

THE HOLY PANCHAKSHARA  
AND OTHER WRITINGS OF  
SRI-LA-SRI PANDRIMALAI SWAMIGHAL



PART II



*Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Swamighal*

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PART II

## CONTENTS

Publisher's Note of the 1974 Edition	vi
Preface	vii
1. Bhagavati Annapoorni	1
2. Sri Mahalakshmi Vaibhavam	6
3. The Spinal Centres	15
4. Lord Sri Krishna and Gurubhakti	18
5. Bhakta Kuchela	23
6. Saadhu Samrakshaka Sri Krishna	28
7. Vageeswari Saraswati	35
8. Vidura The Virtuous	40
9. Dushta Sikshaka Sri Krishna	49
10. Sisupala The Reviler	59
11. Gopee Jana Krishna	67
12. Lord Skanda	74
13. Sri Anjaneya	84

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE OF THE 1974 EDITION

*Since publishing the Second Edition of "The Holy Panchakshara" and other Writings of Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Swamighal, a few more articles have been materialised by the mere wish of Swamiji at the request and in the presence of many of his disciples and devotees.*

*These Articles appeared from time to time in The Bhavan's Journal. I am grateful to the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan for permitting me to publish them in a book form.*

*This book contains 13 more Articles of Sri Swamighal and is published as Part Two of the Second Edition of "The Holy Panchakshara."*

*Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Swamighal has his permanent Ashram 'Om Namasisvaya' at 3/1 Village Road, Nungambakkam, Madras-600 034. (India).*

A. V. Ramachandran  
Bombay  
1st January 1974

## PREFACE

*Guru Bhagawan Aasaan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Swamighal, in His Grace and Kindness, divinely materialised several articles containing essential truths for the welfare of mankind. These have been published as a series of books entitled "The Holy Panchakshara" Parts 1 to 4 as well as a supplement to Part 4. Of these, The Holy Panchakshara Part 2, printed in 1974 has been out of print for some time now.*

*Smt Vasanthi and Sri S. Subramaniam of Andheri, Mumbai, ardent devotees of Sri Guru Bhagawan for the last six decades, desired to get this Volume republished and it is through their efforts, The Holy Panchakshara Part 2 has been reprinted now. May all the devotees of Sri Guru Bhagawan offer their heartfelt gratitude to this exemplary devotee-couple.*

*Our sincere prayers to Sri Guru Bhagawan to guide us all to imbibe the true import of the articles published in this volume and practice it in our lives to fulfill all our earthly obligations happily and thereafter obtain ever-lasting bliss at His Lotus Feet.*

*May the Blessings of Sri Guru Bhagawan Aasaan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Swamighal abide with us.*

Aasaan Sadguru Sri-La-Sri Pandrimalai Sakthevadivel Swamighal  
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The Light of Pandrimalai.  
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28 April 2014  
Sri Guru Bhagawan's 108th Jayanthi Day

## BHAGAVATI ANNAPOORNI

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*“Annapoorney sadaapoorney sankara praana vallabhey  
Gnanavairaagya siddhyartham Bhikshaamdehicha Paarvati”*

“O Goddess Paarvati! Who art Annapoorni, the presiding deity of Kaasi and the animating spirit and spouse of Lord Sankara, the giver of auspicious things, salutations to you who are full of bounty giving sustenance to all and always full and perfect! I pray to you for the gift that bestows on me Jnaana and the sense of detachment.”

This prayer reveals the greatness of Bhagavati Annapoorni whose very name when uttered blesses one with all knowledge and the deep spirit of renunciation conducive to the attainment of salvation and redemption from the earthly bonds.

She is the half of Lord Viswanaatha and is the cause of his beauty.

*“Yogam chakaasi Gaganaarava Ratnaminduhu  
yotam suraasura gurub purushab puraanaba/  
Yadvaama Mardha mida mandhaka soodanasya  
devi twameyva taditi pratipaadayanti.”*

“The moon god, that gem of the ocean of the sky, the Paramapurusha who is the preceptor of both the gods and the raakshasaas and worn by her and the left portion of Lord Parameswara, the killer of the giant Andhaka, proclaim loudly that she is the Paramaatman.”

She is the ocean of mercy. Holding a rosary, a book, a noose and a goad, she is the reigning deity of Vaaranaasi or Kaasi, the Maheswari showering blessings on all and giving in plenty to every one.



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She is the inalienable part of Lord Viswanaatha, shining in all brilliance in the resplendent and sacred city of Kaasi known also as the Avimuktakshetra or the holy place Bhagavati Annapoorni and Lord Viswanaatha and at the deluge.

Vanquisher of all enemies, both internal and external of her devotees, she gifts them with the bliss of power to understand the Nigama. She forms the letters of the Beeja: “Om” and leads one to liberation. Pleasing her lord always, she ladles out the food of divinity to every aspirant and worshipper, giving them the taste of the elixir of Satchidaananda, the eternal bliss.

Lord Viswanaatha and Bhagavati Annapoorni would not brook separation from Kaasi. When the King Divodaasa by a boon, secured the externment of all the gods from the world for him to rule over it, both felt the pangs of separation from that holy abode so much, that they employed a stratagem to get back and secure permanent residence there. They succeeded in their efforts and Kaasi became the Avimuktakshetra.

Mere habitation at Kaasi is enough to secure salvation. Lord Parameswara himself utters the sacred *mantra* of liberation in the ear of every creature that dies there. It is his eternal pastime in which he is aided by Bhagavati Annapoorni.

They would not tolerate any one who would think ill or speak ill of Kaasi. The great sage Veda Vyaasa learnt this at a bitter cost to himself. He stayed at Kaasi for a long time worshipping the Lord and Bhagavati Annapoorni. He had a large team of disciples along with him and they spent their time blissfully following all principles of hermit life and enjoying the hospitality of the housewives of the city by the grace of Bhagavati Annapoorni. One day the Lord Viswanaatha wanted to test the sage. He expressed his desire to Bhagavati Annapoorni and instructed her to see that no one gave anything to the sage or his disciples. The sage and his disciples found that they could not get food at any house that day. The

sage wondered at it. Even in summer and the lean months they had food given to them in plenty. He could not fathom what happened to make the residents deny them hospitality that day. It was inexplicable. He and his disciples fasted that day as no one entertained them. This happened the next day also. The sage became very angry. He thought that the Brahmins of the place had become arrogant because of their prosperity, their Vedic knowledge and their consciousness that they were sure to get salvation under the blissful shade of Lord Viswanaatha and Bhagavati Annapoorni and therefore chose to neglect him and his disciples. He became insensate with rage and thought of cursing the sacred place and its residents with lack of prosperity, knowledge and liberation for three generations to come.

Finding the vulnerability of the sage, Bhagavati Annapoorni thought it the proper moment to intervene. She took the shape of an elderly housewife and invited the sage for food. The sage was surprised for he had never seen that lady at any time in Kaasi and as he was still confounded, he said he could not take any food leaving behind his disciples who were legion. The mother said that all were welcome for taking food in her house. The sage still wondered and requested her to tell him who she was, for he had never seen her in that city till then. She said that she would speak to him after his repast. He was desperately hungry and had lost control of mind. Her husband who was on a vow to eat only when a guest was by his side was waiting keen with hunger and all talk would be at taking their food. The sage and his disciples had a marvellous feast, wherein all delicious things sprouted to satisfy their palates. Vyaasa now felt that the lady was none other than Bhagavati Annapoorni and the host was only Lord Viswanaatha. He sought enlightenment.

The Mother burst out with anger and rated him for thinking ill of Kaasi and intending to curse the city and its residents though knowing that they were all under the protective aegis of herself

and the Lord. Was it proper for a sage of his kind to condemn their abode in a fit of anger? He had forfeited his right to be called a sage. So saying, she looked at her husband for the necessary permission to punish the sage for his indiscretion. The Lord said that the sage should be externed from Kaasi forever, as he was fickle minded. On listening to these words, Vyaasa trembled in fear and fell on his feet before them and prayed for mercy. The divine couple ordered thereon that he would be permitted to enter Kaasi on every Ashtami or eighth day of the month and on every Chaturdasi or fourteenth day of the month. On other days, he should stay away. The sage felt miserable but had to go away and live away from the Ganges at a place which came to be known as Vyaasa Kaasi.

Bhagavati Annapoorni is majestic in all her glory and she and Maheswara are in eternal union at Kaasi inspiring every one with devotion to Dharma and Artha and giving salvation. She is the cause of the threefold manifestation of the Lord Parameswara and is the power reigning supreme in the three worlds. Without propitiating her with equal reverence along with the Lord good would not result in full measure.

Yaagnadatti performed severe penance at Kaasi and was vouchsafed the vision of the Lord with Bhagavati Annapoorni. The man wondered at the radiant beauty of the Mother and went on casting looks of envy at her for her immediate proximity to the Lord. He lost his eye when the Mother looked at him irritated! She asked the Lord who that impertinent fellow was. Parameswara smiled and said that he was his true devotee and had performed deep penance at Kaasi. The fellow deserved boons and he was going to bless him. He said that she also should bless him for there was no difference between them. So saying the Lord made Yaagnadatti the master of the Yaksha: the Kinnaraas and the Guhyakaas and gave him promise of eternal friendship. Bhagavati Annapoorni followed suit and gave him untold wealth and riches.

The eyesight was restored with a defect for his earlier impertinence. He was called Kubera for having envied her lot!

One should therefore make no difference in devotion between the Lord and Bhagavati Annapoorni.

The Mother is the embodiment of all deities and all of them bow to her in obeisance. Her grace has the power to wipe out the bad letters of destiny written on the forehead of her devotees: “*Lumpanti daivalikhitaani duraksharaani.*” All embracing of all divinities, she has the ultimate power to give salvation. So we should pray to her:

*“Brahmeyndra rudra bari chandra sabasararasmī  
Skanda dvīpaanana butaasana vanditaayai  
Vaageeswari tribhuvaneyeswari viswamaataba  
Antarbahischa kruta samsthitatey Namastey”*

“Salutations to her who is worshipped by Brahma (the creator), Indra (the Lord of Heaven), Rudra (the destroyer), Hari (the preserver), Chandra (the moongod), Surya (the thousand-rayed Sungod), Murugan, the Lord Vinaayaka and Agni (the Firegod). Prayers are to her, the goddess of Vidyaas, the Iswari of the three worlds and the Universal Mother residing in the ins and outs of all.”

Bhagavati Annapoorni would respond readily to the prayer of every devotee who would say:

*“Maataacha paarvateedevee pitaa Deyvo maheswaraha  
Bhaandhavaah sivabhaktaascha swadeyso bbuvanatrayam.”*

“Goddess Paarvati is my mother. Lord Maheswara is my father. The devotees of Lord Siva are my kith and kin. The three worlds are my native country.”

Let us surrender to her and her Lord wholeheartedly and totally, and pray for their bounty of the bliss of liberation.

## SRI MAHALAKSHMI VAIBHAVAM

*Tvam maataa sarvalokaanaam Devadevo Harihpitaa/  
Tvayaitad Vishnunaachaamba Jagadvyaaptam charaacharam //*

Indra, the Lord of Heaven, praised Goddess Mahalakshmi in these words. He said:

“O Mother! You are the Universal Mother and the God of Gods. Lord Vishnu is the Universal Father. The mobile and the immobile in the Universe are permeated by You both.”

Goddess Mahalakshmi is inseparable from Lord Vishnu. She is Prakriti and He is Purusha. Their combination is the Universal Spirit. Her graceful and merciful look is necessary for any prosperity in any of the worlds. Her grace can be eternally had by one of pure mind and *dharmic* nature.

She herself said:

*Yam yam rushto gururdevo maataa taatascha baandhavaba /  
Atithih pitrulokaascha na yaami tasya mandiram //*

“The houses of those people who have fallen foul of the Guru, God, the parent, relatives, guests and the pitrus will not be entered into by me.”

Again,

*Yo dharmaseelo jitendriyascha  
Vidyaavineeto na paropataapee /  
Agarvito yascha janaanuraagee  
Tasminsadaa ham purusho vasaami //*

“I live for ever in the one who is a follower of dharma, a

conqueror of the Senses, a person of humility with erudition, not harmful and causing injury to others, not proud and haughty, but with love towards the common folk.”

Indra learnt this from a bitter experience of his that was the offshoot of his folly.

The sage Durvasa received a garland that was a gift from Vaikunta. He met Indra and presented the garland to him. Indra in his full splendour viewed the gift lightly and put it on the head of his celestial elephant, Airaavata. The elephant drew the garland by its tusk and trampled over it. This was seen by the sage Durvasa.

He became insensate with anger and he cursed Indra for that negligence and insult. As a consequence of the disrespect of Indra, Goddess Mahalakshmi forsook him. He became bereft of all prosperity and power. The Rakshasas invaded his realm and he was driven out. He suffered heavily and became miserable. All the *devas*, were in a pitiable condition.

Indra prayed to Lord Brahma, who took him along with the attendant *devas* to Lord Vishnu who said that in order to gain the grace of Goddess Mahalakshmi the gods should, in conjunction with the Rakshasas, churn the Milky Ocean when she would be reborn as the daughter of Ksheeraabधि and riches would accrue to Indra and the *devas*.

Accordingly, the Milky Ocean was churned and Goddess Mahalakshmi came out in full glory. She sought the hand of Lord Vishnu and Her graceful look lighted on the chastened Indra who prayed to Her and surrendered himself to Her after regaining his seat of power as the lord of heaven.

He said:

*Tvayaa devi parityaktam sakalam bhuvanatrayam/  
Vinashtaprayamabbhavattvaye-daaneem samedhitam //*



“As a result of your absence, the three worlds lost their lustre and became as one utterly desolate and as good as dead. Now with your remanifestation they have attained prosperity?”

Again,

*Daaraab putraastadhagaara subruddhaanya dhanadbikam/  
Bhavatyetanmahaabhaage nityam tvaddveeksbanaamrınaam//  
Sareeraarogyamaisvaryamaripaksha ksbayassukham/  
Devi tvaddrushti drushtaanaam Purushaanaam na durlabham//*

“O blissful Mother! As a consequence of the least look of yours, mankind gets wife, sons and likewise buildings, friends, corn, money and the like riches. There is nothing unattainable in the world by one on whom your merciful look falls. He will get health of body, riches, victory over enemies, ease and comforts of all kinds.”

That is why Sri Adi Sankaracharya prayed to Goddess Sri Mahalakshmi in his famous *Kanakadhara Stotra* to bestow riches on the old lady who was the very picture of poverty and who offered him an Amalaka fruit which alone she had with her to spare.

As a consequence the Goddess rained golden Amalakas.

In that prayer, Sri Sankaracharya said:

*Ishtaa visishtha matayopi noraa yayaadraag  
Drushtaa trivishthapa padam sulabham bhajante/  
Drushtihprahrushta kamalodara deeptirishtaa  
Pushtimkrusheeshta mama pushkaravishtaraayaha!//  
Geerdevateti Garudadwajasundareeti  
Saakambhareeti sasisekharavallabheti//  
Srushtistithi pralayakelishu samstithaayaa  
Tasyainamastribhuvanaika gurostarunyai!//  
Srutyaainamostu subhakarmaphala prasootyai  
Ratyainamostu ramaneeyagunaarnavaayai//  
Saktyainamostu satapatraniketanaayai  
Pushtyaainamostu Purushottamavallabhaayai!//*

He said:

“May that blissful least look of Goddess Lakshmi seated on the lotus, which can, by its mere dwelling on a person, make him attain the position of Indra even though he may not be inclined to perform the Yajnas and other auspicious rituals for the purpose, light on me and go on giving me unending riches! I pray to you who take the shape of the Goddess of Speech, Saraswati, the form of Sreedevi, the wife of Lord Vishnu, who has Garuda on His flagstaff, and the form of Parvati, wife of Lord Siva with the crescent moon on His head and carry on the work of creation, preservation and annihilation of the Universe. I offer my salutations to you, the goal of the Vedas, the rituals and all auspicious works. My prayer is to you, the Anandaswaroopini blessing everyone with the cherished desires, the Saktiswaroopini seated on the lotus and the Pushtiroopini and the wife of Lord Vishnu.”

Goddess Lakshmi was praised by Lord Mahadeva who vouchsafed to Goddess Parvati the *Lakshmi Ashtottara Stotra*. He said:

*Devi saadhu mahaabhaage mahaabhaagya pradaayakam/  
Sarvaisvayakaram punyam sarvapaapa pranaasanam //  
Sarvadaaridryasamanam sravannadbhuktimuktidam/  
Raajavasyakaram divyam guhyaadguhyataram param//  
Durlabham sarvadevaanaam chatusshashtikalaaspadam/  
Padmaadeenaam varaantaanaam nidheenaam nityadaayakam//  
Samastadevasamsevy manimaadyashtasiddhidam/  
Kimatrabahunoktena Deveepratyakshadaayakam//  
Tavapreetyaadyavakshyaami samaabitamanaasrunu/*

He said:

“Blissful Devi! Parvati! Just now I am going to vouchsafe to you the Ashtottarasatanamastotra of Goddess Mahalakshmi which is all blessing, productive of all riches, capable of giving absolute control over things, sacred and annihilating all sins rooting out all poverty. By hearing it one gets enjoyment of pleasant things

and salvation. By reading it one becomes powerful over rulers. The stotra is auspicious, more secret than secret itself, most precious and not even attainable by Indra and other devas and is the source of the sixty-four arts. It bestows the nine kinds of *nidhis* or treasures beginning with Padma and ending with Vara eternally. It is followed and used in worship by all the devas. It gives the eight *siddhis* beginning with the Anima. Why add more? It will make Goddess Lakshmi present herself before you. Listen with attention.”

The glory of the goddess is brought forth to the full in the stotra. That the Goddess is all-merciful was proved when Vedanta Desikacharya uttered his *Sree Stuti*. He wanted to grant the prayer of a Brahmachari for monetary help to get married. As in the case of Sri Sankaracharya, Goddess Mahalakshmi rained gold on hearing it. This *stuti* was uttered in praise of the Goddess Mahalakshmi known as Padmavathi or Alarmelmangathaayaar resplendently manifest at Tiruchanur near Tirupathi. She is highly powerful Parasakthi. She is seated on the lotus of Sreepeeta. Lord Venkateswara did penance to attain Her by rearing golden lotuses. He got perfect bliss and absolute peace only after He seated Her once again on His breast, which She had forsaken, as the sage Durvasa who had defiled and was not punished by Her Lord.

The presence of Goddess Lakshmi on the breast of the Lord Mahavishnu is conducive to generating merciful patience and nurturing it in Him. She is “Tatkshaantisamvardhini”. She cannot be thought of separately by anyone. That is why one is enjoined to pray to Lord Mahavishnu while praying to Goddess Mahalakshmi. The *Lakshmeenarayana Hrudayastotra* states this with all emphasis.

It says:

*Naaraayanyabrudayam sarvaabbeeshtaphalapradam/  
Lakshmeehrudayakam stotram yadichaitadvinaakrutam//*

*Tatsarvam nishphalam proktam Lakshmeenkrudhyati sarvada/  
Yetatsamkalitam stotram sarvaabbeeshtaphalapradam//*

“One who utters Narayanahrudaya which fulfills all desires exclusively without uttering the Lakshmihrudaya stotra would have done so in vain. There would be no benefit according to him. He would be courting the displeasure of Goddess Mahalakshmi who is part and parcel of the Lord. His prayer to Lord Narayana would be fruitful only when he utters it along with the propitiating stotra to the Goddess Mahalakshmi.” The same is true *vice versa*.

She Herself said:

*“Yatra naasti Harehpoojaa tadeeyaguna keertanam  
Notsukhamcha prasamsaayaam na yaami tasyamandiram”*

“The house wherein the Lord Hari is not worshipped, sung and praised prayerfully is taboo to me. I won’t proceed there.”

So it is that one finds Lord Venkateswara worshipped alongside of Goddess Padmavati at Tiruchanur as Bhoga Sreenivasa. She is all-powerful, and all embracing of the Ashtalakshmis viz: Veeralakshmi, Gajalakshmi, Santaanalakshmi, Dhaanyalakshmi, Vijayalakshmi, Dheelakshmi, Dhanalakshmi and Aiswaryalakshmi. She is the one sung by the Vedas, the one sought after by the Vedantins and the seers, meant by the incantations in all *yajnas* and rituals and prayed to as the vital power giving salvation. She is the Lokanaayaki or Bhuvaneshwari.

The prayer to Her says:

*Padmaasanastitedevi Parabrahmaswaroopini/  
Paramesijaganmaatava Mahalakshmee namostute! //*

“Salutations to Thee, seated on the Lotus, of the form of Parabrahmam the Supreme Goddess and the Universal Mother.”

She is the forceful and valorous deity, Vikramanaayaki annihilating

evil forces. She is the Bhoganaayaki who is the mistress of all enjoyment and pleasurable riches and pursuits, worshipped by those who have control over their senses and realise Atmajnaana with purity of heart and intensity of desire to get salvation. She is the Spirit animating the Sabdabrahman and sung by the *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda* and the beautiful *Saamaveda*. She makes the devotee get salvation by bestowing on him the necessary erudition, knowledge and power to get over the ocean of *samsara*.

She is always with Lord Vishnu in all His Avataaras:

*Yevamyadaajagatswaamee devadevo Janaardana/*  
*Avataaram karotyeshaa tadaa Sreestatsabaayinee/ /*  
*Punascha Padmaasambhootaa hyaadityobhoodyadaa Harihi/*  
*Yadaacha Bhaargavo Raamastadaabhooddbarineetrayam/ /*  
*Raaghavatve bhanatsetaa Rukminee Krishnajanmani/*  
*Anyeshuchaavataareshu Visnnoresnaanapaayinee/ /*  
*Devatvedevadehoyam Manushyatvechamaanushee/*  
*Vishnoduenaanuroopaamvai Karotyeshaatmanastanum./ /*

“Whenever Lord Mahaavishnu descends into the world as an incarnation, Goddess Mahalakshmi accompanies Him. When he became Vaamana, She was born as Padma and took His side. When He was born as Parasurama in the family of Bhrigus, she took birth as Harini and became His bride. When the Lord became Sri Raghava Rama, She was born as Seeta. When He descended as Lord Krishna, She became Rukmini. In all other Avataaras, She was beside Him taking human birth or adopting a divine body according to Lord Vishnu’s shape.”

She is worshipped as “*Bihvanilayaayai namaha*.” The Bilva is Her residence also. Lord Mahavishnu and Lord Parameswara cherish worship by *bilva* on that account. Once Goddess Lakshmi asked Her Lord to tell Her whom He liked best of all. The Lord said that He liked Lord Siva best of all as He always meditated on Him and there was no difference between them. She again asked Him as to

whom He liked next best. He said that He liked the devotees of Lord Siva next best. She then questioned Him as to who was the best among the devotees of Lord Siva. Lord Mahavishnu said that Lord Siva liked the lotuses best of all flowers and so that devotee who worships Him with the lotuses every day without a break for a year would be the best devotee of Lord Siva. Goddess Lakshmi thought that She should worship Siva that way and began doing so with the permission of Lord Vishnu. She did so continuously for a year and on the last day She found only 108 flowers available for worship. When She sat down for worship with those flowers She found two short of 108 to finish Her *pooja*. She felt dismayed at first. Then She remembered Her husband Lord Vishnu telling Her that Her breasts were like lotuses. So She thought of offering them to Lord Siva cutting them off Her body. She cut off one and worshipped the Lord Siva with it. When she was about to cut off the other one also, Lord Siva appeared before Her and told Her: “O Mother! I am highly gratified by Your devotion. Do not toil further. Your breasts shall be as lustrous and beautiful and intact as before. As for the cut-off one, I shall make Your fame eternal by making it take the shape of a tree. Its leaves shall be holy and cherished by all the gods in worship in addition to me.” So saying he put that on the ground and the Bilwa tree came from out of it. Its leaf had three petals. The middle one represented Lord Siva, the right one Lord Vishnu and the left one Lord Brahma. The *bilwa* tree thus became the most cherished of Goddess Mahalakshmi and Lord Vishnu. That is why Lord Venkateswara also is worshipped with the *bilva* leaves. That She is Trimurtyaatmika is evident from the constitution of the *bilva leaf*.

She is therefore prayed to thus:

*“Aadyantarabite Devi Aadyasakti Maheswari*  
*Yogaje yogasambhote Mahaalakshmee namostute”*

“Salutations to Thee, Mahalakshmi! Thou hast no beginning and

no end. You are the original force of the Universe. You are eternal, born of yoga and created by yoga.”

Without invocation to Her and complete surrender to Her the Yogi cannot attain salvation. It is only She that can grant our desires. Hence it is that we should pray to Her thus and attain Lord Narayana:

*“Sreesaamgribhaktim Haridaasadaasyam  
Prapanna mantraartha drudaika nishtaam  
Gurossmrutim nirmalabodhabuddhim  
Pradehi me te paramam padam Sreebi!”*

“O Mahalakshmi! Kindly vouchsafe to me deep devotion to the feet of Lord Mahavishnu, Your husband and the service of the servants of Sri Hari. Kindly give the power to adopt and follow with tenacity of purpose the pith of the great *mantras* propounding Jnaana. Kindly grant the power of constant contemplation of the Guru, pure *jnaana* and intellect. Please grant me the auspicious and peerless seat of Yours.”



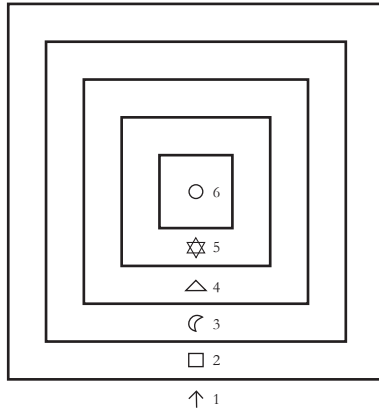
## THE SPINAL CENTRES



The article on “World Experience” deals with the working of invisible bodies in relation to the sense perceptions being made aware by the physical brain. The physical brain centres are connected to the five sense organs located in the physical body by nerves. The external sense organs may be described as windows or gateways to the physical body. Similarly, there are windows or gateways located in the invisible bodies of man and they are called Chakras or windows of the soul serving the purpose of sending as well as receiving messages from the corresponding invisible worlds. The Chakras or centres are located in the spinal column and are six in number beginning with Muladhara, Swadistana, Manipuraka, Anahata, Visuddha and Ajna. These centres have the Mula Prakriti and the five undifferentiated elements beginning with earth, water, fire, air and ether respectively as their essence. The six centres are the seats of consciousness, active in the body extending within the spinal column beginning from the lower end and extending up to the top to the brain. From each of the Chakras radiate thousands of Nadis (subtle channels), visible only to the Yogis, and they extend their activity to the corresponding regions in the gross physical body.

The Chakras in the spinal column are considered as the Adharas for the soul. Supersensual experience is possible when the Chakras are awakened through the practice of Raja Yoga. The experience is similar to one who is awakened from sleep by the operation of all the five sense organs in the waking state.

The unmanifest Sakti is said to reside in the Muladhara Chakra



and is called by the Yogis as the great Kundalini. The body is the living storehouse of power. Yoga aims to raise all the forms of power to their highest degree and expression through the purification of the invisible bodies and bringing into operation the Chakras in relation to physical consciousness. The Yoga process is the return movement to the source which is the reverse of the creative movement arising out of the world experience. Liberation comes when we realise the source from which we arise. The Jiva (Life Principle), the mind and Ahankara (lower self) are within all living beings. The lower self has the three states (viz. waking, dreaming and deep sleep). The Ahankara or lower self has to enter the fourth state (Turiya) by getting absorbed in the mind itself wherefrom it took its origin.

(1) The Muladhara is the starting point in which the Ahankara is absorbed in the mind. (2) The Ahankara gets merged in the mind completely in Swadistana when the mind has no work. (3) Manipuraka is the fullness of the mind. (4) The expression Anahata denotes that the active mind is cooled by the life force or Jiva. All the Vasanas (Latencies) of the mind are destroyed in this centre.

The state of the Jiva merging with the mind is indescribable. (5) The Visuddha is the state of purified knowledge or Sivam where both mind and life have blended in perfect harmony. (6) The real awakening of the Jiva takes place at Ajna Chakra and is the state of eternal bliss, that can be experienced and cannot be described.

The seat of Ahankara is in the Muladhara. The seat of mind is in the invisible bodies and the seat of consciousness is in Ajna Chakra located between the two eyebrows.

The Yoga of raising the Kundalini through the various Chakras has to be practised under the guidance of a Guru with faith and devotion. When Kundalini sleeps, man is awake to the world. When she awakes man sleeps and he loses all consciousness of world experiences and enters (Pravesha) into his causal body realising himself as Sivam.



4

## LORD SRI KRISHNA AND GURUBHAKTI

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The sabda ‘Gu’ indicates the deep darkness of *Avidya*, or ignorance that clouds one’s perception and prevents him from knowing his real nature of oneness with the Brahman. The sabda ‘Ru’ signifies the brilliant light of *Jnaana* or wisdom which dispels the dismal gloom of *Avidya* and makes one realise Godhead. Hence the term *Guru* denotes a realised soul who has attained the knowledge of Brahman and who is capable of putting his disciples well on the way to salvation by redeeming them. He is verily God to them as the following invocation posits:

*“Gururbrahmaa gururvishno gururdevo Maheswaraha  
Gururssaakshaat Parambrahma tasmaisree gurave namaha!”*

The *guru* gives a new lease of life to the disciple by ushering him into the spiritual world and making a fresh man of him even as Brahma, the Creator does. He protects him from all evils and impediments that stand in his way of *Sadhana* and preserves him even as Lord Vishnu, the Protector and Preserver, does. He destroys the *Avidya* that surrounds his disciple and annihilates his ego even as Maheswara, the destroyer, does. *Gurubhakti*, or unstinted devotion to the Preceptor, is the sovereign means to attain god.

The *Arishadvargaas*, namely, *Kaama* (Desire), *Krodha* (Anger), *Lobha* (Greed), *Moha* (Attachment), *Madha* (Arrogance) and *Maatsarya* (Envy) can be conquered only by means of *gurubhakti*. As the sage Narada said to Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas. “The *guru*

gives the light of *Jnaana*. The one who gives such enlightenment is not an ordinary mortal. He is God in flesh and blood. Yet the fact is not realised due to *Avidya* or ignorance. There is no need to go anywhere to verify this statement. Before you, is Lord Krishna. He is the Supreme, the *Purush* and the one *Guru*. Yet he is regarded as an ordinary person and you speak familiarly of Him. But to the *yogins*, He is Yogeeswara, the goal of all meditation and *tapas*. In the same way a guru may seem to be like an ordinary person to his son; but to the disciples He is the Supreme Lord Himself.”

But can all be *gurus*?

The boys in the *ashram* of Chanda and Amarka, the sons of Sukracharya, asked Prahlada, “If *guroopadesa* is beneficial, why not we follow our gurus here in this *ashram* who regard Hiranyakasipu, your father, as the All Powerful Lord?”

Prahlada answered, “Don’t doubt the efficacy of *gurubhakti*. But note that all cannot be *gurus*. Only an *Atmajnaani*, a realised soul, can be the *guru*. His words are to be obeyed totally without demur. Those who follow the scholars wallowing in *Avidya* repeating *saastraas* parrot-like are like those blind who are led by the blind.”

Lord Krishna has very clearly shown this way to the world by His personal example. His *gurubhakti* was paramount and without peer. He and His brother Balarama went to the Great Guru Saandheepani of Avanthi, famed for his saintly character and learning in Vedic lore. They went to study all the *saastraas* and arts as well as the Vedas and Vedangas under him. The guru found out Their prowess and knew Their divinity. He felt Krishna to be the Supreme Lord Himself. It was here that Sudhama, later known as Kuchela, studied with Lord Krishna. After completing the studies, Lord Krishna came before the *guru*, prostrated before him along with his brother and said meekly: “O Learned Sir! We have become well-versed in all branches of learning through your infinite grace. The *guru* is Brahman. It is only because of the



existence of *sadgurus* like you that Dharma is established firmly in this world. We have finished our studies. Unless we pay our mite in return for the training we have got, our learning cannot be fruitful. Kindly mention your desire. It shall be carried out in a trice.”

Saandheepani was highly pleased with their behaviour. He said: “You are personifications of wisdom. Did you need a *guru* at all? For the sake of *lokasangraha* only you have come to me. You are the manifestations of the divine. That you have chosen me as your preceptor is in itself the gem of a boon to me. What more do I want?” Just at the moment he caught the eye of his wife who beckoned to him. He understood her. He said: “However, I ask for a boon from you. Our only son went to Prabhaasa *teerta* a long time ago for a bath and was drowned. My wife is inconsolable on that account. I am able to forget my woe in the company of my disciples. But she is pining away for him. Please restore our son to us.” It was an impossible task on the face of it. The guru’s wife found out the divinity of Lord Krishna and she was sure that He could gratify her desire. Lord Krishna felt that He should give that *gurudakshina* set by her. Otherwise the *guru-sishya* Dharma would be at stake.

So He and His brother Balarama went to Prabhaasa *teerta*, made inquiries of the Lord of the Ocean and, on learning that the boy was taken to *Yamaloka*, went there. Yama, who knew who they were, welcomed them and learning of their purpose gave back the son of Saandheepani to them. Their superhuman task was extolled by the *guru*. By His example Lord Krishna had shown that every one should follow a *sadguru* with his soul and attain the goal of self-realisation. He laid great store by *gurubhakti* and went all out to protect the genuine disciples of the chosen *guru*.

Aswatthaama, the son of Guru Dronacharya, killed the sons of the Pandavas as they slept in their tents after the Mahabharata war at dead of night, to fulfill a promise made to his fallen king Duryodhana. Arjuna chased him. In mortal fear for his life,

Aswatthaama used the deadly *Brahmasironaamakaasthra* for which he knew only the propelling or *prayoga* and not *upasamhaara* or mitigation, which by itself was a gross violation of the established Dharma. Arjuna could not divine the nature of the *asthra*. Lord Krishna thereon told him what *asthra* it was. He was directed to use the same *asthra* in attack. Then there was a great upheaval. Fearing the total destruction of the Universe if the *asthraas* were not mitigated, the Lord asked Arjuna to withdraw both the *asthraas* himself. Arjuna did so. He bound over the culprit Aswatthaama and was going to take him before Draupadi. Lord Krishna wanted now to test Arjuna, who was a devoted disciple of Dronacharya, for whose sake he had made Drupada a captive and beg forgiveness of the *Acharya*. He wanted to test his *gurubhakti*. He said:

“Arjuna! This fellow is not a Brahmin at all. For, like a wicked rascal, he has killed innocent children while they were asleep. Know you not that the *Dharma Saastraas* say that one who is unaware, one who is not in his consciousness due to drink, one who is a boy or a woman or an ardent supplicant, one who is thrown out of a chariot in war and one who is frightened to death, should not be killed even though he is an enemy? This man has committed a heinous crime. Kill him at once.”

Arjuna folded his arms and said: “After all is said and done he is the son of my *guru*. I cannot kill him. I shall take him to Draupadi.” Draupadi on seeing Aswatthaama in that plight melted at heart and said: “Sire! Please release him. He is the son of your *guru*. As such I see the *guru* in him. Don’t make the *guru’s* wife suffer the pangs of loss of her child. Releasing him is the first thing you should do.” Lord Krishna was pleased, but Bheema, the brother of Arjuna, was raging. So Arjuna taking the cue from the Lord, remembered the words of the *Dharma saastra* that a Brahmin scoundrel should not be killed or corporeally punished but should be shaved in head, stripped of his property and driven out from the country. He therefore cut off the crown jewel that was in the

head of Aswatthaama since his birth, having grown up with his hair, and drove him out. Lord Krishna was very much pleased with their consideration for their guru and so stood by them when they later had to face Aswatthaama's lethal *astbra* which he had propelled at them for entirely wiping them out to attenuate the disgrace he had undergone at their hands. The *astbra* blazed forth in all its fury and was forging ahead to destroy the child in the womb of Uttara, wife of Abhimanyu. The Pandavas were in great distress. The Lord then used His *Sudarsana chakra* and saved them all. Such acts of the Lord throughout His incarnation in this world show that the Upanishadic peroration *Matru devo bhava, Pitru devo bhava, Acharya devo bhava, Aitithi devo bhava* forms the sum and substance of the means to earn the protection and attain His Lotus Feet.

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## BHAKTA KUCHELA

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God's grace descends upon His devotee who yearns for Him intensely with single-minded devotion and an absolute sense of surrender or *Saranagati*. If one contemplates on Godhead with steady and pure devotion, all the riches, both temporal and spiritual, flow unto him or her. God does not make any distinction between the high and low, the rich and poor, the male and female of any caste, creed or race of any clime in this universe. This is seen exemplified in the case of Sudhama, the fellow pupil of Lord Krishna, famous as Bhaktha Kuchela.

Sudhama lived in Avantidesa. He was a poor Brahmin. He always thought of God in his mind and carried on his work in no way deterred by the gnawing poverty that beset him. He used to go about with his bowl for alms from those that deigned to give and was satisfied with whatever he could get.

His wife was very loyal to him. She did not complain to him about her lot. Her devotion to him was unparalleled. They had a large number of children and she felt it very difficult to make both ends meet. They had often to go to bed without even an apology for food. One day she felt the pinch so much that she approached her husband and made her supplication.

She said, "O Lord, I find it extremely difficult to bear this misery. I request you to see the fate of the children. They are thinning day by day. Save them. You have never been tired of telling us that Lord Krishna is your boyhood friend and fellow student. He is famed for His mercy and compassion towards the poor and the suffering who surrender to Him.



Why not you go to Dwaraka and seek His mercy? He will surely come to our aid. I entreat you to think of the welfare of the children and act expeditiously.”

Sudhama pondered a little. He was averse to the proposition at first. But then the thought of having the *darsan* of the Lord made him relent and consent to go to Dwaraka to his friend. Then a hitch arose. What was he to take as a gift to him? The *Sastras* say that one should not go to God and godly, the aged and the children, with empty hands. His wife found that there was nothing in the house except a small quantity of fried rice. There was not even an old rag to tie it properly and securely. His clothes were ragged. Somehow she managed to tie it to a part of his upper cloth.

Sudhama departed for Dwaraka. He was thinking of the Lord and was very eager to have His *darsan*. Seeing his tattered clothes, people called him Kuchela and that name stuck to him ever afterwards.

He reached the quarters of the Lord. The sentry at gate was amused and he made fun of him when Sudhama told that he was Lord Krishna’s friend and wanted to see Him. Others joined him in the fun. But at last seeing the earnestness and innocence of Kuchela and yielding to his importunities the sentry conveyed the message of his arrival to the Lord.

Lord Krishna was spending His time very pleasantly with His divine spouse Sri Rukminidevi. On hearing about Kuchela’s arrival, He hurried forward, received him, took him in, made him sit on His soft couch of Swan’s feathers, washed his feet, sprinkled the water on His head and on His wife and worshipped him.

All stood stunned at the immense good fortune of the poorly clad Brahmin mendicant whom the Lord Himself worshipped. Lord Krishna spoke words of welcome to Kuchela with great warmth and affection. Grasping Her husband’s intention, Sri Rukmini Devi took a fan and began to wave it to and fro to give

relief to Kuchela; the minions of the palace were so filled with awe at the reverential treatment given to the beggarly Brahmin that they stood by mutely as spectators of the wonderful scene.

The Lord spoke kind words to His friend and reminded him of the good old days they had spent together when they studied in the *ashram* of their great guru Sandheepani. He specially told Kuchela about a particular incident that had happened at the time.

One day their guru’s wife asked them to fetch firewood from the nearby forest. While there it became evening and they were assailed by storm and thunder. They lost their moorings and began to wander hither and thither not knowing how to proceed to the *ashram*. Their guru was on pins and needles all night about their safety. He found fault with his wife for having sent them to the forest. Early in the morning he came out in search of them. His joy knew no bounds when he found them safe and sound. He said to them, “My dear boys! I am pleased with your sense of devotion and duty towards me. There is no virtue greater than devotion to the guru. A devoted disciple who worships the guru and carries out his behests will be immensely benefited in this and the other worlds.”

“Don’t you remember, friend, how our beloved preceptor hugged us both and spoke words of comfort?” asked the Lord.

Kuchela was in a state of ecstasy. He was in great bliss. He was overwhelmed by the Lord’s sweetness towards him, a nondescript poor Brahmin. He was ashamed to offer the gift he had with him to the Lord for he felt it to be too small and beneath the dignity of the Lord. But the All-knowing Lord asked him, “What have you brought me, my good friend?” So saying, He found the bulge at the end of the upper cloth of Kuchela, opened it and quickly took a handful of the fried rice in it. He exclaimed, “How very sweet of you!” and put it in His mouth.

He was about to take another handful and eat when Sri

Rukminidevi stopped Him saying that what He had already taken was enough. Of course, Kuchela could not comprehend the purport of this conversation. He was blissful and in a state of supreme joy and peace. He had forgotten the purpose for which he had come there. He enjoyed the exhilarating vicinity of the Lord and His divine consort and no extraneous thought entered his mind.

The next morning the Lord went along with him for some distance and bade him farewell. Kuchela could not leave the Lord. But he had to go back home. He proceeded to go. Time and again he looked back for the Lord and then went on. His whole thoughts were about the Lord and the Divine Mother and the right royal treatment given to him. He came to his village at last. There he found a grand palatial building before him at the place where his hut had stood before he had left for Dwaraka. He thought that perhaps he had come to a wrong place. Then his wife dressed in beautiful and gorgeous attire and bedecked with jewels presented herself before him with countless handsomely dressed servants.

She welcomed him home. Kuchela was thunderstruck. He found that the Lord had blessed him with limitless riches unasked. He exclaimed, "Is it not foolishness to ask the Lord for this and that? Complete surrender to Him with steadfast devotion will bring everything conducive and proper to the devotee at the appropriate time. O Lord! Let not these riches cloud my perception and prove to be a hindrance to my devotion to you. Let my heart be always of You, in You and with You."

He thereafter led a saintly life of perfection and attained salvation.

The episode is revealing. Kuchela never thought of approaching the Lord for material riches and even forgot to ask for such riches when in His presence. But the omniscient Lord who found out his divine bent of mind which would not allow him to crave for mundane prosperity gratified his unsolicited desire. He had about

Him a scheme to fulfill every word of the holy and learned guru. Guru Sandheepani had told them that they would be blessed with temporal and spiritual riches galore as a reward for their pure devotion to him. The Lord had brought it into effect in this manner. Complete surrender to Him with no other thought had torn asunder all the *karmas* of his former births and Kuchela was blessed thus at the appropriate moment. His *guruseva* along with the Lord redeemed him.



## SAADHU SAMRAKSHAKA SRI KRISHNA

*Paritraanaaya saadhoonaam vinasayacha dushkrutaam  
Dharma samsthaapanaarthaaya Sambhavaami yuge yuge!*

“I am born again and again age after age to protect the meek and the gentle, to destroy evil and evildoers and to establish Dharma firmly in this world.”

This was the pronouncement made by Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the course of the Celestial Song, the *Bhagavadgeeta*, unfolded to him to wake him up from the stupor of an illusion that he was the doer and he was going to kill his relatives and friends in the battlefield.

The Lord is the sole refuge of the meek and the weak. He is the Sustainer of those who appeal for his succour and give themselves up to him wholeheartedly without any reservation. He has said:

*Ananyaaschintayanto maam ye janaah paryupaasate  
Tashaam nityaabhiyuktaanaam yogakshemam vahaamyaham.*

“I shall look after the welfare and prosperity of all those that serve me with single-minded devotion without any other thought or worry.”

The safety and prosperity of those that surrender to him totally are his eternal charge as he had shown time and again in his *Mahimaavataara* of Sri Krishna.

Draupadi was the wife of the five Pandava brothers. She was the devotee par excellence of Lord Sri Krishna. Her reliance on him was complete and without peer. When Yudhishtira, the eldest of

the Pandavas, was defeated in a gambling bout engineered by the eldest of the Kauravas, Duryodhana, the arch-villain who wanted to defraud him of his riches and his realm, the latter wanted to humble and insult him and his brothers publicly as he hated them like very poison.

He desired to openly and blatantly undress Draupadi in the Court hall in the presence of the elders like Bheeshma, Drona, Vidura, Kripaachaarya and others. He therefore ordered his equally evil brother Dussaasana to drag her to the Court hall though she had earlier turned back their emissary saying that she was in menses, in single cloth and not in fit condition to go over there and asking whether she was lost in wager before or after her husband had outbid himself.

Dussaasana rushed to the apartment of the ladies and, pulling her by the hair, he got her to the court in her agony in spite of her protests and appeals. All the elders in the court were stunned at this daring act of evil. They sat like idols of stone. The Pandavas hung their heads in shame.

Overcome with anger and choked with emotion, Draupadi addressed the elders and said: “How sad and pitiable it is that all of you elders well versed in the *Sastras* and *Dharmas* are keeping mum over this infamous act! Has the race of the Bharathaas become so degenerated and demoralised as not to condemn this daring outrage? Is there nobody to speak for *Dharma*?”

None ventured to give any answer. The youngest of the Kauravas, Vikarna, thereupon, boldly spoke against the indecent and heinous act of Dussaasana. He said: “The words of a person who is afflicted with the gambling spirit should not be taken too seriously by any sane person. Here Dharmaraja had gone wrong in having made Draupadi, the common property of all the brothers, as the bet to be won after he himself was won over in the game. She was won by *Adharma* therefore it is deplorable that she should

be got here in this atrocious manner while she is in menses and in single cloth and all should condemn this.”

It was like the lone voice of conscience upbraiding an evil person before being suppressed. Karna was very angry with him for his forwardness and chided him saying: “You are too talkative and young. It is presumptuous on your part to think that the elders here are not followers of *Dharma* and you alone know it and follow it. You have no business to speak while all the elders are silent. Draupadi had been fairly won in the game. Dharmaraja had bet all the common property of the brothers. She was no exception. If she had not been fairly won, do you think that the brothers would keep quiet? You say it is improper to bring her to the court in this heinous manner. A female should have one husband. This woman is a *bhandaki*. She has five husbands. What harm is there even if she were to be brought nude here?” The words of Karna, jarring and hateful, went unchallenged; Vikarna was silenced. Duryodhana took the cue and asked Dussaasana to at once disrobe her.

Draupadi was in dire distress. Her mighty husbands were impotent spectators. They were slaves to the Kauravas, having been won in bet. The elders were helpless in the matter and sat mute. She saw no hope of help from any quarter round her. She then thought of her Lord and Saviour, Sri Krishna, the only refuge of the oppressed and the meek. She prayed to *Saadbusamrakshaka* Sri Krishna with all her heart and soul. Her surrender was perfect. Her agony was felt by the world.

Dussaasana ran forward without any hesitation to carry out the command of his vile brother. But his surprise was indescribable when he found that as he dragged off one cloth, another appeared in its place. This went on *ad infinitum*. He became fatigued and fell down on the ground thoroughly exhausted and unconscious.

The joy of the elders and the Pandavas knew no bounds. Their hearts were full of devotion to the Lord who had saved the chastity

of his supreme devotee. The Kaurava brothers could not believe the evidence of their eyes. Karna hung his head in shame. *Draupadi maana samrakshana* was the grandest act of protection given by the Lord to those who supplicate to him totally. The innocent and the distressed who seek his help with perfect faith and sense of surrender are sure to be protected against all odds.

The greatest wonder however was that even though the Kauravas headed by Duryodhana knew that Lord Sri Krishna was the protector of the gentle and *dharmic* Draupadi and the Pandavas, they continued to persecute them and attempted to bring harm to them at all costs and at all times. They tried to make use of the sage Doorvaasa to bring them to grief and ruin.

They pleased the sage so much that he consented to test the Pandavas and put them to distress if they were to fail to please him. They hoped that the poor Pandavas would be obliged to invite the wrath of the fiery sage by some act of commission or omission and would be destroyed for ever.

Doorvaasa was a sage of extra-ordinary spiritual power and had a quick temper. He came over to the residence of the Pandavas in the forest well after noon. He was accompanied by a host of his disciples. As in duty bound Pandavas invited them for taking food. Doorvaasa said that he and his followers would go to the nearby river, bathe there and come back for participating in the hospitality offered.

Dharmaraja conveyed this news to Draupadi who was filled with deep chagrin and fear. There was no food at all in the house. Cooking was impossible at the time for such large number of persons. The ever filling *akshaya paatra* food would not yield anything once their feeding was over. What was she to do now? The sage Doorvaasa was quick in taking offence at the slightest mistake.

Draupadi was in great anguish of mind. She fell into deep meditation in wholesome prayer to Lord Sri Krishna, the *Aarta*

*traana paraayana*, the saviour of the suffering. Her surrender was in toto. Lord Sri Krishna, the *Saadhusamraksba*, the saviour of the saintly, the All merciful, heard her prayer.

He appeared before her with his sweet smiling face exuding confidence and cheer. He asked her: “Sister! I am very hungry. Can you give me something to eat?”

Draupadi who was roused from her prayerful state fell on her feet before him and said: “My Lord! I am in a quandary. There is no food at all. It is all over. I am at the end of my tether. What to do?”

The Lord said: “Let me see the cooking vessel. There must be something there.” Draupadi accordingly brought the vessel before him. The Lord saw a small bit of vegetable sticking to the vessel. He eagerly took it up and put it in his mouth, let out a belch and went to the eldest of the Pandavas and asked him why his guests were so late in coming.

Dharmaraja was so stunned on his seeing Lord Krishna there at that juncture that he became speechless. He did not know how the Lord came to be there and how he could know of their difficulty. On being asked by the Lord, he sent Bheema to the river to bring the sage and his followers posthaste as food was ready and it was becoming late.

There the sage and his followers were in a strange predicament. Soon after bath they found that their stomachs became full and they began to let out belches. They were not in a position even to eat a single particle of food. Doorvaasa was now at a loss as to what to do. He felt that he was very foolish in having embarked on this venture.

Could any one harm Pandavas and Draupadi who were under the benign protection of Lord Sri Krishna, the protector of the meek and the weak? He thought that if he were to go to the residence of the Pandavas and not partake of their hospitality

they might even curse him and his retinue. He thought discretion to be the better part of valour and sped away with his crowd without looking back and not heeding the repeated request of Bheema inviting them for food.

The moment Lord Sri Krishna took in the vegetable piece with relish that very moment all the creatures in the universe were fed to the full. As a result, the biter was bit. Lord Sri Krishna disappeared the moment the sage left in such ignominy. Draupadi heaved a sigh of intense relief and praised the Lord’s compassion towards his devotees.

Time and again the Lord came to their help he protected the Pandavas throughout. In all moments of crisis he was beside them. When Arjuna vowed to sacrifice himself if he were not to kill Saindhava who was responsible for the death of Abhimanyu, within sunset, which was well nigh an impossible task for him, the Lord created an illusion of sunset by putting his discus to cover the sun so that Saindhava looked out from his hiding place thinking that the sun had set and so was killed by Arjuna.

He was the charioteer of Arjuna and piloted him safely in the epic war of Mahabharata. Again when Aswatthaama, the son of Dronaachaarya, sought to completely wipe out the Pandava family and kill the child in the womb of Uttara, the Lord came to their rescue. He gave life to her child who was born lifeless. That child was called Parikshit and he was the successor of the Pandavas.

Throughout this *Avataar* of Krishna, the Lord provided ample instances to show that he was the protector of the saintly and the weak. He will be the charioteer of all those who repose full faith in him without any other thought. It was not for nothing that he said *Yogakshemam Vabaamyaham*. So let us offer our prayers to him even as Kulasekharaalwar prayed:

*He Gopaalaka He Krupaajalanidbe He Sindbukanyaa Pate!  
He Kamsaantaka He Gajendrakarunaapaareena He Madhava!*

*He Raamaanuja He Jagatbraya guru He Pundareekaaksha Maam  
He Gopeejana naadha Paalaya Param Na Jaanaami Tram Vinaa!*

“O Lord of the cowherds! O Ocean of Mercy! O Lord of Lakshmi, the daughter of the Ocean god! O Destroyer of Kamsa! O Saviour of the kind of elephants who sought your mercy! O husband of Sree! O Brother of Balaraama! O Perceptor of the three worlds! O broad eyed as the Pundareeka! Lord of the Gopeejana! Save me. I do not know any Savior other than you!”



7

## VAGEESWARI SARASWATI



*“Saraswatee namastubhyam Varade Kamaroopinee  
Vidyaarambham karishyami siddhirbhavatumesada!”*

“My salutations are to You, Mother Saraswati, the giver of boons, assuming different forms of Your volition. I begin the process of learning. Let my efforts be crowned with success.”

Prayer should be offered to Vageeswari Saraswati at the beginning of every learning process. That would result in its accomplishment in full and in perfection. She is the goddess of all learning and all forms of knowledge. She is the ruler of *Vak* or Speech.

She is a form of Maha Tripurasundari who gave her to the Creator Brahma to animate him in his cosmic work of creation. She is Sarvachaitanyarooma or all dynamism personified; she is *Aadya*, the first to exist and *Vidya*, knowledge incarnate.

*“Vageeswaree Jnaanasaktirvagbhava Moksharoopinee  
Kamaraje kriyaasaktibi Kamesee Kamaroopinee  
Saktibeeje Parasaktibi Iccheva Sivaroopinee  
Evam Devi Tryakshareetu Maha Tripurasundaree”*

She is Moksharoopini or of the form of Salvation. It is only she that can make one get mastery over *Brahmavidya* and attain salvation. She is contemplated as such by the initiated in *Sandhyopasana* or *Sandhya* worship. They meditate during *Sandhya* worship upon Gayatri, Savitri and Saraswati, the manifestations of the dynamism of Brahman. Of these Gayatri leads to the knowledge of action, Savitri guides to the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit. Saraswati it is who leads one to the path of Moksha and procures



salvation to her votary. She makes him free from the cycle of births and deaths and makes him one with Brahman. She is Brahmee or Brahmasambandhini.

Her union with Brahma has given birth to this cosmic creation and to the resplendent glory of the *Sabdabrahman*.

She is called Bharati as she bears the burden of creation and contains it. Her variegated forms were made known to the human world by the sage Bharata. Saraswati was so designated to denote her all-pervading nature. She is omnipresent and nothing can exist without her.

Without Vageeswari Saraswati's grace no one attains proficiency in poetry or other forms of a literary nature. That is why the devotee exclaims:

*"Vame pustakadharineemabbayadam sakshasrajam dakshine  
Bhaktebhye varanapesala karam karpoorakundojjvalam  
Ujjrumbhambuja patra kanta nayana snigdha prabhalokineem  
Yetvamamba na seelayanti manasa tesham kavivam kutaba!"*

"O Mother! How can one get poetic ability unless that person contemplates on You as of that brilliant form with book in left hand and rosary in right hand, with arms extended to grant protection to Your devotee with boons galore, shining radiantly like camphor and jasmine, and looking charming with your attractive and wide lotus eyes?"

She is worshipped during the Navaratri period as an aspect of the Universal Mother Parasakti. Prayers are offered to her as such.

*"Namostute Saraswati trisoola chakra dharini  
Sitambaravrute subhe mrugendra peeta samsthite  
Suvarnabandburadhare sujhallaree sirorube  
Suvarnapadmabhooshite namostute Maheswari."*

"Salutations are made to Goddess Saraswati holding the Trisoola

and the Chakra, robed in white, auspicious and seated on the seat of the lion. With golden hue, adorned with golden lotus, being Maheswari, the Universal mother."

She makes her abode on the tip of the devotee's tongue making him alert, intelligent, of wise speech, and of spectacular knowledge and talk. The whole world bows before her devotee who becomes invincible and charming on account of her grace.

Twelve glorious names of Vageeswari Saraswati have become highlighted for their efficacy. The prayer says:

*"Saraswateetviam drushtaa veenaapustaka dharinee  
Hamsavaahasamaayuktaa vidyaadanakaree mama  
Prathamam Bharatee nama dviteeyamcha Saraswatee  
Truteeyam Saradadevi chaturtham Hamsavahini  
Panchamam Jagateekhyata shashtam Vageeswari tatha  
Kaumari saptamam proktamashtamam Brahmacharini  
Navamam Buddhidaatreecha dasamam Varadayini  
Ekadasam Kshudraghanta dvadasam Bhuvaneshwari  
Brahmee dvadasa namami trisandhyam yab patennaraha  
Sarvasiddhi kareetasya prasanna Maheswatee  
Samevasatu jibvagre brahmaroopa Saraswatee."*

She wields the Veena in her hand. She is Vara Veenamrudupani. Music flows from her. She is sabdaswaroopi-nadaroopini. Her Veena is called "Kacchapi." Her mount is the *Hamsa* or the Swan. One who drives away Tamas or darkness of *Avidya* is called a *Hamsa*. Vageeswari Saraswati is the ruler of the *Hamsa* or the *Jaani*. The devotee prays to her for divine knowledge. Of the twelve names enunciated, the first is Bharati, the sustainer of the world. The second is the name Saraswati, the omnipresent dynamism of the cosmic world. The next is the appellation Sarada, the deity worshipped during *Saratkala* or *Navaratri* period. She grants *Brahmavidya*. One who has affluent Sarada *sakti* is called *Visarada*. Worshipping Sarada makes one *Visarada*. It makes a new person of

the devotee waking him up to the realm of consciousness of the Brahman. The fourth name is Hamsavahini driving away the *Jadatra* or dullness of the person. The fifth divine name is Jagateekhyata or famed in the cosmic world. The fame and glory of the goddess is unparalleled and spread all over. The next name is Vageeswari, the presiding deity of speech. She is pleased when one makes use of speech as stipulated by Lord Krishna to Arjuna.

*Anudwegakaram vakyam satyam priyabitamchayat  
Swaadhyayaabhyasanamchaina vangmayam tapa uchayate.*

One should do the *tapas* of the *Vak* as above. It has to be by regulating speech so as not to cause displeasure or emotional upset in others and by speaking the truth. Speaking what is good and pleasant and pursuing the Vedas and Sastras form part of the *tapas* of the *Vak*. The *Vak* should be employed in the *Namajapa* of the Devi. Her grace descends upon a person who does so.

The next name is Kaumari which, when uttered, bestows youthfulness. The name Brahmacharini when dwelt upon gives spiritual strength. The ninth gem of a name is Buddhidaatri or giver of wisdom and intellect. The tenth name Varadayini bestows boons in plenty. The next name is Kshudraghanta acting like a bell to drive away the low, the wicked, the base, the cruel and the vile enemies of the devotee. The twelfth name is Bhuvaneswari which when uttered gives the devotee absolute power over the world. These names make the devotee unique and peerless in the world.

Vageeswari Saraswati is Vyamohasamharini, the destroyer of bewilderment and illusion. She is seated on the *Pranava* and her devotee has her full power. It behoves us well therefore to pray to her always:

*Yakundendu tusharabara dhavala, ya subhra vastravruta  
Yaveenaavaradanda manditakara, ya swetapadmasana  
Ya Brahmachyutasankaraprabhrutibirdevaisadaapoojita  
Saamampaatu Saraswatee Bhagavatee nissesha jadyaapaba*

“Bhagavati, the Mother Saraswati, of pure white shining like jasmine, the Moon, camphor and the snow, robed cleanly, with the Veena and the rosary brightening her hands, sitting on the white lotus, worshipped by the gods like Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara always shall protect me by wiping out of existence the dullness of mind without remnant.”

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## VIDURA THE VIRTUOUS

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Lord Krishna is the sole refuge of the innocent and the oppressed. One who thinks of Him always dedicating himself wholeheartedly to His service shall have no fear. He or she can be even in the midst of vile people and yet the Lord will save him or her from any predicament. Vidura was such a sterling devotee of Lord Krishna. He always meditated upon Lord Krishna. He felt:

*Vasudevasya mey bbaktaassaantaastadgata maanasaaha  
Teyshaam daasasya daasobam Bhaveyjjanmani janmani*

His desire was to be born in every birth as the servant of the servant of the devotee of the Lord Vasudeva, who has the Lord always in his mind and is permeated by Him.

Vidura was the son of the great sage Veda Vyasa and the servant woman of Ambika who sent her to unite with the sage instead of herself to bring an offspring to the Kuru race, as the first son of Ambika born to the sage became blind. The first son was Dhritarashtra. He regarded Vidura as his brother and kept him by his side always.

Vidura was the incarnation of Yama, the Lord of Death forced to be born in the world due to a curse issued against him by the sage Mandavya who was punished wrongly. He was a man of virtue. But fate had ordained it that he should live among vile people and feel the pangs of suffering inflicted on virtue. Vidura liked the Pandavas who were children of Pandu, the brother of Dhritarashtra, and who were very virtuous.

He found to his great distress that the wicked sons of

Dhritarashtra headed by Duryodhana became jealous of their Pandava brothers and tried every method to wipe them out. He wanted to remedy the situation laying great store by the Lord's mercy towards the helpless and the meek and endeavoured in every way to protect them though he knew that it would endanger his position.

The Kauravas built a house of lac in which they designed to burn the Pandavas when unaware. Dhritarashtra knew the fact but kept quiet as he could not go against the wishes of his son Duryodhana. Vidura acted alone. He got a tunnel dug to let the Pandavas escape and intimated them about the dastardly plot of their cousin brothers. The Pandavas thus escaped. They went incognito to the town of Drupada and there married Draupadi, the King's daughter. They got a powerful ally.

Dhritarashtra found that virtue would triumph always and was afraid as to what would happen if the Pandavas were to become mightier. He sought the advice of Vidura. Vidura said that it would be better to give their share of the kingdom to the Pandavas and if it pleased him, he could bring them back. Dhritarashtra agreed and gave half the kingdom to the Pandavas.

Vidura continued to be with the blind king though he knew that Duryodhana and his brothers did not like him and were always on the lookout to harm him. He knew that the Lord of Lords, Sri Krishna, would save him. The Pandavas, who were ardent devotees of Lord Krishna, would be protected by Him at any cost for he was *Sadbusamrakshaka*. He helped them in the conduct of the Rajasuya sacrifice and killed many kings like Sisupala, Salva, Dantavakra and others. He caused the death of Jarasandha through Bheema of the Pandavas.

Seeing the phenomenal success of Yudhistira, the eldest of the Pandavas, Duryodhana thought of unfair means to down him and his brothers. He made Yudhistira enter into a game of dice and

defeated him winning lordship over him, his brothers, their wife and all property.

He asked Vidura to bring Draupadi who was in menses and in one cloth to the public hall for disrobement. Vidura refused to do so. He stood firm like a rock and upbraided him.

He said that Draupadi's question as to whether she was won before Dharmaraja was lost or after he was lost should be answered. But nobody paid heed to him.

Then Draupadi prayed to Lord Krishna for succour and she was protected from being disrobed in public by the villainous brothers Duryodhana and Dussasana. Vidura could perceive the inexorable hand of fate in all this and wondered at the infinite mercy of the Lord who came in a trice to save the virtuous Draupadi.

He got perturbed when again a game of dice took place and the Pandavas were made to go into forest life for twelve years and then made to live without being detected for one year. Failing that, they had to repeat the forest life once again and the incognito life without detection. Vidura could not contain himself. When Dhritarashtra asked him what the Pandavas could do as they had gone away to the forests, Vidura said that they would give battle and get back their kingdom. He should not have sent them to the forests heeding the words of his wicked son.

These words angered the blind king who admonished Vidura and said: "You always speak ill of my sons. Get out of my sight!" Vidura left him and went to live with the Pandavas. But Dhritarashtra could not bear separation from Vidura who was the keeper of his conscience and so got him back to live with him once more as usual. But Vidura was concerned with the welfare of the Pandavas who were gentle and God-fearing.

Neither Dhritarashtra nor Duryodhana told him about their plan to break the incognito life of the Pandavas and send them

back to the forests again. They did not agree to give the Pandavas their due even after they successfully completed their part of the wager. Lord Krishna himself came down to mediate on their behalf. Duryodhana tried to win over the Lord by his hospitality. But the Lord had nothing to do with him. He went to the house of His devotee Vidura and partook of his food. He was glad to bless His devotee who felt himself to be in elysium.

The attempts at mediation failed in spite of the Lord's efforts. Dhritarashtra became afraid that his sons would meet with their end as the Pandavas' might was growing with the Lord himself on their side. So he called Vidura to his side and asked him for advice. What Vidura said became famous as *Vidura Neeti* in the world.

He said: "Dharmaraja is Ajatasatru. No one is an enemy to him. So he has borne patiently all the crimes committed against him and his brothers. No one should violate a word of oath. Their portion of the kingdom must be given back to them as per the conditions of the wager. It would be beneficial to both sides. It is *dharma*."

"Bheema is dangerously active. As *dharma* is on the side of the Pandavas, the Devas and the Brahmins are wishing for their welfare. The crowning fact of it all is that Lord Krishna, who is the Absolute Brahman born in this world for the establishment of *dharma* in this world and for the protection of the meek and the oppressed, the righteous and the undefended, is on their side. I am sure that victory will be theirs."

"I feel Duryodhana is sin personified born into the family to destroy you and your kith and kin. You are bestowing your love on an undeserving and undesirable fellow. Know this. Perceive as to what you should do as a real king following the right path. Are you going to sacrifice the whole family for the sake of an unworthy son or are you going to exclude him from your fold in the cause of peace and prosperity for the family and for the world? Followers of *dharma* should adopt the second course."

These words fell like poison in the ears of Duryodhana who berated Vidura and spoke harshly and insultingly to him. He said: “Who asked you to come here? Who wants your unsolicited advice? This old man does not know that you are a viper by his side and he has fostered you. Can a serpent forget its innate quality? You are biting the hand that has been feeding you. You always care for your protector’s enemies and their welfare. Can there be any other *adharma* than this? You wicked rascal! You have exhibited the mentality of a slave woman’s son.”

So saying, he turned towards Karna, Sakuni and Dussasana and ordered them to drive him out into exile. Dhritarashtra kept mum all through. Now Vidura felt that the time had come for the parting of ways. God’s will had to be done. So, he dropped his bow and left on a pilgrimage to holy places, he wanted to atone for his having been in that vicious company for so many long years. He did not care for bodily comforts. He donned the hermit’s attire and went as an *avadhoot* taking food by the begging bowl when available.

He roamed about from one sacred place to another and at last came to Prabhasa Teertha. No one could recognise him. Here he learnt about the fate of the Kauravas and how Lord Krishna placed the virtuous Pandavas on the throne at Hastinapura. He wept at the fate of the despicable Kauravas and wondered at the pranks of destiny. Thereafter he continued his pilgrimage and finally came to the banks of the Jamuna.

There he met Uddhava, the sterling devotee of Lord Krishna, and was filled with great elation, for the very sight of Uddhava made him remember the Lord of Lords who appeared to be present there at the moment. He made enquiries about the Lord’s welfare. He asked about the Pandavas and felt very much for the fate of Dhritarashtra who had behaved so treacherously towards his brother’s children and reaped the consequences.

He said: “O Uddhava! As for myself, I have centred my mind on the Lord of Lords. As a result of His grace I have been able to feel His mysterious powers. Men are deluded by the ego when they have education or riches or high caste. The Kauravas became prey to this three-fold pride. All this was known to Bhagavan Sri Krishna. But why did He ignore them for so long a time? It would have been but child’s play for him to have killed them by mere volition. But he allowed them to exist in the world for so long a time to make them realise their foolishness and get reformed. As they did not, they suffered for their folly.

“The Lord does not have birth or death or *Karma*. In spite of that, He takes shape in the world for its safety and well-being when the vicious reign supreme and work havoc. His divine acts are beyond human comprehension. I long to hear more and more of Him. Please enlighten me.”

Uddhava became emotional. He was permeated with love and devotion to Lord Sri Krishna who had just left His mortal frame and returned to His original abode. He was overpowered with feelings when relating to Vidura the exit of the Lord from the world.

Vidura felt very miserable when he heard about *Krishnaniryan*. He was stunned. After a time they both came to themselves. Uddhava delineated on the auspicious and divine qualities of the Lord and recounted to Vidura His story in full and how He had attained *Nirvana*. Uddhava was at the Lord’s side at the time. He had asked the Lord as to what he should do in the future, and he prayed to the Lord to take him along with Him.

The Lord looked with eyes of tender mercy on him and said: “I have already told you to go to Badareevan. Go there.” But Uddhava still held on. Then suddenly the sage Maitreya, a staunch devotee of Lord Krishna and a close disciple of the sage Parasara,

came there. He fell at the feet of the Lord whose eyes still rested on Uddhava with compassion.

He told Uddhava within the sage's hearing: "Uddhava! You were one of the Vasus in your previous birth. The Vasus performed *Satra Yaga* while you worshipped with the sole idea of attaining me. What you desire is known to me. It is not attainable by others. Yet I shall fulfill your wish. There are two reasons for it. The first one is your pure *Bhakti* towards me. Do you know the second reason? I shall tell you. It is difficult for any one to be by my side when I am casting off my incarnation. On account of your *Poorvapunya* you have got this benefit. This is your last life. I shall vouchsafe to you the *Atma vidya* which I had given to Brahma and which the pundits and the *Bhagavatas* praise. It shall enlighten you."

These words were ambrosia to Uddhava who was beside himself with ecstasy. He prayed to the Lord with all humility. The Lord was pleased with him and blessed him with *Atma Vidya*. It was only after that that he had met Vidura.

When Vidura heard this, he felt humble before Uddhava and requested him to teach *Atma Vidya* to him also. Then Uddhava said: "My dear friend! You do possess the *Atma Vidya* by yourself. But for it to fructify you must have *upadesa* from a Guru. The Lord had thought of you at the time of His leaving the world. He asked me to direct you to the devoted sage Maitreya and asked the sage to teach it to you. You are indeed a blessed man." These words were nectar to Vidura. He now felt sure that his sins were expiated. He believed:

*Krishneti mangalam nama yasya vaci pravartate  
Bhasmeebhavanti tasyasu mahapataka kotayaha!*

"That person on whose tongue the auspicious name of the Lord dwells would have crores of his sins wiped out and burnt to ashes."

Vidura was convinced about it once again. He was in great bliss,

and thought: "O how merciful is the Lord! He did not forget me even at the time of shedding the mortal coil. He had such kindness to me even though I lived with the vile without parting from them at the first sight of wickedness. How sad that I did not have the splendid opportunity that Uddhava has had!"

He thereupon sought Maitreya who was in his hermitage near the source of the Ganges. Vidura made obeisance to the learned and saintly Maitreya and wished to learn *Atma Vidya* from him. He said that the accounts of the Lord's divine acts give the necessary equipment to master *Atma Vidya* and requested the sage to tell him about the divine *leelas* of Lord Krishna. The contemplation of Lord Krishna at all times has the potency of giving spiritual advancement leading to self realisation. For had not the Lord said:

*"Krishna Krishneti Krishneti Ye Mam Smarati Nityasaha  
Jalam bhitva yatha padmam Narakadudharamyabam?"*

"He who meditates on the Lord saying, "Krishna, Krishna Krishna," shall be protected by Him and brought out of hell like the lotus coming out of the water driving a wedge in it!

The sage Maitreya appreciated the wisdom of Vidura and complimented him on his request and said that it was as it should be. He said: "This consideration of yours for the benefit of humanity at large is laudable. It denotes your total devotion to the Lord. It is not surprising as you are Yama in human shape. The Lord likes you. Instead of himself giving you the initiation into *Atma Vidya* he has put me in the place of your guru and has blessed me. Listen."

The sage thereupon went on to speak of the various incarnations of the Lord. He spoke of the *Bhagavata Purana*, the *Varahanatara*, the *Kapilavatara*, *Daksha Sambara*, the life of Dhruva and Prithu and in the course of his recounting these he taught Vidura the secret of the *Atmatatva*, *Ashtangayoga*, *Bhaktitattva*, *Jeewanmukti*, the

onward march of the soul to self-realisation. *Karma yoga* as had been given out by Kapila Narada and others.

Vidura felt himself to be in the full grace of the Lord and after saluting Maitreya for his teachings, he went back to Hastinapura. There he was welcomed by the Pandavas. Dhritarashtra was in gloom and wept when he saw Vidura. He felt for the fate of his sons. Vidura told him that this *samsara* was useless and he should not feel for what had happened as it was of their own making. He taught him renunciation. He left along with Dhritarashtra to do penance. He finally attained Nirvana when Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas, came to see him. His spirit entered the latter. The life of Vidura exemplifies the truth that the Lord protects the virtuous even though they are in the midst of villainous people.

That is why I say:

*“Harernamaiva namaiva namaiva Mama jeevitam  
Kalan Nastyeva nastyeva nastyeva gati ranyatha!”*

“My life spirit is in the name of Hari, Hari, Hari alone. Refuge there is none in any other way, person or thing, other than in the name of Hari in this Kali age.”

## DUSHTASIKSHAKA SRI KRISHNA

*“Vinaasaaya cha Dushkrutaam, Sambhavaami Yuge Yuge!”  
“I am born age after age to destroy evil and evildoers”*

So said Lord Sri Krishna to Arjuna. The Lord is the punisher of evil and the agents of evil. The Bhagavata chronicles his divine exploits in this direction. The Ekaslokaatmaka Bhagavatam states:

*“Aadau Devakeedevi Garbhajanam Gopegrube Vardhanam  
Maayaa Pootana jeevitaapabaranam Govardhanoddhaaranam  
Kamsacchedana Kauravaadibanam Kunteesutaapaalanam  
Hyetadbhagavatam Puraanakatbitam Sri Krishnaleelamrutham.”*

The Bhagavata which deals with the ambrosia of the divine exploits of the Lord Sri Krishna highlights how he was born in the womb of Devakeedevi, how he was brought up in the house of the Gopees, how he snatched away the life of the guileful giantess Pootana, how he lifted up the Govardhaa Mountain to save the Gopaas from the ire of Indra, how he killed Kamsa, the Kauravas and others of their type and how he protected the sons of Kunteedevi though they were all through beset by the evil machinations of the Kauravas. It contains a vivid account of how Lord Sri Krishna made short work of all the evildoers that infested the earth at the time.

Kamsa was the foremost among the wicked rulers that formed a great menace to the world with their brutishness and cruelty. He usurped his father's throne and put him in prison. He imprisoned his sister Devakeedevi and her husband Vasudeva believing the words of the Divine Voice of the Sky which said that their eighth issue would kill him. He gathered round him fierce and

merciless Rakshasas like Baka, Vatsa, Trunaavarta, Dhenuka, Agha, Chaanoora, Mushtika and a host of others to aid him in his villainous deeds. He had the full help of the mighty king Jaraasandha of Magadha whose daughters, Asti and Praasti were given in marriage to him. He tried every conceivable method to get rid of Lord Sri Krishna when he found out that he had killed the invincible giantess Pootana. His bosom friends Sakataasura, Trunaavarta, Vatsa, Baka, Agha, Dhenuka and Pralambha were all killed in the process. He fancied he could still kill the Lord even after the sage Narada told him that he was Vishnu himself. He could not publicly wage war for fear that there would be a bloody revolt in that event. So he thought of a ruse to get the Lord and his brother Balarama to Madhura and use some stratagem to get rid of them there. He sent the saintly Akrura with the injunction to bring them stating that there was going to be a Dhanuryaaga at Madhura. Akrura knew the why and wherefore of that invitation and was loth to go on that mission. But he had no alternative. He was a devotee of the Lord and he knew that the Lord would forgive him. He conveyed the news to Lord Sri Krishna who readily agreed to follow him with his brother Balarama. Little did Kamsa imagine that he had sent an invitation to death when he sent Akrura. Kamsa made arrangement to get them trampled under the feet of the huge and fearful elephant Kunalayaapeeda and if they were to escape he plotted to have them killed by his terrible wrestlers Chaanoora and Mushtika. But what were they to Lord Sri Krishna? He killed the wild elephant and made short work of Chaanoora while Balarama on his part accounted for Mushtika.

Kamsa became enraged and ordered his army to kill them. Within the twinkle of an eye, the Lord jumped on to the throne, dragged the cruel Kamsa and killed him much to the relief and happiness of the terrorised courtiers. The Lord freed his parents from prison and set Ugrasena, the father of Kamsa on the throne. Prayers were offered to the Lord.

*“Vasudevasutam Devam Kamsa Chaanoora Mardanam  
Devakeeparamaanandam Krishnam Vande Jagadgurum”*

“Salutations to the Lord who is the son of Vasudeva and who has killed Kamsa and Chaanoora, the most feared by the people! Salutations to the Preceptor of the world and to the bringer of supreme bliss to Devaki!”

All those who had fled the city and the kingdom not being able to bear the tyranny of Kamsa and his minions now returned in happiness. As all the evil practices that had resulted on account of the wicked rule of Kamsa had to be rectified Krishna stayed behind at Madhura without going back to Gokula. After setting right things there both Lord Krishna and Balarama went to perform penance for thirteen years. In the meantime Jaraasandha swore vengeance against Lord Sri Krishna for having killed Kamsa. He consolidated his position and collected round him the evil rulers of the country. Many became his vassals overawed by his might and lured by his patronage and cunning. Sisupaala, the King of Chedi, who was a sworn enemy of Lord Sri Krishna, became his commander-in-chief. Dantavakra, Sisupaala’s brother, followed suit and joined his ranks. Bhagadatta of the Yavana kingdom trailed behind him. Paundraka, another open foe of Lord Sri Krishna, also became the camp follower of Jaraasandha. After thus gaining powerful allies Jaraasandha laid siege to the fort of Madhura from which Lord Sri Krishna and Balarama were absent.

The people were in jitters. They prayed to Lord Sri Krishna who made his presence there. He kept the fort impregnable. He defended it very well. Jaraasandha was defeated and he retreated having lost his two famous commanders Hamsa and Dimbhaka who were the mainstay of his army. Lord Sri Krishna could have killed him then and there. But every soul has to work its destiny. The longest rope is given for one to get reformed. God allows considerable latitude to sinners and the vicious in the fondest hope



that they might reform. A person cannot leave this body unless his Praarabda Karma is expiated. For it there is a well-ordered scheme.

Jaraasandha was allowed that time lag. His death was not to be at the hands of Lord Sri Krishna. After this defeat he bided his time. He made friendship with Kaalayavana, the Mleccha king, and planned to invade Madhura with his support. He proclaimed his intention to ravage Madhura. Lord Sri Krishna knew that it was not propitious for any resistance to their pincer movement. So he advised his kith and kin to leave the place before Jaraasandha's arrival and go to Kusasthali in Goorjaradesa near the Western Sea. Here was built Dwaaraka, the abode of the Lord. In the meantime Lord Sri Krishna appeared in Madhura which was besieged by Kaalayavana, the Mleccha king. He was chased by the latter. He could have killed the Mleccha king himself; but it was ordained by fate that the fellow should meet with his death at the hands of another. So the Lord led him to the cave where lay King Muchukunda, the son of Maandhaatru, in deep sleep on account of a boon from the Devas whom he had helped in their battle with the Asuras. Anybody who had the misfortune to wake him up would be burnt to ashes. The proud Kaalayavana who thought that the Lord was in full flight on account of fear for him ran into the cave. He found Muchukunda on the ground. He mistook him to be Lord Krishna and hit him on the head with his leg. The sleeping king woke up in great anger and directed his fiery eyes towards Kaalayavana who was immediately burnt to ashes. Muchukunda saw then the beautiful form of Lord Sri Krishna and learning who he was fell on his feet before him. The Lord said: "The death of this evil fellow was destined to be at your hands. You are my devotee. I have come down to earth to rid it of evil and evildoers. Your mind will be pure. You shall not be affected by any desire. Single-minded devotion to me is a panacea for all such things. One who becomes a slave to his senses and does not do devotion to me will be susceptible to the

pranks of the mind and will be lost to the path of self-realisation and salvation. Only unadulterated devotion to me can protect him. You shall have firm faith in me. Perform tapas. You will attain me in your next birth." Muchukunda was highly pleased and left the place for doing penance.

Thereupon Lord Sri Krishna destroyed the armies of Kaalayavana and began transporting all their wealth to Dwaaraka. Now Jaraasandha appeared on the scene with a huge army. The Lord and Balarama feigned to be afraid of him; threw away the wealth and began to retreat. Jaraasandha laughed loudly at them in derision and went after them. They ascended the hill of Praharsana. Jaraasandha set fire to the hill and thought that they must have died in the fire and left the place in hilarity. But the Lord and his brother had already reached Dwaaraka.

Subsequently Jaraasandha became very tyrannic. He wanted that Rukminidevi, the daughter of Bheeshmaka, the king of Vidarbha, should be married to Sisupaala much against her will. Bheeshmaka's son, Rukmi, was on the side of Jaraasandha. Rukminidevi was the incarnation of the Divine Mother Sri Mahaalakshmi. She supplicated to the Lord who came on the *Swayamvara* day and carried her off defeating Jaraasandha, Sisupaala and all their allies. Rukmi, the brother of Rukminidevi, was chastised and disfigured when he persisted in resisting the Lord. Rukminikalyaana decidedly proves that the Lord who is dushtasikshaka will always protect his devotee under any circumstance.

Even this defeat did not deter Jaraasandha and his followers in thinking themselves to be supreme to the Lord. They waited for their chance to resist him again. In the meantime Naraka, the king of Praagjyotisha, raised his ugly head and proclaimed himself the Lord of the Universe. He imprisoned sixteen thousand princesses of ravishing beauty and declared that everyone should worship him. Lord Krishna killed him and the day of his death became the

festival day of Deepaavali. In spite of this ocular evidence, other evil rulers rose against Lord Sri Krishna and oppressed the meek and the weak. So the Lord waged battle against them and killed all of them. He annihilated Paundra, Kaasiraja and Baanasura. This does not mean that the Lord was a warmonger. Not so. Vice had to be met at all levels and the remedy must be applied at the proper time. Now the Lord found that evil was taking root in the land of the Kurus. Duryodhana, the Kaurava Prince, was out to do injustice to the virtuous Pandava brothers. The Lord came to know of their plight from Akrura. The mother of the Pandavas was his great devotee. Kuntee was her name. She prayed to the Lord for his succour. He took them into his fold. He got his sister Subhadra married to Arjuna whom he made his earnest follower and disciple. He approved the proposal of King Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandavas, to perform the Rajasooya Sacrifice for it would help in his onerous task of ridding the world of evil. It was first necessary to overcome Jaraasandha who had become incorrigible by imprisoning a good number of kings with a view to offering them as a sacrifice to the Lord Mahadeva. He therefore took with him Arjuna and Bheema to the capital of Magadha putting on the guise of Snaatakaas and challenged Jaraasandha to mortal combat with any of them. The latter chose Bheema to be his opponent and in the wrestling bout he was killed by Bheema. The world heaved a sigh of relief and the released kings swore their loyalty to the Lord and the Pandavas.

At the Rajasooya sacrifice Lord Krishna was chosen to be worshipped at first. Bheeshma selected him for that honour. But this was objected to by Sisupaala, the Chedi King, who abused Bheeshma as well as Lord Sri Krishna. He accused Bheeshma of senility due to old age and abused the Lord outright. He said that the cowherd did not deserve that honour; being a coward as he got his master Jaraasandha killed by a ruse. Sisupaala made ready to attack the Lord. All were afraid as to how the matter would

end. The Lord said: "This person is the son of my aunt. Yet he had been acting inimically towards me and tormenting my people. When I invaded Praagiyotisha he pillaged Dwaaraka. When the Bhoja kings went to the Raivata hill, he killed them mercilessly. He carried away the horse intended for the Aswamedha sacrifice by my father Vasudeva. He had violently taken away the wife of my devotee Akrura while on the way to Saubara kingdom. He raped the daughter of the King of Karoosa country. I had promised my aunt that I shall bear hundred crimes of this fellow. The wretch has exceeded his limit. You shall see." So saying, the Lord let out his Sudarsana Chakra which cut off the head of Sisupaala even as he was uttering invectives against the Lord. After the death of Sisupaala and the close of the Rajasooya sacrifice, Saalva, his brother, did penance to Lord Siva, got an aerial vehicle and began attacking Dwaaraka when the Lord was not there. He was also killed by the Lord who thereafter annihilated the other two masterminds of evil, Dantavakra and Viddoradha, sons of his uncle. The world became a safe place now. Evil had subsided to a major extent. But after a time it raised its venomous head through the arrogant and vile Duryodhana who wanted to ruin the Pandavas for the shame he had undergone at Mayasabha at the time of Rajasooya. He subjected them to all sorts of humiliation and even went to the extent of getting Draupadi, the wife of Pandava princes, disrobed from which predicament she was saved by the Lord who bestowed her with numerous sarees replacing the one taken off before anything could happen. He did not like to give back their kingdom even though they had carried out all the conditions of the wager of the gambling bout. War became inevitable. Lord Sri Krishna who protected the virtuous Pandavas tried to conquer vice by means of persuasion.

He even condescended to go as a messenger of peace on behalf of the Pandavas. But Duryodhana would not yield. He preferred war. He was blinded by an illusion that he could crush



the Pandavas with the help of Karna and the warriors under Bheeshma, Drona, Kripa and Aswatthaama. He even went to the extent of planning to imprison the Lord as he was in the court hall on his mission of peace. That sounded his death knell. The Lord showed his cosmic form and left the place. War thus became inevitable. It fitted with the scheme of ridding the world of all evil forces at one stroke. The Pandavas relied on the Lord who was their sole prop and Arjuna chose him to be on his side though he was told that Lord Sri Krishna would not fight with any weapon in that war. He consented to be the charioteer of Arjuna who was also of the name of Paartha. The Lord thus earned the name Paarthasaaradhi and piloted the Pandavas to victory. But for the Lord they could not have won the Mahabharata War. It is described:

*“Bheeshma Drona thataa, Jayadhradha Jalaa, Gaandhaara Neelopala  
Salya Graaha vatee, Krupeno Vabinee, Karnena Velaakula  
Aswatthaama Vikarna Ghoramakaraa, Duryodhanaavarthinee  
Sottheerna Khalu Pandavaibi Rananadee Kaivartake Kesave!”*

“The Pandavas could ferry over the river of the battle of Kurus which contained the banks Bheeshma and Drona, the water Jayadhradha, the black stone Gaandhaara king, the crocodile Salya, the flood Krupa, the waves Karna, the fierce alligators Aswatthaama and Vikarna and the whirlpool Duryodhana, only with the piloting of Lord Sri Krishna.”

He taught the Celestial Song the Bhagavadgeeta to make Arjuna fight at the outset when he was deluded by the belief that he was going to kill all his kith and kin and was unwilling to do battle. The Lord showed him the Viswaroopa which washed away that idea. Arjuna found that he was only an instrument in the work of annihilation of evil in the cosmic scheme of things. He saw the vision in which all those were found entering into the fierce mouth of the Lord. He prayed to the Lord:

*“Amee cbah tvaam Dhritaraashtrasya Putraah  
Sarve sabaivaavaripaala Samgghaibi,  
Bbeeshmo Dronah Sootaputrastathaasou  
  
Sabaasmadeeyairapi Yodhamukhyaib  
Vaktraani te tvaramaanaa Visanti  
Damsbtraakaraalaani Bhayaanakaani  
Kechidvilagnaah Dasanaamtareshu  
Samdrusyante choornitairutthamaangaih.”*

“I find all the sons of Dhritaraashtra entering your mouth with all their kingly followers. Bheeshma and Drona, Karna and all our heroes are also entering you. All of them are caught between your ferocious teeth and appear beheaded.”

The Lord withdrawing his cosmic vision said:

*“Kaalosmi Lokakshayakrutpravruddho  
Lokaansamaabartumiba pravruttbaha  
Rutepitvaam na bhavishyanti sarve  
Yevastithah pratyaneekeshu Yodhaah.”*

“I am the Time spirit in full effulgence to destroy the world. I have begun the work of killing the living creatures. Even if you do not battle, the warriors on the other side cannot live.”

These words of the Lord dispelled Arjuna’s illusion and the epic battle was fought. The protective aegis of the Lord helped him. Dushtasikshaka Sri Krishna made use of the war to wipe out the evil doers and lessen the burden of Mother Earth. Verily he is the Eternal Spirit always on his mission of Dushtasikshana. Hence we shall pray:

*“Jayati Jayati Devo Devakeenandanoyam  
Jayati Jayati Krisbno Vrushnivamsa Pradeepaha  
Jayati Jayati Meghasyaamalabkomalaango  
Jayati Jayati Prudhveebhaara naaso Mukundaha!”*

“Victory to the son of Devaki! Victory to Krishna, the glorifier of the Vrushni Family! Victory to him of the body with the hue of the black dark clouds! Victory to the destroyer of the burden of Mother earth!”

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10

## SISUPALA THE REVILER

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Vasudeva, the father of Lord Krishna, prayed to him thus on his birth:

*“Tramasya Lokasya Vibho rirakshisu  
Rgrubeyvateernosi Mamaakhilesvara  
Raajanyasamjnaasurakoti yoothapai  
Rnirvyoobamaanaani Hanishyaseychamoobu!”*

He said: “O All pervading and All regulating Parabrahm! You are born in my house for saving the Universe and for killing the hordes of armies of the Aasuric kings and rulers.” The Lord accordingly fulfilled his expectations by killing the villainous Kamsa and his Aasuric minions. He had thereby incurred the wrath of Jarasandha, the father-in-law of Kamsa and all his followers, chief of whom was Sisupala.

Sisupala considered himself to be the inveterate enemy of Lord Krishna and was out to do anything to decry him. He was the son of the Chedi king called Damaghosha. His mother was Satwati, the third aunt of Lord Krishna. He was born with four hands and an extra eye in the forehead. The parents were agitated over this. Then they heard the Unseen Divine Voice of the Sky telling them that the extra eye and the additional hands would vanish when the would-be killer of the child would take him into his hands. From that time they gave the child to every visitor that came to them. Lord Krishna came there with his brother Balarama to see them. The Lord took the child in his hands. Lo! The extra eye and additional hands disappeared at that very moment. Satwati now knew that the Lord was going to kill the boy. So she prayed to

him: ‘My dear Krishna! This boy may grow to be very bad and do harm to you. Kindly bear with him and do not retaliate until he commits hundred crimes against you. Have mercy on me!’ The Lord gave his word of promise to her out of compassion. He kept his word and did not act even when the evil Sisupala caused the greatest provocations to him. That was how Sisupala could be so nonchalant and hate Krishna committing wrongs against him. He associated himself with the enemies of the Lord committing many atrocities with impunity. He became the Chief of the forces of Jarasandha who was himself evil personified. Jarasandha had imprisoned many kings with a view to offering them as sacrificial victims. Sisupala became bold and went on with his hostile activities against the Lord.

When the Lord was not in Dwaraka, having gone on war with the king of Pragotisha, Sisupala came to Dwarka and burnt the city and its resident population including children and old men. When the Bhoja kings who were the Lord’s kith and kin went to the Raivataka hill with their womenfolk on a pleasure trip, he fell upon them suddenly and killed them all without mercy. He stole the sacrificial horse of Vasudeva, the Lord’s father and spoiled the sacrifice. Akroora was a devotee of the Lord. He was an innocent person and he never interfered with the work of others. When his wife was on her way to the country of Saubara, Sisupala went and took her away by force to his own country where she was kept in his harem. The king of Visala promised his daughter in marriage to the king of Karoosa. But Sisupala came in the guise of the Karoosa king and spoiled her chastity. This evil man was fortified in all his deeds with the alliance of Jarasandha and the promise extracted from the Lord by his mother. He wanted to marry Rukmini the daughter of Bheeshmaka, the king of Vidarbha and had the consent of her brother Rukmi, an evil man like himself. But Rukmini was a devotee of the Lord. She had given away her heart to the Lord as was natural. For she was the

incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi! What could she do now? Here were mighty forces of evil arrayed against her. She was helpless. Her father was a puppet in the hands of her brother who was Sisupala’s bosom friend. But she was not disheartened. She felt that the Lord would certainly come to her aid. For was he not Aartatraanaparaayana? She therefore made bold to send her message of love and surrender to her Lord Sri Krishna through her purohit Agnidhyotana. She represented her case to the Lord and said that she would sacrifice her life if the Lord were not to come at once and rescue her from the wicked hands of Sisupala. She said: “O Lord! the wretch Sisupala is trying to take me away from you like a fox trying to take the portion belonging to a lion. Had I performed the worship of the Deva the Dvijas, the Gurus, and the Elders and also performed the Chandrayana and other vritas in my previous birth. You my Lord would come here and take me by defeating Sisupala, Jarasandha and others. You need not doubt as to how you can take me without killing my kith and kin. There is a custom that the bride should go to the temple of the Goddess Gauri at the outskirts of the city before marriage; You can take me off at that time. If you were not to come I shall shed this mortal coil. Even after hundred births, I shall marry you and you alone”. The Brahmin went to Dwaraka and gave her message to Lord Krishna. He described to the Lord the state of mind of Rukmini who would marry him and no other. The Lord smiled and promised to do the needful in the matter and relieve her anguish of mind. He would get Rukmini from Kundinapura defeating all the cruel kings. So saying the Lord made necessary preparations to go to that city for the purpose. Meanwhile Bheeshmaka decorated the city and its environs in a very grand style befitting the occasion feeling sure that Sisupala would marry Rukmini.

Sisupala arrived there with his father Dhamagoshha and his villainous train of friendly kings like Salva, Jarasandha, Dantavakra, Vidooratha, Paundraka and others who were all the

avowed enemies of Lord Krishna. They were all cocksure about Sisupala's wedding with Rukmini. The arrival of these wicked kings was made known to Rukmini Devi. She was jittery. What about her Lord? There was no news about him. Would he come at all? No! He would certainly come. Her mind was tossed up and down with despairing thoughts and she was in a pensive mood. She prayed to her Lord with all her heart. It became night. She was at the end of her tether. Then came the bright light of hope and cheer. Agnidiotana brought the good news of his successful mission to the Lord. He told her of the Lord's promise to come and marry her. The Lord's arrival also was announced. She expressed her gratitude to Agnidiotana for his succour to her in her hour of need. She was elated beyond measure. She was now sure of her redemption. The news of the arrival of Lord Krishna spread like wild fire. The citizens gathered in large numbers to see him. They had the feast of their eyes. How they wished that the Lord should become their own by marrying their princess Rukmini! They were the proper pair, so the people thought. The next day Rukminidevi went with her retinue to the temple for the customary worship of the Goddess Gauri. She turned towards the marriage hall and finding the Lord there, she put her garland round his neck. Lord Krishna took her off before the very eyes of Sisupala and his allies. These latter became enraged at this outrage and did mighty battle to defeat the Lord. But it was all in vain. The Lord and Balarama who came from Dwaraka with the Yadava army vanquished them all. Rukmini Devi became the Lord's own. Sisupala was inconsolable at this insult to his masculinity. His friends led by Jarasandha came to him and consoled him saying: "Do not deign to become dispirited and gloomy. Good and bad, success and defeat, happiness and unhappiness come and go according to destiny. After all this Krishna was defeated by our Jarasandha umpteen times. It is all the work of fate. We shall wreak our vengeance against him at the appropriate time." Thus assuaged in feelings Sisupala went to his country. But Rukmi, brother of

Rukmini Devi and his bosom friend would not take it lying down. He did battle against the Lord who defeated him in a trice and let him off with life on the entreaty of his sister after disfiguring his face. Irrevocable is the hand of fate and the will of the Lord. With all circumstances in his favour Sisupala could not win. The Lord is omnipotent.

*"Rukmineekeli samyuktam Peetaambara susobhitam  
Avaapta Tulaseegandham Krishnam Vandey Jagadgurum!"*

"Salutations to the Lord Sri Krishna, the Preceptor of the Universe, shining in his Peetaambara dress with the seducing scent of Tulasi and in sport with Sri Rukmini Devi! He is the Paramatman."

His true quality is revealed in the unique way when he talked with his consort after marriage one day. He said: "My Dearest! Many mighty kings sought your hand. Sisupala was particular to marry you. Your brother also was in his favour, You set at naught all their calculations and married me. I do not know what you saw in me. I am not brave and valiant as I made my abode in the midst of the ocean for fear of my enemies. To think you have been attracted by my riches and grandeur cannot be correct as all the world knows what riches and grandeur I can show being a simple cowherd. To think that *you* expected total affection from me as a loving husband cannot hold ground, as I am not subject to any woman's control and love. To feel that you have loved me for my qualities of head and heart is not also correct as I am without qualities and attributes. I do not have a stable and stationary place of residence and existence. There must be equality of status between persons for marriage or for battle. You are the daughter of a king of kings. I am only a cowherd and I do not own even a foot of land. I do not have any attachment to properties houses or men and things. I am beyond desires. To marry a person like me who finds bliss in himself is a futile exercise. I do not go by the words of the

other people. Perhaps you have erred in your choice of me.” These words of the Lord revealed his true nature to Rukmini Devi who found Atmatattva expounded in them, thus making her intensified in her devotion and love to him. Sisupala nursed his grievance against Lord Krishna and went on in his wicked activities against the Lord and his devotees. He becomes ripened in crime and the time approached for his complete annihilation with his evil assistants. Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas, proposed to perform the Rajasuya Yaga and the Lord’s help was sought by him. The Lord thought it to be the proper occasion to rid the world of the wicked and vile tyrants among the rulers. He told Dharmaraja that Jarasandha, the wicked king of Magadha, was to be killed first before embarking on that sacrifice.

Accordingly he took Bheema and Arjuna of the Pandavas along with him, disguised as brahmins, to the city of Jarasandha. Here there ensued a wrestling bout between Bheema and Jarasandha. The latter was killed by Bheema following the instructions of the Lord as to how to overpower him. The kings who were all along in prison waiting to be sacrificed as victims by Jarasandha were now all of them released by the Lord whom they worshipped. They promised all-out support to the Rajasuya Yaga. Thereupon the Pandava princes won over the kingly order in the country and invited them to participate in the Yaga. Everything was made ready for the commencement of the sacrifice. At the beginning of every sacrifice it was customary to worship and give Arghya or offering of holy water in reverence to a deserving elder, acknowledged as such and it was usual to select a Guru, a Dwija, a Wellwisher or a King of good character, name and fame for the purpose. Dharmaraja requested Bheeshma to decide as to who of all those present there deserved that honour. Everyone was eager to listen to what the Kuru elder would say. Bheeshma said that the Lord of Lords Shri Krishna was the proper person to be given first worship as He was the almighty Lord Himself. These words enraged Sisupala who

berated both Bheeshma and Dharmaraja for their foolishness in selecting an undeserving and miserable cowherd for worship at the outset while there were many others who far surpassed him in name, fame and character among the vast concourse of mighty kings and meritorious brahmins assembled there. He accused Lord Krishna as being the lowest of the lowest. Bheeshma justified his choice. He said that the worship of the Lord was the paramount duty of one and all and there was none in the hall more fitted for that honour. Lord Krishna was Paratattva himself. He was the creator, preserver and protector of all. On hearing these words Sisupala exploded further in anger and began to revile. He raved: “What is the greatness and eminence of this cur called Krishna who committed heinous crimes like killing Pootana, a woman, and Vrishbha, a cow? What can we expect from the silly old man like you Bheeshma who knows no *dharm*a and who had taken away Amba intended as a bride for somebody else? Has not this Krishna violated *dharm*a in getting Jarasandha killed by a trick? Do you know *dharm*a at all? Fie upon you all I cannot allow this. Come on. Let this wretched Krishna fight!

These words created an uproar in the assembly. Dharmaraja felt very much upset. The Lord then got up. He directed everybody to be calm and collected. He recounted the cruel deeds of Sisupala who transgressed all limits and whose crime against him went beyond hundred. All along he was bound by his promise to his aunt and now he was free to deal with the miscreant in the proper manner. The Lord thought of his Divine Weapon, the Sudarsana Chakra. It came whirling and chopped off the head of Sisupala, the reviler, within no time.

Everyone was astounded at the turn of events. The path became smooth for the performance of the Rajasuya yaga. Lord Krishna was worshipped and the sacrifice reached a successful and grand completion. Later the Lord killed Salva, Dantavakra and Vidooratha who formed the evil trio that helped Sisupala

in his misdeeds. It is to be understood from this that there is an appropriate time for everything and the hand of fate is inexorable when the time arrives. The Lord is the Time-spirit. He said to Arjuna:

*“Kaalosmi Lokakshayakritpravruddhe,  
Lokaansamaahartu Miha pravrittaha,  
Ruteprivaam na Bhavishyantisarve  
Yevastithaha pratyaneekeshu Yodhaaha!”*

“I am Kaala, the Time-spirit born to make short work of the world. I have begun to rid the world of creation. Even, if you do not do battle, the warriors on the other side cannot live.”

He allowed Sisupala to work out his destiny. He gave the reviler the largest margin and when the time came he was merciless. His ways are inscrutable. He is the mainspring of all action. I salute him:

*“Krishno Rakshatu no Jagattraya  
gurub Krishnam Nama syaam yaham  
Krishnenaamarasatravo vinihitaha  
Krishnaayaa tasmai namaha!  
Krishnaadeva samutthitam  
Jagadidam Krishnasya daasosmyaham  
Krishnetishitati Sarvametadakhilam  
He Krishna Rakshasva Maam!”*

“Let the preceptor of the three worlds, Lord Krishna protect us. I salute Lord Krishna. The enemies of the Devas are annihilated by him. My salutations to him. This world is born due to Lord Krishna. I am the servant of Lord Krishna. All things are in Lord Krishna. O Lord Krishna! Save me!”



## GOPEEJANA KRISHNA



*Ananyasadbarana Kantikanta makranta Gopeenayanaravindam  
Pumsah puranasya navam vilasam, punyena poornena vilekayishye!*

“I perceive by virtue of my perfect acts of punya the Purana Purusha, Lord Krishna, of unique and peerless beauty and radiance lighting the lotus eyes of the cowherd damsels with divine pleasure, and bow unto him.”

Lord Krishna was Gopeejana Krishna. He was the cynosure of the eyes of the Gopees who were his devotees par excellence. None could equal them in their intensity of love and devotion to the Lord. They had realised the Universal Father in him. They prayed.

*Nakhalu Gopikanandanobbava, Nakhila dehina mantaratmadruk  
Vighanasarthite viswaguptaye, Sakha udeyivam sattvatam kule  
Virachitabbayam Vrushnidhuryate, Saranameeyushamsamsruterbhayat  
Karasarorubam Kantakamadam, Sirasidhebinassreekaragraham*

“O Friend! You are not the son of Yasoda, Isn't it? For you are the omniscient Lord knowing the heart's working of each of the creation and residing in all. You are born in the Yadava race in pursuance of the prayer of Lord Brahma for protecting the world. Hence it is your bounden duty to give us protection. O Uplifter of the race of the Yadavas! The stealer of our minds! Grant us the shield of your shelter; place your lotus hands that satisfy the Goddess Lakshmi and that have the aim of saving the devotees from the ocean of Samsara while granting their boons, on our heads and bless us!”



The Gopees were highly devoted to the Lord and they were always of him, in him and by him. Even as they worked in their houses, even as they served their husbands, their minds were concentrated on him and enveloped in thoughts about him. Their love of the Lord was of the highest type super *Bhakti*. Their thoughts were not base or carnal. Theirs was Madhura Bhakti of the purest type. They felt him to be the Lord of all. Thoughts of the Lord permeated them through and through. They were like those ladies who while they served their husbands thought of their paramours. That is why Lord Krishna was called *Jarachora sikhamani* - the gem of thieves and paramours who stole their minds. He would perform funny tricks to embarrass them even in their houses and when hauled up before Yasoda, his foster mother, he would vanish from their grip and appear innocently beside her. He charmed them with the divine music of his flute. They would rush to hear his musical notes leaving off all their work. They could not brook any separation from him. He was pleased with their devotion. He tried to make their spiritual advance sure and secure.

Once they embarked on a *vrata* to propitiate the Goddess Katyayani in the month of Margaseersha. Early in the morning they went to the Kalindee river and placing their clothes on the bank, they entered into the water to bathe. Lord Krishna went there and taking away their clothes, hung them on a Kadamba tree and asked them to come out of water and take their respective dresses. They were filled with shame and would not come out. They appealed to him saying that they were his servants and he should have compassion towards them. The Lord told them that if they were his true devotees, they should come out and take their clothes. Finding no other go, the ladies came out covering their genitals with their hands. Lord Krishna told them: “you should not have attachment to the body and consciousness of it while you are on oath to perform *vratas*. You will not have your desires fulfilled if you do not surrender whole hog without any reservation. If

you are unable to get rid of the consciousness of your body, it is wrong of you to have got into the water bare bodied. So you shall atone for it by surrendering yourself completely. Salute with both hands upraised and take your clothes.” On hearing these words Gopees did as they were bidden and got back their clothes. This *Gopikavastrapaharana* had been made much of to tar the Lord’s character. Some critics of the Lord cite this incident and say that the Lord was a debauchee and a philanderer. It is mere foolishness to think demeaningly of the Lord in this manner. Even a fool would not like to satiate his desire in mass presence in this way. If he had really wanted union with the girls, he would have chosen to meet them singly and in secret, He would not attain the purpose by merely taking without proper thought their clothes and dallying with them. The age of Lord Krishna at that time was ten years. That is not the age when such desires arise. It is ridiculous to view this act of Lord Krishna as sexually impelled and to ascribe to him a vile life. The Gopikas regarded Lord Krishna as their Divine Lord. They had intense love towards him. Their devotion to him was unparalleled. But, for unsullied devotion, they had to get rid of all worldly notions and all ideas about this material body being an object worthy of attention and attachment, even Changadeva learnt from experience.

Lord Krishna desired to rid the Gopikas of worldly illusions and secure sure salvation for them. He filled them with eternal bliss by his presence among them. One full moon night the Gopikas had gathered to listen to his enthralling music. They formed a circle round him so that he could not hoodwink them and get away from them. As the Lord played on his divine flute, they forgot themselves. Each of them found a Lord Krishna by her side and had a blissful time in dance and rhythm.

*Anganamangana mantare Madhave Madhave  
Madhavamchantarechangana*

*Itthamakalpita mandale madhyagaba  
Sanjagan Venuna Devakeenandanaha*

The scene of a Krishna between each of them pandering to their whims was enchanting and divine. Suddenly he vanished from among them. They came down to the mundane world. They felt miserable at the absence of their dearest Lord. They behaved as if mad and wailed. Finding their sad and pitiable plight, the Lord suddenly reappeared among them. Their ecstasy knew no bounds. They felt that they were in Vaikunta itself. The Lord told them: "I am deeply pleased with your unstinting devotion towards me. For my sake you have left all your kith and kin. This sort of sacrifice of self is not possible for even the greatest of Yogins and I am gratified by it. The love lavished by you on me is unique and peerless. I am bound to you forever as your devotion is pure without any strings and without any motive."

The Lord performed the Rasakreeda or the Divine dance with them appearing amidst them, alongside of them and with them. That was a superhuman and divine feat. Any devotee can attain the Lord by entertaining the feelings of a ladylove for her lover, the Lord being the lover here. This is Madhura Bhakti. Sri Krishna Chaitanya exemplified this beautiful Krishna Prem. It is blasphemous to think of the Lord as a dabbler in sex and love of the carnal variety. He is the Universal Spirit. What is there to be hidden from him? Who are other women to him who had created them?

Lord Krishna's divinity was beyond question. His acts cannot be viewed from worldly lights. Even commonsense tells how it is impossible for an ordinary man to appear as Lord Krishna had done among the Gopikas being among them and alongside each of them at the same time in the same place and in the same way. The Lord's position vis-a-vis the Gopikas was that of the Universal spirit or husband pervading them.

Even during his sojourn in this world, no one ever accused Lord Krishna of adultery or debauchery. His inveterate enemy Sisupala, uttered many bad things against him; but he had never said even once that the Lord was of unchaste character, he did not at any time even hint that the Lord indulged in sensual pleasures and orgies with other women. Even the Kuru kings who spoke ill of him had never said that Krishna was of evil character going after women. He was spoken of by everyone as being a Jitendriya or one who had conquered the senses.

Even his worst enemies spoke of his sterling purity of character. When he had killed Kamsa and he had to settle at Madhura, the sole thought of the Lord was first to alleviate the misery that the Gopikas felt at his separation from them.

For that purpose he sent Uddhava, his devotee, with a message to them. He said: "My dear friend! The Gopikas are my devotees pure and crystalline. They always think of me. They have no thoughts for their husbands, children and relatives. They love me as their lifespirt. It is my avowed duty and responsibility to look after them and give them salvation. They will be restless now with my separation. Kindly convey to them news of my safety and tell them about my present position. Assure them that I am always alongside of them, with them and in them. Try to give them mental solace thiswise"

Uddhava was surprised at the attention paid by the Lord of Lords to the humble cowherd ladies. He went to Vrajapura with a wondering mind. He found the Gopikas who rushed to him to hear the news about their bosom Lord. They asked him whether the Lord remembered them at all. Did he have any consideration for them? Or was he like the Bhramara which sucked honey from every flower and then left them to their fate? Uddhava was overwhelmed when he found the intensity of devotion of the Gopeejana. He felt chastened and thought that the Lord had purposely sent him there



to learn the nature of true love and bhakti to him. He thought that he was highly blessed in having been afforded that splendid opportunity of observing the Parabhakti of the Gopikas.

He paid his respects to them by prostrating before them and said humbly: “O ladies of peerless virtue! I bow to you all and thank the Lord for enabling me to salute you, paragons of virtue and beauty. You are the Lord’s most valued devotees. He has sent his divine message to you through me. You are in his thoughts at all moments. He said: “O Beloved Ones! There can be no separation between you and me. Your devotion has no equal. Though I am away here, I am in you and you are in me. You are highly blessed and loved by me. I know the state of your minds. You shall attain me soon.” So what lack can you have?”

These words were nectar to them. They felt the Lord’s presence among them even as Uddhava recited his message. They recaptured at once the scenes of joy and ecstasy they had with the Lord and forgot themselves. Uddhava was amazed at the depth of their devotion and love to the Lord. He could not compare with them at all. He found that the Gopikas made the Lord their own by their supreme Madhura Bhakti. He blamed his fate for making him a citizen at Madhura instead of at Vrajapura for that would have given him the company of those pure souls whom he wanted to worship. He once again fell on his feet before them and left them. They told him to convey to the Lord their eagerness to have the Lord’s immediate presence with them when so desired by them and prayed to be united with him soon. Such were the Gopikas. Uddhava felt Lord Krishna to be verily Gopeejana Krishna, the sole refuge of the innocent and the meek. He prayed to the Lord fervently to make him as the Gopeejana. He surrendered himself to the Lord wholeheartedly without any reservation. We also shall pray to Gopeejana Krishna for succour:

*He Gopalaka! He Krupajalanidhe! He Sindbukanyapate  
He Kamsantaka! He Gajendrakarunapareena! He Madhava!*

*He Ramanuja! He Jagatraya Guro! He Pundareekaksha! Mama  
He Gopeejana nadba! Palaya! Param Janami Na Tvam Vina!*

“O Lord of the Cowherd! Ocean of Mercy! Husband of the Daughter of the Ocean! Vanquisher of Kamsa! Saviour of the Elephant King! Lord of Sree! Brother of Balarama! Preceptor of the Three Worlds! The Lotus-eyed Lord! Lord of the Gopeejana! Protect me. I do not know any one else who has the ability to help me.”



## LORD SKANDA



*Shadvaktram Sikhivaahanam Trinayanam Chitraambaraalamkrutam  
Saktim Vajramasim Trisoolomabbayam Khetam Dbanuschakrakam  
Paasam Kukkutamamkusamcha Varadam Hastairdadhaanam  
Sadaa Dhyayeydeepsitasiddhidam Sivasutam Skandam  
Suraaraadhitam*

“Pray to the Six faced Lord Skanda, the son of Lord Siva, with his mount as the Peacock and worshipped by all the Divinities for the fulfillment of their desires. Meditate upon him who is three-eyed and decorated in unique attire holding in his hands the Sakti, the Vajra, the Sword, the Trisoola (Vel), the Shield, the Bow, the Chakra, the Noose and the banner of the Cock with one hand offering security or abhaya from all evil and the other granting boons to the devotees.”

Lord Skanda is the most powerful deity who is easily propitiated by the devotee’s intensity of dedication. He is bountiful in giving boons and in offering invincible protection from all evil.

He is to be worshipped by all those who cherish worldly and spiritual wellbeing. He is the vanquisher of all enemies, internal and external, and bestows eternal peace and tranquility of mind on his devotees who are sure to attain salvation.

His birth itself is a saga of absorbing interest and import, Vritraasura was killed by Indra, the Lord of Heaven. In the battle Namuchi, one of the ministers of Vritraasura, was also killed. Namuchi had a son called Taaraka who on hearing about the death of his father at the hands of Indra swore to wreak vengeance against him. The giant thereupon entered into a deep penance. He

contemplated upon Brahma, the Creator for a long time. Brahma was pleased with his Tapas and appeared before him. Taaraka requested the Lord to give him immortality. Brahma said it was impossible and he might ask for another boon. Then the giant said that no one in Brahma’s creation should be equal to him in might and in battle. The Lord gave him that boon and disappeared. Taaraka became vile and proud as a result of that boon. He became a menace to all the Divinities whom he put to untold trouble. His wickedness exceeded all limits. The Devaas went to the Creator Brahma with their complaint for succour. Brahma said to them that only a son born to Lord Parameswara could kill the giant and none else. But it was an uphill task very near impossibility for Lord Parameswara was in deep Tapas having lost wife Sati in the ill-fated Daksha Yajna. No one dared to approach him. Lord Vishnu said that if Lord Siva were to marry Paarvati, the daughter of Himavan and Menaka, the matter could be settled for she was Sakti reborn. He told the Devaas and Lord Brahma to indent upon the services of Manmatha, the God of beauty and love, to bring about the union between Lord Siva and Paarvati. Brahma and the Devaas put the plan into practice to no purpose. Manmatha was burnt to ashes in his attempt to make Lord Siva love Paarvati. The Lord once again went into meditation. Paaravati now decided to win the hand of the lord by herself resorting to penance. She succeeded in her effort and Lord Siva married her. With their marriage, Manmatha was revived. The Lord and Paaravati were in union for a long time. No son was born to them. The Devaas were afraid that some extremely unbearable spirit might be born to the Divine couple and so they came before the Lord Siva and supplicated to him: “O Lord! We are before you in deep submission. We do not think that the worlds can bear the offspring that might be born out of your effulgent energy. So stop the union and go to Tapas with the Devi. Please keep the energy within yourself. Kindly let it not flow down.” Lord Siva said: “So be it. I will stop the flow of my energy. So shall Devi Paarvati. But what about the energy fluid, that had

already trickled down? Who will bear that radiant energy? Tell me.” The Devaas said that Mother Earth would bear it. Lord Siva let down that energy fluid on the ground. It began to increase on and on and drench the world. Seeing this the Devaas were afraid and they asked Agni, the Fire God, to enter into that energy with the aid of Vaayu and bear it. Agni did so. The energy entered into him. It became white and mountainous. Saravana, a divine thicket of reeds, equal in brilliance to Fire and Sun, emerged. At the act of the Devaas who thus stood in the way of her directly begetting a son, Goddess Paarvati became angry and she cursed them saying that they would not be able to have progeny by their wives. She cursed Mother Earth saying that she would be wife to different kings of different shapes and types and would never be able to have any maternal satisfaction. The Devaas were ashamed of their action. The Lord and Goddess Paarvati went in the Western direction to perform Tapas.

In the meantime Agni was unable to bear the powerful Sivateja. Lord Brahma said that he should shed that energy in Mother Ganges, who, as sister to Goddess Paarvati was the proper receptacle for the purpose. Agni followed the advice of Lord Brahma and requested Mother Ganges to take over the energy of the Lord from him. She agreed and took up the most ravishing feminine form whereupon Agni caused the energy of Lord Siva to drench her. She became permeated all over by that extremely unbearable energy which was increasing in content and power. She was afraid of being scorched and prayed for Agni’s help. Agni asked her to let it fall down on the ground. She did so. The Earth by its contact gave rise to Gold, Silver and other metals like Copper, Iron, Tin and Lead. The thicket of reeds, Saravana, over which the energy spread, gave rise to the most beautiful form of Lord Kumara. Seeing the baby, the Krittikaas, the wives of the six rishis who had left them under a mistaken notion about their chastity, rushed forward to look after him. They bathed him and

each of them wanted to feed him with milk from her breast. The Lord took six faces to take milk from all of them and thus became Shanmukha or Shadaanana. He got the name of Kaartikeya as he was tended by the Krittikaas. As he was born as a result of the dropping out of (Skannam) the energy fluid of Lord Siva, he was called Skanda. His radiant beauty was unparalleled; he attracted everyone by his resplendent beauty. Lord Siva and Paarvati came there. Lord Kumara being told about his parentage performed obeisance to them. The divine mother was pleased with him. She gave him all power and invincibility.

By his very brilliance and look all were filled with fear. The Devaas said to Indra that Kumara might plan to seize power from him and displace him from heaven; it would be better for him to forestall Kumara. Indra sent the Sapta Maatukaas to kill him. They came to Kaartikeya, found his presence unbearable and surrendered to him. They said: “We are the mother spirits of the universe. Treat us as you would treat your mother.” Kumara made them Baalagrahaas. Finding his attempts fruitless, Indra came to war. He used the Vajraayudha against Kumara. It struck the right part of the Lord. That made a dot there. Out of the impact came Visaakha of the Goat’s face and groups of youth troupes, male and female. On seeing this Indra fell on his feet before Lord Kumara and prayed for mercy. Kumara gave him Abhaya or security and asked him to rest with peace. Indra extracted a promise from Kumara not to entertain any ill will against him on any account and requested him to take over the commandship of the army of the Devaas. Lord Skanda thus became Devasenaani. He led the Devaas against the demon Taaraka and killed him in a trice. The Mission of the Lord’s birth was fulfilled. But then another Raakshasa, Soorapadma by name, took into his head to measure his strength against the Lord. His brother Simhavaktra tried his best to make him desist from his foolish plan in vain. Lord Skanda made short work of him within no time.

Then there were other Asuraas under Mahishaasura who troubled the meek and the Devaas and then hid in the Krauncha Parvata which formed an impregnable fortress for them. There was no other go than to pound the mountain to pieces along with those wicked Raakshasas under Mahishaasura. Indra gave his foster daughter Devasenaadevi in marriage to him and thereafter remained free from all fear and worry. Lord Skanda married Sri Vallidevi and shone as the saviour of all the innocent and oppressed people.

Many are the divine deeds of the Lord Skanda or Murugan.

Once Narada gave a divine fruit to Lord Siva. Skanda wanted very much to have it for himself. But he could not fulfill the condition fixed for it. Being aggrieved at it he left the presence of his parents and came down in anger to the Palani hills. Goddess Ambika came over there to pacify him. She said: "My dearest son! Are you not the fruit of wisdom and learning having the power to fructify the desires of your devotees the Jnaana Pazham? Do you require any fruit by itself when you yourself can bestow it upon any one by yourself by your grace?" Thus mollified by the Mother, Lord Skanda or Subrahmanya regained his sangfroid and became his own inimitable Lord of grace and cheer. He is powerfully present at Palani as Baala Dandaayudhapaani and is the deity par excellence. There is nothing that cannot be wrought by prayer to him here. He is Aasritavarada - the gratifier of all desires of those that surrender to him totally.

He is the annihilator of Ahankaara or Ego in any one.

Once Brahma the creator came to see him. Kumara asked him to tell him about Pranava or Omkaara. Brahma declared: "I am Pranava. I am the Pranavaartha." Kumara became angry at the pride of Brahma. He imprisoned the creator and assumed the duty of creation.

*Dhaataaram tamasaavyaaptam duravastham muneeswaraha  
Srushtisaamarthyarabhitam Vidhaaya Kamalaasanam  
Svaavajnaa janita krodhaachaap ena janitenatam  
Tadaaprabhruti tanmudraa maavaban Venkataachale  
Akarojjagatamsrushtim swayameva Shadaananaba*

Brahma became taamasic and could not continue his power of creation and Lord Shanmukha took over and went on with creation seating himself in Venkataachala or Tirumala Hill. Venkataachala or Tirumala is thus a sacred place of Lord Subrahmanya. The Devaas accompanied by Indra went to Lord Siva and reported the fate of Brahma to him. Lord Siva then intervened and secured the release of Brahma from Kumara.

Lord Kumara is Swaminatha. He is the Master of the Panchaakshari Pranavamantra given unto him by Lord Siva. He manifested himself in Swamimalai in the Cauvery Basin and was shedding his grace on his devotees. While so it happened that the sage Bhrigu became the unwitting instrument of Lord Paramasiva forgetting the Pranava Rahasya. The sage having been thwarted in his earlier attempts of penance by the Devaas laid a prior curse that whosoever were to try and prevent the successful completion of his Tapas would lose all his spiritual power and forget the Mantra which bestowed such power on him. He went into deep penance. After a time flames came from out of his head and spread all over the Universe. No one could bear the heat and all the Divinities ran to Brahma and Vishnu for help. They were told that only Lord Siva could help them at that juncture and at once they rushed to Lord Siva and prayed to him to save them and the Universe from extinction.

Being told about their predicament the Lord was filled with compassion. He went to the sage Bhrigu and tried to bring him back to the normal plane. Even though the Lord closed his head with his divine hands he could not disturb the sage. Then he

summoned up all his spiritual strength and with a supreme effort distracted him from his deep samadhi. The sage was mightily pleased with the appearance of Lord Siva before him. He praised the Lord who said that he was subject to the curse of the sage having stopped his penance. Bhrgu begged for his forgiveness and said that the effect of his conduct at the moment could be wiped out by his going to his son Skanda and asking him to repeat the Holy Panchaakshara mantra which was earlier bestowed on him by the Lord himself. Lord Siva after granting boons to the sage gave respect to his words by going to Skanda and requesting him to repeat the Holy Panchaakshara mantra to him. Skanda did so. Lord Siva thereon regained the full blast of power of the glorious Panchaakshara mantra which danced before him in glee. The power of Lord Skanda is highly efficacious at Swamimalai as the Lord Swaminatha. One who wants siddhi of Panchaakshari mantra has only to go to Swamimalai and pray to him with perfect surrender:

*Hey Swaminatha Karunaakara Deenabandho  
Sree Paarvateesa mukha pankaja Padmabandho  
Sreesaadi Devagana poojita paadapadma  
Valleesanatha mama debi karaavalambam*

“O Swaminatha! The merciful Lord and befriender of the oppressed! The son lighting up and cheering Lord Siva and Paarvati like the sun cheering up the lotuses! The Lord whose feet are worshipped by the Devaas like Vishnu, the Lord of Sree! Lord of Sri Valli! Kindly give me your guidance by hand.”

He is present very effectively at Tiruchendur the place of annihilation of Soorapadma. By worshipping him at this holy place one can get over all obstacles and conquer all enemies both external and internal. The devotee who offers prayers here is sure to lead a peaceful and divine life free from all troubles and attain salvation. So also is he auspiciously present at Tirupparamkudram along with his divine consort Devasena Devi fulfilling the desires of the Bhaktaas bestowing on them a happy married life with good

progeny and prosperity. The Tiruttani Kshetra is his peaceful abode where he can be seen as a Saantamoorthy. One can get eternal peace, the eternal bliss Sacchidaananda and Moksha here as the Lord with Sri Valli married here is the redeemer of all. One who prays to him here is sure of a bright life of spirituality with accent on freedom from the bonds of birth and death. He is manifest as Bhakktaparaadheena always at the beck and call of his devotees at Pazhamudirsolai. There is nothing that a devotee cannot get from the Lord by worshipping him at this holy place. Lord Skanda is Murugan. He is beauty personified and loved by the Divine Mother. He has sixteen names which are held sacred. These names correspond to the various stages through which he had passed before taking his divine shape. They are given hereunder:

*“Prathamo jnaanasaktyaatmaa Dwiteeyah Skanda evacha  
Agnigarbhastruteeyastu Baabuleyaschaturthakaha  
Gaangeyah panchamah Shashtassaravanodbbavaha  
Saptaman Kaartikeyascha Kumaaraschaashtamastatha  
Navamah Shanmukhabh proktaha Taarakaarih smrutodasa  
Ekaadasascha Senaanee Guho dwaadasa evacha,  
Trayodaso Brahmacharee Sivatejaschaturadasaha  
Kraunchadaaree panchadasaha shodasa Sikhivaabanaha  
Shodasaitaani naamaani yo japeydbhakti samyutaha  
Bruhaspatisamo buddhyaa tejasaa brahmahassamaha  
Kanyaarthee labhate kanyaam Jnaanaarthee Jnaanamaaphuyaat  
Vidyaaarthee labhate vidyaam Dhanaarthee dhanamasnute  
Yadyatpraartbayate martyaha tatsarvam labhate dbruvam”*

The first name to be pondered upon is Jnaanasaktyaatma. The Lord is embracive of Jnaana and Sakti, typifying Parameshwara and Paarvati. He embodies both the aspects that animate creation. He is the repository of Jnaana and Sakti being the offspring of the energy of the divine couple. The second name is Skanda. He took shape by the shedding (skannam) of the generative energy of Lord Siva and Paarvati. He therefore inherited all the qualities

of Lord Siva with his fierce annihilating power and extreme grace of compassion for the oppressed and the downtrodden. The third name is that of Agnigarbha. For he was borne by the firegod Agni whose body was permeated all over with the Tejas or brilliant energy of Lord Siva. The fourth name is Baahuleya. He is called so being the offspring of the many Krittikaas (Bahulaanaam Krittikaanam Apatyam Baahuleyaha). The fifth is Gaangeya, the son of Mother Ganges having been borne and contained by her for sometime. The sixth is Saravanabhava, born in the divine thicket of reeds. The seventh name is Kaartikeya, the son of the Krithikaas. The next name is Kumara. He is called so because of his eternal youthful existence. His name means the person who makes short work of his enemies (*kutsitaan maarayateetivaa*) who are wicked and evil-minded. It means him who is beautiful like Manmatha in the world (Kau Prithivyaam Maarayati Manmathava daacharateetivaa). Again he is Kumara because he bestows riches in the world on his devotees (Kau Prithivyaam Maam Lakshmeen raati dadaateeti Vaa). Also the name Kumara is highlighted in his case, he being an eternal Brahmachari given to abstinence. The next name is the blissful name of Shanmukha. The tenth name is Taarakaari, the enemy of the giant Taaraka whom he killed in the battle. The eleventh name is Senaani, the commander of the Divine Forces. The twelfth auspicious name is that of Guha. He protects his armies from the weapon of his enemies and hence this appellation for him (*Goohati paraayudheybhya Aatmasainyam Gopaayateeti Gubaba*). Brahmachari, Sivateja, Kraunchadaari, (the pounder of the Krauncha mountain) and Sikhivaahana are the other names in succession. These sixteen names of the Lord Skanda or Murugan have the power to gratify the desires of all devotees. One would become equal to Brihaspati, the Devaguru, in wisdom and get radiant spiritual energy of the knower of Brahman.

The utterer of these names with devotion and concentration is sure to become proficient in the Shodasa Kalaas or arts. He will

become the master of the Ashtasiddhis and will shine in the world with Devatva.

Lord Skanda is Velaayudhapaani. The Vel is the trident that has no opposition. It is the sword of Jnaana which bestows salvation and the weapon of success which cuts through any enemy. The Lord of the Vel is All merciful. He comes down to the world to correct the erring humans and put them in the proper path. The discerners can even now locate him. Our salutations are to Lord Murugan, the wielder of the Mahaasakti and the Vajra of immense brilliance and the giver of boons and desires at all times.

*“Namaste Namaste Mahaasaktipaane  
Namaste Namaste Lasadvajrapaane  
Namaste Namaste Katinyastapaane  
Namaste Namaste Sodaabheeshtapaane!”*





13  
SRI ANJANEYA

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Anjaneya was the greatest devotee of Lord Sri Rama. Wherever and whenever Lord Sri Rama is worshipped, Anjaneya is also worshipped alongside of him. Temples are also built in his name. He won for himself that unique position by his intense and total surrender and service to Lord Sri Rama. He looked upon the Lord as his very lifespirt. He lived for Rama and fought for him. Lord Sri Rama and he are inseparable. No one can think of Anjaneya without Sri Rama and vice versa. When once the Lord asked Anjaneya as to how he regarded himself, Anjaneya reverentially replied:

*Dehabuddhyaatu daasomi,  
Jeevabuddhyaatvadamsakaha  
Aatmabuddhyaatvamevaaha,  
mitime nischitaamatibi!*

“From the point of view of this corporeal body, I am your servant; as Jeeva, I am part of you; and, as Aatman, I am you yourself. This is my considered opinion.”

He always thought of Lord Sri Rama and chanted his holy name at all times incessantly, under all circumstances and at all places.

*Yatra yatra Raghunaatha keertanam  
Tatra tatra Krutamastakaanjalim  
Baashpavaari paripoorna lochanam  
Maarutim namataraashasaantakam*

“Maruti, that is, the son of Vayudeva, or Anjaneya, is found with head bent in obeisance to Lord Sri Rama and with eyes full

of tears of bliss, wherever the praise of the Lord of the Raghu race is chanted. Our prayers are due to him, the destroyer of the Rakshasaas.”

On account of his meritorious services to the Lord, Anjaneya was granted the boon that he would be enabled to be present at all places where the sacred account of the Lord’s sojourn in this world as Sri Rama is chanted. His name would reverberate throughout the world along with that of the Lord eternally.

The lives of the saints like Tulsidas and Samartha Ramadas and others establish the truth of the above statement. Tulsidas could have darsan of Anjaneya who was wont to attend his Ramayana recitals, disguised as a leper to escape detection. He could know about it through the good offices of a Brahma Rakshasa who could quench his thirst by means of the water which Tulsidas poured at the root of the tree which he inhabited and which he could not leave even to get water or food for himself. Tulsidas earned the grace of Anjaneya and was granted the blissful vision of Lord Sri Rama through him. So also Samartha Ramdas could realise the truth and have the blessed vision of Lord Sri Rama through the divine grace showered on him by Anjaneya. Any one who prays to Anjaneya wholeheartedly is sure to earn the grace of Lord Sri Rama.

Lord Sri Rama himself taught Brahmajnana to Anjaneya. The Lord asked him to study the Vedanta sastra to learn about self-realisation and gave out in a nut-shell the way to emancipation. He said that self-realisation or emancipation is of four types. They are Saalokya, Saaroopya, Saameepya and Saayujya types.

That type of freedom from the bondage of Samsara which enables one to be in the Lord’s Loka without any sojourn anywhere in any form is termed Saalokyamukti. This form of emancipation is attainable by chanting the praise of the Lord and incessant Namasankeertan.



Getting equal personal appearance like the Lord in Mukti is called Saaroopyamukti. This can be got when one leaves the mortal coil in the sacred Teerthas of holy places of pilgrimage, contemplating upon the Taaraka mantra.

Living in the Lord's presence is Saameepyamukti. This is attainable by onward regular Anushtaana rigorously according to the principles laid down by Dharma and by contemplating intensely time in and time out upon the Lord's shape and form without any cessation.

Again one who gets the grace of a Sadguru and is initiated by him and who follows the paths so shown pining for the Lord thinking constantly on his form gets Saayujyamukti. Intense and perfect Dhyana or contemplation is necessary for this purpose.

The methods for attaining these types of mukti or salvation are clearly laid down in the Upanishads. So it is that the Lord told Anjaneya about the need to get mastery over them.

The Lord further said that Kaivalyamukti which means merger within the Lord himself can be got only by practice of Jnana yoga. Attachment to Samsara creates bondage. Knowledge of the Truth gives Jeevanmukti.

The destruction of the body vehicle which is the result of one's Prarabdha or consequence of actions of previous births is called Videhamukti.

Jeevanmukti consists in the annihilation of all the binding attachments or Vasanas which should be rejected. The mind gets purified by absorbing auspicious Vasanas. Then gradually these good Vasanas also are to be rejected and the mind has to be directed to the state of non-attachment.

That awareness without any trace of these binding attachments and the destruction of the mind form the stepping stones

to salvation. One full of binding attachments will be toiling in Samsara while one devoid of them will attain self-realisation, pure and simple.

Thinking always of things known forms the nucleus for desire. Desire leads to births and deaths. Desire gives heartbeat to living. This heartbeat gives raised existence to desire once again. This is the wheel of Samsara giving rise to the cycle of births and deaths.

That is why bad desires are to be thrown out at first; blissful ones should be taken in and gradually purity of mind is to be attained. To get purification of the mind intense and deep spiritual practice is necessary. Holy company is the must for it. Destruction of desires and control of the life-spirit lead to purity of mind. A wavering and fickle mind makes us undergo this cycle of births and deaths. If this oscillating mind is controlled and concentrated, wisdom or Jnana results leading one to salvation.

Dhyana or meditation makes the mind single and pointed. Therefore contemplation of the Truth-Knowledge-Bliss form of the Lord should be there at all times and under all situations. By such meditation for a long time the Ego or Ahankar is destroyed. The mind enters into Brahman. This state is called Samprajnata Samadhi.

If the antics of the mind are swept out, that state is called Asamprajnata samadhi. Unless one becomes desireless, the greatest bliss cannot be achieved. Becoming desireless and even getting rid of the desire for salvation, the mind must identify itself with the Lord's form.

First, the aspirant must be able to enjoy that pure and blissful form. It is only then that he can get Jeevanmukti. After destruction of body-consciousness, he comes to the state of Videhamukti. That is Vishnupada. It can be got only by one who does things without any desire to enjoy the fruits thereof. Nishkama karma or

doing things without any selfish intent of enjoyment of the result is important. That is the secret of spiritual discipline.

The Lord had thus granted to everybody the way to salvation making Anjaneya the instrument. Anjaneya, the devotee of devotees of Lord Sri Rama, practised the spiritual discipline indicated by the Lord. He also taught it to the sages like Sanaka.

How could Anjaneya earn such an exalted position and become worshipped alongside of the Lord? His life was a dedication to the Lord. The life and exploits of Anjaneya will reveal to us that he formed the bulwark of the Lord's valour and success on account of his stupendous energy and strength. He was the Mahaveera, feared by everybody in the Rakshasa world.

*Anjanaa nandanam veeram Jaanakee sokanaasanam  
Kapeesamakshabantaaram Vande Lankaabhyankaram!*

“Salutations are made to the son of Anjana, the then terror of all Lanka, who wiped out the grief of mother Janaki and who killed Aksha, the mighty son of Ravana.”

Anjaneya was the son of Anjana, the Vanara lady. She was in her previous birth the heavenly damsel called Punjikasthala. She was of peerless beauty, sprightly, agile and vivacious. She laughed at a Rishi and giggled at him. The sage grew wild with her pranks and cursed her stating that she would become a monkey. Finding her misery as a consequence and pitying her state, the sage softened and said that she would be born as a Vanara lady and could assume human shape at will.

Anjana married Kesari, the leader of the monkeys. They were very happy. But they could not find any satisfaction in their lives as they could not beget a son. So Anjana decided to do penance for the purpose of getting an offspring. She performed intense penance thinking of Lord Siva, the easy boon-giver and all-merciful deity.

Once when she was in meditation the Lord appeared before her and told her that he would be born to her in his eleventh Rudramsa. She would receive his Veerya. Anjana was very glad on hearing the words of Lord Sankara. One day she was in meditation. Vayu Deva, the Wind God, saw her. He was attracted by her beauty and embraced her. Consequently, she was disturbed. As she looked round to see who it was that disturbed her, Vayu Deva appeared before her and said: “Don't be agitated. I am Vayu Deva. I had entered by mind into you and conveyed the Rudra Veerya within me to you. You will beget a son equal to me in every respect.

*Veeryavaan buddhisampannastava putbro bhavishyati  
Mahaasatbro Mahaatejaa Mahaa balaparaakramaha  
Lamghane Plavanechaiva Bhavishyatihimatsamaha!*

“He will be energetic, highly intelligent and endowed with great courage, strength, vigour and valour. He will be my peer in jumping across, flying over and floating all over.”

Anjana was pleased with her good fortune. In due course she gave birth to Anjaneya on a Tuesday which happened to be the Full Moon day in the month of Chaitra. A rose smells very sweet from its very blossoming. So also Anjaneya shone with innate, inherent brilliance and valour from his very birth. One day his mother left him to get fruits and flowers. Then he found the Sun God rising in the eastern sky shining red in full splendour. He thought it was a red fruit and he began to fly towards that direction.

That was a new Moon Day when there was to be a Solar Eclipse. Rahu, as was his usual duty, was coming forward to seize the Sun. Anjaneya found this rival and simply flung him off with his tail. Rahu who was thus discomfited went to Indra for help. Indra came there mounting the Airavata. Finding Anjaneya adamant and attacking, he hurled his mighty Vajraayudha at him. It struck Anjaneya on the cheek and broke a bone. He fell down in a swoon.

Vayu Deva saw the plight of his son. He became angry and withdrew from his duty. He sat by the side of his fallen son. All the worlds became troubled due to the non-functioning of Vayu Deva. The Gods went to Lord Brahma who finding out the reason went followed by Lord Vishnu and Lord Siva to Vayu Deva. Lord Vishnu touched Anjaneya who immediately recovered animation. Lord Brahma told Vayu Deva to resume his duties. The latter promised to do so provided his son was granted the boons of immortality and invincibility. Lord Vishnu said that none could defeat his son. Lord Siva said that Anjaneya would be free from fear and he would not be affected by his Trident whose secret would be open to him. Lord Brahma said that no Astra, including the terrible Brahmastra, could harm his son. No Sastra or weapon could have any effect upon him. Indra said that Anjaneya would become famous as Hanumantha as he was hit in the Hanu or cheek by the Vajrayudha and his body would be as impregnable as the Vajra or the diamond. He would die only if he were to wish it. The other divinities present gave similar boons and left the place.

Hanumantha became very powerful. Within a short time he learnt the Vedas, the Saastras and other sacred lore from the Sun God himself following him in his orbit from sunrise to sunset. It was a colossal feat that filled everyone with awe and admiration for him. He also became an expert in alluring music. He followed his natural tendencies as a monkey and played pranks on the sages. The sages became enraged with him and said that he would forget his being the possessor of supernatural power, strength and valour and would know about it only when someone reminded him and encouraged him. Thereafter Hanumantha behaved like any other monkey chief. He became the Minister of Sugreeva and lived in Kishkindha along with his master. He became popular with all and impressed everybody with his sagacity and qualities of leadership.

When Vali, the elder brother of Sugreeva, chased the latter with intent to kill him, Hanumantha followed him and remained

his boon companion, giving him his support. They took their residence in the Rusyamooka Mountain as Vali could not come there due to a curse and bided their time.

Lord Rama accompanied by his brother Lakshmana came there searching for mother Seeta. When Surgreeva saw them, he became terribly afraid. He thought that they were sent there by Vali to make short work of him. But Anjaneya or Hanumantha as we shall call him hereafter allayed the fears of his master. He took the shape of a Brahmin and approached Lord Rama. The Lord was so impressed with the words and appearance of Maruti that he said to Lakshmana:

*Tamabhyabhaasha Soumitre Sugreevasachivam kapim!  
Vaakyagnam madburairvaakyaissnehayuktam Arimdama!*

“You speak to this Minister of Sugreeva. He knows how to talk and he is fit to be our friend. Talk to him sweetly.”

The Lord continued:

*Naanrgugvedavineetasya naayajurvedadbaarinaba  
Naasamaveda vidbushassakyamevam prabhasbitam.  
Noonam vyaakaranamkrutsna manena babudaasrutam  
Bahavyaaharataanenkinchidapasabditam  
Namukhenetrayorvaapi lalaatechabhrvostadaa  
Anveshvapicha gaatreshu doshabsamviditabhkvachit  
Avistaramasandighdamavilambi tamadrutam  
Urasthassam kantagam vaakyamvartate madhyamesware.  
Samskaarakramasampannaamadru taamavilambitam  
Uccharayati kalyaaneem vaacham hrudayahaarineem  
Anayaachitrayaavaachaatrithaana ryanjanasthayaa  
Kasyanaaraadhyate chittamudyattaaser arerapi.  
Evam gunaganairyuktaa yasyasyuhu kaaryasaadbakaah  
Tasyasiddhyanti sarvaartha Dootavaakya prachoditaah!*

“Unless a person has made a thorough study of the Rig, Yajur

and Sama Vedas one cannot converse as Hanumantha has done. There is no doubt that he should have mastered grammar totally. For look! He has not committed even a single mistake in speech. As he has been speaking, no defect could be noticed in him either in the features of his face, looks, and eyebrows or in any part of the body or in his manner of delivery. Don't you see how pretty his words are? They are to the point and clear. His sentences are not long nor are they short. They are balanced and relevant and there is no undue hastening to close. Have you noticed the tone of his voice? He has not shouted blowing out with his chest nor has he mumbled so as not to be audible. It has been medium and the words are blessed and delightful. Even the enemy who lifts his sword to cut his opponent into pieces would be softened by his blissful words. Success is sure to attend the master who has such an emissary as Hanumantha.”

How prophetic! The Lord had recognised his main tool and associate in his divine mission. That was why he had selected Hanumantha as his messenger in confidence to Mother Seeta. In her state of mind she required one who could impress her with his personality, comfort her and fill her with optimism to sustain herself till the arrival of her Lord to redeem her. The trust reposed by the Lord in Hanumantha was amply rewarded.

Hanumantha had not only found Mother Seeta but also won her supreme confidence by his delicious words and method of approach. He dispelled her fears about his being a Rakshasa sent by Ravana to tease her and dupe her. He stood all her tests and finally showed the ring given by the Lord as an identifier. She appreciated his winsome manner. She said:

*Vikraantastvam samarthastvam praagnastvam vaanarottama!  
Yenedam Raakshasapadam tvayaikena pradbarshitam  
Satayojana visteernasaagaroma karaalayaha  
Vikramas laagbaneeyena kramataaoshpadeekerutha*

*Nahitvaam praakrutam manye vaanaram vaanararshabha!  
Yasyate naasti samtraaso Raavanaannaapisambhramaha*

“What a stupendous feat! Your valour, strength and courage, your power of discernment and discrimination are praiseworthy to the greatest extent. It is not a matter of light importance to fly over the ocean, come here alone, and enter Lanka well fortified by giants. I do not think that you are an ordinary Vaanara. You have exhibited your bravery even without caring for Ravana.”

*Preshyayishyati durdbarsbo Raamonahyapareekshitam  
Paraakramasuvignaaya matsakaa samvisheshataba!*

“Being sent by the Lord you are the proper person to be talked to. Will the Lord send to me one without adequately examining and ascertaining his abilities?”

Hanumantha was liked very much by Mother Seeta and Lord Rama both of whom he served with all his soul. As Sri Ramadoota, Hanumantha is the gratifier of the desires of those who contemplate upon him as such. That is why the prayer noted below is very effective when made to him:

*Manojavam Maarutatulya vegam  
jitendriyam buddhimataam varishtam  
Vaataatmajam vaanarayoodhamukhyam  
Sree Raamadootam sirasaanamaami!*

“Salutation is made to Hanumantha, the emissary of Lord Sri Rama. He has the speed of the Wind God whose son he is. He has controlled his senses and is best among the intelligent. He is the most important among the Vaanara warriors and I bow unto him!”

Lord Sri Rama always chose him whenever he wanted a delicate mission to be performed. He sent Hanumantha as a messenger to Bharata in advance to give him the news of his arrival and find out how the latter reacted to it. If there were to be any reluctance on

the part of Bharata there would be no need to go to Ayodhya at all. Hanumantha fulfilled this delicate mission also with ability.

He was a Mahaveera without equal. In all crises in the war with Ravana, he was the tower of strength to the Lord. He killed many powerful giants that were the mainstay of Ravana. Even when he went to Lanka to find Seeta, he destroyed the Asokavana, in which Mother Seeta was held, in order to find out Ravana's strength.

When Ravana sent his powerful son Akshayakumara, Hanumantha killed him within no time. He killed Jambumali, the son of Prahasta, and seven other ministers' sons. He struck terror into the heart of Ravana who had to send Indrajit, his main bulwark, to deal with the attacking Vanara. Indrajit could not conquer Hanumantha and he used the Brahmastra in the end.

Hanumantha showed his respect for Brahma by appearing to have been caught by it and remained so in order to be taken to Ravana whom he wanted to personally chide and make him hand over Seeta at least then and come to terms with Lord Sri Rama who would surely save him. He showed his capacity for destruction by burning Lanka and its fortifications. His very name struck terror in all Lanka.

Even in the final war, Hanumantha stood foremost among the warriors. He formed the mount of the Lord and Lakshmana at crucial moments, and helped the army whenever there were calamities out of proportion. When Indrajit used Brahmastra which made everyone helpless and unconscious, Hanumantha and Vibheeshana went about searching for warriors still alive.

They came to Jaambavaan who exclaimed:

*Anjanaasuprajaayena maatarisvaacha Nairrutaa!  
Hanumaanvaanarasreshtaba praanaan dbaarayatekvachit?*

“Is Hanumaan who by his behaviour got the reputation of being

the ideal son of Anjana and Vayu Deva alive?”

Vibheeshana asked Jambavan why he pitched upon asking about Hanuman alone while there were so many warriors and even the Lord and Lakshmana. Jambavan said:

*Srunu Nairrutisaardoola! yasmaatprutchaami Maarutim  
Tasminjeevati veeretu hatamasya hatam balam  
Hanumatyujjhitapraane jeevantopi vayam bataah!*

“O Tiger among the giants! I will tell you the reason why I have asked only about the welfare of Hanuman omitting to ask about that of others. If the hero Hanuman is alive, it does not matter even if the whole Vaanara army is gone. It is as good as living. But if Hanuman is no more, we are one with the dead even if alive.”

Hanuman saved them all by getting the mountain containing Visalyakarani, Mrutasanjivani, Souvarnakarani and Sandhaanakarani when these latter disappeared at the coming of Hanuman to take them. After his purpose was served, he replaced the mountain of medicinal plants in the Himalayas in the original place, a superhuman feat by itself.

He repeated the feat when Lakshmana was rendered unconscious and helpless by Ravana who used his Sakti Astra against him when he went to the rescue of Vibheeshana. Lakshmana came back to normal when the medicinal plants were used for him and but for Hanuman this superhuman feat could not have been possible.

There is no count of giants killed by Hanuman. He killed mighty warriors on whom Ravana relied for his success. He killed Akampana, Devantaka, Narantaka, Trisira and Nikumbha who were foremost among Ravana's followers.

His strength flowed from his immense belief in Lord Sri Rama whose name was always on his lips in whatever circumstance he was placed. That acted as a talisman.

The Divine Mother Seeta honoured him at the time of Ramapattabhisheka. Then the Lord gave her a necklace of pearls of extraordinary brilliance and value. He said:

*Pradehi Subhage! Haaram yasya tushtaasi bhaamini!  
Paurusham Vikramo Buddhir yasminnetaani sarvasaba!*

“You may bestow this necklace on any one here in whom you find exuberance of courage, initiative, boldness and wisdom according to your liking.”

Mother Seeta gave it to Hanumantha. So it is that he is prayed to by all. When the necklace was given, Hanumantha began to break each pearl and look for something in it. Vibheeshana who saw it asked him why he did so. Hanumantha, said that he was trying to find out if the pearls contained the Lord’s name in them for otherwise, the necklace was unfit to be worn by him. Vibheeshana made fun of him. Then Hanumantha said that his very being was animated by the Lord. He tore open his heart and there they found the Lord with Mother Seeta and Lakshmana. All praised Hanumantha who was thereupon embraced by the Lord. The Lord’s embrace made Hanumantha more brilliant and whole than before and he shone with extraordinary spiritual power. The Lord said that Hanumantha would live for all time to come and that he would enjoy his grace and presence always.

That was how he could be found by Bheema, the Vayunandana among the Pandavas, pleased with whom he remained in the banner of the chariot of Arjuna during the Mahabharata War helping him in moments of crisis. He humbled the pride of Garutman who thought that Lord Vishnu became invincible because of his being the mount for him. He also humbled the pride of Balaram, the brother of Lord Krishna, and that of Satyabhama, the wife of Lord Krishna. He made Narada and Tumburu realise their nothingness before him as musicians.

There was an unhealthy rivalry between the sages Tumburu

and Narada in the field of music. Each regarded himself superior to the other in music. They went to Hanumantha for judgment. Hanumantha seated them quietly before him after paying his respects to them and then began to sing sweetly about Lord Sri Rama. The melody of the music melted the rocks. The moment he stopped his music, the rocks solidified again and Narada and Tumburu got stuck up. Hanumantha said that he who among them could melt the rocks again would be declared superior to the other in music. Both Tumburu and Narada failed miserably in the attempt.

It was given to Hanumantha to sing again, melt the rocks and free them from their predicament. The sages thus humbled took leave of him in a chastened mood. There was no wonder in this. For Hanumantha was an Amsa of Lord Rudra, the Sabda Brahman.

Prayer to him would make one gain the grace of Lord Sri Rama and attain salvation. Hence we pray to him:

*Goshpadeekruta vaaraasim Masakeekruta Raakshasam  
Raamaayana Mahaamaalaaratnam Vandenilaatmajam!*

“Salutations are to the son of Vayu Deva, who crossed the ocean as if it were the length between the two feet of the cow, who made short work of the giants as if they were mere mosquitoes and who formed the Crown Gem of the necklace of gems called Ramayana!”

