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TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

SAPTHAGIRI

ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

JANUARY 2022

RS. 5/-



Nithyaaya Niravadyaaya

Sathyaananda chidaatmane

Sarvaantaraatmane

Srimadvenkatesaya Mangalam

Sriprasad



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

A view of
Brahmotsavams
performed to
Sri Padmavathi Devi
at Tiruchanur
from 30-11-2021
to 08-12-2021.



BHAGAVADGITA



Gāṇḍīvaṁ sraṁsate hastāt
tvak cai 'va paridahyate
na ca śaknomy avasthātum
bhramatī 'va ca me manaḥ

Gandiva (the Bow), slips from my
hand and my skin too burns all
over. I am not able to stand steady.
My mind is reeling.

(Chapter- I, Sloka-30)

INVOCATION

Bhāvamulōnā bāhyamu nandunu
gōvinda gōvinda yāni koluvavō manasā..

..bhāvamu.

hariyavatāramulē akhila dēvatalu
harilōnivē brahmāṇḍambulu
hari nāmamulē anni mantramulu
hari hari hari hari hari yanavō manasā

..bhāvamu.

viṣṭuni mahimalē vihita karmamulu
viṣṭuni pogaḍeḍi vēdambulu
viṣṭuḍokkaḍē viśvāntarātmuḍu
viṣṭuvu viṣṭuvani vedakavō manasā..

..bhāvamu..

acyutu ḍitaḍē ādiyu nantiyamu
acyutuḍē asurāntakuḍu
acyutuḍu śrīvēṅkaṭādrī mīda nide
acyuta acyuta śaraṇavavō manasā...

..bhāvamu..

- Annamacharya



O mind! In your thought and also outwardly,
Say 'Govinda' 'Govinda' and pay reverence!

All deities are but Hari's Incarnations
Within Hari are the numerous vast universes
All divine incarnations are but Hari's names
O Mind! Say 'Hari' 'Hari' 'Hari' 'Hari' and pay reverence!

Vishnu's omnipotent miracles are our ordained deeds
The entire Vedas are but praises of Vishnu
Vishnu alone is the inner self of the entire universe
O mind! Saying 'Vishnu' 'Vishnu', continue to seek Him!

Achyuta alone is the beginning and the end
Achyuta Himself has put all diabolical demons to end
Achyuta is the one on Sri Venkatadri Hill,
O mind! Take refuge in that Achyuta!

Courtesy : Nectar ocean of Annamacharya by
Smt. Ambika Ananth & Sri Adviteeya N. Dixit

LET US LEARN SANSKRIT

LESSON - 13

Original Expression by : Mahamahopadyaya Kasi Krishnacharya

Modified Expression by : Mahamahopadyaya Samudrala Lakshmanaiah

English by : Dr. S. Vaishnavi

प्रयाणम् = Travel

दिवा = Morning

दौष्ट्यं = Noise

तथापि = Even then/yet

भिक्षाटनम् = To seek alms

सर्वथा = Always

अकुर्वन् = (They) did

अकुरुत = (You all) did

अकुर्म = (We all) did

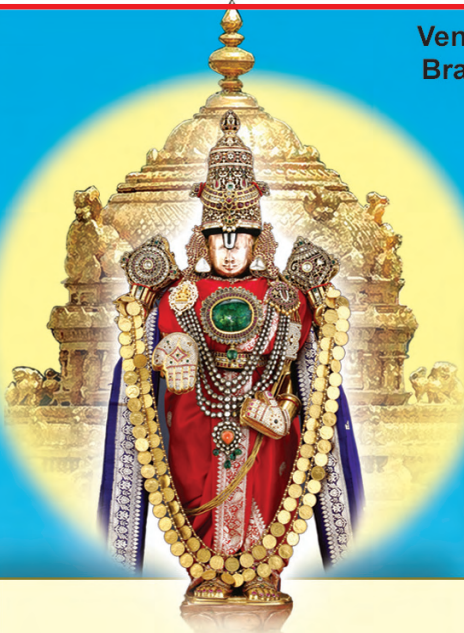
QUESTIONS

- a १. त्वं हयः नक्तं कुत्र प्रयाणमकरोः? २. बालकाः दौष्ट्यं कुर्वन्ति। ३. ते कुत्रापि नासन्। ४. तथापि एते पाकम् अकुर्वन्। ५. ब्राह्मणाः भिक्षाटनं कुर्वन्ति। ६. अद्य पाकः कथमस्ति? ७. अद्य व्यापारं वयमेव अकुर्म। ८. तथापि ते केऽपि अत्र न सन्ति। ९. अद्य दिवा सर्वथा त्वम् अत्र नासीः। १०. अद्य पाकं यूयमेव अकुरुत किम्?

- b 1. I didn't travel anywhere. 2. Did you not alone cook today? 3. We didn't. Some others did. 4. Others are brahmins. 5. Who are they? 6. These are the ones. 7. Yesterday boys were making noise. 8. Didn't you seek for alms? 9. You be like this. 10. I am greeting you.

ANSWERS

- a १. Where did you travel yesterday night? 2. Children are making noise. 3. They were not there anywhere. 4. Even then, these (people) did cooking. 5. Brahmins seeking alms. 6. How is the food today? 7. We all only did today's business. 8. Even then, they all are not here. 9. You were not here completely this morning. 10. Did you not alone cook today?
- b १. अद्य कुत्रापि प्रयाणं न अकरोम। २. यूयमेव पाकम् अकुर्वत किम्? ३. एवं न, ये केऽपि अकुर्वन्। ४. अन्ये ब्राह्मणाः सन्ति। ५. ते के? ६. एते एव। ७. हयः बालकाः दौष्ट्यं अकुर्वन्। ८. त्वं हि भिक्षाटनमकरोः किम्? ९. त्वमे एव भव। १०. अद्य पाकं ययमेव अकुरुत किम्।



Venkatadri Samamsthanam
Brahmande nasti kinchana



Venkatesa Samo Devo
Na Bhuto na Bhavishyati

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No. 8

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Honorary Editor
Dr. K.S. JAWAHAR REDDY, I.A.S.
Executive Officer,
TirumalaTirupati Devasthanams
Publisher & Chief Editor
Dr. K. RADHARAMANA, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.,

Editor
Dr. V.G.CHOKKALINGAM, M.A., Ph.D.,

Printer
Sri P. RAMARAJU, M.A.,
Special Officer
T.T.D.Press, TIRUPATI - 517 507.

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Sri P.N.SEKHAR
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For details
Chief Editor, Sapthagiri Magazine
TirumalaTirupati Devasthanams
K.T. Road, Tirupati - 517 507
Ph : 0877-226 4543, 226 4359, Editor : 226 4360

For further details
TTD Call Centre Nos.
0877 - 2233333, 2277777

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Toll Free No. 1800-425-4141
Website : www.tirumala.org, www.tirupati.org
For Suggestions, Complaints regarding Sapthagiri Magazine
sapthagiri.helpdesk@tirumala.org

HAPPY SANKRANTI

January month has its own significance in each calendar year. The first day of the month is celebrated as New year day. Everyone exchanges greetings for a happy and prosperous year ahead. In India, Makara Sankranti is the most revered festival of this month. It is celebrated when the Sun enters Makara Rasi launching the auspicious period of Uttarayana Punyakala (the beginning of the Sun's movement towards North). The festival is observed with immense devotion and fervor. The Sun God and Goddess Dhaanya Lakshmi are worshipped during these days.

Sankranti is a three day festival. The first day is Bhogi. People discard old and derelict things and buy new items. People light bon-fires early in the morning. The fire denotes that the material attachment is sacrificed to attain the knowledge of spiritual wisdom. It gives a new vigor and enthusiasm for a happy future. The second day is Sankranti. The festival is dedicated to the Sun God. The Sun is the source for growing crops and agricultural products. He is the root cause of rains which provide water source for our living. So, the farmers offer grains, paddy, vegetables, fruits, sugarcane etc., to the Sun God to show their gratitude. Jaggery- rice (Sweet Pongal) is prepared and offered to God. The third day is Kanuma. It is also an important festival for farmers. They consider cattle as a symbol of wealth and prosperity. Special pujas are performed to the cattle. Cow worship is done by all the households. In fact in Tamil Nadu, it is called Mattupongal (Pongal festival for bovines).

In Tirumala, on Sankranti day, the Presiding Deity is adorned with new clothes and fragrant flowers. On the Kanuma festival day, the processional deity of Sri Malayappa Swamy along with Sri Krishna Swamy participates in Paruveta Utsavam. The Lord as Panchayudha murthi with all His five weapons participates in the mock wild hunt. It is not out of place to mention about "Navaneetha Seva" on the occasion of Gokulastami started by TTD in a grand way. Recently TTD performed "Go-sammelan programme" in Tirupati. The main intention of this programme is to encourage 'Go Adharita Vyavasayam' (Organic farming) and recognizing the significance of cow and its unique status in the spiritual as well as the material world.

May this Sankranthi bring about new light of unrelenting happiness and prosperity among the lives of all devotees by the grace of Lord Venkateswara.

TAKING GO PUJA TO A NEW HIGH

- Sri Atthi Rangarajan



Cow worship is always considered a sacred activity for Hindus. It is revered as a symbol of prosperity as Goddess Maha Lakshmi is believed to live in the animal, thus bestowing health and wealth to Her devotees.

Since time immemorial, all the dynasties that were part of the Bharata Varsha patronised cattle worship and even promoted cow based products not only to ensure the citizens' health, but also to distribute wealth among the masses. A quick look at our hoary mythology and ancient history reveals that the prosperity of a kingdom used to be measured by its cattle wealth. The cow was hence considered not only as the sole breadwinner in many households, but also as the living god of a village.

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has been a champion in preserving, propagating and promoting native cows (Go-Matha) at its Sri

Venkateswara Gosamrakshanasala and mobilising donations through its Sri Venkateswara Gosamrakshana Trust. Though the TTD is a pioneer in cow protection and propagation activities, it has taken steps to make cow worship a regular part in its series of activities.

Sri Venkateswara Saptha Go-Pradakshina Mandiram : Alipiri, the foot of Tirumala hills, has a new landmark for cow worship, which is called 'Sri Venkateswara Saptha Go Pradakshina Mandiram'. The idea behind the TTD coming up with the concept is to let the pilgrims do 'Pradakshana' to seven 'Desi' cows and calves. The magical number 'seven' here is synonymous to the seven hills of Tirumala and is considered a good omen for people to start their holy trek to the hill shrine after praying to the cows arranged in a pattern. There will be 25 to 30 at any point of time in the premises, from which seven cows will be made to stand in the altar at

Devotees visiting Tirumala will certainly feel blessed after stepping into Sri Venkateswara Saptha Go Pradakshina Mandiram and praying to the cows before reaching Tirumala, which is revered as the 'Kaliyuga Vaikuntham'.

Feed donation to be made in Go-Mandiram

Grain/Cereals	Planetary positions
Wheat and jaggery	- Suryagraha Shanti
Paddy	- Chandragraha Shanti
Red gram and jaggery	- Kujagraha Shanti
Black gram and jaggery	- Rahugraha Shanti
Chickpea	- Gurugraha Shanti
Sesame seeds	- Sanigraha Shanti
Green gram	- Budhagraha Shanti
Horse gram	- Kethugraha Shanti
Cow pea	- Sukragraha Shanti

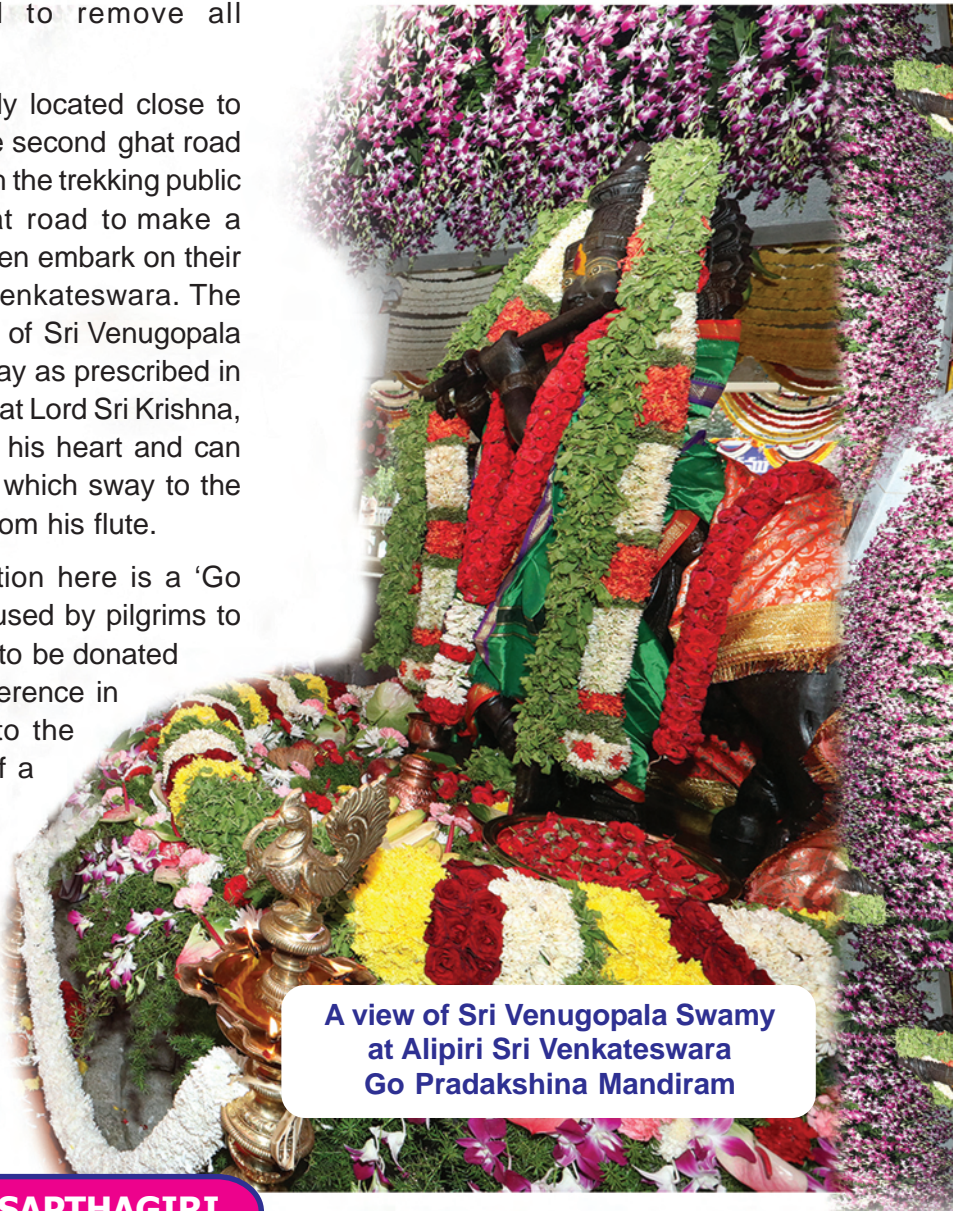
the centre. Devotees walking in will perambulate around the cows as a form of worship. This act, done with a noble heart and with due sincerity, is believed to remove all sins committed in previous births.

The four-acre campus is strategically located close to the footpath and also the toll gate on the second ghat road leading to Tirumala hills. This facilitates both the trekking public as well as the motorists using the ghat road to make a stopover at Alipiri, pray to the cows and then embark on their holy pilgrimage to the abode of Lord Venkateswara. The complex also has a temple with the deity of Sri Venugopala Swamy, where Puja will be offered everyday as prescribed in the religious doctrines. It may be recalled that Lord Sri Krishna, as a cowherd, always holds cow close to his heart and can be mostly seen in the company of cattle, which sway to the tune of the mellifluous music emanating from his flute.

Go-Thulabaram : Another major attraction here is a 'Go Thulabaram', which is similar to the one used by pilgrims to weigh products against their own weight, to be donated as part of fulfilment of their vow. The difference in this case is that the products donated to the temple are weighed against the weight of a cow. A cow is made to stand on one side of the 'Thulabaram' and consumable products like rice, jaggery, haystack, nuts and cereals, sugarcane, groundnut husk etc. are added in gunny bags on the other side, till both the sides strike a balance. The philanthropist then donates the same to the TTD, which in turn uses it to feed the cattle not only at the 'Go Mandiram',

but also at the various Goshalas under its management. In order to hold the weight of a cow as well as the products, the 'Thulabaram' is specially ordered from a firm in Madhya Pradesh, which made it with cast iron with a heavy gauge.

Apart from the temple and a cattle shed to house thirty cows, there is a vast grazing field, where the cattle will be let out. Animals moving around and grazing in the pasture will naturally gain strength and immunity, compared to the ones that are fed manually. This is the idea behind developing a grazing field with fodder crop.



A view of Sri Venugopala Swamy at Alipiri Sri Venkateswara Go Pradakshina Mandiram

Go-Pradakshina Seva : Devotees can have Go-pradakshinam at this Go-Mandiram before offering prayers to Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala.

Go-Vignana Kendram : Also abutting the 'Go Mandiram' is a massive building 'Go Vignana Kendram' housing a meditation hall and a photo gallery depicting TTD's cow-related activities. After praying to the cows, people intending to sustain the devotional fervour for a few more minutes can sit down for meditation and chant the holy names of the Lord. There is also a children's play area, where the kids will be allowed to roam around when the elders pray. It will also be an occasion for the children to engage fruitful time with the cows and attain a spiritual and compassionate bent of mind. The building also has a gallery to display the TTD's programmes on cow protection, apart from the donation schemes available to the public. This will not only help more benefactors join the cause of cow protection, but also provides a window to let the TTD's activities on this front spread far and wide. As the area is surrounded by forest, where the movement of carnivorous animals cannot be ruled out, the TTD management is intending to provide electric fencing to ensure the safety of the cows. Deployment of guards with light arms is also under contemplation to scare away such wild animals from the vicinity.



Devotees can offer various grains of their choice to the cows and may donate the grains and cereals that suit the planetary positions and movement.

For example, wheat and jaggery are known to please the Sun God, which the devout can donate for Suryagraha Shanti. Similarly, paddy is suited for Chandragraha Shanti, red gram and jaggery for Kujagraha Shanti, black gram and jaggery for Rahugraha Shanti, chickpea for Gurugraha Shanti, Sesame seeds for Sanigraha Shanti, Green gram for Budhagraha Shanti, horse gram for Kethugraha Shanti and cow pea is donated for Sukragraha Shanti. Devotees can donate the above grains according to the weights of the various cows mentioned at the 'Go Thulabharam', or pay the equivalent in cash drawn as a demand draft.

T.T.D. took up the noble cause in popularizing the concept of cow worship and propagating the importance of 'Go Matha' in a great way.



Sapthagopradakshana Shala

SANKRANTI – A DELIGHTFUL CELEBRATION

- Sri P.T.S. Murthy

The festivity of Sankranti starts with the transition of the Sun into Capricorn, the tenth astrological sign in the Zodiac. It is the beginning of Uttarayana when the Sun starts moving northwards. Dhanurmasam is the final month with which the night for the Gods ends. The sankranti festival is celebrated across the country for three days. The first day is named Bhogi, the second day as Sankranti and the third as Kanuma. Special prayers to the Gods, different delicacies for each day, honouring the community, and adoring the cattle will be part of these celebrations. It is a harvest festival celebrated with joy and enthusiasm by one and all. This harvesting festival implies appeasing gods and manes. Donate what you possess for your wellbeing is a common belief.

The women decorate the front yards of their houses with Rangavalli (Muggulu) with flowers, flour, and colours. Gobbemmalu (cow dung made into balls), decorated with flowers, red vermillion, and turmeric powder, are placed in front of the house. The girls sing songs and dance around the Gobbillu. Gobbemma is considered as a form of Gouri. Haridas is a special attraction of this festival. Bommala Koluvu (display of dolls) is another colourful event. Gangireddulu (Bull) melam is another attraction. The bulls are decorated with clothes, flowers and small bells. Children fly colourful kites.

All these activities bring togetherness among the people. They forget their differences of sect, creed, and belief and enjoy the festivities with fervour.

The First Day - Bhogi

People take bath with sesame oil. They distribute sweets made of sesame and jaggery which are favourite dishes for appeasing the Lord. People lit a fire on the streets opposite their houses in the early hours symbolising the burning of disputes, ill-feeling amongst themselves and starting a new era of happiness and togetherness. People keep the entire environment neat



SANKRANTI CELEBRATIONS IN TIRUMALA

Kaka Bali is a special ritual conducted on Kanuma day in Tirumala. In the wee hours of this day, as per the Vaikhanasa Agama, the archakas mix turmeric and vermillion separately in cooked rice and offer it to Ananda Nilaya Vimana Venkateswara.

Lord Malayappa Swamy and Lord Sri Krishna will be taken in a procession to the Paruveta Mandapam in Seshachalam forests. A mock hunt called Paruveta Utsavam is enacted by the temple priests. Lord wears with five celestial weapons in the form of Panchayudha Murthi (Lord with five weapons).

The Jeeyars ceremoniously carry the Andal Goda Devi garlands all the way to the Tirumala temple where they offered to the Lord. These garlands are considered as the presentation of Godadevi as a part of Goda Parnayotsavam to the main deity.

and clean by burning all unwanted things. Cow dung cakes are used to burn the fire. The smoke emanated cleans the environment from mosquitos, bacteria, and viruses.

Mother Earth is prayed as she provides shelter and food to all living beings.

The Second Day – Makara Sankranti

Lord Sun symbolises happiness, joy, knowledge, spirituality, and wisdom. He is also the provider of good health. He shuns the darkness in our lives and makes us brighter. People offer special prayers to Sun God for his bountiful blessing in providing health and wealth. People take bath in sacred rivers and offer prayers to Lord Surya. People offer Pongal, a recipe made from first harvested rice to Lord Surya.

The Third Day – Kanuma

The farmers consider the cattle as the prosperity harbingers. They decorate them, feed copiously and pray with reverence. Service to the Cow is the main event taking place on this day. It is also believed that Lord Krishna lifted the Govardhan Hill to protect the people and cattle of Gokulam on this day.

Let us pray Lord Balaji to bless us with joy and prosperity on this Makara Sankranti.



The cow plays a significant role in Indian culture, heritage and ethos. It is revered as one's own mother and taken care of in our country from time immemorial. As the cow provides milk for babies which is the next best substitute for mother's milk, it is rightfully hailed as *Gomatha* and is accorded all affection and respect. Each household in India used to maintain cows. The cow which is considered as part of the family also helps in maintaining the economic well-being of the house. It is considered a symbol of auspiciousness and well-being.

Cow dung has antiseptic properties. Cow urine is used in many *Ayurvedic* preparations. A lot of research is being done now in order to scientifically prove and harness the power of cow urine. Cow dung is used in modern times for producing bio-gas which acts as a source of cooking fuel.

In the traditional prayers there is a special mention for the goodness of the cows (*gobrahmanebhya: subhamastunityam loka: samasta: sukhinobhavantu*). Worshipping both the cow and its calf during the auspicious *govatsa dvadasi* day verily cleanses grave sins and bestows great *punya*.

Cows in Asramas

In the celestial world, the divine cow is hailed as *Kamadhenu* which fulfils all the desires and gives boons as well to her devotees. In ancient times *Rishis* used to maintain and worship celestial cows in their *Asramas*. The celestial cow *Nandini* was there in the hermitage of *Vasishta rishi*. *Jamadagni rishi* had the celestial cow *Susila*. These cows were

Role of **GOMATHA** In Indian Culture

- Dr. Kannan Srinivasan



Cows are an integral part of the rich cultural heritage and religious domain of our country from ancient times. The cow is considered as divine. According to *Vedic* scriptures all the Gods and Goddesses reside in the body of a cow (*gavovaisarva devata:*).

so dear to the *Rishis* and the inmates. They took special care of them and worshipped them with great devotion. Starting from the *Vedic* Period, cows occupy a place of pride in our culture. Cows are important for performance of sacrifices as their milk, curd, ghee are offered as oblations. The place walked by cow is considered auspicious. During the incarnation of Lord *Krishna*, protection and nourishment of cows was given paramount significance. The cowherds and cowherdresses fondly called as *Gopas* and *Gopis* were so dear to the cows as they were to Lord *Krishna*. *Krishna* lifted the *Govardhana* hills like an umbrella and safeguarded the cows and the people of *Vrindavana* from the fury of the torrential rains instigated by *Indra deva*. *Krishna* is lovingly called “*Gopala*” and “*Govinda*” as he is verily the protector of the cows. These two names of *Krishna* are considered so sacrosanct. The eternal abode of *Radhakrishna* itself is eulogized as *Goloka* representing the cow-heaven.

In marriage

As per *Manu Smriti* III-29, the father gives away his daughter in marriage according to the rule, after receiving from the bridegroom, a cow and a bull or two pairs, that is named the *Arsha form* of marriage rite which constitutes one of the eight forms of marriage performed in ancient times. In order to purify oneself, *Sastras* prescribe the consumption of *Vedic* mantra-sanctified *Pancagavya* which includes five items in terms of cow curd, cow milk, cow ghee, cow urine and cow dung whenever one is impure and wants to become pure and fit for performance of *Vedic* rituals. *Pancagavya* also has medicinal properties.

In accordance with *Manu Smriti* III-271, the ancestors (*Pitrs*) get satisfied for one year by offering oblations in terms of milk and milk-rice.

Considered great

According to *Manu Smriti* V-124, land gets purified when it is smeared with cow dung or sprinkled with cow's urine or by a cow staying on it one day and night. The Vedas hail that giving a Cow to one's preceptor as *Gurudakshina* is considered great. Similarly, *godana* meaning gifting of a cow to a qualified *Brahmana* makes one easily cross the dreaded hellish *Vaitarini* river after one's death. The simple act of offering grass and water to a cow yields so much *punya*.

Mahalakshmi, the Goddess of wealth, resides in cow dung and at the backside of the Cow. On seeing a cow coming in the front one should cross it on his right side as if he is circumambulating it. *Go Puja* is done daily in the early morning in the *visva upadarsana seva* of temples of Vishnu. One should not interrupt a cow which is suckling its calf. One should never ride on the back of a cow. One shall not consume milk of a mother cow within ten days of her calving. This is intended to ensure that the new-born calf has adequate cow milk.

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati

ATTENTION !!

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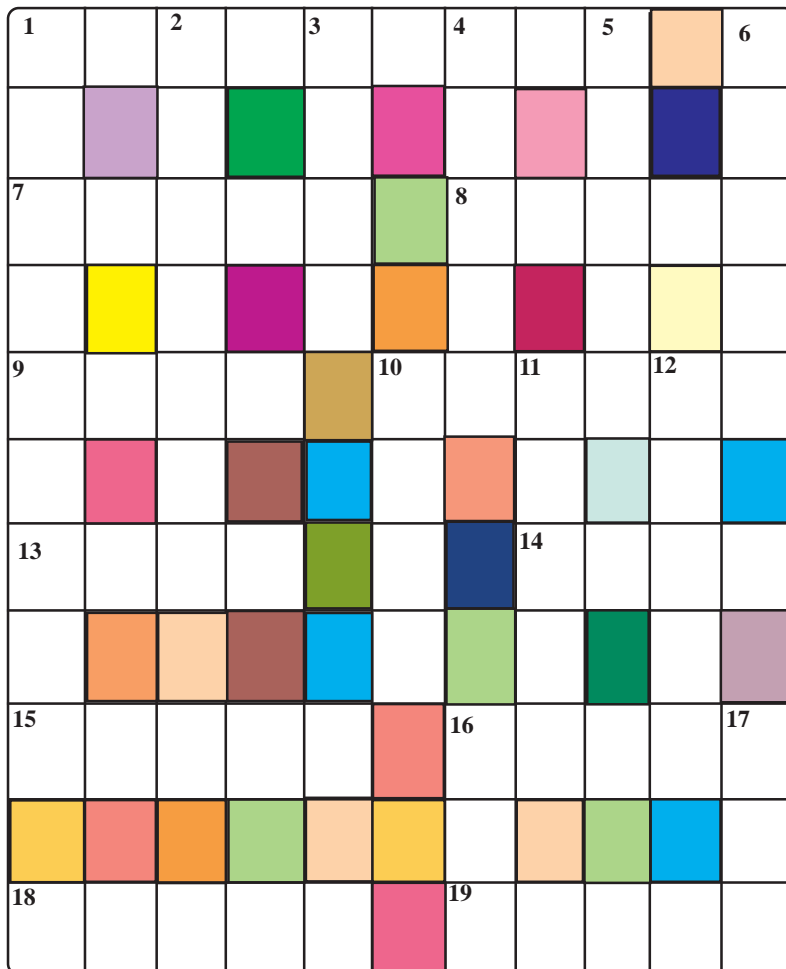
**Chief Vigilance & Security Officer
T.T.Devasthanams**

Cows play a crucial role in organic farming which safeguard the fertility of the soil besides augmenting the immunity of the plants. For enriching organic farming, application of the *panchagavya*, an organic product in terms of a mix of cow dung, cow urine, cow ghee, cow milk, cow curd, water, jaggery, *Poovan* banana and tender coconut water promotes growth and provides immunity in plant system. The youth of this country should be specially motivated and inspired in this noble endeavour.

When cows flourish, the cowherds will definitely prosper by making and selling the value-added dairy products and the nation also consequently becomes prosperous. This will ensure a vibrant and self-sustaining rural ecosystem with fruitful livelihood for millions of people by augmenting all-inclusive economic development besides protecting the rich cultural heritage of our country.



PUZZLE



Presented by
Sri T.S. Jagan Mohan

01. Son of Harischandra (9)
02. Wife of Lord Surya (7)
03. Be obliged in (4)
04. Kubera (5)
05. Vajrayudha (5)
06. Saraswathi (5)
10. Bruhaspathi (4)
11. Foster Mother of Karna (5)
12. Son of Hotraka (5)
16. Upper side (3)
17. Period of time in History (3)

DOWN

CLUES FOR PUZZLE

01. Wife of Dhadheechi (9)
07. Area of Darkness (5) (Jumbled)
08. Goddess Lakshmi (5)
09. Work Hard (4)
10. Goddess Parvathi (6)
13. Earth (4)
14. Solid (4) (Jumbled)
15. Grandson of Jahnu (5)
16. Strongly felt (5) (Jumbled)
18. Mother of Sukra (5)
19. Daughter of Anaranya (5)

ACROSS

PUSHPAYAGAM

- Smt. P. Sujatha

Yagam or Yajna is a religious ritual performed to obtain the benediction of the Gods. The Agni (fire god) is lit with prayers. The ahutis (offerings) are poured to illuminate the fire while chanting holy mantras from scriptures. It is believed that Lord Agni carries these submissions to the Gods who in turn will bless mankind with prosperity, health, wealth, and peace in the universe.

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams conducts a Yagam with flowers and it is called 'Pushpa Yagam'. Lord Venkateswara with Goddess Sridevi and Goddess Bhudevi in Tirumala are offered umpteen variety of flowers in reverence during this event. This ceremony is performed after the annual Brahmotsavam on the asterism of Sravanam which also happens to be the birth star of Lord Venkateswara. In the same way pushpa yagam is performed to Goddess Padmavathi devi in Tiruchanur is eye feast to eyes. This yagam is performed after the annual Brahmotsavam of Sri Padmavathi devi. As per the scriptures, this festival is usually performed to save the earth from natural calamities such as quakes, cyclones, epidemics and appease the Lord to save the life of humanity, flora, and fauna from all the catastrophes. It is believed that performing Pushpa Yagam is equivalent to performing Aswamedha Yaga which confers prosperity, happiness and finally the moksha (salvation) to the devotees.

Annamayya had composed a beautiful song describing the stature of the Lord during the Pushpayagam. He wrote that the Lord would shine bright decorated with a variety of flowers, while the Veda mantras are chanted, poets sing songs in praise and beautiful damsels dance during the ceremony. The Lord looks adorable when decorated with sandal paste and offered camphor Harati. He is adorned with canopy (Chatram), Fly flap (Chamaram). The Lord looks graceful during the Pushpayagam. Recently, TTD conducted Kanakambara Sahita Koti Mallepushpa Maha Yagam at the sacred abode of Goddess Padmavati.

In Bhagavadgita

Flowers have a special mention in the prayers offered to the Lord. He is satisfied when a devotee offers Him a leaf, a flower, fruit, or even water with devotion. He assures that He will accept

them (Gita Chapter 9 verse 26). Lord Venkateswara is often addressed as Kamala nayana (Lotus eyes). Lord is offered Mantra pushpam at the end of the prayers. Devotees offer flowers to him while chanting in chorus the greatness of the Lord.

Padmavati Devi who sits on a lotus flower holding flowers in her hands has a special place in the minds of the devotees as Mother who gives fortune and prosperity. She is adored as Padma priyam, padma hastam, padmakshim and padma sundarim. She is also considered as kamala, kamalatakshi, kamalavasini. Lord, Goddess

and flowers are synonymous. Offering flowers to God is the most absorbing event in the devotee's life.

The flowers that are offered to the Gods have special fervour. They should be equally utilized once they are removed from the idol of the Lord and the flowers used in the service of God in various rituals should be properly put to good use.

Now every household can have the scented fragrance of the Lord's flowers along with the daily Suprabhatam. Now we say, "Lord Venkateswara, wake up in the dawn with the scent of your adorned flowers and bless us for our wellbeing."

DRY FLOWER TECHNOLOGY

The TTD management conceived the project of reusing tons of flower garlands used in all its temples daily and during festivals and special occasions in making Agarbattis (Incense sticks) instead of throwing them into the pushpapubavi (well) inside the temples' premises. All the used flowers and garlands are now transported by the TTD garden department to Sri Venkateswara Goshala Agarbatti Production Centre where trained personnel categorise the flowers and mechanically dry and transform the residue into powder.

Thereafter the powder is mixed with other ingredients and water into a paste which is then produced as Agarbatti sticks. Later they are dried in machines for 15-16 hours and soaked in aromatic liquid again in another machine. After another round of drying, they are packed in machines for the final product-the divine aromatic Agarbattis.

The TTD is also coming out with a project to make photos, paper weights, key chains of the Lord with used dried flowers.





In the great epic 'Mahabharata', there is a chapter '*Anushasanika parva*', which is a compendium of 'Ethics in Administration' and it was narrated by *Bheeshmacharya*, the commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army and highly revered person in the court of *Dhritarashtra*, to *Yudhistira* popularly known as *Dharmaraja*. In '*Mahabharata*' it is said, *Bheeshmacharya* compiled the thousand names of Lord Sri Vishnu, at the request of *Yudhistira*. The *Vedas* and *Vedic knowledge* always consider human being as the manifestation and manipulation of the

The Reflections of Virtues of Teacher in SRI VISHNUSAHASRANAMAM

- Sri K.V. Murali Krishna

The act of imparting 'Knowledge' is the 'Education'. A person who spreads knowledge so as to dispel the ignorance from the minds of the seeker is the 'Teacher or Guru or Acharya'. In the Universe the 'Mother' is the first 'Teacher' of any individual. In fact the process of teaching and learning commences in the mother's womb itself. It is the Teacher who transforms a crude individual with flesh and bones into a respectable citizen with a noble mind, enhanced with understanding ability and sensible speech. The Teacher is undoubtedly, the charioteer of the lives of his disciples because he is enriched with intellect and wisdom. He always drives and directs them comfortably to reach their goals.

divinity. The Vedas declare that there are three pathways for anyone to opt, first one is the pathway of '*brahmajnaana prayaanam*', second '*dharma jnaana prayaanam*' and the third '*karmajnaana prayaanam*'. Of which a Teacher should invariably tread all these three paths. The teacher should perform the karma without a hidden agenda but with dharmic values in imparting 'Jnana' to the disciples. Thus, the duty whichever is assigned to an individual is divine and godly. The teacher, who discharges duty with devotion, for the holistic development of one's disciples, is but a form of Lord Sri Mahavishnu himself, because Vishnu is the '*Stitikaara*' of this Universe, who explicitly manages and controls the Universe. Hence, the qualities of Lord Mahavishnu can be attributed to an ideal and committed teacher.

'Sri Vishnu Sahasranama', compiled by Bheeshmaacharya, comprises one hundred and thirty verses, of which one hundred and eight verses accommodate the one thousand names of Lord Mahavishnu and the remaining twenty two verses come under 'Phalashruti'.

In the verse – 7 of 'Sri Vishnu Sahasranama',

*Isanah pranadah prano jyeshtah sreshthah prajapatih
Hiranyagarbho bhugarbho madhavo madhusudanah ... 8*

The most revered Bheeshmacharya praises Lord Mahavishnu as 'Isanaha', the controller and regulator of everything. An ideal teacher

discharging duty in an educational institution, shouldering the responsibility of imparting education to the students should continuously monitor, motivate and inspire them. The teacher receives laurels as 'praanadaha', the provider of vital energy, if he leads the students into a state of prosperity with unquenchable enthusiasm. The noble teacher is truly 'praano', the 'Supreme Being', the embodiment of vital energy. He should take every precaution that the attribute of supremacy never gets infected by ego. In fact teacher should utilize all embedded abilities for the betterment of students. The teacher is also praised as 'jyeshtaha', the eldest of all. The teacher's greatness should be recognized by the society through teacher's cordial, compassionate attitude, while discharging duties. Then only a teacher receives praise from all as 'sreshtaha', one who deserves highest praise and also as 'prajapatihi', the supreme master of all students.

An ideal teacher is eligible to be praised as 'hiranya garbho', atman of Brahma. The teacher is the heart and soul of an educational institution. All his senses should contribute only for its progressive development. The teacher is praised as 'bhugarbho', who got world within himself. The teacher should have a comprehensive and an updated knowledge and should ever be enthusiastic to teach. The teacher receives accolades as 'madhavo', consort of Mahalakshmi and also as 'madhusudhana', the destroyer of demon Madhu, when teacher utilizes wisdom and skill for the institution's financial betterment by enhancing the student strength through an assurance to the public that the teachers of this educational institution offer the best education to their children. The teacher should never let either internal or external

destabilizing factors to cause any harm to the reputation of the institution. The teacher should be stringent towards such evil doers and should act promptly in weeding them off.

In the verse—12 of 'Sri Vishnu Sahasranama',

Vasur vasumanah satyah samatma

sammitah samah

Amoghah pundarikaksho

vrusha-karma vrushakrutih ...12

The most revered Bheeshmacharya invokes Lord Mahavishnu as 'vasur', in whom all beings dwell and who dwells in all living beings and also praises as 'vasumanaha', great in mind, wealth and traits. As a matter of fact, every teacher should create an ideal working atmosphere of 'I care for you all' for the students in the class room. The teacher should rationally manage his financial resources and should always maintain a sound financial position in personal life. At the same time he should tread the path of righteousness and be helpful to the society. All teachers should be endowed with 'satyaha', whose nature is truth, 'samatma', equality towards all, 'sammitaha', praiseworthy and 'samaha', unperturbed even in crisis. An ideal teacher is praised as 'amoghaha', whose worship bears plenty of fruits. That means, teacher should lend a helping hand to the poor and meritorious students. Every teacher is truly revered as 'pundarikaksho', he who is found in the lotus of the heart. If the teachers through their friendly attitude win the hearts of their students, they in return respect their teacher as 'God'. The teacher whose every action is in accordance with righteousness is praised as 'vrushakarma', whose actions follow dharma and also as 'vrushakrutih', who manifests himself for the sake of dharma.

In the verse—19 of ‘Sri Vishnu Sahasranama’,
Mahabuddir mahaviryo
mahasaktir mahadyutih
Anirdesyavapuh
shrimanameyatma mahadridhruk ...19

The most revered Bheeshmaacharya praises Lord Sri Mahavishnu as ‘mahabuddir’, the wisest among the wise and as ‘mahaviryo’, the most powerful one. All the educational institutions bountifully prosper, only if they are endowed with teachers who are very wise, capable of skillfully handling problems and both internally and externally strong. The teachers with such qualities truly deserve the adoration as ‘mahashaktir’, one who has great strength and skill. The teacher should possess a clean conscience. The teacher’s heart should be like an open page. Such a teacher receives accolades as ‘mahadyutih’, one who is intensely brilliant both within and without. That teacher is really ‘anirdesyavapuhu’, one who is indescribable, that means there will be nothing to pin point. The teacher with this high stature is truly a ‘Shriman’, one who is enriched in all aspects and that teacher is praised by all as ‘ameyatma’, a spirit with immeasurable intelligence. The teacher is considered as ‘mahadridhruk’, one who held up the Mandara mountain, if he puts all his efforts for the prosperity and upliftment of all the students in their transit from a state of ignorance to a state of being endowed with intellect.

In the verse—34 of ‘Sri Vishnu Sahasranama’,
Ishto vishistah shishtestah
sikhandi nahusho vrushah
Krodhaha krodhakrut karta
vishvabahur mahidharah ...34

The most revered Bheeshmacharya invokes Lord Sri Mahavishnu as ‘ishto’, one who is dear to

all and as ‘avisishtaha’, one who is indistinct as he resides within all. These qualities are must for all teachers. Every teacher should invariably win the hearts of the students, through the gentle nature and cordial personal rapport. The teacher who is admired for having brilliance even by his superiors, naturally receives praise as ‘shishtestaha’, one who is dear to the wise. Every teacher should prove himself as ‘sikhandi’, one who wears peacock feather in his crown. His contribution to the institution should get it a great name and prosperity. The teacher should be like a golden feather in its cap. A truly ideal teacher is praised as ‘nahusho’, binder of all beings, and as ‘vrushaha’, form of dharma, since the teacher always strives to establish harmony among the students and never deviates from the path of righteousness. The teacher who never gives scope for heated verbal exchanges, and tactfully avoids all untoward incidents is praised as ‘krodhaha’, one who eradicates anger in virtuous people. An ideal teacher should also assume the role of ‘krodhakrutkarta’, one who is angry with the evil people, in the larger interest and safety of the institution. A committed teacher receives adoration as ‘visva-bahur’, one who is the supporter of all and also as ‘mahidharaha’, one who supports the earth. This is true because the teacher has a multifaceted role to play in nurturing and nourishing the each and every student in the class room.

Let there be *adhyaathma shaanthi* (peace for self) *aadhiboudhika shaanthi* (peace around us) *adhidevatha shaanthi* (peace in the universe). Let all Educational institutions prosper because of efficient and committed teachers, who literally are the different forms of Lord Sri Mahavishnu himself.

SARVE JANAAHA SUKHINO BHAVANTHU





(In the previous episode, it was discussed that one will receive the blessings of Sri Krishna when one behaves with right attitude like Arjuna. It is evidently mentioned in the slokas of Bhagavad Gita. To imbibe or to follow the slokas of Bhagavad Gita is not easy with one reading or hearing. One should often listen to them with dedication and devotion. Then only the essence of Bhagavad Gita touches the heart and soul of a person. It is necessary to have blessings of a teacher in every part of work to lead a successful journey of life. It is clearly mentioned in Bhagavad Gita.)

Sri Gurubhyonamaha!

The commands of Sri Krishna Paramathma in Bhagavad Gita are equivalent to the Vedas. Both the Vedas and Srimad Bhagavad Gita are the texts that demonstrate the responsibilities that a human being has to perform in his life. Before we discuss Gita's instructions keenly, it is essential to know who is eligible to receive its instruction. Then only, the real essence of the text can be squeezed. It is called 'authority or capability' in linguistic terms. It is essential to have, in scientific terms, the capability and authority to study and interpret Gita.

Let us question ourselves who is having the 'authority' to receive the flavor of Srimad Bhagavad Gita. Make a thorough research on it. To get a clear and comprehensive answer, one should go back to history. If

we observe, we will understand that the elixir of Gita was first received by Arjuna. While Paramathma was instructing Arjuna, Anjaneya who was on the chariot flag also received its essence. Not only Anjaneya and Arjuna but Vedavyasa who was visualizing the God's deeds with his spiritual consciousness had also imbibed its elixir. With the

blessings of the hermit Vedavyasa, Sanjaya who was capable enough to possess its flavor, had listened to it. Through Sanjaya, Drutharastra was able to hear it. All the above mentioned personalities absorbed the concept of Gita at the same moment when Paramathma was describing Gita to Arjuna.

Through history we understand the effect of Bhagavad Gita instruction on beings. Along with the above mentioned persons maharshis, siddhas, hermits, saints and many others who were waiting eagerly for valuable words listened to 'Paramathma's instruction' hiding in the form of tiny creatures. It is clear that many grasped the ideal of Bhagavad Gita earlier.

It is not said anywhere and in any book that only a person who listens to Bhagavad Gita directly will benefit. Paramathma displayed his skills in choosing the audience to receive Bhagavad Gita instruction.

Arjuna was the first person among those who listened to and enjoyed the taste of Gita. He was worthy of the task being very close to Paramathma. He earned the blessings and support of Paramathma from all sides. He is a devotee, friend, colleague and also relative to Paramathma.

The second one who listened to Bhagavad Gita was Anjaneya. He was on the chariot flag of Arjuna. He was the devotee of Paramathma. Paramathma considered all his devotees in one category and proved that all the devotees are eligible to receive his instruction.

Next, Vedavyasa was the one who listened to Paramathma's instruction alongwith Arjuna. He is a

supernatural philosopher. By selecting Vedavyasa, Paramathma clearly showed that those who will try to gain the highest philosophical knowledge are also eligible to it.

The persons who think that they are not philosophic, or devotional, or who did not feel the necessity of Bhagavad Gita instruction were all kept under one category. They are Sanjaya and Drutharastra.

Sanjaya was a common man who was trying to control his six senses and stepping forward to attain philosophical knowledge. By selecting Sanjaya, Paramathma proved to the world that the common man is also eligible to attain eternal knowledge with his instruction of Bhagavad Gita. He did not neglect even the blind and bad. Paramathma selected Drutharastra also as the one to receive the instructions of his Gita. No good qualities were seen in Dhrutharastra. He cried for his son always. His six senses and inner consciousness did not work with right attitude. Even then, paramathma allowed him to attain the eternity with his Bhagavad Gita.

With this it is clear and understandable that those who were not really eligible, they were also given an opportunity to imbibe Gita. If we think from another corner, Sanjaya was an ordinary man who was rendering services to a king. Still he was selected by Paramathma. By this, it is evident that people at grassroot level can also observe and absorb the elixir of Gita.

(to be continued)



ANNAMAYYA'S VIGNETTES OF WISDOM - 6

- Prof. M. Rajagopalachary

Sankirtana:

andukE summl nE jEsE....

andukE summl nE jEsE AchArAlu
daivamA!

nindavAya nA manasu nlpai nilupavE.

BaTTabayaTa dOlithEnu bandemEyu basuramu
PaTTi mEpitEnu tana panulu sEyu
ITTe vadilitEnu yendainA bAru manasu
KaTTuka nEmastudaitE kaivasamaiyundunu

BaDi dappitE banTlu paradEsu louduru
EDayaka kUDkonTE hitu louduru
vidicitE niTulanE kaDakubAru manasu
odalilO naNacitE voddikai vunDunu.

cE vadalitE pencina cilukainA mEdalekku
rAvinci gUtabeTTitE rAmA yanunu
bhAvincakunDitE yiTTe pArunendainA manasu
srIvEnkatEshu golcitE cEtajikkivunDunu.

Glossary

AcAramu = anuShTAnamu, naData, pravartana; practice, custom, a course of conduct; nindavAya = apavAdamu lEkunDA; without censure or blame; tOlitEnu = naDipincitE; if driven; bande = pashuvula cera; imprisonment, confinement of cattle, poundage fine, a cattle pound; mEyu = pashuvulu mEta tinu; to feed, graze, eat as cattle; pasuramu = pashuvu; cattle; pAru = parugettu, pAripOvu; to run away; nEmastuDdu = niyamastuDdu, kaTTubATuIO nunnavaDU; self-restrained, self-disciplined, rule-bound; kaivasamu = adhInamu vashamu; control; baDi = kramamu, kaTTubATu; order, firmness; eDayaka = without separation; kUDukonu = kalusukonu; to associate with, unite; hitulu = hitavu ceppuvADu; a friend, well-wisher, one who gives good advice; kaDakubAru = civaraku pOvu, pakkadAribatTu ; goes astray, goes to the extreme end; oddika = AnukUlyamu; concord, agreement, friendship; cE = ceyyi, hand; gUtabeTTu = dArilO peTTu, gUTilO peTTu; trained, caged;

Translation

Fix it on You, O Lord!

My mind is whimsical and blameworthy.
Fix it on You, O God, lest there should be any blemish.

That is the import of my course of conduct!

Left free, an animal ends up in a cattle pound.

Tied and fed, it does the work assigned.

Left uncontrolled, the mind capers whimsically

Regulated properly, it remains poised.

Left without discipline, servants go astray.

Under supervision, they work for the master's benefit.

Left free, the mind becomes whimsical.

Self-restrained, it abides by you.

Out of hands, even a tamed parrot flits away

Caged and trained, it repeats melodiously the word 'Rama'

Unrestrained, mind wanders hither and thither

Fix it on Lord Venkatesha and serve Him

It remains controlled.

Message : Annamayya refers to the whimsical nature of human mind and suggests the need for self-control or *atma-nigraha*. The import of the course of conduct we follow is to fix one's mind on God so that the mind is calm and steady. Unless trained and disciplined, mind goes astray beyond control. Annamayya gives a number of similes to prove this point. Animals go astray and end up in a cattle pound if uncontrolled. Servants leave the work place and evade work in the absence of their master. A domesticated parrot flies away if it is not caged, but a caged and trained parrot mimics the master and repeats the word 'rAma'. What should a man do to control his mind, then? Annamayya suggests that one should fix the mind on Lord Venkateswara and serve Him. Self-restraint helps to keep one's mind on the right track. Annamayya's advice helps us to enrich our personality. It also suggests the rules of business management. There should be a code of conduct for the employees and proper supervision upon them for efficient management and successful execution of work.





ALVARS ON LORD VENKATESWARA - 9

KULASEKARALWAR : Incarnation of Humility

- Smt. Prema Nandakumar

When we recall the Bhakti Movement, we come across hundreds of self-rapt singers in the first millennium, but it so happens that the group of twelve Alvars present a crystallized representation of this wide spectrum. One of them, Kulasekara, was a king of Kerala. He is a very real hero to us because of his hymns and his humility.

Tradition avers that Kulasekara ruled the Chera land from Thiruvananthapuram during the 8th century but gave up temporal power so that he could wander in the lands of devotional mysticism. He utilized his immense personal property in the service of Lord Ranganatha at Srirangam. An intense devotee of Vishnu, his 105 verses constitute the "Perumal Tirumoli" of the Nalayira Divya Prabandham. Kulasekara was certainly the first to write a complete Ramayana in the Tamil language. The king was fond of listening to discourses on the Ramayana. Once, a speaker doing 'katha-kalakshepam' was dealing with events in the 'Aranya Kanda'. He described how Rama was facing Khara, Dhushana and their vast rakshasa army. Rama was standing alone as

Lakshmana was in the hermitage guarding Sita. Kulasekara was deeply troubled. How could a single archer demolish this oceanic army of fourteen thousand demons? He turned to his commander-in-chief. "Bring me my bow and arrows. Get my chariot ready. And all of you follow me to join Rama!"

It was clear the king was in a trance and the Ramayana incidents were live happenings for him. Nobody dared to disturb him. Fortunately the Bhagavatha who was rendering the Kalakshepam realized what had happened. With an admirable presence of mind, he continued with his speech: "Behold, there returns Rama after vanquishing the demon army, single-handed! Hail Rama the peerless hero! Welcome him with songs of victory!" Kulasekara stopped in his tracks and was comforted that his hero had emerged unscathed and victorious.

Soon after this, he anointed his son Didavrata as the king, and began his travels to holy places. His daughter, Cherakulavalli merged with

Lord Ranganatha when they were in Srirangam. Kulasekara spent his last days in Mannarkovil near Tirunelveli worshipping the presiding deity, Rajagopala. Today a grand garden of Champak trees surrounds the King's resting place near the temple.

Kulasekara's 105 verses are known as Perumal Tirumoli (the sacred sayings of the king). He brings in a variety of approaches and moods to these verses bunched into ten decads. With his mind steeped in Rama's glorious life, it is not surprising that his favourite iconic deity was that of Lord Ranganatha at Srirangam, since Ranganatha was originally the family deity of the Ikshvaku race. His verses included in the Nalayira Divya Prabandham open with a magnificent decad on Ranganatha. There are poems written in Nayaka-Nayaki bhava and later on there are even lullabies extolling Baby Rama! Almost all temples to Rama in South India have an installed image of Kulasekara.

While all the Alvars exemplify Prapatti yoga, Kulasekara's hymns are drenched in surrender and are guiding lamps for the aspirant proceeding on this path the way to learn humility when seeking Divine Grace. He has composed an entire decad about his desire to be born only in Venkatam in his future births. Not necessarily a human birth, though. Kulasekara is ready to be born as a bird, a beast, a tree or anything that is found in this sacred hill. He wants to remain in the constant presence of the Lord for all time. His humility melts our hearts no end. The eleven verses of this group open with a firm statement:

"I do not want a birth as a rich person;
All I want is to serve the Lord
Who controlled the seven bulls;
He has an whoirled conch to his left.
I would rather be born as a stork
In the koneri pond in Venkata hill."

(Perumal Tirumoli, 4-1)

Kulasekara was born a king but preferred to go away on pilgrimage to holy places instead of enjoying royal pomp and show. Why, I do not care even for birth in Indra's heaven, he says; and that he would be happy to take birth as a fish in a Venkata pond! Ah, enough if he were born as a golden

spittoon accompanying the Lord for His use, during his move away from and return to the sanctum! Such a natural simile to come from one who had known all about royal pomp! The carrier of the spittoon is the lowliest servant! These birds, vessels and plants are here only for being close to the Lord and so living among them as one of them assures Kulasekhara of sat-sangha which is most important for a devotee that assures him of a favourable atmosphere for meditative aspiration. He is ready to be born as a champak tree here!

"To see the feet of the Lord who rests
On the Milky Ocean tossed by waves,
I am ready to be born as a champak tree
Where the honey-bees always buzz,
On the holy Venkata hill." (4-4)

The humility of Kulasekara is astounding. He is ready to remain just a pillar doing tapasya in the temple of Venkateswara! Even if Urvashi and Menaka come to please him with songs, he will not care. He would rather be a spire on the Venkata Hill shining with a golden glow. No kingdom and royal pomp for him: enough if he flows as a wild stream on the hill of Lord Venkateswara. Kulasekara would be happy to stretch as a footpath on the hill. Ah, just a step that leads to the temple. A step on which millions of feet walk while they come in and go out? But that is Kulasekara:

"Lord who destroys our karmas
That have grown as thick weeds!
Narayana! Venkateswara! I shall
Look up at your coral-red mouth,
Lying down as a door-step used
By devotees, gods and dancing girls." (4-9)

Finally, Kulasekara exclaims that he is prepared to be anything on the Venkata Hill and remain thus in the constant presence of the Lord. Such devotion and unsurpassable humility of Kulasekara has made this beautiful decad a symbol of humility for countless generations of devotees of Lord Venkateswara.

(Message: Humility is the first lesson a devotee should learn and train himself in, if he wants self-improvement.)

(to be continued)

Everyone who runs after the illusory mirages of the material world and gets exhausted, at one point of time or the other, will seek shelter and refuge at the lotus feet of the Lord to cross the ocean of Samsara - and for that they must traverse the path of devotion and become pious travellers on that quest. To conquer the fear and grief of the material world, they must seek the honey streams of compassion flowing from the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the eternal one, who is the most pristine one, who is the immaculate one, who is the most merciful one, who is the personification of supreme auspiciousness. Complete surrender and total devotion are the principal qualities that are propounded and proclaimed by many blessed saint poets and poet devotees through their writings and outpourings that contribute to the vastness and the magnificence of our devotional literature.

Meppathur Narayana Bhattatri (1560–1666 AD) was a much celebrated Sanskrit scholar and a blessed poet of Kerala state who composed Sage Vyasabagavan's Srimad Bhagavatam's summary in a poetic form as Narayaneeyam. Though Bhagavatam has around 18,000 verses, this condensed version of Narayaneeyam has 1034 pithy and powerful verses, divided into 100 *Dasakams* or Cantos. The deeply evocative Sanskrit text is known for its highest devotional fervour and feeling coming out through verses of great literary merit and value. This eulogy has all the finer aspects because Narayana Bhattatri, who was born in a traditional Namboodiri Brahmin family, composed this beautiful '*BhaktiSthavam*', devotional hymn, not only as a devotee but also as a poet, as a grammarian, as a scholar par excellence. Hence it has become a great source of happiness and healing that can bestow the grace of Lord Guruvayurappan - Lord Krishna of Guruvayur Temple. This powerful hymn is known for its potent quality as 'a provider of health and preventer of death.'

The special attribute of this hymn is that at the end of each canto there is a humble submission,

NARAYANEYAM

- Smt. Ambika Ananth



'Narayaneeyam' is a most powerful and sacred hymn which is blessed and bountiful in every way.

supplication to the Lord to cure physical diseases being suffered. The background story goes like this – Narayana Bhattatri had a guru by the name Achyutha Pisharadi, who fell seriously ill after an attack of paralysis. Seeing his guru suffer severe pains and agony, Bhattatri prayed to the Lord to

relieve his guru from the suffering by transferring the disease to himself - the Lord granted his wish and Bhattatri became crippled and suffered painful bodily condition and immobility. Once when his pain became unbearable, he was carried into Guruvayur temple where as if by divine ordinance, he met one devotee- scholar who told him in a very cryptic way that his disease will be cured by 'fish' medicine. Everybody around was shocked at his suggestion as it is considered a taboo to consume fish by brahmins. But Narayana Bhattatri being an elevated soul understood its deeper meaning that by praying to the Lord who had taken the form of fish in his dasaavatarams- ten manifestations, Lord Vishnu, he will be cured of his disease. So he started immediately to compose verses glorifying the Lord and his wonderful attributes and his powerful incarnations. He sat near the sanctum and completed one dasakam of ten verses everyday resolutely. By the time he reached the 100th Canto, the Lord appeared to him in his vision and Narayana Bhattatri, with overwhelming devotion described the magnificence of that effulgent appearance of the Lord in his 100th canto. The legend goes that Narayana Bhattatri got completely cured of his disease.

Beatific as exemplified

The concept of God responding to our pleas and prayers is very well illustrated by this hymn. The potency of bhakthi in its purest form is conveyed through this hymn. How in utter helplessness if a devotee directs all his energies, mental, spiritual and emotional in a unified way unto the lotus-feet of the Lord, the resultant fruit can be wonderfully blessed and beatific as exemplified by this powerful treatise.

Lord himself has proclaimed that he places his true devotees in his heart, values them very much, and that he would never abandon these pious people who seek refuge in him. "Holy men are my heart and I am their heart," he emphatically pronounced.

How Narayana Bhattatri got relieved of his terrible ailment after composing the hymn in praise

of all the ten avatars, incarnations of Lord SriHari beginning with 'fish' - Matsyavatara', portraying all the magnificent leelas of the Lord is a sure example of how compassionate the Lord is towards his bhaktas.

*"Saandraanandaa bhodaaatmakam
anupamitham Kaala Deva Daninyaam
Nirmuktham NityaYuktha nigama
shatasahasrena nirbhaasyamaanam
Aspashttam drustamaatre punahruru
purushaardhatmakam brahmatatwam
Tattawabhaathi saakshaath*

gurupavanapurehantha bhaagyam Jananaam"

Guruvayurappan

This very first verse of Narayaneeyam says that in the temple of Guruvayur is the form of Supreme Brahman, who is the ultimate goal of all devotees and that it is by the greatest fortune that human beings are able to perceive that Supreme Brahman in the image of the presiding deity of Guruvayur - Lord Sri Krishna as Guruvayurappan.

Narayana Bhattatri wonderfully versified the Bhagavatam episodes in a style of his own, pouring out bhakthi in torrential streams of devotional expression. Each canto of the hymn eulogizes the excellence, majesty and supremacy of Lord SriHari. The way he composed conveys the personal relationship he had with the Lord with all his senses, intellect and spirit. The hundred cantos cover the beautiful aspects of the glory of the Lord, cosmic evolution, diversification of creation, detailed account of the ten incarnations and the stories of devotees, devotion as the supreme yoga, bhagavata dharma, mystery of divine Maya etc. Narayana Bhattatri focused on Lord Sri Krishna as the 'Poorna Avatara', the perfect incarnation. So from the 37th canto to 88th canto, he dwells deeply and devoutly on the leelas of Lord Sri Krishna.

The intense bhakthi and longing for the Lord that are expressed in this hymn powerfully influence the subconscious mind of a devotee helping him progress on the path of devotion and total surrender with complete faith and dedication.



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

JANUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

FEBRUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

MARCH 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



JANUARY 2022

- 01 New Year Day
- 07-13 Sri Andal Neeraattotsavam
- 13 Vaikunta Ekadasi
- 14 Bhogi,
- Swami Pushkarini Theerthamukkoti
- 15 Makara Sankranti
- 16 Kanuma, Sri Godadevi
- Parinayotsavam
- 17 Sri Ramakrishna theertha Muktoti
- 18 Pranayakalaha Mahotsavam in
- Tirumala temple
- 26 Republic Day

FEBRUARY 2022

- 01 Sri Purandaradasa Aradhanotsavam
- 02-10 Devuni Kadapa Sri Lakshmi
- Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 05 Vasanthapanchami
- 08 Rathasapthami, Bhishma Ashtami
- 12 Bhishma Ekadasi
- 16 Kumaradharatheertha Muktoti
- 20-28 Srinivasa Mangapuram Sri Kalyana
- Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 22 to Mar 03 Tirupati
- Sri Kapileswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams

MARCH 2022

- 01 Mahasivarathri
- 10-18 Tarigonda Sri Lakshminarasimha
- Swamivari Brahmotsavams
- 13-17 Tirumala Srivari Float Festival
- 18 Sri Lakshmi Jayanti,
- Tumbura Theertha Muktoti
- 29 Annamacharya Vardanthi
- 30-Apr 07 Tirupati Sri
- Kodandaramaswamivari
- Brahmotsavams

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS



APRIL 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

MAY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

JUNE 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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APRIL 2022

- 02 Sri 'Subhakruth' Telugu Samavathsara Ugadi
- 03 Matsya Jayanti
- 06-14 Vayalpadu
- Sri Pattabhiramaswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 10-18 Vontimitta Sri Kodandaramaswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 10 Sriramanavami
- 14 Tamil New year Day, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Jayanti
- 14-16 Tirumala Srivari Vasanthotsavam
- 16-24 Nagulapuram
- Sri Vedanarayanawamivari Brahmotsavam

MAY 2022

- 01 May day
- 03 Akshaya Thruthiya, Sri Parasurama Jayanti
- 05 Sri Ramanuja Jayanti
- 06 Sri Sankaracharya Jayanti
- 10-12 Tirumala Sri Padmavathi Srinivasa Parinaya Mahotsavam
- 13-21 Hrushikesh / Narayanavanam Sri Kalyana Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 14-17 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari Vasanthotsavam
- 14 Sri Nrusimha Jayanti
- 15 Sri Kurma Jayanti, Mathrusri Tarigonda Vengamamba Jayanti
- 16 Sri Annamacharya Jayanthi
- 17 Tirupati Ganga Jatara
- 23-31 Karvetinagaram Sri Venugopalaswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 25 Sri Hanuma Jayanti

JUNE 2022

- 05-13 Tirupati Sri Govindarajaswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 10-18 Appalayagunta Sri Prasanna Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 10-14 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari Float Festival
- 12-14 Tirumala Srivari Jyeshthabishekam
- 20-22 Tiruchanur Sri Sundarajaswamivari Avatarotsavams

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

JULY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

AUGUST 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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SEPTEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
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JULY 2022

- 03-05 Srinivasamangapuram
Sri Kalyanavenkateswaraswamivari
Sakshatkaravaibhavam
- 09-11 Tirupati Sri Govindarajaswamivari
Jyeshthabishekam
- 09-12 Tirupati Sri Kapileswaraswamivari
Pavithrotsavams
- 13 Gurupurnima, Vyasapurnima
- 17 Tirumala Srivari Anivara Asthanam
- 29 Sri Chakrathalwar Varshatirunakshatram

AUGUST 2022

- 01 Nagachaturdhi
- 02 Garudapanchami
- 05 Sri Varalakshmi Vratam
- 06 Mathrusri Tarigonda
Vengamamba Vardanthi
- 07-10 Tirumala Srivari Pavithrotsavams
- 11 Sri Vikhanasa Mahamuni Jayanti
- 12 Sri Hayagreeva Jayanti
- 13 Gayathrijapam
- 15 Independence Day
- 19 Srikrishnashtami, Gokulashtami
- 29 Sri Balarama Jayanti
- 30 Sri Varaha Jayanti
- 31 Vinayaka Chavithi

SEPTEMBER 2022

- 01 Rushipanchami
- 07 Sri Vamana Jayanti
- 07-10 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavathi
Ammavari Pavithrotsavam
- 09 Sri Anantapadmanabha Vratam
- 26 - Oct 05 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati
Ammavari Navaratri Utsavams
- 27 - Oct 05 Tirumala Sri Venkateswara
Swamivari Brahmotsavams

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS



OCTOBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

NOVEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
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DECEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

OCTOBER 2022

- 01 Tirumala Srivari Garudaseva
- 02 Saraswati Pooja, Gandhi Jayanti
- 03 Durgashtami
- 04 Maharnavami
- 05 Vijayadasami
- 24 Narakachaturdasi, Deepavali
- 25 Kedaragowrivratam
- 29 Nagulachavithi

NOVEMBER 2022

- 01 Tirumala Srivari Pushpayagam
- 05 Kaisika Dwadasi
- 14 Children's Day
- 20-28 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari Brahmotsavams
- 21 Sri Dhanvantari Jayanti
- 24 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Gajavahanaseva Panchami Theertham
- 28 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Pushpayagam, Sri Subramanya Sashti
- 29

DECEMBER 2022

- 04 Sri Gita Jayanti
- 05 Sri Chakratheertha Mukkti
- 06 Tirupati Sri Kapileswaraswami temple Kruthika Deepotsavam
- 07 Sri Datta Jayanti
- 08 Sri Kapilatheertha Mukkti
- 17 Dhanurmasam Starts
- 21 Hanumadvratam

(continued from the previous issue)

An examination whether the idol of the Lord is a Sakthi idol

Sometimes it is stated that the temple was originally that of a Goddess and the idol represents Durga or some sort of Sakthi. The reasons adduced for this view are as follows:

The temple is called by North Indians as Balaji temple and since Durga is known as Bala the idol of the Lord must be Durga or Sakthi.

Tirumala Hill is called Meruchakram which is in the form of Devi or Sakthi.

Galigopuram is known as kali gopuram, and hence is a gopuram to kali or sakthi.

On the top of the central vimana a couchant lion which is the vehicle and the emblem of the sakthi is seen.

The 'drapery' of the Lord which is called in Tamil 'Ulchattu' is very long and resembles a

sari and hence this proves the Deity as a Goddess viz., Durga or Sakthi.

Sandal paste is used in worship which also indicates the idol is that of Goddess.

Turmeric which is a peculiarity feminine cosmetic is used in the abhisheka. Also certain types of offerings to the Lord show that it is more consistent to hold that the idol is that of Durga or Sakthi at any rate at an early date.

A verse in Devi Bhagavatam describes the Lord is Sri Venkateswari, the only diety of Kali yuga.

The abhishekam of the mula vighraha is done only on Fridays, which is a mangala snana day prescribed for women.

Thomalaseva is called Bhagavati aradhana and hence the worship is really to Sakthi.

Sri Sukta mantras are recited during the abhisheka of the Lord which again prove a saktheya type of worship.

The above reasons which are generally used as proof that the idol of the Lord is that of Durga or Sakthi do not bear any close scrutiny.

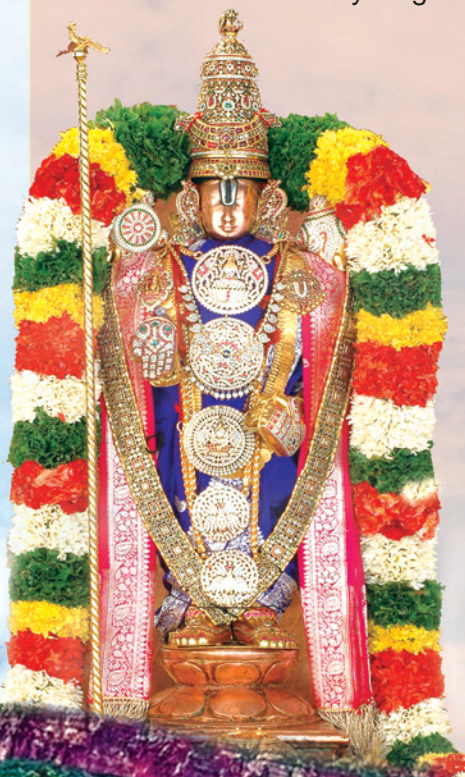
They are untenable for the following reasons:

Above: The fact that North Indians call the Lord as Balaji is of very recent origin as can be

THE TIRUMALA TEMPLE

- Dr. N. Ramesan

Part
IX



seen from the inscriptions of the temple. There is no mention of the word 'Balaji' anywhere in any inscription or any literary reference to the temple before the 17th Century A.D. In fact, North Indians commenced going to Tirupati only from the days of Shivaji i.e., in the middle of the 17th century A.D. and hence the North Indians' description of the Lord can have no bearing whatever on the antiquity of the temple.

Alternatively Sri Vishnu is closely associated with the Krishnavatara where Lord Krishna is shown as an infant. In the Bhagavata the words "Tamadbhutam Balakamambujekshanam" occurs in describing the darshan which Sri Krishna gave to his father soon after his birth. It is possible that the word Balaji may be derived not from Bala, which is a synonym for Durga, but from Balaka which is the name in the Bhagavata to Krishnavatara with which this temple is closely associated.

In any case no serious reliance could be placed on this argument since North Indian influx to the temple is only of very recent origin, and till the time of the Vijayanagara period, we have no information that the temple used to attract pilgrims of the North in such numbers as now.

Above: The range of the Hills has always been called as Vengadam. Even the name of Seshachalam is of recent origin. Hence the shape of Meruchakram which is in the form of Devi has no relevance to the Hill which is known always as Vengadam and the Lord as Venkatachalapati.

Above: 'There is clear epigraphical evidence that the galigopuram itself was constructed only in 1628 A.D. by a Sri Vaishnava by name Matla Anantaraja whose name is also given in the inscription. The builder is a well known Srivaishnava

and it is inconceivable that he would have built in a Vaishnava Temple of the 17th Century, a gopura for Kali. This argument has no basis whatsoever.

Above: The temple vimana has a small lion which is also used as an emblem for Sakti. The lion symbol however is not exclusively used only as a Sakti symbol. Both the Vaikhanasa and Pancharatra agamas which govern a Vaishnava temple, clearly lay down that either a lion or a garuda may be placed on the corners. The Bhrigu Samhita (Vimana Devata) makes this clear.

The Agamic rules require that not only on the top of the Vimana, but also on the top of the mandapas either a lion or the garuda should be placed. Normally a lion is selected to overcome the enemies of the area, when the location of the temple is such where recurrent invasions are expected; if a temple is situated in a secluded and remote corner, then garuda is used for mainly spiritual and cultural ends.

It is known to us from the epigraphs of the temple that the vimana as it stands at present was built by Vira Narasinga Yadavaraya of the 13th Century A.D. The silpis of that king had the option to choose either a lion or a garuda. They had apparently chosen the lion as the patron king being Viranarasingaraya, had the name of the lion in his own name.

Even if Ganesa and Durga had been placed somewhere they would not go against the agamic rules of a Vaishnava temple, since in our temple complexes all the Gods are recognised as paravaradevatas. Hence the presence or absence of one particular God or emblem here and there, is in no way a pointer to the type of the idol.

Above: The 'Ulchattu' is no doubt very long. Here again a careful study of the epigraphs reveals that the 'Ulchattu' is of very recent origin only. It is long on account of the number of heavy ornaments and ayudhas with which the idol is decorated. The idol is an object of reverent and devout worship and the utmost care is to be taken to see that the ornaments do not scratch the idol. Thick padding cloth is required for this, and a long Ulchattu is therefore needed to serve only this utilitarian end. It has nothing to do with the idol being that of the Lord or the Lord's consort. If one could extend this argument, one could also say that a ten cubit dhoti, which is worn by a man on auspicious occasion, is proof that a man is a woman!

Above: Here again a careful study and perusal of the epigraphs of the temple would prove that the sandal has been included only from the 15th Century A.D. from the Vijayanagara period. Before that date it is absent. Perfumed sandal paste adorns Sridevi on the chest by night and the two billas are also placed at the feet of the Dhruva bera. Vishnu is traditionally called in Hindu pantheon as alankara priya as Siva is abhisheka priya, and the gandha or the sandal smell is sacred to Lord. Sandal can be offered to men and women as an auspicious mark and there is nothing feminine about it.

Above: Factually turmeric bath is not given to Lord Srinivasa on Fridays. Saffron paste is added to the water. For the Snapana Tirumanjanam of all Vishnu Murtis, turmeric is one of the ingredients. This is nothing particular to this temple. Neither vada or payasam is offered to the deity after the bath. Poli is offered during the second bell. Even this custom is of recent origin and has no antiquity behind it.

Above: The Devi Bhagavatam describes the Lord as Sri Venkatesvari as every god has a Sakthi aspect. It has no other significance.

Above: It is seen from the agamas that there is always need for a smaller idol viz., the Bhogamurthy other than the Dhruva bera since in the Dhruva bera paryanka asana or abhisheka etc., are impracticable.

The Friday abhishekam appears to be ancient custom as it seen from the epigraphs. The Bhogamurti is generally installed in temples so that the abhishekam could be performed to it instead of the Dhruva bera. It is possible that when the Bhoga Srinivasa or the Manvalapperumal was consecrated here the abhishekam for the Dhruva bera was performed since it was a historic occasion in the history of the temple. As it happened to be a Friday, on all subsequent Fridays, a custom has been established by which the Dhruvamurti is given a ceremonial abhishekam. This practice of Friday abhishekam therefore is quite consistent that the idol of the Lord being that of Vishnu and seems to be connected with the nityarchana vidhi necessitated at the time of the installation of the Bhoga Srinivasamurthy, in the 9th Century A.D.

Above: Thomala seva is derived as a corrupt form from the Tamil word 'Thodutta malai' which means flowers that have been put together into a garland. This type of the decoration of Dhruva bera is customary in the temple and the expression Thomala seva is intended only to call the pilgrims' special attention to the flower decoration which takes place at the end of the puja. Garlands in the temple are made in several pieces, each piece being of a particular size so that the decoration could be done without waste of time, and in a grand manner. The term bhagavati aradhana of which there does not seem to be any authority, even if it exists could only be a corrupt form for bhagavad aradhana which clearly means the worship of the Lord only.

Above: It has already been mentioned that the idol is Swayambhu or a self-manifested one. The Lord here combines within himself all the aspects of all deities. Hence not only Srisukta is recited but also Purusha- sukta and also three other suktas.

The fact that the Srisukta figures as one of the five suktas recited during abhisheka, of which the purusha sukta is the first, is therefore no proof to suppose that the idol was at any time that of Sakti.

It is thus clear that the idol of the Lord could never have been at any time conceived as the representation of the Goddess.

Conversely it can be stated that all the characteristic features of a Sakti idol viz., full breasts, etc., and other peculiarities common to an idol of the Goddess are totally absent in this. There can therefore be no doubt whatsoever that the idol could never have been worshipped at any time as that of Sakti.

An examination whether the idol can be of Subramanya

It is also suggested that the temple Could be that of Subramanya mainly for the reason that the 'pushkarini' is being called as 'swami pushkarini' and swami is an abbreviation for Kumaraswami.

This is really no argument since the term 'swami' need not necessarily apply only to Kumaraswami which is the name of the Lord Subramanya The term 'swami pushkarini' can also be interpreted as the swami of all pushkarinis i.e., the best of all the holy tirthas. Also the tirthas associated with Kumaraswami are never known as 'pushkarini,' but only as Kumaradara. We have the authority of the Varaha purana which states that the 'Swami Pushkarini' is a tank which Vishnu brought

down to earth from Vaikunta. Moreover, all the puranas state that Skanda came to worship Vishnu at Tirumala and it is inconceivable that a God that came to worship could be deified as the presiding god. Moreover the Lord's image has only four arms and one face whereas Skanda normally has six faces and twelve hands. This identification is totally not correct.

From the detailed examination of all the above points it can be seen that the idol is and has been all along a Vaishnava idol only.

Before the 8th Century A.D., we have the literary evidence of the mystic outpourings of the Alvars. All these sayings of the Alvars invariably refer to Vishnu alone and there are many instances and quotations in the alvars' compositions where it could be conclusively established that throughout the ages the idol has been recognised as that of Lord Vishnu.

It must be made clear here that the external manifestation of the Lord at Tirumala is only that of Lord Vishnu, but He being a sarvabhutantaratma, can be worshipped and is being worshipped as Siva by Saivites, as Skanda by those who worship Subramanyaswami, as Divine Mother by those who worship Devi or Sakthi. The Lord of Tirumala is not a mere sectarian God, though the outward form is undoubtedly that of Lord Vishnu only. He is Vishnu, Siva, Rudra, Brahma, Maheswari, Mahakali Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswati, Skanda, or any other form to any devotee who conceives of the Lord in that aspect. All the upacharas or the services rendered to this idol are in effect rendered to the eternal Lord. This is the real secret of the Lord of Seven Hills.

(to be continued)

THE CONNECTED TEMPLES OF KANCHI

- Sri Ramesh D Kandadai

Amongst the cities in bharat-varsha, Kanchi is considered one of the best. Nagareshu Kanchi is what we are told. As one enters Kanchi from Chengalpattu side, one encounters the eastern gopuram of a grand temple. This temple is dedicated to Lord Varadaraja Swami and Perundevi Thayar. There are two presiding deities – one made of wood – no longer in daily worship but kept under water in the temple tank. The other of stone and in daily worship. The Lord goes by many names – Aththiyuran, Devarajan, Varadhan and so on. Goddess here is Perundevi and She has a separate shrine. What is important is that this temple is the point in Kanchi where the sthala-purana of other temples conclude. They begin in their respective temples (Yatoktakari, Deepaparakasar, Ashtabhuja and so on) and the story ends here. This makes for most Vishnu temples to be connected to this temple.

Long long ago... Lord Brahma decided to perform a yajna. He was separated from his wife Saraswati at that time. She saw that he planned to perform the yajna without her involvement and so was unhappy with the idea. She decided to prevent him from concluding the yajna by putting many obstacles in his path.

Lord Brahma realized what was about to happen and prayed to Lord Vishnu for success of his undertaking. For each obstacle she placed in his path, there now exists a temple and Lord Vishnu is worshipped in the form in which he came to help Lord Brahma.

Goddess Saraswati sent utter darkness. Nothing was visible. Nothing could be done. Lord Brahma prayed to Lord Vishnu for help in concluding the Yajna. Lord Vishnu appeared as a source of light and banished the darkness. In Hindu culture, darkness is synonymous with ignorance and light is synonymous with jnana or knowledge. This temple is in a part of Kanchi called Thiruthanka and is also the birth place of Vedanta Desika. A well dug by Desika is located next to the temple. The temple is called Deepaparakasar or villakkolli perumal temple.

Sent demons : Next, she sent demons and they were destroyed by Lord Vishnu. She also sent a huge snake. Lord Vishnu took the form with eight hands to hold weapons and killed the snake. This form is worshipped as Ashtabhuja Perumal in the temple located 2 km due west of Sri Varadarajaswamy temple.

River Vegavathi : Next she sent the river Vegavathi in full flood to wash away the yajnasala. Knowing this, Lord Vishnu appeared



Ashtabujakara perumal



Azhgiyasingar



**Sri Varadarajaswamy
Garudotsavam**



Villakkolli Perumal - Deepaprakasaswami



Yatoktakari Perumal



Palayaseevaram - paarvettai

in the path of the River resting on Adhishesha. Seeing someone who is not her husband in the path, the river plunged underground to avoid coming into contact. This temple is in Tiruvekka in Kachipuram approximately 2 to 3 km west of Varadarajaswamy temple. This Lord is known as Vega-sethu and also as Yatoktakari. In later years Tirumazhisai alwar had a sishya named Kanikkannan. He was banished by the local king and when Alwar left with his sishya, the Lord also followed the Alwar. So, he is referred to as the Lord who obeyed his bhakta.

Next Kapalika : Next Saraswati sent Kapalika, the demoness to disrupt the yajna. Lord Brahma prayed to Lord Vishnu again for protection. Lord Vishnu promptly appeared as Azhaghiya Singar (Nrusimha) and stopped the demoness. The Lord is worshipped in this form at another suburb of Kanchi called Tiruvellukkai about 3km west of Varadarajaswamy temple. The name of the locality means “desired place” and it is the location where the Lord wished to stay.

After all these hurdles by Goddess Saraswati, Lord Brahma with the support of Lord Vishnu completed the Yajna. Upon completion, it is said, Lord Narayana himself came in person to accept the offerings. As the Yajna ended, the Lord rose in golden glory from the homa pit. Even today, one can see the scars of fire on his face when one worships Lord Varadaraja’s processional form.

Vishnu Kanchi : Thus the temples of Kanchipuram – Vishnu temples – are connected to Lord Varadaraja swamy temple through their stalapurana. Kanchipuram has more than a dozen shrines to Lord Vishnu and a portion of Kanchi is called Vishnu-kanchi to this day. Most of these temples are at least 1200 years old and date back to Pallava times. The sculptures in Varadaraja swamy temple are of the highest quality. The mandapam on shores of temple tank has chains made of stones. There is small four pillared mandapa in the tank in which Lord Athi Varada is housed. He emerges once in forty years to give darshan. The Brahmotsava of Lord Varadarajaswamy temple is famous and the Garuda vahanam is one of the largest in Vishnu temples of South India.

Once a year, Lord Varadarajaswami is carried on foot along the northern banks of river Palar to the town of Pazhayaseevaram about 20km away on the day after Sankranthi in January. He visits Lord Nrusimha there and returns via the southern bank of the river visiting all the villages on the way out and back. The residents of these villages joyously participate in the visit of the Lord. The festival is called Parvettai and in the attached picture one can see Sri Azhagiyasingar of Pazhaiyaseevaram face to face with Lord Varadaraja swami of Kanchi amidst a sea of devotees.

Thus one half of Kanchi – may be the smaller half – is fully integrated along with the nearby villages in the worship of Lord Varadaraja swamy.





Part - 9

Tirumalai Ozhugu

History of Rituals and Customs in Tirumala

Original in Tamil by- Sri K. Balasundar Nayakar
Excerpts Translated into English by- Dr. M. Varadarajan

Consecration of Midway Azhagiya Singhar

It is said in Markandeya Purana, that Markandeya Maharishi, who was on the way to Tirumala, had darshan of Azhagiya Singhar in a cave. He worshipped Azhagiya Singhar with the following verse – “O Lord Lakshmi Narasimha, who showered grace on Prahlada! God of Gods! Blissful one! O Madhusudhana! Protect this servant of Your devotees”. After worshipping the deity, Markandeya left for Swami Pushkarini. Having noted this, Sri Ramanuja built a temple and consecrated Azhagiya Singhar according to Sri Vaikhanasa Agama and also arranged daily *Tiruvaradhanam* (pujas).

Flower plucking festival

Tirumalai Ananthalan, an ardent disciple of Sri Ramanuja, was doing flower-weaving service to

the Lord. With a view to creating awareness about Tirumalai Ananthalan's service with purity of mind, on the night of 7th day of Brahmotsavam in Purattasi month, Lord Srinivasa and His Consort disguised themselves in the form of a Prince and Princess and roam about and sport in the garden laid by Tirumalai Ananthalan. They plucked the flowers for their pleasure. When they left the place, Ananthalan noticed it. He thought that a thief is plucking the flowers. He ran away to catch hold of him. But the thief escaped by going in the opposite direction of the temple from the garden and disappeared.

This incident is being introduced every year during Brahmotsavam in Purattasi month and on the seventh day Malayappaswami is being taken to the garden of Tirumalai Ananthalan

from the left side of the temple (*apradhakshinam*) and after honouring Ananthalan in the garden, enter from right side to the temple. (Note - This festival is now held on the tenth day of Brahmotsavam instead of the seventh day).

Honouring Parapatyadar

A Chola King (*Krimi Kanta*), (*avyabadesan*—unfit to be called by name) by accumulating sins from births did violence by throwing Vishnu deities into the sea. He destroyed the icon of Sri Govindaraja Swami of Chittirakuta (Chidambaram) who appeared before the sage Kanva doing penance on the banks of Kaveri river. Sri Ramanuja felt deeply sad about the happening to Lord Govindaraja Swami. He thought of Divya Desa's reputation as stated in the Purana and Alvars like Kulasekara Alvar and Tirumangai Alvar who liked this Divya Sthala and this Divya Desa should not go without Mulavirat. Further, Sri Ramanuja knows full well the future of this place where Sri Govindaraja Perumal and Tiruvenkatamudayan are stationed with so much of desire. He decided that daily after night *neivedhyam* of Prasadam by Tiruvenkatamudayan, the priest with Sri Satakopa covered in the hand brought with all paraphernalia like, umbrella, samara etc. in *Vendri Malai Ittan Mandapam* (otherwise called Garuda Mandapam) facing South side and at that time the sannidhi bearar recite the *kattiyam*; then calling Senaimudaliyar, who is prominent in the service of Lord and Tiruvenkatamudayan's *Senkol Mudra* performer and honouring the temple chief Sri Vaishnava with *pariyattam* and Sri Satakopa.

Adhyayanotsavam in Tirumala

With a view to fulfilling the desire of Alvar Tiruvarangapperumal Areyar, son of Yamunacharya, unlike in other Divya Desas, Sri Ramanuja commanded to recite Iyarppa Prabandhams on the first day of Adhyayanotsavam followed with other Prabandhams for 23 days every year for



Tiruvenkatamudayan. Accordingly, in Sri Govindarajaswami Temple also Sri Ramanuja commanded to follow the same. Further he ordered to recite Nalayira Divya Prabandham in one day only to extol Jnanappiran (Varaha Swami). In this way, some festivals used to be held other than the days of celebrating the festivals for Tiruvenkatamudayan.

Krishna is Sayana berar during Margazhi month

According to Sri Vaikhanasa Agama, in Tiruvenkatamudayan Sannidhi, Azhagappiranar (one among five Murthis) used to be the *sayana berar* for every night. But, Andal with so much of devotion on Krishna sung a hymn for each day for thirty days 30 hymns called *Tiruppavai* Prabandham, during *Dhanurmasa* (Margazhi month) and also sung *Nachchiyar Tirumozhi* wherein She pleaded that the God of Love should join her with Tiruvenkatamudayan (*Venkatavarkkennai vidikkitriye –Nachchiyar Tirumozhi* 1.4). Andal left other deities in Archa form and prays only Tiruvenkatamudayan.

Further there is unanimity in *Vibhava Avatara* and *Archa Avatara*. Even in Sri Vaikhanasa Agama, one Samhita speaks about Sri Krishna to be the *Sayana berar* during *Margazhi* month and also there is provision among three Murthis, Krishna is to be the *Sayana berar*. Hence, Sri Ramanuja



commanded that Krishna is only put to bed during the thirty days of *Dhanur Masa*.

Sri Ramayana Discourses at the foot of the hill for Sri Ramanuja

Periya Tirumalai Nambi was a disciple of Yamunacharya and maternal uncle of Sri Ramanuja. At the command of Yamuna, Nambi was doing dedicated *kainkarya* at Tirumala by worshipping Tiruvenkatamudayan three times daily, i.e. morning, noon and evening, besides bringing water for *abhishekam* from the far off Akasa Ganga. At the command of Yamunacharya, Nambi should initiate Sri Ramayana to Sri Ramanuja.

Accordingly Sri Ramanuja reached Tirupati, foot of the Hill from Srirangam to learn Sri Ramayana from Nambi. Nambi would come down every day after the morning

Tirumanjana kainkaryam and bring with him *Mahaprasadam* of Lord for Sri Ramanuja. Sri Ramanuja would be there at the appointed place – under *Thinthrinee* tree, near a round rock, at the foot of the Hill and Nambi instructed Sri Ramayana to him. In the afternoon he would perform *yaga* and *anuyaga* and reach Tirumala for evening *kainkarya*. One day when lessons were progressing, Nambi thought of Tiruvenkatamudayan as follows – “O Lord Venkatesa! By the grace of Yamunacharya I have been blessed to worship Yourself thrice a day. Now, I have to miss the afternoon *kainkarya* and darsan” and then Nambi retired to bed.

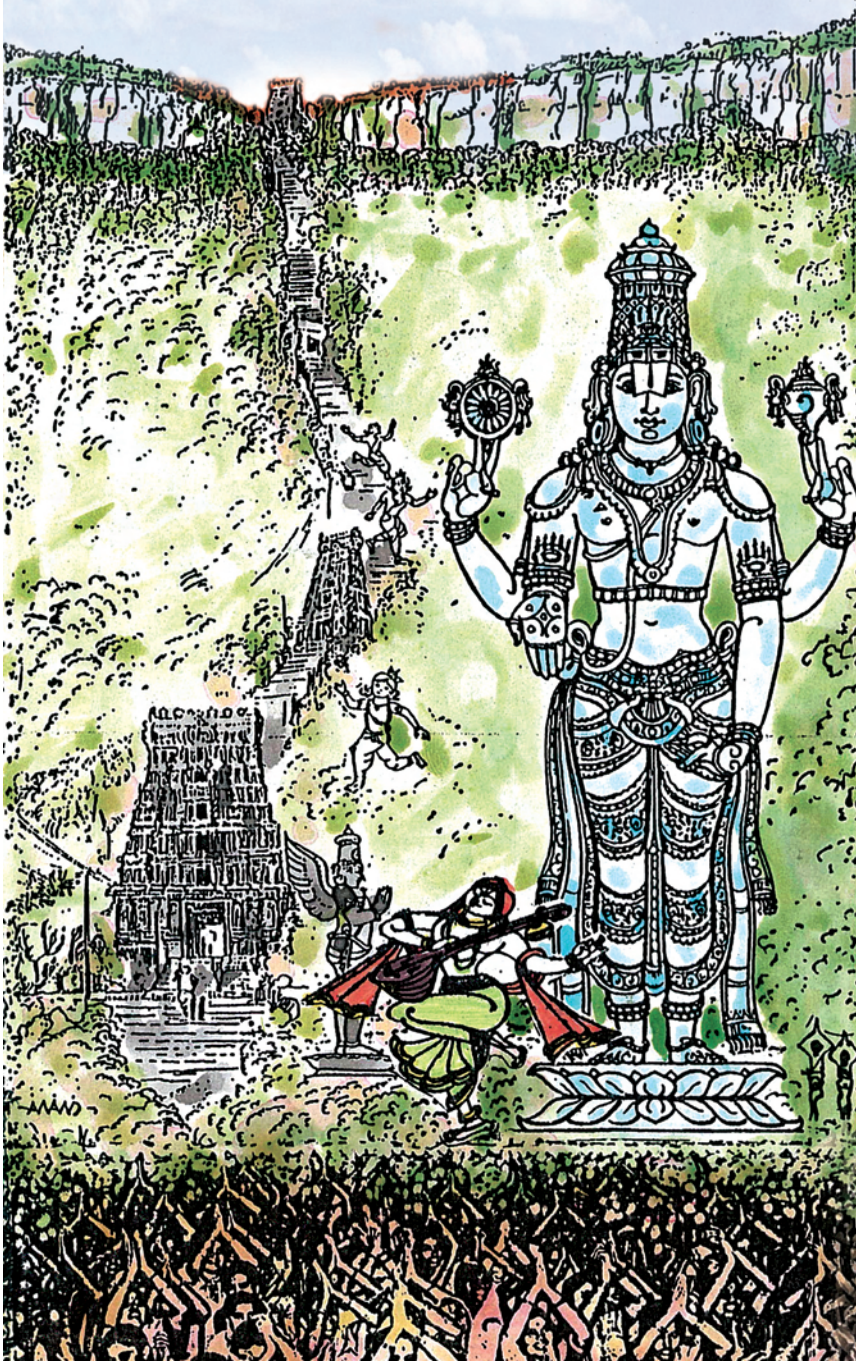
Tiruvenkatamudayan appeared in his dream that night and told him – “Nambi! we will give afternoon darsan also”. Nambi got up next morning and as usual attended *tirumanjana kainkaryam* and had morning darsan and came down the Hill to initiate Sri Ramayana to Sri Ramanuja. At that time, Sri Ramanuja reached from Tirupati to the foot of the Hill and Nambi also joined him. Both of them experienced the fragrance of *kasturi* (*musk*), saffron, camphor and sandal. They noticed at the foot of the *Thinthrinee* tree, nearby rock, a pair of Tiruvenkatamudayan's feet decorated with flowers. Nambi narrated his dream of the previous night to Sri Ramanuja and felt happy at the grace showered by Tiruvenkatamudayan. Having worshipped the self-revealed (*svayam vyaktham*) feet, they decided to construct a small temple around the rock and also decided to establish the images of Alvars and arrange daily *puja* according to Sri Vaikhanasa Agama bearing in mind the foot-tamarind is also to be an incarnation of Adishesha since the feet of Tiruvenkatamudayan appeared in the shadow of that tree.

As said in the text “*Kalou Venkata Nayakaha*” (which means that in this Kali Yuga, the Lord has come down in the form of Sri Venkatanayaka to safeguard His devotees who are particularly dear to Him) that irrespective of sect, birth etc. only to protect His devotees Tiruvenkatamudayan emerged in this place. Sri Ramanuja ordered that even such devotees worship and get blessings of Lord by doing *pradakshina* etc. the *svayam vyaktha* feet of Tiruvenkatamudayan, after taking bath in *Chandala Teertha* (*malavari kunta*) situated in the southern end of the Hill, which is famous one among five *theerthas* in Tirumala.

(to be continued)

SIGNIFICANCE OF Dasa Bhakti

Telugu Original by :
Sri Suswaram Nagarajacharyulu
English by : Dr.M.Krishna Kumar



Sri Mohana Dasa was a celebrated Kannada 'haridas' and a staunch devotee of Lord Srinivasa. He was destined to write a number of songs in praise of Lord Vishnu. Unfortunately he met with premature death. The renowned 'haridas' Sri Vijaya Dasa used to treat Mohana Dasa as his own son. When his dear son Mohana Dasa suddenly died, Sri Vijaya Dasa went to the residence of Lord Yama, the God of Death and talked to Him about his son's premature death and finally restored his life. Sri Mohana Dasa was as great as Sri Vijayadasa. With the grace of Sri Vijaya Dasa, he became a great seer and a famous philosophical poet. He wrote many 'suladulu', 'ugabhogadulu' and also 'kolupadams.' 'Mohana Vittala' is his 'ankita.' He eulogized Lord Srinivasa when He was on His chariot. It was a marvellous description which touched the heart of each and every devotee. The sum and substance of the description is to invite Lord Srinivasa along with his two consorts, Sri Devi and Bhudevi to shower His abundant grace on him.

Sri Subbannacharya's Eulogy

Sri Kalluri Subbannacharya was a great scholar and has written many 'padams' in Kannada. He was called 'Vyasa Vittalankitulu.' He attained the perfect grace of Sri Vijayadasa. The potential and scholarly characteristics in his writings were magnificent. The wonderful mystic philosophy of Lord Srinivasa was reflected in his three 'charanams' incorporating the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu. The 'padam' was popular in the hearts of every devotee of Lord Srinivasa. It is usually sung in the 'Kalyani Raga.' The 'padam' starts with '*Tileyado Ninnaata Tirupatiya Venkata...*' The expression 'Poleva

Neerolu' symbolized Matsyavataram as it denotes the Lord's luster in the water. '*Geluva moreya*' tells about Kurmavataram. The expression reflects that the Lord raised His face. '*Nelava Noduva*' expresses Varahavataram which tells the Lord's caring attitude for the creation. '*Suliva Kambhadi*' means that the Lord comes out of the pillar in Narasimhavataram. '*Eleya Naliyuva*' means that the Lord measures the earth in Vamanavataram. '*Bhalire Bhargava*' brings one to light that the Lord is a magnanimous and a bold Brahmin in Parasuramavataram. The expression '*Khalana Bhedisi*' tells that the Lord destroys the monsters in Ramavataram. '*Kolala Dvanige*' means that the Lord plays the flute in Krishnavataram. '*Nalina Mukhiyaranaachisuva*' expresses that Lord instills noble thoughts in the hearts of women. '*Hayadala dahavanegarane*' means that the Lord climbs the horse to destroy the evil forces in the world in His tenth incarnation i.e., Kalkyavataram. Who knows Your 'maya' or 'leela' in this world? Even Goddess Lakshmi astounds at Your 'leelas.' Lord Brahma and other deities do not know Your mysterious 'maya.' This is Your mysticism.

Sri Kalluri Subbannacharya says: 'O! Lord! You have constructed Your residence in water. You have borne the burden of the universe on Your back. You have possessed the terrible teeth. You have the lustrous appearance of a man and a lion at the same time in Your incarnation. You have possessed the entire cosmos in Your Vamanavataram. You are a courageous and an ethical person in Parasuramavataram. You are the destroyer of all monsters in the world in the embodiment of Lord Rama. You are the Father of Lord Cupid, the God of Love in Krishnavataram. As Lord, You have reformed the activities of women. As the most

handsome person, You climb the horse in Kalkyavataram.'

Sri Subbannacharya further eulogizes: 'Hey! Lord Lakshmi Ramana! All your activities are full of mysticism. You have saved Arjuna, the brother of Bhima. You are 'Kamadhenuvu' and Kalpavruksha' to Your devout devotees. You have protected the Vedas. You have lifted the Govardhan Mountain. You have protected the earth by putting it on Your teeth. You are renowned as 'Narahari.' You have measured the entire cosmos with Your ingenuity. You are called 'Bhargava.' You have eaten fruits to give salvation to Your earnest and plain devotee Sabari as Sri Rama. You are the husband of Rukmini, the sister of Rukmi. You are Kalki Ramana.'

Sri Subbannacharya eulogizes the Lord by saying that even thousand eyes are not enough to see the Lord's grandeur and glory. Even Lord Sesha is not efficient to extol Lord's Srinivasa's greatness even though He has innumerable tongues. The Lord does not shut His eyes when He is in the form of fish. He shows His back to protect the devotees when He is a tortoise. He digs the earth when He is in the form of a boar. A small boy, Prahlada has captured the Lord's attention. The Lord is very short in the form of Vamana. He is also in the form of Parasurama. He is 'Punyapurusha' in the embodiment of Sri Rama. He is a naughty boy in the incarnation of Lord Krishna. He has created enlightenment in the hearts of women as Lord. When He is Kalki, He takes the horse and protects the entire universe. One cannot comprehend the mystic 'leelas' of Lord Srinivasa.

May Lord Srinivasa shower His abundant grace on us and grant peace, prosperity and eternal bliss.

(to be continued)

LORD BRAHMA'S VISIT TO DWARAKA !!!

- Smt. P.S. Pranavi

Once, when Krishna was ruling Dwarka, Lord Brahma came to see Him, and the doorman immediately informed Lord Krishna of Brahma's arrival.

When Krishna was so informed, He immediately asked the doorman, 'Which Brahma? What is his name?'

The doorman therefore returned and questioned Lord Brahma.

When the doorman asked, 'Which Brahma?' Lord Brahma was surprised. He told the doorman, 'Please go inform Lord Krishna that I am the four-headed Brahma who is the father of the four Kumaras.'

The doorman then informed Lord Krishna of Lord Brahma's description, and Lord Krishna gave him permission to enter. The doorman escorted Lord Brahma in, and as soon as Brahma saw Lord Krishna, he offered obeisance at His lotus feet.

After being worshipped by Lord Brahma, Lord Krishna also honoured him with suitable words. Then Lord Krishna asked him, 'Why have you come here?'

Being questioned, Lord Brahma immediately replied, 'I shall later tell You why I have come. First of all, there is a doubt in my mind which I wish You would kindly dissipate.'

'Why did you inquire which Brahma had come to see You? What is the purpose of such an inquiry? Is there any other Brahma besides me within this universe?'

Upon hearing this, Sri Krishna smiled and immediately meditated.

Unlimited number of Brahmas arrived instantly.

These Brahmas had different numbers of heads. Some had ten heads, some twenty, some a hundred, some a thousand, some ten thousand, some a hundred thousand, some ten million and others a hundred million. No one can count the number of faces they had.

There also arrived many Lord Sivas with various heads numbering one hundred thousand and ten million. Many Indras also arrived, and they had hundreds of thousands of eyes all over their bodies.



When the four-headed Brahma of this universe saw all this opulence of Krishna, he became very bewildered and considered himself a rabbit among many elephants.

All the Brahmas who came to see Krishna offered their respects at His lotus feet, and when they did this, their crowns touched His lotus feet.

No one can estimate the inconceivable potency of Krishna. All the Brahmas who were there were resting in the one body of Krishna.

When all the crowns struck together at Krishna's lotus feet, there was a tumultuous sound. It appeared that the crowns themselves were offering prayers unto Krishna's lotus feet.

With folded hands, all the Brahmas and Sivas began to offer prayers unto Lord Krishna, saying, 'O Lord, you have shown me a great favour. I have been able to see Your lotus feet.'

All of them then said, 'It is my great fortune, Lord, that You have called me, thinking of me as Your servant. Now let me know what Your order is so that I may carry it on my heads.'

Lord Krishna replied, 'Since I wanted to see all of you together, I have called all of you here. All of



you should be happy. Is there any fear from the demons?'

They replied, "By Your mercy, we are victorious everywhere".

"Whatever burden was upon the earth You have taken away by descending on that planet.'

This is the proof of Dwarka's opulence: all the Brahmas thought, 'Krishna is now staying in my

jurisdiction.' "Thus, the opulence of Dwarka was perceived by each and every one of them. Although they were all assembled together, no one could see anyone but himself.

Lord Krishna then bade farewell to all the Brahmas there, and after offering their obeisance, they all returned to their respective homes.

After observing all this opulence, the four-headed Brahma of this universe was astonished. He again came before the lotus feet of Krishna and offered Him obeisance.

Brahma then said, 'Whatever I formerly decided about my knowledge, I have just now had personally verified.'

'There are people who say, "I know everything about Krishna." Let them think in that way. As far as I am concerned, I do not wish to speak very much about this matter. O my Lord, let me say this much. As far as your opulence is concerned, they are all beyond the reach of my mind, body and words.' This is a quotation from Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.14.38), spoken by Lord Brahma.

Krishna said, 'Your particular universe extends four billion miles; therefore, it is the smallest of all the universes. Consequently, you have only four heads.

Some of the universes are one billion yojanas, some one trillion, some ten trillion and some one hundred trillion yojanas. Thus, they are almost unlimited in area.

According to the size of the universe, there are so many heads on the body of Brahma. In this way I maintain innumerable universes [brahmandas].

'No one can measure the length and breadth of one fourth of My energy. Who can measure the three fourths that is manifested in the spiritual world?

Beyond the River Viraja is a spiritual nature, which is indestructible, eternal, inexhaustible and unlimited.' It is the supreme abode consisting of three fourths of the Lord's opulence. It is known as paravyoma, the spiritual sky.

Krishnarpanamasthu



It is a challenging task to convey profound meaning in simple terms. Over the ages, Yogis have practised it to convey their message. It is indeed difficult to sustain it especially in poetic medium. Poet-saints like Tiruvalluvar, Kabir, Sarvajna and Narayana Guru have perfected this capsular form that enabled them to reach out to vast masses, both literate and illiterate.

Vemana has consistently employed a four-lined quartet. The fourth line in the quartet is usually his signature line. The first two lines give a moral/social/spiritual statement followed by a suitable example in the third line. He used this form to effectively counter superstitions as well as propound certain values to be cherished by the people. He achieved this by means of likeness or contrast bringing in similarities, appropriate illustrations from everyday reality. Moving from general to particular, abstract to concrete, ideational to practical he has conveyed his message in an effective manner. The following poem shows how he employed this technique to a telling effect:

*Urvi janulu parama Yogeeshwaruni joochi
Thegadu vaaru gaani theliya leru
Amrutha maadi ruchula hasthame merugunu?
Vishwadabhirama vinura Vema!*

(Poem 117. Page 18. *Vemana Padyalu*, C.P. Brown Collection, 1839. Ed. Bandi Gopala Reddy (Bangore). Published by TTD, Tirupathi, 1992.)

In translation it reads:

Ordinary mortals, looking at a Yogeeshwara,
Begin to snub without 'knowing' him.
How does the hand know tastes like nectar?
Listen Vema, the one endeared to the Creator!



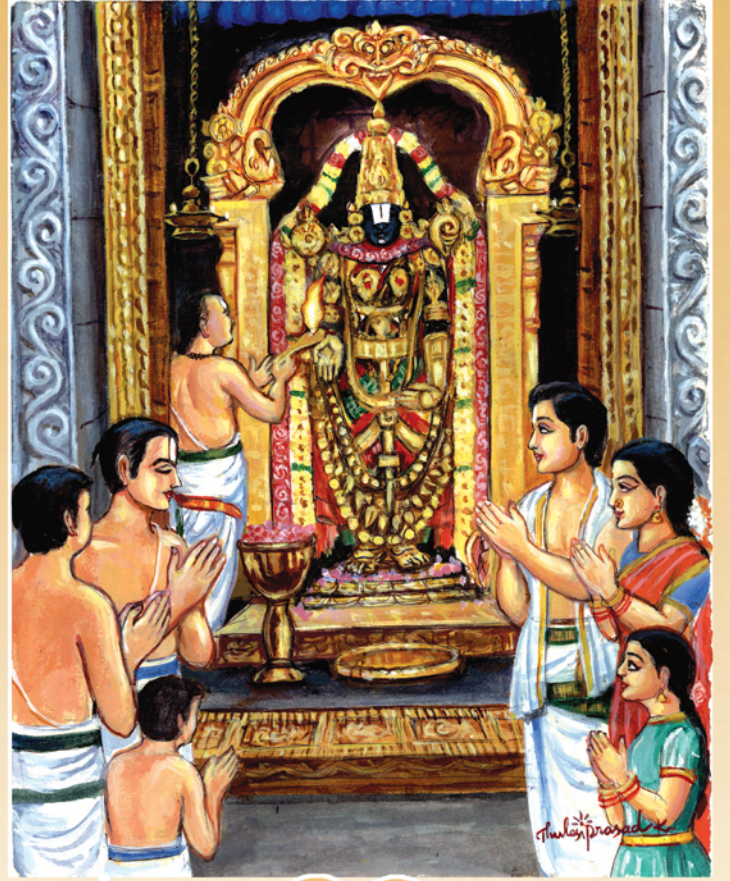
It is common for the ordinary people to scorn at a Sadhaka or Yogi for not being one of them. Without realizing that the yogi has attained a higher state they look down upon him. They wish him to be at their known mundane level ignorant of the fact that he has travelled beyond that stage to be nearer the Truth. It is ignorance that clouds their judgment. Ironically, they think that they are superior to him mired as they are in their worldly affairs. They fail to recognise him as the provider of light in darkness, guidance in distress. The poem stresses that 'knowing' is important. The Yogi has attained a state where he can differentiate truth from falsehood, the everlasting from the temporal. He knows that the people are in a state of illusion who need to be liberated. Therefore, he views them with sympathy. On the other, without knowing it, they consider him a 'stranger' or 'outsider.' One can do many things with one's hand, but it does not know the taste of nectar. It is the tongue that tastes it, so knows its sweetness. So much difference between wisdom, here manifested by the Yogi, and ignorance exemplified by the 'unknowing' masses.



The three key Sanskrit words are *Prarthana*, *Saranagati*, and *Dhyana* and differences exist among these three. *Prarthana* is prayer. Every one stipulates it as an integral part of living. Going to a place of worship is made mandatory. We go to places of worship to gratify our needs and desires, solve problems, tide over complex situations, and finally seek refuge. In Prayer we ask God whom we worship to fulfil our deep desires. These desires are material in nature. We go with a complaint or a petition to a temple. Once the desire is granted and materialized, we fulfill our vow. So, prayer is asking for material benefits.

All our prayers move in this direction, and there is no prayer that is truly not materialistic in nature and unselfish. Therefore, it is low and mean and at the bottom rung of spirituality. Can there be a prayer that is simply thanks-giving to the Supreme? Can we stand or sit with folded hands and simply thank the Supreme for giving us this wonderful life? This life itself is a beautiful gift. Our coming into this world is a miracle. What more do we need? Nature has given us this elegant life and brought us into this world. The rest is in our hands to mould and shape it into meaningful and significant. The prayer that does not involve any selfish motive and does not seek material benefits is true and real.

Patanjali does not speak about prayer in his *Astanga Yoga*. It is both individual and collective. There is a big difference between an intellectual person and a wise person, and here the spiritual practice of prayer helps us move from mere intellect to wisdom. Prayer takes us into the heart, connecting us to the Source, where we are able to let go of any mistakes we have made, deciding not to make the same mistakes again. Is this not



PRARTHANA SARANAGATI and DHYANA

- Dr. K. V. Raghupathi

wisdom? Whereas if we succumb to making foolish mistakes day after day, hour after hour, we are not becoming wiser. We become wiser when we wish

to change from the bottom of our hearts and ask for help to do so. When we live with this attitude every moment, wisdom flourishes.

In all prayers, there are six important aspects. 1. The subject is the one who prays 2. The object that is prayed to is one of many gods. One can choose any god and direct his prayer to him. 3. Every prayer is asking or begging 4. Sometimes, or in most cases, the subject fulfills a vow. 5. What flows between the subject and the object is worship or devotion, that is *bhakti*. The subject develops an illimitable affection for the object, the deity. This affection is not to be confused with the affection between the two people. This sort of *bhakti* is crucial in *Bhakti Yoga*. 6. The dichotomy between the subject and the object is maintained until the subject merges with the object. Till then the identity is maintained. The subject is separate from the object. It is this separation that causes pain and misery in the subject.

Prayer is one aspect of Yoga, though it is not Yoga itself. However, in certain forms of Yoga like *Bhakti Yoga*, *Japa Yoga*, and *Mantra Yoga*, prayer is emphasized. *Raja Yoga* and *Jnana Yoga* do not give any credence to prayer.

Navavidha bhakti

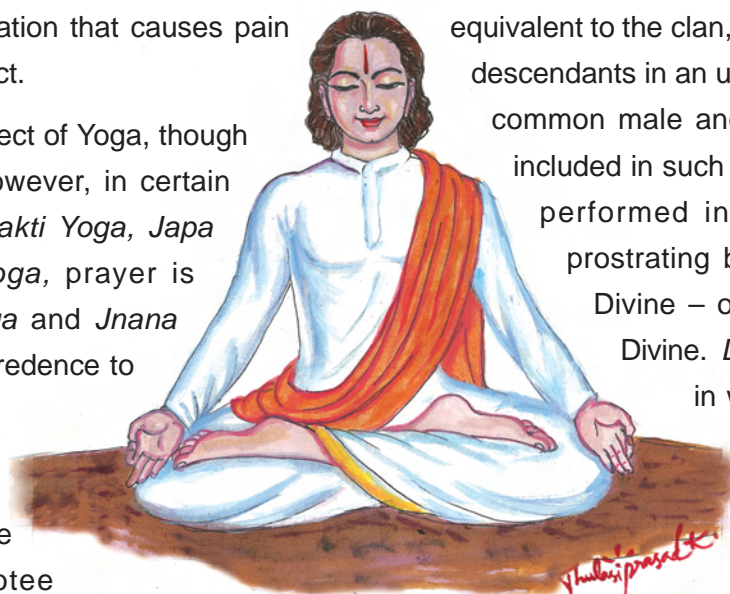
In *Bhakti Yoga*, the practitioner is a devotee



(*bhakta*), and the Divine is the Beloved. The Navavidha bhakti include *Shravana* (listening) in which the devotee listens to the hundreds of names of the deities or the hymns composed on such deities.

Kirtana is chanting or praising in song forms in honour of the deity. Singing is a form of prayer in which the devotee attains ecstatic breakthroughs. *Smarana* is remembering God in various forms in utter devotion. *Pada sevana* is serving God at his feet, which is a part of ceremonial worship. The feet of the Lord are considered full of spiritual power and grace. Here, service at the Lord's feet is understood metaphorically as remembering God in all activities.

Archana is performing a prescribed religious rite, mostly done in temples, by offering coconut, incense sticks, flowers, and fruits. Usually, the name of the devotee and his/her *gotra* (considered to be equivalent to the clan, refers to people who are descendants in an unbroken male line from a common male ancestor or patrilineal) are included in such *archana*, and it is mainly performed in temples. *Vandana* is prostrating before the image of the Divine – one form of pleasing the Divine. *Dasya* is a devotion to God in which the devotee wants to be very close to God by performing servitude. *Sakhya* is a feeling of friendship



for the Divine, which is a more mystical form of association with God. When *Dasya* is performed for years, it, in turn, transforms into *Sakhya*. The last one is *atma nivedana*, self - offering. This is a total surrendering, called *Saranagati* or *Prapatti*.

Surrender, that is, *Saranagati* is higher than the prayer. In surrender, we just surrender our will and our self at the feet of God whom we worship for long. We consider ourselves as mere instruments and puppets in the hands of the Supreme. Since we are helpless, we leave everything to the Supreme, our needs, and our survival. You are content and happy because you accept whatever is given by the Supreme. There is no further seeking. In this surrender, the petty self is dissolved since you totally rely on the Supreme. Devotion overflows in you. This devotion is filled with boundless affection for the Supreme. It is unlike prayer wherein asking for some desire to be fulfilled is involved. Since the total surrender takes place, there is no room for petty self.

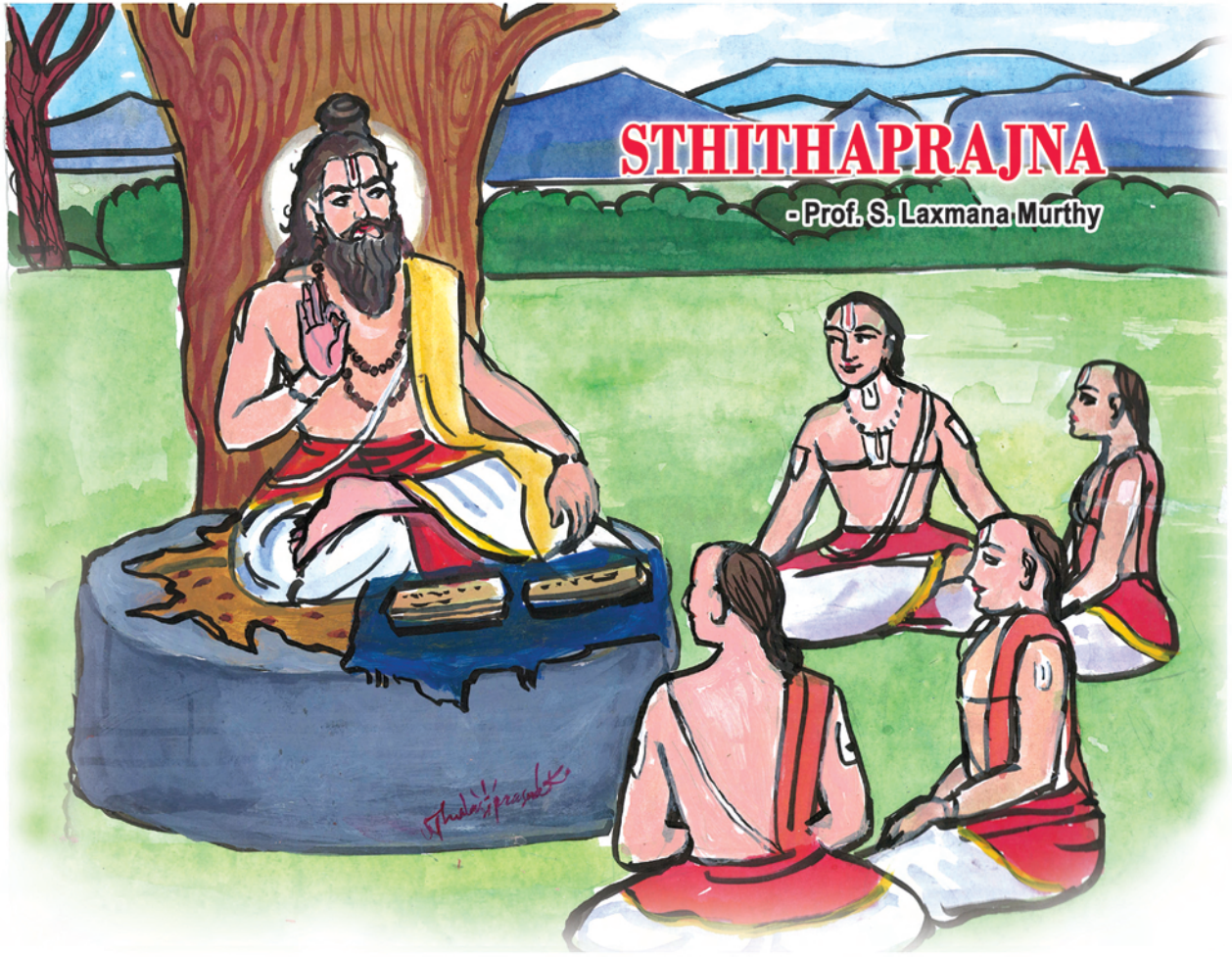
Meditation (*Dhyana*) is totally different. It is higher than prayer and surrender. It is a higher form of spirituality. In meditation, the mind which is the cause of all problems

and troubles is annihilated or transcended. The mind is the focus of transformation. When the mind is completely sublimated, one enters into a state of deep, fathomless silence which is no different from the Cosmic Silence. It is a state of Nothingness—Nothing else. You simply float in that state. The ultimate object of meditation is to liberate oneself. It is the objectless concentration (*Dhyana*). Whereas in prayer and surrender, the object exists. In prayer, the gap between you and the Supreme exists. It is endless. In surrender also, the dichotomy exists between you and the Supreme. It is a deep longing with the Supreme. Since that does not happen immediately, anxiety is created. In meditation, such a gap disappears. What exists is only a deep void. We must evolve in prayer and meditation to get salvation.



SOLUTION TO PUZZLE

1 L	O	2 P	A	3 M	U	4 D	R	5 A		6 B
O		A		U		H		S		H
7 H	A	D	E	S		8 A	M	A	L	A
I		M		T		N		N		S
9 T	O	I	L		10 G	I	11 R	I	12 J	A
A		N			U		A		A	
13 S	O	I	L		R		14 D	R	H	A
Y					U		H		N	
15 A	J	A	K	A		16 T	A	C	U	17 E
						O				R
18 U	S	A	N	A		19 P	A	D	M	A



Man needs to be level minded and balanced in his life in order to be happy and successful. He needs to control his emotions to lead his life without sorrow and regrets. He would encounter different situations in life some pleasant and quite a few unpleasant as well. He has to respond to a variety of experiences. They are likely to cause him happiness and also misery. This is an inevitable fact in life. He should not allow himself to be assailed by disturbing emotions.

Bhagavadgita in its second chapter has introduced the concept of Sthithaprajna. In one of the slokas to explain the nature of Sthithaprajna the scripture enjoins that a Sthithaprajna has to discipline himself by controlling emotions in the contexts of experience causing either pain or pleasure in life. That is the ideal way to live happily or without misery in the world. Man is advised to get neither perturbed by misery nor overwhelmed

with joy. Man should train himself to live like a Muni. Then who is a Muni?

Bhagavadgita says that a Muni is one who is free from attachment, fear and anger. These negative emotions disturb the mind and makes it unsteady. The mind which is fickle and unsteady leads man to misery. The only way to happiness is the way of Muni, to be free from attachment, fear and anger; neither to be assailed by sorrow nor overwhelmed by joy. The sloka runs as :

*Duhkeswanudwigna manaah,
Sukhesu vigata sprihah
Veetaraaga bhayakrodhah,
Sthitadheermuniruchyate*

The Gita goes on to explain in detail the concept of Sthithaprajna or Muni. The Gita is therefore a manual of ideal life. Constant practice of what is explained in the Gita will certainly vouchsafe a life free from mental tension. It will surely enrich life.



BUDHA – MERCURY

- Smt. D.K. Ahana Lakshmi

Closest to the sun, smallest in the solar system, Mercury is a little larger than earth's moon and travels around the sun in 88 earth days. It has a very thin atmosphere and has no moons or rings. Described as the son of Tara (wife of Brihaspati) and Chandra, this celestial body appears in many ancient texts such as Agni Purana and Mahabharata.

As part of the navagrahas, Budha lends his name to Budhavaram in Telugu, in English Wednesday. In English, the name comes from Woden's day, transformed from the Latin "Day of Mercury", *Mercurii dies*. Inherently auspicious, he has three paces, slow, quick and medium. He is described as riding a lion or a yaali, or a chariot made of wind and fire, golden in colour, drawn by eight horses having the speed of wind. Not surprising then that Mercury moves fast, travelling through space at nearly 170 km per hour!

BEWARE OF THIEVES


1. Keep your luggage, valuable things and ornaments carefully.
2. Don't keep your children and old age people to watch the luggage.
3. Don't eat or drink anything like Tea, Coffee, water, cool drinks, biscuits etc offered by the strangers.
4. Your attention may be diverted by throwing Coins, Rupee Notes in order to steal your valuable things.
5. Don't go away by keeping your cellphones while charging.



Budha holds three weapons – the mace, sword and shield – while the fourth hand shows the varada mudra. Green skinned, he is believed to be mild and eloquent, influencing intellect, communication, humour and reasoning:

Budho budharcitah saumyah saumyacittah subhupradah: Intelligent, worshipped for acumen, son of Soma, of calm mind, bestowing brilliance.

Navagraha Kshetram : Swetharanyeswarar Temple in Thiruvengadu on the Sirkazhi-Poompuhar road, about 60 km from Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu is considered Budhakshetram, one of the navagraha kshetrams. In Kovur near Chennai, the Sundareswar temple is also considered as dedicated to Budhagraha.

A glimpse on Kirtana : Let us learn Muthuswami Dikshitar's kirtana in Natakurunji ragam, Jhampatalam, which is a prayer to Budha: 'Budhamashrayaami satatam...'.


I seek shelter in Budha, worshipped by Gods and the son of Chandra and Tara, revered by the learned ones, bringing joy, bestower of sweet poesy, of splendid wealth.

BITTER GOURD

Food Supplement and Medicine

Telugu Original by : Dr. C. Madhusudana Sarma
English by : Smt. N. Kalpana



Shadrasyukta means to eat sweet, sour, salty, spicy, bitter and nutritious food in a scientific manner, according to our Vedic knowledge. That is why “Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshana” is the most ancient Ayurvedic medicine. The main purpose of this medical procedure is to maintain the health of the healthy. These Shadrasyas play a major role in maintaining health.

A bitter-tasting vegetable used in the preparation of our food is Bitter Gourd. Compared to the past, the consumption of these bitter-tasting vegetables is low in modern times. Obesity, diabetes, life style changes affect less consumption of such bitter-tasting substances in the regular diet of modern times which is the main reason to an increase in genetic diseases. Bitter Gourd comes in different shapes—long, short, green and green with white in color. Bitter Gourd, when ripped, the color changes to red and acorn-colored. Bitter Gourd in English is known as *Caravella* in Sanskrit, *Kakarkaya* in Telugu. Bitter Gourd, Bitter Melon in English belong to *Kukurbites* plant family having scientific name as *Momordica Charantia*. Bitter Gourd is used in the preparation of lentils, broth, fried curries, pickles and as fryums. Some people seep Bitter Gourd pieces in salted water for a while to reduce their bitter taste. Doing so will not only deplete the nutrients in Bitter Gourd but also reduce their benefit in health care. Bitter Gourd cut in round shape, dried and stored are occasionally fried in ghee and eaten with other curry to improve taste.

Let us learn how to use this Bitter Gourd rich in medicinal properties as a medicine for various common ailments that we face in our daily life.

Constipation: - Half a teaspoon to one teaspoon of Bitter Gourd paste with same amount of honey consumed at night before sleeping reduces the problem of constipation and de-worms the intestines.

Control of Diabetes : Mix 50 grams powder each of chopped, dried Bitter Gourd, Podapatri plant seeds and Jamun (Neradu) seeds, and consume 2-3 grams of this powder in 50ml of water in the morning and evening. It keeps diabetes under control.

Knee pain: - With little water, paste the Bitter Gourd pieces, add 1/8th part of turmeric powder, make it a smooth paste, apply on the knee as a thick layer, leave it to dry. It reduces pain in the knees, removes excess water and strengthens the knee muscles. The same paste applied on the surface will reduce cracks on the soles of the feet and palms.

Hemorrhoids: - Take 25 ml juice of Bitter Gourd, add 1/2 Teaspoon Haritaki powder with 2-3 pinches of salt and consume before sleep. It reduces the pain in the anus, inflammation, pain and swelling caused by haemorrhoids.

Hair Loss Problem: - In 50 ml juice of Bitter Gourd, dissolve half a teaspoon of sugar, leave it for ten minutes, and apply on the scalp twice a week, massage for some time and wash with lukewarm water. It helps in growing black, soft, glossy and aesthetically pleasing hair also reduces hair fall, dandruff and lice.

Skin diseases: - On empty stomach consume 20 ml juice of Bitter Gourd with 5 ml of lemon juice. It is a good remedy for various skin ailments like itching, fungal diseases, psoriasis, lichen planus, and eczema. This drug removes toxins from the blood and purifies it. This also helps to lose weight by dissolving excess accumulated fat in the body and increases immunity.

Sores between Fingers of hand and toes: - Once in a day apply paste of Bitter Gourd, turmeric and salt to soften the sores and itching between the fingers of hands and toes.



THIS LIFE IS PRECIOUS TO LIVE ON

- Prof. Padmanabha Rao



This is a Story from Mahabharata. There was a certain remote village, very much far away from cities, with dry land and very less opportunities for agriculture and cattle rearing. Naturally, people who lived there suffered from poverty. They were forced by circumstances to get out of their town for a living. In this village, there was a Brahmin by name Kashyapa. He went to a Gurukula, had formal Education, but he had no land to till, and no students to teach in that remote place. He was forced to live by begging alms as he had a large family to feed and support. Every day he set out early in the morning for begging and returned in the noon, with whatever he begged. One noon, while he was on his begging rounds, slowly walking on a road, a rich man's horse carriage was coming behind him at a great speed.

Due to some reason, the horse was distracted and unfortunately, the wheel of the chariot ran over the Brahmin's left leg. He fell unconscious. Bleeding profusely, with pain and with great difficulty, he somehow crossed the road and sat on a rock. He was brooding over his misfortune. He could no longer beg. His children were very young. Cursing himself, he decided to commit suicide, as he felt he was useless to his family and was a burden to them. Kashyapa crawled across and reached slowly to a lonely place to end his life. Gods wanted to teach him a lesson.

Suddenly a Jackal appeared before him from somewhere, and spoke to him like a human being! In great pain, he did not realize it must be an angel. He however, looked at the strange animal in surprise.

The Jackal said, "Oh the learned one, why are you into this heinous crime? You are learned, capable of advising other people, who behave foolishly, not to do such things. What are you achieving by ending your precious human form gifted by God? You will again be born as an animal like me or even worse. Instead, cure your pain by patience and resume your work and look after your family. So saying, the jackal gave him an option.

'If you are unable to bear this pain, you can enter into my form, and I shall take your painful form.'" Kashyapa readily agreed. 'Be it so', he said and with the help of the jackal, took over the animal form and the jackal took his painful, bleeding human form.

In fact, Lord Indra, wanted to test the Brahmin's love for life, and teach him a lesson. Soon after the exchange of bodies, the Brahmin had a moment's joy, free from pain and walked freely in the forest. His happiness did not last long. A herd of Jackals arrived to greet the newcomer. Some of them even licked his body with their foul-smelling tongue, some sniffed at him.

Kashyapa was unable to live among jackals. He felt the painful human form was much better than this foul smelling animal form. Now he realized Gods might have put him to this test. Kashyapa honestly prayed to God to return to his earlier form, though painful, and wanted to get rid of this jackal's body. The Gods were pleased and he was made to take over his wounded human form. In a few months, he was fit to work. He started a new life, worked hard, cleared all his debts, and soon became a respectable man of the town. He now realized how precious the human form is!

Moral : Don't expect happiness to come from somewhere. It lies within us. Explore it. You will surely be happy.





PICTURE STORY

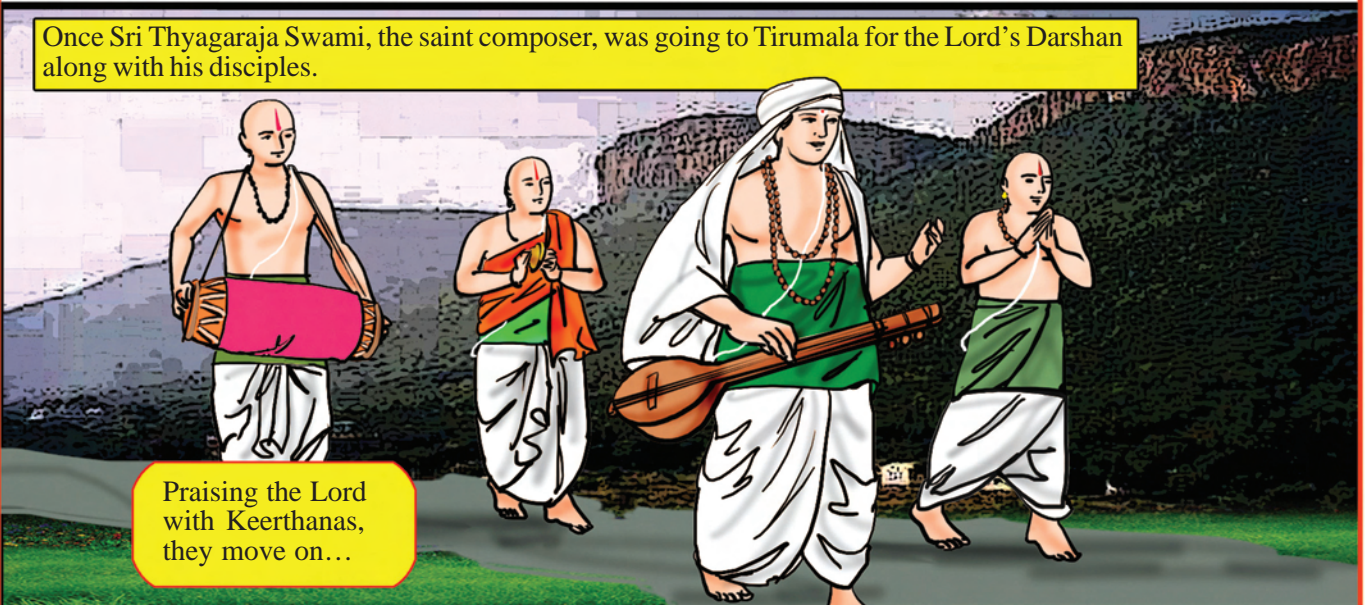
SAINT POET THYAGARAJA

Original Story in Telugu by : Dr. Kampalle Ravichandran

Pictures by : Sri Thumbali Shivaji

Translated by : Smt. J.C. Gnanaprasuna

Once Sri Thyagaraja Swami, the saint composer, was going to Tirumala for the Lord's Darshan along with his disciples.

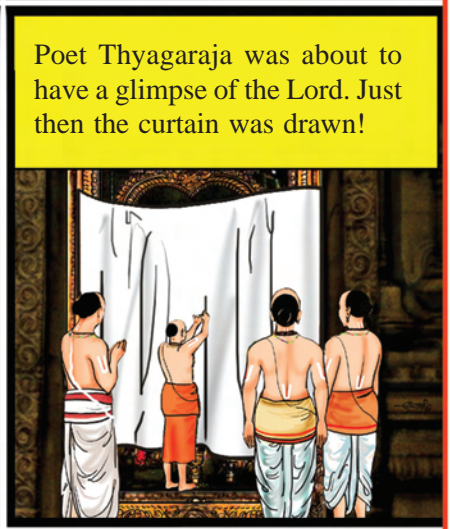


Praising the Lord
with Keerthanas,
they move on...

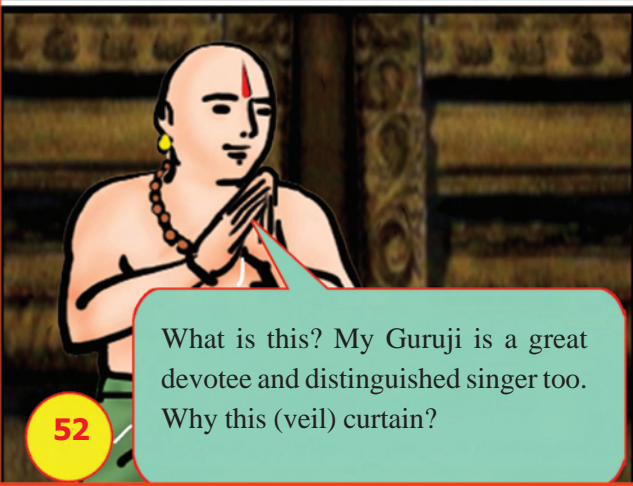


Guruji! The Darshan of the
Lord is meritorious and
divine.

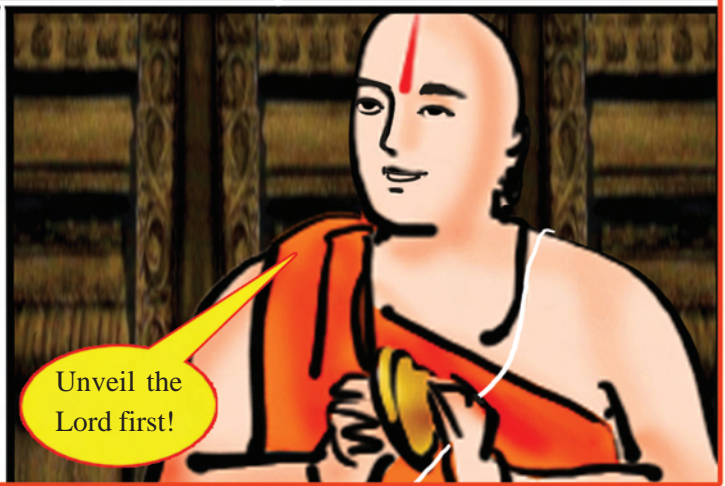
Yes, my dear
disciples.



Poet Thyagaraja was about to
have a glimpse of the Lord. Just
then the curtain was drawn!



What is this? My Guruji is a great
devotee and distinguished singer too.
Why this (veil) curtain?



Unveil the
Lord first!

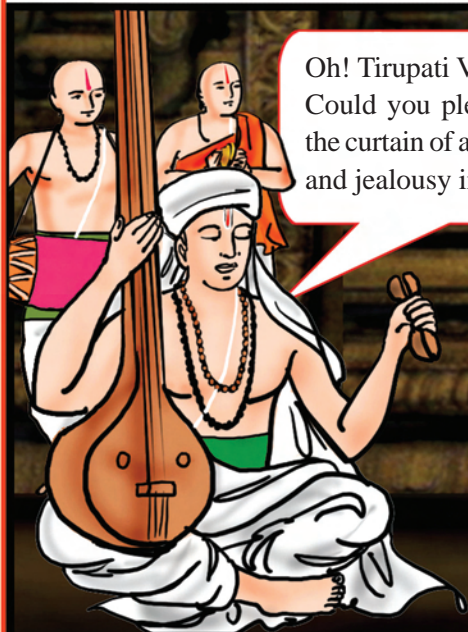
O! Ganapati! It is not right to criticise the traditions of the temple. There is no need to unveil the Lord and stop puja for us.



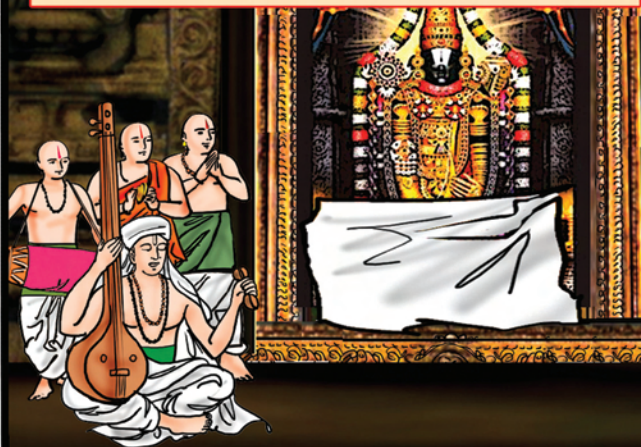
There is much ignorance in us. Let us pray to the Lord to dispel such ignorance.



Oh! Tirupati Venkataramana! Could you please pull down the curtain of anger, arrogance and jealousy in us?



With the ecstatic Thyagaraja keerthana "Tera teeyaga radaa..", the curtain got unveiled on its own to the dismay of the priests there.



Marvellous! With your unique singing the curtain was drawn open. Swami is impressed by your keerthana! Your life is blessed!!



Sarve Jana Sukino Bhavanthu

Quiz

1. Correct the proverb

A Day keeps the doctor away an apple

An apple a day keeps the doctor away
Answer :

2. Unjumble the Words in this

Universal Mantra:

Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre
Kim akurvata sanjaya
Mamakah pandavas cai va
Samaveta Yuvutsavah

Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre
Samaveta Yuvutsavah
Mamakah pandavas cai va
Kim akurvata sanjaya
Answer:

3. Match the words in Column A with the Column B:

A

B

SRI VILLIPUTTUR
ANDAL
TIRUPPAVAI
KATHYAYINI VRAT
TIRUPPAVAI

MELLIFLUOUS LYRIC
BIRTH PLACE OF ANDAL
PERIALWAR
PASURAMS
PERFORMED BY ANDAL

KATHYAYINI VRAT
TIRUPPAVAI
SRI VILLIPUTTUR
TIRUPPAVAI
ANDAL

PERFORMED BY ANDAL
PASURAMS
BIRTH PLACE OF ANDAL
MELLIFLUOUS LYRIC
PERIALWAR

Correct Series:

4. Riddle: Name the Woman Alwar using the clues given below.

1. Found in Tulasi garden

2. Performed Kaathyayini vrat / Sri vrat

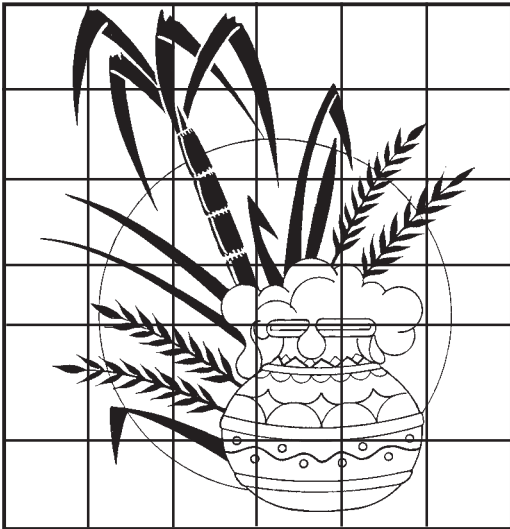
3. She has composed an unique poetical
pasurams called Tiruppavai.

4. She tranforms herself into a gopika

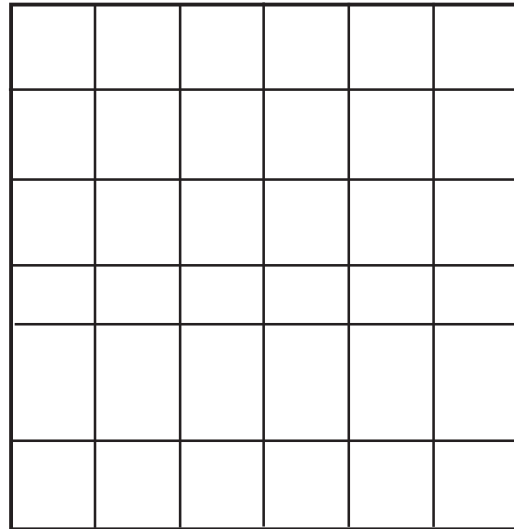
Answer : Sri Goda Devi

DRAWING

Colour the Picture



Draw the Picture as given



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TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

**A view of
Astabandhana Balalaya
Maha Samprokshanam
was performed along with
Jeernodharana rituals in
Sri Varaha Swamy temple
at Tirumala
from 25-11-2021
to 29-11-2021.**





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Jagadaananda Kaaraka

Jaya Jaanaki Praananaayaka

- Sri Thyagaraja