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N7789K - MATHEWS PERKINS

Can anyone experience life after death for a few days in his present life? Believe me, it was possible earlier. Around 1000 years back, anyone could go for a purgatory voyage to experience life after death for 12 days through a tunnel in Bharmaur, Himachal Pradesh. But no one could recall what happened to him during his purgatory voyage. Once, a person from Bundelkhand, named Kalidas went for a purgatory voyage. He experienced life after death and surprisingly, he was able to recall all those incidents of a different planet. After returning to his state, he embarked on a discourse about his purgatory voyage and his scary encounters with the King of Bundelkhand. Could anyone believe in his riveting account of the voyage or people smelled a foul play?RECOMMENDATIONThe novel "Purgatory Voyage" by Adarsh Kumar Khare is about a story that dates back to 925 AD of a village person, otherwise living peacefully, whose life is thrown into a turmoil consequent to an extraordinary experience of the afterlife, an outcome of his deed (karma) and sense of inquiry. The story is beautifully weaved with threads of mythology, traditional Hindu beliefs, and folklore. At the same time, there is a conscious effort to bring out the social behavior, rituals, and festivities of village life of that period along with the political order of the King with his subjects. There is a gripping narration of Kali, the protagonist of the novel, of other-worldly experience of his visits to after-life planets of hells and heavens, of torments and punitive actions meted out to sinners, and accounts of suffering the souls have to undergo for the various sins committed in their earthly lives. The author seems to have largely drawn from the "Pretkalp" part of Garuda Puran for making such a vivid description of the splendors of the city of Yam, the horrors of various hells, and the excruciating journey

of an ordinary soul through all this. The most interesting part of this novel is the day-by-day recount by Kali of incidents, pain, and suffering of his soul and other fellow souls in his 10-days sojourn to different types of hells and also exploring parts of Yam City and heaven. The curiosity of a reader is held on toes as the account of each day unfolds, much like the Arabian nights. I find 'Purgatory Voyage' by Adarsh Khare a hugely fascinating story in which one cannot leave reading halfway. It latches on to your curiosity and leads your imagination till you reach the end and sigh a sense of relief and joy of having gone through the upheavals along with the protagonist of the story. I think this is the achievement of Adarsh Khare in writing this book. -Asit Kumar, Advisor in the Ministry of Petroleum, New Delhi. RECOMMENDATION Purgatory Voyage is a very interesting novel based on one of the important ancient scriptures of India, specifically the Garuda Puran. Adarsh Kumar Khare has used his creative craft to bring back alive the old teachings of India in a story of fiction that should strike a chord with all age group people, particularly those who have some inclination to occultism. The author has followed a style of simple storytelling that generates curiosity in the mind 'what next'. It was a joy to read the book describing what life after death could be like, with vivid descriptions of different hells and heaven, and punishment or reward according to committed sins or virtuous work. Most of the geographical locations including river, valleys, and forests bear names either similar or the same as those that exist in present-day India and that adds much credence and authenticity to arouse interest in the reader's mind, even though it is a fiction. This book is a must for those who have some fascination towards Indian rich cultural heritage including ancient scriptures and those having the curiosity to peep into the future of life after death. -Pradipta Kumar Das, Bestselling author of Power of the Uni-

verse lies within you.

George Wyman Bury (1874-1920) was a British naturalist and explorer who spent 25 years in different parts of the Arab world, including Morocco, Aden, Somalia, and Egypt. He wrote several books, including The Land of Uz about the Arabian Peninsula, which he published in 1911 under the pseudonym Abdullah Mansur, and Arabia infelix, or, The Turks in Yamen, published in 1915. During World War I he served with British intelligence in Egypt, where he was charged with countering Turkish and German pan-Islamist propaganda (and infiltrators) aimed at stirring up popular sentiment against the British and inducing Muslim troops under British command to desert. Pan-Islam, written while Bury was dying of a lung disease, is based in part on his experiences during the war. He writes that Pan-Islam "is a movement to weld together Moslems throughout the world regardless of nationality" and that it is "the practical protest of Moslems against the exploitation of their spiritual and material resources by outsiders." While acknowledging these indigenous causes, Bury argues that the growth of Pan-Islam as a political movement in the period before and during World War I was very much the product of German political, financial, and logistical support, supported by Ottoman Turkey after it entered the war on the side of Germany. Bury argues that the German attempt to use Pan-Islam as a political weapon was largely unsuccessful, owing to the animosity between the Turks and Arabs and the lack of "psychic insight" on the part of the Germans. Bury concludes with a "Plea for Tolerance," in which he calls for better understanding in Europe and the United States of the Islamic world. The book includes a fold-out map showing the lands of Islam.

This Puran is devoted to the mother goddess. Owing to her brocreational capabilities she is considered to be the geacom of all ener-

gy. Hence the term 'shakti' for mother Goddess which literally means energy.

Winners don't do different things, they do things differently. A practical, common-sense guide that will lead you from ancient wisdom to modern-day thinking, *You Can Win* will help you to establish new goals, develop a renewed sense of purpose, and generate fresh and exciting ideas about yourself and your future. Shiv Khera guarantees, as the title suggests, a lifetime of success. The book enables you to translate positive thinking into attitude, ambition and action, all of which combine to give you the winning edge. This book will help you to:

- Build confidence by mastering the seven steps to positive thinking;
- Be successful by turning weaknesses into strengths;
- Gain credibility by doing the right things for the right reasons;
- Take charge by controlling things instead of letting them control you;
- Build trust by developing mutual respect with the people around you; and
- Accomplish more by removing the barriers to effectiveness.

One of the most popular Indian novels of all ages, 'Ananda Math' was translated innumerable times into Indian and English languages. Five editions were published in Bengali and Hindi during the author's lifetime, the first in 1882. The novel has the backdrop of the 18th century famine in Bengal, infamous as "Chhiyattorer Manvantar" (famine of 76th Bengali year, 1276), to narrate the saga of armed uprising of the ascetics and their disciples against the pillaging East India Company rulers. The uprising is historically known as 'Santan Vidroha', the ascetics being the children of Goddess Jagadamba. The saga of 'Ananda Math' is thrilling and best epitomised in the patriotic mass-puller song "Bande Mataram" ('Hail thee, O My Motherland'). The song is still a mantra that stirs imagination of millions of Hindus. The ascetics robbed the tormentors of people — the British rulers and the greedy zamindars — distributed the looted wealth to poverty-stricken people but kept nothing for themselves. Their targets were mostly the Company armoury and supplies. They had a highly organised setup, spread throughout Bengal. It was also India's first battle for freedom, and not the Sipahi Vidroha of 1857.

The "Garuda Purana" is probably the most important, living Purana. It is used in sermons, last rites, death anniversary / Shraadh. In its original form (19,000 shlokas), it is a treatise that covers Ayurveda, creation theories and the afterlife. It contains graphic details of death and punishment. Thus the "Garuda Purana" is rec-

ommended for reading only to the evolved jnani in most Indian traditions. The layman is advised to read the "Shubha Dharma Garuda Purana". This book evolved out of my attempt to revive a lost sacred text called the "Shubha Dharma Garuda Purana". I will soon publish The Shubha Dharma Garuda Purana. The Shubha Dharma.. version only contains parts that have a divine, ethical and metaphysical message. Narayana in his own words recommends its reading for the layman, grihasta. May the Acharyas, Garuda, Narayana and Yama bless you through this book. Originally published on Amazon, this is globally available.

Garud Puran is a matchless scripture of satvik category. It is said that reading or listening to the narration of Garud Puran not only brings happiness in the present life but also takes one closer to the divinity. Therefore, all human beings, particularly Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs must acquire the deep knowledge enshrined in this scripture. The Garud Puran also aims at establishing a welfare society not only for human beings but also for all creatures and also paves the way for well being of the entire ecology and creation. It says that one must be full of action, compassion and generosity. One should live a controlled life while remaining Brahmin-nisht (engrossed in Divinity).

Presents interior and exterior shots of historic homes and includes such information as the building's style, architect, builder, original or most famous owner, and date of construction.

A seamless blend of fable and philosophy, the Bhagavata Purana is perhaps the most revered text in the Vaishnava tradition. It brings to life the legends of gods, asuras, sages and kings—all the while articulating the crucial ethical and philosophical tenets that underpin Hindu spiritualism. The narrative unfolds through a series of conversations and interconnected stories. We are told how the sage Vyasa was inspired by Narada to compose the Bhagavata Purana as a means to illumine the path to a spiritual life. We learn of the devotion of Prahlada, the austerity of Dhruva, and the blinding conceit of Daksha. Also recounted are tales of the many incarnations of Vishnu, especially Krishna, whom we see grow from a beloved and playful child to a fierce protector of the faithful.

BEFORE speaking of the Vedic Deities, it is necessary that something be said concerning the Vedas themselves, the source of our information concerning them. The root of the word is vid, "to

know;" hence the term Veda signifies knowledge; and as these books were not written for centuries after they were originally composed, it signifies knowledge that was heard, or orally communicated. The Vedas are not the work of a single person, but, according to popular belief, were communicated to a number of Rishis or saints, who in their turn transmitted them to their disciples. The Seer Vyasa is styled the arranger, or, as we should now say, the editor, of these works. The instruction contained in these writings is said to have been breathed forth by God Himself. Other writers teach that it issued from Him like smoke from fire. Sometimes the Vedas are said to have sprung from the elements. The accounts of their origin, though differing in form, agree in teaching that they were the direct gift of God to man; and hence they are regarded with the greatest veneration. They are the special property of the Brahmans. As early as Manu, the nominal author or compiler of a law book probably not more than two or three centuries later than the Vedas, though some suppose it to have been no earlier than A.D. 500, it was regarded as a grave offence for a single word of these divinely given books to be heard by a man of a lower caste. The Vedas are four in number; of these the Rig-Veda is the oldest, next in order was the Yajur-Veda, then the Sama-Veda, and last of all the Atharva-Veda. Each of these Vedas consists of two main parts: a Sanhita, or collection of mantras or hymns; and a Brahmana, containing ritualistic precept and illustration, which stands in somewhat the same relation to the Sanhita as the Talmud to the Law. In these are found instructions to the priests who conduct the worship of the gods addressed in the hymns. Attached to each Brahmana is an Upanishad, containing secret or mystical doctrine. These are regarded as of lesser authority than the Mantras and Brahmanas. For whilst they are spoken of as Sruti, i.e. heard, the Upanishads are Smriti, learned. Though based on the older compositions, if there is any discrepancy between them, the teaching of the later ones is rejected. The Sanhita and Brahmana are for the Brahmans generally; the Upanishads for philosophical inquirers. Yet, strange to say, whereas the older portions had, until recent years, been almost entirely neglected, with some parts of the Upanishads there was considerable acquaintance amongst the learned pundits of Benares and other places. In many parts of India not a man could be found able to read and interpret them. Of the Sanhitas, the "Rig-Veda Sanhita—containing one thousand and seventeen hymns—is by

far the most important; whilst the Atharva-Veda-Sanhita, though generally held to be the most recent, is perhaps the most interesting. Moreover, these are the only two Vedic hymn-books worthy of being called separate original collections;” the others being almost entirely made up of extracts from the Rig-Veda. Between the time of the composition of the Rig-Veda and that of the Atharva, considerable changes in the religious faith of the people had come about. The childlike trust of the earlier hymns has disappeared, and the deities now seem more cruel, and there is greater need of propitiatory offerings. Probably the old religion of the people whom they had conquered had begun to tell on that of the Aryans.

The ‘Srimad Bhagwal’ itself is believed to be the gem among all the sacred Puranas as it emphasises on the devotion to Lord. Vishnu’s incarnation, Lord Krishna. It is believed to have been authored by the great sage Vedavyasa when he felt a great unrest troubling his soul after authoring the Mahabharat. Although this Purana itself is believed to be a part of Skanda Purana, it is its lyrical beauty and devotion to Krishna that made it most popular. It enlists 22 incarnations of Lord Vishnu, while other sacred accounts of the Sanatana Dharma believe that there were nine incarnations and one is yet to come. Normally in the Purana, the tales or stories frequently overlap with each other giving emphasis on a different point. Owing to paucity of space, many of the stories have been given a brief mention in this work with the footnote guiding to the sources, to get the full story in the other Puranas. There are also certain variations in the details of the stories which have been also marked within parenthesis. Also, many details mentioned in this Puran which may appear uninteresting, have been deliberately left out. Some of the stories which are well-known have been skipped. For example, the Ramakatha or the details about other incarnations popularised by other sacred sources. The main emphasis in culling out the stories has been on those stories that reveal the basic moral fiber of our ethos. These stories have been recreated keeping in mind the comprehension of our young learners and hence making these stories more logical. This work is only an attempt to make our society recapture its roots. That is why the language and style have been used with great care so as to make the stories readable and comprehensive. It is hoped that our discerning readership will accord it a warm welcome. Lastly, the author wishes to record his gratitude to

Narenderji of Diamond Pocket Books whose crusade to publish the gems of our cultural and religious ethos has few parallels in the field of publishing.

When his rakshasa army was destroyed in the battle against Rama, the prince of Ayodhya, Ravana, the Lord of Lanka, called for his son Mahiravana, a powerful magician. Would he succeed in killing the noble Rama and Lakshmana? Not while Hanuman was around, for this faithful friend had a trick or two of his own. The Bengali "Krittivasa Ramayana" written by poet Krittivasa in the 15th century describes how Hanuman manages to get around the wily sorcerer's schemes.

Vishnu means all pervading. Vishnu is the administrator of the universe. He puts in place, the laws of the universe and administers the universe strictly according to the law. He is a strict disciplinarian, yet highly compassionate in nature. He presides over all the seven planes of the universe. The abode of Vishnu is supposed to be the Supreme one. He has prescribed various paths through which one has to travel to reach His abode, the point of no return for a soul, known as liberation. He has been referred to in Vedas. Without Vishnu, no fire ritual is complete. He is quite often referred to as Purusha, the Supreme Soul. His famous sleeping posture on Ananta, the snake, who floats on the ocean of milk, is very well known. This posture is not merely a gross description, but has got subtle meaning. Ananta means infinite and the milk of ocean refers to the eternal bliss. He lies in the ocean of eternal bliss. Those who seek Him also enter the state of bliss at some point of time. He incarnates in different forms to destroy evil doers. His avatars occur whenever there is imbalance between morality and immorality. When immorality begins to dominate over morality He incarnates. His notable incarnations are Lord Rama and Lord Krishna. The scene of unfolding this great Sahasranama happened in the great epic Mahabharata authored by sage, Veda Vyasa. Bhisma was lying on a bed made of arrows awaiting his death. At that time, he was meditating on Krishna. Knowing this, Krishna asked Yudhishtira (eldest among Pandava brothers and known for his righteousness) to seek spiritual initiation from Bhisma and also told Bhisma to initiate Yudhishtira. Yudhishtira asks Bhisma kimekam daivatam loke meaning who is the Supreme Lord of the world. Bhisma replies by saying, that the purest, the most auspicious, the chief among the gods and the father of all the beings is the One who is Supreme, referring to Lord

Vishnu. This conversation appears in the prrvabhag of this Sahasranama. The spiritual initiation of Yudhishtira by Bhisma is Vishnu Sahasranama. Krishna was also present when this happened and this Sahasranama was blessed by the Lord Himself. Vishnu is also known as Narayana. Garuda Purana (III.24.54, 55) explains the etymological meaning of Narayana. “As He is the resort of merits and demerits and as He abides in the waters of ocean, He is called Narayana. Water is also called nara (probably meaning cosmic water); as His Abode is water, He is called Narayana.” Vishnu is the most auspicious form of the Brahman. He is not only invoked during auspicious occasions, but also while performing funeral rites. At the time of conclusion of all rituals, the effect of the rituals are surrendered to Vishnu. Vishnu Sahasranama consists of three parts – purvabhag or the first part; stotrabhag or the main part from which one thousand names or nama-s are composed; and uttarabhag or the concluding part. The main part consists of 108 couplets from which all the 1000 nama-s are derived. Apart from these three parts, this Sahasranama has seven dhyana verses by which one can meditate upon His auspicious form. All the one thousand nama-s have been interpreted based on ancient Scriptures like Upanishad-s. Wherever possible, quantitation from Upanishad-s and other Scriptures have been used. Many of the nama-s are interpreted from the point of view of attaining Him to get liberation. Wherever needed, Sanskrit verses have been used along with IAST, for the sake of proper pronunciation.

The Puranas are not merely history books in the accepted sense of the term but they do give a mine of information about the ancient life or the time when our values were taking roots. Since they record not only history and geography, but also the essence of our jurisprudence and subjects of practical value and its relevance, it perhaps never wanes. In order to help the gen-next know and appreciate the span of our achievement, it is essential for it to have a comprehensive version of our Puranas. The language and style of narration have been kept as near to the modern parlance so as to help the reader get the crux of the text. This Skanda Purana is an important to me of the series as it contains varied descriptions of our ancient heritage. Curiously enough, the now widely popular story: the ‘Satyanarayan Katha’ owes its origin to this very Purana. It is hoped our discerning readers would accord a warm welcome to Skanda Purana as they did to the earlier Puranas of the present series. We would welcome any sugges-

tion from our readers to make the present series more relevant and meaningful.

Even after he has composed the awesome Mahabharata, the Maharishi Vyasa finds no peace. Narada Muni says to him, Ordinary men will be delighted by your work, but what about the Sages of heaven and earth? You have described the human life, its strife and its ends, but you have not yet described the Lord himself. You must turn your great gift to that task; only then will you find peace. Veda Vyasa composes the Bhagavata Purana, in eighteen thousand slokas and twelve kandas. He teaches it to his illumined son Suka, who narrates the Secret Purana to Yudhishtira's heir, King Parikshit, on the banks of the Ganga. The Bhagavata Purana is a living embodiment of the Lord Narayana and claims to bestow moksha merely by being heard. Just before Krishna, the Avatara, leaves the world, Uddhava says to him, leave us a tangible form, Lord, in which we can find you, touch you, and be near you. Krishna enters the Bhagavata Purana with all of his being. This book is a full literary rendering of the Bhagavata Purana, bringing all the wonder, wisdom and grace of the Book of God to the modern reader.

About 16 centuries ago, an unknown Indian author or authors gathered together the diverse threads of already ancient traditions and wove them into a verbal tapestry that today is still the central text for worshippers of the Hindu Devi, the Divine Mother. This spiritual classic, the Devimahatmya, addresses the perennial questions of the nature of the universe, humankind, and divinity. How are they related, how do we live in a world torn between good and evil, and how do we find lasting satisfaction and inner peace? These questions and their answers form the substance of the Devimahatmya. Its narrative of a dispossessed king, a merchant betrayed by the family he loves, and a seer whose teaching leads beyond existential suffering sets the stage for a trilogy of myths concerning the all-powerful Divine Mother, Durga, and the fierce battles she wages against throngs of demonic foes. In these allegories, her adversaries represent our all-too-human impulses toward power, possessions, and pleasure. The battlefields symbolize the field of human consciousness on which our lives' dramas play out in joy and sorrow, in wisdom and folly. The Devimahatmya speaks to us across the ages of the experiences and beliefs of our ancient ancestors. We sense their

enchantment at nature's bounty and their terror before its destructive fury, their recognition of the good and evil in the human heart, and their understanding that everything in our experience is the expression of a greater reality, personified as the Divine Mother.

Derived from a Buddhist funerary text, this famous volume's timeless wisdom includes instructions for attaining enlightenment, preparing for the process of dying, and moving through the various stages of rebirth.

This book offers a translation of the seven thousand verses of the second book of the medieval Hindu text, the Ganesa Purana, one of two Puranas dedicated to the important elephant-headed god. In this book the reader is given many narratives about Ganesha's ascent to earth in order to kill demonic figures who threaten to overthrow the correct world order. In addition, these narratives contain myths about Ganesha's birth and family as well as some extended and quite humorous myths about ideal devotees of the god. The translation is preceded by a long introduction offering a geographical and historical context for the Ganesa Purana. Following the translation are very extensive notes which bring our points of philological interest, but focus mainly on the literary structure of the text and the methods used to present the many myths and narratives in a coherent and fully integrated manner.

- The first study of an important popular print genre - Connects popular prints with political history and current Indian politics - Vividly documents the fascination and repulsion provoked by images of punishment This book documents the growth of printed images of punishments in hell in 19th- and 20th-century India. It explores what happens when new technologies of image reproduction collide with very deep cultural traditions. It traces the sources of the iconography and formal visual structures that found new expression in late 19th-century chromolithographs showing deeds and their punishments. These prints, often known as karni bharni, remain part of a living tradition, being still commercially produced by several presses. Jain iconography provided one of the routes to visualizing the punishments listed in the Garuda Purana within a visual grid established by gyan chaupar or the "chess of knowledge." Style and form remained in many respects remarkably stable over the last century and a half but the political concerns of the genre changed from a vegetarian code reinforcing conventional high-caste Hindu patriarchy and morality to a concern with the

obligations of the citizen. A parallel genre of Good Habits and Bad Habits (together with educational charts on duties to village and nation) reflected an Emergency-era co-option of karni bharni's key idioms in the interests of the state. Twenty-first-century pastiches satirize the ideological positions in these popular images. Contents: Acknowledgements; Introduction; The Oldest of Archives; "Atrocious Representations of Scenes of Hell"; Myth, Play and Pedagogy; Short Notes on Heaven; Printing in India; Verticality and the "Public"; Puranic Origins; Colonial Hell; Indian Hells in a Global Context; The Architecture of Hell; Yampats; The Mechanics of Mimesis; Dalit Critiques; The History of Hell; Celluloid Hell; Mimesis as Infection; From Karni Bharni to Ideal Boy; The Politics of Karni Bharni; Notes; Index.

The magical story of how Ganesh, the son of Shiva and Parvati, was brought back to life with the head of an elephant • The story of one of the most beloved characters in Indian lore, made accessible for Western children • Illustrated throughout with paintings from the classic Indian tradition Any Indian child can tell you how the beloved god Ganesh got his elephant's head--now American children can know as well. For centuries Indian children have grown up hearing Ganesh's story--how his mother, Parvati (an incarnation of the great mother goddess), created a small boy from sandalwood soap and commanded that he guard the palace against all intruders while she took her bath. How her husband, Shiva (the fearsome god of destruction), didn't take kindly to being barred from his own home. How Shiva beheaded the boy during the cosmic war that followed, but then, when he realized that the balance of the entire universe was at stake, brought the boy back to life by grafting an elephant's head onto his body and made him the people's intercessor against the powers of destruction. Ganesh's timeless story teaches children about the steadfast power of dedication to duty, the awe-inspiring power of a mother's love for her child, and the gentle power of compassion, which holds the world together. Accompanied by rich, color illustrations prepared according to the traditional Hindu canon, How Ganesh Got His Elephant Head will transport children to a magical world filled with ancient wisdom.

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freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. To ensure a quality reading experience, this work has been proofread and republished using a format that seamlessly blends the original graphical elements with text in an easy-to-read typeface. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant.

In the previous volume Sitā was rescued from the demon Rāvana and Rāma's exile in the forest had ended. But in this volume we

will see that Sitā's troubles are far from over. "This Story ends with the Uttara. It is held in reverence by Brahma, composed by Vālmiki and passes as the foremost of all under the name of the Rāmāyana. Thereupon as before, Vishnu, who compriseth the three worlds and all objects, mobile and immobile, again established himself as before in the land of immortals. Thereupon the celestials the Gandharvas, the great Rishis used to hear happily every day in heaven this poem of Rāmāyana. At the Sarādhā ceremony the wise should chant this Rāmāyana sacred like the Vedas, removing sins and increasing life and prosperity. Reading even a single verse of this poem, one who hath no son, obtaineth him; one having no riches, gets by them--and people are freed from all

sins. By reading even one sloka people are freed from all sins which they commit every day. Clothes, cows, and gold should be conferred upon him who chants this poem, for he being pleased all the deities remain satisfied. Whoever reads this story of Rāmāyana, conferring a long life is honoured in this world along with his sons and grand-sons and as well as in the land of the dead. Whoever shall read this Rāmāyana either in the morning, noon, or evening, shall never be wearied. Pracheta's son Vālmiki composed this poem, conferring long life, together with the future story of the deity and the Uttara Kandam." You can get a free e-book version of this text at: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/62496>