

Subhashita 6. The Gift of Knowledge.

September 5th is Teacher's Day.

There are a great many subhashitas on knowledge and learning but this one is particularly sweet. More so, since we have just done the Trutiya vibhakti last week and the Sanskrit isn't Greek and Latin any more!

अन्नदानं परं दानं विद्यादानमतः परम् ।
अन्नेन क्षणिका तृप्तिः यावज्जीवं च विद्यया ॥

अन्नदानं The gift of food (is) परं (a) supreme दानं gift.

विद्यादानमतः परम् = विद्या-दानम् The gift of knowledge(is)+ अतःपरम्
superior (to that of the gift of food)

अन्नेन With food तृप्तिः satisfaction (is)क्षणिका for the moment

च And (in this context, च would mean "while") विद्यया With knowledge
(satisfaction is) यावज्जीवं = यावत् जीवं Life long .

i have been wondering why we need to celebrate Teacher's day when we already have Guru Poornima. i did some cursory sleuthing and then got bored sleuthing on my own. So i thought of asking you to help too. Do you know why Teacher's day is celebrated on September 5th? If you do, please write to me....it would be wonderful to share that with everybody on our site.

After all, विद्यादानमतः परम् !!!!!

(My query was posted in 2002. Today, on July 24th, 2008, Shri U M Acharya from Mangalore has written in to say that the 5th of September is India's 2nd President- Dr S Radhakrishnan's birthday. Dr Radhakrishnan was a great scholar and to honour teachers, India celebrates the 5th of September as Teacher's Day. Thank you, Shri Acharya!.)