



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

SAPTHAGIRI

ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

MARCH 2021

Rs 5/-



Srinivasamangapuram

Sri Kalyana Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams

02-03-2021 to 10-03-2021

Sri Kalyana

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

Lord Malayappaswami
was taken out in a procession on
Seven Vahanams on the occasion of
Rathasapthami at Tirumala on 19-02-2021





BHAGAVADGITA

Atha vyavasthitān dr̥ṣṭvā
Dhārtarāṣṭrān kapidhvajāḥ
Pravṛtte śāstrasampāte
Dhanur udyamya paṇḍavaḥ

(B.G. Chapter- I, Sloka-20)

Arjuna, whose banner bore the crest of Hanuman, looked at the sons of Dhritarastra drawn up in battle order; and as the flight of missiles (almost) started, he took up his bow.

INVOCATION

Suteevra daridrya vidukha hantraiḥ
Namostute sarvabhayaḥ hantrye
Sri Vishnu Vakshasthala samsthitayai
Namo Namaha sarva vibhutidayai

- Sri Lakshmi Hridayam (Atharvana Vedam)

Oh! Goddess Lakshmi, You are the Destroyer of all our sorrows and fears! We salute to You! You are present on the Bosom of Swami to bless us with wealth and plenitude! We prostrate before You! Give us Your darshan to make our lives holy!



LET US LEARN SANSKRIT

LESSON - 5

Original Expression by : Mahamahopadyaya Kasi Krishnacharya

Modified Expression by : Mahamahopadyaya Samudrala Lakshmanaiah

English by : Dr. S. Vaishnavi

एकः = One (male)

प्रातः = Morning

आस्तु = Ok / let it be

अनेके = Many

सायम् = Evening

एधि = be there (you)

कति = How many

नक्तम् = Night

असानि = Were there (we all)

QUESTIONS

- a १. तत्र कति सन्ति? २. एकः अद्य प्रातः तत्रासीत्। ३. सः तत्रास्तु।
४. त्वम् अद्य सायम् अत्र एधि। ५. सायं तत्र अनेके आसन्। ६. अहं तत्र असानि।
७. ते सर्वे नक्तं तत्र न सन्ति। ८. यूयं अद्य नक्तं कुत्रास्तु? ९. वयं सर्वे अत्रास्म।
१०. कति अत्रासन्?

- b 1. You be there today in the night 2. How many were there today morning? 3. One person was there. 4. Are you there? 5. We were not here. 6. Many were there at that time. 7. Let me be here 8. Where is he now? 9. He is not here. 10. When were you there?

ANSWERS

१. त्वम् अद्य नक्तं तत्र एधि। २. अद्य प्रातः तत्र एकः आसीत्।
३. त्वम् अद्य सायम् अत्र एधि। ४. अद्य प्रातः तत्र एकः आसीत्।
५. सायं तत्र अनेके आसन्। ६. अहं तत्र असानि।
७. ते सर्वे नक्तं तत्र न सन्ति। ८. यूयं अद्य नक्तं कुत्रास्तु? ९. वयं सर्वे अत्रास्म।
१०. कति अत्रासन्?

1. How many are there? 2. This morning someone was there. 3. Let him be there. 4. This evening you be here. 5. Many were there in the evening. 6. Let me be there. 7. They all are not there in the night. 8. Where will you all be this night? 9. We all were here. 10. How many were there?

Venkatadri Samamsthanam
Brahmande nasti kinchana



Venkatesa Samo Devo
Na Bhuto na Bhavishyati



Honorary Editor
Dr. K.S. JAWAHAR REDDY, I.A.S.
Executive Officer,
TirumalaTirupati Devasthanams

Publisher & Chief Editor

Prof. K. Rajagopalan, Ph.D.,

Editor

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

Printer

Sri P. RAMARAJU, M.A.,
Special Officer (Press & Publications)
T.T.D.Press, TIRUPATI - 517 507.

Photos

Sri P.N.SEKHAR
Photographer, TTD
Sri B.VENKATARAMANA
Asst. Photographer, TTD

Annual Subscription : Rs. 60/-
Life Subscription : Rs. 500/-
Foreign Subscription : Rs. 850/-
(For Annual only)

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

THE OPINIONS REGARDING THE ARTICLES
PUBLISHED IN THIS MAGAZINE BELONG TO
AUTHOR ONLY. T.T.DEVASTHANAMS IS NOT
RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS.

Chief Editor

SAPTHAGIRI

Vol. 51

MARCH 2021

No. 10

CONTENTS

Vyuha Lakshmi - The Most Compassionate	
- Smt. Ambika Ananth	- 7
Nandi - Vahanam of Lord Siva	
- Prof. P. Raja	- 10
The Story of Yajnavalkya and Yoga	
- Dr. K.V. Raghupathi	- 13
Floral Offering to Goddess Lakshmi	
- Dr. Jyoti D. Vora	- 14
Ksheera Sagara Mathanam	
- Prof. Subbarao V. Jayanti	- 18
Upanishads - Scriptures for all times	
- Smt. T.S. Rajalakshmi	- 22
Panchabhoota Kshetras	
- Sri I.L.N. Chandrasekhara Rao	- 24
Sri Ramanuja's Visistadwaita	
- Prof. M. Rajagopalachary	- 31
Every Idol is an Amsa of the God	
- Kaaladevan	- 35
Satyameva Jayate	
- Smt. D.K. Ahana Lakshmi	- 37
The Guru - Disciple bonding in the Taittiriya Upanishad	
- Sri P.T.S. Murthy	- 39
Four Fold Devotions	
- Sri R. Kannan	- 43
The Significance of Dasa Bhakti	
- Dr. M. Krishna Kumar	- 45
Lord Surya - Provider of Good Health	
- Smt. P. Sujatha	- 49
The Story of Shravan Kumar	
- Smt. N. Kalpana	- 51
Kirathaarjuneeyam	
- Smt. J.C. Gnanaprasuna	- 52

Front Cover : Sri Kalyanavenkateswaraswami with His Consorts,
Srinivasamangapuram

Back Cover : Sri Kapileswaraswami with Goddess Parvathi, Tirupati

Toll Free No. 1800-425-4141

Website : www.tirumala.org, www.tirupati.org

For Suggestions, Complaints regarding Sapthagiri Magazine
sapthagiri_helpdesk@tirumala.org

MARCH - 2021 :: SAPTHAGIRI

5

SRI MAHALAKSHMI – AN IMMACULATE GODDESS

EDITORIAL

The great sage, Agastya praised Mother Lakshmi as the most beloved of Lord Vishnu and the ruler of the universe. She followed the Lord in all his incarnations as his consort. Be Lord Rama avatar time or Krishna avatar time, she had always been with Him withstanding all the ordeals equally along with the Lord had to. She could not bear the insult to the Lord when the Maharishi Bhrgu kicked him on the sacred bosom where she herself resides eternally. She had to spend a tenacious life in Kaliyuga by leaving her abode. Lord could not bear her separation and followed her to Bhoolok as Lord Venkateswara. This gives a message that divine couple are the inseparable two wheels of the universe for their smooth travel. One's torment is the others and *vice versa*. Separation of the couple is unimaginable pain. Lord himself said about the attributes of Sri MahaLakshmi. She is eternal and imperishable. She is the disposer and ruler of the entire universe.

She, as the mother of all mothers, takes care of the well-being of her devotees. She not only showers wealth in abundance but also progress, prosperity, name, and fame to her devotees. The talent of the learned does not shine or the qualities of the person do not get noticed unless the Mother blesses them. Sage Agastya further said that any person's charm, family, intellect, will shine with her benevolence. She is the protector of the universe — its sustenance and peaceful living.

She is worshipped in eight forms. She takes the form of Adi Lakshmi to provide salvation, as Dhanya Lakshmi to bless with food and prosperity, Dhairya Lakshmi to power with courage, Gaja Lakshmi to destroy the troubles, Santhana Lakshmi to bless with progeny, Vijaya Lakshmi to give success in all endeavours, Vidya Lakshmi as motivator of intellectual prowess, and as Dhana Lakshmi, multiplier of wealth.

As a bestower of sovereignty and wealth, she is always seen in a blessing posture, seated on a blossomed lotus, decorated with dazzling ornaments and flanked by white elephants. Such a form of Goddess Lakshmi is seen in each house and business places. By looking at her soothing and composed posture, the devotees get peace of mind and comfort.

Goddess Lakshmi resides in five sacred places, lotus flower, Bilva leaves, forehead of elephants, back of a cow, and the fingertips of humans. She lives in a place where people keep themselves clean and healthy. Wherever the people are happy, joyous and worship her with peaceful mind and devotion, she makes it as her permanent abode. She does not stay in a house which is untidy, dirty, and unclean.

Goddess Lakshmi who is the bestower of all physical comforts to humans is also a source of providing the abode of Lord Vishnu. We need to honour her in a neat and clean environment, where people around are healthy and joyful, where the surroundings are kept spic and span, where conch shells are blown to drive evil thoughts.

“Let us keep our surroundings neat, clean and disinfected. It will help us minimise infections (like corona virus etc.,) and also invoke the blessings of the Goddess”.

Sree Narayana maanasabja Nilayayai
Sree Vishnu vaksha sthitaayai
Srinivaasaanga madhyasthayai

There are many more such *naamaas* that eulogize Sri Mahalakshmi as the one residing on the bosom of Sri Maha Vishnu.

Why did Sri Mahalakshmi choose to reach the sacred bosom of Her consort Lord Sri Maha Vishnu - because she would be closest to His heart and from there, She can provide the worlds with Shriyam - 'auspiciousness' and bless with Her most compassionate 'audaaryam' - 'generosity' and also because Her eternal presence there gladdens Her Lord immensely.

When Lord Vishnu manifested as Lord Srinivasa, Lakshmi Devi started residing in his whole form, as she is 'Anapaayini' one who is inseparable from Her Lord and a beloved companion to her Lord. Here is the slokam which beautifully describes Her presence in the entire form of Lord Srinivasa.

*"Vaktraabje bhagyalakshmi hi,
karathala kamale sarvadaa Dana
lakshmi hi, Dordande
veeralakshmihi, hridaya sarasi
bhootakaarunya lakshmi hi,
khadgaagre sourya lakshmi hi,
nikhila gunaganaadamba e
keerthi lakshmi hi, sarvaange
sowmya lakshmi hi, mayatu
vijayataam sarva samrajya
lakshmi hi"*

VYUHA LAKSHMI THE MOST COMPASSIONATE

- Smt. Ambika Ananth

When freely translated the meaning of the sloka goes like this - "In the face of the Lord is Bhagya Lakshmi, (auspiciousness and infinite wealth) in his hands is Daana Lakshmi (generosity), in his powerful shoulders is Veera Lakshmi (valour) in his lotus- heart is Bhoota Kaarunya Lakshmi (compassion for all the living beings) at the tip of his sword is Sourya Lakshmi (bravery, prowess) in the whole cosmos is Keerthi Lakshmi (Lord's fame) in his full form is Sowmya Lakshmi (gentleness, kindness) in his victory is Samrajya Lakshmi (kingdom, realm). The above sloka offers a description of Lakshmi Devi's presence filling the whole form of Lord Srinivasa who is none other than Lord Vishnu.

"Para", "Vyuha", "Vibhava", "Antharyami", "Archa" are the five forms of the Lord as per agama shastra. Vyuha form exists in the Vedas and the Upanishads which contain the divine scheme, the plan of the whole creation, the relation between the creator and the creation, the relation between the creation and the beings that are created. The whole scheme of binding all this is called "Vyuha". The whole process of creation is a divine Vyuha (strategy).

Goddess Mahalakshmi is Vyuha Lakshmi and Yoga Lakshmi. Vyuha- means a secret strategy, a divine scheme, a plan or a strategy. Lakshmi Devi reaching the hridaya sthana of Lord Vishnu happened secretly, very naturally. Their divine scheme is to protect the world just as parents take care of their children. And as a typical mother Vyuha Lakshmi protects us, her children in a very caring manner, taking our side and convincing Her consort not to punish harshly for the wrongs done by us - because She is compassion personified - 'Kaarunya Vighraha'.

The primordial couple Sri Maha Vishnu and Sri Mahalakshmi have a strong 'Sankalpa' to rescue the 'Samsara' from sins and concomitant sufferings. Their hearts respond with 'anukampa' - compassion arising out of empathy towards their children, their own creation.

When Goddess Mahalakshmi left the seven hills of Tirumala and established herself at Tiruchanur as Sri Padmavathi Devi, she- comes to known as Swatantra Veera Lakshmi as per Vaishnava tradition. It is said that, She is actually “Viraha Lakshmi” (viraha meaning ‘the state of feeling the pangs of separation’) as She was away from Her Lord - but in usage seemed to have become Veera Lakshmi. Then She became “Vyuha Lakshmi” as She was lovingly placed on the bosom of Her Lord. This is done as a divine scheme, a plan by the Lord to have his consort forever



on his bosom - and it was done secretly, very naturally, but not openly - only the two of them knew about it - the Lord who invited Her onto His bosom and Lakshmi Devi who was eager to reside there - that is why She is called ‘Vyuha Lakshmi’. Since She is ‘Sri’ and is residing on His bosom, He became “Srinivasa”.

Vyuha Lakshmi in Tirumala

In the temple of Tirumala, Vyuha Lakshmi is found on the right side of the bosom of the self-manifested vigraha (icon) of Lord Sri Venkateswara and She is also seen consecrated in the form of a gold image which is hung to a gold chain that adorns the Dhruva Bera of Srivaru to the right side of the chest. She will be seated in Padmasana posture with lower right and left hands in Abhaya and Varada pose, and the upper right and left hands holding her favourite lotuses, with a compassionate smiling face or with only two hands (dvibhuja) holding lotuses in both the hands.

Every morning as the part of nitya aradhana, after the usual Thomala Seva and Koluvu, the deity of the Lord is worshipped with 'Kesavadi Chaturvimshati Namavali' (24 names of the Lord) and 'Sri Venkateswara Sahasranamavali', offering tulasi leaves at the lotus feet of the Lord. Then the worship of Vyuhalakshmi follows with the chaturvimshati namavali, the 24 names of Vyuhalakshmi from Varaha Puranam - and the beauty of that worship is that the Tulasi (basil) leaves offered to the lotus-feet of the Lord are again offered to both the consorts of the Lord, goddess Vyuhalakshmi and goddess Padmavathi devi present auspiciously on the Lord's bosom. The 24 powerful sacred names of Devi VyuhaLakshmi are -

“Sriyai namah, lokadhaatre namah, Brahmatre namah, padmanetrayai namah, Padmamukhyai namah, Prasannamukha padmayai namah, padmakantanyai namah, bilva vansthaayai namah, Vishnu patnyai namah, vichitra kshomadhaarinyai namah, Ritushronyai namah, pakvabilva phalaapeena tungasthanayai namah, suraktapadma karapaada talayai namah, Shubhayai

namah, Suratnaagada
keyura kaancheenooopura
shobhitaayai namah,
Yaksha kardama samlipta
sarvaangaayai namah,
Katakojwalayai namah,
Mangalyaabharana
Chitramuktaaahaaryai
vibhushitayai namah,
Taatankairava tantaishya
shobhamana
mukhaambujaayai namah,
Padmahastayai namah,
Harivallabhayai namah,
Rugyajussaamaroopaayai
namah, Vidyayai namah,
Abdhidaayai namah, Sri
Mahalakshmyai namah, Sri
Padmavatyai namah, Sreem
Shriyai namah".

Sri Varaha Puranam
has a beautiful Stabakam
(hymn) called "Vakshasthala
avasthana Stabakam". The
entire Stabakam pays
glorious honour to
Vakshasthala Lakshmi in 26
slokams. It explains about
the story of how
Mahalakshmi reached the
bosom region of the Lord,
and about all her
compassionate attributes.
Devotees who chant Sri
Lakshmi Sahasranama
follows it with this beautiful
sacred Stabakam or
Sthavam.

"Aum sreem aum namah, paramalakshmyai Vishnu vaksha
sthitaayai, Ramaayai, aasritha taarakaayai, namo vahnijaayai Sree
Vyuhalakshmyai namo namah" is one of the slokas to be chanted to be
graced by Sri Vyuha Lakshmi.

As Sri Annamacharya offered his praises to Lord Venkateswara and
his consort by singing - "Siri uramuna mrochi, Sree Venkatadri meeda
garima varaalichhe Kalpataruvaa..." May Lord Venkateswara, the"
Kalpataruvu", the celestial wish fulfilling tree who has 'Siri' (Mahalakshmi)
on His bosom readily grant boons to the devotees and bless the worlds
eternally.

(I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Acharya Sri Mallapragada
Srimannarayana Murthy garu, a highly erudite scholar and
pravachanakarta (one who speaks a discourse) for his valuable guidance
and inputs about the glories of Sri Vyuhalakshmi, which helped
me write this article with authentic information).



SRI VYUHALAKSHMI MANTRAM

(Srivarahapurane Venkatachala Mahatmye Srivyuhalakshmi
Mantra Stotranama Ekonatrinshat Adhyayah)

Dayaalola Taragjaakshee Poornachandra Nibhanana |
Jananee Sarvalokanam Mahalakshmihi Haripriyaa ||

Sarwapaapa haraasyaiva praarabdaswapi karmanah |
Samhrutautu kshamaasyaiva sarva sampat pradaayini ||

Tasyaah Vyuha Prabhedastu Lakshmihi Kirtirjayeti Cha |
Tatra yaa vyuhalakshmihi saa mugdha karunya vighraha ||

Anaayaasena Saa Lakshmihi Sarvapaapa Pranasini |
Sarvaishwarya Prada Nityam Tasyah Mantra Midam Sruta ||

Vedadimaayai Matrecha Lakshmihi Nathipadam Vadeth |
Parameti padham Choktwaa Lakshmaah Iti padam Tatah ||

Vishnu vaksha sthitaayai syaatmaya sri tarikaa tatah |
Vahnijayaantha mantroya mabheeshtardha suradrumah ||

Dvibhujaa Vyuhalakshmeehi Syaat Baddhapadmasana Priyaa
Srinivasaagja Madhyasthaa Sutaraam Keshavapriyaa ||

Tameva sharanam gachha sarvabhaavena satvaram |
Sarvasampatkarim devam sarva saubhagya daayineem ||

(Iti Srivarahapurane Venkatachala Mahatmye Srivyuhalakshmi Mantra
Stotranama Ekonatrinshant adhyayah Sampurnam)



NANDI

VAHANAM OF LORD SIVA

- Prof. P. Raja

names by which he is called during worship. It is mandatory to say that these much honoured and more revered vehicles of the deities are also worshipped by the devotees as they are specially dear to their lords.

As Nandi is the gate-guardian deity of Mt. Kailasa, the abode of Lord Siva, almost all Siva temples flaunt the stone images of a seated Nandi, generally facing the sanctum sanctorum, so that Nandi may perpetually gaze on the Lord. Since waiting is considered the greatest virtue in our culture, Nandi facing the Lord symbolizes eternal waiting. This is not so say that he is waiting to take commands from the Lord. But he is only waiting...waiting forever, that forms the very essence of receptivity. And it is this receptivity that made Nandi, Lord Siva's closest accomplice.

Speaking etymologically, the word 'Nandi' comes from the Tamil root word, 'Nandi' meaning "to grow, to flourish, or to appear". The Sanskrit root word 'Nandi' means "happiness, joy and satisfaction". Either way the character of Nandi fulfills these root meanings.

Some interesting stories from Siva Purana

Vayu Purana describe Nandi as the son of Kasyapa and Surabhi. *Siva Purana* tells the interesting story of how Nandi became Lord Siva's closest accomplice.

Shilada, a sage, loved children but did not have any to call his own. He decided to adopt one and so meditated upon Lord Siva for many years. At last, Lord Siva listened to the sage's prayer.

One fine morning the sage went to his field to plough and to his great surprise, he found a charming baby behind the plough. Shilada was in a fix. He then heard a voice from the sky, "He is a special child. Care for him. Bring him up to your satisfaction". Happy at heart, the sage took the baby home and named him Nandi. As he grew up, he proved to be a very precocious child learning everything fast. The sage was very proud of the boy.

As we have vehicles to call our own, the gods and goddesses of the Hindu Pantheon too have some such thing to call their own. Like ours, theirs too differ in shapes and sizes, and they take pride in riding upon them. While the pot-bellied and elephant faced Lord Ganesa chose a mouse for a vehicle (vahanam), Lord Indra chose an elephant. While goddess Durga prided herself on riding a lion, Goddess Lakshmi preferred a floating lotus and an owl. And Lord Siva, the chief of the Trinity had a bull for his vehicle. And this bull of Lord Siva is known as 'NANDI'.

Nandi is of a milky white colour though in several temples he is dark as the rock he is made of. As we park our costly vehicles outside our dwelling places, Nandi too becomes conspicuous by his position before the temples of Lord Siva.

The Chamberlain of Lord Siva, Nandi is also the chief of the Lord's personal attendants, known as 'Ganapatis'. And like the several names of Lord Siva, he too has a plethora of

A few years rolled by. One day two rishis Mitra and Varuna visited Shilada. Shilada made their stay comfortable by entrusting the work to Nandi. Nandi too played his part well.

When it was time for the Rishis to continue with their pilgrimage, Shilada and Nandi prostrated before them to receive their blessings. "Have a long and happy life, Shilada. We enjoyed your stay". But to Nandi, they said, "Be well...be learned."

Shilada was taken aback. "Oh, beloved Rishis! Why didn't you bless my son with long life?"

The Rishis replied : "How can we? Nandi is destined to die when he is eight years old. It is fated thus". They left with sorrow-laden faces.

Shilada felt his heart crumble at the words of the Rishis. But Nandi began to console his father. He told him that as an ardent admirer and devotee he would pray to Lord Siva and beg Him to rewrite his fate.

"To meet Lord Siva is not as easy as you think. I meditated for a thousand years before I could get a darshan of him. You are already seven and how do you expect to meet Siva in the one year that is left to you?" asked the depressed father.

"I will manage. I will wait with devotion and faith", so saying Nandi jumped into River Bhuvana and began his underwater prayers. His prayers were quickly answered. Pleased with the boy's efforts to meet Him, Lord Siva appeared before him, and asked what he wanted.

"I love you so much Lord that I want to remain devoted to you forever. Do not let me be born again, and die of old age."

Pleased with the words of Nandi, Lord Siva granted his request by allowing him and his father to become residents of His Sivaloka. He transformed Nandi into half man and half bull and granted him immortality. Apart from retaining Nandi as his perpetual companion, he made him 'Ganapati', the chief of His companions, known by the name 'ganas'. And as a welcome gift, the Lord gave Nandi a wonderful garland to wear. Once it adorned his neck, Nandi became resplendent with three eyes and four hands.

Since then Nandi became Lord Siva's companion, door-man and a vehicle. It was by sheer devotion and waiting with faith, Nandi was able to overcome his fate. In fact, he rewrote it.

Nandi - the greatest devotee

Once it so happened that when the Devas

and the Asuras churned the milky ocean for nectar with Mt. Mandara for the churning staff and serpent Vasuki for the rope, the first thing that emerged was the deadly poison called halahala. It could have easily destroyed the world, had not Lord Siva jumped into the fray. He collected the poison in his hand and swallowed it.



Panic-stricken Goddess Parvathi, Lord Siva's consort, grasped her husband by his throat and thereby stored the halahala there, so that the poison would not affect him. Lord Siva's throat turned blue. However a small quantity of poison slipped out of Lord Siva's hands and fell to the ground. Following his master, Nandi licked and swallowed it up.

Shocked stood the Devas for they were witnesses to Nandi's action. Nothing happened to Nandi. Lord Siva smiled and said to the Devas thus: "Nandi is my greatest devotee. All my powers are his too and my wife's protection will go to him too."

Such was the affection Nandi commanded from his master Siva. This story also proves that Nandi had immense strength and immunity, the gift of the Lord. No wonder that the gifted bull is worshipped too. It is said that the pooja of Lord Siva would be incomplete without Nandi's worship.

Conveyed the message

Once Parvathi lost her memory that very much disturbed her husband. Lord Siva started meditating with the noble intention of probing into the causes of her illness. Nandi too joined the meditation to ensure that he is connected with the Lord. This is why he sits in front of the Lord even today.

Jalandhar, an enemy of Lord Siva, stole this opportunity to abduct Goddess Parvathi. Neither was Lord Siva aware of this nor his companion Nandi. But the other deities who stood witness to the incident, were unable to convey this news to Lord Siva. Hence they searched for Ganesa, and hurried him up. But Ganesa failed to pull his father out of His meditation. An idea struck him. He went near Nandi and whispered all that he wanted to in his ears. Nandi conveyed to his Lord all that he had heard from Ganesa. And Lord Siva came out of his deep meditation. Perhaps the custom of whispering into the ears of Nandi came into force from that day on.

Turned the curse into a blessing

Nandi played many roles in the lives of the divine couple, to whom he was attached. Here is another interesting story.

The divine couple were playing a game of dice and the faithful Nandi played umpire (act as a judge). The game was over. Though Goddess Parvathi was a clear winner, the umpire declared that Lord Siva had won. Surely, he was partial to his Master.

Enraged, Parvathi cursed him. Grieved Nandi apologized and said, "My actions arose from devotion to my Master. Please be kind enough to release me from the curse".

Goddess Parvathi finding a method in his madness sympathized with Nandi. She finally said: "Want a release from the curse. Then go and offer my son Ganesa all his favourite items and revere him on his birthday."

Nandi faithfully followed the advice of Goddess Parvathi and turned the curse into a blessing. He pleased the elephant headed Lord by offering him green grass (Darbha) on Ganesa Chaturthi day.

Since Nandi's strength of mind and body was beyond question, he fought battles to help Lord Siva to be the victor. The Lord's youngest son, Karthikeya who himself was a great warrior took Nandi's advice before he entered any battle.

Thus Nandi became the favourite of Lord Siva's entire family. It is in fitness of things that Nandi is given a place of great importance in all Lord Siva's temples, especially in the South. He is seen as a humped white bull sitting on a raised platform and facing the entrance door of the shrine. The message is that the soul (Nandi) should always be focussed on the supreme power (Siva).

The people have such a strong faith in Nandi that they believe he would come when they die and guide their soul to the holy land of Mt. Kailasa. Therefore, next time you come across a bull do not forget to feed him with green grass. Is not the purpose of this birth to achieve divine consciousness?



THE STORY OF YAJNAVALKYA AND YOGA

- Dr.K.V.Raghupathi

The story of Yajnavalkya and his two wives taken from the Brihadaryanaka Upanishad has great relevance here. Yajnavalkya was a famous sage of ancient India and one of the great scholars of his time. He had two wives, namely, Katyayani and Maitreyi. Katyayani was an average housewife and a materialist. She was not interested in esoteric subjects and knowledge. She rarely participated in her husband's philosophical inquiries, pursuits and discussions. Opposed to her was Maitreyi who was a spiritualist, interested in learning pure knowledge and wisdom.

One day Yajnavalkya called his two wives and told them that he wanted to retire in the forests and spend the rest of his life for contemplation and meditation. So he wanted to distribute his wealth to his wives. Katyayani was excited at this and readily agreed to take her portion of wealth. While Maitreyi was not happy at this and confronted her husband with a question, "Can wealth help me attain immortality?" on receiving the negative

reply from her husband, she said if the wealth could not help her attain immortality then she was not interested in such wealth and requested him to take her along with him to the forest to lead a life of contemplation and meditation. On hearing this, Yajnavalkya was overwhelmed with joy and began to teach her the supreme truth and said that Brahman is Pure Intelligence, and through ignorance, we identify ourselves with the body, mind, knowledge, and images. When that identification disappears, individual identity also vanishes. Then one experiences the ever-shining Brahman, the Pure Intelligence.

The two ways of life are important

The story has three personae, Yajnavalkya, the enlightened soul, Katyayani, the materialist, and Maitreyi, the one who was interested in learning and pursuing the Truth. Yajnavalkya though enlightened lived with his two wives representing two spheres of life. He had never discarded his first wife, Katyayani, just because she was interested in mundane things and life. The two spheres of life are important for us to lead a normal life. We can be materialists, partake in the world, and at the same time, we can pursue a greater life of truth. There is no discordance.

Striking harmony between these two ways of life is what is known as Yoga.



FLORAL OFFERING TO GODDESS LAKSHMI

- Dr. Jyoti D. Vora

The humble offerings by the devotees to the God / Goddess are all based on an unshakable faith in the benevolence of the divine. Almost all the festivals are a visual feast because of the stunning rituals involved in them.

Goddess Lakshmi immediately brings to the forefront a blazing radiance, exquisite beauty and She personifies and epitomises wealth, achievement, accomplishment and naturally success. She is revered for Her bound of less grace and also as an inspiration for anyone who submits to her unconditionally. She motivates one to achieve one's goal and obtain the due rewards of diligence and a favourable destiny.

Goddess Lakshmi is known for abundance prosperity and good fortune. She is typically depicted in an awe inspiring manner where She sits in the midst of an open lotus flower, and hence, it is considered as Her favourite flower. Goddess Lakshmi is associated with the lotus and is sometimes referred to simply as the Lotus Goddess (Kamaladevi). The choice of Lotus is definitely with a philosophical and thought provoking reason. Lotus is a flower



of unparalleled beauty and purity. It is noteworthy that the lotus originates on this earth in muddy soil. Hence, the representative lesson to the devotee is that however challenging and negative the environment it is, one need not worry about getting contaminated if the intent is pure, ethical and for the general good of humanity. The consequence of this purity of intent is tangible material and worldly gains along with the undiluted grace of Goddess Lakshmi. Goddess Lakshmi is associated with colours like red, gold and yellow as these are rich in texture and symbolize wealth and prosperity.

There is a lot of mythological significance and analogies to flowers and their figurative and literal synergy to our Gods and Goddesses, more than in any other culture of the world. In our holy scriptures, Goddess Lakshmi is depicted as seated on a pink / red lotus. She is resplendent in red apparel (garments) and shower grace and beauty which automatically encourages us to offer her our reverence and bow down before her with devotion. Incidentally, the lotus is associated with Lord Brahma, the creator too, who is depicted as seated on a lotus arising from the navel of Lord Vishnu. Lotus symbols are central in Yantra patterns and form part of many designs and other spiritual contexts.

Coloured flowers

In fact, aside from lotus, Goddess Lakshmi is pleased with vibrantly coloured yellow marigolds also. On every wednesday, white fragrant flowers like Tuberose, Mogra and non-fragrant ones like white chrysanthemum should be offered to Lakshmi Devi.

Goddess Lakshmi has several divine facets which serve to fascinate and create a sense of wonder in the devotees. Ashtalakshmis are the eight manifestations of Devi Lakshmi. She manifests in eight forms. They are - Aadi-Lakshmi (of eternal grace), Dhana-Lakshmi (of wealth), Dhanya-Lakshmi (of Grain and food), Gaja-Lakshmi (of livestock, with the elephant, who is Her Vahana as a representative), Santana-Lakshmi (of progeny), Veera-Lakshmi (of valour or bravery), Vidya-Lakshmi (of knowledge and wisdom), Vijaya-Lakshmi (of Victory and accomplishment). All these Goddesses are worshipped with floral adoration to get bring inner peace and soulful harmony.

Devotees decorates their houses and temples with rangolis and red flowers also become a prelude to worship, religious rituals and adoration of Devi. One thing is common in all festivals that is the use of flowers. Importantly, Lord Vishnu needs to be mentioned here because He is known as "Kamalakantha", (beloved husband of Goddess Lakshmi).

Now, let us have a look with most popular types of flowers that one can offer to Goddess Lakshmi.

Lotus: This is one of the most important among the types of flowers for Goddess Lakshmi. During the Varamahalakshmi Puja, lotus is offered to the goddess.

Red Roses: Goddess Lakshmi is the symbol of married women. Red roses are one of the favourite flowers of Goddess Lakshmi. Hence, one can decorate the puja space with this flower and generate an environment of beauty and aesthetics to the Goddess.

Red Jasmine: While talking of different types of flowers to offer the Goddess, this flower cannot be ignored. This little, lightly aromatic flower looks so good while one can offer it to the Goddess in a magnificent Bouquet.

Fragrant Screw Pine (Mogali in Telugu): Though this flower is not commonly used in other pujas, this is regarded as one of the favourite flowers of Goddess Lakshmi.

Marigold: What are the other different types of flowers to offer Goddess Lakshmi? Yes, marigold is an easy answer. One can decorate one's room and puja space with some marigold garlands. This flower is available in three colours, yellow, orange and red. You can offer every flower to Maha Lakshmi.

Hibiscus: You know Goddess Lakshmi is the symbol of married women. How can you forget red hibiscus to add to the list? this bright red flower can also be offered to the goddess.

Jungle Geranium (Nuruvarahalu in Telugu):

May be this name is uncommon, yet these miniature bunches of red flowers may be offered to the Goddess Lakshmi. These little red flowers are also known as the flame of jungle and very sacred to the Goddess.

Durbha Grass: Apart from flowers, this grass is also offered to the goddess. It is used to spread on the place where the kalasam is kept during the puja. Durbha grass is inseparable from any puja/ritual that takes place in the religious occasions.

These are some of the sacred flowers to be used for the worship of Goddess Lakshmi.

The bright red colour is symbolic of the fierceness of the divine. It is seen as a flower that brings wealth and destroys enemies from one's life. Lotus – A symbol of beauty, in Hindu scripture, Goddess Lakshmi is shown sitting on red Lotus, red indicates both sensuality and purity. Red is of utmost significance and the colour most frequently used for auspicious occasions like weddings, birth of a child and in other festivities.

Flowers remain an integral part of spirituality with the main worship rites called puja, which literally means “the flower act”. Flowers are used as an offering to the God / Goddess as people believe that by

offering flowers, the deity grants good health, wealth and prosperity.

Significance of lotus flower

In general, lotus flowers represent spiritual enlightenment, growth, purity, and birth, among many others. The flower symbolizes one's ability to perform their duty without being influenced by any desire, pleasure, or gain.

The spiritual representation of red is power, energy, vitality, dominance, action, assertion, creation, survival and passion. When a spiritual sign appears in your life that is red, it usually represents that you are ready to take action on a new goal or project that you have been putting off.

The lotus flower is regarded in many different cultures as a symbol of purity, enlightenment, self-regeneration and rebirth. Its characteristics are a



perfect analogy for the human condition: even when its roots are in the muddy waters, the lotus produces the most beautiful flower.

Colours play a very important role in the culture and have a very deep significance, transcending purely decorative values. Proper use of colours creates an environment, which should keep a person cheerful.

"Flowers please the mind and grant prosperity. Hence, people with righteous deeds bestowed the name Sumana on them".

According to this verse from the epic Mahabharata, when a pious man with a pure heart

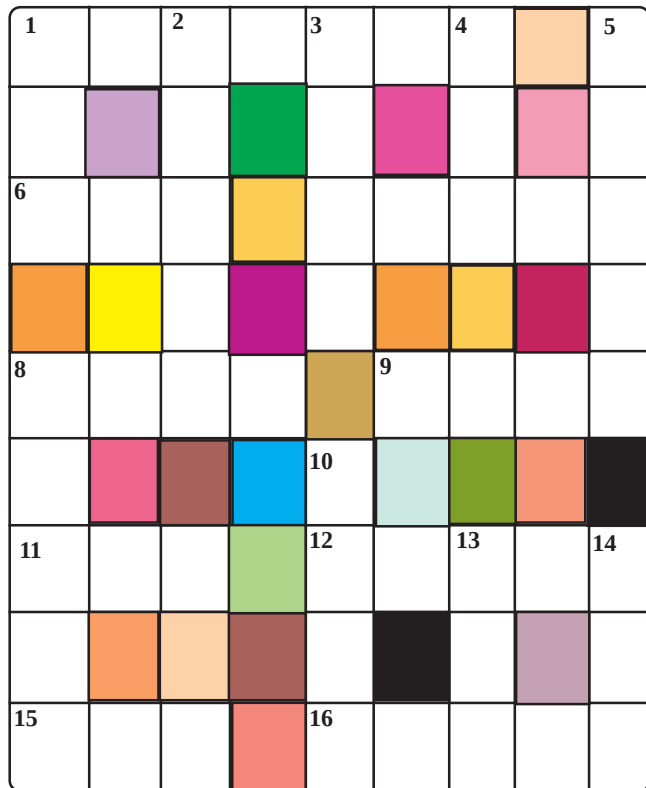
offers flowers to the deities, they are gratified and as a result bestow prosperity upon him.

Yes, flowers play a significant role in almost every religious ritual. Any puja, be it offering prayers or performing Haarati, is incomplete without flowers. Worshipping Gods and Goddesses with flower offerings is not only considered auspicious but has its own importance too. Any type of flower can be offered to any God. There are certain favourite flowers to Gods that can bring us good fortune.

Let us offer different types of flowers to Goddess Lakshmi and be blessed with abundant riches.



PUZZLE



Presented by
Sri T.S. Jagan Mohan

CLUES FOR PUZZLE

01. Child (3)
02. Concise (5)
03. Goddess Lakshmi - Jumbled (4)
04. Not daughter (3)
05. Balarama (5)
08. Wife of king Paandu (5)
10. Goddess Saraswathi (4)
13. Lord Siva (3)
14. Old coin (16th part of 1 rupee) (3)

DOWN

01. Sanskrit Poet who wrote Meghasandesam (7)
06. Not bright (3)
07. At present (3)
08. Companion (4)
09. Lord Vishnu (4)
11. Father (3)
12. Wife of Bali (5)
15. Bad Health (3)
16. Sriman Narayana (5)

ACROSS

KSHEERA SAGARA MATHANAM

- Prof. Subbarao V. Jayanti

Ksheera Sagara Mathanam is a fascinating story in *Srimad Bhagavata* by Vyasa Maharshi (Ashtama Skanda). The story has many implications from different angles (spiritual, philosophical, management etc.).

Once Indra and other Devas lost their charm, lustre, strength and freshness due to Maharshi Durvasa's curse. In contrast, the power of the Asuras increased. They attacked the Devas and killed them in large numbers. A spell of gloom loomed over the world. Then, the Devas, along with Brahma went to the abode of Lord Vishnu and extolled Him with Vedic hymns. The Lord said, "The present time is favourable to the Asuras. You have to wait until time turns in your favour. Hence, now you make peace with them. Even mutual enemies have to come together for achieving important objectives. Henceforth, both you and Asuras work to get Amrit (elixir), the immortal drink, by churning the Ksheera Sagar (Milky Ocean). You agree to whatever terms the Asuras propose".

The Devas then approached Bali, the king of the Asuras, and conveyed Lord Vishnu's instructions. Both the groups had agreed to put in together all their energies to obtain Amrit (elixir). They lifted the Mandara mountain from its base and started taking it to the sea to use it as churning

rod. Because of its heavy weight they dropped it on the way and became helpless. Then Sri Hari appeared there, lifted the mountain, and put it on Garuda, who unloaded it on the seashore.

Lord Vishnu in Kurma Avatar

They wound Vasuki, the lord of the serpents, round the Mandara mountain as churning rope and began churning with all their might. Then the mountain began to sink in the water because of its sheer weight, as it was not supported by anything under. The omnipotent Lord Vishnu assumed the form of divine tortoise (Kurma Avatara) of huge proportions, entered into the water and jacked up the mountain. The churning resumed. The Lord strengthened the resolve of all in many ways by this manifestation of Kurma – above the mountain by pressing it down, underneath, supporting it as tortoise, in the hearts of Devas and Asuras as strength, and in Vasuki as anaesthesia (to make it insensitive to pain).

After fierce churning, emerged the virulent poison Halahala (also called Kalakuta garala). When it started spreading everywhere with its fatal fumes, all of them ran to Kailasa to seek protection of Lord Siva. The Lord was extremely pained to see their miserable plight. He told His consort Sati, "O Bhavani! I have to give shelter to these harassed

by garala. Affording protection for the weak and the suffering is the only object and justification of lordship. So, I am going to drink the poison to save all the beings". Goddess agreed to his drinking. (In the Telugu translation of Bhagavatam Potana mahakavi gives a beautiful explanation of why She gave permission to drink the poison: She knows that it is poison, and it is Her husband who is going to drink it. Yet, she gave permission because it will benefit the people. She must have so much confidence in Her 'Maangalyam'. She is 'Sarva Mangala' and the presiding goddess of 'Maangalyam' worn by all married women. In Hindu marriage tradition, the bride first does puja to Gauri Devi for long-lasting marriage). Then, Mahadev collected the

spreading poison in his palms and drank it with a heart full of love and compassion for all the beings. Because of the destructive power of the poison, His throat became blue. Lord Siva got another name 'Nilakantha', indicating His zeal for the welfare of the worlds. A small portion of the poison which happened to fall from Siva's hand while drinking, was appropriated by serpents, scorpions, poisonous plants, and other poisonous creatures.

Devas and Asuras continued churning and various objects emerged from the ocean. First came the 'Kamadhenu', the heavenly cow that bestows all wishes. The Rishis appropriated that cow would be useful for Agnihotra and other Vedic Yajnas. Then came the horse known as 'Ucchaisravas' and it was



taken by the Asura king Bali. Next came 'Airavata', the white four-tusked elephant and it was taken by Indra. Kaustubha, a gem of Padmaraga, became an ornament of Sri Hari's neck. Next came the celestial tree Parijata, which can fulfil the wishes of those who approach it. Then came the beautiful Apsaras.

Emergence of Goddess Lakshmi

Next happened an important event – the emergence of Rama (Lakshmi Devi) with the brilliance of lightning. She then put round the neck of Sri Hari the most attractive garland made of choice fresh lotuses. Mahavishnu, the father of the worlds, assigned His bosom, the most sublime of regions, as the residence of Sri Devi, the Mother of the universe and the source of all power, glory, and prosperity (Aiswaryam). Casting Her benign glance from Her residence there on all Her children in the three worlds, She brought about their progress and prosperity.

Next came Varuni, in the form of a beautiful girl. The Asuras took possession of her. After further churning, there emerged Dhanvantari, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, who is noted for initiating Ayurveda, and who is entitled to a share in the sacrificial offerings. A man with a unique and astounding form, he carried the pot of Amrit. Seeing him, the Asuras, who entertained desire for all things, suddenly snatched the pot from him. The Devas, in great distress took refuge in Sri Hari.

Meanwhile, a quarrel started among the Asuras. Each one of them wanted to have the Amrit first and not share it with others. Forgetting mutual friendship, they behaved like enemies. Then,

appeared Mahavishnu in the form a wonderful woman 'Mohini'. Her extraordinary beauty mesmerised the asuras. They requested Mohini to divide the Amrit among them in a just way and avoid subsequent disputes. Mohini told them that she would distribute the Amrit if they abided by her actions, irrespective of whether they consider them right or wrong. The Asuras agreed to the condition and handed over the Amrit bhanda (pot) to her.

The Lord thought that it is unwise to confer immortality on the naturally depraved Asuras. Hence, Mohini made different seating arrangements for the Devas and Asuras and assigned seats to them. Then she distributed Amrit among the Devas. The Asuras' lustful attachment to her prevented them from making any adverse remarks. After the Devas had finished drinking the Amrit, the Lord assumed His real form and appeared before them. Thus, ended the wonderful story of Ksheera Sagara Mathanam.

This story has many implications and interpretations. We will examine some of them here.

As Lord Vishnu advised the Devas, when the time is not favourable, we have to wait until the time turns in our favour. For achieving important objectives, even enemies have to join hands. The Lord also suggested that Devas agree to whatever terms the Asuras propose since conciliatory methods are more successful than those of confrontation. These are great lessons in 'strategic management'.

When we undertake any major project, we will undergo many obstacles. First, the Mandara

mountain sank. Then the ferocious Kalakuta poison emerged. Those obstacles should not deter us from our effort to achieve the ultimate goal. Like Lord Vishnu and Lord Siva, great people help us overcome those problems without expecting anything in return.

In any major project, we may get small benefits on the way, but they should not deter us from achieving the final objective. While advising Devas to start Ksheera Sagara Mathanam, Sri Hari told them, “Many objects will come out of the ocean when churned. You should not have any attraction for, or desire to possess them. Nor should you feel angry if you are prevented from possessing them”. This is another lesson.

Service becomes fruitful

Devas and Asuras joined hands on a common point and worked very hard with the same motive, plan, and objective. When they achieved the goal, the evil Asuras wanted to have the Amrit for themselves only and snatched the pot from Dhanvantari. Because of their greed and adharma, the Asuras were deprived of the results of their efforts. Greed is not good. Vyasa Maharshi says that by devotion to the Lord and *saranagati* (seeking His refuge) the Devas achieved the result. The Asuras failed because they had no faith in Him. Whatever service or sacrifice men perform with their life, wealth, work, mind, and words for the sake of themselves and their dear ones will be in vain. But all that becomes immensely fruitful if the service is done to Him.

Goddess Lakshmi chose Lord Vishnu because He possessed everlasting virtues

(Dharma). Among the four Purusharthas, Lord Vishnu represents Dharma (Ramo vigrahavan Dharmah) and Lakshmi represents Artha. Through Artha, one can fulfil his desires (Kama). Artha and Kama should always be controlled by Dharma. That is the meaning of Goddess Lakshmi always stays with Lord Vishnu. Ravana tried to separate Lakshmi (Sita) and Vishnu (Rama). He wanted to have Kama without Dharma. Hence, he got destroyed. Similarly, if people want to earn wealth without Dharma (e.g., through corruption, crime, fraud etc.) it will bring disaster to them. Only wealth acquired by dharmic means stays and brings happiness.

In the story of Kuchela in Bhagavata, he always worshipped Krishna with utmost devotion (bhakti). When he visited Krishna, he forgot to ask Him anything. But he was blessed with enormous wealth without asking for it. In *Kanakadhara Stotram*, in almost all Slokas, Sri Adi Sankaracharya prays to Goddess Lakshmi to grant wealth to the poor Brahmin lady.

From the story of Ksheera Sagara Mathanam, Lakshmi Devi got some names like Ksheera Samudraraja Tanaya (daughter of King of Milky Ocean), Ksheerodbhava (born out of Milky Ocean), Ksheerabhdhi Kanyaka (daughter of King of Milky Ocean), Chandra Sahodari (sister of Moon). Sri Adi Sankaracharya uses the names Makaralaya Kanyaka (daughter of ocean), Sagara Sambhava, Somamruta Sodari, and Amrutabhdhi Putri, in *Kanakadhara Stotram*. The emergence of Mahalakshmi from the ocean is a wonderful episode in Ksheera Sagara Mathanam.

May Goddess Lakshmi shower Her gracious glances on the whole world and bring happiness to all.



UPANISHADS - SCRIPTURES FOR ALL TIMES

• Smt. T.S. Rajalakshmi

Upanishads are Vedic texts which contain the ideologies and profound truths of life from ancient Sanathana Dharma. They are also referred as Vedanta. The concepts of Brahman (ultimate reality), Atma (Soul) and many other concepts from Vedas (Rig, Yajur, Sama, Atharva) are detailed in Upanishads in the form of question and answers, dialogues, story forms, discussions and descriptions. Sanskrit language is used mostly in Upanishads. There is no single author and mostly they will be renowned sages and kings. They were also written as well as orally transferred from various places like Gurukulam (ancient school), Raja Sabha (King's court), forests and many other places. The concepts are taught intelligently, so that even the less learned can benefit the goodness of Upanishads.

Here is a conversation between Devas and Prajapati. Let us have a look into this -

Da! Da! Da from Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

Devas: Oh! Prajapati, can you please be our Guru and teach us?

Prajapati: Yes, definitely!

Devas: Thank you, please start teaching now itself.

Prajapati: "Da", Have you understood?

Devas: Yes! Please check if our understanding is correct, "Da means – Damayata" which means self-control.

Prajapati: Yes! You have understood correct!

Devas: Can you please teach us next?

Prajapati: "Da", do you know this?

Devas: Yes! we think Da means - "Datta – Be charitable"

Prajapati: Good! The next is again "Da"

Devas: "Dayadhvam – Be compassionate!"

Prajapati: Good! You have learnt the most essential disciplines of spiritual process.

Devas: "We will follow it and ensure that this wisdom is passed to future human generations".

Prajapati: Let me detail you on this! Being Self-controlled will help to remove egoism. Being charitable, helps the society to get uplifted and being compassionate is the most essential truth which makes the world sustain happiness. Let you all be blessed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Thus, the moral of this dialogue is that one should be always self-controlled, charitable by giving to others which will help, and compassionate to all the beings irrespective of caste, creed, beings will make the world a better place to live. Following this, one will get uplifted and will get the blessings of God.

Let's see another conversation, which shows us which is the important organ in our body-

A quarrel among the sense organs from Chandogya Upanishad :

The sense organs in our body once had a bitter argument among themselves as to who is superior.

Each one of them boasted themselves to be the best. But they were unable to decide. So, they decided to ask Prajapati.

Prajapati: Welcome Sense Organs! What is the reason for coming to my place?

Senses: Please let us know who is the best among us?

Prajapati: The sense which departs and makes the body worst is the best of senses.

Speech: Let me go first and see.

After some time...speech returned

Organs: We lived dumb without speaking. But breathing was happening by Prana, Eyes were seeing, Ears were listening, and Mind was thinking.

Eye: Let me go and see now, how you all reflect.

After some time...eyes returned

Organs: We were blind and could not see anything, but were breathing with Prana, listening via ears

and thinking through mind and speaking through tongue.

Ears: Let me go now....

After some time...ears returned and asked, "How did you all work now?"

Organs: It was like being deaf, but breathing with Prana, thinking via mind, speaking with tongue and seeing through eyes.

Mind: I think, if I go, you all cannot do anything, because I only control you.

Then...after some time the mind returned and questioned....

Mind: I think I am the best.

Organs: You are not the best. Though you control, we were like a child whose mind is not working. But we were breathing, speaking, hearing and seeing and were able to perform activities without you. So, you are not the best.

After hearing this...the Prana took the turn to leave...then all the senses looked worried...Oh! Prana, if you go then what is the use of the body which has eyes, ears, mind, tongue and other organs! We cannot perform any activity and we are also considered as non-usable. So, you are the Best of all. This proved that "Prana" is the "Sign of Life".

Thus, the Upanishads teach us many interesting conversations in simple format which helps us to know the basics of life. There are many other interesting tough concepts about the Universe, Life, Supreme, Creation, etc., which makes our "Sanathana Dharma", the oldest and richest culture in the world. We should be proud of this profound fact, first learn ourselves the Upanishads and then teach our new generations to come.



PANCHABHOOTA KSHETRAS

- Sri I.L.N. Chandra Sekhara Rao



Bhoomi (Earth), Neeru (water), Agni (fire), Vaayu (air), and Aakasam (sky) are called Panchabhootas. 'Pancha' means five and 'Bhoota' means compound. These five elements which are very important for life have been worshipped since olden days. Siva, the God of Destroyer within the Trimurthis, manifested himself as Panchaboothas in the form of panchabhoota lingas. Where the panchabhoota lingas offered pujas are called as 'Panchabhoota Kshetras'. Lord Siva appears in different element in every kshetram.

The Panchabhoota kshetras are :

1. Pruthvilingam - Sri Ekambareswara Swamy – Kanchipuram
2. Jalalingam - Sri Jambukeswara Swamy – Jambukeswaram
3. Agnilingam - Sri Arunachaleswara Swamy – Thiruvannamalai
4. Vayu Lingam – Sri Kaalahasteeswara Swamy – Srikalahasti
5. Akasa Lingam – Sri Natarajaswamy - Chidambaram

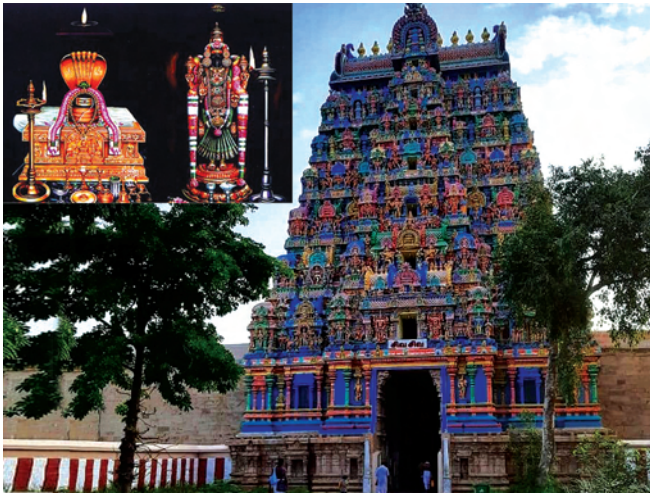
PRUTHVILINGAM - SRI EKAMBARESWARA SWAMY – KANCHIPURAM

Kanchipuram is located 76 kms from Chennai, Tamilnadu. According to the



Sthalapuranam, in olden days Goddess Parvathi turned into a small girl grown up in Kathyana Maharshi Ashram. She wished to marry Lord Siva. With the Suggestion of Maharshi Sri Katyani Devi reached the present Kanchipuram and made Sivalingam with sand and worshipped Lord Siva in the form of Pruthvi Lingam. When Parvathi devi was worshipping Pruthvi lingam, the Kampa river overflowed and threatened to engulfed the Siva Lingam. At that critical movement, Goddess Parvati embraced the Lingam. When Lord Siva touched Goddess Parvathi, He identified Goddess Parvathi as his consort and married her. The Lingam which was created by Goddess Parvathi is being worshipped now in the name of Ekambareswara swamy and Goddess Parvathi is worshipped as Sri Kamakshi Devi, who is one of the Ashtadasa Shakthis.

JALALINGAM - SRI JAMBUKESWARA SWAMY – JAMBUKESWARAM



Jambukeshwaram is the second of the Panchabhuta Linga temples. Jambukeshwaram is located at a distance of 11 km from Trichy in Tamil Nadu. Jambukeshwaram is also known as Thimevakai and Thiruvanaikaval. This means that Lord Shiva was worshipped here by elephants. In olden days this place was famous for its jambu trees (white apricot trees).

A sage named Shambhu lived here. The sage was a devotee of Lord Shiva who would not even receive fresh water without worshipping the Lord. As time went on, Shambhu once had a desire to worship Lord Shiva directly. Thus he began to do penance to please Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva appreciated his penance, appeared before him and granted him a boon. Shambhu sought the blessing of direct worship of the Lord. Bhola Shankara agreed and said that he will appear in the form of a linga, and Shambhu will worship Him in the form of a jambu tree. Jambukeshwar is located on the banks of the holy river Cauvery. The locals call this river Ponni. Ponni in Tamil means gold. The locals believe that bathing in the river Cauvery is the best

way to worship Lord Shiva as Jambukeshwar. Swamivari Deveri is Sri Akhilandeswari Devi.

Agnilingam - Sri Arunachaleswara Swamy – Thiruvannamalai

Thiruvannamalai is located in the State of Tamil Nadu. It is also known as Arunachalam. In olden days once there was an argument between Brahma and Sri Mahavishnu about superiority between them. At that time, Lord Siva appeared in the form of Agni Linga and asked Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu to find the beginning and the ending of the Agni lingam. They both failed to find and prayed



Lord Siva, then Lord Siva transformed as Sri “Arunachaleswara and became Agni Lingam (Tejo Lingam). Sri Arunachaleswara Swamy's Consort is Sri Unnamalai Devi.

Vayu Lingam – Sri Kaalahasteeswara Swamy – Sri Kalahasti

Sri Kalahasthi is situated 36 kms away from Tirupati in the banks of Swarnamukhi river in the state of Andhra Pradesh. In olden days at the time of celestial Siva Parvathi Kalyanam, large number of Gods, Maharshis attended for Marriage and the



earth leaned to one side. Then sage Agasthya prayed Lord Siva in the bank of Swarnamukhi to balance the earth and Lord Siva settled in the form of Vayu Lingam. Afterwards Lord Siva gave salvation to spider, elephant and serpent who were ardent devotees of Lord Siva located here and the Lingam is named after these three and Sri Kalahastheeswara Swamy. Lingam is incarnation of Vayu the evidence is two lamps in the Garbhalayam move always. Swamivari Consort is Sri Gnanaprasunaambaa Devi.

AKASA LINGAM – SRI NATARAJASWAMY - CHIDAMBARAM



In Tamil Nadu, Chidambaram is situated 250 Kms away from Chennai. In olden days Adishesha, who was born as Pathanjali was wandering in

various places and finally he reached Chidambaram. He spent few days meditating Lord Siva. At this time Lord Siva appeared in the form of Nataraja Swamy and as per Patanjali's wish he settled in Chidambaram. The primary deity in this temple is Natarajaswamy. By side of the Natarajaswamy there is a room. In this room there is a Yantram on the wall. It is always closed with curtains. It appears only at the time of Harathi. Each and every one will have different experiences and they don't know exactly what it is. Some may feel like sky and the sky itself is Lord Siva. Swamivari Deveri is Sivakama Sundari Devi.



TRADITIONAL DRESS CODE is Compulsory

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams made it compulsory for the devotees to wear Traditional Dress while coming for Darshan of Lord Venkateswara in the Tirumala temple. As part of this, T.T.D. implemented Traditional Dress Code to the devotees coming for Arjitha sevas and Rs.300/- darshan also.

Apart from this, devotees should compulsory wear mask and gloves due to corona pandemic and maintain distance while in the Q lines.

DEVOTEES COMING FOR SWAMI DARSHAN MUST FOLLOW THE BELOW GIVEN DRESS CODE :

Women : Saree with blouse, Halfsaree, Punjabi Dress with Duppata and Chudidhar with Duppata

Men : Pajama–Kurtha, Dhoti– Uttariyam

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

**Float Festival
in Tirumala
24-03-2021 to 28-03-2021**



Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams



SRI LAKSHMI ASHTOTHARA SATHA NAMAVALI

OM Prakruthyai Namaha
OM Vikruthyai Namaha
OM Vidyayai Namaha
OM Sarvabutahitapradayai Namaha
OM Shradhayai Namaha
OM Vibhutyai Namaha
OM Surabyai Namaha
OM Paramatmikayai Namaha
OM Vaache Namaha
OM Padmalayayai Namaha 10
OM Padmayai Namaha
Om Suchaye Namaha
OM Swahayai Namaha
OM Swadayai Namaha
OM Sudhayai Namaha
OM Dhanyayai Namaha
OM Hiranmayyai Namaha
OM Lakshmyai Namaha
OM Nityapushtayai Namaha
OM Vibhavartai Namaha 20

OM Adityai Namaha
OM Dityai Namaha
OM Deeptayai Namaha
OM Vasudayai Namaha
OM Vasudharinyai Namaha
OM Kamalayai Namaha
OM Kanthayai Namaha
OM Kamakshyai Namaha
OM Ksheerodhasambavayai Namaha
OM Anugrahaparayai Namaha 30
OM Budhaye Namaha
OM Anaghayai Namaha
OM Harivallabayai Namaha
OM Ashokayai Namaha
OM Amrutayai Namaha
OM Deeptayai Namaha
OM Lokashokavinasinyai Namaha
OM Dharmanilayayai Namaha
OM Karunayai Namaha
OM Lokamatre Namaha 40
OM Padmapriyayai Namaha
OM Padmahastayai Namaha
OM Padmakshyai Namaha
OM Padmasundaryai Namaha
OM Padmodbhavayai Namaha
OM Padmamukhyai Namaha
OM Padmanabapriyayai Namaha
OM Ramaayai Namaha
OM Padmamaladharayai Namaha
OM Devyai Namaha 50

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

OM Padminyai Namaha
OM Padmagandinyai Namaha
OM Punyagandayai Namaha
OM Suprasannayai Namaha
OM Prasadabhimukhyai Namaha
OM Prabhayai Namaha
OM Chandravadhanayai Namaha
OM Chandrayai Namaha
OM Chandrasahodaryai Namaha
OM Chaturbhujayai Namaha 60
OM Chandraroopayai Namaha
OM Indirayai Namaha
OM Indusheethalayai Namaha
OM Ahladajananyai Namaha
OM Pushtyai Namaha
OM Shivayai Namaha
OM Shivakartyai Namaha
OM Satyai Namaha
OM Vimalayai Namaha
OM Vishwajananyai Namaha 70
OM Tustyai Namaha
OM Dharidhryanashinyai Namaha
OM Preetipushkarinyai Namaha
OM Shantayai Namaha
OM Shuklamalyambarayai Namaha
OM Shriyai Namaha
OM Bhaskaryai Namaha
OM Bilvanilayayai Namaha
OM Vararohayai Namaha
OM Yashasvinyai Namaha 80

OM Vasundarayai Namaha
OM Udarangayai Namaha
OM Harinyai Namaha
OM Hemamalinyai Namaha
OM Dhanadhanyakarthiyai Namaha
OM Sidhaye Namaha
OM Srainasoumyayai Namaha
OM Shubhapradhayai Namaha
OM Nrupaveshmagatanandhayai Namaha
OM Varalakshmai Namaha 90
OM Vasupradhayai Namaha
OM Shubayai Namaha
OM Hiranyaprakarayai Namaha
OM Samudratanayayai Namaha
OM Jayayai Namaha
OM Mangalayai Namaha
OM Devyai Namaha
OM Vishnuvakshastalasthitayai Namaha
OM Vishnupatnnai Namaha
OM Prasanakshyai Namaha 100
OM Narayanasamasritayai Namaha
OM Daridhryadvamsinyai Namaha
OM Sarvopadravavarinyai Namaha
OM Navadurgayai Namaha
OM Mahakalyai Namaha
OM Brahmavishnusivatmikayai Namaha
OM Trikalajnanasampannayai Namaha
OM Bhuwaneshwaryai Namaha 108

|| Ithi Sri Lakshmi Ashtothara
Satha Namavali Sampooranam ||



The foundation stone was laid by T.T.D. for the construction of the temple of Goddess Sri Padmavati Ammavaru at T. Nagar in Chennai, Tamilnadu on 13.02.2021. On this occasion, Sri Sri Sri Vijayendra Saraswati Swamy, Sri Y.V. Subba Reddy, Chairman, T.T.D. Trust Board & Dr. K.S. Jawahar Reddy, I.A.S., Executive Officer, T.T.D. participated.



The ceremonious Bhoomi Pooja was performed in Ulundurpeta of Tamilnadu on 22.02.2021 for the construction of Sri Venkateswara Swami temple by the T.T.D. On this occasion, Sri E.K. Palani Swamy, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and Sri Y.V. Subba Reddy, Chairman, T.T.D. Trust Board participated.



Dr. G. Vani Mohan, I.A.S., Principal Secretary of A.P. Endowments was sworn-in as Ex-officio member of the TTD Trust Board on 27.02.2021. On this occasion, Sri A.V. Dharma Reddy, Addl. Executive Officer, T.T.D., presented laminated photo of Srivaru to her.



Vasanth Panchami Saraswati Puja was performed in Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore District on 16.02.2021. On this occasion, Sri Y.V. Subba Reddy, Chairman, T.T.D. Trust Board and other officials participated.



The auspicious muhurtam was fixed on 17.02.2021 for Kalyanamastu programme to be conducted by TTD. On this occasion, Dr. K.S. Jawahar Reddy, I.A.S., Executive Officer, T.T.D., Sri A.V. Dharma Reddy, Addl. Executive Officer, T.T.D., Prof. K. Rajagopalan, HDPP Secretary and Agama Shastra Pundits participated.



Floral tributes were offered to the idol of Sri Purandaradasa located at Alipiri in Tirupati on 11.02.2021 on the occasion of 174th Aradhana Mahotsavam held by the Dasa Sahitya Project Special Officer Sri P.R. Anandatheerthacharya and the Bhajana Mandal members participated.

SRI RAMANUJA'S VISISTADWAITA

- Prof M. Rajagopalachary

A millennium has passed since the advent of Sri Ramanujacharya. He is the founder of Visistaadvaita philosophy (Qualified Monism). Mastering Dravida and Sanskrit Vedanta, he has preached a synthesis of the esoteric meanings of Upanishads and Alvars' Pasuras through his Prapatti marga. He reveals the secret of Ashtaakshari mantra to all with abounding compassion from a temple tower. Annamayya aptly pays tribute to Sri Ramanuja as a living God in one of the keertanas, "Gatulanni khilamaina kaligyugamanduna / Gati yeetade choope Ghana Gurudaivamu".

Born of the aspect of Adi Sesha, Ramanuja's life was full of miracles. He was born in 1017 in Sri Perumbudur of Tamil Nadu to Kantimati and Keshava Yajwa as a result of Putrakameshti Sacrifice with the blessings of Lord Parthasaradhi. Having lived for 120 years, he tried to dispel the ignorance of the people through his masterly writings.

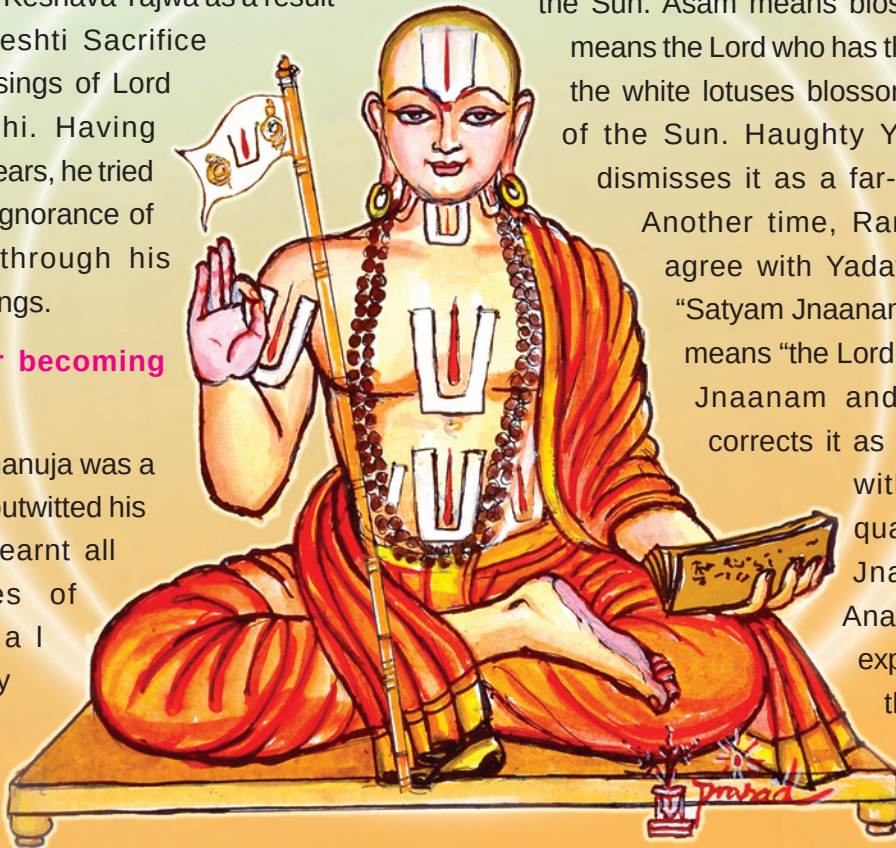
A Preceptor becoming the Disciple!

Sri Ramanuja was a disciple who outwitted his master. He learnt all the treatises of spiritual philosophy within no time under

Yadava Prakasha. Though an advaitin, Yadava Prakasha propounded a theology that is different from Sankara's advaita. He wanted to realize Brahman in the form of sat-chit-ananda on the lines of Bhedaabheda marga. In the later period, Sri Ramanuja denounces it as more terrible than mayavada.

One day, Yadava Prakasha explains a Chandogyopanishadic dictum, "Kapyasam Pundarika meva makshinee" comparing the Lord's eyes with the red buttocks of a monkey. Deeply pained at the misinterpretation, Ramanuja breaks into tears. Taken aback, Yadava Prakasha asks him for his interpretation. Ramanuja explains that Kapi here does not mean monkey but water. Pibati means drinking. One who absorbs water is the Sun. Asam means blossoming. Hence, it means the Lord who has the eyes resembling the white lotuses blossoming with the rays of the Sun. Haughty Yadava Prakasha dismisses it as a far-fetched meaning.

Another time, Ramanuja does not agree with Yadava Prakasha that "Satyam Jnaanam Anatam Brahma" means "the Lord himself is Satyam, Jnaanam and Anantam," and corrects it as "the Lord radiates with the auspicious qualities of Satyam, Jnaanam, and Anantam". He further explains that these are the qualities of the Lord and cannot be equated with



Brahman Himself. When I say this body is mine, it does not mean that I am this body. In another instance, he says that “Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma” should not be understood with the limited meaning that this entire world is Brahma, but Brahman pervades this entire world. Brihadaranyakopanisat’s dictum: “Neha Naasti kinchana”, he says, should not be understood as “there is no object other than Brahman”, but as “there is no object without the inner presence of Brahman”. Thus, Ramanuja always probes the deeper rather than the stated meanings of words. Out of sheer jealousy for the disciple’s extraordinary merit, Yadava Prakasha makes many attempts to kill him. But, by God’s grace Ramanuja escapes to Kanchi with the help of his friend Govinda. Later, Yadava Prakasha realizes his mistake and becomes a disciple of Ramanuja. As Govinda Dasu in sanyasaashrama, he writes a book named Yatidharma Samuchchayam. What a miracle! A preceptor becomes a disciple of his disciple.

Against social class Discrimination

Kanchi Purna was a saint-devotee who used to talk direct to Lord Varadaraja of Kanchi. Impressed by his devotion, Ramanujua invites him to his house for meals. Kanchi Purna goes to his house, but at that time Ramanuja was not present. His wife Rakshakamba serves him with a meal; but later she washes the house and prepares fresh food for her husband as per the orthodox rules. Ramanuja feels bad about it. But, soon he quits his wife and enters sanyasa ashrama as she continues to follow the social class discrimination against his will.

Lord Ranganatha’s Lord answers

A miracle happens when Ramanuja requests Kanchi Purna to seek Lord Ranganatha’s answers for his doubts in his daily conversation with Him. But, surprisingly Lord Ranganatha answers all his

doubts unasked as follows. First, I am the Lord who is the cause of this world. Second, there is a difference between the body and the soul which wears it. Third, Prapatti is the only way of liberation. Fourth, there is no need for antima smriti (remembrance at death-bed) for my devotees. Fifth, I reward my devotees with moksha in the penultimate stage of life itself. Sixth, seek Maha Purna as your acharya. Ramanuja was overwhelmed by the Lord’s mercy. He goes to Maha Purna and meets him on the way and receives initiation into Vaishnavism then and there itself lest there should be any delay.

Fulfilling the Desires of Yamunacharya

The encounter between Ramanuja and Yamunacharya is amazing. Yamunacharya was the grandson of Nathamuni who collected the Divya Prabandham. While reciting a pasuram “poligha poligha..”, it occurs once to Yamunacharya that a great acharya was born for the uplift of the world. In his search, he concludes that he was none else than Ramanuja. He sends for Ramanuja to see him urgently, but unfortunately breathes his last before Ramanuja reaches Srirangam. Finding three fingers of Yamunacharya folded, Ramanuja makes three promises that (i) he will write a commentary for Nammalwar’s Tiruvayimozhi and propagate the Prapatti marga to the world; (ii) he will write Sri Bhashyam on Badarayana’s Brahma Sutras taking into account the earlier commentaries; (iii) in order to perpetuate the memory of Parashara, the author of Vishnu Purana, he will name a good vaishnava after him. At this, Yamunacharya’s fingers get unfolded much to surprise of the onlookers. Ramanuja fulfils these three vows in his life-time itself.

Emberumanar

It is interesting to note that Sri Ramanuja has five acharyas, namely—Kanchi Purna, Maha Purna,

Goshti Purna, Maladhara and Vara Rangacharya. Look at the perseverance of Ramanuja! He approaches Goshti Purna eighteen times treading all the way from Srirangam to Goshtipuram for the sake of initiation into ashtaakshari mantra. At last, Goshtipurna is convinced of his eligibility for the mantra and initiates him into the mantra on condition that he would not divulge it to the others. But defying the orders of Guru, Ramanuja goes to the nearest Narasimha temple, climbs up the tower and announces the esoteric mantra to one and all with great compassion. To the unhappy preceptor who curses him to go to hell, Ramanuja humbly replies that he doesn't mind going to hell if his act opens the doors of heaven for so many. Moved by his compassion, Goshti Purna embraces him and calls him Emberumanar- You are my Lord.

Navaratnas

Sri Ramanuja's significant Sanskrit works are known as Navaratnas (nine jewels). Sri Bhashyam, a commentary on Vedanta Sutras, is his master piece. The other works are: Vedanta Sangraha, Vedanta Saram, Vedanta Deepam, Gita Bhashyam, Nitya Granthas, Gadya Trayam including Saranagati Gadya, Sriranga Gadya and Vaikuntha Gadya. They scintillate with wisdom and devotion. To fulfil the want of any Tamil work from the pen of Ramanuja, his heir Kurukesha collects his Tamil discourses and publishes them under the title Shat Sahasram.

Brahma Satyam and Jagat Satyam

Ramanuja's Visistadvaita is a synthesis of Vedanta tatva and the Bhakti tatva of Alvars. It seems Ramanuja did not use the term anywhere in his writings. But, this name was given to Ramanuja's theology later to mark its distinction from Advaita. Sri Sankaracharya's advaita advocates the unity of Atma and Paramatma. As wisdom dawns, the Jiva realizes that he is Brahman. Accordingly, this ephemeral world is only an illusion (mithya). But,

we think it is real due to Sarpa-rajju Bhranti (mistaking the rope for a serpent out of ignorance). Sri Adisankaracharya says that Atma Satyam and Jagat Mithya. Dismissing it, Ramanuja affirms Brahma Satyam— Jagat Satyam. This entire world is a part of Brahman. And the Brahman is immanent in this world. So, how can the world be an illusion? There is no answer in advaita for the question, where does the so-called avidya and mithya reside? If it is in Brahman, then we are ascribing the impurity to the Brahman. If it is in the soul or Jiva, Jiva becomes impure. If it is other than these two, then there is no advaita but only dvaita, dualism. Thus, the argument of Ramanuja goes on.

Brahman: Not Nirguna but Saguna

According to Ramanuja, Supreme Soul is not without form or qualities. How can we worship a formless entity? This creation is in the Supreme Soul, just as the Supreme Soul is antaryami in the creation. He is in the form of wisdom. Truth, Purity and Infinity are in Him. He is self-born. He has limitless auspicious qualities. Jnana, bala, aishwarya, virya, shakti and tejas are the important qualities. Maya is inauspicious; but, the Brahman has auspicious qualities.

Creation and Supreme Soul

A question arises here. How does the stainless Brahman create a world full of sins and passion? Both the variegated life forms and evolutionary nature are true. Just because they change, they are not illusory. They have an inalienable relation and unity with the Brahman. They do not have existence independent of the Supreme Soul. He is the main source for them, but they are not the basis for Him. They are His body. This is called Apradhak Siddhi. Ramanuja describes the relationship between the creation and the Supreme Soul in different ways. First, Sarira-Sariri sambandha the relation between the body and the

soul. Second, Seshha-Seshi sambandham; Sesham means remainder or part; Seshi means the completeness or whole. It is the relationship between the master and his servant. Third, Prakaara-Prakaari sambandham; that is the mass and the forms it assumes. Fourth, Visishta-Viseshana Sambandham the completeness and its qualities. Can we separate an object from its qualities? Fifth, adhara-adheya sambandham. During the deluge, the creation is withdrawn and in other times creation progresses. But, it does not mean that they do not have inalienable relationship with the Supreme Soul.

Doesn't Parabrahma get maligned by the creation which is full of sins and passion? No, says Ramanuja, because the Supreme God is stainless. Just as the bodily troubles do not attach the soul, the Supreme Soul is also not affected by the sins of animate and inanimate beings. The pleasures and pains of the embodied beings are only the consequence of their karma.

God's Lila

Paramatma has no desires left unfulfilled. This creation is God's lila (play). There is no special aim for it. If it is so, doesn't it speak of His cruelty? It is in fact for the welfare of the beings. Creation leads to the evolution of beings. Hence, it speaks of His mercy. It is not cruelty. The being, whether bound in the body or liberated, does not forego his distinction. Bound in the body, he becomes one with the body and when liberated he becomes one with the God. Though the Supreme Being is transcendental, He is easy of access as well. One can attain Him through the difficult path of Upasana, or absolute surrender, the Prapatti way. Sri Mahalakshmi makes the task easier by taking the being nearer to the Lord.

Soham vs Dasoham

Being is the centre of consciousness. That is the characteristic of the being. Though the being has a few characteristics of the Supreme Soul, he does not have the powers of creation, sustenance and destruction. Hence, the soul or being is not Supreme Soul. While Sankara says Soham, i.e. I am Thou, I am Brahman, Ramanuja says Dasoham, i.e. I am thy servant. For him, the being is at the service of God. Paramatma is like the Sea, while the being is like a wave, just a form or stage of the Sea. Though both of them have water in them, a wave cannot be called the Sea. But, it belongs to the Sea. Their unity is subject to certain limitations. This is the Qualified Monism of Sri Ramanuja. There is no room for Jivanmukti of advaita in Visistaadvaita, as the body which is the consequence of one's actions attains moksha or liberation only when the chains of karma are broken.

Tattvamasi

Upanishad Mahavakya 'Tattvamasi' means "That Thou art". Sri Adisankaracharya takes the lakshana meaning of it and proposes equality (samanadhikaranya) between them. But, Ramanuja says there is no need to take the lakshanaartha when the stated meaning (vachyartha) is clear. The statement separately states the two words tat and tvam. So, where is the need to suggest their unity? questions Ramanuja. How can powerless Jiva become the same as Infinite Paramatma? The statement only suggests that Omnipresent God is also in the soul or jiva.

Liberation, according to Ramanuja, can be attained by one's discharge of ordained duties with a sense of offering them to God. Prapatti means absolute surrender. Everyone including those who are distanced to studying Vedas is eligible for liberation. With his egalitarian approach, Ramanuja has contributed a great deal to the national unity and integration. All the acharyas subsequent to Ramanuja preached his Bhakti marga with a few minor changes.



EVERY IDOL IS AN AMSA OF THE GOD

- Kaaladevan

Every pious devotee strongly believes that gods manifest in the idols. It is the essence of his spiritual life. No wonder that the idol worship is of paramount importance to him. Idols are no mere toys for him and temples are not mere museums and the places of pilgrimage are no holiday resorts. They are centres of powerful activity and no doubt they have both attractive and repulsive forces. Though the concept of the temple as a place of worship is common to the whole of India, the worship pattern varies from state to state and place to place, depending upon the economic conditions and the cultural variants.

Every idol enshrined in a temple is something more than a symbol. The primary purpose of setting up images before the worshippers is to facilitate meditation. Though God is manifest everywhere, all cannot feel his omnipresence, because all cannot be Siddhas. It is said that a Bhakta is one who tries to see God and a Siddha is one who has realized God. And so every

Bhakta needs a definite object before him or her for concentration. It is this power of concentration that actually takes the Bhakta's thoughts over to an object beyond and behind the actual phenomenon. Since the sacred idols are the "amsa of God" they have to be propitiated with appropriate mantras. Lord infuses his 'amsa' in such idols and is ever present with the Bhaktas in such a form.

Lord it is said, makes a manifestation on his own without any initial invocation. Vedas talk at length of 'Swayam Vyaktam' which in English would read as 'self manifestation of God in an image'. The foremost instance of this is that of Lord



Venkateswara in Tirumala. Devotees invariably believe that Sri Vaikuntam manifested as the Tirumala hills and the Lord manifested as Lord Venkateswara. "The first Archa form therefore which the supreme being divulged in for the benefit of human meditation was in the Tirumala shrine".

The first available reference to this temple of Lord Venkateswara occurs in Sangam Tamil poetry belonging to the first three centuries. Then there came the early Alvars (Vaishnavite saints) who lived from about the fourth century to the ninth and sang of Vengadam, the original name of Tirumala. Ilango Adigal's 'Silappathikaram', one among the five great epics in Tamil, speaks of its reverence during that time. It was the famous monarch Krishnadeva Raya who did almost everything for its prosperity. And this is according to literature and history.

As idols are considered manifestations of Gods, a celestial wedding is arranged between Sri Malayappa Swamy (the Processional deity of Lord Venkateswara) and his two consorts – Sridevi and Bhudevi. It is a pleasant sight to watch the wedding of the Gods since it is performed as per tradition according to Vaikhanasa Agama Sastra.

Six hundred years ago Tallapaka Annamacharya glorified Lord Venkateswara in his thirty thousand Sankeertanas. He narrated the process, procedure and the purport of the Utsavas, especially Srivari Kalyanotsavam.

Annamacharya started this Srivari Kalyanotsavam (the Celestial wedding) in 1546 and the practice continues to this day. It should be a great blessing if we participate in this celestial wedding which is celebrated for world peace, the real need of the hour.



In and Around Temples and their Distance

Name of the temple



Distance of the Temple From Tirupati Railway Station

1. Sri Govindarajaswami Temple, Tirupati	1/2 Km.
2. Sri Kodandaramaswami Temple, Tirupati	1 Km.
3. Sri Kapileswaraswami Temple, Tirupati	03 Kms.
4. Sri Kalyanavenkateswaraswami Temple, Srinivasamangapuram	12 Kms.
5. Sri Padmavatidevi Temple, Tiruchanur	05 Kms.
6. Sri Kalyanavenkateswaraswami Temple, Narayanavanam	22 Kms.
7. Sri Vedanarayanawami Temple, Nagalapuram	65 Kms.
8. Sri Prasanna Venkateswaraswami Temple, Appalayagunta	15 Kms.
9. Sri Venugopalaswami Temple, Karvetinagaram	58 Kms.
10. Sri Pattabhiramaswami Temple (Valmikipuram), Vayalpadu	100 Kms.

SATYAMEVA JAYATE

- Smt. D.K. Ahana Lakshmi

“Revered sage, I would like to study under your tutelage”.

A young boy, obviously poverty stricken, was standing with bowed head and hands in front of Sage Haridrumata Gautama, known for his wisdom. It was the equivalent of trying to obtain admission to one of our prestigious educational institutions.

The boy's eyes were bright and shining. The sage looked into them and saw a longing to learn. But, as we all know, it is not so easy to get admission to a good school or college nor was it easy in times long ago.

“I see. What is your lineage?”

In those days, education of the type the young boy was seeking was limited to certain classes of people.

The young boy was stumped for he had no idea who his father was. He went and asked his mother who told him the truth: “In my youth, I was forced to serve in many places, had been used by many men, and one of them was your father. I do not know which one. All that I can tell you is my name is Jabala and your name is Satyakama, and so you may be known as Satyakama Jabala.”

The boy went back to the Rishi and looking at his face repeated what his mother had told him.

“Oh brave and truthful child”, exclaimed the sage. “You have not

departed from the truth, Come what may and you are worthy of learning. come, I will initiate you into the process of learning”.

The young boy was true to his name, Satyakama, which means one who has passion for truth. This story from the

Chandogya Upanishad is a beautiful example of how, even if one does not have not so nice background, it is better to be truthful rather than hide facts and get into trouble later.

That truth must pervade our life is brought out by many stories. For example, there is an another story to emphasise that truth will be out, sooner or later.

Once there was a king who had a set of courtiers who swore that they were ready to sacrifice their lives for their master. The king boasted about this to a visiting ascetic.

“I don't believe that”, smiled the ascetic.

“You can test my courtiers. They are absolutely loyal and truthful”.

“Ok. I will perform a great yagna to ensure that your reign lasts a very long time. To prepare for this, each courtier has to come in the middle of the night and pour a can of milk into this tank”.

“Is that all?” laughed the courtiers.

The next morning, when they looked at the tank, it was full of clear water! Where had all the milk disappeared?



And then the truth came out. Each courtier thought that his can of water would make no difference as the others would pour milk. Swamiji concludes the story saying, "Unfortunately most of us have the same concept and we do our share of the work as did the courtiers in the story". But then, at some point, the truth comes out after all.

The Mundakopanishad (1:2:1) says: "*tanyacaratha niyatam satyakama esa vah panthah sukrasya loke*". In other words, it is best do your work thoroughly with a passion for truth, 'satyakama'. That is your road to the heaven of good deeds. Do you know that the very same Mundakopanishad has given us our national motto, 'Satyameva Jayate'. The complete verse is:

*satyameva jayate nanrtam
satyena pantha vitato devayanah |
yenakramantyr sayo hyaptakama yatra tat
satyasya paramam nidhanam ||*

(3:1:6)

Truth alone triumphs, not falsehood. It is by truth that the way of the Gods is widened - the path followed by seers on their journey to where the highest treasure, Truth, has its abode.

Let us all try to remember this motto while we go about our work in our daily lives with 'satyakama' and surely the world will be transformed into a better place.



SUGGESTIONS TO THE AUTHORS / CONTRIBUTORS

1. Authors are advised to contribute articles to **Sapthagiri** which promote Hindu religion, culture and its importance and mainly on *Vaishnavism*.
2. The articles may deal in subjects like *Puranas*, Epics, history, temple culture, the importance of festivals etc. innovatively; Hindu Gods, the significance of temples and their glory; spiritual articles based on the moral edification of the youth; on the stalwarts like AdiSankaracharya, BhagavatRamanuja, saint poetess Tharigonda Vengamamba, Padakavithapithamaha Thallapaka Annamacharya, etc. and the other topics like Vedic Maths, Vedic Science, Astrology, Astronomy, Ayurveda, Arthasashtra etc. and their relevance in the present day world.
3. The articles must be qualitative maintaining good standards, informative and thought-provoking to the readers.
4. The article must be readable, non-controversial and relevant to improve the spiritual knowledge among readers.
5. Authors should not use any copyrighted material in their articles unless appropriate permissions are obtained by them.
6. The word limit of an article should be a minimum of 1000 words, not exceeding 2,000. However, worthy research articles exceeding the above word limit may also be considered.
7. Each article should be scholarly and it should conform to the international standards by following MLA (Modern Language Association) Style sheet/format such as in-text and end text citations and works consulted or bibliography.
8. Attractive remuneration will be paid to the contributors. Editorial Board is the competent authority to finalise the articles submitted by the authors.
9. Please send your contributions neatly typed in word format with a self-declaration to the following mail: englishsubeditor@gmail.com

- Chief Editor

THE GURU – DISCIPLE BONDING IN THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD

- Sri P.T.S. Murthy

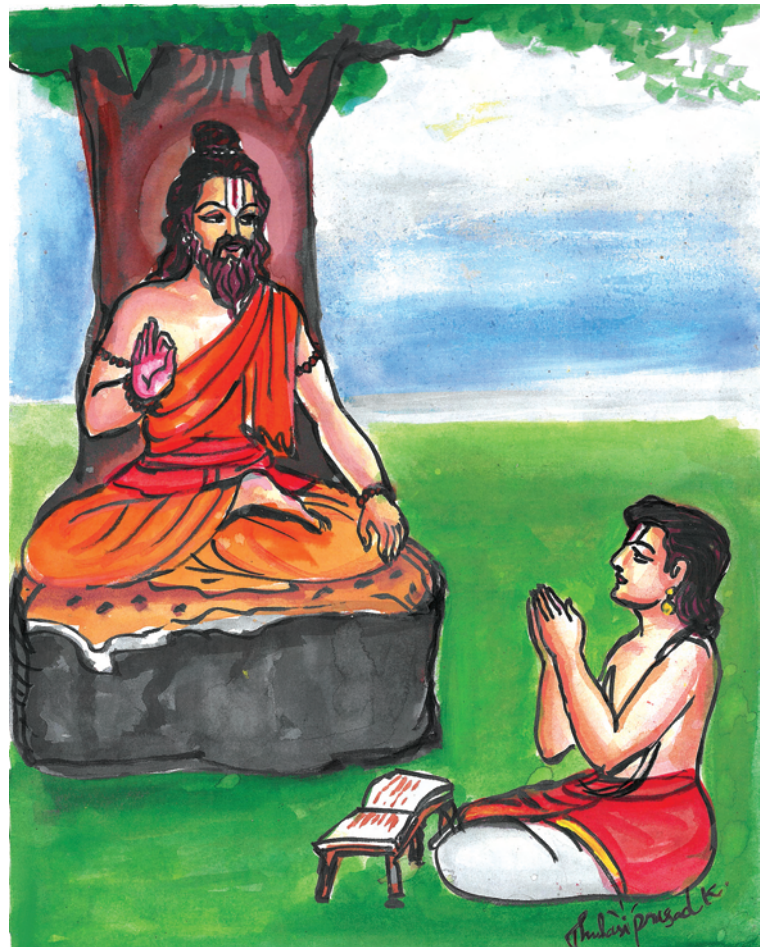
The word Upanishad is composed of two terms, upani and shad. Upani means near and shad means to sit, “sitting near”. These texts were spiritual instructions rendered by an elated Guru to his disciples. The illuminated guru had taught the brahma knowledge to the students by making them aware of the relevance of atman, the need for liberation from materialistic aspirations and achieving the greater soul, God with structured practices and prayers. These are the epilogues of the four Vedas. Upanishads are considered as *shruti* literature and hence are divine. We need to relate them to the present day situations to understand better as the principles taught yore, continue to hold good now and ever.

Vaishampayana was the guru of Yajnavalkya. Once, Yajnavalkya quarrelled with his guru. The guru ordered him to give back the knowledge of the Veda which he studied under him. He vomited the Veda. The other seers who were the disciples of Vaishampayana metamorphosed as birds and partridges (Tittiris) swallowed the Veda. It thus got the name as Taittiriya Upanishad. The essence of this Upanishad is divine knowledge or Brahma vidya bestowed to a disciple by his guru.

The Upanishad is bifurcated into three chapters. These chapters are named

as Siksha Valli, Brahmananda Valli and Bhrigu Valli. Valli means a vine (Creeper).

The first chapter Siksha Valli has twelve anuvakas (theories), Brahmananda Valli also called Ananda Valli has nine lessons and the last chapter Bhrgu Valli has ten verses. Siksha Valli dealt with the relationship between the guru and his disciple. The Brahmananda Valli spoke about the relationship between Atman and the need for liberating oneself. The third chapter, Bhrgu Valli explained about the self and the soul.



Siksha Valli

In the twelve anuvakas in this chapter, the essential relationships between the guru and disciple have been narrated. The instructions given by the guru to his disciple after completion of the studies under him were also given in detail.

The Invocation

The first Anuvak starts with seeking benedictions from the divine forces which have a direct influence on our mind, status and peace. The student propitiates before the God of Light, (Sun), the God of Rain, (Varun), the God Aryaman (the protector of mares and the stars), Indra (the leader of the rulers of the eight directions) Brihaspati (the Guru of Gods), Vishnu (the protector), Brahma (the knowledge power). He seeks blessings of the divine powers which are visible and have a direct impact on our happiness, to protect the guru also.

The disciple should always pray to God, for the wellbeing of his guru. If the guru is free from the encumbrances, he will be able to teach with happiness and concentration. It is necessary to invoke the blessings of different Gods before the disciple embarks upon the study from a guru. Every student must pray before the Lord to give sumptuous happiness to the guru.

Pronunciation

The right pronunciation is important in any language. Phonetics is to be taught to the student before educating him to higher studies. The wrong spelling will change the meaning, content and may land the speaker in trouble. In the Sanskrit mantras, the strength of the mantra rests in the voice, rendering and speaking. The modulation and conjunction are important parts of speech.

The Guru's wish

The guru wishes glory to both the learner and the learned with the effulgence of the divine

knowledge. The knowledge must be imparted with reference to five elements. They are, the contemplation of worlds, the power of light, knowledge, progeny, and the self. The guru also instructs the student to concentrate on pronunciation through a method of representation. There is a need for the student to focus his mind on what he is speaking. With reference to imparting knowledge, the teacher is the prior form, student is the subsequent one, knowledge is the bonding and teaching is the medium.

The Guru's prayer

Even though guru is considered as the complete form of Trinity, he understands that he attained the knowledge from a larger source, the God or the power source and hence prays for the blessings of the Almighty. He also prays that his health, vigour be strong. He must be adorable through his manasa, vacha, karmana (soul, talk and action). He also prays god to protect his knowledge. If the guru has depleted health, he may not be able to do justice to his students. He also prays to God to give students who come to him with good conduct, chaste and sound mind. He further prays to God to make him renowned and the light of knowledge pass to him from God and wishes that his students come from all over the universe to have diversity and conduct.

The completeness

Guru admires that the Bhū, Bhuvā, Svā and Mahā are the complete forms of Brahman and that is ātman as well. Each one of these can be represented in four forms again. So to say there are four into four sixteen vyāhritis. If a student perfects in all those sixteen vyāhritis he will know the God. Once he knows God, he will be a perfect learner. In the present era of specialization, the students are concentrating only on one subject. A miniscule of the whole orbit. Such knowledge takes

nowhere. The perils of half-knowledge cause destruction. With a diversity of subjects, specializations and degrees, the present-day students are ignoring the other areas of the subject thus becoming redundant with the changes. One must pursue an overview of the subject.

Meditation

Guru advises his disciples to meditate upon the Brahman whose body is like ether, self is the truth who is the succour of life, the bliss of the mind and energetic with peace of mind. The Guru impresses upon the student that the final goal of education is to reach the Brahman through meditation catapulted into action. Guru identifies the student's talents, calibre, capacity, and conundrum. The Guru will know that if he takes his advice, the student will be sure to achieve his goal with interest and impeccable career.

The five conglomerates

Guru realised that it is not possible for his student to grab the entire knowledge of Brahman in one go. It must be in phases, and step by step. He says that the body is five-fold with five senses and is being filled up with five aggregates. These are the earth, the sky, the heaven, the fire, the air, the sun, the moon and the stars. The five senses are filled up with five natural elements. The sky is associated with sound – ear, the air is with touch – skin, the fire with colour – eye, the water with taste – tongue and earth with the smell – nose. It is practically impossible to attain complete knowledge unless one is healthy and is able to grasp the same in stages.

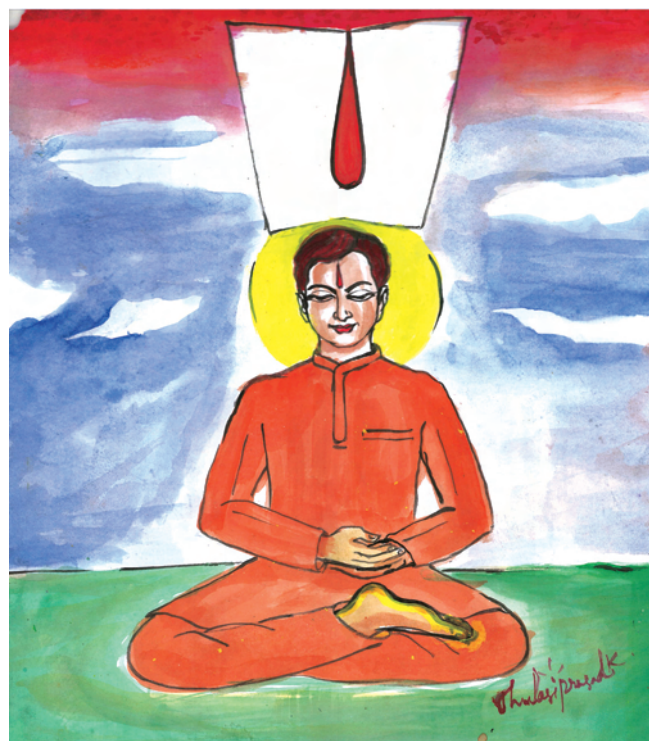
The importance of Om

Om is chanted as the first syllable before reciting any spiritual or ritual chanting. It consists of three syllables a, u and m. It represents a unification

of mind, body and spirit. Om is also regarded as Lord in the form of a sound. The Guru said that Om is the Brahma. Om is remembering God in every aspect and each walk of life. It clears cluttering of the mind and makes a student concentrate on the subject. By greeting with Om, we say I am Brahma. It means that I am a man of knowledge, perfection and purity and you are equally so. We stand on the same pedestal of understanding and unequivocal in our thoughts and utterances.

The self-effort

The Guru says that the process of learning has to be through self-effort and not merely theoretical knowledge obtained from him. One has to experience the same through recitation, practice and self-appraisal. Those days when written texts were not available, one had to practice repeatedly with correct pronunciation what the Guru had spoken. One has to experience the thought. He also said that one has to learn through self-effort and study the duties he has to perform towards the truth,



austerity, senses, sacrifices, his duty towards guests, his children, grandchildren and to the society. These are enjoined duties to a student along with learning the vedas.

Knowledge and wisdom

The wisdom shared by Trisanku is an interesting concept brought in here. The verse speaks indirectly about the necessity of alighting the ancestors, the family to higher planes by one's knowledge, purity, the wisdom of the self. It indirectly speaks that one's responsibility is not in growing alone but also to grow others with him.

Advice to Students

The guru instructs the disciple what they should undertake after completion of his studies. The advice holds good even today and for ages to come. The instructions have been narrated in four slokas.

1. Always speak the truth, perform your duty, never discontinue your study, protect the righteousness and never deviate from progeny.

2. Perform your rites to Gods and to the departed souls, respect your mother, father, and the guest. You must treat them as your gods. You must do such acts which are esteem and embellishment and are followed by others.

3. Respect the superior to you, gifts be given with dedication and in plenty. Be modest in your giving with compassion.

4. Judge yourself to be appropriate to be seated to judge the wrongdoing of others. In such situations, follow the best practices and not by your intuition.

Prayer to the Gods

It is a joint appeal by the guru and disciple to appease the Gods. They applaud the Sun, Varuna, Brihaspati and Vishnu to be favourable to them. They both surrender to the Almighty as he is the protector and controller of this universe.

*Aum Saha Nau-Avatu |
Saha Nau Bhunaktu |
Saha Viryam Karavavahai |
Tejasvi Nau Adhiitam Astu Maa Vidvissaavahai |
Aum Shantih Shantih Shantih ||*

Oh supreme God, may he protect us. May he nourish us together, May we work together with great energy, may our knowledge be effective and let there be no animosity or hatred amongst us.

The word, Shantih has been repeated thrice to pray to the Almighty to give us peace from three sufferings arising out of Adhidaivika (divine origin – earthquake, floods, lightning etc), Adhibhautika (physical or material origins such as accidents, death) and Adhyatmika (created by selves such as distraction, demur).



APPEAL TO DEVOTEES

- Devotees must maintain a social distance while collecting Laddus.
- Always wear mask.
- After collecting Laddus, go outside through exit gate.
- In case you face any technical issues at the Laddu counter, please contact TTD staff.
- Please follow the instructions given by the Security and TTD staff meticulously and cooperate.

During the Maha Bharath battle, Lord Sri Krishna was the charioteer for Arjuna. Seeing own relatives and acharyas on the opposite side, Arjuna got much confused and decided to leave the battle field. At the time, Lord Krishna uttered Srimad Bhagavad Gita advising Arjuna to fight the battle.

Bhagavad Gita is considered to be one of the best scriptures of our culture and contains tenets which are applicable even today. That is why the same has been translated in various languages in different countries and said to be included in their educational system.

It contains Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakthi yoga-three steps to attain Salvation-that is liberation from the material world to reach Moksha, which is full of Bliss.

During the course of His sermons, the Lord refers to four fold devotions which are practiced in this world to attain their goals. Let us go through the same in brief in this article.

FOUR FOLD DEVOTIONS

- Sri R. Kannan

Chatur vidhaa bhajante maam janaah sukritino Arjuna I
Aarto jignaasur arthaarti jnaani cha Bharatarshabha II

(7- 16)

“Oh best of the Bharatas, four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me – the distressed, the one to enjoy one’s own self, the seeker of wealth and the one who is searching for the knowledge of the Absolute”.

Here Sri Krishna refers to four different persons.

1. Aartah-The one who has lost all his wealth somehow. He wants to regain the lost wealth.
2. Jignaasuh-The one who likes to enjoy his own self which is said to be more enjoyable without the tinge of worldly miseries.
3. Arthaarthi-The one who is born very poor, seeks fresh wealth.

4. Jnaani-The one who wants to attain the Moksha and enjoy Bliss.

All the above four persons worship the Lord only to get their wishes fulfilled. That is they do not approach anybody else for their purpose.

The first one worships the God and entreats Him that he has lost all wealth by some means and that the Lord may kindly restore him the lost wealth so that he can live happily.



The second one is a little learned person. He knows that the worldly pleasures are short lived and limited in quantity. He has learnt that enjoying one's own self – Atma, which is imperishable, is superior and entreats the Lord to grant him his wish of enjoying the same.

The third one is born very poor and struggling in life to meet day today requirements. Seeing others enjoying wealth, he prays to the Lord to grant him opulence to enjoy the life as other.

In fact the first and the third ones both of them seek wealth in the material world but due to different circumstances and as such they can be clubbed together (actually the lord clubs the two into one category in the 8th Chapter).

The last but not the least one is Jnaani. He has learnt that the supreme enjoyment is Moksha where the Bliss is eternal and unlimited. That is he wants to enjoy the Lord in Sri Vaikuntam eternally.

The first three persons may leave the contact of the Lord once their wishes are granted by Him and prepare to enjoy their life accordingly. The last one Jnaani, will never leave the Lord as his wish is to enjoy the Lord himself eternally. That is why the Lord considers Jnaani as His Soul and never likes to be separated from him. '*Jnaani tu atmaiva me matam*' 7-18

In fact the Lord declares all the four persons referred above are magnanimous souls.

'Udaaraah sarvaa evaite' 7-18

All these are undoubtedly magnanimous souls because they give me an opportunity to grant them their wishes- establishing me as a person of Mercy.

In fact the Lord insists Arjuna to engage his mind on Him always and attain him ultimately like a Jnaani.

Manmanaa bhava madbhakto
madyaaji maam namaskuru I
Maam evaisyaasi yuktavaivam
atmaanam matparaayanah II

(9-34)

Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisance to Me and worship Me. By completely absorbed in Me you will attain Me ultimately and enjoy everlasting Bliss like a Jnaani).

As such the Jnaani is the most superior among the four, since he enjoys eternal Bliss.

Similarly, the Lord refers four persons as miscreants

Na maam dushkrtino moodhaah
prapadhyante naraadhamaah I
Maayayaa apahruta jnaanaah
aasuram bhaavam aasritaah II (7-15)

Moodhaah- foolish people, they do not care to know the Lord with all His auspicious qualities.

Naraadhamaah – they know God's superiority but run away from Him thanking that He is unapproachable, though He is very simple and easily adorable.

Aphruta jnaanaah- they know the superiority and His auspicious qualities but are carried away by the ill advices of others and forsake Him.

Asuram Bhaavam Asritaah – they are esthetics who are trying to establish the non existence of the God with their demonical nature.

The Almighty is forced to dislike these persons He dooms them to their fates.

So, we should, as told to Arjuna by Sri Krishna, concentrate on Him, worship Him and surrender unto Him to attain the most superior goal of bliss.

Krishnaarpanamasthu



The Magnificence of Tirumala in Sri Vijayadasa's Literature

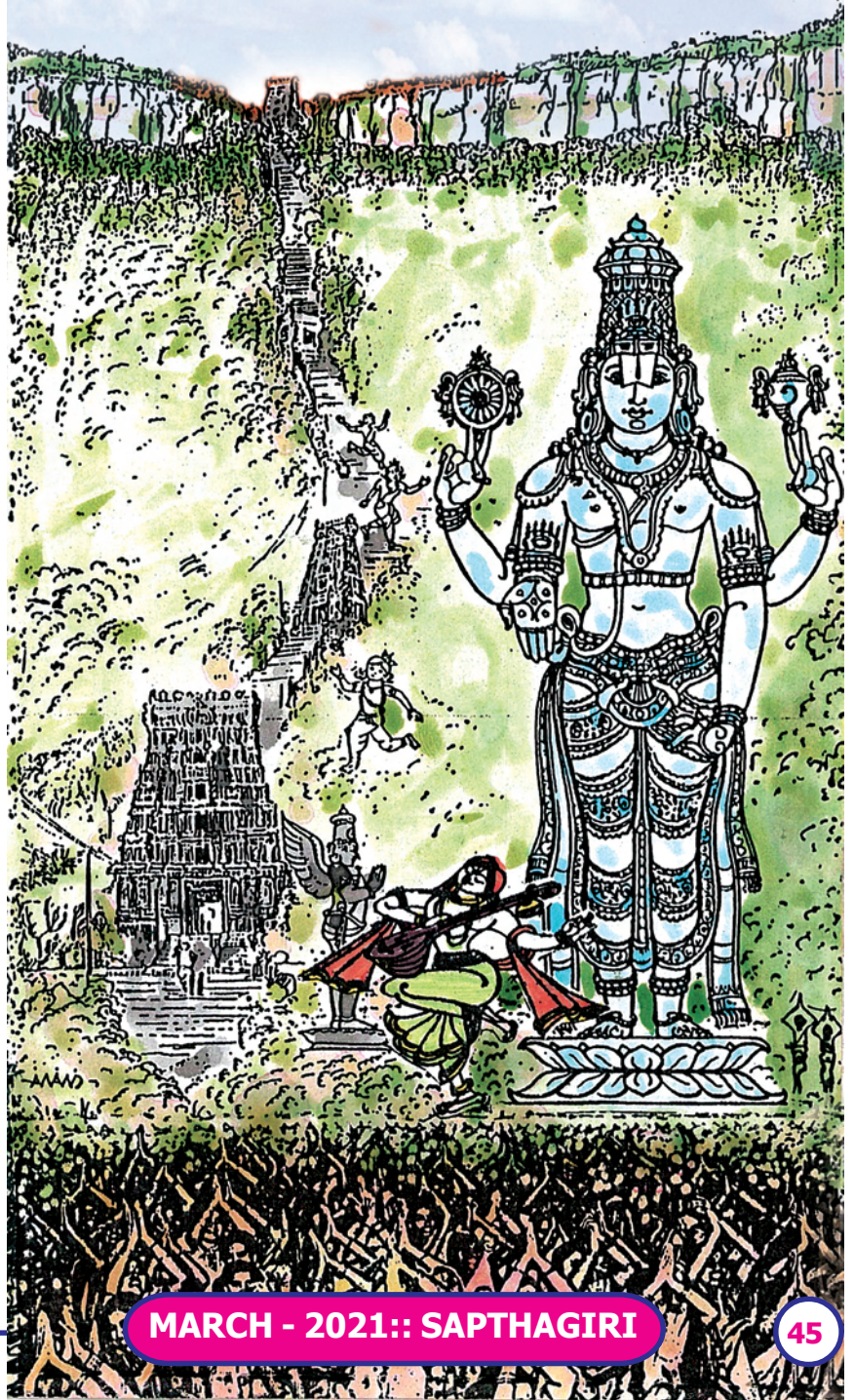
It is sufficient for a human being in his life when he takes a holy bath in the Swami Pushkarini in Tirumala and visits Lord Venkateswara with devotion and diligence. Such a man can wander in the 'akash' (sky) i.e., swarga (heaven), the earth and the nether world and can get his unasked desires fulfilled and can easily get salvation by having the grand 'darshan' of the lotus feet of Lord Sri Hari.

When Sri Vijayadasa visited the hill, he narrated what he had seen on it. The deities, Gandharvas, Uragas, Yakshas, Siddhas, Garuda, Kimpurusha, Kinneras, Guhyakas, Sadhyas, the sage Tumbura and others saints did penance among the bushy forests on the hill and they wished for the grace of Lord Srinivasa. Extolling the magnificence of Tirumala, Sri Vijayadasa said that the stones available on the hill were called 'Salagramamas' and 'Sudarsanamas' the shining sand mounds were 'Chakrankitamas'. Tirumala is the 'Vaikuntam' confirmed on the earth. The enlightened people know that Tirumala is 'Swetadweepa' and 'Anantasanamas'. Lord Brahma, Lord Siva and other deities worship Lord Venkateswara as Vijayavittala with utmost piety and devotion.

10

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF Dasa Bhakti

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



MARCH - 2021:: SAPTHAGIRI

45

The pilgrimage to Tirumala is also called 'Varagiri Yatra' as it fulfills the wishes of the devotees by the abundant grace of Vijayavittala. Tirumala is the most sublime 'kshetra' of all in the three 'lokas'. A virtuous person who walks on the auspicious hill even with a single step will be blessed. He will make his journey in a divine path. Even the smallest deeds like taking a holy bath on the hill would bring auspicious results infinitely. It is equal to Meru mountain. There would be no agonies from the side of the wicked ones.

According to Sri Vijayadasa, Tirumala is Vaikunta in Kruta Yuga. It is 'Anantasana' in Treta Yuga. In Dwapara Yuga, it is a wonderful Sweta Dweepam. In the present Yuga, it is 'Varagiri' which is also called 'Venkatam.' After knowing this, the enlightened people used to worship the hill. A single visit to Tirumala would bring auspiciousness which is equal to many 'yagnas', 'japas', 'tapas', pilgrimages, charities and many 'vratas' done by a devotee who offers them to Lord Krishna after knowing the devotional philosophy. It is not possible to the wicked people. After knowing the magnificence of the hill, even Lord Brahma was also stunned. Lord Tiruvenkatanadha would protect His devotees who have sincere devotion.

Worship the Lord with devotion

Sri Vijayadasa feels that every devotee confirms that Tirumala is the Vaikuntam on the earth and the 'jnanis' like Suras, Kinneras, Siddhas, Garudas, Sadhyas, Gandharvas, Urugas, Yakshas, Kimpurushas, Charanas, Varamunas and bhusuras wish to get salvation and they were wandering on the hill meditating on the Lord of Tirumala with utmost spirit of renunciation and devotion. On this auspicious hill, all the deities were

born in many forms like trees and creepers. They serve and worship the Lord with devotion and animals are visible to the devout devotees. They are not visible to those who have no devotion. The devotees who chant and worship Tirumala would always be blessed by the Lord. The pilgrimage to Tirumala is a unique one. Each and every one cannot get this opportunity easily. Lord Srinivasa only knows the greatness of Tirumala. To get the opportunity of going to Tirumala is the excellent result of the auspiciousness of one's infinite births. 'Metlotsava Seva' is one of the most significant and renowned 'sevas' of the Lord done by the devotees. Sri Vijayadasa described the order of the 'seva' performed by the devotees traditionally with piety after they arrive at Tirumala and how they would visit the Lord in a 'Suladi'.

Holy bath in Pushkarini

Under the leaves fallen from the cluster of trees of the hill, there is Kapila Thirtham which includes many 'thirthams'. In it, the human beings take their bath with 'sankalpam' and offer charities to the Brahmins and they come to Tirumala with a spirit of devotion, diligence and zeal. After climbing up every one hundred steps, they should sit and listen to the story of Lord Sri Hari and also do eulogize Lord Srinivasa. On the way, they should have the grand 'darshan' of Lord Narasimha and should see the summit of the temple and should do 'pradakshina' around the temple and should offer salutations to the Lord Varaha Swamy who is associated with the goddess Dhara Devi. Later on, one should take a holy dip in the Swamy Pushkarini and enter Mahadwaram of the main temple of Lord Venkateswara and stand near the 'Garuda Gambha' and meditate on the Lord and keep waiting

for the brilliant 'darshan' of Lord Srinivasa, the Paramatma who promotes 'moksha' that saves from all mundane trials and tribulations. It is said that who makes a donation of 'salagrama,' gold and silver after completing their holy bath in the Swamy Pushkarini drives out the 'arishadvargas' and brings him great auspiciousness.

The visit to Tirumala and the glorious 'darshan' of the Lord, would wash off all sins of the deities also. The sin of Lord Siva, i.e., the 'Brahmahatyapatakam,' Lord Chandra's 'gurutalpam,' Lord Sukra's sin i.e., 'Suraapanam,' King Bali's 'suvarnaapaharam,' Lord Indra's 'parasthrigamanam', the sin of Balabhadra, Lord Yama's sin and the sins of other deities were also washed out after the grand 'darshan' of the hill. For the hill of 'bhava', Tirumala hill is the 'Vajrayudha.' Lord Vijayavittala would grace His devotees who come to Tirumala. Describing the beauty and charm of Tirumala, Sri Vijayadasa says that Tirumala has seven summits shining like the refined gold as it contains seven hills and it has spread to fourteen 'lokas' like 'Saptadweepas.' It is shining like the radiant rays of Lord Surya. Further, he describes that the elegance of the hill is indescribable. It is shining like the refined gold. It is 'Bangaru Shikarala Bahu Brahmayamu'.

Lord is everything

The animals, water creatures, groups of birds wandering around the hill have their own kaleidoscopic beauty. The hill contains a variety of trees and creepers hanging with diverse fruits. There are caves, tanks, graceful mountain summits here and there. Gods, Garudas, Gandharvas, Kinnerras, Siddhas, Saadhyas, Kimpurushas, Yakshas, Vidyadharas and saints were wandering among

them. On the hill, there were many sages and saints who had sacrificed everything and meditate on the Lord as He is everything for them. Sri Vijayadasa praises Lord Varaha Swamy as the Lord born from the nose of Lord Brahma. When Hiranyaksha captured the Earth, Lord Vishnu in the form of Varaha killed the monster and protected the world after listening to the earnest prayers of the deities.

In the world of 'haridasas' literature in Kannada, Sri Vijayadasa was renowned as 'Varakavi' and 'Bhaktakavi.' Most of his 'kritis' are complex. They have the poetic quality of possessing 'naarikelapaaka'. Vagdevi, the Goddess of Learning granted the showers of words like the auspicious waters of the Ganges. The 'suprabhata' song called 'Elu' which was composed of complex words. It consisted of nine 'charanas'. Mainly, there were two significant 'rasas' namely 'bhakti rasa' and 'srungara rasa.' Sri Vijayadasa's description of dawn and the activities done by the devotees were very striking. As Aruna is driving the chariot of Lord Surya rapidly, the Moon gradually loses its brightness. The stars become invisible. The cock crows at dawn. The entire world is getting free from darkness and is filled with luminosity. As lotuses bloom, the bees fall on them. Sri Vijayadasa said: 'O! Kamaladalayataksha! Please wake up in order to protect Your innumerable devotees.'

The most affectionate and amiable 'haridasas' stand before the Lord in groups with their musical instruments like tambura, cymbals, conches, the temple bell and their tingling bells of their legs produce wonderful, melodious and divine music that echoes the entire sky singing His virtues. It is impossible to describe in words. Sri Vijayadasa said: 'O! Seshagirivasa! Bhaktajana Samrakshaka

! Wake up!' All the servants are standing before Your 'Bangaru Vakili' with hot water, aromatic things like kasturi, javvadi, fragrant oil, mirror, golden planks for sitting, 'sandals,' silk clothes and the most beautiful ornaments. O! Adi Hari! Bhaktajanasamrakshaka! Wake up!'

O! Lord! Wake up

Lord Indra, Lord Agni, Dharmaja, Lord Varuna, Lord Vayu, Lord Kubera, Lord Nairuti, Lord Eswara, and Lord Surya and other deities came on their vehicles along with their attendants. In the same way, the saints like Mitravarana, Jamadagni, Kashyapa, Viswamitra, Bharadwaja, Sanakadulu and Narada singing 'sthotra' on the Lord. They sang: 'You are our refuge. O! Dhaatri Ramana! O! Bhaktajanakarakshaka! Wake up!' SriVijayadasa praises the Lord: 'O! Lord! Your regular wake up time is over. Still You have not woke up. Is it the reason that Your consort Sri Devi applauded You in the time of 'rasa kreedha?' What is the reason? Are You not listening to our prayers? We do not know whether You have got a great position than the present one. O! Sachithanandatmaka! O! Bhaktajanakarakshaka! Please get up and protect the world.

After the grand 'darshan' of Lord Venkateswara, Sri Vijayadasa sang the magnificence of His ten incarnations: 'The Lord's 'Matsyavataram' symbolized sleeplessness. 'Kurmavataram' represented staying in water. In 'Varahavataram,' You brought back peace to Goddess Bhudevi. In 'Narasimhavataram,' You destroyed Hiranyakasipa, the son of Kasyapa. In 'Vamanavataram,' You possessed Goddess Lakshmi, the Queen of the Oceans. In 'Parasuramavataram,' You punished the cruel kings.

In 'Ramavataram,' You sent the 'mudrika' to Bhumiya. In 'Krishnavataram' You lifted the mountain. In 'Bhuddhavataram' You killed Tripurasura. In 'Kalki Avataram' You would establish 'dharma' and drive away the evils of Kali Purusha. You are the Lord eulogized in the Vedas. Please wake up from the 'Seshatalpa.' Sri Vijayadasa's description of Tirumala and the 'leelas' of Lord Venkateswara are highly devotional and tremendous.

(to be continued)

STATEMENT ABOUT OWNERSHIP AND OTHER PARTICULARS ABOUT

SAPTHAGIRI

(MONTHLY)
FORM IV

See Rule 8

1. Place of Publication : TIRUPATI
2. Periodicity of its Publication : Monthly
3. Honorary Editor : **Dr. K.S. JAWAHAR REDDY, I.A.S.,**
Executive Officer, TTD
4. Printer's Name : **Sri P. Ramaraju, M.A.,**
Whether citizen of India : Yes
Address : Special Officer
(Publications and Press)
T.T.D., Tirupati.
5. Editor & Publisher's Name : **Prof. K. Rajagopalan, Ph.D.,**
Whether citizen of India : Yes
Address : Chief Editor (i/c),
Sapthagiri,
T.T.D. Journal, Tirupati.
6. Name and address of individuals who own the Newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one percent of the Total Capital } Board of Trustees represented by the Executive Officer on behalf of T.T.D., Tirupati

I, K. Rajagopalan, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

TIRUPATI
Date : 28-2-2021

(Sd.) **Prof. K. Rajagopalan**
Signature of the Publisher



LORD SURYA - PROVIDER OF GOOD HEALTH

Telugu Original by : Dr. C. Madhusudanasarma
English by : Smt. P. Sujatha

Our Vedic wisdom says that the health is very important for accomplishing righteousness, desire, and salvation. Lord Surya is the provider of such good health. It is mentioned that the health is under the control of Lord Surya.

This universe stands as a testimony for the birth of several crores of living species. The life cycle of birth to death is perfectly manoeuvred by an unknown supernatural power. One of such power sources is Lord Surya. Our ancestors have given prime importance to the worship of Lord Surya in our daily life.

Lord Surya plays a pivotal role in administering daily rituals of the world. With his powerful rays, he is awakening our life force and creating body power to perform our duties effectively.

Since time immemorial, our ancestors are worshippers of Lord Surya. There are several health tips behind worshipping the Lord. Just by a mere salute to the Lord Surya early in the morning, he

would bless us with health and wellbeing. He is benevolent to those who worship him. Even those who cannot perform, dawn prayers, are blessed with powers to perform better in the day by mere offering morning salute to him. It has become a tradition and daily routine in many of our lives to pray early in the morning standing opposite to the Sun.

The light emanated from the Sun rays is extremely powerful and beyond the comprehension of us. Vitamin D with the help of cholesterol in the body is produced through the ultra-violet rays of the Sun.

D-Vitamin is very vital for the good health of our body. Lack of it, will create severe illness to the body. The body will be inflicted with diseases frequently. Knee pains, muscle pains, weakness, tiredness, lack of appetite, sleeplessness, infertility, diseases relating to bones, skin, blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, etc., are some of the off-shoots of deficiency of D-Vitamin. If the sweating glands do not function properly, lack of concentration, memory loss, eye related problems will crop up. Age related issues will pop up fast. Skin and hair glittering fades out.

Hence it is necessary to expose to sun light to produce D-Vitamin in the body. Realising the relevance of sun light on the health, our ancestors have created some customary rituals and ceremonies to be a part of our daily life so that in

one way or other we receive sufficient body vitamins through natural resources such as sunlight.

Young children are exposed to sunlight in the morning after applying gingelly oil so that they get sufficient D-vitamin which makes them energetic and healthy. On the first day of Sankranti festivals, Bhogi day, regi pallu (in english called Jujebi) are dropped from the head. Through them the sun's power is received by the young body. During summertime, people fly kites in the morning and evening. Same time, sweets made of gingelly and jaggery are served. This custom has dual advantage. The fats and calcium produced through gingelly will help healthy growth of the body alongwith Vitamin-D received from the sun rays.

Similarly, the cow dung cakes, ghee, mango and pipal tree branches are burnt on the Bhogi day. The smoke contains Silver Iodide and Nitrogen which will help reduce the impact of ultra-violet rays in summer heat. We also take bath keeping cakitrious gigantea (Jilledu) leaves on the head, shoulders, and hands on Rathasaptami day. These leaves attract power from the sun and imbibe into the body.

Our ancestors have thus explained the relevance and importance of the powers of the Sun rays and how we should attract it through religious means.

Unfortunately, because of the present-day busy life, many people working in offices, students, businessmen, software engineers, etc., are unable to expose themselves to the sunrays and thus

becoming a target of illness. It is not beyond exaggeration to mention that due to the recent Covid-19, many citizens restricted their movements and thus could not get exposed to sun light.

We must always seek the blessings of the Lord Surya, a doyen of power, activity, and movement to provide us good health and energy.

Bhavishoyttara Purana prays Lord Surya as :

Sarva Dukkopa santaya –
Sarva papa harayacha |
Sarva Vyadhi vinasaya –
Bhaskaraya namonamah ||

(I salute to the Lord Bhaskara who is the pacifier from all sorrows, remover of all sins, and destroyer of all diseases.)



SOLUTION TO PUZZLE

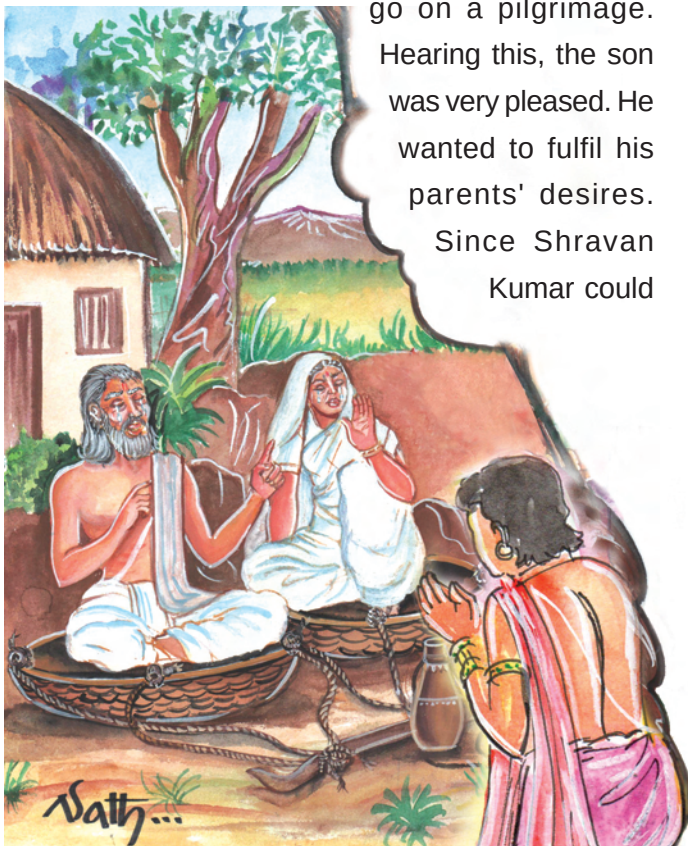
1 K	A	2 L	I	3 D	A	4 S		5 S
I		I		U		O		O
6 D	I	M		N		7 N	O	W
		I		I				R
8 M	A	T	E		9 H	A	R	I
A				10 B				
11 D	A	D		12 A	S	13 A	N	14 A
R				N		J		N
15 I	L	L		16 A	J	A	Y	A

THE STORY OF SHRAVAN KUMAR

- Smt. N. Kalpana

Long time ago, there lived a boy called Shravan Kumar. He was very unfortunate as both of his parents were blind. Shravan Kumar's parents, Shantanu and Gyanvanti (Malaya), were hermits. He had to look after his parents and do all types of household chores throughout the day. As his parents were unable to see, so he had to do all the work for them. He was a very responsible son and did all the work of his parents with full of eagerness and responsibility. None of the wishes of his parents remained unfulfilled as he always tried his best to fulfil every wish of his parents. He even prefers to worship them instead of God.

When they became aged, parents desired to go on a pilgrimage. Hearing this, the son was very pleased. He wanted to fulfil his parents' desires. Since Shravan Kumar could



not afford the transport, so he created a balance like device where he could carry his parents on his shoulders and take them on the pilgrimage. Soon they set off their journey. During their travel, Shravan Kumar offered his parents some fruits from the forest. They ate the fruits happily but never had any corn or cereal. Since they were on a pilgrimage, they avoided food offered by anyone else. Shravan Kumar is famous for his devotion and obedience to his blind parents.

Unity, peace and obedience are essential in every family between children and their parents. Obeying parents is a direct commandment of God. The word obey cannot be separated from the idea of honouring them. Honour your parents so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy life on earth. The commandment 'Honour your father and mother' is the first one with a promise attached so that things will go well for you, and you will live for a long time in the land.

It's time to admit they know more than you and know what's best for you. Therefore, you should not only listen to what your parents have to say, but respect what they are asking you to do. They will ask for plenty of things that are in your best interest, even if you can't understand it at the time.

Moral:

The moral of the story is we should respect our elders and take care of our parents till our last breathe.





PICTURE STORY...

KIRAATAARJUNEEYAM

Original Story in
Telugu by :
Dr. K. Ravichandran
Pictures :
Sri Thumbali Sivaji
Translated by :
Smt. J.C. Gnanaprasuna

Lord Indra was pleased with the austere penance done by Arjuna.

Lord Indra,
'Please grant me
'divine weapons'.

Why do you ask me for
the divine weapons? I will
grant you auspicious
bliss.

My brothers are suffering from many troubles
in the forest. How can I become happy?
After my death also, my fame would not be
spoiled. Swami bless me with a solution.

Your goodness is admirable. To get your
desire fulfilled, you have to go for the grand
'darshan' (do penance) of Lord Shiva.

Sages were very much worried
about the penance. They went
to Lord Shiva: 'O! Lord! Arjuna
is doing penance rigorously.
Please fulfill his desire.

'Don't worry my dear sages.
I am going to fulfill his desire'.

Lord Shiva wore the guise of a 'kirata'(hunter).
His consort Goddess Parvati also wore a
suitable guise. Both were wandering in the
location where Arjuna was doing penance.

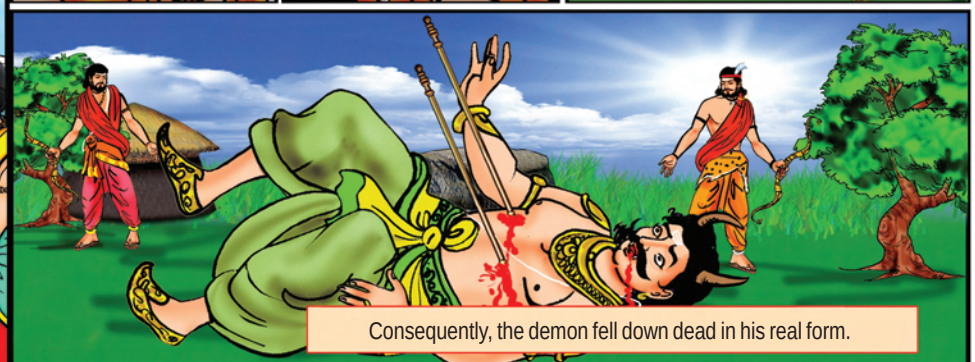
Meanwhile, a demon called Mookudu
attacked Arjuna in the form of a wild boar.
Arjuna took his bow and arrows to kill the
wild boar.



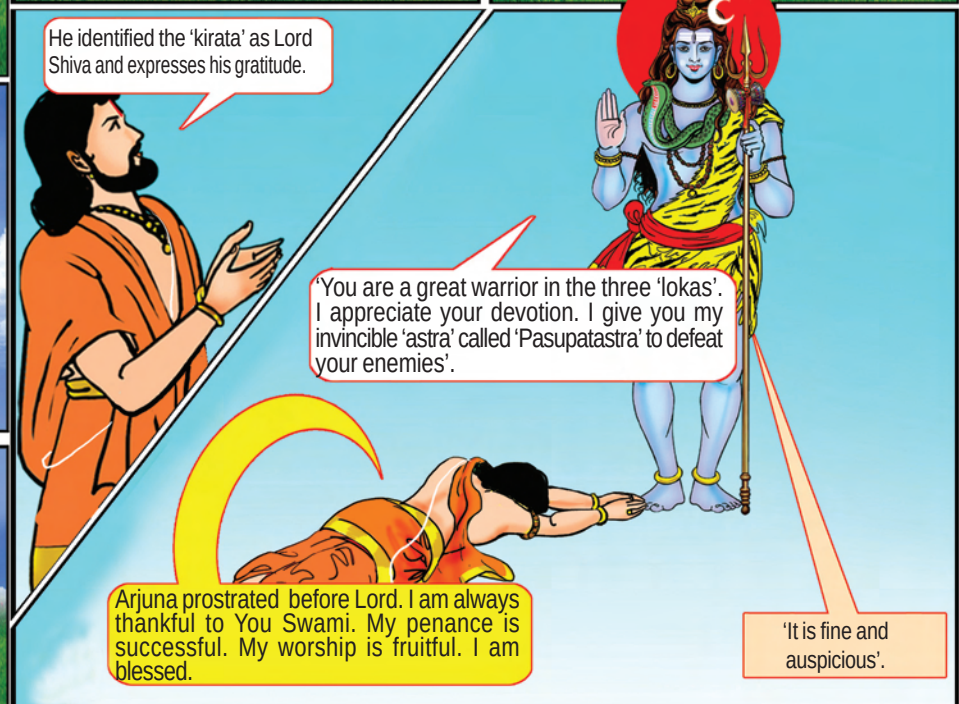
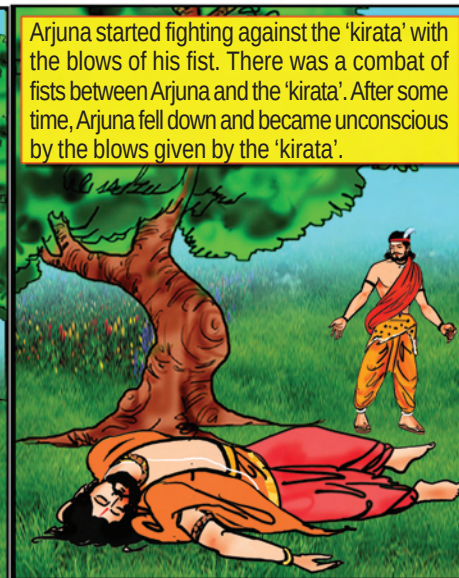
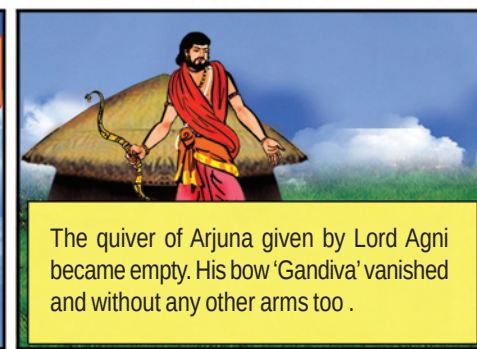
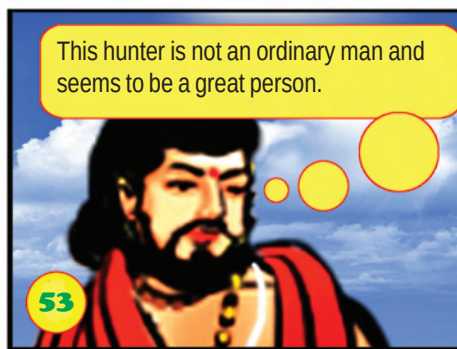
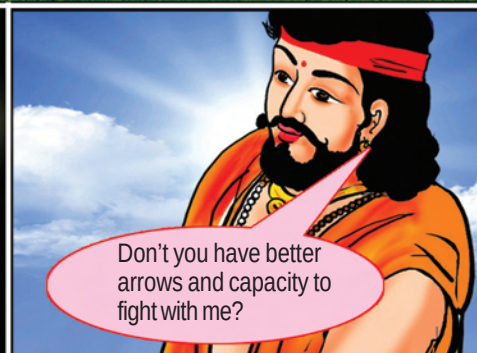
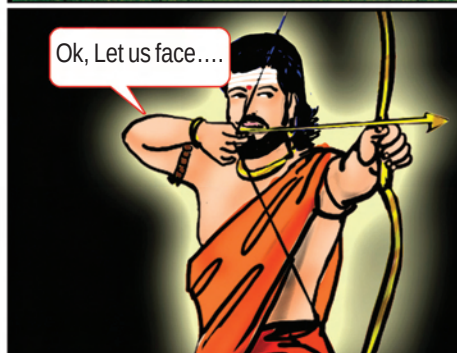
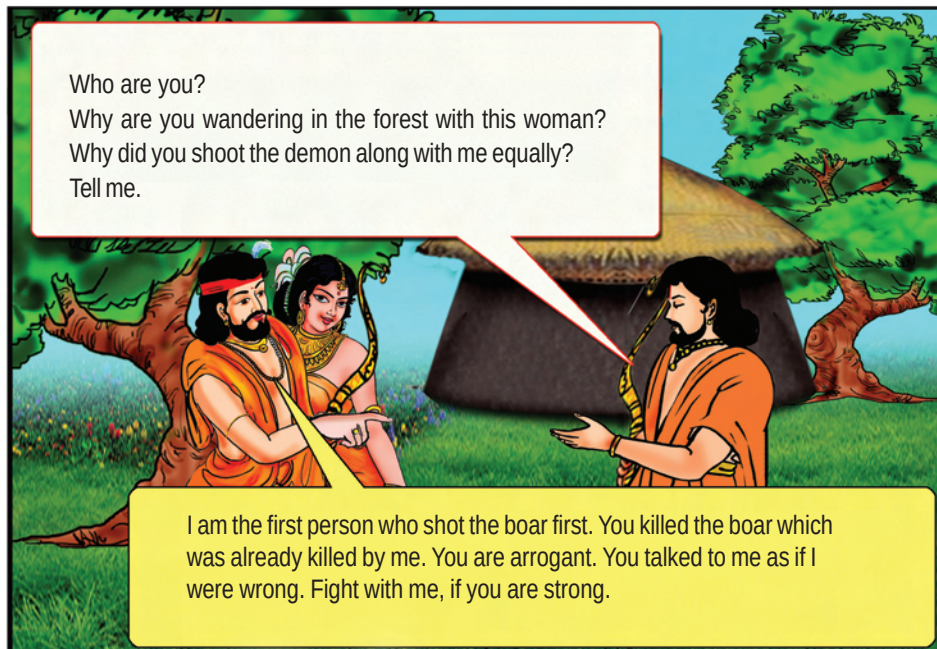
Do not shoot the
boar.
I will shoot.

Why should I listen
to your words?

Both Arjuna and the hunter
shot the boar with arrows.



Consequently, the demon fell down dead in his real form.



In the next issue we will discuss about another divine story.

End

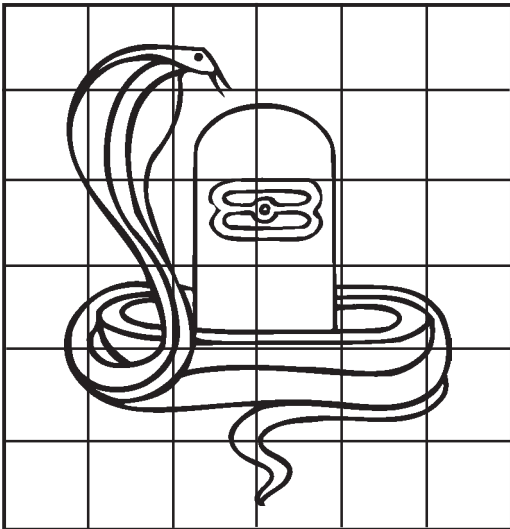
Quiz

- Who is the consort of Sri Maha Vishnu
a) Goddess Parvathi b) Goddess Lakshmi c) Goddess Saraswathi d) Goddess Durga
- Lord Siva's vahanam is
a) Nandi b) Garuda c) Airavata d) Kamadhenu
- The 108 names of Goddess / God is called
a) Ashtottara Sahasranaamam b) Ashtottara Shatanaamam c) Ashtottaram d) Ashtakam
- Name the Goddess emerged from Ksheera Sagara Mathanam
a) Goddess Saraswathi b) Goddess Parvathi c) Goddess Durga d) Goddess Lakshmi
- Who drank poison during churning of ocean
a) Lord Vishnu b) Lord Brahma c) Lord Siva d) Lord Indra
- Name the avatara assumed by Lord Vishnu while churning the milky ocean
a) Kurma b) Matsya c) Varaha d) Narasimha
- Sri Kaalahasteeswara Swami temple is situated in
a) Telangana b) Tamilnadu c) Karnataka d) Andhra Pradesh

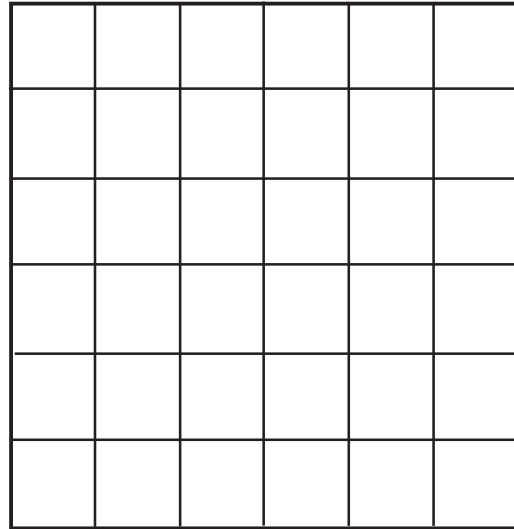
Answers: 1) b 2) a 3) b 4) d 5) c 6) a 7) d

DRAWING

Colour the Picture



Draw the Picture as given



Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

VONTIMITTA
SRI KODANDARAMASWAMIVARI
BRAHMOTSAVAMS
21-04-2021 to 29-04-2021



21-04-2021 Wednesday
Day: Dwajaroohanam
Night : Seshavahanam

22-04-2021 Thursday
Day: Venuganaalamkaram
Night : Hamsavahanam

23-04-2021 Friday
Day: Vatapathrasai Alamkaram
Night : Simhavahanam

24-04-2021 Saturday
Day: Navaneethakrushnalankaram
Night : Hanumathseva

25-04-2021 Sunday
Day: Mohiniseva
Night : Garudaseva

26-04-2021 Monday
Day: Sivadhanurbhanalamkaram
Night : Kalyanotsavam, Gajavahanam

27-04-2021 Tuesday
Day: Rathotsavam

28-04-2021 Wednesday
Day: Kaaleeyamardhanaalamkaram
Night : Aswavahanam

29-04-2021 Thursday
Day: Chakrasnanam
Night : Dwajavarohanam



Tirupati

**Sri Kapileswaraswamivari
Brahmotsavams**

04-03-2021 to 13-03-2021

