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# Tattvāloka

THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUTH

**THE LIONESS' MILK**

**Self-knowledge to end  
the Birth Cycle**

**Devotion to  
Mothers**

**Say It in  
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# Tattvāloka

THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUTH



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Patron-in-Chief His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji

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तत्त्वं जिज्ञासमानानां लोकानां प्रीतिमावहन् । तत्त्वलोको विजयतां शारदादयया सदा ॥  
*May Tattvāloka always excel, by the grace of Sharada, delighting the seekers of Truth.*

*His Holiness Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji*

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# Jagadguru Speaks...

## Prudence Must Precede Any Activity

The purpose of life for every man is the attainment of joy and peace. To achieve this, he makes use of every chance, in every possible way by performing various types of *karmas* (actions). In the process, his mind starts craving for impossibilities, and compliance to the demands of his craving mind and senses can cause his fall.

Hence, like a benign father, our *Sastras* advise man to exercise a bit of caution and think about the pros and cons while performing *karma*. Prudence and mind control are necessary for any activity; be it spiritual or otherwise.

One who has not conquered his senses will be driven to engage often in bad *karmas*, even if he does not like it. He eventually gets covered, like a silkworm, with the twists and turns of bad *karma* with no means of extricating himself -

देह्यज्ञोऽजितषड्वर्गो नेच्छन् कर्माणि कार्यते ।

कोशकार इवात्मानं कर्मणाऽऽच्छाद्य मुह्यति ॥

It is also a known fact that in accordance with the extent of *dharma* and *adharma* that a person has engaged in, he or she will proportionately enjoy and suffer in the life hereafter.

येन यावान् यथाऽधर्मो धर्मो वेह समीहितः ।  
स एव तत्फलं भुङ्क्ते तथा तावदमुत्र वै ॥

Hence, before engaging in any *karma*, it is advisable to ponder over the effects it will produce. Tuning the mind into a *sattvic* mode and doing the *karmas* in a spirit of surrender to the Almighty will yield a wise man a clear perception. Thence, his quest for joy and peace will well up to fulfillment by itself.

We bless everyone to understand this while performing allotted duties and make life meaningful.



Dear Sir,

The article *Ananta Sayana, the God of Creative Energy* (December 2022) features the beautiful *sloka* in *Ranganatha Ashtakam* by Adi Sankara extolling Sri Ranganatha as a blissful form of *Brahman*, an embodiment of Vedas, and as the protector of *dharma*.

The article has the remarkable power of charming the readers and elevating them to a higher plane aesthetically, emotionally and spiritually.

Pichumani R  
[rpjayav@gmail.com](mailto:rpjayav@gmail.com)

Dear Sir,

This is regarding the article *Duty Before Expectations* in the December issue.

As between 'bargainers' and sincere and hardworking employees in our organisation, I used to mention and console in a way that 'the first reward for good work is more work,' and other expected rewards would follow and faster in the long run.

I was inspired at the way the author developed the whole idea up to *Ramarajyam*.

K. Balasubramanian FCA  
[athreyakb@rediffmail.com](mailto:athreyakb@rediffmail.com) [rpjayav@gmail.com](mailto:rpjayav@gmail.com)



Dear Sir,

The *upadesa* under *Jagadguru Speaks* in the December issue is great, profound, simple and easy to grasp. *Isvara* is supreme reality .

As soon as we get up, we see world in front of us which is beautiful, useful, but not steady and stable but as though real. The supreme power is invisible to us and hence not registered in our mind.

The *upadesa* is to gain knowledge about *Isvara*. The approach is discrimination between *Atma*, the real, and *Anatma*, as though real. In other words, make *Isvara* dominant in life by worshipping daily and seek his grace for all activities. As days go by, the practice would end up in *vairagya* to gain tranquil mind and satisfaction in life.

N V K Murthy  
[nvk.rukmani@gmail.com](mailto:nvk.rukmani@gmail.com)

**Errors and Corrections:** The opening sentence in “The Divine Names of Sri Krishna” in the December 2022 issue should read as “...Sri Krishna is the eighth *avatara* of Sri Mahavishnu...”, and not as printed.

In the article '*Story from Epics – The Magic of the Lost Calves*' in the December 2022 issue, the last sentence appears half complete in the print edition due to a technical error. The sentence should read as: “Through this simple story, *Bhagavatham* seeks to convey the supreme *advaitic* concept that the Lord pervades everything, and that *Brahman* is reflected in every being as the individual *atman*.”





# The Lioness's Milk

A beautiful story that makes you think

**L**et me begin with a story. Taken from Uri Kaplan's *Wise Tales From The Jewish World*.

A mighty king fell ill with a strange disease and the doctors recommended an

unusual remedy: the milk of a lioness.

The palace announced a reward for the brave person who would be able to obtain such priceless medicine, but most people, of course, were

too terrified to try. However, there was one wise man who had a plan.

The man purchased a dozen lambs in the market and hurried to the lioness's den. He placed one lamb in front of the den every few hours, and by the third day, the satiated lioness became so friendly he could pet her. He drew some of her milk into a small bottle and headed back to town.

Midway through his journey, the man stopped for a nap and had a rather peculiar dream. He dreamed that his limbs quarrelled with one another. Each believed it deserved the credit for the mission's success.

The feet claimed that only due to their ability to walk could the milk have been obtained. The hands argued that without them, the lioness could not have been milked. The eyes objected and reminded everyone that

without them, the man could not have found his way to the den in the first place.

The brain calmly reasoned that it was responsible for the entire plan. And the tongue disputed them all and boasted: "Without me the man is hopeless!" The others, however, sneered at this. "Quiet, you foolish, boneless thing!" they said. "You contributed nothing!"

The insulted tongue decided to teach them all a lesson. It would show them who was really in charge. And indeed, the following day, the man entered the palace and told the king that he obtained the milk of a snake for him. The king was enraged at this bold disrespect, and ordered that the man's limbs be severed and his eyes gouged out.

Upon hearing this, the feet and the hands and the eyes trembled in fear. "Please

save us!” they begged the tongue.

Having thus proven its power, the tongue became more considerate.

“Forgive me, your honour,” said the man to the king. “That was merely a slip of the tongue. I have the milk of a lioness for you.” The king drank the milk and was soon cured, and the man learned that the tongue should be regarded with due respect.

### **Madhura Bhashanam**

One can never speak gently or sweetly enough. In fact, not just when speaking to someone but also when we are speaking about someone, it always helps to pause for a moment, and ask yourself if what you are about to utter is meaningful in any way. Am I saying anything nice about this person? Is it useful or helpful? And above all, can I say it gently, humbly and sweetly?

You will be amazed at what loving and courteous speech can do for you. With a respectful and kind tone, a million barriers can be broken down.

I agree that there are situations when we have to be firm or confrontational. And yet, I say that we do not have to be rude or dismissive. Gentle speech can turn even your sworn enemies into your allies.

How difficult is it to use ‘thank you’ and ‘please’ at every opportunity, or to express the good you see in someone, or to acknowledge the contribution of someone in your life? Not very.

Why order when a request will do, why boss around when you can befriend them? Being genuinely kind in your speech will fill your life with a lot of beautiful people who will love you and care for you just as much.

Have you ever opened the shell of a capsule and tasted the actual medicine, such as, paracetamol? To say that it is bitter would be an understatement, you would want to scrub your tongue with soap afterwards. The job of the shell is to encapsulate the right amount of medicine and make the whole thing digestible, palatable.

What is the shell of medicine in any capsule is what the brain is to the tongue in speech. That is, no matter how bitter or useful the words you may wish to deliver with your tongue, an evolved brain will help you package them nicely.

A beautiful brain without a useful tongue is of little use in this world.

The hallmark of a spiritually evolved individual is that, seeped in truth, he possesses both: a beautiful mind and gentle speech.

For, truth is nothing but another dimension of love. Beauty, gentleness, compassion, calm and humility are mere refractions in the kaleidoscope of truth.

The tenderness of your heart, the care in your actions, the sweetness in your speech are signs of how close you are to your truth, the truth. Either you practice the virtues and you will unearth your truth, or you find the truth and the virtues will come flocking to you. Either way, you progress.

After all, what is true is what is beautiful, and what is both is invariably what is divine. *Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram.*





## Wisdom for Self-Improvement – 16

*Tattvāloka* continues the series on key *slokas* in *Bhagavad Gita* on the journey towards self-improvement and attaining true knowledge.

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः  
 श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।  
 तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव  
 विदधाम्यहम् ॥

*Yo yo yām yām tanuṁ  
 bhaktaḥ shraddha-  
 yārcitum-icchati |  
 Tasya tasyācalām  
 shraddhām tām-eva  
 vidadhāmy-aham ||*

***Bhagavad Gītā 7-21***

It is time now to come to the *bhakti* aspect of *Sanatana Dharma*.

And we start with one of the easiest statements on *bhakti* in the *Gita*. There are

devotees and devotees; and there are deities and deities. That is why the *sloka* starts with 'yo yo' (whatever devotee) and 'yām yām' (whichever deity).

And the *sloka* therefore says: Whichever form of a deity a devotee wants to worship with faith, I make the faith of that person steady towards that very form.

The words '*shraddha*' occurs twice in this *sloka*. This refers to the faith of the devotee (first half of the *sloka*), and that unmitigated faith (*acalām shraddhām*) is approved and confirmed by the Lord (in the second half

of the *sloka*) by the words:  
I make that faith of his firm  
and undeviating.

In seeking the fullness of the Supreme, one has to gradually transcend the dualities. But not all aspire or appreciate the need for such a fullness. They become victims to ill-founded devotion and to transitory fruition.

But the Supreme in whom there is no disharmony, takes due note of every one's ways and ambitions and strengthens that same devotion. "Endowed with this faith, the devotee worships that particular *devata* he has in mind," continues Krishna in the next *sloka* (7-22) "and obtains without doubt his desired enjoyments as ordained by Me (the Supreme)!"

One may ask: Why does the Supreme protect the faith of devotees who only need fulfillment of their desires through their hand-picked deities?

The Lord knows that if the devotee is a thoughtful person, there is a strong possibility that he may turn his mind to the Supreme in search of the supreme bliss.

God stoops to meet the soul at the latter's own pace, says Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the scholar-president of India, whose analysis is superb.

He says "Even seers who were so profoundly contemplative as Gautama the Buddha, and Sankara did not repudiate the popular belief in gods. They were conscious of the inexpressibility of the Supreme.... Every surface derives its soil from the depths, even as every shadow reflects the nature of the substance. Besides, all worship elevates. No matter what we revere, so long as our reverence is serious, it helps progress."

 **Prof V. Krishnamurthy**  
profvk@yahoo.com



## Bliss of the Self – 4

The relentless pursuit of 'Who am I?' is the principal means to dissolve one's ego

**A**fter the first verse in his treatise *Ulladu Narpadu*, or 'Forty verses on Reality', Sri Ramana Maharishi draws attention of spiritual seekers in the second verse to the essential requirement of eliminating individual ego.

The second verse thus defines the requirement clearly. While all religions

accept the three postulates - the world, the *jiva* (soul) and God, know that only one principle alone appears as three.

The argument 'the three ever remain as three independent entities', is possible only as long as the ego remains. The best and the highest state is to abide in one's own *svarupa*, the



Self, after the cessation of the ego 'I'.

### True Liberation

The underlying note behind all of Maharishi's teachings is that the destruction of the ego itself is liberation. No experience that retains the ego will be enduring.

According to the Maharishi, accepting the individual-'I' and trying to seek *Brahman*, God or liberation as an external objective goal, is like the thief assuming the guise of a policeman to search for the thief which is he himself!

Disregarding the ego or dismissing it as unreal, one must abide in the Self. Once the ego is burnt to ashes by sheer disregard, the bliss of liberation will be experienced in its fullness.

If the ego is regarded as real, it will project limitations, dualities, triads, the gods, and other worlds.

It will make us imagine the existence of various types of bondage and limitations, and compel us to struggle needlessly to overcome them. This is the complex power of delusion.

Therefore, the foremost need is that one must reject the individuality. "Without stirring the consciousness by any thought or imagination, remain still and abide in the *svasvarupa*, the Self," says the Maharishi.

Abide in stillness, without any movement of tongue, mind or body. And behold the effulgence of the Self within; absence of all fear; the vast ocean of bliss.

The individuality or the *jiva bhava* is itself the seed of ignorance. This is called the primal ignorance (*mula avidya*). Any *sadhana* or spiritual practice that is undertaken with the presumption that the individuality is real,

cannot destroy the ego-sense at all.

### Sadguru as the Solace

How can we eliminate this individual ego? Great sages who have understood its mystery declare that the one and only way this can happen is through the grace and *upadesa* of the Guru.

The words of a *sadguru* will bring about the awareness that the sense of individuality, the *jiva bhava* - is unreal, and that the infinite reality, *Brahman* alone exists. Thus, the *sadguru* at one stroke destroys the *triputi*, and that very instant the lamp of Self-knowledge is lit.

“He who fancies to claim the treasure hidden in the *Upanishadic* words without experiencing his own death is a fake – *kapatayati* - and not a knower of *Brahman*. To him, there is not the effulgence of *chit* that shines when the *triputi* is erased,”

says sage Narayana Guru in his *Atmopadesa Satakam*.

In the spiritual treatise *Kandar Anubhuti*, which literally means God Experience, a deeply philosophical work with profound mystical import, Saint Arunagirinathar sings, “the moment Lord Muruga appeared as my *sadguru* and told me 'Be word-less and remain silent', the three entities, *isvara, jiva and jagat* vanished without any trace, and instantly the unceasing experience of bliss was born”.

As the Maharishi says, there is truly no cause for you to be miserable and unhappy. You yourself impose limitations on your true nature of infinite being, and then weep that you are but a finite creature.

Then you take up this or that *sadhana* to transcend the non-existent limitations. But, if your *sadhana* itself assumes the existence of the

limitations, how can it help you to transcend them?

Know that true knowledge does not create a new being for you, it only removes your 'ignorant ignorance'. Bliss is not added to your nature, it is merely revealed as your true and natural state, eternal and imperishable, says Sri Ramana.

When the whole world continually hypnotises us by constantly asserting that we are the body, we are a man or woman, we have such and such obligations, we are limited and so on, there is no other way to wake up from this awful dream than by hearing the thunderous roar of the *sadguru's* voice that declares: *Tat Tvam Asi* (You Are That!).

*Sadhana*, scriptural scholarship or dignity of birth or status - none of these are helpful to one without the grace of a *sadguru*.

Self-realisation is complete release from the sense of doership and enjoyership. If the individual ego is accepted as real, innumerable triads such as 'God, the individual, the world' and 'the seer, the seen, seeing', will arise in the mind. It is based on this error that all creeds through the ages have affirmed the existence of these triads!

### 'Who Am I?'

When, by enquiring 'Who am I?' one traces the ego to its source, instantly, all these triads will vanish, just as a dream vanishes on waking up. The absolute, non-dual, pure Self alone will shine forth as 'I-I' in the heart.

For the cessation of the ego, the bold pursuance of the Self-enquiry 'Who am I?' is inevitable. One must not trouble oneself trying to research into the entities - the God, the *jiva* and the world. The solution for the miseries in a dream is in

waking up, and not in enquiring into that which is seen in the dream!

Whether one is a follower of *advaita*, *dvaita* or *visishtadvaita* - one's mere faith alone in these doctrines will never lead to liberation. Whatever be the doctrine that one follows, Self-knowledge is essential to attain peace, to attain liberation from *samsara*.

And this will not take place without the complete erasing of the ego. All doctrines rely upon the mind and the ego for their survival. Whatever be a man's religion, as long as the ego (*ahankara*) and mind born of *avidya*, remain unaffected, he will continue to be in misery.

The only herb that can erase the *avidya dosha* is *jnana*. Hence, *atma vichara* is indispensable for Self-knowledge.

The extinction of the ego will bring about supreme

happiness to the follower of any faith. On the other hand, if the ego is not erased, there will not be any benefit derived from the nobility of one's faith, or even from the divinity of one's Guru.

Therefore, Sri Ramana declares, "To remain ego-less and to abide in one's own glory is indeed supreme".

Whatever be his religion, one who knows this will attain peace and will have the qualities of *amanitva* (humility) and the like, described in the *Bhagavad Gita* as divine virtues.

He will be untouched by feelings of pride in his faith or hatred towards other faiths, but will remain a devoted follower of his own.

Nochur Sri  
Venkataraman



(Edited excerpts from the author's book 'Swatmasukhi')



# Self-knowledge to End the Birth Cycle

The scriptures stress that the cycle of repeated births and deaths can be put to an end by knowledge of the Self

**P**unarapi jananam  
punarapi maranam  
punarapi janani  
jathare sayanam

Again and again, one is born; again and again, one dies; again and again, one

sleeps in the mother's womb... so wrote Adi Sankaracharya in *Bhaja Govindam*.

Death and re-birth are attributed to one's accumulated *karmas*, the

immutable law of cause and effect. This explains why a person is born rich or poor, healthy or disabled; or why one is a prodigy and the other, dull or a mediocrity.

Heredity and environment do not explain everything. True believers do not blame God for social inequities, the reason being that human beings are capable of impacting their present and future states.

Swami Vivekananda explained reincarnation thus. “We know that we have a present and feel sure of a future. Yet how can there be a present without a past? Modern science has proved that matter exists and continues to exist. Creation is merely a change in appearance.”

### Transmigration of Soul

While negative *karmas* keep the soul confined to a lower state of consciousness, virtuous acts purge the soul of

its *karmic* load, Sri Krishna affirms in *Bhagavad Gita*.

In chapter 14, Sri Krishna gives a clue to the nature of re-birth that people of varying mental dispositions get.

If the embodied one meets with death when *sattva guna*, mental calmness and full consciousness is predominant, then he goes to *Brahma Loka*, the highest and the purest world of the creator.

The *rajasic* person, the one of passion and attachment, leaving the body with excitement, desire and sorrow, is born again as the one given to excessive activities. The person with overwhelming *tamas*, or ignorance, delusion and lack of consciousness, is born as an animal or a sub-human being.

The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (IV.3.35-36) says: As a heavily laden cart

creaks as it moves along, the body groans under its burden when a person is about to die. When the body grows weak through old age or illness, the Self separates himself as a mango or fig or banyan fruit frees itself from the stalk, and returns the way he came to begin another life.

After the final departure from the temporal world, the soul of a person revels in the higher or the lower regions of being, depending on his *karma*.

Sri Krishna mentions (*Gita* 15-8) that as the air carries fragrance from place to place, so does the embodied soul carry the mind and senses with it, when it leaves an old body and enters a new one.

What leaves *sthula sarira* or the gross body, are *prana*, life, *manas*, mind, the five senses of perception, the five senses of action, and acts of

merit and demerit (the basket of *punya* and *papa*). All these form part of *sukshma sarira*, the subtle body, that accompanies the soul during all its transmigrations.

### **Jnana and Bhakti**

*Moksha* being the foremost *purushartha* or pursuit of human life, the process of re-birth can be brought to an end by realising one's true nature, and becoming a *jivanmukta*, the one who is liberated while living.

When the stock of *karmas*, both good and bad, accumulated over many lifetimes, are snuffed out by spiritual practices and the right knowledge, one becomes free from the cycle of birth and death.

The highest form of *jnana* is much the same as the highest form of *bhakti*. In both states, one is fully established in the divine. Constant devotion to God

can disentangle the self from its 'limited identification' with the world of name and form, and turn one into a 'witnessing consciousness.'

The scriptures declare that, for spiritually-elevated persons remaining soaked in the *bhakti bhava* at all times, there is no more taking birth time and again. There are examples of such mature souls, like Dhruva, Prahlada, Pundarika and Andal, among others, that are mentioned in the legends.

Our scriptures thus assert that each lifetime provides an opportunity to evolve spiritually and gain perfection through right knowledge and right conduct, so that one is able to tread the path of gods (*devayana*) from which there is no return to the world of phenomena.

As *Bhaja Govindam* asserts, one may go to take a dip in Ganges, observe fasts, and

give away riches in charity, yet, devoid of *jnana*, nothing can give *mukti* even at the end of a hundred births.

Only self-knowledge, the realisation of the oneness of human soul with *Brahman*, the supreme consciousness, through constant attention to the inner awareness of "I" or "I am", is the path to end the cycle of birth and death.



*Dr. Satish K Kapoor*

[infinityami50@gmail.com](mailto:infinityami50@gmail.com)

*The author is a former British Council Scholar and the former Principal of Lyallpur Khalsa College, Jalandhar (Punjab).*



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# DEVOTION TO MOTHERS

There is no debt greater than to one's mother

**I**n life we are preoccupied with our own needs, desires, ambitions, achievements, enjoyment, *keerti* etc.

Could we have achieved any success entirely on our own? Are we not indebted to many? Do we adequately realise and acknowledge these debts?

In *Sanatana Dharma*, we are reminded of our *Pancha Runam*, Five Debts. One of these is *Pitru Runam*, debt to our ancestors. Our immediate ancestors are our parents—*Mata* and *Pita*; mother and father.

A *subhashita sloka* says '*Mata samam nasti runam*', there is no debt equal to our debt to mother. *Adi Sankara* brings it out poignantly in one of his spontaneous, short compositions, the *Matru Panchakam*, five *slokas*, verses, on the mother. He composed it perhaps while grieving and performing the final rites for his mother.

First, he acknowledges her *vyatha*, pain, during pregnancy and delivery. You may have heard of the term, *prasava vedana*, the pain of child birth. Survival of the mother after delivery is also

called *punar janma*, rebirth. Despite such pain and risk, she does not complain.

Second, Sankara recalls the day when his mother had a dream. He appeared as a *sannyasi*, ascetic, in her dream.

She was deeply disturbed. She immediately went to his *gurukulam*. Seeing her cry, others were also moved to tears. One may accept one's grandfather as a *sannyasi*, even one's aged parents as *sannyasi* and *sannyasini*. But, one's own son!

A mother would like to see her son enter, and live long in *grihastha asrama*. In extraordinary *avatars* like Sankara, moving from *brahmacharya* to *sannyasa* is effortless, and immensely beneficial to the world. Sankara re-established *sanatana dharma*. He also revived the national organisational unity of Bharat by setting up *mutts* in

the four corners of the country.

Third, Sankara recalls how his mother would shower her love on him. He remembers her endearments, such as pearl, prince, *chiranjeevi*, etc. In return, all that he offers on the mouth of her *preta*, corpse, is rice as sacrificial offering.

Fourth, he recalls how his mother coped with the pain during delivery. She chanted the names of *Devi*, *Bhagavan*, *Siva*. She also sang, *Krishna*, *Govinda*, *Hare Mukunda*!

You may have come across a touching *subhashita sloka* on the mother.

*Mata samam nasti priya*  
*Mata samam nasti saranam*  
*Mata samam nasti chhaya*  
*Mata samam nasti runam*  
 There is no one dearer  
 than one's mother;  
 There is no refuge safer  
 than the mother;  
 There is no shade cooler  
 than the mother;  
 There is no debt greater  
 than to one's mother.

There are several actions you can take, learning from Sankara.

One, if your mother is alive, shower her with respect, love and care. Express your regrets and apologies for any past neglect and errors towards her. If she is no more, extend them to your older female relatives in the extended family.

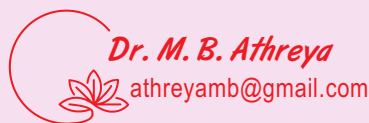
Two, instill in your own children deep appreciation of the boundless love and sacrifices of their mother.

Third, share this value with all children and grand-

children, among your nieces and nephews.

Fourth, help raise the awareness in your community or neighbourhood, of our debt to mothers and grandmothers.

Fifth, create opportunities for the older women to interact with the younger generation, for the latter to draw upon their values and sacrifices, and continue the *parampara*.



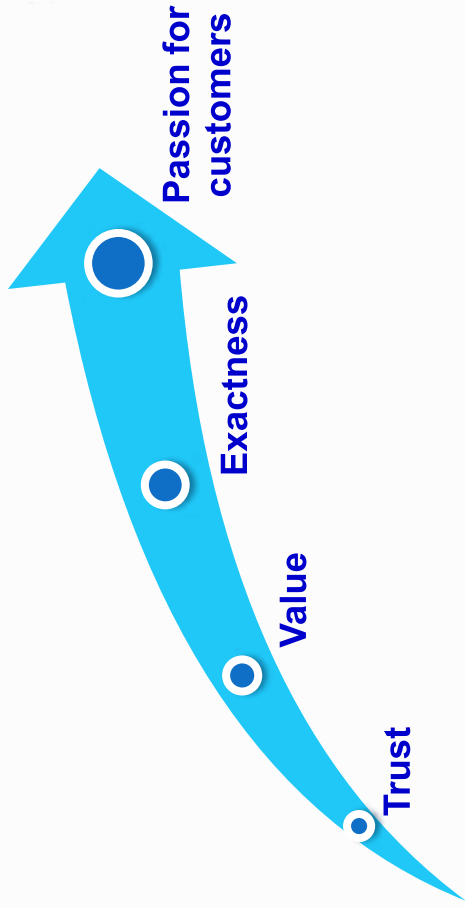
## The Divine Mother

In creating this universe, God revealed two aspects: the masculine or fatherly, and the feminine or motherly.

If you close your eyes and visualise vast, illimitable space, you become overwhelmed and enthralled — you feel naught but pure wisdom. That hidden, infinite sphere wherein there is no creation, no stars or planets, and only pure wisdom, is the Father.

And Nature with her diamond-dazzling stars, the Milky Way, the flowers, birds, clouds, mountains, sky, and the countless beauties of creation, is the Divine Mother. The beauty in the world bespeaks the creative motherly instinct of God.

--Sri Paramahansa Yogananda



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# The Enduring Values of Public Sector

Public sector undertakings are known to espouse and live by certain basic values

**P**ublic sector may no longer be a fashionable word in many countries. Many business undertakings in the public sector have lost their charm.

The surprising efficiency of state-owned enterprises despite the constraints that they live with, often goes unnoticed.

Even critics agree that the values that public sector enterprises have practised over the years, are indeed laudable.

The fact of a commercial undertaking being 'public' implies that it shares a larger social responsibility.

As many instances around the world have shown,

public good and commercial viability are not always in conflict. In fact, the current market flavour is doing well by doing good. Many public sector firms have shown the way in this regard.

This brief article seeks to highlight four key values and practices identified with public sector firms, and how private businesses could draw lessons therefrom.

### Respect for Systems

The foremost feature is the strong systems and procedures. Public sector undertakings are process-driven, with established systems in place for every aspect of their functioning, from the procurement process through tendering, to internal vigilance. Established systems and processes promote integrity, openness and accountability.

Proper systems help an enterprise to grow on its

own momentum, without regard to who is at the helm.

There is a perception in private enterprises that rules and processes often militate against the speed of decision-making.

Many executives prefer the route of taking decisions 'according to their best judgement', and they believe in 'not getting bogged down by internal bureaucracy'. They believe that timely action and result-oriented implementation are key, not detailed systems.

Such an attitude may look *prima facie* tempting, but it could lead to internal chaos as business expands, or when unforeseen issues arise. In the absence of clear rules, a new set of managers would become the arbiters, without the benefit of clear action tools. In fact, lack of systems is often cited as the reason for nepotism and



irrational decisions in private businesses.

It is worth remembering that even Nature functions under a well-ordained system, though unrecognisable by human minds. Just look at the cosmic order, and the Vedic concept of *rta* that explains how there is a code of systems operating around us, with checks and balances.

The *Nasadiya Suktam* in the *Rg Veda* provides a scientific description of the Supreme Force that created the universe, and the empirical order or moral *rta* stemming therefrom. This is codified in the form of *dharma sastras* that lay down the codes of behaviour and *karmic* results including punishments for transgressions.

### **Notion of Time**

Another key factor responsible for good value system in public enterprises is their long term orientation

as opposed to operating on short term considerations.

A focus on long term means a willingness to sacrifice current benefits for potential future gains. Long term orientation brings a cultural perspective that is future-oriented by practising values such as persistence, perseverance, saving and frugality, and an adaptive approach.

Most private organisations suffer from extreme levels of short-termism, and driven by an approach of QSQT, or *quarter se quarter tak*. A desire to have a control on the fruits of action invariably forces one to focus on ends, and not the means. Process orientation thus gives way for result orientation.

The short term approach leads to a tendency in many businesses to cut costs and show impressive results by slashing, for example, training budgets and

expenditure on research and development. Such actions carry the risk of making the organisation less equipped for the future.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna's first lesson to Arjuna is to train his mind to the notion of time that is essentially long term (Chapter 2, *slokas* 11-13). A good understanding of this helps managers to feel less pressurised of results in the short run and engage in decisions that seek to create a balance between short term and long term.

## Respect for Environment

For a business to continue in an ethical manner, it must respect the planet by limiting its impact on the environment, and many public sector firms have stood by this principle. They have shown how to be alive to environmental issues while launching greenfield projects in sectors such as

mining or power, or in hilly or tribal dominated areas.

There are many examples of profit-hungry private businesses showing scant regard to environment and local issues.

A recent example is a report of reputed multinational firms, Alcoa and Rio Tinto, venturing into bauxite mining in the African nation of Guinea. They are said to have taken advantage of the local government's failure to protect rural land rights, and exploited gullible local residents without paying compensation.

There are examples of oil companies causing acute pollution by contaminating ground water, and getting away with scant or no liability.

Our Vedic literature is replete with the assertion that anyone causing environmental damage

would pay a *karmic* price in their current or future birth. The *Pancha Mahabhutas* (the five great natural elements) create a web of life and show interconnectedness of the cosmos and the human body.

## Human Capital

Lastly, many public sector institutions, especially in the banking sector, have followed the maxim of developing human potential as HRD initiative, with continuous training and skill upgradation.

They have repeatedly exposed the employees to values seminars and workshops to explore the practical application of values to everyday workplace scenarios.

It is well known that some of the best talent in our country is in the public sector, especially in the engineering domain. The quantity and quality of research and development in

public sector is known to be far ahead of private sector counterparts.

Unlike in private firms, rotation of employees on different job roles is a key practice in public sector. The employees tend to get involved in policy-making even at an early stage of their career that improves their confidence and maturity levels.

In the final analysis, whether public sector or private business, values define what is important to an organisation and how things will be done. Having a sense of purpose allows employees to feel connected to their work, and boosts their motivation, productivity and morale.



*R. Krishnamurthy*

[rk@tattvaloka.com](mailto:rk@tattvaloka.com)

# Ramayana Trio

VALMIKI - KAMBAN - TULSI



Prof. V. Krishnamurthy



## Book Review:

*Ramayana Trio –  
Valmiki, Kamban,  
Tulsi by Prof. V.  
Krishnamurthy.  
Published by Indica,  
254 pages.  
Price Rs. 630.*

There is something indescribable about the enduring emotive appeal of *Ramayana*. The epic truly stands as the bedrock of our culture, with its moral and ethical values remaining the guiding star for human conduct.

While *Ramayana* symbolises the power of devotion and the deep

connection between God and his devotees, its three celebrated versions by Valmiki, Goswami Tulsidas and Kamban have differing flavours and emphasis.

In Valmiki's *Ramayana* (as well as Kamban's, which closely follows Valmiki with literary excellence in Tamil), Rama is depicted as a human with exceptional conduct

and virtues as a *Maryada Purshottama*. In Tulsidas' *Ramcharitmanas*, Rama is treated as an *avatara* of Lord Vishnu, bearing a strong *bhakti* flavour.

The book under review is an admirable snapshot of 150 random scenes and conversations from all the three versions selected by the author based on his long years of devotional practice, and his deep love for *Ramayana*.

The author, a former professor of mathematics, a Sanskrit scholar and a well-known exponent of *Vedanta*, has spent decades delivering talks and writing books on *sanatana dharma*.

This book is an admirable compendium of key verses appearing in the three versions of *Ramayana*, along with the author's commentary on their nuances, as well as on some key standalone verses.

For example, Prof Krishnamurthy offers an interesting comparison of the narrations of Sumitra advising her son Lakshmana, prior to his leaving with Rama and Sita for the forest life.

In Valmiki's *Ramayana*, Sumitra tells Lakshmana that he should never neglect Rama whether in adversity or in riches, and it is the code of conduct in *dharma sastras* that the younger brother should be subject to the control of his elder brother. “Know Rama to be Dasaratha; look upon Sita as myself; consider the forest as Ayodhya, and depart happily,” says she.

In Tulsi's version, she lists a set of virtues that Lakshmana should keep in mind, and that “one's preceptor, parents, brother and master should all be treated as one's own life.”

Kamban provides a beautiful Tamil verse in the

same context that means “Oh son, you accompany Rama, like a brother, not just for being with him, but to be his slave who serves him as per his wish. If he comes back to Ayodhya, come back with him. If he is not able to come back, give up your life before him.”

### **Saranagati Tattva**

Likewise, Prof Krishna-murthy provides a vibrant insight of the three versions in the context of *sarangati tattva* (surrender to the divine).

In the context of Visbhishana seeking refuge at Rama's feet, when opposing views were expressed in Rama's camp, Valmiki describes Rama making the monumental promise that “even if, for once, the devotee says 'I am totally yours', whatever living being it be, I have to grant *abhayam*, my grace of fearlessness; this is my *vrata* (vow).”

The professor quotes a relevant *nama* ‘*Suvrataha*’ that appears in the *Vishnu Sahasranama*, and explains how a devotee's *saranagati* should be a trust with total abandon, not half-hearted or situation-specific.

In the same context, Tulsi quotes Rama making even a stronger statement in *Sundara Kanda*, saying, “I will not abandon even a murderer of millions of *Brahmins* if he seeks refuge in me. A sinner by his very nature is averse to my worship. Had Vibhishana been wicked at heart, could he ever dare to approach me?”

In Kamban's verse, there is a policy statement on *saranagata rakshanam* in Rama's words, when he says that the sages who were troubled by Ravana and his cohorts had come to him for succour, and that he gave his word to protect them. “My word to the sages is a more

important reason to kill Ravana than to avenge Sita's abduction.”

Such comparisons and erudite comments make delightful reading, revealing the *bhakti bhava* of the author and his scholarship.

The book has some useful appendices. One of them is a table containing a list of tangible benefits that sincere devotees can stand to get by chanting specific verses.

The author describes his personal experience of overcoming problems during his research study days by devotedly chanting two specific verses from *Balakandam* of Valmiki. He provides a list of such 'cure' verses that can yield benefits such as good progeny, relief from fear, cure of illness etc.

This elegantly produced book, with pleasing sketches

and illustrations, will be a delight for all lovers of *Ramayana*. It is a handbook that shares insights on how to truly savour this timeless epic.

A brief background on Kamban and how he staged his *magnum opus* would have added value of the book to readers not familiar with the bard of the south.

Also the font size could have been larger to facilitate easier reading.



*Rishi*

[Vidyakrish58@gmail.com](mailto:Vidyakrish58@gmail.com)





Sankalpa,  
Resolve



## Making a resolution with an unwavering mind is the mark of a good meditator

**T**he singular most important, by far the most significant quality, that a meditator must have, is willpower, the resolve to not give up in the face of challenges.

Irrespective of what path you are on, your determination to persist and persevere, your resolve to tread the path, determines the outcome.

The Sanskrit term for a vow, for a resolution is *sankalpa*. When you take a decision, a stand, you have taken a *sankalpa*. The practice of *sankalpa* strengthens your willpower like no other.

A critical point to note is that you need not give up or take vows that extend your whole lifetime. Those vows

are often unnecessary and unnatural. While taking *sankalpa*, like all other *yogic* practices, vow to do something (or not do it) for an initial period of 40 days. Thereafter, you can decide if you want to repeat or carry on with them forever.

Think of passing an entrance examination, say for securing a place in a prestigious institution. You ought to prepare keenly. You may take things a little lightly once you are in, but initially you have to work hard.

The quality, discipline, intensity of your preparation directly affects the outcome. It is the difference between failure and success.

The same applies to the *yogic* practice of *sankalpa*.

Once you have kept your resolve for the set period, you can go a little easy thereafter. During the period of your practice, however, it is paramount that you do not waver.

When you keep your resolutions, something amazing happens: your mind starts to listen to you a lot more, almost as if it understands that it is in the hands of a determined individual.

If you vow to do something but let it go without a determined and monumental effort, you will really struggle to keep any resolution you make the next time.

### Putting into Practice

The only *mantra* for successfully keeping the practice of *sankalpa* is to not give up, no matter what.

Let us assume you vow to sit still for 30 minutes every

day for the next 40 days. You decide to sit still like a rock in the same posture for those 30 minutes no matter what.

For that half hour, with great willpower and determination, you are going to build your concentration with great mindfulness. You are going to make every attempt to remember that during the hour of your practice, each time your mind wanders off, you will gently bring it back to your object of focus.

A certain degree of determination is required to do the aforesaid. As you progress with resolve, you will find your conditioned mind becoming feeble. You will experience an inexplicable inner strength.

Such new found strength will enable you to reach *sahaja*, an emergent natural state of bliss ultimately.

During your period of *sankalpa*, if you miss your practice even once, it is a hundred per cent breach of practice and requires restarting. As part of the practice, you can resolve to do anything at all. Sitting still is merely one example.

A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. Remember though, in the dense forest of desires, in the deep ocean of proclivities of the conditioned soul, in the endless and baseless sky of expectations, no plane can land.

The discipline to keep your resolve gives you the wings of confidence and wisdom to soar high.

Bhagavan Krishna refers to this in Gita in chapter 17 when dealing with faith, and says that all people possess faith, and whatever the nature of their faith, that is verily what they are. In verse 17-16 beginning as *manaḥ-prasādaḥ saumyatvaṁ*, Krishna declares self-control along with serenity of thought, gentleness, and purity of purpose, as austerity of the mind.

*--Edited excerpts from 'A Million Thoughts' by Om Swami. Published by the author. Available at Amazon.com. Price Rs.399.*

## Obstacle to Realisation

You are already the Self. Therefore realisation is common to everyone. Realisation knows no difference in the aspirants. This very doubt, "Can I realise?" or the feeling, "I have not realised" are the obstacles. Be free from these also.

*--Sri Ramana Maharshi*



## SILVER AS A MEDIUM OF CURE IN AYURVEDA

As the most sacred and pure metal, silver has great therapeutic value

The ancient practitioners of Ayurveda were skilled in the use of heavy metals like iron, gold, silver, lead and copper, and it falls under the category of *Rasa Sastra*.

Among them, the shining bright metal silver stands out

for medicinal use. Ayurvedic medicine uses silver in small amounts as a tonic and elixir. It is used as *bhasma* (calcined formulation) to treat neurological disorders, respiratory track disorders, muscular dystrophy, infertility, urinary tract disorders and diabetes.

Considering the antibacterial properties of silver, storing drinking water in silver vessels is an ancient practice. In olden times, milk used to be preserved by putting silver coins in it, since silver kills pathogens of all types instantly.

Silver is an element having high electrical and thermal conductivity. It is malleable and ductile. Care needs to be taken that only pure silver is used for medicinal preparations.

Silver occurs naturally in its pure free form (native silver) as an alloy with gold and other metals, and in minerals such as argentite and chlorargyrite.

### Therapeutic Benefits

In traditional homes, silver is used in the form of utensils for offering *naivedya* at the *puja* room. Silver plates and tumblers are used at the dining table as a mark of purity.

This practice is supported by Acharya Sushruta, who lived around 600 BC and wrote the foundational text in Ayurveda. The Acharya says, *peya deyaiti rajate*, meaning juices, food and drinks should be stored in silver vessels. Juices and drinks are considered to be coolants and storing them in silver vessels before serving will enhance this property.

Silver is widely used in topical gel impregnated into bandages because of its anti-microbial activity. The anti-microbial properties stem from the chemical properties of silver in its ionized form.

This ion forms strong molecular bonds with other substances used by bacteria to respire, such as molecules containing sulphur, nitrogen and oxygen. When the silver ion forms a complex bond with these molecules, they deprive the bacteria of necessary compounds, and

thereby curtail its growth eventually leading to the bacteria's death.

Silver gives strength, controls *vata* and *pitta*, and it is indicated in the treatment of *bhrama* (hallucination) and *unmada* (delusion).

### Hallmark of Purity

The characteristics of pure silver are defined in the Ayurvedic texts. It should be heavy, unctuous, soft and white.

When heated or cut, it should have a firm and even surface, and should be free of adulterants. Silver with unsuitable characteristics includes that which is hard, artificial, dry, red or yellow coloured, or one that has many layers.

The purification process of silver is an important step for preparation of medicines, as traces of heavy metal can have harmful effects on

health. If the silver used is not purified, it can lead to degenerative disorders, decrease in virility, and can cause fever.

A general *sodhana* or cleansing is done by heating thin silver sheets in fire till red hot. It is then dipped seven times into each of the following: Sesame oil (*taila*), buttermilk (*takra*), cow's urine (*gomutra*), fermented gruel (*kanji*), and a decoction of horsegram (*kulattha kwatha*).

A special *sodhana* is also done wherever necessary by heating and dipping in *Agastya patra swarasa* or *Jyotishmati swarasa*, where a fresh extract of the herb is used for purification.

### Conversion into *Bhasma*

Purified silver is used in therapy in a powder form as *rajata bhasma*. Incineration or *marana* is an essential step in *Rasa Sastra* to convert a metal into a fine, ash form.

The optimum temperature that the metal should be subjected in the specific pit is specified in Ayurvedic texts, and this is expressed in terms of *puta*. This ensures that the final product is rich in the required quality standards of the medicine.

The conversion process is itself interesting where pure thin silver sheets are triturated, or ground into a fine powder, with other metals and herbs.

The Ayurvedic formulations with silver as the ingredient are vast. *Mahayogaraja guggulu*, the tablets used for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, *Kasturibhairava rasa* used in treating chronic fever, and *Vasanta kusumakara rasa* for treatment of diabetes and diseases relating to urinary tract, can be mentioned as examples.



## The Custom of Women Wearing Silver Toe Rings

Toe rings (known as *bichiya* in Hindi, and *metti* in Tamil) are the traditional piece of jewellery for married women in our culture.

Toe rings are normally made from silver and are usually worn in pairs by women on their second toe in both feet. There is an important reason behind this custom. The nerve of the second toe finger of a woman is said to pass via the heart and is connected to the uterus. It is said to aid in the control of a woman's menstrual cycle.

# Gita Jayanti at Sringeri

A round up of key events at Sringeri

**W**ith the blessings of Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahasannidhanam and Jagadguru Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Sannidhanam, *Gita Jayanti* was celebrated in a grand fashion in Sringeri on December 4, 2022.

The entire *Bhagavad Gita* was chanted once in the morning in Sacchidananda Vilas in Narasimha Vanam and again in the afternoon at the Pravachana Mandiram near Sri Sharadamba temple. Several devotees who had committed the *Gita* to memory had participated in the event.

Sri Sannidhanam blessed the gathering with an *anugraha bhashanam*

explaining the greatness of *Gita*. He specifically pointed out the need to cultivate *sattva guna* and detailed the nature of a person engaged in action with a *sattvic* bent of mind.

Quoting a *Gita* verse in this regard, Sri Sannidhanam explained its significance.

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी

धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः

कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥

A person with *sattvic* bent would be free of attachment and ego. While he would also be endowed with determination and enthusiasm in undertaking any task, he would remain equanimous irrespective of





Sri Sannidhanam giving *anugraha bhashanam* on Gita Jayanti



Sri Sannidhanam with executives of major donors - State Bank of India, Canara Bank - along with Sringeri Math CEO Sri V R Gowrishankar, for Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Multispecialty Hospital.

whether the result of the action became favourable or not.

Sri Sannidhanam also explained the verses that outline how people who are under the influence of the *rajasic* and *tamasic gunas* would act, and advised that we must all endeavour to cultivate the *sattvic* nature of engaging in action.

## Multi-specialty Hospital at Sringeri

Sri Sannidhanam inaugurated the Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Multispecialty Hospital in Sringeri on December 11, 2022. The hospital is mentored by the Rangadore Memorial Hospital, Bengaluru, which is run with the support of Sri Sringeri Sharada Peetham.

Sringeri Mutt CEO Sri VR Gowrishankar, speaking on the occasion, stated that in 1979 Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal

set up a hospital to cater to the needs of the people in and around the Sringeri Taluk. Four decades later, the need for a hospital with state-of-the-art facilities was felt to service the local and neighbouring population, as well as the large number of pilgrims visiting Sringeri.

The multi-specialty hospital will focus on providing quality healthcare at affordable cost. It will offer free cataract surgery and provide dialysis facilities at highly subsidised cost.

Sri Gowrishankar thanked the major donors, State Bank of India and Canara Bank for donating Rs 2 crore each to set up the new hospital. He thanked the eminent doctors from Bangalore for their mentorship, as well as the yeoman service by the Bangalore Kidney Foundation for providing dialysis services. The modernisation of the



Vigrahas of Bhagavan Dhanvantari, Sri Sharadamba and Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha at the newly inaugurated hospital



Sri Sannidhanam giving *anugraha bhashanam* at the Rakesvari temple after inaugurating Devi Kripa Residential Complex



Sri Mahasannidhanam performs Mahamangalarati during Chandramoulisvara Puja on Subrahmanya Shashti day



Sri Sannidhanam performing Kumbhabhisheka at Haradooru Durgamba temple, Sagara



Sri Sannidhanam worshipping Sri Balasubrahmanya Swami on Subrahmanya Shashti

hospital was completed in just two years under constant direction and guidance of the Jagadgurus. The hospital would function in full capacity with 50 beds with more than a dozen specialty treatments.

Sri Sannidhanam in his *bhashanam* mentioned about the two primary teachings of our *Sastras* for the entire mankind. The first is that we must engage in *Isvara aradhana* to make life purposeful. The other is to be *dharmic*, associate with *satpurushas* and engage in *paropakara*.

In order to direct our lives accordingly, we need a healthy body and mind. This is why Mahakavi Kalidasa had stated that the primary means to *dharma* is the body – शरीरम् आद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम् ।

Sri Sannidhanam invoked the grace of Sri Sharadamba upon all who would approach the hospital for

treatment to be restored to good health.

### **Sri Subrahmanya Shashti**

On November 29, 2022, marking *Subrahmanya Shashti*, a special *puja* was performed by Sri Sannidhanam at the shrine of Sri Balasubrahmanya Swami in the Sringeri temple complex at noon. There was *Phala-Panchamruta abhisheka* followed by *tirtha abhisheka* to the chanting of *Sri Rudra*, *Chamaka*, *Narayana Suktam*, *Kumara Suktam* and other *Veda mantras*.

In the evening, Sri Sannidhanam was present at the *deepotsava* at the temple when *mahamangalarati* and *Ashtavadhana Seva* were offered to Sri Balasubrahmanya Swami. This was followed by chanting of *Sri Subrahmanya Bhujangam* by the *pandits* and *vidyarthi*s of the *Pathashala*.



Sri Sannidhanam worshipping Sri Kalikamba



Sri Sannidhanam gracing the *puhahuti* of Satachandi Mahayaga at the newly inaugurated Kalikamba Kripa Yagasala

There was also a *deepotsava* at Sri Naga-devata shrine located at the base of *asvatta* tree in Narasimhavanam.

Earlier in the evening, the Jagadguru had *darsan* at the temple of Sri Subrahmanya Swami in Sacchidanandapura in Sringeri town where *deepotsava* was celebrated.

### **Maha Pradosha**

The *Pradosha Sangha* of Sri Sadvidya Sanjeevini Samskrita Mahapathashala conducted the Sakti Ganapati *Mahapradosha* on November 21 at the shrine of Sri Sakti Ganapati inside Goddess Sharadamba temple.

*Vidyarthi*s performed *Satarudra Abhisheka* and *Sahasra Atharvaseersha Abhishekha* to Sri Sakti Ganapati from morning till noon. *Sahasra Modaka Homa*, *Dvadasa Narikela Homa*, *Rudra Homa* as well as *Veda parayana* were performed by the *pandits* of the *Pathashala*. The *puṇahuti* of the *homas*

and the *Mahamangalarati* to Sri Sakti Ganapati took place in the presence of Sri Sannidhanam.

In the evening, following the *Mahapradosha puja*, a procession carrying the *utsava murti* of Sakti Ganapati took place in the premises of the Mutt.

### **Kalabhairava Ashtami**

On December 16, 2022, *Kalabhairava Ashtami* was observed at Sringeri when Sri Sannidhanam performed *abhisheka* to Sri Kalabhairava to the accompaniment of sonorous chanting of *Sri Rudram*, *Purusha Suktam*, and *mantras* from the *Mahā-narayana Upanishad*. *Rudra Suktam*, *Vishnu Suktam* and *Pavamana Suktam* from the *Rg Veda* were also chanted by the *pandita* of the Mutt.

Earlier in the morning, Jagadguru Sri Mahasannidhanam had *darsan* at Sri Kalabhairava temple. Later in the evening,



Sri Sannidhanam performing  
abhisheka to Ashtalingesvara at  
Bhadravati



Sri Sannidhanam at the purnahuti  
of Sahasrachandi Mahayaga in  
Tirthahalli



*deepotsava* was celebrated at the temple when the entire temple complex was beautifully lit. The event concluded with *maha-mangalarati*, *Ashtavadhana Seva* and the chanting of *Kalabhairava ashtakam* composed by the 33rd Acharya of the Peetham, Jagadguru Sri Sacchidananda Sivabhinava Nrisimha Bharati Mahaswamigal.

### Devi Kripa building at Rakesvari temple

Earlier on December 1, Sri Sannidhanam had *darsan* at the Rakesvari temple located on the Sringeri-Jayapura Road and inaugurated the Devi Kripa Residential Complex. He recalled in his *anugraha bhashanam* that the temple was originally small, where worship rituals had been suspended in the past. Eventually the temple was renovated with the blessings of Sri Mahasannidhanam and all *puja vidhis* were established.

Sri Sannidhanam quoted from the *Devi Mahatmyam* and said that mere contemplation of Mother Durga removes all difficulty and bestows upon us immense well-being.

### Satachandi Yaga in new Kalikamba Kripa Yagasala

On December 4, Sri Sannidhanam dedicated a new Yagasala complex, 'Kalikamba Kripa', adjacent to the temple of Kalikamba temple, the guardian deity installed in the northern direction of Sringeri by Sri Adi Sankara, and undertook the *sankalpa* for a *Satachandi Mahayaga* at the new Yagasala.

At noon on December 7, Sri Sannidhanam offered a special *puja* to Goddess Sri Kalikamba. The following day, on December 8, he graced the *purnahuti* ceremony of the *Satachandi Yaga* performed at the temple over the 5-day period.

## The Four-day Vijaya Yatra

On November 25, Sri Sannidhanam started on a 4-day *Vijaya Yatra* around a few places near Sringeri.

Arriving at Kuntavalli, Tirthahalli Taluk, he graced the *puṇahuti* of a *Sahasrachandi Mahayaga*. In an *anugraha bhashanam*, Sri Sannidhanam spoke about the need to engage in worshipping Bhagavan as well as the importance of charity and *dharmic* life.

Pointing out that charity can be engaged by all depending on their capacities, Sri Sannidhanam narrated the story of a vegetable vendor who donated two cucumbers every day to a *sannyasi*, became a king in his next birth owing to his *punya*. He continued to donate only two cucumbers to various *sannyasis* in his kingdom, and then in the subsequent

lifetime, he became a vegetable vendor again because he had not engaged in greater charitable acts when he had the resources to do so.

*En route* to Bhadravati, Sri Sannidhanam arrived at the Gajanuru Agrahara and inaugurated a nature park containing herbs and sacred plants. The park, called Lakshmi Divine Park, is in the premises of a care centre for terminally ill people.

At Bhadravati, the Jagadguru was accorded a grand reception at the Sringeri Sankara Mutt. In an *anugraha bhashanam* at the Guru Vandana Sabha, Sri Sannidhanam explained the significance of the divine names.

Talking on the greatness of *Lalita Sahasranama*, Sri Sannidhanam said some of the *namas* describe the *upasana* of the Divine Mother, while some others,



Sri Sannidhanam graces the *purnahuti* of *Sahasra Narikela Gana Yaga* at Shivamogga



Sri Sannidhanam giving *anugraha bhashanam* at the PACE PU College in Shivamogga

such as भण्डासुरवधोद्युक्त  
शक्तिसेनासमन्विता, सम्पत्करी-  
समारूढ सिन्दूरव्रजसेविता,  
दशमुद्रासमाराध्या etc. describe  
Her *charitra* (accounts of  
divine sport).

Some names such as  
भूमरूपा, दहराकाशरूपिणी,  
अदृश्या describe Her  
*nirguna svarupa*  
(attributeless nature), while  
a few others describe Her  
*saguna svarupa* (nature  
endowed with divine  
attributes).

The next day, Sri  
Sannidhanam had *darsan* at  
the Venkatesvara Swami  
temple (Timmarayapura) and  
the Ashtalingesvara temple  
in Bhadravati, and graced  
the *purnahuti* of *Lalita Homa*.

Arriving at Shivamogga, Sri  
Sannidhanam had first  
*darsan* at Sri Mallesvara  
temple at Guddemaradi and  
the adjacent Sri Sharadamba  
temple. He then arrived in a  
procession to Sri Sanaischara

temple, and graced the Guru  
Vandana Sabha organised at  
the Shubhamangala  
Samudaya Bhavana.

Devotees led by former  
Deputy Chief Minister of  
Karnataka, Sri KS  
Eshwarappa welcomed the  
Jagadguru.

Sri Sannidhanam blessed  
the gathering with an  
*anugraha bhashanam*  
extolling Sri Mahaganapati  
and quoting *Ganapati*  
*Atharvaseersha* that declares  
-त्वं भूमिरापोऽनलोऽनिलो नभः  
“You are the *Pancha bhutas*  
(five elements) from which  
the entire creation  
originates. You are the  
*adhara* (foundation), the  
*moola* (basis), for all entities  
in existence which are in  
essence manifestations of  
the five elements, namely  
*bhumi* (earth), *apa* (water),  
*anala* (fire), *anila* (air) and  
*nabha* (space).”

Every entity, everybody, is  
made up of these *Pancha-*

*bhutas* originating from Sri Mahaganapati, which is also why the *sareera* (body) is also referred to as '*pancha-bhautika-sareera*'. Sri Sannidhanam mentioned how the following day of *Margashira Sukla Paksha Chaturthi* is acclaimed as a day for *Ganapati Upasana*.

Next day, after gracing the *puṇahuti* of *Sahasra Modaka Homa* at the Shivamogga Sankara Mutt, Sri Sannidhanam inaugurated the Annapoorna Bhojanalaya in Pace Ultra Modern PU College run by the Prajna Educational Trust. He also inaugurated the Cardiology Wing of Sarji Hospital in the town in the evening.

Sri Sannidhanam then proceeded to the town of Sagara and arrived at the Haraduru Durgamba temple to a devout welcome. He blessed the gathering with an *anugraha bhashanam* extolling the greatness of Adi Sankara and how the

Jagadguru had conveyed the purport of the *Upanishadic* philosophy of *advaita* through commentaries. Bhagavatpada had dispelled the wrong notions by describing that the same *Paramatma* sports multifarious divine names and forms, and also provides instructions in accordance with one's spiritual eligibility and maturity.

On November 28th morning, Sri Sannidhanam performed the *Kumbha-bhisheka* of Sri Mahaganapati, Sri Venkatesvara and Sri Haraduru Durgamba temple, and also the *Gopura Kumbhabhisheka* in the temple.

In the evening, the Acharya inaugurated Sri Saraswati Granthalaya in the premises of the Sringeri Sankara Mutt in Sagara before returning to Sringeri.





# Tattvāloka Awards 2022 for Spirituality in Practice

**W**ith the blessings of Jagadgurus of Sri Sharadha

Peetham, *Tattvāloka* launched a new initiative to institute the “***Tattvāloka Awards for Spirituality in Practice***” to honour a select few individuals every year beginning 2022.

The launch function was part of the *Jayanti* celebrations of Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal, the 35<sup>th</sup> Jagadguru of Sringeri Peetham, the acclaimed *jivanmukta*, who was instrumental in starting *Tattvāloka* as the medium to spread messages on *sanātana dharma*.

The Award is intended to honour individuals who have put into practice high ideals in spirituality in their walk of life, and sought to preserve our culture and traditions, while successfully pursuing their chosen profession. The Award is to recognise the



professional excellence of such individuals who have demonstrated empathy towards fellow humans, and serving as role model on the strong roots of ethical values and public welfare.

With the blessings of the Jagadgurus, three persons were chosen to receive the Award this year: Sri A. Krishnamoorthy, Group Chairman, Amalgamations Group, Chennai; Dr. T.G. Chandrashekar, Ayurvedic Doctor and Vedic scholar, Bangalore; and Padmashri S. Ramakrishnan, Founder, Amar Seva Sangham, Ayikudi.

The Awards function held on November 26, 2022 at the *Tattvāloka Auditorium*, began with a *Veda Ghosham* by a group of eight *Ganapatis* led by *Vedabrahmasri Venkata Krishna Ghanapatigal*.

Jagadguru Sri Vidhushekara Bharati Sannidhanam gave a special *anugraha sandesa* for the occasion, which was webcast to the large audience. Expressing happiness at the initiative and conveying his blessings to the awardees, Sri Sannidhanam mentioned that it is imperative to acquire the knowledge about our vast treasures of Vedas, *itihasas* and *puranas*, and teach the same to our children and youth. It is ironic, and even sad, that people from other countries acquire proficiency in our Vedic texts, and write books based on their understanding, which people in our country accept as tools of knowledge.

Pujya Sri Vidyasankara Saraswathi Swamiji of Nerur, the young *sannyasi* who is an ardent follower of the traditions of the Guru *parampara* of Sringeri Peetham, was the chief guest on the occasion, and he handed over the citation and a Gold coin to each awardee.

In an absorbing hour-long talk on the topic '*The Glory of Narasimha Tattvam*,' the Swamiji eloquently described the purport of Narasimha *avatara* of Lord Mahavishnu, and the *ekatvam* (oneness) of the *avatara* with Lord Siva. He also described how Lakshmi Narasimha is not an *ughra murti* as popularly imagined, but a beloved deity ready to confer spiritual knowledge and material welfare to those who pray to him.

The awardees expressed their grateful feelings to the Jagadgurus of Sringeri as the guiding force for all their accomplishments.







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# ERADICATION of BONDAGE – II

This is a series of excerpts from the expositions of Jagadguru Sri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha Mahaswamikal, the 35th Acharya of Sringeri Sri Sharada Peetham. This is the second and concluding part of the section where the Acharya expounds Sage Yajnavalkya's

avertment on the means to acquire knowledge of the Truth. The previous installment appeared in the *Tattvāloka* of December 2022.

**Y**ajnavalkya proceeded to explain to Kahola that right knowledge of the *Atma* is opposed to desire.

After all, knowledge is opposed to *avidya*. Because of *avidya*, there is delusion; from delusion there is sorrow, and then desire. The

sage said, "Having known this very *Atma*, the *Brahmanas* renounce the desire for sons, wealth and the worlds and lead a mendicant's life".

Here, "having known this very *Atma*" refers to knowledge of the form, "I am this, the Supreme *Brahman*,

that is ever devoid of phenomenal attributes and ever satiated", acquired by hearing the words of the scripture and the *Guru*.

The *Upanishads* are emphatic that unless one is taught by a *Guru*, who has realised *Brahman*, right understanding about the *Atma* will not arise.

The *Katha Upanishad*, for instance, states, "This *Atma* is not comprehended clearly if taught by a man of worldly understanding, for It is taught variously by people. When taught by one who has become identified with It, there is no further cogitation with regard to It.

The *Mundaka Upanishad* specifies, "For knowing It, he must necessarily approach a *Guru* who is versed in the *Vedas* and absorbed in *Brahman*."

## Cessation of all Desires

The 'wealth' referred to by

the sage Yajnavalkya in his teaching that the knowers renounce the desire for wealth, is of two types.

One form of wealth comprising cattle etc. is the means for performing sacrificial rites; the other is contemplation, the means for winning the world of the *devas*.

Yajnavalkya spoke of desire for sons being the same as desire for wealth because both these are the desire for means to perceived ends; they are the means for the gaining of this world and for the performance of rites.

## Total Renunciation

In his *bhashyam* (commentary) on the portion of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* under consideration, Sri Adi Sankara has elaborately established that in the statement "the *Brahmanas* renounce", the *Upanishad*

actually enjoins renunciation.

Yajnavalkya went on to add that since the ancient knowers renounced, "Therefore, to this day, the knower of *Brahman*, having completed *pandityam* should live with *balyam*. Having completed *balyam* and *pandityam*, he becomes a *muni*. Having completed *mounam*, he becomes an actual knower of *Brahman*."

## Characteristics of a Knower

The 'knower of *Brahman*' mentioned above is one who has acquired intellectual understanding about *Brahman* from the words of the scriptures and the *Guru*. Such a person should, by adequate hearing, complete his acquisition of *pandityam* or intellectual knowledge of *Brahman*.

Completion of *pandityam* is characterised by the

renunciation of desires. *Pandityam* is contradictory to desires, and it cannot truly arise without the elimination of desires.

In his *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Bhashyam*, Sri Adi Sankara explains that the word *balyam* stems from *balam*, or strength and means the strength of knowledge. The strength of common people lies in wealth, children, etc; in general, their strength is derived from the means and results of action.

The knower of *Brahman* avoids the means and the results of action, and he depends upon the strength that comes from his knowledge. Dependence upon the strength of knowledge involves the negation of false notions about the *Atma*. On the knower doing so, his desirelessness becomes pronounced, and his senses

cease to have the power to drag him to the objects of desire.

## Complementary Interpretations

In the *Kena Upanishad*, it is said, "Through the *Atma* one attains strength." The *Katha Upanishad* teaches, "This *Atma* is unattainable by the weak."

This teaching is cited by Sri Sankara in his *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Bhashyam* in the context of the strength of knowledge. He explicitly states that strength is the elimination of the vision of objects by the knowledge of the *Atma*, and that the knower should try to live upon that strength.

In the *Brahma Sutra Bhashyam*, it is taught that *balyam*, as derived from the word *bala* or child, means a child-like state. Just as a baby does not indulge in pride, ostentation, etc. the

knower too should not give room to pride, ostentation etc. He should live without exhibiting himself.

In the *Smriti*, it is said, "He is a knower of *Brahman* whom nobody recognises either as an aristocrat or as a commoner, either as well-read or not well-read, either as well-behaved or as not well-behaved. A man of enlightenment should resort to unostentatious behaviour while following his spiritual practices in secret."

The two interpretations of *balyam* are not contradictory; they are complementary. He who lives by the strength of knowledge uses his intellect to ward off any doubts or false notions that he is the body-mind complex. He seeks to avoid cognition of what is not the *Atma*. How could such a person want to show off or feel proud, for showing-off, pride etc., depend upon identification

with the body-mind complex?

### Sway of Ignorance

By complete acquisition of *pandityam* and *balyam*, one becomes a *muni*. A *muni* is one who is meditative; he is a *yogi*. All that has to be done by one who has correctly known the *Atma* from the words of the scripture and the *Guru* is to eliminate all notions about that which is not the *Atma*.

As noted earlier, the *Atma* is self-evident; the defect lies in the superimposition on It, owing to *avidya*, of attributes that do not belong to It at all.

*Mounam* of the *Upanishad* refers to the culmination of the process of eliminating vision of what is not the *Atma*. When the acquisition of *pandityam*, *balyam* and *mounam* is complete, complete realisation of *Brahman* dawns and destroys *avidya*. One then

becomes a true knower of *Brahman*.

Sri Sankara, in his *Bhashyam*, speaks of such a true knower of *Brahman* as a "Yogi who has completed all that has to be done."

Yajnavalkya ended his reply to Kahola by glorifying the one who has realised *Brahman* with the words, "How does that knower of *Brahman* behave?"

No matter what his conduct, neither virtue nor vice can touch him. He goes beyond the pale of all scriptural injunctions and prohibitions. Nevertheless, as he had practised great spiritual discipline earlier, his conduct is impeccable.

After all, to override the past practice of good conduct, effort is needed, and he is not going to put in such effort. While people might think of him as engaging in bodily and

mental activity, from his viewpoint he does not act at all; he is ever aware of being the non-dual, actionless *Brahman*.

Yajnavalkya's final comment was to the effect that except for this state of realisation, all else is perishable, being

unsubstantial like a dream. The *Atma* alone is eternally free.

On hearing Yajnavalkya's words of wisdom, Kahola kept silent.

--From "Enlightening Expositions" published by the Sri Vidyatheertha Foundation



## Vedic Greeting of Sannyasis

It is customary to recite the popular Vedic chant that begins as '*na karmana na prajaya danena*' while offering *purna kumbha* to *sannyasis* on receiving them.

The chant means 'Not by work, nor by progeny or by wealth, but by renunciation alone have some attained immortality. That immortality which is even beyond heaven, is attained by the self-controlled renunciates as the Self shining in their heart.'

The chant is a reiteration that one can gain liberation (*moksha*) only knowledge, not by action or *karma* (*Na karmana*). *Karma* will bring *karmaphala*, results, but *karma* is finite and therefore, *karmaphala* is also finite. The limited person plus the limited result born of limited *karma* will continue to be limited. A finite number when added to a finite number will still be a finite number.

Therefore, *na karmana*, there is no way of getting *moksha* through *karma*.

Only by *tyaga*, renunciation of *karma*, can you gain *moksha*. Not doing *karma* is not renunciation. Even while performing *karma*, you should discover that you are actionless. That is *akarma*. You can gain *moksha* only by knowing that the *atman* is *akarta*, and that it is *Brahman*.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati



## The Divine Names of Sri Krishna – 2

The 108 auspicious names of Krishna in the form of *Sri Krishna Ashtottara Satanamavali* represent the collection of Krishna's divine qualities and the accounts of his incarnation.

Millions of devout people chant the *Satanamavali* daily, and they testify the immense benefits of doing so, while meditating on Krishna.

The *Acharya Parampara* of Sringeri worship Sri Krishna as the Jagadguru, first while undertaking the *Chaturmasya Vrata* during Vyasa Puja.

2) श्री कमलानाथाय नमः ।  
*Śrī Kamalānāthāya namaḥ ।*

I pay obeisance to the one whose consort is Kamala.

*Kamalā* in Sanskrit means lotus. *Kamalātmikā*, one

who dwells in lotus, is the tantric characterisation of Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity.

Lakshmi who signifies power, splendour and might, has always been Maha



Vishnu's inseparable consort.

Legends describe the insolent behaviour of Indra, the celestial chief, towards sage Durvasa when the latter gave him a garland blessed by Lakshmi that resulted in a curse by the sage and the disappearance of *Shri*, the downfall of *devas* and the rise to power of *asuras*.

The *devas* sought refuge in Vishnu who advised them to prudently conciliate their powerful enemies and with their help, churn the milky ocean, to obtain *amruta* or nectar.

As the *devas* embarked on this venture, their initial efforts were thwarted by obstacles, and eventually, instead of *amruta*, a deadly poison rose out of the ocean which Siva, out of supreme mercy consumed, thereby protecting all beings from its vicious effect.

The *deva-asura* team resumed the churning of the ocean, there arose many wonders like the celestial cow and horse, precious gems, and so on.

Finally, the most marvellous gift of the milky ocean emerged in the form of Lakshmi, seated on a *kamalam*. She was thus acclaimed as Kamala and she enchanted the entire universe with her splendour and glory.

As she cast her divine spell over all beings which vied with one another to offer her the choicest gifts, Lakshmi Devi selected her incomparable spouse, Mahavishnu, replete with all virtues and free from any blemish.

Mahavishnu accepted the mother of the three worlds by giving her a befitting place in his bosom, and he came to be venerated as Kamalanatha.

3) श्री वासुदेवाय नमः ।  
*Śrī Vāsudevāya namaḥ* |  
I pay obeisance to  
Vasudeva.

Sage Garga, on Nanda's request, named the *avatara* of Vishnu as Krishna and Vasudeva. He was Krishna as he had a dark complexion in this *avatara*, and he was Vāsudeva as he was Vasudeva's son in his previous birth. The sage went on to say that while men of the world did not know the infant's many names, the wise knew the other names that celebrated his many qualities.

This *nama* Vasudeva occurs thrice in *Vishnu Sahasranama* (332, 695, 709), and Sri Adi Sankara has explained it thus in his *bhashya*: He is called Vasu (from *vas* or *vās* to cover) as he envelops all beings, *vasati vāsayati ācchādayati sarvamiti vā vāsuḥ*. He also resides in all beings as Deva – the one who sports, who wishes to

conquer, who conducts affairs, shines, creates and moves, and whatever the beings do, it is through his power, *vāsuśca asau devaśca iti vāsudevaḥ* |

He veils everything through *maya*:  
*Jagadācchādayati māyayā sa eva deva iti vāsudevaḥ*.

Towards the end of *Vishnu Sahasranama*, there is a profound statement by sage Vyasa which echoes the same sense, *Vāsanād vāsudevasya vāsitam bhuvanatrayam, Sarvabhūta nivāso'si Vāsudeva namo'stu te..* I bow to Vasudeva who lives in every being, as he pervades all the three worlds.

This *nama* gives the quintessence of Vedanta. Vasudeva is the omnipresent *Paramatma* who resides everywhere, and in whom all beings remain.

## 4) सनातनाय नमः ।

*Sanātanāya namaḥ*

I pay obeisance to the one who is eternal.

He is the origin of all beings. He sustains everything and everything dissolves into him. He is also the most ancient, as he is the cause of all, and older than Brahma and all others who may be considered the oldest.

## 5) वासुदेवात्मजाय नमः ।

*Vāsudevātmaajāya namaḥ* ।

I pay obeisance to the one who is the son of Vasudeva.

The *nama*, Vasudeva, is repeated here with emphasis on the aspect of Krishna being Vasudeva's son.

This has special significance as Devaki and Vasudeva were not ordinary parents. They had undertaken arduous penance to be blessed with the parenthood of the lord himself. This will be elaborated later under the *nama Devaki nandanaya namaḥ*.

As the scriptures describe, the advent of Lord Narayana took place at midnight when darkness enveloped the world, and Brahma and other gods awaited the great moment. He appeared before Vasudeva and Devaki in his divine form, with his four arms holding the conch, mace, discus and lotus. His chest shone with *Srivatsam*, the auspicious mark, and *Kaustubha*.

Vasudeva spontaneously celebrated the occasion of Bhagavan's birth with jubilation and mentally lavished presents on pious brahmins and offered his prayers to Narayana (X.3.13): You have been known by me as the Lord himself, the supreme spirit that is beyond Primal Nature, the very form of bliss and the witness of minds of all beings.





# Peace, Peace, Peace



**Mrs. Purviz R. Shroff, MH  
and  
Late Mr. Rusy M. Shroff, BBS, MBE**

## ANANTASAYANA VISHNU UNDER OPEN SKY

**A**nantasayana, the cosmic form of Lord Vishnu, is always a mesmerising image to behold.

Sri Narayana resting on the milky ocean in a reclining posture atop the thousand headed serpent Ananta Sesa, with Goddess Lakshmi seated near his feet, is an iconography that is immortalised in several gorgeous temples in south India.

There is one location in the village of Saranga in Odisha where the Anantasayana form of the Lord is in the

open, on the banks of a massive river, about 100 kms from Bhubanesvar.

The Anantasayi Vishnu is a huge image under the open sky carved during the first quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE. It is a large open air horizontal rock relief, located on the left bank of the Brahmani river, a major river and the second widest in Odisha after Mahanadi.

It is the largest exposed rock cut structure in India, with the image of Vishnu measuring 51 feet in length (in the horizontal position) and 23 feet in width. It is

carved out of natural rock of sandstone formation.

As in traditional Padmanabha temples in the south, the Lord has four arms, holding a *chakra* in the upper right hand, a *sankha* in the upper left hand, a mace (*gada* or *kaumodaki*) and a symbolic lotus on the lower left hand. The hoods of the serpent *Sesha* covers the head of Vishnu.

We can see the sharp chin of the Vishnu image, the distinctive nose and a crown on the head. A lotus design shown sprouting from

Vishnu's navel has the creator Brahma, sitting in meditation.

As per historical records, the image was carved under the devout local rulers who were worshippers of Vishnu, and attached to the kings of the Bhauma dynasty who ruled in eastern India between the 8th and 10th centuries.

It is now a protected monument maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India, which allows worship to be offered to the image.

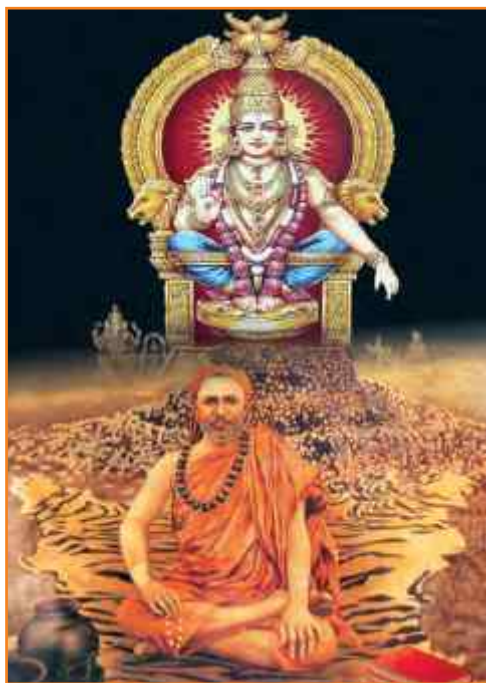
## The Anantasayana Coin



A rare coin of *Anantasayana Vishnu* was issued by the erstwhile kings of Travancore in Kerala. They were ardent devotees of Lord Vishnu as Padmanabha, and a rare coin issued by the kings depicts Padmanabha in *yoga nidra*.

During pre-Independence period, Travancore was one of the most prosperous and powerful kingdoms of India. At that time, the rulers Marthanda Varma and Balarama Varma, who had called themselves as '*Padmanabha Dasa*,' or servants of Padmanabha, minted many beautiful coins in different metals such as silver and copper.

The coin depicts Lord Vishnu reclining on his left, and the obverse of the coin depicts a sceptre between *sankh*, the sacred symbol of Vishnu, and a diamond, with a crescent above.



## The Simple Prayer of Dharma Sasta by the Jagadguru

**T**he month of January is special to devotees of Dharma Sasta, as their forty-day austerities (*vrata*) culminates in the *darsan* of *Makara Jyoti*, the brilliant light at the mountain opposite to the Sabarimala temple.

The *vrata* starts with a *diksha* from the Guruswamy,

a veteran who has made many pilgrimages to the holy *sannidhanam*. Leading an austere life and abstaining from *rajasic* and *tamasic* tendencies, the pilgrims move in holy company, singing *bhajans* and visiting temples.

When the pilgrims meet, they greet each other with

'Swami Sharanam Ayyappa', literally meaning 'the only hope is Ayyappa'. This greeting instils piety and modesty in all and it is regarded as the gateway *mantra* to fulfil the objective of the *Sabarimala Yatra*, which is to realise the oneness with the Supreme, *Tat Tvam Asi*, That Thou Art.

There is a short *sloka* that summarises this *tattva* of Dharma Sasta, composed by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Jagadguru of Sringeri Sarada Peetham, Sri Sivabhinava Nrisimha Bharati Mahaswamigal.

With an extraordinary mastery of *sastras*, this great personage shone as a great *tapasvin* and *yogi*.

Here is the simple *sloka*:

शास्ता दुष्टजनानां  
पाता पादाब्जनम्रलोकानाम् ।  
कर्ता समस्तजगताम्  
आस्तां मद् हृदयपङ्कजे नित्यम् ॥

*Śāstā duṣṭajanānām  
Pātā pādābjanamralokānām |  
Kartā samastajagatām  
Āstām mad hṛdayapaṅkaje  
nityam ॥*

May Sasta, the creator of the universe who governs the evil, and protects the devotees who bow down at his lotus feet, always remain in the lotus of my heart.

Sasta is considered the champion of *dharma*. He is *yogisvara*, immersed in meditation.

Anger, avarice and such negative emotions are subdued, and peace and joy reigns in the mind of the devotee who experiences the Sasta *Tattva* after rigid austerities.







## Never Taunt a Noble Soul

**T**his story from *Srimad Bhagavatam* is to drive the message that one should never try to belittle the good-naturedness and sacrifice of a person immersed in *bhakti bhava*.

There lived a pious king named Ambarisha who was

a great devotee of Lord Vishnu. He performed his duties in a spirit of dedication to the Lord, and was constantly in divine remembrance.

The king used to observe the *Ekadasi Vrata* (on the eleventh day of the fortnight of every waxing and waning

moon), by abstaining from any food, and spending the day in *puja* and *bhajan*. The *vrata* requires fasting from the previous night, and before breaking the fast on the following day, the devotee is expected to feed respected *brahmins*, and obtain their blessings.

As the king made preparation to break the fast and sit down for a meal on the day next to *Ekadasi*, sage Durvasa, a great *rishi* prone to short temper, arrived at the royal palace. The king was overjoyed, and requested the sage to partake the *dvadasi* meal with him. The sage accepted and left for the riverside to finish his ablutions before lunch, and the king was dutifully waiting for his return.

Time kept passing by and the *rishi* was not back, placing the king in a dilemma. Since it was customary to break the fast

at a stipulated time, the king consulted his ministers who advised to symbolically break the fast by sipping water soaked with *tulsi* leaves.

As Durvasa returned and noticed that the king had broken the fast without him, he flew into a rage, and in great fury, pulled out a strand of his hair and transformed it through his powers into a fiery monster. The monster charged at Ambarisha standing calm with the Lord's name on his lips.

The compassionate Lord came to the aid of his devotee, and let his *sudarshana chakra*, the celestial discus with 108 serrated edges, to go to protect the king. The *chakra* intervened, destroyed the monster, and started charging at sage Durvasa himself.

In great fright, the sage took to his heels, with the

*chakra* pursuing him, and he pleaded for protection from the creator, Lord Brahma. As Brahma expressed his helplessness in the matter, the sage ran to Siva, who too was not helpful, and finally he fell at the feet of Lord Vishnu and begged for protection from the fury of his weapon.

Vishnu told the sage to seek forgiveness from Ambarisha himself. As Durvasa apologised to Ambarisha for

his crude action, the king, who bore ill will towards none, immediately forgave the sage, thus ending the pursuit of the *chakra*.

This account of the saintly king Ambarisha is recounted in *Srimad Bhagavatam* to show the great love of the Lord for his true and selfless devotees.



## Durvasa, the Enigmatic Sage

The puranas describe that Durvasa was a great rishi, but several personalities were at the receiving end due to his temper. Durvasa literally means the 'one who is difficult to live with'!

There is a puranic story which describes that Durvasa once went to the town of Chamkarapura and requested the brahmanas of the town to build a temple for Lord Siva. But they ignored his request. So, Durvasa cursed the brahmanas that their progeny would be infatuated with pride (*mada*). The brahmanas are said to have counter-cursed Durvasa that he would always be full of wrath.

Curses and boons are two sides of the same coin. If a sage could utter a curse, then he also had the power to bestow a boon.

In mythological tales, sage Durvasa comes across as one who sets out to test gods for their integrity. When he found them floundering, and not matching his standards of excellence, he was quick to curse them, but when pleased, he would generously bestow boons to them.



## THE MILKMAN'S CART

**T**here lived a milkman with his family in a quiet village. He had numerous cows in his cow shed, and he and his family tended to them well.

The cows yielded a good quantity of milk. Early every morning, the milkman and his wife milked the cows, loaded the milk pails onto his bullock cart, and the milkman then rode to the nearby town to sell the milk, and returned home with the empty pails.

One morning, as the milkman was busy milking the cows and the cart was kept ready to be loaded, one of the wheels of the cart started speaking. It boasted, "I am such a beautiful wheel. Look at how well I have been shaped and made with the best materials. I make such beautiful patterns in the mud road. Without me, this cart would never work".

A wooden plank that joined two of the wheels interjected

and said, "Wait a minute, I am the one who holds you up and joins you to the other wheel. I am so important".

As the wheel laughed at this and said, "You are not as crucial as me", a tiny voice suddenly spoke up, "Hey, we are the most important. Without anyone of us, the cart will not move".

It was a tiny screw that had spoken up. The wheel looked at the screw and said jeeringly, "Why, you are such a tiny piece. Who will miss you? I am sure this cart will not miss you".

The little screw felt quite offended at this reaction.

Soon the milkman loaded the cart with the heavy milk pails and set off.

The little screw mustered up all her strength and pulled, heaved and twisted. She kept on twisting and turning on the axis, until

with a final push she came off, and fell onto the dusty track.

Immediately the two wooden planks that were linked together with this little screw gave way, and fell off with a huge thud. The other planks too started creaking and giving way.

The milk pails rolled down and the milkman jumped off and helplessly surveyed the mess of the broken cart and the spilt milk from the pails.

The distraught milkman set about to repair the cart and it took a while to assemble the fallen parts and fix them to their original positions.

After a long time as he was nearly done, he could not find the final parts. "Where are all those tiny screws and bolts?" he wondered loudly. After intense combing the mud road, he found all of them, and finished putting

the cart together in one piece.

With a heavy heart on losing a day's earning and wasting all good milk, the milkman turned his cart around and returned home.

Now the wheel spoke once again, "I realise that I was totally wrong in assuming that I was the most important part of the cart. Each one of us has his own important role to play. We are all parts of the whole and can only function in harmony."

All the parts of the cart agreed and resolved never to belittle anyone.

अल्पानामपि वस्तूनां संहतिः  
कार्यसाधिका ।  
तृणैर्गुणत्वमापन्नैः बध्यन्ते  
मत्तदन्तिनः ॥

*Alpānāmapi vastūnām  
samhatih kāryasādhikā |  
Tṛṇairguṇatvamāpannaiḥ  
badhyante mattadantinaḥ ||*

Even small (insignificant) things, when put together in a well-planned manner, can do a great work. A rope made up of hay sticks can entangle powerful elephants.

 **Anuradha Sundara Raman**  
anuradha113@yahoo.co.in



## Everything has a Purpose

Everything in the universe has a purpose as determined by the Creator. The Divine Will prevails at all times and under all circumstances. The individuals cannot act of their own accord.

Recognise the force of the Divine Will and learn to keep quiet.

--Sri Ramana Maharishi



## Say it in Sanskrit

In Samskrutam, a suffix 'tvā' is added to the verb to give the sense of gerund. Once the suffix is added, the word becomes past indeclinable, so it will not take any terminations.

For example,

हस् (Has) to laugh  
सेव् (sev) to serve

पत् (Pat) to fall  
कथ् (kath) to tell

भक्ष् (Bhakṣ) to eat

हसित्वा (hasitvā) after laughing  
सेवित्वा (sevitvā) after serving

पतित्वा (patitvā) after falling  
कथयित्वा (kathayitvā)  
after telling

भक्षयित्वा (bhakṣayitvā)  
after eating

चुर् (cur) to steal

चोरयित्वा (corayitvā)

after stealing

भू (Bhū) to be

भूत्वा (bhūtvā) after becoming

पृच्छ (prucha) to ask

पृष्ट्वा (pr̥ṣṭvā) after asking

कृ (Kr) to do

कृत्वा (kṛtvā) after doing

त्यज् (tyaj – give up)  
to abandon

त्यक्त्वा (tyaktvā – giving up)  
after abandoning

If the verb is preceded by an *upasarga*, about which we learnt in the previous issue, 'ya' is added instead of 'tvā'.

नम् to bow

नत्वा after bowing

प्रणम्य after bowing

Nam

natvā

praṇamya

नी to lead

नीत्वा after leading

आनीय after bringing

nī

nītvā

ānīya

दा to give

दत्वा after giving

आदाय after taking

dā

datvā

ādāya

स्मृ (smṛ) to remember

स्मृत्वा (smṛtvā) after remembering

विस्मृत्य (vismṛtya) after forgetting

क्री to buy

क्रीत्वा after buying

विक्रीय after selling

kṛī

kṛītvā

vikṛīya



स्था (*Sthā*) to stand स्थित्वा (*s̥hitvā*) after standing  
उत्थाय (*utthāya*) after getting up

As mentioned in the previous lesson, the *upasarga* can enhance, alter, or even give an opposite meaning for the verb, as seen in some of the examples given above.

The *Krishnakarnamrutam* of Lilasuka has some charming verses on Krishna's *lila* as a child. The following verse is a dialogue between a *gopi* and Krishna.

कस्त्वं बाल बलानुजः किमिह ते मन्मन्दिराशङ्कया  
युक्तं तन्नवनीतपात्रविवरे हस्तं किमर्थं न्यसेः ।  
मातः कञ्चन वत्सकं मृगयितुं मा गा विषादं क्षणाद्  
इत्येवं वरवल्लवी-प्रतिवचः कृष्णस्य पुष्पातु नः ॥

*Kastvaṁ bāla balānujaḥ kimiha te manmandirāśaṅkayā  
Yuktaṁ tannavanītapātravivare hastaṁ kimarthaṁ nyaseḥ  
Mātaḥ kañcana vatsakaṁ mṛgayituṁ mā gā  
ityevaṁ varavallavī- prativacaḥ Kṛṣṇasya puṣṇātu naḥ ॥*

The conversation goes like this:

Gopi : - बाल त्वं कः? O child! Who are you?

*Bāla tvaṁ kaḥ*

Krishna - बलानुजः - Balarama's younger brother

*Balānujaḥ*

Krishna - इह ते किम्? - What do you want here?

*Iha te kim?*

Krishna - मद् मन्दिराशङ्कया *Mad - mandirāśaṅkayā*

– (I have come) Thinking it is my house.

Gopi - तद् युक्तं; किमर्थं नवनीतपात्रविवरे हस्तं न्यसे: ?

*Tad yuktam; kimarthaṁ navanīta-pātra-vivare  
hastam nyaseḥ ?*

– That is alright; Why do you place your hand  
in the pot of butter?

Krishna - क्षणाद् विषादं मा गा -

मातः कञ्चन वत्सकं मृगयितुम् -

*Kṣaṇād viṣādam mā gā*

*Mātaḥ kañcana vatsakam mṛgayitum*

- Do not despair immediately, O mother!  
(I am trying) To look for a certain calf.

इति एवं कृष्णस्य वरवल्लवी-प्रतिवचः नः पुष्पातु

*Iti evaṁ kṛṣṇasya varavallavī prativacaḥ naḥ puṣṇātu*

- May the reply of Krishna to the Gopi in this manner,  
protect us.



[vasumathi@tattvaloka.com](mailto:vasumathi@tattvaloka.com)

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