. Prasadam will come back to you.