

DHARMA DHWAJA

DHARMO RAKSHATI RAKSHITAH

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CHENNAI

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An Ideal Woman - Vedic References of Pancha Bhutas translated

Introduction

One of my readers enquired as to why I have been contributing to the website of Purohit@templepurohit.com while my scripts have been released by kamakoti.org in the articles section under the guidance of my mentor HH.Vijayendra Sarasvatifor the last decade and half nearly. The reply was that kamakoti is my Kama Dhenu while the Temple Purohit is my 'Go Maata'!

Dharma Dhwaja is a compilation for the Purohita while kamakoti is sustained ever as my passion- in fact an obsession!.

Dharma Dhwaja seeks to outline the various aspects with predominance about Maha Deva and the tenets of Dharma as briefly reflected in the Puranas, Upanishads, Itihaasaas and Vedas. The precepts so sought to be presented are brief, readily readable and with telling picturisation.

Kamatoti Classicals are some what detailed yet edited translations invariably under the title of Saaraamshas or Essences- Essence of Eka Vimshati Puraanas -Essence of Ashta Dasha Upanishads- and Classics of Dharma Sindhu-Brahma Sutras-Mani Smriti-Soundarya Lahari-Shiva Sahasra Lingarachana-Bhagavad Gita-Kashmiri Shaivism , full Valmiki RamayanaSeries and the best part of Maha Bharata including Virat-Bhishma-Drona-Shanti Parvas-Sanatsujaateeya and so on. Further, coverages on Pratyasha Bhaskara-Chandra-Pancha Maha Bhutas- Ganesha- Lakshmi- Vaak Devi- Gayatri – Sanatana Dharmas- Pradhana Gitas are prominent.

My scripts as appeared by the Purohita website have all been either the extracts or editings of mine that appeared and approved by the kamakoti website as a component of Dharma Prachara as always emphasised by Kanchi Mutt

I am beholden to Pandita Veda and his associates for the Dharma Prachara of the Purohita website. He acknowledges to state: ' It's a wonderful feeling when a small act that you do makes someone truly happy. I must say, the articles that you write are in-depth and has a lot of information for the current generation to understand and comprehend.Continue writing and spread the knowledge! Stay blessed!'

VDN Rao,

Chennai

Ganesha Mahima – The Glory of Lord Ganesha

*Ganaanaam tvaa Ganapatigm havaamahe kavim kaveenaamupashravastamam, jyeshtha raajam
Brahmanaam Brahmanasapat aa nah shrunootibhih seeda saadhanam/ Rig Veda 2-23-1*

Each and every Hindu with belief of Dharma, irrespective of caste or gender, wakes up from bed in the morning remembering Ganeshwara to ensure that through out the following day and night sleep into the bed, should pass off without obstructions , hurdles or mishappenings and with contentment, be it from family, surroundings and society, without no shows of evil energies. Equally significant is that all Hindu families all over the world do unfailingly perform the Vinayaka Chaturthi Vrata on the Shukla Chaturdhi of Bhadrapada Month each and every year religiously with faith , dedication and austerity. Invariably the Vrata irrespective of caste, creed and by man-woman-child and social barriers is observed to one's own devotion.. Not only this but Ganesha Smarana is a 'must' preceding all the Devata Vratas, Yagjnya Karyas, upanayana-vivaha-and auspicious deeds like Griha Praveshas, and even all social functions- be they Shravana- Pathana – Shraavya- Nartanaadi Kalaa related ones to ensure their successful completion.

Ganesha is the singular symbol of auspiciousness, endeavour and success with the primacy of worship from Tri Mutis downward to charaachara jagat. He is the very essence of the entire Universe which is surfiert with Tapatrayas viz. Adhi Bhoudika- Adhyatmika and Adhi Daivikas; Ishana Trayas of Praaneshana, Daraa- putra- dhana – sukheshana and Dharmeshana; Trikaranas of Mano -vaachya karmanas; Trikalpa Kaalamaana of Padaardha-Paridhi-Paramanu /Matter-Space-Atom; Trigunas of Sat-Rajas-Tamas. He represents Tri Shaktis of Brahmini, Vaishnavi and Rudranis; Trividha Rishis viz. Brahmarshi, Devarshi, Rajarshi; Trikaankshaas of Kanta-Kanaka- Keerti; Chaturvidha Purusharthaas, Chatur varnas, Chaturaashramas; Chaturvedas; Pancha Bhutas , Pancha bhakshyas, Pancha koshas of Annamaya, Praanamaya, Manomaya, Vigyanamaya and Ananda maya; Panchagnis , Panchendriyas, Pancha Tanmatras, Arishad vargas, Shat Chakras of Moolaadhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anaahita, Visuddha, Agjnaa and Sahasraara; Shat Karmas of Sandhya Vandana, Tarpana, Japa, Homa, Devaarchana, Swaadhyaya, Atithi Seva; Shat Vedangas: Siksha, Vyakarana, Kalpa Grandha, Nirukta, Chhandas, and Jyotisha; Sapta Lokas , Sapta Dwipas of Jambu, Plaksha, Salmaali, Kusha, Krouncha, Shaka and Pushkala and Sapta Patalaas of Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talaatala, Mahatala, Rasatala and Patalas; Sapta Samudras: Lavana, Ikshurasa, Sura, Ghrita, Dahi, Ksheera and Suswada jala Sapta Parvatas of Sumeru , Kailasa, Malaya, Himalaya, Udyachala, Agastyachala, Suvela and Gandhamadana; Sapta Kratus viz. Shodassi, Ukta, Purushi, Agnishtoma, Aptaryama, Atiratra, Vajapeya, and Goshava; Ashtanga Yogas of Yama- Niyama- Aasana- Pranaayama- Pratyahara-Dharana-Dhyana-Samadhi.

Ganesha is actively assisted by Ashta Loka Paalakas: Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirruti, Varuna, Vayu, Kubera and Ishana; Ashta Bhiravas viz. Kaala, Asitaanga, Rudra, Krodha, Kapala Bhishana, Unmatta and Samharas as Ashta Bhairavis for Graha Shanti viz. Mahakali, Neela Saraswati , Chhinna mastaka, Shodashi, Kahairavi, Dhumavati and Bagalamukhi; and Ashta Lakshmis of Dhanya, Dhairya, Santaana, Vijaya, Vidya, Bhagya, Gaja and Varada; Ashta Matrikas Brahmani, Vaishnavi, Maheshwari, Aindri, Vaarahi, Chamunda, Naarasimhi and Kaumari; Ashtaavasus are viz. Aapa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Anila, Anala, Pratyusha and Prabhasa; Nava Durgas Shailaputri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kushmanda, Skanda Mata, Katyayani, Kaala Ratri, Maha Gauri, and Siddhi Dhatri; Navagrahas and most certainly the Dashavataras of Vishu, apart from Vishvadevas, Ekadasha Rudras, Dwaadashaadithyas, Daitya Daanava Pishachadi evil forces too! Such is the singular balancer of Dharma-Adharma , Truth and Falsity, and Maya and Paramatma viz. **Ganesha!**

Ganesha's Origin

Shiva Purana mentions that in the Shveta Varaha Kalpa, Devi Parvati mentioned to her maids Jaya and Vijaya that there was none else worthy of worship excepting her own body sweat which eventually took the form of an outstanding form of a boy named Ganesha. The Purana further states: When Nandi was asked to bar entry into the Interior Place of Parvati as She was taking bath, Nandi no doubt prevented but Bhagavan still entered and She was not amused. She decided to create an idol of a boy which was infused with life and empowered Him to challenge anybody with the necessary powers. The boy followed the instruction and did not allow entry even to Shiva. The Pramadha ganas were asked to teach a lesson to the boy by Shiva but they were defeated in no time. Shiva Himself decided to force His entry but to no avail. Finally, an irritated Bhagavan snapped the boy's head and Parvati became furious and Her angry manifestations surprised Shiva Himself. She insisted that the boy be brought to life forth with. Shiva suggested locating anybody sleeping in the northern direction and the Shivaganas were able to trace only an elephant. The severed head of the boy was fixed with that of the elephant and He was revived. The assembly of Deities who first fought with the boy and witnessed the entire scene earlier decided that any function in the World ought to be commenced with worship of Ganesha foremost as He is the Lord of preventing impediments and of providing success. Ganesha's worship on Bhadrapada Sukla Chaturdhi is compulsory all over Bharatadesa as one is dreaded of becoming a victim of undeserving blames since Moon God received a curse from Ganesha that whoever saw the Moon on the particular Chaturdhi night without worshipping Him would become a sure target!

Vamana Purana details the origin of Gauri of gaura varna from Parvati Devi and then proceeds with the birth of Ganesha. After the Sacred Wedding, Shankara and Parvati moved around freely in enjoyment and asked Vishwakarma to build a glorious home for them, performed Yagna worthy of Grihastashrama and the couple were nicely settled down. One day out of fun, Parama Shiva addressed Devi Parvati as Kaali or of dark complexion. She felt that his fun was unbearable and left for serious Tapasya to Brahma deva and secured golden complexion. As she discarded her earlier Form, Indra requested her to give away the earlier Form to him and since she was materialised from Krishna Kosha or of deep blue nature, she was named as *Katyayani*; she was also called as *Koushiki* since she was materialised from Brahma kosha and since Indra called her as his sister, Indra too was known as Koushika. Indra then asked Katyayani /Koushiki to reach Vindhya Parvata and thus she became *Vindhyavaasini* and Indra gifted a Lion as her Vahana /Carrier. After this incident, Devi Uma who discarded her earlier Rupa now replaced with Suvarna Rupa and identified herself as *Gouri*. Maha Deva was too pleased and both the couple spent some thousand years in Garhastya all by themselves ignoring the out side contacts, which had terribly distressed Devatas and the entire Universe was upset too. Indra and Devatas were concerned about fresh threats of Indratwa as there were forebodings to that effect and approached Brahma who wished that Mahadeva's continued immersion in the stage of 'Manmoha' for Gauri would continue before Daityas would gain strength; this concern got Indra and Devas worried and tried to somehow manage an entry to Shiva's abode but found that sneaking into the adode would not be possible as Maha Nandi was holding the security. Even while Indra and Devatas were waiting outside the Abode, Agni took the form of a Swan and sneaked in and having assumed a Sukshma Rupa conveyed to Parama Shiva that Indra and Devas were waiting outside to desperately meet him. Maha Deva stepped out and let Indra and Devas come inside; he said that since he was actually enjoying Devi Gauri he was disturbed and any of the Devatas should take over the weight, radiance and power of Parama Siva's 'Shukra' (Semen)! Surya and Chandra felt that they might be unable to do so but Agni Deva emboldened himself and asked Shiva to release the Sukra so that he could consume it. Shiva did so and then he asked Indra as to what was the emergency about! Indra had respectfully entreated to terminate the period of enjoymernt so that he could very kindly concentrate on many tasks pending. As Maha Deva agreed to do so, Indra and Devas returned to Swarga and he narrated the incident to Parvati and the latter got furious that the disturbance caused by Indra and Devas was indeed frustrating and cursed Indra and others that since they did not allow to let her bear a child at the nick of time, they too would become childless!

Ganeshotpanna: In an angry and vexatious mood, Gauri entered the ‘Snaana shaala’ and asked her maid Malini to massage her body and as the maid applied flavoured milk cream the sweat of her angry body got evaporated; when massaged Gauri’s body collected body dirt and made a figure viz. Ganesha with four hands, broad chest and handsome and later on resumed her bath and left later to Puja Mandir to worship Maha Deva. Thereafter, Parama Shiva entered the same Abhyagana Griha (bath room), and noticed the Ganesha Pratima apparently made by Parvati’s body dirt during her Abhyangana. Maha Deva added his body dirt too to the Pratima and made an addition of an elephant trunk to the Murti which as he took his Snaana got washed his own sweat, bhasma and sacred water. The Pratima came alive as the combined body dirt, sugandhas and water and Shiva told Parvati that he was their own son! Gauri was surprised to see their child with an elephant face and excellent features and embraced him:

*Yattadangamalaadwiyam krutam Gajamukham Naram, Tatah preetaa Girisutaa tam putram
parishashvajey/ Murdhina chaina –mapura -aghnaaya tatah Sarvobravedumaam, Naayakena vinaa
Devi tava Bhutopi Purnakam/ Yasmaajjastato naamnaa bhavishyati Vinaayakah, Yesha vighna
sahasraani Suraadeenaam harishyati/ Pujayishyanti chaivaasya lokaa Devi charaacharaah, Ityava
muktatwaa Devaastu Dattavaamstanayaaya hi/ Sahaayantu Gana Sreshthamnaamnaa khyaatam
Ghatodaram, Tathaa Matruganaa ghoraa bhutaa Vighna karaaschaye/Tey Sarvey Paramoshena
Devyaah preetyopa- paadinah, Devi cha Sasutam drustwaa paraam mumadavaapacha/*



Maha Deva asked Shailaja Devi to find her own son and the latter embraced him who was materialised by the body dirt of hers and his as the child was a charming boy with an elephant face; Shiva said that the child was born without any 'Nayaka' and thus would be called **Vinayaka**, who could forestall thousands of Vighnaas of Devas. The entire Universe would worship Ganesha said Parvati who created Ghatodara Ganaas to assist him as also Matru Ganaas and Vighna Bhutaas to destroy who did not worship him. Devi Parvati felt extremely happy and contented with the arrival of Ganeswara!

Ganesha swarupa- Sindura Varna: Before the puja related to any Devata involving mantra – tantras- upaasana, fulfillment of each and every task, Ganesha's invocation is a must. **Svarupam mantra**

yantranaam Devataanaam visheshatah, agjnaatvaa bhajate moodho na siddhim praanuyaat kvachit/ Skanda Purana describes that Ganesha's Gajaanana swarupa is replete with all the 'shubha kalshanas' or auspicious features and traits as Gambheera-Charurhasta-Saptarakta-Shadunnata-Pancha deergha- Pancha sukshma-and trivisteerna as mentioned in Saamudrika Shastra. Ganesha's body colour is of sindura varna. As explained in Shiva Purana, as Devi Parvati applied that ointment as Shiva replaced with the head of an elephant. Ganesha Purana states that Ganesha as a boy killed Daitya named Sindura and the odour of the daitya's blood was smeared by Ganesha on his body.

Lord Ganesha's Naama karana and Vividha naama

Various Puranas pronounced the names of Ganesha as Gajapati, Gana naayaka, Gajavakra, Gajaanana, Ekadanta, Lambodara, Shurapakarna, Chaturhasta, Paasha-ankusha-parashu-kamala-aksha sutra-Danta dhaari, Naaga yagnopapeeti, Chandra shekhara, Mooshakadhwaaja, Mooshaka vahana, Raktavarna, Raktavastradhaari, Raktagandhaanulepita and Raktapushpa supujita. According to Varaha Purana, Devi Parvati got infatuated with astonishment on seeing a sky like form of Parama Shiva himself in Ganesha and instantly understanding the 'stree swabhava' or woman like feeling, Shiva then cursed Ganesha as Gajavakra or Elephant Faced, Pralamba jathara or Lambodara with huge belly and Sarpopaveeti or of Serpent made yagnopaveeta. As Shiva was serious while the curse, he sweated profusely and the drops converted his body blue and thus got Vinaayaka generated and commissioned with the consent of Tri Murtis as well, as the Head of Pramadhaganas and thus henceforth became popular as Ganesha-Ganapati-Ganaadhipa-Gananaayaka. Brahma Vaivarta Purana defines Ganesha as 'Ga' as 'Jnaanaartha vaacha' and 'Na' is of 'Nirvaanaartha' or bliss and thus the combination of Naayaka (husband) and Samyoga (union) or of Shiva and Parvati. Agni Purana while describing the Ganesha Puja Vidhana and the Anga nyaasa, Peetha Puja, Maanasopachaara Puja and Gayatri Mantra, then describes the various names of Ganesha as Ganapati-Ganaadhipa, Ganesha, Gana Naayaka, Ganakreeda, Vakratunda, Eka damshtara, Mahodara, Gaja Vaktra, Lambakukshi, Vikata, Vighna naashaka, Dhumravarna, and Mahendra. In the peetha puja, the hridaya nyaasa gives the names of Mahodara, Danda hasta, Jaya, Ganaadhipa, Gana naayaka, Ganeshwara, Vaktra tunda, Ekadanta, Utkata, Lambodara, Gaja Vaktra, Vikataanaana, Vighna naashana, Dhumra varna, Mahendra and Vighnesha. Likewise, Garuda Purana details in the course of Ganesha Puja , the Dwaadasha Namaas of Ganapujya, Vakratunda, Eka damshtara, Traimbaka, Neelagreeva, Lambodara, Vikata, Vighna Raaja, Dhumra varna, Bhaalachandra, Ganapati and Hastimukha. Brahmanda Purana narrates Sapta Koti Vinayaka 's Aadhipatya like of Aamoda, Pramoda, Sumukha, Durmukha, Arighna and Vighnaharta. This Purana highlights 'Tantra grandha prabhaavita' 51 Ganesha Naamaas viz. Vighneshwara- Vighna raaja-Vinaayaka-Shivottama-Vighvakrit- Vighna hartaa-Avighnarata-Gana naayaka-Ekadanta- Dvidanta-Gaja vaktra- Niranjana-Kapardavaan-Deergha mukha-Shankukarna-Vrishabha dhvaja- Gana naadha-Gajendraasya-Shurpakarna- Vrishabha -dhvaja- Gana naadha-Gajendrasya-Shurpakarna-Trilochana-Lambodara-Maha naada- Chaturmurti- Sadaashiva-Aamoda-Durmukha / Durmada-Sumukha-Pramodaka- Ekapaada-Dvipaada / Dvijihva-Shura-Veera-Shanmukha-Varada-Vaamadeva- Vakratunda-Dvidantaka-Senaani-Graamani-Matta-Vimatta- Matta mushaka vaahana-Jati-Mundee-Khadgee-Varenya-Vrishaketana- Bhakshapriya-Meghanaada-Ganapa-Ganeshwara. Mudgala Purana enumerates the following 33 Ganesha Swarupas: Bala Ganapati-Taruna Ganapati-Bhakta Ganapati-Veera Ganapati-Siddha Ganapati-Uchchishtha Ganapati-Vighnesha-Kshipra Ganapati-Heramba-Lakshmi Ganapati-Maha Ganapati-Vijaya Ganapati-Vijaya Ganapati-Nritta Ganapati-Urdhva Ganapati-Ekaakshara Ganapati-Vara Ganapati-Tryakshara Ganapati-Kshipraprasaada Ganapati-Haridraa Ganapati-Ekadanta Ganapati-Srishti Ganapati-Uddanda Ganapati-Rinavimochana Ganapati-Dhridha Vinaayaka-Dwimukha Ganapati-Trimukha Ganapati-Yoga Ganapati-Simha Ganapati-Durga Ganapati-Sankatahara Ganapati. _

Daitya hara Ganesha-vighna naashana-agra puujata-puja vidhana-abheeshta siddhi / Ganesha as the destroyer of Evil- hurdle remover- primacy of worship: As in the case of Tri Murtis and Shakti

Forms, Ganesha has the reputation of uprooting all the forms of Evil and preserve Peace and Auspiciousness in the Universe. As per Linga Purana, Lord Shiva stated that the manifestation of Ganesha is to destroy Daityas and save Brahma vaadis. Mudgala Purana details various manifestations of Ganesha as of killing Daityas:

*Vakratundaavataarascha dehaanaam Brahma thaarakah, Matsaraasura hantaa cha
simhavaahanagah smritah/ Ekadantaavataaro vai dehaanaam Brahmadhaarakah, Madaasurasya
hantaa sa akhuvaaha -nagah smritah/ Mahodara iti khyato Jnaana Brahma prakaashakah,
Mohaasurasya shatruvaim akhu- vaahanagah smritah/ Gajaanah sa vigjneyah saankhebhyah
siddhi daayakah, Lobhaasura prahartaa vai akhugascha prakeertitah/ Lambavataaro vai
Krodhaasura nibarhanah, Shakti Brahmaakhugah sad yat tasya dhaaraka uchyate/ Vikato naama
vikhyaatah Kaamaasura vidaahakah, Mayura vaahanash -chaayam Sourabrahmadharah smritah/
Vighnaraajaavataarascha shesha vaahana uchyate, Mamata-asura hantaa cha Vishnubrahmoti
vaachakah/ Dhumra varnaavataarascha abhimaanaasura naashakah, akhuvaahana evaasou
Shivaatmaatu sa uchyate/*



Vakratunda sporting the back on a roaring lion killed *Matsaraasura*. Seated comfortably as a 'mooshaka vaahana', the Lord with His 'ekadanta' the single tusk destroyed *Madaasura*. Mooshaka vahana Ganesha as manifested as Mahodara killed *Mohaasura*. Assuming the title of Gajaanana killed *Lobhaasura* while as Lambodara destroyed *Krodhaasura*. The outstanding evil of the Society viz. *Kaamaasura* was subdued and killed by Ganesha as Mayura Vahana while as Seshha Vahana Vighna Raja killed *Mamataasura*. As Mooshaka Vaahana, Maha Ganesha destroyed *Abhimaanaasura*. Thus as Vakratunda-Ekadanta and such 'avataaraas', Ganesha destroyed Matsara, Mada, Moha, Lobha, Krodha, Kaama, Mamata and Ahankaara naamaka asuras.

Birth of Gajanana, Priority Invocation and adoration on Chaturthi: As Devas faced a strange problem of recurring failures as and when they take up a fresh assignment whereas Demons seemed to be going ahead with novel operations, they approached Lord Siva and Devi Parvati to provide a solution. In reply Bhagavan Siva started thinking that among the Panchabhutas (Five Elements), there was an identifiable personification of a Deity among Prithvi (Earth), Varun (Water), Tejas (Fire) and Vayu (Wind God), but how was it that ‘Akash’ (Sky) did not have? By so thinking Lord Siva laughed loudly and Devi Parvati could guess by her Jnana Shakti (Power of Knowledge) what Bhagavan was laughing boisterously about. From that energetic hilarity with an open mouth emerged a replica of Siva who was strong, handsome and powerful whom Devi Parvati kept gazing and got mesmerised. Lord Siva got annoyed by the instant reaction of Devi Parvati, became jealous of the Super Boy and infact got angry and cursed him saying that he would possess an elephant face, disproportionate belly and serpented Yagnopaveeth (Holy Thread). Siva was still angry and from His body hair roots kept on multiplying innumerable Vinayaks resembling the original and Lord Brahma flew over the Sky and as ‘Akashvani’ (a loud announcement from the Sky) declared that Devas should be grateful to Lord Siva to have provided the solution to the problem posed by them and that the various forms of Vinayak which got materialised would indeed ensure that as and when Devas (and human beings) initiated a task they should invoke the blessings of Vinayak foremost. As the announcement from Brahma was heard, Siva was by then cooled down and addressed Vinayaka endearingly;

Ganesh Puja in detail with ‘kathas’ or episodes

Invocation:

Vinayako Vighnakaro Gajasyo Ganesha naamaacha Bhavasya Putrah, Yethecha Sarvam thava yanthu Bhruthya Vinayakayaah Kruura drishtah Prachandah-Vucchushma daanaadi vuvruddhva dehaha Karyeshu siddhim prati paadayanthah, Bhavaamsva Deveshu thadha makeshu kaaryashu chanteshu Mahanubhavat-Agreshu Pujam Labhatenyatha cha Vinashayishyastatha kaarya siddhim

Vinayaka, Vighnakara, Gajavadana, Ganesha, Shankara Putra; all these cruel-eyed, harsh and angry Vinayaks will be your servants; those who are desirous of giving well earned materials as ‘daanas’ or alms be provided with Siddhis or boons. At Yajnas or various Propitious Tasks, all the devotees shall be provided the highest veneration, lest their tasks or worships be discounted’).

[As sourced from **Skanda Purana**]

The foremost prayer to Ganesha states :

Sumukhaschaika dantascha kapilo Gajakarnikah, Lambodarascha vikato Vighna Raajo Ganaadhipah, Dhumaketur -ganaadhyashah phala chandro Gajaanah, Vakra tundah Shurpakarno herambahskanda purvajah, Shodashaitaani naamaani yah pathesh shrunuyaadapi vidyaarambhe vivaachecha praveshe nirgame tathaa, sangraame sarva kaaryeshu vighnastasya na jaayate, abheepsitaartham pujito yassurairapi, sarva vighnacchide tasai Shri Ganaadhipaye namah/



Then follow the Sankalpa, Kalasha puja, 'Shodaashopa-chaara' or the formal Services to Ganesha with Dhyaana-Aavaahana-Vaahanaadis and Shuddhodaka Snaana- Vastra-Yagnopaveeta-Gandha-Pushpa-Phala- Dhupa -Deepa-Avasara Naivedyas-Tambula – Neeraajana-Achamaniyas – Mantra pushpa- pradakhshina namaskaarasa- are offered in the opening phase of the Puja stating : ***Ganaadhipa prasaadam shirasaa grihnaami/*** Thus one's own head is adorned with 'akshata-pushpas'. Then commences the further phase of Phala Siddhi Vinaayaka Puja with Praana pratishtha:

Asya Shri Vara Siddhi Vinaayaka praana pratishthaapana mantrasya, Brahma Vishnu Maheshwaraa Rishah, Rikyajursaamaadharvaani chhandaamsi, praanah shaktih paraadevataa, hraam beejam,

hreem shaktih, hruum keelakam, mama Varashiddhi Vinaayaka praana pratishtha shiddhyarthe jape viniyogah/

Kara nyaasa: hraam angushthaabhyaam namah, hreem tarjanibhyaam namah, hruum madhyamaabhyaam namah, hraim anaamikaabhyaam namah, hroum kanishthikaabhyaam namah, hrahah karatala prishtaabhaam namah;

Anga nyaasa: hraam hridayaaya namah, hreem shirase swaaha, hroom shikhaayai vashat, hraim kavachaaya hum, hruum netratrayaaya voushat, hrahah astraaya phut/ Bhurbhuvassuromiti digbandhah/

Dhyaanam: Raktaambhodisthapotollaasadaruna sarojaadhiroodhaa karaabjaih, paasham kodandamikshhoodbhava maliganapyankusham pancha baanaan/ Bibhraanaa -srukkapaalam trinayana lasitaa peena vakshoruhaadhyaa devi baalaaka varnaa bhavatu sukha kree praana shaktih paraanah// Hraam hreem krom ya ra la va sha sah om/ Varasiddhi Vinaayaka! Praanah mama praanah Varasiddhi Vinaayaka jeevah mama jeevah vaangnahshrotra jihvaa ghraanaih ucchvaasa rupena bahiraagatya, asmin bimbe-asmin kalashe- asyaam pratimaayaam-sukhena charan tisthantu swaaha/

Mantram: Asuneete punarasmaasu chakshuh punah praanamihanodhehi bhogam, jyokpashyema Suryamuccharantamanumate mridayaanasswasti, amritam vai praanaa amritamaapah praanaanena yathaa sthaanamupahvayate// Swamin sarva jagannaatha yaavat pujaavasaanakam, taavatvam yathaa preetibhaavena bimbemin sannidhim kuru/ Aavaahito bhava, sthaapito bhava, suprasannobhava, varado bhava, avakunthitobhava, sthiraasanam kuru, praseeda praseda praseeda//

Mantrah: Aaa twaavahantu harayassacheta sashvaitairashaisah ketumadbhih vaataajavairbalavadbhirnojavairaayaahi sheeghram mama havyaaya sharvom/

while reciting this mantra, akshata-pushpas be kept on the head of the Idol and offer some naivedya like a fruit and gud to signify the 'praana pratishtha'.

Pujaa praarambhah: Bhava sanchita paapougha vidhvamsana vichakshanam, Vighnaandhakaara bhaswantam Vighnaraajamaham bhaje/ Shurpakantham Gaja vaktram chaturbhujam, Paashanaang -kushadharam Devam dhyaayetsiddhi Vinaayakam/ Uttamam Gananaathasya vratam sampatkaram shubham, Bhaktaabheeshtapradam tasmaad dhyaayettam Vighna naayakam/ Dhyaayet Gajaananam Devam taptakaanchana nannibham, Chaturbhujam mahaa kaayam sarvaabharana bhushitam/ Dhyaayaami-Atraagaccha jagadvandya suraasuraarchiteshwara, Anaatha naatha sarvagjna Gauri garbhaa samudbhava/Aavaahayaami- Mouktikaih Pushparaagaischa naanaaratnairviraajitam, Ratna simhaasanam chaaru preetyartham pratigruhyataam-Aasanam samarpayaami/ Gauriputra namastestu Shankara priya nandana, Grihaanaarghyam mayaadattam grihaanad -viradaanana: Paadyam samarpayaami/ Anaadha naadha sarvagjna geervaana varapujita, Grihaanaachamanam Deva tubhyam dattam mayaa prabho-Aachamaniyam samarpayaami- Dadhiksheera samaayuktam madhvaajyena samanvitam, Madhuparkam grihaanedam Gajavaktra namostute-Madhuparkam samarpayaami/ Snaanam panchaamritairdeva grihaana Gana naayaka, Anaadha naatha sarvagjna Girvaana gana pujita/

Panchaamrita snaanam samarpayaami/

Milk:Aapyaayasva sametu te vishvatassomavrishniyam, bhavaa vaajasya sangadhe-Shri Vinaayakam snapayaami;

Curd:Dadhikraavno akaarsham jishnorash -vasyavaaginah, Surabhino mukhaaratprana aayugumshitaarishat-Shri Vinaayakam dadhnaa snapa -yaami/

Ghee:Shukramasi jyotirasi tejosi Devovassavitot punaatvat chidrena pavitrenavapoh Suryasya rashmibhih-Shri Vinaayakam aajyena snapayaami/

Honey:Madhu vaataa rutaayate madhu kharanti sindhavah, maadhveernassvantyoshadhih- Shri Vinaayakam Madhunaasnapayaami/

Sugar:Swaaduh pavaaswa dishyaaya jinvane swaadurindraaya suhave tu naamne swaadurmitraaya Varunaaya Vaayave Brihaspataye madhumaagum adaabhyah- Shri Vinaayakam sharkaraa snapayaami/

Phalodakam: Yaah phalineeryaa aphalaa apushpaa yaascha pushpineeh Brihaspati prasutaastaa no munjavagumhasah- Shri Vinaayakam phalodkena snapayaami/ Shuddhodakam:Gangaadi sarva tirthebhya aahrutairamalair -jalaih, snaanam kurushva bhagannumaaputra namostute/ Shri Vinaayakam shuddhodaka snaanam kaarayaami/

Mantram: Aapohishthaa mayobhuvah, taana urje dathaatana, maheranaaya chakshase, yovasshivatamo rasah, tasya bhaajayate hanah, ushiteeriva maatarah, tasmaa arangamaamavah 'yasya kshayaaya jinvatha' aapo janayathaa cha nah//

Vastram: Raktavastra dwayam chaaru Devayogyam cha mangalam, Shubhaprada grihaana twam Lambodara Haraatmaja/ Shri Vinaayakam Vastra yugmam samarpayaami//

Mantram: Abhivastraa suvasanyaanyarshaabhidhenoh sudughaahpuyamaanaah, Abhichandraabhartaveno hiranyobhyashvaan rathino devasoma//

Yagnopaveetam: Raajatam Brahma sutram cha kaanchanamchottareeyakam, grihaana Deva sarvagjna bhaktaanaanishtadaayaka/ Shri Vinaayaka yagnopaveetam samarpayaami/ Mantram-Yagnopaveetan paramam pavitram prajaapateryatsahajam purastaat, Aayushyamagryam pratimuncha shubhram yagnopaveetam balamastu tejah//

Gandham: Chandanaagaru karpura kasturi kunkumaanvitam, vilepanam Surashreshtha preetyartham pratigrihya taam/ Shri Vinaayakam gandhaan dhaarayaami/

Mantram: Gandhadwaaraam duraadharshaam nityapushtaam kareeshineem, Ishwareegum satyabhutaanaam twaamihopahvaye shriyam/



Akshataalankaaram: *Akshataan dhavalaan divyaan shaaliyaamh tandulaan shubhaan, grihaana paramaanada Shambhu putra namostute/ Shri Vinaayakaaya Alankaranartham akshataan samarpayaami/*

Mantram: *Aayanete paraayane durvaarohantu pushpineeh, hradaascha pundareekaani samudrasya grihaa ime/*

Pushpa Puja: *Sugandhaani cha pushpaani jaatikundamukhaani cha,Eka vimshati patraani sangrihaana namostute/ Shri Vinaayakam pushpaih pujayaani/*

Athaanga puja with flowers: Ganeshaaya namah paadou pujayaami-Ekadantaayanamah gulphou [ankle joints] pujayaami-Shurpa karnaayanamah jaanuni[knees]pujayaami-Vighna Rajaya namah janghe pujayaami[ankle]-Aakhuvaahanaaya namah uru [thigh] pujayaami-Herambaaya namah katim [loin]pujayaami- Lambodaraaya namah udaram [tummy] pujayaami-Gana naathaaya namah naabhim [umbilical chord] pujayaami- Ganeshaaya namah hridayam [heart] pujayaami-Sthula kanthaaya namah kantham [throat] pujayaami-Skandaagrajaaya namah skandham[shoulders] pujayaami-Paasha hastaaya [hands] pujayaami-Gaja vaktraaya [face] vaktram pujayaami-Vighna hantre namah netrou [eyes] pujayaamu-Shurpakarnaaya namah karnou [ears] pujayaami-Phaalachandraaya namah lalaatam [forehead] pujayaami-Sarveswaraaya namah shirah[head] pujayaami- Vighnaraajaaya namah sarvaanyangaani [all the body parts] pujayaami/

Atha ekavimshati or 21 Patra Puja: Sumukhaaya namah Maachi patram pujayaami-Ganaadhipaaya namah Brihati patram pujayaami-Umaadhipaaya namah bilwa [bael or stone apple tree leaf considered as highly sacred for Shiva-Uma- Ganesha-Skanda Kumara pujas]-Gajaana -naaya namah durvaa yugmam [two pieced -grass]- Harasunave namah dutthura patram pujayaami-Lambodaraaya namah badari patram pujayaami-Gahaagrajaaya namah apaamaaragapatram pujayaami-Gaja karnaaya namah tulasi patram [exceptionally] pujayaami- Ekadantaaya namah chuta patram[mangoe leaf] pujayaami-Vikataaya namah karaveera patram pujayaami- Bhinna dantaaya namah Vishnukranta patram pujayaami- Vatave namah daadimi patram pujayaami-Sarveswaraaya namah Devadaaru patram pujayaami-Phaalachandraaya namah Maruvaka patram pujayaami-Herambaaya namah sindhuvaara patram pujayaami-Shurpakarnaayana mah jaati patram pujayaami-Suraagrajaaya namah ganaki patram pujayaami-Ibhavaktraaya namah shami patram pujayaami-Vinaayakaaya namah ashvattha patram pujayaami-Surasevitaaya namah Arjuna patram pujayaami-Kapilaaya namah arka patram pujayaami-Ganeshwaraaya namah eka vimshati patraani pujayaami/

(The Sahasra naama/ Ashtottara Pujaam samarpayaami/)

Dhupam: Dasaangulam guggulopetam sugandhi sumanoharam, Umaasuta namastubhyam grihaana varadi bhava/ Shri Varasiddhi Vinayaka namah dhupamaaghraapayaami;

Mantram: Dhurasi dhurva dhurvantam dhurvatom yosmaan dhurvati tam dhurvayam vayam dhurvaamah/

Deepam: Saajyam trivarti samyuktam vahninaadyotitam mayaa, Grihaanamangalam Eshaputra namostute/ Shri Vara Siddhi Vinaayakam deepam darshayaami;

Mantram: Uddipasya swajaatavedopaghnam nirrutam mama, Pashugascha mahyamaahava jeenanancha disho dasha, maanohigumsih jaatavedo gaamashvam purusham jagat, abhibhradaghna aag hi shriyaa maa paripaalaya/

Naivedyam: Sugandhaan sukrtamschiva modakaan ghritapaachitaan, naivedyam grihyataam devachanamudgaih prakalpitaan// Bhakshyam bhojyamscha lehyamcha choshyam paaniyamevacha, Idam grihaana naivedyam maa dattam Vinaayaka/ Shri Varasiddhi Vinaayaka namah Maha Naivedyam samarpayaami/

Mantram: Deva savitah prasava satyamtvartena parishimchaami Amritamastu Amritopastaranamasi swah, Udaanaaya swaah, samaanaaya swaah, Brahmane swah/ Madhye paaneeyam samarpayaami, hastou prakshaalanam samarpayaami, paada prakshaalanam samarpayaami, shuddhhaachaneeyam samarpayaami//

Taamboolam: *Poogiphalasamaayuktam naagavallidalairyutam, karpura churna samyuktam taamboolam pratiguhyaam/ Shri Vara Siddhi Vinaayaka Swamine taamboolam samarpayaami/*

Suvarna Pushpam: *Sadaanandada Vighnesha pushkalaani dhannaanicha, Bhumyaam sthitaani Bhagavan sweekurushva Vinaayaka/ Shri Varasiddhi Vinaayaka namah suvarna pushpam samarpayaami/*

Neeraajanam: *Ghritavarti sahasraischa karpurashakalaistathaa, neeraajanam mayaa dattam grihaana varado bhava/ Shri Varasiddhi Vinaayaka namah Neeraajanam darshayaami- neeraajanaanantaram aachamaniyam samarpayaami/*

Mantram: *Hiranya paatram madhoh purnam dathaatimadhavyosaaneeti, ekadhaa brahmana upaharati ekadhaiva yajamaana aayustejo dadhaati/*

Durvaa yugma puja: *Ganaadhipaaya namah durvaayugmam pujayaami-Umaaputraaya namah—, Aakhuvaahanaayanana—, Vinayakaaya namah—, Isha putraayanamah—, Sarvasiddhipradaayanamah—Ekadantaaya namah—, Ibhavaktraaya namah—, Mooshaka vaahanaaya namah—, Kumara gurave namah/*

Mantra Pushpam: *Yopaam pushpam veda pushpavaan prajaavaan pashumaam bhavati- Chandra maa vaa apaam pushpam—Agnirvaa —/ Ganaadhipa namastestu Umaaputraagha naashana, Vinaayakeshatanay sarva siddhi pradaayaka/ Ekadantaika vadana tathaa Mooshaka Vaahana, Kumaara gurave tubhyamarpayaami sumaanjalim/*

Pradakshinnopachaaraan: *Yaani kaani cha paapaani janmaantara kritaayacha, taani taani pranashyanti pradakshina pade pade/ Paapoham paapa karmaaham paapaatmaa paapasambhavah, traahi maam kripayaa Deva sharanaagata vatsala/ Anyathaa sharanam naasti twameva sharanam mama, tasmaad kaarunya bhaavena raksha raksha janaardana/ Pradikshanam karishyaami satatam modaka priya, Namaster Vighna raajaaya namase vighna naashana/ Shri Vara Siddhi Vinaayakaaya namah Atma pradakshina namaskaaraan samarpayaami; Chatram aacchhaadayaami, chaamaram veejayaami, nrityam darshayaami, geetam shraavayaami, aandolikaamaarohayaami, Ashvaanaarohayaami, Gajaa naarohayaami, samasta Raajopachaara shaktyupachaara bhaktyupachaaramantropachaara devopachaara sarvopachaara pujaam samarpayaami/*

Punararghyam: *Arghyam grihaana Heramba sarva bhadra pradaayaka, Gandha pushpair yuktam paatrastham paapa naashana/ Praarthana: Yam Brahma vedaanta vido vadantiparam Purusham tathaanye, Visyodgateh kaaranameeshwaram vaa tasmai namo Vighna vinaayakaaya/ Namastubhyam Ganesaana namaste vighna naashana, Ipsitam me varam dehi paratra cha paraam gatim/ Vinaayaka namastubhyam satatam modaka priya, Nirvighnam kuru me deva paratra cha paraam gatim, Nirvighnam kurume Deva sarva kaaryeshu sarvadaa//*

Vaayana daanam: Respective Mantas of the Provider and Reciever : 1) *Ganeshah pratigrihnaat Ganesho vai dadaati cha, Ganeshastarakobhyaam Ganeshaya namah/* 2) *Devasya twaa savituh prasave asvinoh baahubhyaam pushno hastaabhyaamaadade/*

Vinaayaka Vrata Katha

It is essentially heard or read with attention and devotion besides being self adorned or blessed by elders on head with akshatas and flowers to ward off the curse of chandra darshana as Lord Krishna himself was

a victim of seeing the reflection of Moon in the milk yielded inside the vessel on Ganesha Chaturthi; Krishna was subsequently troubled and doubted of robbing 'Shamankaka Mani' of Satraajit which yielded tons of gold daily!

Vinayaka vrata concludes with Vrata kathaashravana as follows:

Aaseetpuraa Chandra vamshe Rajaa Dharma iti shrutah, swaraajye Daivayogena jnaatibhih kutilair - hrute/ Anujairbharyayaasaardham jagaama/ Gahanam vanam bahuvriksha samaakeernam naanaa mriga samanvitam/ Bahu pakshikulopetam vhyaaghra bhalluuka sankulam, tatra tatra samaa vishtaa Munayo Brahma vaadinah/ Aadithya sannibhaah sarve sarve vahni sama prabhaah tejo mandala sankasha vaayu parnaambu bhakshakaah/ Agnihotrarataa nityamatitheeh naam cha puujakaah urthvabaahu niraalambaah sarve muni ganaastathaa/ Taan pashyan Dharma Raajopi sambhramena samanvitah Sutaashramam samaa saadya Sutam drishtvaa sa sambhramah/ Natvaacha bhaaryayaa saardhamanujaih samupaavishat/

King Dharmaraja who lost his Kingdom pursuant to the grave injustice perpetrated by his villainous cousins proceeded to a huge forest called 'Nainishaaranya' along with his wife and loyal brothers. The forest was infested with cruel animals, birds of varied colours and squeaks and awe inspiring trees and creepers – at once frightening and yet magnificent. The dethroned King also discovered congregations of Brahmavaadi, tapasvis, hands raised and standing or 'Padmaasana' brahmanas performing 'agni kaaryas, tapasyaas' and Yoga. He then further proceeded to find the cynosure of Ashramas headed by Suta Maharshi and addressd him as follows.

Dharma uvaacha/ Suta Suta mahaa pragjna sarva shastra visharada/ Vayam cha bhaaryayaa saardham jnaatibhih paripeeditaah, swaraajyam sakalam chaiva putraaschhapahritaa hi nah/ Tava darshana maatrena sarvam dukkham vinaasitam, mamopari kripaam kritvaa Vratam bruuhi dayaanidhe/ Suta Maha Muni!

You have digested the essence of all Shastra Dharmas. Our cousin Kauravas had betrayed and did enomous injustice to us as a result of which we were evicted from our own kingdom thus proceeding perforce into the forest with wife and brothers. We have however got immense relief by your 'darshan' Do very kindly teach us with a way out to recover our lost kingdom especially by the instruction of performing aa appropriate 'Vrata' to regain our lost kingdom again.

Suta uvaacha/ Vratam sampatkaram Nruunaam sarva soukhya pravardhanam, shrunudhvam Pandavaah sarve vrataanaam uttamam vratam/ Rahasyam sarva paapagham putra poutraabhivardhanam Vratam Saamba Shivenaiva Skandasyod bhoditam puraa/ Kailaasa shikhare ramye, naanaa muni nishevite, mandaara vitapi praante naanaa mani vibhushite/ Hema simhaasaanaaseenam Shankaram loka shankaram, prapaccha Shanmukhastushuto lokaanugraha kaankshayaa/ Skanda uvaacha, kena vratena bhagavan soubhaagyamatulam bhavet, putra poutraan dhanam labdhvaa manujah sukhamedhate/ Tanmevada Mahadeva vrataanaamuttamam vratam, Ishvara uvaacha- Astichaatra mahaa bhaga Gananaadha prapujanam/ Sarva sampatkaram shreshthamaayuh kaamaardha siddhitam maase Bhadrapade shukla chaturdhyaaam vratamaacharet/

Skandakumara addressed Parama Shiva even as the latter along was his mother Parvati Devi- the Universal Parents- as the latter were amidst several Sages comfortably seated on a golden throne studded with most precious and proverbial nine gems; he requested that keeping in view 'loka kalyaana' or universal auspiciousness the latter be kindly advised as to what precisely the best possible 'Vrata' or a Penance with clean body and mind accompanied with devotion and 'indriya nigras' or control of body

mind. ‘ Which outstanding Vrata would readily bestow prosperity, long life and best progeny! Parama Shiva elaborated his reply.

Praatah snaatvaa shuchirbhutvaa nitya karma samaacharet swashaktyaa Gananaadhasya swarnaroupya – mathaakritim/ Athavaa mrinmayam kuryaadvittashathyam na kaarayet, swagrihasottare deshe mandapam kaarayettatam/ Tanmadhyeshtadalam padmamyavairvaa tandulenavaa, pratimaam tatra samsthaapya pujayitvaa prayatnah/ Sveta gandaakshataih pushpairdurvaangkura samanvitaih, dhupair deepascha naivedyairmodakairghritapaachitaih/ Eka vimshati samkhyani neerikela phalaanyapi, rambhaa jambu kapitthougaanikshukandhaashchaavatah/ Evamanya phalaapuupair naivedyam kaarayetsuta, nritta geetaischa vaadhyascha puraana pathanaadibhih/ Tarpayengana naadham cha vipraan daanena shrotriyaa, bandhubhih swajanaih saardham bhunjiyaa taila varjitam/ Evam yah kurute marto Gananaadha prasaadatah, sidhyanti sarvakaaryaani naatra kaaryaa vichaaranaa/ atah prabhaate vimale punah pujaam samaac haret, mounjeem krishnaajinam dandamupaveetam kamandulam/ Paridhaanam tathaa dadhyaadyathaa vibhavamuttamam, upaayanam tato dadyhaachaarya svashaktitah/ Anyebhyo dakshinaam dayaadbraahmanaan bhojayettatah, trailokyeshrutam chai tad vraataanaamuttamottamam anyaischa Deva munibhir gandharvaih kinnaraihstadhaa, cheernametad vratam sarvaih puraa kalpe Shadaanana/ Iti putraaya Sharvena Shanmukhaayoditam puraa, evam kurushva Dharmagjna Gananaadha prapujanam/ Vijayaste bhavennityam satyam satyam vadaam - yaham, etad vratam harischaapi damayanti puraakarot/



Ganesha Vrata to overcome ‘Vighnas’ to humans-and celestial beings alike is scheduled on Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi on which day the Performers are required to get ready with clean body and heart, get ready with an idol made of gold or silver or atleast by earthen cakes, place it towards the northern direction of the house, decorate the idol suitably and place it in the middle of a eight leafed diagram filled up with well spread out rice flour and commence the shodashopa -chaara puja of avaahana-praana pritishtha-pushpaadi puja along with dhupa-deepa-naivedya of bakshya- bhojya-lehya- choshya- phala-paaneeyas and various other services like ‘gaana-natya-purana pathanaas’ and finally bhोजनाadi services of the ‘prasadaas’ to bandhu-aapta jana- bhojanas and ‘satkaaras’ especially to the learned brahmanas; a follow up with a similar puja next morning by way of ‘punah puja’ too is scheduled. This is the broad framework of the Ganesha Puja which has outstanding fall out benefits and is applicacable human beings irrespective of Varnas Brahmana-

Kshatriya-Vaishya-and even lower castes too; besides Deva-Daanava-Yaksha-Kinnara- Gandharva-Apsraraadis are no exceptions univeraslly.

Krishno Jaambavateemaagaad ratnamchaapi syamantakam, Damayasti Nalamchiva vratasyaasya prabhaavatah/ Shakrena pujitah purvam Vritrasura vadhe tathaa, Ramadevena tadvaccha Sitayaa maargane tathaa/ Bhageerathena tadvaccha gangaamaayatanaa puraa,Amritodpaadanaardhaaya tadhaa Devaasurairapi/ Kushthavyaadhiyutenaapi Saambenaaraadhitha puraa, evamuktastu Sutena saaujah Pandunandanah/ Pujayaa maasa Devasya putram Tripuraghaatinah, shatru sangham nihatyaaashu praaptavaan Raajya- mojasaa/ Pujayitvaa mahaabhagam Ganesha siddhidaayakam, siddhyanti sarvakaaryaani manasaa chintitaanyapi/ Tena khyaatim gatoloke naamnaa Siddhi Vinaayakah, Vidyaaarambhe puujitaschet Vidyaa laabho bhavedhravam/ Jayamcha Jayakaamascha putraadhee labhate sutaan, patikaamaac ha bhartaaram soubhagyam cha Suvaasinee/ Vidhavaa pujayitvaa tu vaidhavyam naapnuyaatkvachit, Brahmana khsatriyo vaishvah shudrovyaaapathaastryah/ Arbhakaschaapi bhaktyaa cha vratam kuryaad- yadhaavidhi, siddhyanti sarvaakaaryaani Gana naadha prasaadatah/ Putra poutraabhi vriddhim cha gajaadyaisvaryamaapnuyaat/

Lord Krishna performed Ganesha Vrata and Ganesha Deva blessed Krishna to secure both Satya Bhama and Jambavati as his consorts and Syamantaka Mani as a bonus. King Nala regained Damayanti again as Nala was cursed to turn into an ugly dwarf and out of shame left Damayanti for twelve years; they were reunited only on Nala devotedly executed Ganesha Vrata as the loving couple were reunited.

Lord Indra the Chief of Devas was able to kill Vritrasura after Ganesha was pleased with Indra by the latter's Vrata Puja. The most tenacious Bhagiradha was able to undergo several vicissitudes in bringing Ganga from Vaikuntha from the feet of Bhagavan Vishnu to Bhuloka only to wash off the ashes of Sagara Putras of his ancestors but only performing Ganesha Vrata. Lord Rama too observed Ganesha Vrata puja systematically before searching for Devi Sita in Lanka from the clutches of Ravana'sura. As Lord Krishna's own dear son Samba as the latter suffered from leprosy owing to Durvaasa Maharshi's curse, Krishna too observed Vinayaka Vrata with faith and diligence and as a result cured the deadly disease. Thus Itihasas stand proof of the outstanding advantage in performing Ganesha Vrata with faith and dedication. Be it that at the initiation of a child's preliminary education or aspiration to initiate a battle, or a desire to secure an ideal wedded life, especially of unwedded maidens, or a sumangali woman wishing for long and contented wedded life, or a widow seeking a never ever repeat of widowhood in the lives to come, or 'putra poutraabhivridhi' or happy line of progeny ahead seeking, the definite answer indeed is the performance of Ganesha Vrata with dedication.

The Vrata could be performed by persons- man woman-child- of 'Chaturvarnas' of any Society, clan or faith and that would ensure success in their lives ahead with contentment and fulfillment. The proceedings of the Vinayaka Vrata are vouchsafed vide Skanda Purana. Ganesha Vrata samaapti

Encounter of Bhargava and Ganesha, Face-Off by Parvati and Shiva-Krishna's identity

After exterminating Kartaveerya, Parashu Rama continued the killings of his hundred sons besides quite a few of the Kings who came to assist Kartaveerya; some five of the late King's sons ran for their lives. There after a highly elated Bhargava reached Narmada to take bath and proceeded to Kailass where Maha Deva and Devi Parvati stayed for thanks giving. He saw Nandeswara, Maha Kaala, Raktahsha, Virupaksha, Bhairava, Baana, Ruru, Veerabhadra, Chanda, Bhrigi, Ekaadasha Rudras, Vidyadharas, Bhuta-Preta-Piscachas, Yaksha, Brahma Raakshasa, Kimpurushas and Kartikeya on the left entrance and Ganesha on the right. Ganesha asked Rama to wait as Shiva and Parvati were alone and that he wanted to find their convenience to enter. Rama was restless and felt uncomfortable to have been stopped by a Boy

like Ganesha. There was an argument and Parashu Rama raised his axe which Ganesha disliked and lifted up Bhargava with his trunk and swirled him around when Rama saw Bhur- Bhuvar-Swar-Tapo-Urthwa-Mahar- Jana- Satya-Vaikuntha- Golokas and from there dropped Rama into Sapta Pataalaas and back to Kailasa again. This happened before all who assembled there and a highly fuming Bhargava shot his Parashu which partially broke Ganesha's tusk. As nearly half of his tusk fell down, Earth was shaken with spills of blood, Sapta Samudras witnessed reverberating sounds of upheaval, Earth got quaked and there was universal commotion. Devi Parvati who heard the uproar and insinuated Maha Deva that he treated Bhargava like his son and Bhargava gave a gift to Ganesha with a broken trunk! Shiva understood the taunt in the words of Parvati and her face off in the context and heartily remembered Krishna. As Krishna and Radha made their appearance, the entire family of Shiva, Parvati, Ganesha and Skanda greeted them; Bhargava too having greeted the former fell on the feet of Devi Parvati sheepishly and she did not respond. Shri Krishna sought to pacify saying: 'Bhavabhayahaarini! Bhargava Rama fell on your feet seeking your pardon for his indiscretion and rashness. He stated:

Shrunu Devi Mahaabhaago Vedoktam Vachanam mama, Yac chhutvaa harshitaan nunam havishyasi na samshayah, Vinaayakasto tanayo Mahatmaa Mahataam Mahaan/ Yah Kaamah Krodha Udvego Bhayam naavishatey kadaa, Veda Smriti Puraneshu Samhitaasu cha Bhamini/ Naamaanyasyopadishthaani Supunyaani Mahatmabhih, Yaani taani pravakshyaami nikhilaaghaharaanicha/ Pramathaanaam Ganaayecha naanaa rupaa mahabalaah, Tesaameeshastwayam Yashmaatganeshestena keertah/ Bhutaani cha Bhavishyaani Vartamaanaani yaanicha, Brahmaandaanyaakhilaan- yeva Yasmimllambodarah sa tu/ Yah sthiro devayogena cchinnam samyojitah punah, Gajasya shirasaa Devi tena porokto Gajaanah/ Chaturthihmuditaschandro darbhinaa shapta Aturah, Anena vidhruto bhaaley Bhaalachandrasthatah smrutah/ Shapta puraa Shaptahistu Munibhih Samkshayah gatah, Jaatavedaa deeptobhudynaasou Shurpa -karnakah/ Puraa Devaasurey yuddhey Pujito Divipadganaih, Vighnam nivaarayaamaasa Vighnanaashath smrutah/ Adyaayam Devi Raamena kuthaarena nipaatyacha, Dashanam Daivato Bhadreyhyekadantah krutomunaa/ Bhavishyatyaatha paryaaye Braahmano Haravallabhey Vakreebhavishyattundatwaadvakra tundah smruto Budhaaih/ Evam tavaasya putrasya santi naamaani Parvati, Smaranaatpaapa haarini Trikaalaanu- gataanyapi/

Devi! Bhavabhaya haarini! Do condone Bhargava who fell on your feet for his momentary fault. Indeed Ganesha your son is one who conquered Kaama (Desire) -Krodha (Anger)- Udvega (Neurosis) and Bhaya (Fear) and his names are highlighted in Vedas and Puranas as they were sin-destroyers; he is Pramatha Gana Natha, Ganesha, Lambodara as he keeps the past-present- future happenings of the Brahmada in his Udara or belly; he is Gajaavana since due to destiny his head was replaced by that of an Elephant; in the past the Chaturashi Chandra was cursed by Ganesha and Krishna got affected by the blame and thus Vinayaka secured the encomium of Bala Chandra; therefore Chandra's radiance was subject to growth and decadence. Similarly Sapta Rishis cursed Agni but Vinayaka re-kindled Agni again and thus got the name of Jaataveda . Ganesha got the name of Shurpa Karna as his flappy ears could winnow the grains from dirt and pebbles signifying the capacity to sift truth and falsehood. Vinayaka secured the name of Vighna Naayaka as he destroyed obstacles and difficulties at the time of Devaasura battles. Thus for each name of Ganesha there was an occurrence or background and from now on he would be called 'Vakratunda' or Crooked Trunk in future. Devi! Let me bestow to Ganesha the boons that in course of time, human beings should worship Ganesha first before Jataka and other Samskaaraas or Birth and Name Giving Ceremonies, Yatras, launch of Commercial Activities, or Vratas or before any Puja performance). Devi Radha further stated:

Prakritih Purushaschobhavyonyaaashraya vigrahov, Dwidhaa bhinnow prakaashetey Prapanchesmin yathaa tathaa/ Twam Chaahamaavayordevi bhedo naivaasti kaschana, Vishnstwamahamevaasmi Shivo dwiguna- taam gatah/ Shivasya Hridaye Vishnurbhavatyaa

rupamaasthitah, Mama Rupam Samaasthaaya Vishnoscha hridaye Shivah/ Isha Ramo Maha Bhaage Vaishnavah Shaivataam gatah, Ganeshoyam Shivah Saakshaat Vaishnavastam Samaasthitah/ Eaitayoraavayoh prabhavoschaapibhedo na drushyatey, Evamuktwa saa Radhaa krodey krutwaa Gajaananam/

Prakriti and Purusha are never disconnected and are mutually dependent. It might look that we are two distinct Entities but You and I are the same and we have no difference at all. The concept that I am Vishnu and You are Shiva is indeed absurd and both the Forms are just the same. Ganesha is the Vaishnava Entity called Shiva and Bhargava Rama is the Shaiva Entity named Vishnu. So saying Radha placed Ganesha on her lap and affectionately touched his chin and as soon as that the cuts on his cheeks dried up and Devi Parvati too lifted Bhargava and caressed his tresses. Rama Ganesha were together again and Krishna kept Skanda on his lap and there was thus a happy union of Shiva and Krishna!

As the task of thanks-giving to Maha Deva and Shri Krishna were accomplished splendidly, Parashu Rama returned home and narrated the entire story of his Tapasya and attaining the Bhakti of Maha Deva, his Tirtha Yatra and accomplishing the Maha Krishnaamrita Stotra, battle with Kaartaveerya and his killing, his encounter with Ganesha, Devi Parvati's subdued anger as Ganesha's trunk was hurt by his 'Kuthaara' and Radha-Krishna Darshana. Jamadagni Muni stated that the vicissitudes experienced by Rama must have been due to the sin of killing Kshatriyas and that Bhargava should atone it through Tapasya again for twelve years. But unfortunately, history repeated again and the five sons of Kartaveerya attacked Jamadagni once again and having killed him took away his head as a souvenir! Bhargava Rama's elder brothers performed 'Uttara Kriyas' (obsequies) to the deceased father. On his return from his twelve-year long penance for atonement as instructed by his father, Bhargava Rama faced a similar situation! This time his reaction was that of a filial duty rather than revenge and launched twenty one systematic attacks of Kartaveerya's sons and indeed of as many as twelve thousand Kshatriya Kings and their male progeny searched from the nooks and corners of Earth and wiped out the traces of that Vamsha. Then he and his brothers got dug up Pancha Sarovaras at Kurukshetra and filled them up with the blood oozing heads and mutilated bodies of the Kshatriya Vamsha and performed Pitru Tarpanas and Shraddhas as per Shastras and pleased the Pitras with Snaana-Daana-Mantra-Bhojana- Dakshinas to seek lasting redemption to Pitras to attain higher lokas. The famed Syaantaka Tirtha at Kurukshetra continued to be the Sacred Place for Pitru Karyas. Bhargava further proceeded to Gaya Kshetra to continue the Pitru Karyas at the illustrious Chandra Paada where again the Pitru Devatas receive and bless the 'Karthas' of their offerings till date at the above Tirthas irrespective of any caste or creed. Pinda Pradanas and Tarpanas performed at these Sacred Tirthas with faith and devotion are stated to bestow the best of one's on going life and in the unending series of lives ahead. Brahmanda Purana

Tulasi Devi was called Sati Vrinda. Her husband, who was named Jalandhara, was a very cruel daitya and used to harass the rishis and munis and destroy their sacrifices. Lord Vishnu therefore had to set about killing him, but due to the purity of his Jalandhara's wife, Sati Vrinda, and her devotion for her husband, he could not do so. So Vishnu took the form of Jalandhara and stole her virginity. Only after doing this was he able to rid the world of Jalandhara and restore peace and harmony. When Sati Vrinda discovered the trick Lord Vishnu had played on her, she cursed him to become a shaligram, an oval stone used in sadhana and worship, in his next incarnation. Vishnu then gave Sati Vrinda the boon that in her next birth she would incarnate as Tulasi, and be worshipped everywhere. That is why Tulasi is virtually married to Shaligram. It is against background that Tulasi Leaves are forbidden in Ganesha Puja. Though Tulsi is considered as very auspicious but due to involvement of curse it is prohibited to use tulsi leaves at the time of pooja. Once Lord Ganesha was engaged in deep meditation As Ganesha was doing pooja, there came Tulsi. The moment she saw Ganesha, she fell in love with him and requested him to take her as his wife. But Lord Ganesha had turned down the offer but on her continued pestering cursed her that

shewould marry a demon. After the curse Ganesha took pity on Tulasi and blessed her be Lord Vishnu's beloved; even tulsi leaves are placed into the mouth of a dying person! (Vishnu Purana).

Ganeshvara has a weakness for food, especially sweets. Once he ate all through a day and at early hours of night gathering the remaining sweets walked home slowly with a heavy stomach was walking back he stumbled and fell down as the sweets were scattered and his dress was torn. An embarrassed Lord Ganeshwara stood up and regained composure. Chandra Deva had witnessed the scene as the short statured- pot bellied-trunk faced Ganesha falling with heavy eating could hardly control into boisterous laughter. A boiled up Ganeshwara shouted at Chandra with terrible anger saying that without pitying my fall with sympathy as a responsible Deva had behaved as a loose moralled laughter of a mean human being. 'You are arrogant, unsympathetic, ill behaved and irresponsible presuming you are charming and blemishless! Here is my curse to you that henceforth you would disappear from the sky and never show your face again.' Indeed the curse was too harsh as the entire order of the Universal System would be upset! A totally shaken up Chandra begged of Ganesha's forgiveness of his blatant stupidity and arrogance! Ganesha the hallmark of forgiveness smiled yet might not be able to retrieve the curse but with a proviso lessened the heavy impact of the curse that the Moon would gradually reduce in his appearance and that there would be only one day when there would be no increase in the size of Moon yet on the subsequent days would keep increasing in size and finally glow on the fifteenth day in till full size. More over since Chandra laughed on the Chaturthi of Bhadrapada month and on that very day there would be Ganesha Puja, whoever would sight Moon would have some problems, but these problems would be solved if reminded of the story of Krishna and the 'Shyamantaka Mani'!

Krishna's 'apa-ninda': Lord Krishna's second wife was Devi Satyabhama-of the Amsa of Bhu Devi- the daughter of Satrajit who secured a 'Shamantaka Mani' from Surya Deva which yielded eight maunds (38 kg per maund) of gold daily! Krishna found Prasena the brother of Satrajit wearing the jewel and desired to wear it but was declined. Later on he sported the 'Mani' when he was on a hunting spree and unfortunately got killed by a lion, which took fancy to the Mani and carried it. Jambavan the bear- and an active associate of Shri Rama of the earlier Yuga-killed the lion and took the 'Mani' to his cave. Shatrajit alleged that Krishna must have killed his brother to take away the Mani. Desirous of disproving the allegation, Krishna traced the deadbody of Prasena and following the footsteps of a lion and of a bear entered the cave of Jambavan and fought the latter for many days; finally Jambavan realized that Krishna was Rama himself, apologized to him and not only returned the Shamantika but also requested Krishna to accept his daughter Jambavati in wedding. Shatrajit was profusely apologetic for the baseless allegation that he made against Krishna and offered not only the Shamantaka Mani but also his daughter Satyabhama in wedding. The unnecessary blame that Krishna was subjected to was due to the fact that he did not worship Ganesha on Bhadrapada Shukla Paksha Chaturthi as it was strongly believed by the Public of all Varnas ought to observe the Vinayaka Vrata that day formally and reverentially! (Padma Purana)

Ganeshakhyaana – Ganesha kavacha and Mahatmya



Maharshi Narayana

recounted to Narada Muni the account of Ganesha commencing from his birth, the significant events that followed with impact on Universal welfare and his 'Mahatmya'. Maha Deva advised that Devi Parvati should perform a Sacred *Vrata Punyaka* in favour of Shri Hari which was like a 'Kalpa Vriksha' that fulfilled all kinds of desires including 'Uttama Putra Prapti'; this Vrata was the best like Ganga among Rivers, Shi Hari among Devatas, Shiva among the Vaishnavites, Brahmana among Chatur Varnas, Pushkara among Tirthas, Tulasi dala among leaves, Parijata among flowers, Ekadashi among Punya Tithis, Ravi Vara among the a week days, Margasirsha among the Maasas, Vasanta among Ritus, Mother among the Gurus, wife among the closest relative, Mango among the fruits, Pati among Priyajanans, son among the Bandhujanas, Priya bhashana among sweets, Puranas among Kavyaas, and so on. Bhagavan Shiva appointed Sanat Kumara as the Purohit of the Vrata along several Rishis to acquire Puja materials and initiated the proceedings of the year-long vrata on Magha Shukla Trayodashi with the objective of securing an extraordinary male child with Vishnu's 'Amsa'. Brahma and many important Devas arrived to attend the Vrata, besides innumerable Maharshis and Rishis like Kapila, Kratu, Vasishtha, Pulaha, Atri, Gauthma, Bhrigu and Markandeya. Dharma Putra Nara-Narayanans, Dikpalakas, Devatas, Yakshas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Vidyadharas and so on. Bhagavan Vishnu and Devi Lakshmi too arrived, to initiate

the Maha Vrata. Vishnu Deva addressed the illustrious gathering and blessed Devi Parvati for performing this unique Vrata which would grant her the benefit of thousand Rajasuya Yagnas and Golokanath Shri Krishna himself would be born as partial 'Amsha' to the Shiva-Parvati pair. He further declared that the boy to be born would have over thousands of epithets like *Ganesh* the house hold word in Trilokas and as the Lord of Ganas; *Vighna nighna* as he would bless that no obstacles would be faced by the Performers of any deed the Worlds over; *Lambodara* since his Bhaktas would pamper and offer him food specialities that he liked and his stomach would be thus elongated; *Gajaanana* since an elephant face would be fixed on his shoulders soon; *Ekadanta* as he lost one of his tusks in an encounter with Parashurama. Lord Vishnu ordained that if Ganesh were not worshipped no puja would be ever successful anywhere in the Trilokas. As the Vrata was executed perfectly as per the prescribed 'Vidhana', the illustrious guests were treated in high esteem, appropriately gifted and respectfully provided unique 'Bhojanas'. Then the question of Dakshina was raised by the Purohit Sanat Kumara for successfully conducting the Vrata; he said that either Devi Parvati would part with the Tapsya that she had been putting in all through her life or give away her husband Parama Shiva. Devi Parvati argued that if her Vrata were to be fruitful by giving away either her Tapasya or her husband, then the vrata was not worth it, except that she would beget a son and secure Dharma! It was like performing puja to a tree by ignoring the interest of the Bhumi! A husband would be more worthy to a Pativrata than obtaining hundred sons! As Parvati was arguing like this, Vishnu offered the solution of giving away Shiva as Dakshina and got him back in exchange of cows which were of Vishnu Swarupa. Evenwhile Parvati was not satisfied the solution, Sanat Kumara performed 'Purnaahuti' of the Vrata and Maharshis recited the Swasti Mantras and the Sacred Vrata was concluded. But Parvati was none too happy about the deal suggested by Vishnu. However she offered one lakh cows in exchange of her husband, especially since Vedas underlined that the price of a cow was that of a husband. The problem was still not settled as Sanat Kumara said as to what would do with one lakh cows in place of an invaluable Shiva! Devi Parvati was non-plussed since neither she was able to secure the Vrata Phala by getting a son of Krishna Amsha as assured by Vishnu, nor could even get the 'darshan' of Shri Krishna. Just as her mind was disturbed on these lines, there descended a big blaze from the high skies like thousand Suryas and all the dignitary Deities present looked up in awe and dread; Vishnu, Brahma, Mahadeva, Dharma, Saraswati, Savitri, Lakshmi, Himalaya and various Devatas. Devi Parvati was overcome at the vision of an all encompassing radiance and broke into grateful tears that after all the Vrata that she performed was indeed triumphant and that the Mula Purusha had acknowledged its success! She was literally dazed and prayed to that huge illumination and Paramatma obliged her with his physical vision for a while eventually the vision disappeared. Sanat Kumara released Shiva, gifts were given away liberally to all the invitees, excellent food was served, music and dance were displayed and Shiva and Parvati knew no bounds of joy. Meanwhile a hungry Brahmana appeared on the scene and after taking food counselled the couple about the Parama Tatwa of the Unparalleled, Ever lasting Truth and about the Most Compassionate Supreme Power and he too disappeared suddenly. Even as Parvati was utterly bewildered in that stage of heightened astonishment and shock with incidents happening so swiftly that she was in unbelievable dreams, an 'Akash Vani' was heard loudly and clearly that Shiva and Parvati should immediately reach their Mandir: The Celestial Voice said: 'Jaganmaataa! Please be composed and see for your self your own son in your Chamber; he is indeed the Goloka Pati Paratpara Shri Krishna Him self! The boy is the sweet fruit of the Magnificent Tree of the Punyaka Vrata that you had so successfully accomplished! It is that Parama Teja which the highest yogis dream of visioning; it is that Adi Purusha whom Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are constantly absorbed in with Dhyana; and it is that Punya Rasi Swarupa whose very thought dispels all Vighnas of all Beings in Trilokas who is lying playfully in your bed chamber indeed!!' As soon as the Akashvani Devi Saraswati made the celestial announcement, the Shiva-Parvati couple made a swift dash into their Mandir, embraced the child by quick turns and gave 'Mangala Snaana'; even before the Snaana, all the Devatas, Dikpalakas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Maharshis got collected and instantly Vishnu, Brahma, Dharma and their spouses were anxiously waiting for the Darshan of the Sacred Child. Vishnu blessed the child with 'Deerghaayu'/ long life, Vignaan like that of Shiva, and 'Sarva Pujyata'/ Worship worthiness soon! Brahma said that the child's fame and Shakti be known all over at once. Maha Deva blessed his son that

like himself he should become a Daata (Philanthropist), Hari Bhakta, Buddhimaan, Vidyaavaan, Punyavaan, a Jitendriya and Shanta Murti. Dharma Deva blessed to be a Dharmika / the Form of Virtue, Sarvagjna/ the All- Knowing, Dayaalu / Kind hearted, and 'Shri Hari Samaana'/ equivalent to Shri Hari. Devi blessed him to be a resident of each and every home and be an ever charming and Powerful source of Strength to every body. Saraswati blessed him Dharana and Smarana Shakti /Memory Power, Vivechana Shakti / Thinking Power and Kavita Shakti (Power of Imagination). Veda Maata Savitri blessed that he should become a Veda Gnaani. Vasundhara (Bhu Devi) blessed Ganesha to be an emblem of Kshama (Forbearance), Sharana daata (Provider of Refuge), Ratna Sampanna (The Fund of Opulence), Vighna Rahita and Vighna naashaka (The destroyer of Obstacles). Parvati blessed Vinayaka to excel in his father's traits as Maha Yogi, Siddha, Siddha pradaata, Shubha karaka / Giver of Auspiciousness, Mritunjaya / the Conqueror of Death and 'Atyanta Nipuna' or the Embodiment of Skills. Those who read or hear about the 'Ganesha Janma Vrittanta' are blessed in several ways: the childless would get children, the poor gets rich, the wifeless gets wife, the diseased gets healthy, an unfortunate woman gets fortunate, a spoilt child gets disciplined, money lost gets recovered and an unhappy person finds himself extremely joyful.

Shani veekshana: Once Devi Parvati happened to meet Lord Shaneswara the Planet and the son of Surya Deva during the Festive days of Ganesha's birth celebrations and asked him to bless the child. Shani Deva declined politely as his looks falling on a newly-born (or for that matter on any person) would not be auspicious to the child, since he was cursed by the daughter of Gandharva King called Chitraratha, to whom she was engaged as decided by his father. Unfortunately, he encountered the woman when she was about to have her bathing after menses; she cursed Shaneswara that whom soever he would see a person even by mistake would have his head cut! Parvati did not take what Shani Deva said seriously and prevailed on him to bless Ganesha. Although Shani Deva glanced the child through the corners of his eyes, Ganesha's head dropped abruptly and Devi Parvati fainted at this sudden tragedy. The dropped head of the boy reached Goloka and Vishnu realised as to what had happened. He jumped on Garuda and flew towards North to locate any 'Praani' sleeping northward and found a bull elephant; its head was sliced with his Sudarshana Chakra and fixed the elephant head in place of the head of Ganesha and blessed the child foremost after the fixation of the elephant head and returned to Kailasa. After getting better from her faint, she found Vishnu who had completed the task of fixation of the elephant head. Meanwhile Maha Deva realised what all happened and so did Brahma, Dharma and Devatas. Vishnu blessed Ganesha and gifted his Kaustubha Mani; Brahma gifted a precious kireeta /headgear, Dharma a Ratnaabharana and all other Devatas followed suit. As Devi Parvati became extremely upset with Shaneswara, she cursed him to become 'Angaheen' but Devas requested Devi Parvati to reconsider her lightening the curse especially she took Shaneswara's warning lightly, she reduced the severity of her curse by revising it that Shaneswara might turn lame for ever.

Kashyapa Munis curse to Shiva: Besides the Shani Vikshana, there was another reason for Ganesha's Elephant head. Once Surya Deva attacked two demon brothers Mali and Sumali and the ever-kind Maha Deva saved the brothers by throwing his Trishul on Surya and the latter became motionless with a serious injury on his chest and his chariot fell down too. The whole Universe came to stand still, the highly frightened Devas were stunned at the happening and the Universe was drowned in complete darkness. The highly grieved father of Surya Deva, the powerful Kashyapa Muni, was shattered and gave a curse to Maha Deva that just as his son's chest was broken open by the Trishul, Shiva's future son too would drop off as suddenly. The momentary anger of Shiva got cooled down and from his Yogic powers recovered Surya's normalcy. The demon brothers received their retribution at once as they became victims of dreaded diseases as their limbs were dried up and they lost their strength and shine. Brahma advised that since they annoyed Surya and contracted the incurable diseases, they had to worship Surya himself to please him. He taught the remorseful demons the method of worship to Surya, his Stuti and Kavacha and

regained their might and sheen. But Kashyapa Muni's curse as irretrievable and Ganesha's head had to be replaced.

Bhu Pradakshina by Karikeya vs. Matru-Pitru Pradakshina by Ganesha:

There were different 'Avatars' (incarnations) of Kartikeya and Ganesha in various Kalpas. In 'Sveta Varaha Kalpa', the two anecdotes about Kartikeya and Ganesha- the Illustrious Sons of Siva and Parvati- were narrated by Lord Brahma to His Son Devarshi Narada. As both the Brothers came of marriageable age, the question arose as to who should be married first and the parents decided that whosoever could circumambulate the entire Universe first would get the choice. Kartikeya flew off by His carrier- a peacock- without even waiting for a minute, Ganesha who applied His mind and recalled what Vedas stated that a single 'Pradakshina' of one's parents would yield the fruit of 'Bhu pradakshina'. Even half way through the full circle of the World, Sage Narada intercepted Kartikeya and conveyed that Ganesha's wedding with Siddhi and Riddhi was in progress already (they were blessed with two sons Kshema and Labha eventually). Kartikeya felt cheated by the parents and retired at Krouncha Mountain and the parents brought Him back by cajoling the dear son who felt hurt! It is on this day of Kartika Pournami, Kartikeya's 'darshan' is considered as most auspicious.

Another Story of Ganesha's birth is indeed popular. When Nandi was asked to bar entry into the Interior Place of Parvati as She was taking bath, Nandi no doubt prevented but Bhagavan still entered and She was not amused. She decided to create an idol of a boy which was infused with life and empowered Him to challenge anybody with the necessary powers. The boy followed the instruction and did not allow entry even to Siva. The Pramadha ganas were asked to teach a lesson to the boy by Siva but they were defeated in no time. Siva Himself decided to force His entry but to no avail. Finally, an irritated Bhagavan snapped the boy's head and Parvati became furious and Her angry manifestations surprised Siva Himself. She insisted that the boy be brought to life forth with. Siva suggested locating anybody sleeping in the northern direction and the Sivaganas were able to trace only an elephant. The severed head of the boy was fixed with that of the elephant and He was revived. The assembly of Deities who first fought with the boy and witnessed the entire scene earlier decided that any function in the World ought to be commenced with worship of Ganesha foremost as He is the Lord of preventing impediments and of providing success. Ganesha's worship on Bhadrapada Sukla Chaturdhi is a must all over Bharatadesa as one is dreaded of becoming a victim of undeserving blames since Moon God received a curse from Ganesha that whoever saw the Moon on the particular Chaturdhi night without worshipping Him would become a sure target!

Ganesha suppresses Kubera's arrogance: By His very name, Vinayaka is a Jnaana Swarupa or the Symbol of Wisdom and Knowledge. Yet, any third party seeking to exhibit their own supremacy – especially by Devas, He could hardly stomach the false superiority. Lord Kubera the King of Yakshas once hosted a lavish feast and among other dignitaries called on Shiva and Parvati; the noblest couple responded that due to their preoccupations, they might have to regret but would ably deputise Lord Ganesha. At the scheduled time and day, all the Devas arrived and Ganesha too. Kubera was so happy as streams of Deva ganas were arriving at Alkapuri and felt proud of himself. Ganesha too arrived and showed off condescendingly remarking to other dignitaries nearby that Parvati Parameshvaras were busy and deputed Vinayaka instead. Then the dinner commenced with great pomp, while the invitees had thoroughly enjoyed the nine course dinner. Meanwhile however Ganesha whose appetite was unending made thousands of servers kept their beelines gasping and tottering the supply lines. As the three crore strong Deva Ganas were bemused witnessing the failure of lakhs of servers and cooks alike, Kubera was put to shame and ran to Parameshvara couple to Kailasha with a fistful of cooked rice by way of his offering to the illustrious Universal Parents of Maha Deva and Maha Devi. Ganesha with dissatisfied appetite too was already present there with His parents. The benign parents found a gasping Kubera

running from Alkapuri to Kailasa cowed down and demoralised while prostrating Shiva- Parvati- and above all to Ganesha too.

Veda Vyasa's negligence of Ganesha

Pursuant to Veda Vibhajana as Rig-Yajus- Saama- Adharvva Vedas, Veda Vyasa's mental sharpness got suddenly dipped and his efforts to take up the challenge of scripting eighteen Maha Puranas to show the beacon light on the values of Dharma and Nyaaya or Virtue and Justice to the posterity. He approached Brahma Deva who stated that Vyasa did not invoke Ganesha for blessings and hence the problem.

Paraashara Muni's son Veda Vyasa who is a top expert surfiest with the awareness of the past, present and future and tatva jnaani, who had the reputation of Veda Vibhajana, got self opined of his talent was puffed up in course of time and prepared himself to script Puranas. But he ignored performing salutations to Ganesha Deva and invoking him with veneration. Despite the knowledge of nitya- naimittika-kaamya kaaryas and shrouta- smaartha karmaanushtaana, he tended to forget the Primacy of Ganesha Smarana and as though he got subdued by oushadhi-mantra prayoga was disabled to maintain his mental and intellectual balance. While wondering as to what was wrong with himself approached Lord Brahma for a solution , prostrated before him and asked with humility and dedication

The Essence of Bharat Yatra Smriti published by the website of kamakoti. org. is quoted as follows: 'It is stated that Yatris be advised that after visiting the famed Temple of Badari Narayana, they should also visit the Tapta Kunda or the Agni Tirtha right nearby the famed Pancha Shilas viz. Garuda Shila, Narada Shila, Markandeya Shila, Narasimha Shila and Varaahi Shila. From Tapta Kunda where Yatris enjoy a refreshing bath in hot water of about 45 degree heat and then reach the most renowned **Brahma Kapala** a fairly large platform signifying Lord Brahma's skull of one of his heads relieved by Lord Shiva as he was annoyed with Brahma as the latter got attracted to the beauty of his own creation Saraswati fit to be his own daughter. It is at this Kapala Vimochana Tirtha where Brahma performed severe Tapasya for atonement of his sin that yatris profer Pitru Shraddhas. From Brahma Kunda as Ganga flows and Alaknanda takes a turn from the mountains alongside Brahma Kapala. Then there are Atri-Anasuya Tirtha, Indrapada Tirtha, Mata Mandir, Nara Narayana Parvata, Chakra Tirtha, Satpatha and so on. From Satpatha upward the mountainous terrain is extremely difficult to ascend and once one could do so would find a circular shaped Soma Tirtha might be visible but probably as a sheet of ice and its vicinity one might find if fortunate the Nara Narayana Mountain. On way from Satpatha to Badarinath occurs Alaknanda's another bank and Vasudhara which is about five miles from Badarinath is the Sangam Place of Sarastati leads to Keshava Prayag and Manaagram where Veda Vyas cave is accessible inside which Vyas scripted Eighteen Maha Puranas; a few meters away is situated Ganesh Guha /cave. *The Legendary background states that while Veda Vyasa was mentally scripting the Puranas, Ganesha agreed to write with his trunk on Taala Patras on the mutual agreement that Vyasa should pronounce in a non stop flow while Ganesha should write down in a non stop manner too simultaneously with no slips or interruptions on either side!*

Ganesha's wedding

Some devotees of Ganesha presume that He was a bachelor but others feel that his life partners would have to match up with his own Maha Devi Swarupa's magnificence. But keeping in view of His presence with a peculiar physical features and as he continued to be a bachelor, he was angry and upset and even Deva ganas- let alone human beings, were troubled at the wedding ceremonies by sending groups to mice at the wedding functions and creating problems at the eateries and wedding party residents. Groups of Devas appealed to Brahma Deva and the latter had to seek a solution. Brahma performed Ganesha Puja: To enable the Puja, Brahma manifested my his mind borne 'upacharikas' or helpers with the consent of Ganesha Himself viz. Siddhi and Buddhi. They are extremely beautiful and graceful with arresting looks

and excellently ornamented. They are of divya gandha-divya vastras-divya maalaa dhaaris. They performed neeraajana , pushpaanjali, sahasra naama stotra and pradakshina. There after, Brahma prostrated to Ganesha with earnestness seeking blessings to himself as also crores of bhaktas like him. Pleased by the worship, Ganesha accepted Siddhi and Buddhi as His 'saha dharmacharinees' or Life Patners. Then Brahma initiated Srishti with the benign glances of Ganesha This was how, He had to create two 'kanyas'. According to Shiva Purana, both Ganesha and Skanda Kumara were desirous of Prajapati's daughters Siddhi and Buddhi and Ganesha had won and Siddhi begot Kshema or Prosperity / Shubha or auspiciousness and Laabha or Profit to Buddhi. In any case, whenever Ganesha is present, *siddhi* 'success' and *buddhi* 'wisdom' are not far behind. Ganesha's relationship with the Ashtasiddhis or the eight spiritual attainments obtained by the practice of yoga are the eight glorious powers are represented by a group of young women who surround Ganesha. In the Shakta worship of Ganesha, the Ashta Siddhis are addressed as eight goddesses. In Ganesha Purana, these personified Ashta Siddhis are used by Ganesha to attack demons viz. 'Devantakas' are known as Anima: to reduce one's body even to the size of an atom; Mahima or to expand body in sizes infinite; Garima; Laghima or becoming weightless; Prapti or possessing unrestricted access to any place in the world; Prakamyā or fulfillment of any wish ; Ishitva or possessing absolute Lordship and Vashitva or to subjugate all.

Most Famous Ganesha Temples

as dotted in the length and breath devoted to Hindu Dharma. The most sacrosanct and age old Ganesha Temples in Bharat are the following 21 Kshetras:

Moreshwara: Mayuresha Ganesha is stated to be of Ganapatya 'Mukhananda' Kshetra which is some 35 km from Pune in Maharashtra; *Prayaga* in Uttar Pradesh is 'Omkaara Ganapati' stated to have been installed in the Adi Kalpa of the Yore and worshipped ever thereafter; *Dundiraja Ganapati* at Kashi Mandir; At Kalamba village near Pune is *Chantamani Ganapati* stated to have worshipped by Lord Indra to alleviate the curse of Gautama Maharshi and is famed to reduce the extremely difficult hardships of the devotees with faith. *Adosha Ganapati* on Nagpur-Chhindwaa line at Saamner is famed as Shami Vighnesha Kshetra which was stated to have been worshipped by Vamana Avatara of Lord Vishnu to be able to suppress Bali Chakravarti and demanded three feet viz. Prithvi-Paatala-Antariksha Lokas. *Pali Ganapati* or Ballal Ganapati again in Maharashtra was stated to have worshipped by a Vaishya boy of Pali in Kulaba Dt. for salvation . *Mangala Ganapati* at Pariner on the banks of Narmada was the Kshetra where Mangal Graha was stated to have worshipped. *Phaala Chandra Ganesha* near Parbhani on the Kachiguda-Manmad- where Parbhani Jyotir Linga is also situated where Lord Chandra was stated to have worshipped nearby the Sacred Godavari River flows at a place called Ganga Masale. A place called Rakshasa Bhuvana on Kachiguda Manmad Railway Line again there is *Vigjnana Ganesha Khetra* where Lord Dattaatereya venerated. Very near to Pune Yevur, Lord Brahma himself was stated to have worshipped *Vighnanaashaka Ganesha* to ward off all hurdles and obstacles before launching his creation. The eleventh manifestation of the twenty one series of Pracheena Ganesha is at Siddhitek on Mumbai-Raichur Railway Line named *Siddhi Ganesha* who was worshipped by Lord Vishnu Himself before he launched offensive against the invincible Madhu Kaitabha Demons in the form of Hayagriva. This Siddhi Vinayaka of Siddhitek was also venerated by Maharshi Veda Vyasa before he launched the onerous task of dividing the Single Veda into the present Chatur Vedas. Lord Shiva himself adored the 'Tripura-dhwamsa' Ganesha as the twelfth in the current series of Prachina Ganapati Deva at Manipura Kshetra at Rajan gaon near Pune. at the launch of the battle with the Asura. The next significant Ganesha Kshetra is of *Vijaya Mangala Ganeshwara* at Vijayapura / Vijaya Mangala on Chennai- Mangalore Railway line as Ganesh Deva was manifested to destroy Anala-sura. At Kashypashrama yet unknown about his whereabouts, Kashyapa Maharshi was stated to have meditated at his Ashram and constantly worshipped for Loka Kshema. At Jalesha pura, Tripurasura too performed puja for victory. The whereabouts of these Kshetras were not known. At Lehyadri near Pune in Juwar Taluk, Devi Parvati worshipped Ganesha to be

born as her most popular son as *Putra Ganesha*. At Berol or Ailapur near Ellora near Aourangabad, right within the premises of Ghrishneshwar Jyotir Linga afore mentioned, Ganesha Murti was set up by Skanda Deva as *Lakshya Vinayaka*. At 'praacheena' Pravala Kshetra called *Padmalaya Tirtha*, on Mumbai- Bhusaval Line of Railways, Karta Veeryajuna venerated both Ganesha and Shesha Sarpa on the banks of Ugama Sarovara. At Naamalagao from Jalna to Beed road is the *Amalaakama Kshetra*, Lord Yama Dharma Raja was stated to have worshipped Ganesha to ward off the curse of his mother on the banks of *Sadbuddhiprada Tirtha*. The penultimate 'pracheena' Ganesh is at *Raja sadana Kshetra* where Sindurasura was killed by himself and taught *Ganesha Gita* to Varenya Raja and eversince became popular as 'Ganapati Rajur Kshetra'. Among the most illustrious Pradhana Ganapati Kshetras of the times immemorial, the twenty first and ever popular one is at *Shveta Vighneshwara Kshetra* at Kumbhakokam in Tamilnadu on the banks of the Sacred River Kaveri *Sudha Ganesha Murti* who was worshipped by Deva Danavas before the churning of Ksheera Sagara for the manifestation of Amrit!

Extensive presence of Ganesha elsewhere: It is not a possible task of counting country wide presence of Ganesha Mandirs as each and every village, township, city is replete with them all at countless street corners, for all the Hindus and of other faiths would not only venerate as a habit but many are even obsessed with His presence, since who indeed is such as to ignore the launch of any action seeking auspiciousness! All the same some of the very popular Ganesha Temples- quite apart from sub-temples in the main temples of Devas and Devis, are mentioned : *Andhra:* Hydereabad/ Secunderabad at Nampalli, Karvan Shahu, Vijay Nagar, Lalguda, Turkman gate, Station Road, Marepalli, Lalapet, and Mahindra Hills; Bhadrachalam, Draksharama, Kalahasti, Kani-pakkam; Rayadurg, Vijaywada-*Bihar* Sharif, Deoghar; Mandara Parvat; Raj Griha, Masai near Arra; Ramgarha, Ucchita- *Delhi* Siddha Buddhi Vinayaka, Sarojini Nagar, Vinyaka Mandir, Connaght Place-*Goa:* Khandole, Bandiwade- *Gujarat:* Bhadra Ganapati in Ahmedabad; Baroda Siddha nadha; Dushiraraj Ekadanta, Sarvarkar Ganapati; Dharangadhara Eka Danta; Girnar Mt. Revati Ganapati; Modhera, Navari, Samlaji; Somnatha Durga Kuta Ganapati; Baijnatha Ganapati;- *Karnataka:* Bangalore: Panchamukha, Jambu Ganapati at Malleswaram; Dodda Ganapati at Kempegouda; Gokarana; Hampi Vighnantaka; Kollur Pancha Mukha Ganapati-*Kashmir*, Srinagar: Near by, a rock at the rock bottom of Hariparbar worshipped as Ganapati Bhimaswamin; Ganesh Bal Swayambhu on Rivar Lidar and Ganesh ghati near Sharada shrine-*Kerala:* Shrimadnant Temple's Trigarsthapit Ganesha; Kochi's Royal Palace's Dasha Hasta Panchaloha Murti; Panangad Swayayambhu Murti; Calicut's Maha Ganapati; Guruvayur's Ganesha Temple; Maha Ganapati near Kasargod; Tiruvanantapura's Agrasala Ganapati' Pazhavangadi Ganapati and Mangala Vinayakar- *Madhya Pradesh's* Amarkantak Dwibhuja Siddhi Vinayaka; Indore's 4m tall Bada Ganesh; Omkareshwar's Pancha Mukha Ganesgha; Ujjain's Chintamani, Bade Ganesh and Nishkalankeshwar Ganesh; *Maharashtra's Ashta Vinayaka Temples:* *Mayureshwara at Moregaon; Siddhi Vinayaka at Sidditek; Ballala Vinayaka at Pali; Varada Vinayaka at Madha; Vighneshweera at Ojhar; Girija Mataa Temple at Lohyadri near Pune; Maha Ganapati at Ranjan gaon and Chitamani at Theur.* Besides, Maharashtra is flooded with Ganesha Temples such as Vakratunda at Aawas; Swami Vighnesha at Adosha near Nagpur; Ganesha and Hanuman as Protective devatas at Ahmednagar; Laksha Vinayaka at Berola; Mangala Murti at Chinchwad; Ganapatiphule the famed Swayambhu near seashore a in Ganesh form hill worthy of Parikrama; Dasha bhuja Lakshmi Ganesha at Hedvi in RatnagirinDt. Where Magh Ganesha Jayanti is performed on grand scale; Cave Ganesha at Junnar; Digambar Siddhi Ganesha at Kadav; Ekachakra Ganesha where Bhima of Pandavas worshipped before killing Bakasura; Chitrakuta Ganesha at Nanded; Shri Ganapati with trunk turned its right and is spiritually awaken as at Nagpur; Modakeshwara at Nasik; Dagdusetha Halwai Ganapati at Pune; Dashabhuja Vinayaka erected by Peshwas at Pune; Tishuna Ganapati at Pune; Ganapati Murti like Hanuman of 1.8 m with mace and slim stomach near Pune; Swayambhu Ganesha installed over a Shiva Linga on the banks of River Krishna ar Sangli; and Siddhi Vinaka Temples at at Prabha Devi and Jetha Kapad Market; besides at Borivilli, Dadar and Goregaon-*Odisha;* Maha Vinayakla Temples at Cuttak; Siddhi Vinayaka at Dashashvamedha Ghat on the banks of Vaitarani; Ganesh Cave at Khandagiri near Bhuvaneshwar and Ajanatha Ganesha in the Jagannadha Temple at Puri. *Tamil nadu:* There are as many as 120 Vinayaka Temples in Chennai alone,

literally at every important street! Examples are Ishta Siddhi Vinayagar Temple, Sundar Vinayagar at Gandhi Nagar, Ananda Vinayagar at Madhya Kailash in Adyar; Poiyya Varada Vinayagar at Alwar pet, Prasanna Vinayagar Temple, Flower Bazar, some 20 plus Vinayagar Temples in George Town alone, as many as 22 in Mylapore; Vara Shakti Vinayagar Temple at Nanganallur to name just a few. Eacchanari Vinayagar Temple with an ancient idol of Asia's biggest 6 ft height and 3 ft width is popular in Coimbatore. Pilliarpatti Karpaga Vinayagar of rock carved idol of 4th century antiquity is famed in Tirupatthur with its trunk hurled to the right side near Karaikudi. Kubhakonam is famed with Ucchipilliar, Sudha Ganesha, Adi Kampatta Vinayagar and other Temples; Tiruvalanchuzhi Koil etc. Madurai, besides at Mayapuram, Nagapattinam, Tiruchentankudi near Nalliyam with Vatapi Ganapati and so on. In *Uttara Pradesh*, Omkara Ganapati at Allhabad and Dhundi Raja at Varanasi are popular. Ashtabhuj Temple at Vadanagar on the banks of Hoogly is popular in *West Bengal*. In South East Asia Ganesha Temples are popular in Cambodia, Indonesia / Bali; Malyasia, Nepal, Singapore, Srilanka while in Australia especially Brisbane, Adelaide and Melbourne; Canada mainly at Brapton, Scarborough, Toronto in Ontario and Edmonton in Alberta; Manikka Vinayakar Aalayam in Paris; in Germany at Haltingen; Hamm and Heilbronn. In South Africa, Vinayaka Temples are popular at Durban, Ladysmith and Mt. Edgecombe. In London Shri Ganapati Temple is popular at Effra Rd; while in USA at Anchorage in Alaska, Flushing and Flushing Meadow in New York; Nashville in Tennessee; Phoenix in Arizona, Salt Lake City in Utah and Seattle in Washington.

Maha Ganesha Prayers

1. ***Shuklaambara dharam Devam shashivarnam chaturbhujam, prasanna vadanam dhyayet sarva vighnompashantaye/*** The singular Deva who dons spotless clothes with four arms and ever pleasant face viz. Ganesha be prayed to with devotion to root out all kinds of impediments and difficulties.
2. ***Agajaanana padmaarkam Gajaananamaharnisham aneka dantam bhaktaanaam eka dantam upaasmahe/*** May we worship Gajaanana the elephant faced God with a single tusk who is the darling boy of Devi Parvati and delight her face like Sun blooms the lotus and thus please the devotees like me ensuring our safety and fulfilment of desires.
3. ***Om Ganaanaamtva Ganapatigm havaamahe kavim kaveenaamupashravastamam, Jyeshtha raajam Brahmanaam Brahmanaspat aa nah shrunvaritibhih seeda saadanam/*** May we appeal to you the very First Deity, the Lord of Lords, the foremost Poet and Scriptor, the Supreme of Spritual Knowledge and wisdom. Be with us in our hearts to bless and purify all our deeds and duties.
4. ***Vakratunda mahaa kaaya koti Suryasamaprabha, nirvighnam kurumedeva sarva kaaryeshu sarvadaa/ Vakratunda mahaa kaaya koti Suryasamaprabha, nirvighnam kurumedeva sarva kaaryeshu sarvadaa/*** Maha Ganesha with colossal body and elephant head resplendent with the radiance of billion Suns! we beseech you with all humility and devotion to destroy all obstacles and ensure success in our deeds of virtue.
5. ***Gajaananam bhuta ganaadi sevitam kapittajambuphalasaarabhakshitam, Umaasutam shoka vinaasha kaaranam namaami Vighneshwara paada pankajam/*** Gajaanana Deva! You are ever followed by a huge band of 'bhuta ganas' as your followers as you enjoy your favorite fruits of kapittha and jamboo / wood and rose apples! As the elder son of Devi Uma, you have the reputation of being as 'Avighna Deva' as the destroyer of sorrows and impediments. May we prostrate at your lotus feet for success in our deeds.
6. ***Sumukhaschaika dantascha kapilo gaja karnikah, Lambodarascha vikato Vighna naasho Ganaadhi -pah/Dhumraketurganaadhyaksho phalachandro Gajaanana, dwaadashaitaani naamaani yah pathe- cchrunu yaadapi/ Vidyaaarambhe Vivaahecha praveshe nirgame tathaa, sangraame sankate chiva vighna- stasya na jaayate/*** Sumukha – Ekadanta -. Kapila – Gajakarnika -Lambodara -Vikata- Vighnanaasha – Ganaadhipa- Dhumraketu – Ganaadhyaksha – Phalachandra – Gajaanana– these are the twelve titles of Ganesha once recited, no obstacles could

ever be faced at the beginnings of Vidyaaramba- Vivaha- the Beginning or even Exit such as of successful battle field and any such of Acts of auspiciousness.

7. ***Eka dantam maha kaayam tapta kanchana sannibham, lambodaram vishaalaaksham, vande ham Gananaayakam/*** We bow with awe stricken admiration and veneration the single tusked, giant bodied, huge bellied, large eyed and of molten gold like complexion.
8. ***Eka dantaaya vidmahe vakra tundaaya dheemahe, tannno Danti prachodayaat/*** May the Glorious Ganesha with Single Tusk and Curved Trunk induce and inspire of all of us to lead us to the path of Dharma or Unfailing Righteousness.
9. ***Vinayako Vighnakaro Gajasyo Ganesha naamaacha Bhavasya Putrah, Yethecha Sarvam thava yanthu Bhruthya Vinayakayaah Kruura drishtah Prachandah-Vucchushma daanaadi vuvruddhva dehaha Karyeshu siddhim prati paadayanthah, Bhavaamsva Deveshu thadha makeshu kaaryashu chanteshu Mahanubhavat-Agreshu Pujam Labhatenyatha cha Vinashayishyastatha kaarya siddhim'*** (Vinayaka, Vighnakara, Gajavadana, Ganesha, Shankara Putra; all these cruel-eyed, harsh and angry Vinayaks will be your servants; those who are desirous of giving well earned materials as 'daanas' or alms be provided with Siddhis or boons. At Yajnas or various Propitious Tasks, all the devotees shall be provided the highest veneration, lest their tasks or worships be discounted').
10. ***Namaste Gajavaktraya Namaste Gananaayaka, Viyayaka Namastestu Namaste Chanda Vikrama-Namastestu tey Vighna kartha Namaste Sarpa Mekhala Namaste Rudra Vaktrotha Pralambajathara ashrita- Sarva Deva Namaskaaraad avighnam kuru Sarvada*** ('We greet you Gajavadana, Gananaayaka, Prachanda Vikrama, Vighna kartha, Naga bhushana, Rudra Mukha Utpanna, Lambodhara, Avighna Karaka, Kalyana Pradaata ; Sarva devas are greeting you, Kindly ensure that we enjoy Avighnam always)

Ganesha Panchakam

Mudaa karaatta modakam sadaa vimukti saadhakam, Kalaa dhara avatamsakam vilaasi loka-rakshakam/ Anaayakaika naayakam vinaashitebha daityakam, nataashubhaashu naashakam namaami Vinaayakam/

Ganesha! My prostrations to you as you have in your hands a 'Modaka' with which you seek to usher joy to your devotees; holding Chandra as your ornament to bring in contentment to them; as the supreme master providing protection and destroy evil energies within; and to surrendering devotees to gift all - round auspiciousness.

Natetara atibheekaram navodita Arkabhaasvaram, namatsuraari nirjaram nataadhika aapaduddharam, Suraishvaram nidheesvaram Gajeshvaram Ganeshwaram, Maheshvaram tamaashraye Paraatparam nirantaram/

To those who out of arrogance do not bow to Devas, Vinayaka! You deliver them a frightening form but to the God Fearing devotees of faith, you gift them with benign form of Ushah kaala Surya of glory; You are ever fresh and never tiring not to mention of decay, always greeted by Devas reverentially; ever instant to pull out from deep sorrows and difficulties; indeed you are Sureshvara, Nidhishvara, Gajeshvara and Ganeshvara or the Deva of Devas- Deva of Opulence-Deva with an Elephant Face and Deva of Devas and the Great God Maheshvara Himself; My earnest prostrations to you in total surrender.

Samastaloka Shankaram nirasta daitya kunjaram, daraitarodaram varam varebha vaktram aksharam, kripaakaram kshamaakaram mudaakaram yashaskaram manaskaram namaskrtaam namaskaromi bhaasvaram/

Maha Vinayaka! Our sincere salutations to you as the Flagship of Auspicious Power behind Trilokas and the Great Eliminator of all the external evils and the internal demoniac forces; Ganesha! Your huge body is truly representative of Prosperity, Boon-Giving benevolence and Imperishable Nature at once. You are Kripakara-Kshamakara-Mudakara-Yashaskara-Manaskara or He who showers grace-forgiveness-joy-glory and wisdom! Our heart felt dedications to you with earnestness.

***Akinchanaartimaarjanam chirantanokti bhaajanam Puraari poorvanandanam
Suraarigarvacharvanam/
Prapancha naasha bheeshanam Dhananjayaadi bhuushanam, Kapoladaana vaarananam bhaje
Puraana-Vaaranam/***

Maha Ganesha! You are the refuge of those who are tormented by sufferings, you are the elder brother of Kartikeya and the proud elder son of Tripurantaka as also the destroyer of the pride and arrogance of Daitya Danavas. You are the Head of the Illustrative Pancha Bhutas or the Five Elements and the Enjoyer of the juices of Itihasa Puranas which are the representation of the grace of virtue and nyaaya as your symbols ever active seeking to destroy the evil and ever protect positive energies of the Universe!

***Nitaanta kaanta danta kaantim antakaantaka aatmajam, Acintya ruupam Anta heenam Antaraaya-
krantanam/ Hrdantare niranantaram vasantameva Yoginaam tameka Dantameva tam vichintayaami
Santatam/***

My reverential greetings to Vighnesha! Your form of grace is of Ekadanta readily endearing your devotees; your glory is of the gracious son of Parama Shiva who has the potent break to Yama the Antaka Himself! Your elusive form is Inconceivable and Limitless, yet Cuts through the Obstacles of His Devotees. Gana Nayaka! You continually abide in the cave of the heart of the Yogis. Ekadanta! We are ever in our hearts as you indeed are unique!

***Mahaa Ganesha Panhca Ratnam aadarennam yonvaham, Prajapati prabhaatake hridi smaran
Ganeshvaram/ Arogataam adossataam susaahiteem suputrataam samaahitasayurasstta bhuutimabhy-
upaiti sochiraat/***

Who so ever recites the Unique Ganesha Pancharatnam with Devotion, utter at the early mornings contemplating on Sri Ganeshvara in their Hearts will get free from diseases and vices, will get auspicious Spouses and Good Sons, will get Long Life and the Powers soon.

Dwaadasha Jyotir linga of Mahadeva

Kedaro Himavatprushthe Daakinyaam Bhimasankarah /Vaaranaasyam cha Viswestriumbako Gautami thatey/ Saurashtreya Sommanathasva Srisaile Mallikarjunah / Ujjainyam Maha Kala Omkare cha Amaresvarah / Vaidyanathaaschitha bhumo Nagesho Daarukaananey / Sethu bandhe cha Ramesho Ghrusneswara Siva lingo/Avatara Dvadasakamethchhambhoh Paramatmana/

Nandiswara in Shiva Purana described the Most Celebrated Twelve Jyotirlingas of Maha Deva as follows: Kedarnath in Himalayas, Bhima Sankar in Dakinya, Visweswara in Varanasi, Triambaka on the banks of River Gautami, Somnatha in Saurashtra, Mallikarjuna in Sri Sailam, Maha Kala in Ujjain, Amareswara at Omkara, Vaidyanatha in Chitha Bhumi, Nageshwara at Daruka, Rameswara at Setu Bandhana, and Ghrishneswara.

Kedarnath in Uttaranchal, Bhima Shankar near Pune in Maharashtra, Visveswara in Varanasi, Somnath in Gujarat, Srisailam in Andhra Pradesh, Maha Kala in Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh, Omkara also in Madhya Pradesh, Vaidhyanath at Deogarh (Bihar), Nageshwara near Dwaraka in Gujarat, Rameswara in Tamilnadu, and Ghrishneswar near Ellora Caves in Aurangabad in Maharashtra.

There are some claims and counter claims of the geographical situation of some of the Jyotirlingas and one might possibly visit these Places too for Mukti!

Kedareshwara Jyotirlinga



Flanked by breath taking views of snow-clad peaks of Himalayas at a height of 3585 m from Sea level on the banks of River Mandakini, Kedareswar is the highest point where Maha Deva's presence is indeed felt in the manifestation of a famed Kedareswara Jyotir Linga as spread out as a fairly large expanse of black stone with an inclined elevation in the middle portion. Being inaccessible excepting by a difficult 14km trek by foot, or horse back or 'dolis' (palanquins) carried by two or four humans from Gaurikund, the Temple is open only during end April through November since residents, let alone pilgrims, have little access to the Mountain Top Temple during heavy snowfall in the intervening period. [A helicopter service is available now from Agastya Muni to Phata to reach Kedarnath]. The incarnations of Lord Vishnu in the form of two Sages Nara and Narayana meditated to Bhagavan Siva for several years and as the latter appeared and said that the incarnations of Vishnu Himself executed the penance without any basic reason excepting the welfare of humanity and thus agreed to manifest Himself as a Jyotir Linga at that hallowed place. Nara and Narayana are believed to have assumed their forms as hallowed mountains nearby. According to Puranas, Pandavas performed penance at the Temple and even in the opening Hall of the Temple at the entrance of the Sanctum, there are idols of Pandavas, Lord Krishna, Nandi and Veerabhadra. The belief is that Pandavas were chasing a Bull- Lord Siva Himself- and Bhima continued the chase to subdue the animal by holding its tail and the Pandavas attained Salvation finally from the Temple surroundings. It is also believed that Adi Shankara attained His Salvation from this Place and there is a 'Samadhi' of His behind the Temple. A distinct feature at the entrance gate of the Temple is the head of a man carved in a triangular stone as fascia and a similar triangular fascia is displayed in another Temple where Siva-Parvati wedding was fabled to have taken place. 'Udakmand' is mentioned in Siva Purana as a union of Seven Seas and its water is everfresh. In fact the Homa Kund of the Wedding is also visioned alive. On way to Kedar a number of Pigrimage Centers dot the route including Agastyamuni, Ukhimath, Phali-Pasalat Devi, Kalimath, and Triguni Narayan not far from Sonprayag. Vamana Purana explained the Origin of Kedara Kshetra vividly: Maha Deva performed deep and extensive tapasya on the top of Himalayas to refresh himself as also for Loka Kalyan or to ensure propitiousness to the entire Universe. During the Tapasya, there were fiery sparks from his 'jatajutas' or the thick layers of his hair and fell as huge and heavy boulders on Earth. From the boulders that fell, Kedara Tirtha got materialised and Rishis commenced to reside there and by the grace of Mahadeva a Shiva Linga got materialised. Yatris visited the Kshetra atleast for six months a year since it was difficult and unworthy of stay due to heavy snow and cold. Mahadeva blessed and granted fulfillment of devotees who observed fastings, snana, daana, homa, japa and pitru shraddhas and worship and their acts resulted in multiplier returns. In fact Devas came to worship the Shiva Linga after taking holy dips in Kalindi River (Yamuna) the daughter of Surya Deva. There after Maha Deva disappeared deep inside the depths of the River for a very long time and various Lokas and Samudras got disturbed and even Nakshatras dropped down from the Sky. Devas approached Maha Vishnu in Yoga Nidra on Ksheera Sagara. Meanwhile a Danava named Mura, who was the son of Kashyapa Muni and Danu the daughter of Daksha Prajapati, performed such unusual Tapasya to Brahma and secured a peculiar boon that whosoever would touch would die. Deva and all other Celestial Beings like Gandharva, Yakshaadis got rattled and Mura challenged Yama Dharma Raja who in turn directed him to challenge Jagannadha Chatur Murti resting on the Ocean of Milk. Danava Mura reached Jagannadha who asked Mura to enter into a duel. Mura never expected this defiant reply and got confused with Vishnu Maya and muttered: 'how, where and who'. Swiftly enough, Sudarshana Chakra sliced off the neck of Mura thus earning the encomium of Murari. It was at that juncture that Devas arrived at Ksheera Sagara stating that Maha Deva's whereabouts were unknown. Vishnu along Devas enquired of Devi Parvati, Ganesha, Kumara, Nandi and so on. Then he instructed Devas to observe Tapta Kruccha Vrata for three days each by consuming hot water, hot milk, hot ghee and on the last three days only Vahu bhakshana followed each day by Abhishakas to Maha Linga at KedaraTirtha with sixty five pitchers of curd, thirtytwo pitchers of ghee, sixteen full of pitchers of Pancha gavya, eight ghadas of honey, two hundred pichers of Kalindi's sacred water, one hundred eight pitchers of Gorochana, Kumkuma, chandana, butter as also puja of Mandara, Harashringara, Agarar, dhupa, naivedyas with the recitation of Rigvedantargata pada krama of Shata Rudreeya. At the end of such severe penances, Indra and Devas visioned a Unified Shiva-Vishnu Swarupa!! Having realised their folly

that Shiva and Vishnu were one and the same, Devas and even Brahma moved back to Kurukshetra and discovered Parama Shiva inside the water and hailed the Sthaanu Maha Deva and prostrated before him to withdraw from the Tapasya and bless them all and the Lokas!

Most of the Yatris do not invariably halt over at the intermediate places like Gangotri, Yamunotri, Deva Prayag, etc. and after Haridwar and Rishikesh proceed to Badari/Kedar. This is particularly so since there is a motorable road from Jyoshimutt. It is in respect of those Yatris intending to visit Badrinath that halt at Jyoshimutt while those going to Kedar first prefer halting at Rudra Prayag and trek up to Kedar generally. Of course the context differs in respect of trekking from Rishikesh to either of the destinations first. From Deva Prayag to Srinagar-different from Srinagar of Kashmir-there is a Kamaleshwar Maha Deva Mandir and the legend states that Devi Durga terminated a cruel Kolasura with her 'Dhanush'(Bow and arrow) and there still is a bow shaped Dhanush Tirtha; Lord Rama worshipped Devi Durga here with Sahasra Kamalas or thousand lotuses but Shankara hid the thousandth lotus but Rama replaced it with his right eye in the worship unhesitatingly! From Srinagar to Rudra Prayag just away by a mile is the famed and picturesque Sangam of Alaknanda and Mandakini Rivers. It is at this point, that the ways to Badari and Kedar depart from each other where Sage Narada is stated to have eulogised Parama Shiva with his prowess in 'Sangeeta' where a Shiva Mandir is in place. From Rudra Prayag to Kedarnath the path along Mandakini are the places named Chatouli / Suryaprayag or Surya Deva's meditation point- Agastya Muni Mandir-Chhota Narayana mandir with Rudraksha trees- Chandrapuri with Chandrashekhar-Durga Mandir-Bhiri with Bhim Mandir-Gupta Kashi where King Banasura the son of Bali Chakravarti of Vamanavata fame and Banasura's daughter Usha signified by Ushimutt nearby and Usha's husband was Aniruddha the son of Lord Krishna and Devi Rukmini. Gupta Kashi is also the abode of Ardha-Nareshwara Shiva seated on Nandi Deva and there is a flow of Kunda or pond nearby stated to be a mix of Ganga and Yamuna. In Nala, Lalitha Devi Mandir is popular and this Devi was worshipped by King Nala. Narayana koti just away by a mile from Nala on the banks of Saraswai River are Narayana Mandir and Kalimutt the latter as worshipped by Kalidas the Scriptor of Abhijnana Shakuntala, Kumara Sambhava, Megha sandesa and such immortal classics in Sanskrit. Maikhanda which is two miles from Narayana koti is known for Mahishasura Mardini Mandir. Rampur is the next halt three miles away to the trekkers good for night rest with woollen blankets etc even to carry and return basis to Kedarnath. Up the mountain top at Rampur by a four mile difficult terrain is situated the Mandir of Triyugi Narayana with his two consorts Bhu Devi and Lakshmi Devi; this is right along with River Saraswati with its four Maha Kundas called Brahma Kund, Rudra Kund, Vishnu Kund and Saraswati kund. It is stated that Achamana, Snaana, Marjana, Tarpana be performed at the respective Kundas. At the Triyugi Narayana there is an Akhanda Dhuni or Uninterrupted Fire Place where Homa Prakriyas are continuously performed and twigs are fed in the Agni Kunda. Despite the high significance of this Triguni Narayana Mandir which is very tiring to reach, yatris of normal stamina excuse themselves and avoid the peak height, and proceed further to Soma Prayag and reach *Gouri Kund*. The major halt before the eight and odd mile ascent up to Kedarnath is Gauri Kunda where there is a natural hot water Kund to refresh the yatris.

Kedarnath is one of the *Dwadasha Shiva Maha Linga* Abodes as these are as follows:

Kedaro Himavat prushthe Dakinyaam Bhimashankarah, Vaaranaasyaamcha Vishwesraambako Gautami tatey/ Saurashtre Somanathaswa Shrishaille Mallikarjunah, Ujjainaam Maha kaalaa Omkarecha Amareshwarah/ Vaidyanadhascha Bhumo Nagesho Daarukaananey, Setubandhe cha Ramesho Ghrushneshwara Shiva Lingovtara Dwadashashakametcchambo Paramatmana/

(Nandishwara described in Shiva Purana the Most Celebrated Twelve Jyotirlingas of Maha Deva as follows: Kadarnath in Himalayas (Uttaranchal), Bhima Shankar in Dakinya (Near Pune in Maharashtra), Vishwaswara in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Triambika on the banks of River Gautami (Maharashtra), Somanath (Saurashtra / Gujarat), Mallikarjuna in Srishaila, (Andhra Pradesh), Mahakala, Ujjain (Madhya

Pradesh), Amareshwara at Omkara (Madhya Pradesh), Vaidyanatha at Deogarah (Bihar)/ Parli (Maharashtra); Nagesha near Dwaraka (Gujarat) or Naganadh (Aoudhya, Maharashtra)/ Jageshwara near Almora, (Uttaraakhanda); Rameshwara (Tamilnadu) and Ghrishneshwara, Aurangabad, Maharashtra).

Kedar Linga is known from times immemorial: In Krita or Satya Yuga, Maharshi Upamanyu is stated to have worshipped Kedara Linga and attained salvation; in Dwapara Yuga Pandavas are stated to have performed Tapasya. Bhagavan MahaDeva assumed the form of Mahisha or a Buffalo and confused Pancha Pandavas at the same time as they were engrossed in Tapasya at different locations of Kedar now reputed as Pancha Kedar by displaying different body parts of the Mahisha viz. at Tunganath displaying hands, Rudranath the face of Mahisha, Mada Maheshwara displaying naabhi or middle portion, and Kalpeshwar his 'jataajuta' or the coarse head hair; the Prishtha bhaga or the hind body part is stated to have displayed at Kedar nadha proper. One legendary account states that Bhima of Pandavas in the course of his Tapasya got disturbed by the appearance of the hind part of the Buffalo, chased it and tried to forcibly hold its tail but the ever potent Maha Deva eluded him and succumbed with severe injuries. Pashupati Nath Temple in Khatmandu in Nepal is stated to have displayed the Maha Mahisha's head portion. In Kedar there is no built up Murti swarupa as such but a raised and reclining dome basically a trikona mountain black stone is worshipped with 'Abhishekas' or oblations with Milk, flowers, fruits, honey, agarbattis or perfumed sticks and so on. Kedar Mandir appears very oriental and typically mountainous with imposing locale surrounded by places like Bhrigupantha (Maghna ganga), Ksheera ganga called Chora thadi thaal, Vasuki thaal, Gugukund, Bhairava Shila. The Mandir displays Pancha Pandava Murtis, Bhima cave and Bhimashila. The half broken exit gate is fabled as the Sacred Gate from which Adi Shankara baled out and flew up to Kailasa. Beautiful white stone life size idols of Shankaraacharya addressing his disciples in the rear portion hall of the Kedar Mandir is in place. Apart from the Murtis of Pandavas, those of Usha and Aniruddha, Lord Krishna, Shiva Parvati and so on too. Around the Mandir in a Parikrama are noticed Amrita Kund, Ishana Kund, Hamsa kund, Retasa Kund, and such other Tirthas.

Most unfortunate havoc of torrential rains, floods, mountain quakes caused thousands of Pilgrims to perish from all over Bharata Desha recently. Indian Air Force deserves kudos for their endless helicopter sorties and saved countless Yatris and so did yeoman service by various Defence Forces and their Wings to have extended the trekkers. Happily the entire Bharat stood up as one to help the survivors as per one's own resources and sincere assistance. May Bhagavan Shankara who assumed a spurt of momentary fury for whatever was his own reason but essentially of the nature of interminable mercifulness, take the victims in his own fold and bless them as Kailasa Vaasis!

Right on the expanse of Himalayas are *Nanda Devi and Maha Mrityunjaya* in the Gadhwal region. Mountain Nanda Devi's top is the world's highest Mount Everest named Gouri Shankar. Yatras are conducted to Gaurishankar every twelve years and enterprising men and woman do join the yatra coinciding Bhadrapada Sukla Saptami. On way are Nandakesari, Purna, Triveni Deval, Nandaapeeth etc. The Legend states that Bhagavati Nanda Devi uprooted several Asuras and purified herself by bathing in Rupkunda. Maha Mrityunjaya of Gadwal region again which is of some fifteen miles hike from Karna – ganga suffered a massive earth quake in the remote past at the time Adi Shankaraacharya in mid 18th century and a Shivaratri Festival has been celebrated there ever-since.

Bhimashankar Jyotirling



Located some 110 km from Pune in Maharashtra State in the Ghat region of Sahyadri Hills near the head of Bhima River which merges with Krishna River too, the fifth Jyotirlinga Bhima Shankar is the appearance Maha Siva who exterminated Demon Bhima, son of Kumbhakarna (Ravan's brother). Demon Bhima on knowing from his mother Kartaki wanted to avenge the death of his father by Lord Rama, who was Maha Vishnu's incarnation and performed penance to Lord Brahma to receive boons to conquer even mighty opponents. He defeated Indra and Devas and what provoked Lord Siva most was the tormenting of a great Siva Bhakta King Kamarupeshwara insisting that the latter should pray to himself rather than Siva Linga. As the Demon was about to destroy the Sivalinga by his sword, Lord Siva appeared and destroyed the Demon and His mighty anger caused sweat which flowed as River Bhima. The Jyotirlinga thus manifested is a powerful representation of 'Ardhanariswara' in the Temple provides proof of instant fulfillment of all desires thus attracting thousands of devotees, especially on all Mondays and definitely on Sivaratri festivals. As in certain other cases like at Ujjain, the Swayambhu Jyotirlinga is set at a level lower than the normal Ground; also there is a speciality here that there is a constant flow of water from the Linga! The Bhima Shankar Temple is also associated with the killing of Demon brothers Tripurasuras along with Devi Parvati in Her manifestation as Kamalaja whose temple is also nearby the main Temple. Devi Kamalaja was worshipped by Brahma and hence She was called so. Sakini and Dakini were among those whose contribution was significant in the battle against Tripurasuras and their worship too is performed at the Temple. 'Mokshakund Tirtha', the Holy Waterbody adjacent the Bhimashankar Temple is associated with Sage Kausika. [Maratha Rulers especially Nana Phadnavis who built the Temple 'Sikhara' and Sivaji who made donations to its maintenance were intensely associated with the progress of this illustrious Temple].

While the above version of the location of Bhimashankar is convincing, Siva Purana which is relevant in the context of the current source states in Rudra Samhita: 'Dakininam Bhimashankara' while outlining the broad references of the Dwadasa Jyotirlingas; more clearly the Koti Rudra Samhita states:

Bhimashankara sanjnaastu Shashtha Shambho Maha Prabho/ Avataro Maha leeloBhimasuravinashanah/ Sudakshinabhida Bhaktam Kamarupeshwaram vrisham / yogaraaksha sadbhutam hatvasaram tha bhakta duhkhadam/Bhimashankara naamaa sa daakinyam samsthitaha swayam/ Jyotirlinga Siva rupena prarthesena Sankarah/

The sixth incarnation of Shambu and His 'Leela'(miracle) was the killing of Bhimasura and saving of King Sudakshina of Kamarup whose grateful prayers resulted in the manifestation of Siva at Dakini. The belief is the Bhimashankar Temple at Bhimapur Hill near **Guwahati** in Assam is the one where the King Sudakshina was saved and the Jyotirlinga was consecrated. Sivaratri is celebrated with pomp and Show in this Temple. Yet another version relates that the Temple of Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga at Kashipur near **Nainital** which was noted as a Dakini Country in the past is the one where the Jyotirlinga appeared. The legend in the Region was that Bhima of Pandava brothers married a Dakini woman named Hidimba and that Lord Siva appeared in that Place as a Swayambhu Jyotirlinga in that Temple area. In this Temple too, there are Idols of Bhairavanath and Devi Bhagavati as also a Temple Tank, called Sivaganga. Siva Ratri Jagarans and Worship are observed with religious fervour and devotion in this Temple too.

Varanasi Jyotirling



Famed as the Place of Devas that was founded by Bhagavan Siva Himself, some five thousand years ago, Kasi has a hoary legend with age-old reputation worldwide. Varun and Ganga and also Ganga and Assi, flowing in different directions, confluence in 'Varana-Assi' or Varanasi. Eulogised in several Scriptures like Rig Veda, Puranas and Epics, Varanasi was the Capital of Kasi King three thousand years ago and was reputed even by then as the capital of Religion, Education and Arts. The City covers some five kilometers of the Holy and Everflowing Ganges on its banks attracting lakhs of Pilgrims every year as the Ultimate Destination of Salvation for Hindus of all faiths and several other religions especially Buddhists and Jains. This is the Sacred Spot that Bhagavan Visveswara manifested as Avimukta Jyotir Linga in the

renowned Golden Visveswara Temple. It is stated that Lord Brahma executed such severe Tapasya (meditation) here so much that Maha Vishnu moved His head across fast in disbelief and the latter's ear ring fell at a place on the bank of the River and was since then named 'Manikarnika'. When Brahma was once chanting Vedas in praise of Siva in the form of the Jyoti Linga with the former's 'Panchamukhas' or Five Heads, some pronunciation slips rolled by and becoming furious of the chanting mistakes which changed the sense of the words, Lord Siva opened the third eye and burnt one of Brahma's heads which fell and found a permanent place in the Temple. Viswanath Temple is also considered as a 'Shakti Peetha' and it is believed that Devi Sati's ear-rings fell at the spot where Devi Visalakshi's shrine stands. Durga Temple, nick-named as Monkey Temple owing to large presence of monkeys, is considered as a shrine built originally by Durga Herself and during 'Navarathras' of Dussera festival comes fully alive and heavily crowded by devotees. Sankata Vimochana Hanuman Temple is frequently visited, especially on Tuesdays and Saturdays. The Shrine of Annapoorni is stated as the place where Devi Annapurna Herself distributed 'Anna' (Rice and so on) to devotees when there was a famine and Lord Siva Himself asked for 'Anna' in the disguise of a Beggar! There is a Neelakantha Temple with Deities of Vishnu, Avikuntha Vinayaka, Virupakshi Gauri, Saniswara and clusters of Five-some Lingas. A separate shrine dedicated to Kala Bhairava is present too in the courtyard. On the five km long banks of Ganga are situated hundreds of 'Ghats' or areas specified for many purposes like Sacrifices or Yagnas and Homams, some for bathing, or some even owned privately. For eg. 'Dasasvamedha' Ghat where Brahma performed Yagnas and even now Brahmanas perform Agni Sthomas, Homas to please Devas and so on; 'Manikarnika Ghat' where Brahma executing penance and Vishnu's earrings were lost at the disbelief of the former's strength to do it so seriously and shook His earrings fast and lost these while Devi Parvati pretended that Her earrings were lost so that Siva would stay back to search the lost earrings forever and thus tie Him up to Kasi and such other beliefs. Besides the Manikarnika Ghat, where dead bodies are brought for the favour of cremation to attain mukti (salvation), there is the Harischandra Ghat where the Illustrious King Harischandra was posted as a slave and cremated dead bodies with the same belief of attaining salvation. It is common knowledge that the King stood for truthfulness and endured the most severe tests of life of selling off his family and Son, became a life-long slave and finally attained Salvation.

There are many other Ghats like 'Man Mandir Ghat' near Someswara Linga Temple, Lalitha Ghat near by Pasupatinath Temple, Tulasi Ghat where Tulsidas scripted Ramayana and so on. Ranging from Kings and Queens, Foreign Plunderers, Great Saints like Adi Shankara, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda, Dayananda, Tulasidas and GuruNanak; Educationists, Artistes, Disbelievers, Non Hindu Followers, and even modern Pandas-anybody be named and be found- are all attracted to this Memorable City for their reasons of Salvation, Religion, worldly fulfilments, mischief or mere curiosity: but Maha Deva Blesses them all whatever may be the motive!

Trimbakeshwar Jyotirling



Located thirty kilometers away from Nasik in Maharashtra, the renowned Jyotirlinga of Lord Siva's materialization called Tryambakeswar attracts thousands of Pilgrims round the year providing boons of material and spiritual nature. The 'Punyakshetra' or the Hallowed Land is the source point of the Holy River Godavari basically owing to the Bhagiradh-like efforts of Sage Gautama and his highly pious wife Ahalya. By virtue of the Sage's penance and prayers, Lord Varuna was pleased to supply water and food grains in abundance but this boon turned out as a basis of jealousy of co-Sages and their spouses who created a cow to plunder the grains. Sage Gautama destroyed the cow, but as a result of a sin in killing the cow, the Sage-couple was banished to a hermitage on the mountain of Brahmagiri. Gautama Muni made relentless 'Tapasya' to Bhagavan Siva who endowed Gautama with the double desires of bringing River Ganga near his hermitage and also stay on its banks along with Bhagavati in the form of a Jyotirlinga. Lord Siva granted both the wishes that Ganga was brought near Gautama's hermitage as River Godavari and His manifestation as Tryambakeswara Jyotirlinga in the vicinity of the River Godavari / Gautami. In parallel to this, another legend related to the formation of a Jyotirlinga at Brahmagiri was the interface of Lords Brahma and Vishnu vis-à-vis an appearance of a Fire Column whose height and depth could not be ascertained by both of them; Brahma's cover-up story was that he found out the height of the Column and cited a Ketaki flower as a witness. Bhagavan Siva gave a curse to Brahma that there would not be worship of the former and Brahma gave a return curse that Lord Siva would be pushed underground. Hence the manifestation of Tryambakeswara under the Brahmagiri. The Jyotirlinga is of a small size in a depression on the floor with water oozing out constantly from the top. The force of waves of the River appears to be as per the intensity of the prayers of Sage Gautama according to the conviction of devotees in the Temple! Major Tirthas (Tanks) in the Temple are named Gangadwara representing the source of Ganga

(Godavari), Varaha Tirtha where Lord Vishnu had a bath in the River in Varaha Rupa (appearance as Boar) and Kushvartha Tirtha considered as the most significant as Sage Gauthama spread across Kusha or Darbha Grass while securing the waters of Ganga. There are also other Tirthas like Gangasagara, Bilva Tirtha, Indra Tirtha, Vishwanath Tirtha, Mukund Tirtha, Prayag Tirtha, Rama Kund, Lakshmana Kund and so on. Among the Shrines are Kedarnath, Rameshwar, Gauthameshwar, Kasi Viswanatha, Jareswar, Kanchaneswar, Tribhuneswar, Venkateshwar, and Hanuman. There are daily worships at the Main Temple thrice and the nightly 'arthies' are special. On Mondays there are special 'abhishekas' and 'arthies' as also 'Parikramas'. Kartika month worships are important, especially Kartika Purnima. Gangavatarana is celebrated in the month of Magha. Simhastha Parvati is held once in twelve years.

Somnath Jyotirling



Prajapati Daksha married away twenty seven of his daughters to Chandra Deva (Moon) but Chandra had great infatuation for Rohini to the neglect of other wives. Daksha warned Chandra about this but to avail. Finally Daksha cursed Chandra who appealed to Lord Brahma, and in turn asked to perform Tapasya to Bhagavan Siva. Chandra observed penance at Prabhasa on the banks of River Sarasvati. On His appearance Lord Siva sorted out the problem with a compromise that the first bright fortnight of a month (Sukla Paksha) Moon would wax and the 'Krishna Paksha' Moon would wane. He also blessed Moon to be near Him and Parvati always. Being a 'Sparsha' (Touch) Jyotirlinga-Somachandra- stated to be the first in the series, it would remove away all physical ailments particularly tuberculosis and leprosy and bathing in the Water body 'Chandra kund' washes off all the sins committed by human beings. Known as Prabhat Kshetra [near Veraval in Kathiawad District of Saurashtra in Gujarat], Lord Krishna is believed

to have performed his Leelas (Miracle Acts). [An ever burning light in a cave of the Temple is witnessed till date].

Shrishailam

Stated to be the Second in the Series of Jyotirlingas on the Sri Parvat (in Andhra Pradesh, some 230 Km. from Hyderabad) on the banks of River Krishna, Lord Siva's manifestation as Mallikarjuna along His Spouse Devi Bhramaramba is famed mythologically as the place of penance when Kartikeya was unhappy and felt cheated as Ganesha was wedded earlier despite the Agreement that whoever arrived first after full 'Bhu Pradakshina' (circumambulation of the World) would win, but Ganesha took advantage of a Provision of the Scriptures and performed a 'Pradakshina' of his parents and attained the advantage of the Pradakshina. Siva and Parvati visited the Krouncha Mountain to pacify Kartikeya but to no avail and thus moved over to the Mountain from Kailasa. As Vrishabha Deva –Siva Parvati's Carrier-did Tapasya to the Maha Devas, they appeared as Mallikarjuna and Bhramaramba at this Holy Spot. Lord Rama is said to have installed a Sahasralinga and Pandavas set up Pancha Pandava Lingas in the Temple surroundings. In a tiny hole inside the temple of Devi Bhramaramba, one could still hear the buzz of bees as the Devi assumed the form of bees all over Her Body and killed Mahishasura. Adi Shankara is reputed to have scripted his well known Work named 'Sivananda Lahari' at this Temple.

Mahakal Jyotirling Ujjain



The only 'Svayambhu' (Self-born) Jyotirlinga of Lord Siva in the form of Mahakal originating 'Mantra Shakti' (Power of Mantras) from within is indeed a unique specimen among all the Jyotir- Lingas on the banks of River Kshipra. This is the only Temple of various Jyotirlingas maintained on Tantrik Principles. While Mahakaleswar faces south as a Dakshina murthi, the Idols of Ganesh, Parvati, Kartikeya and Nandi are installed on West, North, East and South respectively. Shree Yantra is perched upside down at the Ceiling of Garbha Griha where the Main Linga is situated. The Temple has five levels including an underground and on the third level is installed the idol of Nagchandreswar open for public view only on Nag Panchami days. Experience at the time of very early morning 'Bhasmabhishekhas' or the spread of ash along with the loud chanting of Mantras of the Deity and with the thrilling and reverberating sounds of various percussion and bronze gong instruments takes one to devotional ecstasy. [It is stated that the Bhasmabhishekhas are performed by using the ashes of the first dead bodies of the previous day, sanctified by Mantras from the holy waters of River Kshipra. Ladies are not allowed to enter the Sanctum at the time of the Bhasmabhishekhas although they could witness the proceedings on Close Circuit TVs.]

The mythological background of the Temple was that there was a pious Brahmana well versed in Vedas and Scriptures had four learned sons named Devapriya, Priyamedha, Survita and Suvrata. A demon named Dushana lived nearby on a hill Ratnamala who could not tolerate the very concept of Vedas and its applications and particularly hated the Brahmana brothers. One day the Demon decided to destroy the brothers who were unfazed and continued their worship of Maha Siva. As the Demon and his cruel

followers were about to kill the brothers there was such a 'Hunkar' or roaring sound of Mahakal which itself took away the breath of the entire band of Danavas headed by Dushan instantly. The Brahmana brothers prayed to the Lord who appeared on the spot and implored His manifestation of 'Mahakala' to stay put for the greatest benefit of posterity and conducted daily worship from generation to generation. [Ujjain, the erstwhile Capital of Avanti, had considerable importance of India's ancient history ruled in the past by Mauryas and Guptas. Memories of King Vikramaditya still linger in the City till date. His Nine Gems of Poets especially Kalidasa who scripted famed Works like Megha Sandesam, Abhijnana Shakuntalam and so on, the other Gems being Dhanvantari, Kshapanaka, Amarasimha, Sankhu, Vetala Bhatta, Ghatakopara, Varahamihira and Vara Ruchi. Bhartruhari the step brother of King Vikramaditya became an ascetic and the Caves of Bhartruhari are on the tourist map of the City as many believe that a person entering the maze of the Caves seldom returns! Kalbharava Temple too is an interesting feature; as much of liquor poured as Naivedya (offerings) in the Deity's throat (in the form of a Dog), half of it is returned as 'Prasad'! Ujjain is one of the Seven 'Mukti Sthalas' (Salvation Places) of India, besides Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Benares, Kanchipuram and Dwarka.]

Omkareshwar Jyotirling



Situated in the banks of River Narmada on the Mandhata (Shivapuri) Island formed in the shape of OM in Sanskrit, Omkareshwar is one of the Jyotirlingas besides another Amareswar Linga. The Legend was that

Sage Narada visited Vindhya Raja and the latter bragged that Vindya was the highest and most powerful Mountain in the entire World. Narada replied that perhaps Meru was the greatest in terms of height and might. Vindhya Raja felt jealous and executed severe 'Tapasya' and pleased Maha Siva and requested that He should always be present in the Vindhya and establish a Linga of Bhagavan on the banks of Narmada near to Vindhya. Hence the Omkara Jyotirlinga there. Puffed by Siva's presence there, Vindhya Raja grew taller and taller to compete with Sumeru. This obstructed Sun God's routine circumambulation of the Universe and He had to return half way turning half of the Universe dark. Bhagavati asked Sage Agastya from Kasi to visit Vindhya Raja who out of veneration bent down to touch the feet of Agastya who asked Vindhya to be in that position till he returned and he never came again from the South!

Baidyanath Jyotirling (At Deogarh / Parli / Jaageshwar?)



The legendary background of Vaidyanath Jyotirlinga is related to Ravanaasura the Epic Villain of Ramayana. The King of Lanka carried out a relentless meditation to Bhagavan Siva at Kailash Mountain for mighty supremacy and indomitability in the Three Worlds. But as Siva was still not responsive, he moved out from Kailasa to Vrikshakandhaka towards south of Kailasa. He dug up a pit and worshipped a Sivalinga even by sacrificing his ten heads, one by one and at the end Lord Siva became visible and gave away boons of supremacy as also to let a Sivalinga to carry to his Kingdom on the condition that he should reach Lanka directly without even a single halt, lest the Linga if kept down would never be pulled

out! Devas became afraid that once Ravana turned unquestionable, there would be chaos in the Three Lokas and Dharma would be wiped out. Thus Devas prayed to Devi Parvati and Ganesha to somehow avert the risk of the Sivalinga to reach Lanka. Parvati appeared on way to Ravana in disguise and in collaboration with Varuna, tempted pure waters of major holy Rivers to quench Ravana's thirst. The King's stomach got bloated and he wished to stop over urgently for a relief and luckily for him, there was a lad whose assistance was sought to hold the Linga for a few moments without placing it on the Ground. By the time Ravana returned, the lad- Lord Ganesha-disappeared and the Linga was stuck to the Ground and no force applied by Ravana was a match to Bhagavan's decision. That was the Jyotirlinga of Vaidyanath who was a 'Vaidya' (Physician) and he helped to piece together the slashed heads of Ravana at the time of his sacrificing them one by one.

'Baidyanathdham' (Baba dham) at Deogarh (Jharkhand) is some seven km from the Jasidhi Junction on Howrah-Delhi main line. It is 220 km away from Patna. The Baidyanath Shrine attracts lakhs of pilgrims from all over a year normally, but they were in millions during the entire 'Shravan' month (July-August). Several of them carry Ganges water from Sultanganj to Deogarh- a distance of about hundred km-to perform 'Abhishekams' to the Jyotirlinga, and many saffron clad Sadhus carry the Ganges water by walk barefooted covering this distance! Pilgrimage to 'Babadham' is considered incomplete without visiting Basukinath Siva Temple some distance away. A well maintained Nandi Temple edging the Nandan Pahad (hill) faces a beautiful lake on one side and the Siva Temple on the other. Sivaganga is a pond very near the Main Temple, where Ravana desired to wash but since there was no water nearby, he used his fist and hit the Earth and a pond appeared. Other places of interest at Deogarh include Naulakha Mandir, Satsang Ashram of Radha Swami, Tapovan with many caves where Valmiki is said to have stayed for penance, Rikhia Ashram of Yoga, Hamira Jori where Ravana handed over the Holy Linga to Ganesh before his ablutions and Trikut Parvat with a Maha Deva Temple. Inside the huge complex of Babadham itself are situated some 22 Temples viz. Neelkantha and Parvati before Babadham and on either side a cluster of Shrines devoted to Sri Ram, Ananda Bhairavi, Ganga, Gauri Shankar, Tara, Maha Kali, Annapurna, Lakshmi Narayana, Surya Narayan, Bhavani, Sandhya, and so on.

There is a controversy about the location of Vaidyanatha Jyotirlinga at Parli in Maharashtra called Kantipur (Madhyarekha Vijayanti or Vijayanti), which is some 26 km from Ambejoga in the Beed District. One legend of this Temple often heard in the vicinity was that Amba Yogeshwari of Ambejoga wedded Maha Deva Vaidyanadha and the marriage party arrived late after the 'Muhurtha' (the precise time) for the wedding and Devi was waiting for long; She cursed the members of the Party to turn into stone statues. Another Story was that after the churning of Ocean for Amrit (nectar), fourteen gems emerged among which were Dhanvantari and Amrit which were hidden inside the Shivalinga, but as Demons tried to take them forcibly, huge flames came out and they had to retreat. Till date, devotees have strong faith that Amrit and Dhanvantari or disease killing medicinal flows emerge from the Abhisheka waters. Thus Lord Lingamurthi is called as Amritamurthi and Dhanvantari. In fact, all the devotees-irrespective of caste or creed-are allowed touching the Linga and performing Abhishekas by themselves. Daily Rudra Parayana Mantras are reverbrated in the entire Complex. This Sacred Temple is also believed to be the Place where Lord Vishnu as Mohini distributed Amrit to Devas, and hence is called Vijayanti. The other legend associated with the Temple is that of Ravana's carrying the Linga as described above. Incidentally, the surrounding mountains, forests and rivers are stated to abound medicinal sources. Over the last hundred years or so, considerable construction was made around the Swayambhu Linga by way of strong walls, Enclosures, 'Mahadwara' (the Main Gate) and several other Gates, a number of windows (one of which allows morning Sunrays inside one Enclosure by means of which Sun God is worshipped), minarets, lighting and various facilities to lakhs of Visitors. This Temple is a hallowed place particularly to Vira Shaiva Lingayats and devotees of Lord Harihara. There is a Harihara Teertha in the vicinity. Many festivals connected with Siva, Krishna and Bhagavati are celebrated with fervour; Mondays, Fridays, Ekadasis, Chaitra Padava, Dussehras, Tripura Pournami, the entire Kartika month,

Sivaratri, Sravana month and so on are observed with reverence. A Pond in the Area is associated with Markandeya's extraordinary devotion to embrace the Linga firmly defying Yamaraja's order of death and Bhagavan's subsequent appearance giving His blessing of immortality to the devotee. A Vateswara Temple reminds the devotees of a 'Vata' or Banyan Tree around which was the Story of Satyavan and Savitri over Yama's sanction of long- life to the couple.

Nageshwar Jyotirling

(Dwaraka/ Naganath/ Almora's Jageshwar) Nageswaraavataarasthu dasamahaparikerthitah /Aavirbhutah swabhaktartha dushtaanam danda sada / Hatva Daruka namaanam Rakshsah Dharmaghatakum / Swabhkata Vaishwanaam cha prarakshat Supriyabhidam /



Bhagavan's tenth manifestation (of Jyotirlinga) is popular in save His devotees; a Demon named Daruka who obstructed virtue was destroyed to save His devotee Vaishaya Supriya. While this was the Statement of Siva Purana's 'Koti Rudra Samhita' establishing that Nageswara Jyotirlinga was no doubt evident but there are atleast three claimants of Its Location viz. Nageswara Temple at Dwaraka, Gujarat; Naganath Temple at Aoudhya, Maharashta; and Jagasewara Temple at Almora, Uttarakhand. Happily, all are winners!The legend was that there a demon couple named Daruka and Daruki and the latter secured a grant from Devi Parvathi that wherever the Demoness went, the entire forest would accompany her. The Demons were spoiling Yagnas and all Spiritual tasks, there were protests from the harassed Brahmanas to Sage Ourva and the Sage cursed the demons and followers that they would all be destroyed on earth; the

Demons had thus no alternative excepting to move into the Sea. Daruki's boon from Parvati became ineffective since the forests were all submerged in the Sea. The Demons thus restricted only in the Sea and resorted to pirating the Ships moving in the Seas and one of extremely devoted Bhakta of Lord Siva named Supriya-a Vaiasya- was thrown into a prison on the ship. Bhakta Supriya who was a staunch devotee of Lord Shiva made sincere prayers and Bhagavan appeared, killed all the Demons and released the prisoners especially Supriya. Commemorating this joyous moment, the Lord blessed that a Swayambhu Nageswara Jyotirlinga be manifested on the Sea Coast as the memorable Nageswara Jyotirlinga.

Dwaraka Jyotirling

Some 18 km from Dwaraka, the Temple is situated in a large scrub landscape with a huge Siva idol beckoning outside the Holy Shrine with high Sikhara. The Sacred Linga of raw yellow stone is quite small of size (40cm high and 30cm dia) set underground of 3-4 steps in a spacious Hall of pillars; the Linga which could be touched by all Hindus. The Sivalinga is facing South and a Gomukham (Face of a Cow) is facing East. Sant Namdeva desired to sing a Bhajan while simultaneously Rudra Parayana (Recital of Rudra Hymns) was being performed and thus the Namdeo party was asked to go to the back of the Temple and when they did so, the Lingam turned towards where the Sant was singing and as this miracle happened the Brahmans begged the Sant for forgiveness. It is said that as the Temple closes, live snakes hover with their hoods open around the Sivalinga as though they were guarding the premises. Naganatha linga is believed to possess supreme Spiritual Powers; a Naga (serpent) is indicative of the nerves of human body. The 'Sushumna Nadi' or 'Naganatha' indicates the energy channel under the spine. The power of Kundalini which normally lies inactive in Mula Dhara Chakra or the Root Chakra at the bottom of the Vertebral Column is also known as 'Naganatha'. The snake-like Kundalini Shakti is akin to the brilliance of Soul (Lord Siva) Himself. Thus the Jyotirlinga is the symbol of Spiritual Radiance. Also the Temple of Dwarakadhish dedicated to Lord Krishna is quite popular in Dwaraka; it is some five hundreds old, remodelled and renovated from time to time. It is granite-built beautiful structure of seven stories of 51 m. height and is a tall land mark in the Township. Krishna and His entire clan shifted to Dwaraka from Mathura although the vestiges were submerged in the Arabian Sea.

Naganath Jyotirling

Situated at Audha in Prabhasa Kshetra [Prabhasa Railway Station on Manmadi-Nanded Line] Naganath Jyotirlinga was referred to as follows by Adi Shankaracharya: *Yame(South)Sadanga (old name of Audh) Vibhushitangam vividhaischa bhoga bhogai/ Satbhakti muktipradameesa mekam /Sri Naganatham saranam prapadye /* The legend of Aunda Naganatha Temple is that during 'Aranya Vasa' (Forest life of twelve years) by Pandavas pursuant to their defeat in a Game of Dice with Kauravas lived in a hermitage and their cows taking water from a river nearby were automatically giving milk back into the same river and finding this miracle act, Bhima found that the middle part of the River was hot compared to the rest of water. Bhima with his mace broke the middle portion of the River seeking to find out as to how had this happened; there was blood gushing out and when dug up to the great surprise Pandavas discovered a Jyotirlinga full of radiance. The Story of Demons Daruka and Daruki as also of Supriya the great Devotee of Bhagavan was also ascribed to Nageswara Temple at Dwaraka in Gujarat was referred to Naganath Temple at Audh in Maharashtra also. The architectural beauty of the Audha Temple of Prabhasa is distinctive, as was built by Pandavas originally with heavy stones and spacious corridors and halls. The Court Hall is oval shaped supported by strong pillars and the Jyotirlinga of Naganatha Deva is in a Garbhagriha which is in a small internal area. While there is no Idol of Nandi before the Main Deity, there is a separate Shrine for him behind the Main Temple. On all the four sides of the Main Temple are separate shrines dedicated to Twelve Jyotirlingas, besides Vedavyasa linga, Bhadreswara, Nilakantheswara, Ganapati, Dattatreya, Murali Manohar, and Dasavataras- totalling 108 Shiva Temples

and 68 Shrines, interestingly including Mothers in law and Daughters in law! Also interestingly, there is a picturisation of a Scene depicting a sulking Devi Parvati and a pacifying Lord Siva! It is said that Aurangzeb ordered to plunder the Temple and swarms of bees drove away the soldiers.

Jagdeswar Jyotirling (Almora)

Till date, devotees pray to Bhagavan Siva as Bal Jagdeswar as connected to a legend of the Area. In Daruka Vana, there were 'Balakhilyas' a group of Sages of dwarf size performing severe penance for years. Bhagavan Siva sought to test the depth of the Dwarf Sages and appeared as a tall, hefty and handsome personality, a 'Digambara' or completely naked, covering His body with snakes. The house wives of the Area were so attracted to the Stranger that they were not only inquisitive but got hypnotised neglecting their house chores. The Sages got frustrated and approached Devas to save the confusion. When Devas meditated Lord Siva in desperation, He manifested as a Bal Jagdeswar, who has no Physique, Gunas (Characretistics), Tatvas, Sex, Age, Time, Distance, yet, He has all of these too! Thus materialized as a 'Swayambhu' (Self-born) Linga eversince! The Main Temple in the Complex is dedicated to Tarun Jagdeswar and the Dwarpalakas are Nandi and Skandi. The Sanctum is of two parts, the larger area being of Jagdeswara Jyotirlinga and the smaller area being of Devi Parvati. There is an 'Akhandya Jyoti' or Everlasting Lamp. The biggest Shrine in the Main Temple is dedicated to Mritunjaya or the Saviour of Death. The distinction of this Linga is that it has an opening of an Eye. Recitation of Mritunjaya Mantra would yield immediate reliefs of troubles, health problems, mental disturbance and Spiritual solace. The Mantra is from Sukla Yajur Veda: *Aum Trayambakam Yajamahe / Sugandhim Pushti Vardhanam / Urvarukamiva Bandhanaan / Mrityor Mokshiye Maamritaam* -We pray to Lord Siva whose eyes are the Sun, Moon and Fire. May He protect us from disease, poverty, and fear and bless us with prosperity, longevity and good health. Another important Shrine in the Complex is of Pushti Bhagavati. Outside the Complex are Vinayak Kshetra, Jhanker Saim Mahadev (who was meditated and instructed His Ganas to destroy the Demons who were disturbing His Tapasya), and Briddha Jagadeswar (in the Form of Old Jagadeswar).

Rameshwaram



The Temple town of Bhagavan Siva's emergence of the penultimate Jyotirlinga of Ramalingesa happens to be celebration point of Lord Rama's glorious victory over Ravana paying Rama's dutiful homage to Bhagavan. Having crossed 'Setu Bandhan' across the Sea on the triumphant return journey from Lanka en route Ayodhya, Lord Rama despatched Hanuman to visit Varanasi to pray Viswesvara and bring a replica of the Linga from Kasi for consecrating it on the Sea coast but since Hanuman could not return by the appointed auspicious time, Sita Devi improvised a Sand Linga and installed it formally amid Vedic Mantras. Hanuman was upset and wished that the Linga blessed at Kasi Viswanadha be substituted instead and tried hard to pull it out but the so called temporary Sand Linga was ever lasting, blessing millions of devotees ever since. The Kasilinga or Hanumanlinga too was installed nearby which too is worshipped by devotees. It would be appropriate therefore that worship to Rameswara or Rathnaswami be performed after the homage to the Kasilinga or Hanumanlinga. Spread over some 15 acres of land, the Temple could boast of rich architectural heritage of high Raja- Gopurams on the East (126 feet high) and the West side, massive walls, a huge Nandi (18 feet tall and 22 feet long) and a 4000 feet long Corridor with 4000 carved granite pillars on raised platforms on either side- perhaps the longest in the World. [It is gathered that in the initial stages, the Rameswara Jyotirlinga was kept in a thatched abode till the 12th Century but royal patronage of passing centuries of the Kings of Travancore, Ramanadha -puram, Nagercoil and Pudukkottai helped improve the Temple Complex.] There are some thirty six Teerthas (Water Springs) with considerable medicinal and mineral properties – twenty of them being in the Temple Complex itself- most of the devotees bathing bucketfulls in all the twenty two Wells dotted all over the surroundings and walking along into the Sanctum drenched and then only perform the worship to the Jyotirlinga in queues! Festivals at the Rameswara Temple are celebrated in 'Ani' Masa (June 15- July 15) signifying Lord Rama's victory worship to Bhagavan Siva and two 'Brahmotsavas' or Annual Principal Celebrations are observed in 'Adi' and 'Masi' months as per local customs. Six worships commence from 5 am each day and Special worships are on Fridays. [Among the experiences include a memorable journey approaching or leaving Rameswaram across the Ocean preferably by train or by a road journey over a high bridge and a commanding view of Area atop the Gandhamadan Hill where a Shrine and Rama's revered foot- prints are witnessed as also a Place in the vicinity of the Temple a heavy mineral-laden stone floating on water, apparently due to its high phosphatic content; the stone was a sample with which Setu bridge was constructed by Vanara Sena or Monkey Brigade!]

Grishneshwar Jyotirling



On a mountain called Devagiri, there were a pious Brahmana named Sudharma and his wife Sudeha but she was barren and had no child. Sudeha proposed that her younger sister, Ghushma or Kusuma who was a staunch devotee of Parameswara be wedded to Sudharma. Sudharma agreed and in course of time, they had a male child due to Lord Siva's blessings. Ghushma was in the habit of daily worship by creating Sivalingas of clay and immerse them after Puja and Abhisheka in a pond nearby. Sudeha got jealous of her younger sister as she was blessed with a son. One night Sudeha killed the child out of jealousy and threw away the child in the same pond where the Sivalingas were immersed by her. The latter no doubt wept over the tragedy but continued her daily worship of Siva none-the-less. The dead body of the child floated in the pond where Ghushma used to immerse the lingas and there was commotion in the family and indeed in the village. Ghushma still continued her prayers to Lord Shankara who finally stood before her and desired to kill Sudharma, but she requested not to do so out of her extreme kindness. Lord Siva brought back the child from death and also asked Ghushma for any boon and she requested Him to stay in pond and the Lord agreed to do so and hence the formation of Ghrishneswara as a Jyotirlinga. Alternative names of the Place are Ghushmeswar or Kusumeswar. This Temple is situated in the Village of Verul or Yelur where River Yala flows and is some 30 km from Aurangabad. [From Aurangabad, Ellora is 30 km, Ajanta is 106 km and Shirdi is 130 km.]

The Temple Complex is quite spacious (240 X 185 feet) enclosed by strong outer walls and the Garbhagriha (Sanctum) measuring 17 feet X 17 feet are the Jyotirlinga of Lord Ghrishneswara and Idol of Goddess Ghrishneswari; a Nandikeswara is facing the Deities in the Court Hall of the Sanctum. It is believed that long ago, the Patel of the Village discovered a treasure in a snake pit and the amount was spent on the basic construction of the original Temple and the Holkar Royal family renovated with

Dasavataras and various other carvings in red stone were added besides a lake named Sikharashingarapur. [Ellora and Ajanta caves which are World Heritage Sites are firmed up on the Tourist map of India].

Prasiddha Shiva Lingas

Following Twenty Four Shiva Lingas are reckoned as significant:

1) Pashupati Nath-Nepal 2) Sundare -shwar at Madurai 3) Kumbheshwar at Kumbhakonam 4) Brihadeeshwar at Tanjore 5) Pakshi Teertha at Chengalput 6) Maha Baleshwar near Pune 7) Amarnath Ice Linga at Jammu & Kashmir 8) Vaidhya nath at Kangra 9) Tarakeshwar at West Bengal; 10) Bhuvaneshwara at Odisha 11) Kangra Shiva at Kajuraho, 12) Eka Linga at Udaipur 13) Gourishankar at Jabbalpur 14) Harishwar near Manasarovara 15) Vyaasheswar near Varanasi 16) Madhameshwar at Kashi 17) Hatakeshwar at Vadnagaru 18) Mukta Parameshwar at Arunachala 19) Pratigjeshwar at Krouncha Mountain* 20) Kapaleshwar at Krouncha Mountain 21) Kumareshwar at Krouncha Mountain 22) Sarveshwara Linga near the 'Jaya stambha' or the Victory Pillar at Chittod of Rajasthan 23) Stambheshwar also near the Jaya Stambha and finally 24) Ajaya Amareshwara Shiva Linga on Mahendra Parvata in the Eastern Ghats of Odisha.

*Krouncha Giri is 10 km away from Sandur in Bellari District of Karnataka, where there is a Kumara Swami Temple Complex and near by the Swami Malay Forest Range full of Peacocks and serpents, with Devi Parvati and Ganesyha Idols too were installed by Chalukya Kings; but women are strictly forbidden to enterb the Concecrated Temple!

Upa Lingas



While describing The Upalingas at the beginning of *Koti Rudra Samhita*, Suta Muni explained the Upalinga which emerged from Someswara linga is Antakesh where Earth and Ocean converge. The Upalinga of Srisailam's Mallikarjuna is Rudreshwar and that of Ujjain's Mahakal is Dugdheswar. Kardameswar is the Upalinga of Omkareswar while Bhuteswar is that of Kedareshwar. Upalingas of Bheemashankar, Nageshwar, Rameshwar and Bhumeswar respectively. There are other significant Shivalingas like Kirtikaveshwar, Tilmandeswar, Bhukteswar, Pureswar, Siddha Nateswar, Shringeswar, Gopeswar, Rangeswar, Rameswar, Ganeswar, Sukreswar, Chandrasekhara, Kuntinatha and Andhakeswar. A few other Upalingas are mentioned herebelow:

Atrishwar Linga

Sage Atri and Sati Anasuya performed atonement of rigorous nature in a forest named Kamda at Chitrakuta mountain when they decided to save people from the grip of a prolonged drought for some fifty years. They did not take a morsel of food during the period of penance. Once Atri felt almost fainted because of thirst and Anasuya went in search of water; Devi Ganga appeared and offered water from a spring dug up by Anasuya into a pit which was taken by Anasuya in a 'kamandalu' for storing water and rushed it to quench Atri's thirst. It was this pit from where water sprang up and became the origin of River Mandakini. But Devi Ganga demanded the full 'Punya' (Virtue) of Anasuya in return and the latter sacrificed gladly to save the suffering people. Lord Siva was impressed as Atri conducted a Maha Yaga and appeared in the form of Atrishwar Linga recognising the sacrifices of the Atri-Anasuya Couple.

Mahabaleshwara Linga

The Holy Place Gokarna (Ear of the Cow) in Karnataka State is believed to have been formed as Earth's ear was squeezed soon after her Creation by Maha Deva Siva. Ganesa tricked Ravana to place down on Earth the 'Atmalinga' of Mahadeva which was secured by the latter after severe penance to the Lord. Once fixed on the Earth, it became impossible for Ravana to pull it out and in the process of pulling it forcefully by breaking it, three parts fell down and got scattered *mainly* at Gokarna and also Murudeswar, Dharieswar and Gunavanthe where too the Temples are venerated. Mahabal Linga's presence of a devotee at Gokarna, especially on the eighth or fourteenth day of 'Arudra Nakshatra' falling on a Monday destroys all sins and opens Gates of Kailasa after one's demise. It is believed that worship of Mahabal Siva on 'Magha Krishna Chaturdasi' is highly fruitful and devotees in large crowds are attracted to the Temple on this particular day. Obeisance by Puja and 'Abhisheka' by milk and Bilwa leaves at the Temple on that day is said to be a sure step towards Salvation.

Batukanath Linga

A Brahmana named Dadhichi was a relentless worshipper of Lord Siva everyday unflinching but had to entrust the worship to one of his sons Sudarshan for some time. Sudarshan too was performing the 'Pujas' dutifully. On a 'Sivarathri' which is the most sacred night for Bhagavan too, along with his entire family kept fast and performed the Pujas. But he did the sinful union with his wife that night and even without observing physical cleanliness continued the worship on that most Sacred night. Lord Siva was furious and there were frequent hurdles in the Pujas all through the Sivaratri. Sudarshan's father realised this most unfortunate happening. Sudarshan performed the most rigorous penance possible for years and Devi Parvathi asked the Lord to pardon, absolve the sin and liberate Sudarshan. Pleased by his sincere self-punishment, the Lord manifested Himself in Batu linga and directed the devotee to worship it. [It is no doubt unconfirmed but came to light that Batuknath Temple and linga of 1.2 meters height was worshipped at Tahab Village, district Pulwama some 32 km of Srinagar, Kashmir, nearby a 40 feet square spring called Vatuksar Nag, along with a Jagannath Bhirav Temple nearby-now under Muslim domination]. Unfortunately, it was gathered that the high linga which was worshipped in the years of yore, was pulled out and used by Muslim women of the villages around to pound grains to split from the husk!

Haatakeshwara Linga

This Linga is a manifestation of Purusha-Prakriti combine. A group of Sages were observing worship to a Sivalinga very religiously at a Siva Temple in Daruka forest and a few of them including their wives visited the forest interior to locate firewood, darbha, flowers, fruits and such other Puja material when they encountered a hefty person who was completely naked. When they questioned about his whereabouts, he did not reply. The Sages cursed the person that his phallus would fall on the ground. There was an earth quake and rumbling storm broken with loud thunders and lightning as this incident happened and such oppressive heat was produced like an inferno. The Sages ran to Lord Brahma out of fright and guilt and the latter confirmed that the Personality who gave the curse was Bhagavan Himself and no power in the Three Worlds could save them as also the very existence of the Universe was threatened. The only possible way out could be to meditate Devi Parvati and for sure she might ease the situation. The Sages prayed to Devi Parvati who manifested as a female part on the spot and the Haatkeswar Linga as well. Eversince then worship of Phallus as a manifestation of Bhagavan Siva came into vogue. At Naimisharanya (Uttar Pradesh) near Lucknow, there is a *Rishishwar Linga*, which is worshipped by Rishis; those who were alleged murderers or who actually committed murder but regretted having committed would be free from their troubles. At Mishra Tirtha, there is a *Dadhikeshwara Linga* which

was worshipped by Sage Dadhichi. At Devaprayaga on way to Kedareswar, *Laliteshwara Linga* is worshipped by devotees in the transit on either way up or down.

Pashupatinath

In Nayapalpur [Khatmandu, Nepal] the very famous *Pashupatinath Linga* attracts lakhs of devotees which has the distinction of being called a ‘Linga Sirsha’ and the Temple doors are four-sided thus enabling four separate queues of devotees simultaneously manned by four priests.

Not far from Pasupathinath Temple is *Mukti Linga* which is worshipped for mental peace and happiness.

Harishwara Linga

The formation of *Harishwar Linga* was a consequence of Lord Vishnu’s worship to Bhagavan Siva by thousand lotus flowers each of these by chanting the ‘Siva Sahasranamas’ or Thousand Names of Siva. During the Worship Siva was desirous of Vishnu’s concentration and stole one of the lotus flowers and there was a shortage of one flower in the count. Unnerved by the lapse, Lord Vishnu gave away one of His eyes in sacrifice and completed the worship.

Bhagavan Siva was thrilled and fully satisfied; He asked Vishnu for a boon and as desired, Lord Siva gifted a very powerful *Sudarshana chakra* which is put to great use often as a last resort to annihilate powerful Demons. Besides the Chakra, Bhagavan Siva was pleased to materialize Himself as Harishwar Linga for the benefit of generations to come.

Ashtottara Shata Shiva Kshetras

Following are hundred and eight Shaiva Kshetras and names of the respective names of Shiva Murtis:

1) Kaivalya Shaila: Shri Kantha; 2) Himalaya Parvata:Kedareshwara 3) Kashipura : Vishwanadha 4) Shrishaila: Mallikarjuna; 5) Prayaga: Nilakanthesha; 6) Gaya: Rudra; 7) Kaalanjar: Nilakantheshwara; 8) Draaksharama: Bhimeshwara; 9) Maayura/Mayavaram : Ambikeshwara; 10) Brahmavarta: Deva Linga; 11) Prabhasa: Shashi Bhushan; 12) Shwetahastipura: Vrishadhvaja; 13) Gokarna: Gokarneshwara; 14) Soma- nadha:Someshwara; 15) Shrirupa: Thyagaraja; 16) Veda: Vedapurishwara; 17) Bhimarama: Bhimeshwara 18) Manthana: Kaalikeshwara; 19) Madhura; Chokkanatha; 20) Manasa: Madhaveshwara; 21) Shri Vaanchaka: Champakeshwara 22) Panchavati: Vateshwara; 23) Gajaaranya: Vaidhya natha; 24) Tirthaa chala: Tirthakeshwara 25) Kumbhakona: Kumbheshwara; 26) Lepakshi: Paapanaashana: 27) Kanvapuri : Kanweshwara; 28) Madhya: Madhyaarjuna; 29) Hariharapura: Shankara Narayaneshwara; 30) Virinchipura: Margesha; 31) Panchanada: Girishwara; 32) Pampapuri: Virupaksha; 33) Somagiri: Mallikarjuna; 34) Tri- makuta: Agasteshwara; 35) Subrahmanya: Ahipeshwara; 36) Mahabala Parvata: Mahabaleshwara; 37) Dakshinaavarta: Ankeshwara as worshipped by Surya Deva directly 38) Vedaranya : Vedaranyeshwara; 39) Somapuri: Someshwara; 40) Ujjain: Rama Lingeshwara; 41) Kashmir: Vijayeshwara; 42) Maha Nandipura: Maha Nandeshwara; 43) Koti Tirtha: Koteshwara; 44) Vriddha Kshetra: Vriddhaachaleshwara; 45) Kukkud Parvata: Gangaadhareshwara; 46) Chamaraja nagara: Chamarajeshwara; 47) Nandi Parvata:Nandeshwara; 48) Badhirachala: Chandeshwara; 49) Gurapura: Nanjundeshwara; 50) Shata -shringa Parvata: Adhipeshwara; 51) Ghanaanada Parvata: Someshwara; 52)

Nallur; Nimalleshwara' 53) Needa naatha pura: Needa natheshwara; 54) Ekanta: Rama Lingeshwara; 55) Shri Naaga: Kunadale -shwara; 56) Sri Kanya : Tri Bhungeshwara; 57) Utsanga: Raghaveshwara; 58) Matsya Tirtha: Tirthesh -wara 59) Trikuta Parvat: Tandaveshwar; 60) Prasanna puri : Marga Sahaayeshwar; 61) Gandaki: Shiva naabha; 62) Shripati : Shripateshwar; 63) Dhamapuri: Dharma Linga; 64) Kanya kubja: Kalaadhara; 65) Vaanigrama: Virinjeshwar; 66) Nepala: Nakuleshwar' 67) Jagannaadha puri: Markandeshwar; 68) Narmada Tat: Swayambhu; 69) Dhamasthala : Manjunatha; 70) Tri Rupa: Vyaseshwara; 71) Swanavati: Kalingeswar; 72) Nirmal: Pannageshwar; 73) Pundarika: Jaiminishwar; 74) Ayodhya: Madhureshwar; 75) Siddhavati: Siddheshwar; 76) Shri Kurmaachala: Tripurantaka; 77) Manikundala: Manimuktaa –nadeshwara; 78) Vataatavi: Kritthivaashewara; 79) Triveni Tata: Sangameshwara; 80) Stanita Tirtha: Malleswara; 81) Indrakeela Parvata: Arjuneshwara; 82) Sheshachala Parvata: Kapileshwara; 83) Pushpagiri: Pushpagirishwara; 84) Chitrakuta: Bhuvneshwara; 85) Ujjain : Maha Kaaleshwara; 86) Jwala- mukhi: Shula tanka; 87) Mangali: Sangameshwara; 88) Tanjapuri: Brihadishwara; 89) Pushkar : Rameshwar; 90) Sri Lanka: Matseshwar; 91) Gandhamaadana: Kurmeshwar; 92) Vindhya Parvat: Varaaheshwar; 93) Ahobila: Nrisimha swarupa; 94) Kurukshetra :Vaamaneshwara; 95) Kapila Tirtha: Parashu Rama Tirtha; 96) Kurukshetra: Vaamaneshwar; 97) KapilaTirtha : Parashurameshwara; 98) Setu bandhana: Rameshwar; 99) Saketa: Balarameshwar; 100) 101) Vaaranaavata: Bouddheshwara 102) Tatwa Kshetra: Kalkeshwara; 103) Mahendrachala: Krishneshwar; 104) Mandapalli : Shaneshwara; 105) Nepal : Pashupati natha; 106) Tenkashi: Kashinatha; 107) Hampi- Virupaksha and 108) Vemulavaada: Nilalohita

Namakam Chamakam with Meanings

NAMAKA PAARAYANA:

Om Namō Bhagavetey Rudraaya/ Namastey Rudramanyava Utota Ishavey namah/ Namastey Astu Dhanvaney baahubhyaamutatey namah, Yaata Ishusshivatamaa Shivam babhoovatey dhanuh Shivaasharavyaaya tatoyaano Rudra Mridaya/ Yaatey Rudra Shivaa tanora ghoraa paapakaashini, tayaanastamavaashantamayaa Girishantaabhichaakasheeh, Yaamishum Girishanta hastey bibhirshya stavey/

Bhagavan Rudra! We are conscious of your fury and the power of your arrows, bow and the mighty hands. We are aware that your arrows and their pulsation against the Evil and feel secure and comfortable. The Resident of Kailasa! Your extremely tranquil demeanor and Placid assurance is an unending source of propitiousness and knowledge to us. Bhagavan of the mountains and bestower of Peace and contentment! Do kindly hold your arrows for punishing the wicked and uphold virtue but not to destroy the Universe.

Shivaam Giritrataamkuru maahigumseeh Purusham jagat/ Shivena vachasaatwaa Girishcchaa-vadaamasi/ Yathaanassarwamijjagadayakshmagum Sumanaa Aset/ Adhavyocha dadhivaktaa prathamō daiviyobhishak/ Aheegscha sarvaan janbhayanthsaarvaascha yaatu Dhaanyah/ Asou yastaamro Aruna Uta Babhrussumangalah/ Yechemaagum Rudraa Abhito dikshu/

Shiva the Original and Primary Purusha and the dweller of Mountains who is kept in the highest esteem by the Devas and all others! Do kindly favour and plead for me, my family, cattle and all the rest so that we all exist in Peace, Prosperity, Excellent Physical and Mental Health and all round auspiciousness. You are indeed the outstanding Physician as also the destroyer ; do very kindly not let us harm by visible and invisible antagonists. Like Surya Deva who is red in the early mornings and as day progresses gets gradually golden yellowish and beneficent, Rudra Deva! you too get angry intially but merciful and auspicious eventually when we approach you with veneration.

Shritassahasra shovai shaagum heda Eemahey/Asou yovasarpati Neela Greevo Vilohitah/ Utainam Gopaa Adrushannudahaaryah/ Utainam Vishwaa Bhutaanisadruhto Mridayaati nah/ Namō Astu Neela greevaaya Sahasraakshaaya meedhushey/ Athoye Asya Satvanoham tebhyyokarah namah/ Pramumcha dhanvanastwamubhayoraaraartni yorjyaam yaaschatohasta ishava// Paraataa bhagavovapa/ Avatatatyadhanu stwagum Sahasraaksha Shateshudhey/ Nisheeryashalyaanaam Mukhaa Shivonassumanaa Bhava/ Vijyam Dhanuh Kapardino vishalyo baanavaagum Uta/ Aneshaanasyeshava Aabhurasya nishangdhih/ Yaatey hetirmeedhushta hastey babhuvatey dhanuh/ Tayaasmaan Vishwatasstwama yakshmayaa paribruja/ Namastey Astwayudhaayanaa tataaya dhrushnavey/ Ubhaabhyaamuta tey namō Baahubhyaam tavdhanvaney/ Pari tey Dhanvano hetirasmaanrunaktu Vishwatah/ Athoya Ishudhistavaarey Asminnidhehitam/ Namastey astu Bhagavanvishveyshwaraaya Mahadevaaya Triambikaaya Tripuraantakaaya Trikalaagni Kaalaaya Rudraaya Neela kanthaaya Mrituyunjayaaya Sarveshwaraaya Sadaa Shivaaya Shriman Mahaa Devaaya namah/

May Neelakantha the blue throated One protect us even as he like Sun God upswings with pink complexion in early mornings when cowherds, water carriers and the rest of the world get active and enthused for the day in our chores with joy and contentment. Our prayers and greetings to you the Sahasraaksha or the Thousand Visioned Kapardini with matted hairs of head! Kindly relax from your angry stance and put back your arrows in your mighty arms; in fact, do place your bow and arrows put off

and may your sword be kept back into the sheath. Do accept our worship Bhagavan Vishweshwara, Maha Deva, Triambika, Tripurantaka, Trikaala, Kaalaagni, Rudra, Neela Kantha, Mrityunjaya, Sarveshwara, Sada Shiva and Shrimaan!)

*Namo Hiranya Baahavey Senaanye Dishaam cha Pataye Namō Namō Vrikshebhya Harikeshebhya
Pasunaam pataye Namō Namassinchiraaya twishematey Patheenaam pataye Namō Namō
Harikeshayopaveetiny Pushtaanaam Pataye Namō Namō Bhavasya heytai jagataam pataye Namō
Namō Rudraayaata taaviney Kshetraanaam Pataye Namō Namah/ Rohitaaya sthapataye
Vrikshaanaam Pataye namō nam Mantriney Vaanijaaya Kakshaanaam Pataye Namō Namō
Bhuvantaye Vaarivaskrutaayoushadheenaam Pataye Namō Nama Uccharghoshayaa krandayatey
Pateenaam Pataye Namah/*

Maha Rudra! You are the one with golden hands, the Commander-in-Chief of the Divine Forces, the Over Lord of the Universe. Our greetings to the trees with fresh green leaves tufted on your head-hair; to the 'Pashus' or the human-bovine-sky bound and underworld Beings who are too engaged in your worship; Your physique emits varied complexions of yellow, crimson, and red ; You are the rider of a bull; the All-Knowing Bhagavan whose vision penetrates every body and every thing; You are the Lord of mighty trees and insignificant plants and grass; You bestow food; You are the dark haired, the wearer of Yagnopaveeta; the grantor of health and strength; the unique Savior of the Worlds; the destroyer of tribulations; the recuer of Kshetras Sacred Places, Forests and Fam Lands; the Advisor to Advisors; the Lord of Traders and Entrepreneurs; the Supreme Controller of Army and Defence Forces; the Creator of Existence and the Universe and the Singular Physician; indeed You are the Outstanding Warrior who rumbles and cracks enemies away. At the same time,- being all pervading You do most certainly protect the desperate calls of your devotees and bless them with timely succor!

*Namassahamaanaaya nivyaadhina Aavyaadhineenaam Pataye Namō Namah Kakubhaaya
nishanginey steynaanaam Pataye Namō Namō nishangina Ishudhimatey Taskaraanaam Pataye Namō
Namō vanchatey Parivanchateystaayunaam Patayey Namō Namonicheravey Parichaarayaanaam
Pataye Namō Namasprukaa vibhyojighaam Sadbhyoumushtataam Pataye Namō NamaUshneeshaney
Giricharaaya kulungjaanaam Pataye Namō Namah/ Ishumbhoy Dhanvaa VibhaschavaoNamō Nama
Aatanwanebhyah Pratidhaaneybhyaschavo namō nama Aatanvotebhyah Pratidadhaaneybhyascha vo
Namō Nama Aaacchadbhyo visrujadbhyaschavo Nama Namosyadbhoy Vidyadbhruscha vo Namō
Namassabhabhyassabhaapatibhaschavo Namō Namō Ashwebhoyshwapatibhyascha vo namah/*

Tandava Murti Rudras! Your courage and intrepidity are so well recognised across the Worlds that even sudden spurts of enemies all around are faced by you with coolness and are not only subdued but extinguished for ever. Indeed You are the cynosure in the battle fields when you slit the throats of the most dreaded opponents by the least possible exertion even as you dance and revel in their termina -tions by the least possible exertion. Our intense admiration for you Tandava Murtis! As You wield your sword with a powerful hold and enjoy the dance of bliss, One could never witness such a scene of ecstasy and mesme rise us we feel that you indeed are the Supreme Thief of our hearts and souls! Our heart felt salutations to You the outstanding Robber of Senses! Indeed, Bhagavan is of the Swarupa of the playful Chief of bandits, forest hunters and thieves who are observant and ready to srike; such robbers move about night-long and carry swords; they also wear turbans to hide their identity and move about mountains and jungles. Rudra Deva! You are an expert to release arrows and hit exact targets! Bhagavan! We seek to prostrate before you as you recline and relax! Tandava Rudras! You are awake while asleep. You bear the personality of he who is on the run while standing still! Paramatma! You preside over conferences and peculiar occasions. You are like the horse that carries the destinies of various Beings.

*Nama Aavyaadhi neebhyo Vividhyanteebhyaschavo Nama Nama Uganaa bhyassrugumhatee bhyasvo
Nama Nama grisebhyogritsapati bhyaschavo Nama Nama Vraatebhyo Vraatapati bhyaschavo namo
namo Ganebhyo Ganapatibhyaschavo namo namo Virupebhyo Vishwarupescha vo namo namo
Mahadbhyah Kshullakebhyascha vo namo namo Rathibhyorathebhyascha vo namo namo
Rathebhyah/Rathapatibhyascha vo namo namassenaabhyassenaanibhhyascha vo namo namah
Khashatrubhya ssangraheetru bhyaschavo namo namastakhabhyo Rathakaarebhyascha vo namo
namah kulaalebhyah Karmarebhyachavo namo namah Pungushthebhyo nishaadebhyascha vo namo
nama Ishukrubbhyo dhanvakridbhavo namo namo Mrigayubhyasshwa nibhyaschavo namo namah/*

Bhagavan! You could perforate and penetrate any body and any material from any where. You have the ability to control and subdue all kinds of forces be they malevolent or benevolent like Ganapati and his army or the evil species of Vinaayakas and their outfits. You also manifest as the forces of avariciousness or generosity and their respective corps. You also assume the forms of countless races and their Chiefs; of Devas and their attendants; of several Forms and the Formless; the Illustrious and the nameless insignificant; the Charioteers, Chariots and the Personalities driven there on; the individuals enlisted in armies as also the Senapatis; as carpenters or chario makers; the clay and metal makers or artisans; as fishermen or chicken feeders; arrow and bow makers; hunters or wolf-deer- fox- grey-hounders as also their keepers!

*Nama Bhavaaya cha Rudraayacha Namassharvaaya cha Pashupataye cha Nama Neelagreevaya cha
Shitikanthaaya namah Kapardiney cha Vyuptakeshaaya cha Namssahasraakshaaya cha Shata
dhanvanecha Nama Girishaaya cha Shipivishataaya cha Nama Meedushthamaaya cheshumatey cha
Nama Hraswaayaa cha Vaamanaaya cha Nama Brihatey cha Varshipeeyasey cha Nama Vriddhaaya
cha Samvriddhaney cha/ Nama Agriyaaya cha Prathamaayacha Nama Aashavechaajiraacha Nama –
ssheeghriyaayacha Sheebhya cha Nama Voormyaaya chaavyasnaaya cha Nama srotasyaaya cha
Dweepyaaya cha/ Nama Jyeshtha cha Kanishthaaya cha Namh Purvajaaya chaaparajaayacha Nama
Madhyamaaya chaagalbhaaya cha Nama Jaghanyaaya cha Budhniyaaya cha Namassobhyaya- cha
Pratiparyaayacha Nama Yaamyaya cha Kshemyaya cha Nama Urvaryaayacha Khalyaaya cha
Namashlokyaya chaavasanyaaya cha Nama Vanyaaya cha Kakshaaya Cha Namasshravaaya cha
Pratisshravaaya cha/*

Bhagavan! You are Bhava the Originator and Rudra the Demolisher! You Create and also Destroy! Our prostrations to You as the Protector and Preserver all the Beings in the Universe kept in captivity. Neela Greeva! Your throat is blue but neck is white! Kapardini! You have matted hair and clean shaven; you have thousands of eyes and hundreds of bows; you are stated to reside in mountains but exist in the consciences of every Being; you shower benedictions as though they are rains! Some times you are like a ‘Vamana’ and as also as a Virat Purusha! You are magnificent, superb and glorious; You are adorable and ever expansive by litanies; He is all pervading and appears instantly. You are the most ancient and the Ageless and praised the highest as the Creator present far before Srishti of the Universe; You are in the high waves of Oceans as also quiet waters or in inundations or islands; Bhagavan! You are the Eldest and the Youngest too yet unborn! None had ever existed before You and would give birth after You too; You are the One existing as Madhyama or in the intermission of Creation and Pralaya the Great Extinction; the intervening time is non existent. None ever existed behind or under You. You are the Creator of Virtue and Evil yet a vibrant and dynamic ‘Samsara’. You are the One who manifested Yama the Symbol of Death –yet Preserved and Protected till One’s death. You are the eldest and the youngest; none existed before you and the totality got manifested only after you; You are also the Madhyama present in the intermission after Creation -the Great Extinction at Pralaya and Punah Srishti or the Creation again in the Cycle of Life. None existed before or behind you or underneath. You are the Generator of Virtue and Evil alike yet Life has always been vibrant and changing. You are the One caused Yama the God of Death yet preserved and protected albeit in the intervals of existence. We are grateful to you for the gifts of Nature

which again is generated and resuscitated from time to time; the prominent gifts include- Crops and Food, Farmlands and Trees; the climate and livable conditions; Sound and Echos; Senas or defence Forces, our safety to move about fast and freely and speedy chariots to carry the warriors to destroy enemies. Devadhi Deva! You don military clothing, helmets and kavachas or body- shields for our sake. Our gratitude to you who is aptly praised by Vedas for materialing such worthy soldiers for our shelter and well being.

Namo dundubhyaaya chaahananyaayananyaaya cha, Namohrusnavey cha paamrushya cha/ Namodootaaya cha prahitaaya cha Namonishanginey cheyudhudhiney cha, Namahsteekshneyshaveycha-ayudhinecha/ Namahswaayudhaaya cha Sudhanvaayacha, NamahSrutyayacha Pathyaayucha NamahKatyaaya cha neepyaaya cha/ NamahSoodyayacha Sarasyaaya cha, Namonadyaaya cha Vaishantaayacha/ NamahKupuaaya chaapatyaaya cha Namovarshaayachaavarshaaya cha/ Namomeghaaya cha Vidytyaya cha, NamahIdhriyaaya chaatapyaya cha Namovaatyaayacha reshmiyaayacha, Namovastavyaaya cha Vaastupataayecha/ NamahSomaayacha Rudraayacha, Namastaamraayachaarunaaya cha/ Namasshangaaya Pashupatayenamah cha, NamaUgraaya cha Bheemaacha cha/ Namogrey vadhaayacha doorey vadhaayacha, Namohantrey cha haneeyasecha/ Namovrikshebhyo Harikeshobhyo namastaraaya, Namoshambhavey cha mayo Bhaveycha/ NamahShankaraaya cha Shivataraaya cha, Namasteerthyaaya cha Koolyaaya cha/ NamahParyaaya chaavaaryaya cha, NamahPrataranaayachottaranaaya cha/ NamaAataryayachalaadyayacha/ Namahsshapyaya che phenyaya cha, Namahsikatyaya cha Pravahaaya cha/

Our prayers to you Maha Deva! For our sake again, You take the Form of War Drum and and club; You would never show your back in battles and is highly calculative of war schemes; some times you assume the role of mediator [like Lord Krishna mediating between Pandavas and Kauravas] when Wars are ahead; You sport a sword and arrows when wars become inevitable as at the demolition of Tripuraasuras; then you are fully armed with most potent weapons. Bhagavan! You are present every where- by high ways to the narrowest lanes as also thin water to huge sarovaras, streams or water falls from high altitudes, swampy places or sludges, or fountains and wells; or Jeena Nadis or ever flowing Rivers like Ganga, or rain waters in the absence of rains.Rudra Deva! You assume the Forms of clouds and lightning or rains mixed with Sunshine in the Sharad Ritu /Autumn Season or Varsha/ Rainy season or rains cloud bursts or hail storms. Our greetings to Soma Deva/ Rudra Deva! You appear with copper complexion and with red rosy lips; You are the symbol of joy auguring happiness to one and all as also the Pashupati or the Over Lord of all the Live Beings; You are terrifying and formidable to even look or glance capable of punishing unhesitatingly of the enemies nearby or away; you are the most ruthless exterminator at the Time of Pralaya. Maha Deva! Your head hair remind us of to the Grand Trees and the green leaves signifying prosperity; You are the personification of Salvation and of Pranava Mantra; You are the Flagship of joy and contentment; You are Icon of Auspiciousness ‘par excellence’! You are the representation of the Blessed Tirthas of Sacred Rivers like Ganga and their banks; You are the magnificent Paramatma who is on the other side of the Ocean of Samsara and You are the Mantra which is germinated by the Knowledge of what you are all about that could ferry the lashing waves and reach you; You are the One who is present when we enter Samsara and inspire us to perform those ‘Karmas’ or Deeds as the Fruits in your Storage or the Destiny; You are every where-be it the grass on the banks or the foam of the water body waves hitting on the banks;

NamaIryaaya cha Prapadyaaya cha NamahKumshilaaya Kshayanaaya cha NamahKapardiney cha Pulastaye cha NamaGoshthyaaya cha Gruhyaaya cha Namastalpaaya cha gehyaaya cha Kaathyaaya cha Gahvareshtaayacha Namohridayaya cha Niveshpyaaya cha NamahPaagum Savyaa cha Rajasyaya cha Namasshukyaaya cha Hariytyaayacha Namolopyaaya cholapyayacha/ Namourvyaaya cha Surmyaaya cha NamahParnaaya cha Parnashadyaa ya cha Namopaguramaanaaya chaabhignatey cha Namokkidatey cha prakkidateycha NamovahKirikebhyo Devaanaagum Hridayebhyo Namoveekshinakebhyo Namovichintkebhyo Nama Aanirhatebhyo Nama

Aameevatkebhya/ Draahey Andhasaspatey Daridraaneela lohita/ Esham Purushaanaa -meshaam Pashunaam maa bhermaaromo eshaam kim chanaamamat/Yatey Rudra Shivaa tanoosshivaa Vishwaaha bhashaji/ Shivaa Rudrasya bhashaji/ Tayaano Mrida Jeevasey/ Imagum Rudraaya tapasey Kapardiney Kshaya dweeraaya prabharaamahey matim yathaa nasshama sadwipadey chatushpadey Vishvam Pushtam graamey Asmin/ Anaaturam/ Mridaano Rudro tano mayaskrudhi Kshaya dweeraaya Namasaa vidhyematey/ Yacchanchayoschamanu raayajepitaa tadashyaama tava Rudra praneetou/ Maano mahanta muta Maano Arbhakam Maana Yukshantamuta Maana Yukshitam/ Maano vadheeh Pitaram Maataram mota Maataam Priya Manasta nuvah/ Rudrareerishah// Manastotaketa naye maana aayushi maano goshu maano Ashveshureerishah/ Veeraanmaano Rudra bhamito vadheer havishmanto Namasaa Vidhematey/. Aaraateyoghna Uta Puurushaghney kshayadweeraaya sumna masmet te astu/ Rakshaachano adhicha Devabroohyatho cha nassharma yacchawi barhaah/ Stuthishrutam garta sadam yuvaanam Mriganna bheema mupahatnumugram/ Mridaa jaritrey Rudrastavaano Anyantey Asminnivapantusenaah/ Parino Rudrasya hetirvranaktu pariveshasya durmatiraghayoh / Avasthiramaghavadbhyastanushva midhva-sttokaya tanayaya Mridaya/ Midhushtama Shivatamaa Shivo nah sumana bhava paramey Vriksha aayudham nitya krittim vasana achaara Pinaakam bibhadragahi/ Vikirida Vilohita namastey stu Bhagavaah, Yastey sahasraagum hetayonnyamasmannina pantu tah/ Sahasraani Sahasradha bahuvoostava hetayah, Tasamishano Bhagavaah parichina mukha krudhi// Sahasraani sahasrasho ye Rudraa adhi bhumyaam, Teshaagum Sahasra yojaneyva dhanvaani tanmasi, Asmin Mahatyarnaenta -rikshey bhavaa adhi)

Bhagavan! You are present in such odd places as salty and trampled , rocky and rough, and such others where none chooses to visit. Yet you rest with your matted hair as a headgear and appear relaxed before your devotees! You stay in go-shaalas and homes, reside in huge, deep jungles and impermeable mountain caves, through dust and hazy spots, alike in shrivelled deserts where no grass or greenery is in sight, on Earth or fathomless Oceans; you are with hordes of Rudra Ganas around you with piercing tridents and other dreadful weapons ready to attack and smash. But Bhagavan! You are fond of encouraging Devas in our heart and bless them in your Virat Swarupa; indeed they are blessed and get entrusted with their responsibilities of administering the affairs of the Universe! Parameshwara! You choose to be poor despite your being the origin of opulence! You expose us humans to miserable conditions devoid of food and such other bare needs of livelihood to us, children, domestic animals! Neela lohita! We do realise that you are dispassionate and impartial and we ought to suffer and deserve retribution from the store of our misdeeds; Yet, do kindly pardon us as you are our unique shelter. May our sins be destroyed as we do desire to initiate a positive account of our selves here onwards and be worthy of our devotion to you. We will indeed truly seek to follow the foot steps of Manu and seek to deserve our prostrations to you. But as of now, Bhagavan! Do not torment us, our elders, babies and our entire generation. We beseech you Rudra Deva the fierce and ruthless to the Evil; yet, you are Shiva too the embodiment of Shubha and Mangala-auspiciousness and fulfillment. Do also advise to Devas to give full consideration in our favour too to help us and fulfill our wishes. While we make sincere supplications to you Maha Rudra! when you as a youthful Lion ready to destroy, let not your Ganas attack us but the Evil Forces; instead you do bless us and our family members even as diverting your weapons far away from us! May those Rudra Ganas loosen the strings and their bows be taken off from us by thousands of yojanas! Rudra Bhagavan! You possess thousands of destructive weapons in your thousands of arms and indeed You command all of them; but let not the weaponry turn against our faces!

Neela greevaasshiti kantha Sharvaa adhah kshamaacharaah, Neelaasshiti kanthaa divam Rudra upashritaah/ Yey Vrikshesu suspinjaraa Neelagreeva Vilohitaah, Yey bhutaanaamadhipatayo vishikhaasah Kapardinah/ Ye Anneshu vividhyantanti paatreshu pibato janaan/ Ye pathaam padhi rakshaya Yailabrudaaya vyudhah/ Ye Tirthaani pracharan srukavantoti nishanginah/ Yayetaavanta – scha Bhuyaagumascha disho Rudraa vitasthitirey/ eshaagum Sahasra yojaney dhanvaavi tanmasi/

*Namo Rudrebhyo ye Prithivyaam yentarikshe ye Divi yeshaa mannam Vaato Varshamishava stey –
bhyo Dasha Praacheer dasha Dakshinaa dasha Pracheetir dashorthvaastebhyo Namasteno
Mridayantu tey yamdwishmo yaschano dheshititam vo jamdhey Dadhami/ Om Trayambakam yajaa
mahy Sudandhim pushti vardhanam, Urvaaramiva bandhaanaamrityormuksheeya maamritaat// Yo
Rudro Agnou yo apsu ya Aoushadheeshu yo Rudro Vishwaa Bhuvanaa vivesha tasmai Rudraaya
namo astu/ Om Shantisshaantisshaantih/*

Neela greeva! Shiti Kantha! Sharva! These manifestations are yours as the Blue Throated with Poison called Kaala kuta that engulfed the Worlds at Amrita Mathana and deposited permanently in your throat- Shiti Kantha or the Dwadasa Rudras elsewhere with white and bright throats-and Sharva the Destroyer! May your bow strings be loosened and bows be kept away thousands of yojanas from us! May the Rudra manifestations of green grass colour, the dark throat colour, the red complexion be all relax the bow strings and kept far aloof; May Rudras provide succor as food and water to and protect us from the Evil and restore the bows and arrows else where; May Rudras appear at our paths, roads and Sacred Tirthas and rest their bows afar; May Rudras with daggers and swords protect us but withdraw the bows and arrows; May Rudras enter our households and ensure our safety but certainly withdraw long shot arrows and their bows; May Rudras on Earth in Dasha Dishas or Ten Directions shower food and bounties, at Antariksha and all over too as our ten fingers meet in sincere salutations and prostrations; let the antagonistic faces and mouth be shut and let Peace and Contentment prevail all over the Universe. May the Three Eyed Parama Shiva spread fragrance all over, may all the Beings in the Universe be contented ; May He permeate in Water, Fire, Crops, and having surfeited us all with fulfillments, do kindly release us like a ripe fruit into the realms of Eternal Bliss! Indeed May He who holds his powerful arrows is the Endless Source of all kinds of medicines against our Physical, Psychological and Spiritual Shortcomings and Illnesses! We ought to be fortunate to possess our appropriate hands to worship Lingarchana and deserve our gratitude to Him for ever!



CHAMAKA

PAARAYANA

Om/ Agnaa Vishnu sajoshaseymaa vardhantu vaangirah/ Dyumnaair vejebhiraagatam/ Vaajaschamey Pravascha mey Prayatascha mey Prasitaschamey Dheetischa mey Kratuschamey Sarwaschamey Shlokaschamey Shraavaschamey Shrutischa mey Jyitishcha mey Suvashchamey Pranaschamey paana cha Vyaanaschamey suschamey chittam cha ma Aadhitatanchamey aakchamey Manschamey Chaksshushcha mey Shrotam chamey Dakshaschamey Balam chamey Ojaschamey Sahaschamey Aayuschamey Jaraa chamey Aatmaachamey Tanushamey Sharma chamey Varmachamey engani cha mey Sthaani chamey Paroogumshicha mey Shareerani chamey/

May Agni and Vishnu too join in our prayers to Rudra to grant us excellend food and material abundance. To me and us let there be quality of Life Force or Breathing comprising Prana-Apana-Vyana-Udaana-Samanaadi components be purified enhancing our knowledge, quality of Speech, Mind, Hearing capacities of Karmendriyas and Jnanendriyas in general. Do kindly bestow to us personalities of brightness, handsomeness, strength, health and longevity;

Jyeshtham cha ma Aadhipatyamcha mey Manuschamey Bhaamaschameyschameybhyascha mey Jemaachamey Mahimaa chamey Varimaachamey Prathimaachamey Varshmachamey daaghruyaa chamey Vriddhischamey Satyamchamey Shraddhaachamey Jagacchamey Dhavamchamey Vashaschamey Twishaschamey Kreedaaachamey Modaschamey Jaatam chamey Janishyamaanam - chamey Suktamchamey Sukrutamchamey Vittam chamey Vedyamchamey Bhutamchamey Bhavishyacchamey Sugamchamey Supathamchamey Ruddhamchama RuddhaschameyKliptamchamey Kliptischamey Matischamey Sumatischmey/

Our prayers to you are to bestow to me and us Status, Seniority, Reactions appropriate to Situations like anger, ruthlessness, kindness, clarity of mind, maturity in handlings, coolness, truthfullness, command, capability, good progeny, respect, richness, determination and glory!

Shamschmey Mayamschamey Priyamchameynukaamaschamey Soumanschamey Bhadramchamey Shreyaschamey Vashyaschamey Yashaschamey Bhagaschamey Dravinamcha mey Yantaachamey Dhartaachamey Kshemaschamey Dhritischamey Vishwamchamey Mahaschamey Samvicchmey Jnaatramchmey Sooschamey Prasoochamey Seeramchamey Layaschamey Rutamchameymritam chamey yakshmamchamey naamayacchamey Jeevatuschamey Dirghaayutwamchameynamitram cha mey Bhayam chameySugamam chamey Shayanamchamey Shoocha chameystudinam chamey/

May our lives be comfortable with fulfillments as also the subsequent lives with exciting promises; My we love our associates and beget love too; May we be the Cynosures of the Society and surroundings; May we reap attention, fame, fortune, wealth, ideal preceptors; affection, protection and excellent upbringing / nurture from parents, respect from relatives and elders; obedient progeny ; attachment to and from servants and domestical animals; freedom from illnesses besides the gifts of health and fitness, long and satisfying life; conplete absence of enemies and evils; appreciation from elders and fellow citizens; sound and restful sleep with contented and cosy bed; all round auspiciousmes with series of Vratas, Yagnas and social festivities; disciplined daily life with Sandhya Vandanas and Veda Pathana; observance of Grihasti Dharmas, charities, TirthaYatras etc.

Urkyachamey Suritaa cha mey Payaschamey Raschamey Ghritamchamey Madhuchamey Sagdhischamey Sapeetischamey Krishischmey Vrishtischmey Jaitramchamey Oudbhidyam chamey Rayischamey Raayaschamey Pustamcha mey Pushtischamey Vibhuchamey Prabhuchamey Bahuchamey Bhuyaschamey Purnamchamey Purnaaramchamey Khitischamey Kooyavaaschame-nnam chameykshuchamey Vreehaschamey Yavaaschamey Maashaaschamey Tilaaschamey Maashaaschamey Mudgaaschamey Khalyaaschamey Godhummaschamey Masuraaschamey Priyangavaschamey vanavschamey Shyaamaakaaschamey neevaaraaschamey/

With excellent agricultural returns due to timely and ample rains, may we enjoy tasty and tongue tantalising food in the stimulating company of intimate family members, close relatives and friends. May we be blessed with good crops of Paddy, wheat, and minor grains like barley, grams, gingelly, beans, lentils, pepper, corn and varieties of rice and spices as also plants, creepers apart from abundant milk and products, ghee, natural honey enrich our food; May we also be ornamnted with golden articles in great variety studded with gems and precious stones to ensure our lives worth living!

*Ashmaaschamey Mrittikaachamey Girayaschamey Parvataaschamey Sikitaaschmey Vanaspataya –
schamey Hiranyam chameyyaschamey seesam cha mey trapuschamey Shyaamam cha mey
Lohamchamegnischa ma Veerudhaschma Aoushadhayaschamey Krishtapachanchameykrishta
pachan –chamey Graamaschamey Pashava Aranyaascha Yagjnena Kalpantaam Vittham cha
Vittischamey Bhutam chamey Bhutischamey Vasuchamey Vasatischamey Karmachamey
Shaktischameyrthascha ma Evascha ma Itischamey Gatischamey/*

May Rudra Bhagavan enable us mortals to put maximum use for our livelihood and sensory gratifications like ‘Netraananda’ from the innumerable items in your Creation like Stones, soil, Sacred Mountains and Rivers, Sand, trees with fruits and flowers, natural resources like gold, iron, coal, lead, tin, rock salt, bronze, copper, fire, water, medicinal herbs, natural plants, grass, cows cattle, food and fodder, and so on for various trades and turnover profits.

*Agnischama Indraschamey Somaschama Indraschamey Savitaa chama Indraschamey Sarasvatee
chama Indrascha mey Pushaa cha ma Indraschamey Brihatispatischam Indraschamey Mitraschama
Indraschamey Varunaschama Indraschamey Twashtaa cha ma Indraschamey Dhataa chama Indras –
chamey Vishnuschama Indraschameyshwinouchama Indraschamey Marutaschama Indraschamey
Vishweychamey Devaa Indraschamey Prithivichama Indraschameyntharikshham cha ma Indras -
chamey Douscha ma Indraschamey Dishasch ma Indraschamey Moorthaa cha ma Indraschamey
Praapatischama Indraschamey/*

Bhagavan Rudra! May you bless us through your Agents and manifestations like Agni, Indra, Soma, Savita, Saraswati, Pusha, Brihaspati, Mitra, Varuna, Twashta, Dhata, Vishnu, Ashvini Devas, Maruts, Vishwa Devas, Prithivi, Antariksha, Swarga, Ashta Dashas, Urtwa Loksas, and Devendra.

*Agumshuschamey Rashmischameydaabhyascha Medhipatischama Upaagumshuschameyntyaa-
maschama Aindra Vaayavaschamey Maitraa Varunaschama Ashvinaschamey Pratiprasthaanas cha-
mey Shukrascha mey Mantheechama Agrayanaschamey Vaishwa devascha mey Dhruvascha mey
Vaishvaanaraschama Ritugrahaaschametigraahyaascha ma Aindraagascha mey Vaishwadevascha
mey Marutwateeyascha Mahendrascha ma Adityascha mey Saavitrashamey Saarasvataschamey
Poushnaschamey Paatnivaschamey Haariyojanaschamey/*

Devadhi Deva Rudra! May distinct inputs especially Special Purpose Vessels like utensils, plates etc utilised for homa yagnas for varied applications and Agni Karyas described in great details in the Yaha Prakaranas of Shrutis: for instance Vaishwa Devas or Vikruti Yagas; it is stated that the ‘Graahas’ or special vessels used in Vaishwanara, Saaraswata, Poushna Yagas, the specialised vessels are called as Idhma and Barhi and so on.

*Idhmaschamey Barhischamey Vedischamay Dhishnaaschamey Srucaschamey Chamasaaschamey
Graavanaaschamey Dhishniyaaschamey Chamasaascha mey Graavaanaschamey Swaravaschama
Uparavaaschameydhishapaney cha mey Dronakalashschamey Vaayavyani cha Puta bhruccama
Aadhavaneeyaschama Agnidhramchamey havirthaanam chamey Grihaaschamey Sadaschamey Puro
daashaaschamey Pachataaschameyvabhurutaschamey Swagaakaaraaschamey/*

*Agnischmey Gharmaschameyrkaschamey Suryaschamey Praanaschameshwamedhaschamey
Prithiveeschmeyditischameyditischamey dyouschamey Shakwarirangulayo Dishaschamey Yagnena
kalpantaamrukchamey Sdaamachamey Somaschamey Yajuschamey Deekshaachamey Tapaschama
Rutaschamey Vratam chameyhoraatrayordrushtyaa Brihadrathantareda mey Yagjnena kalpetaam/*

May Bhagavan bless us in performing Yaaga Karyas meant in favour Agni in Samaayana Yagas; Karma as called Pravargya, Arka as per Indra-Arka-Purodamsha; Surya as per Surya Charu; Prana Homa as per Prayaya Swaaha; Angulya Homa as per the invocation of Virat Purusha's fingers viz. Prithvi, Aditi, Diti, Dyous and Shankari; and Disha Yagas or invocations as per the Eight Directions of Prak-Agneya-Dakshina-Nirruiti-Vayavya-Uttara-Ishaanyas; May all these be yagas as invoked by various Devas illustrated be succesful! May the fruits of rendering Rik-Yajur-Saam mantras be attained and so do the diksha or obeservance of discipline, Tapas and Vratas be effective enough as a proof of which there should be appropriate 'Vrishti' enabled!

Garbhaaschamey Vatyaschamey Tryavishchamey Traveechamey-dityavaatchameydityouheechamey Pandaavishchamey pandaavee da mey Trivatyaschamey Trivatsaachamey turyachaatchmey Turyou hechamey Pashthavachhamey Pashthohee cha ma Ukshaa cha mey Vashaachama Rushabhyash – chamey Vehacchameynadwaam cha mey Dhenuschmey Aayuryagjnena kalpataamapaano Yagnena kalpataam Vyaano Yagjnena Kalpataam Chakshuryagjnena kalpataam Shrotam Yagjnena kalpataam Mano Yagjnena kalpataam Vaakyagjnena Kalpataa-maatmaa Yagjnejna Kalpataam Yagjno Yagjnena Kalpataam/

Parama Shiva! Do protect the bovine wealth of cows and bulls in their garbha or in the form of foetus or of the age of less than one year, one and a half year, two years, three years, three and half years, or those which are infertile, lost their garbhas, or along with their calves or bulls which carry lot of load and so on. Similarly, Pashus of other species of animals besides human beings too be protected; let their breathing comprising Prana-Apana- Vyana and other Vayus be perfect; may they enjoy the quality of their existence by providing them all with perfect eyes, ears, mind, speech and physique in totality to enable them all to discharge their duties effectively. May the fruits of Yagna- Homas and other Daivika Karmas like Vratas, Danaas and so on being now performed or hoped to be carried on in future be spared for the welfare of all the Beings!

Ekaa chamey Tisraschamey Panchamey Saptachamey Navacha ma Ekadasha chamey Trayodashamey Panchdashamey Sapta dasha chamey Navadaha ch ma Ekavigumshatischamey Trayovigum shatischamey Panchavigimsharischamey Saptavigum shatischamey Navavigum Shatischama Ekatravigumshacchamey Trayastigumshacchamey Chaturshchameyshtouta chamey Dwadashamey Shodasha chamey Vigumshatishchamey Chaturvigumshatischamey veshtavigum shatishcha mey Dwaatrigum shacchmeyshatrigumshaccha meyshtaachatwaarigum shacchamey Vaajascha Prasavaschaapijascha Kratuscha Suvashcha Moorthaa cha Vyashchniya shaantyaayanasshaantyas cha bhouvavanascha Buhvanaschaadhhipatyascha/

May all the odd numbers from One to thirty three plus be beneficent to human beings as also the even numbers from four to forty eight specified plus as significant to Devas be all be auspicious; May Maha Deva grant abundant food as facilitated by the beneficent circle of Food- Crops-Yagnas-Surya- Varsha- Prithivi-Good Crops and Food; more than the production process of food and its diistribution management, the resolve to produce and enjoy the results of the food is the most significant!

Idaadevahurmanuryajna neerchrubrihaspatir ukthaamadaanishgum sishadwishve devaa ssukta vaachah Prithivi Maatar maamaahigum sseermadhu Manishye Madhu janishthey Madhu Vakshaami Madhu vadishyaami Madhu mateem Devebhyo Vaachamudyaasagum Shrashreynaam Manushyo – bhyastam maa Devaa Anantu Shobhaayai Pitaronumadantu/ Om Shantissaantih/ Harim Om tatsatu/

Shata Rudreeyam

Vyasa uvaacha: Prajaapateenaam Prathamam Tejasaam Purusham Prabhum, Bhuvanam Bhurbhuvam Devam Sarva lokeshvaram prabhum/ Ishaanam Varadam Paartha drishnavaanasi Shankaram, tam gaccha sharanam Devam Varadam Bhuvaneshwaram/ Mahaadevam Mahaatmaanam Ishaanaam Jatilam Shivam, Tryaksham Mahaa bhujam Rudram Shikhinam Cheera vaasanam/ Maha Devam Haram Sthaanum Varadam Bhuvaneshwaram, Jagatpradhaanamadhikam Jagatpreetamadheeshvaram/ Jagadyonim Jagadveepam Jayanam Jagato gatim, Vishvaatmaanam Vishvasrujam Vishvamurtim Yasha- svinam/ Vishveshvaram Vishvavaram Karmanaameeshvaram Prabhum, Shambhum Svayambhum Bhutesham Bhutabhavya bhavodbhavam/ Yogam Yogeshvaram Sharvam Sarvalokeshvareshvaram, Sarva-shrashtham Jagatcchreshtham Varishtham Parameshthinam/ Lokatraya vidhaataaramekam Loka- trayaashrayam, Sudurjayam Jaganaatham Janma mrityu jaraatigam/ Jnaanaatmaanam Jnaana gamyam Jnaana shreshtham Sudurvidam, Daataaram chaiva Bhaktaanaam Prasaadavihitaan Varaan/ Tasya paarishadaa Divyaarupairnaanaavidhairvibhoh, Vaamanaa Jatilaa Mundaa Hrasvagreeva Maho -daraah/ (10)

Mahaa kaayaa Mahotsaahaa Mahakarnaasthathaa Pare, Aananairvikritaih Paadaih, Paartha Veshaischa Vaikritaih, Eedrisyaissa Mahadevah Pujoyamaano Maheshvarah, sa Shivastaata Tejasvi prasaadaadyaatitegratah/ Tasmin ghore sadaa Paartha Sangraame rohamarshane, Drounikarna kripairguptaam Maheshvaasaih prahaaribhih/ Kastaam Senaam tadaa Paartha manasaapi pradhar -shayet, Rite Devaanmeheshvaasaad bahurupaam Maheshvaraat/ Sthaatumutsahate kaschinnatasminn – agratah Sthite, nahi bhutam samam tea trishu lokeshu vidyate/ Gandhenaapi sangraame tasya krudhdhasya shatravah, Visangjnaa hata bhuyishthaa vepanti cha patatimcha/ T asmai namastu kurvanto Devaattishthanti Vaidivi, ye chaanyee maanavaa lokeyecha swargajito naraah/ Ye bhaktaa varadam Devam Shivam Rudram Umaapatim, iha loka sukham praapyate yaanti paramaam gatim/ Namaskuru -shva kounteya tasmai shaantaaya va sadaa, Rudraaya Shitikanthaaya Kanishthaaya Suvarchase/ Kapardine Karaalaaya Harayaksha Varadaaya cha, Yaamyaaayaaraktakeshaaya Sadvritte Shankaraa -yacha/ (20)

Kaamyaaayaaraktakeshaaya Mundaaya Kanishthaaya Suvarchase, Bhaskaraaya Suteer -thaaya Devadevaayaramhase/ Ushneeshane Suvaktraaya Sahasaakshaaya meedhushe, Girishaaya Sushaantaayapataye Cheeravaasase/ Hiranya baahave Raaajannugraaya pataye dishaam, Parjanya patayechaiva bhutaanaam pataye namah/ Vrikshaanaampataye chaiva Gavaam pataye tathaa, vrikshair- aavritakaayaaya sevanye madhyamaayacha/ Sruvahastaaya Devaaya Dhanvine Bhargavaayacha, Bahurupaaya Vushvasyapataye Munjavaasase/ Sahasra shirase chaiva Sahasranayanaayacha, Sahasra baahavechiva Sahasra charanaayacha/ Sharanam gaccha Kounteya Varadam Bhuvaneshvaram, Umaapatim Viruupaaksham Dakshamyajina nibarhanam/ Prajaanaamvatimavyagram Bhutaanaam -patam Avyayam/ Kapardinam Vrishaavartam Vrishanaabham Vrishadhvajam/ Vrishadarpam Vrishapatim Vrishashringam Vrisharshabham, Vrishaankam Vrishabhodaaram Vrishabham Vrishabheshanam/ (30)

Vrishaayudham Vrishasharam Vrisha bhutam Mahashwaram, Mahodaram Mahakaayam Dveepicharmanivaasinam/ Lokesham Varadam Mundam Brahmanyam Braahmanapriyam, Trishula paanim Varadam Khadgacharmadharam Shubham/ Pinaakinam Khadgadharanam Lokaanaam Patimeeshvaram, prapadye sharanam Devam sharanyam Cheeravaasanam/ Namastasmai Sureshaaya yasyavaishavanassakhaa , Suvaasase namo nityam Suprataaya Sudhanvine/ Dhanurdharaaya Devaaya Priyadhanvaaya Dhanvine, Dhanvantaraaya Dhanushe Dhanvaachaaryaaya te namah/ Ugraayudhaaya Devaaya namassuravaraaya cha, Namostu Bahurupaaya namaste Bahudhanvine/

Namostu Sthaanave Nityam namastasmai Sudhanvine, Namostu Tripuraghnaaya Bhavaghnaaya chavainamah/ Vanaspateenaam Pataye Naraanaam pataye namah, Maatruunaam patayechaiva Ganaanaam patayenamah/ Gavaamcha pataye nityam Devaanaam pataye namah/ Puushno danta vinaashaaya Tryakshaaya Varadaayacha, Haraaya Neelakanthaaya Svarnakshaayavai namah/

Maharshi Vyasa underscored that Maha Deva Ishana the superior to Prajapati Maha Purusha and asserted that Ishana- *Ishaanam sarvavidyaanaam Ishvarassarva bhutaanaam Brahmaadhipatir brahmanodhipati brahmaa Shivomeastussadaashimom*/-was indeed the Over Lord of Trilokas and was the inexplicable phenomenon of Three Letters of Bhur- Bhuva- Svah. Parama Shiva is notable as of Maha Bhuja- Rudra- Shikhi being of long jataajuta- and Cheeravaasa of skinclad figure. Indeed He is Maha Deva-Hara the sin destroyer-Sthaanu or stable, inactive, immobile and insensitive- yet the Supreme. Shiva is quiescent and motionless. He is Varada the boon granter and Tribhuvaneshvara. Indeed He is Jagat Pradhaanamadhika or far greater to Prajapati the head of charaachara jagat. He is thus ‘Jagat- pradhaanamadhikam’ or of superiority to the head of the ‘Praja’. He as Jagadyoni or seed of Jagat as the Root Cause, Jagad Dweepa or the Singulat Source of Radiance, and again the unique insignia of victory, Vishvaatma or the Universal Soul, Visvasruja or the Architect of the Universe, Jagadprateeramadhikam or of dominance beyond the Head of the Universe, Visvasrujam-Vishva Murtim-and Yashasvinam or of the highest universal acclaim. He is Vishvesvara-Vishva vara or the Greatest Boon to the Universe, Karunaameeshvaram or the symbol of kindness, Prabhum, Shambhum, Svayambhum or of Appearance all by Himself Self, Bhutabhavya - bhabodbhavam or the Omniscient of the Past-Present-Future of all the Beings, He is a Yogi- Yogeswara- Sharva with no reference of region-religion- caste- Raashi- Nakshatra- etc.-Sarva Lokeshwara-Sarva shreshtha- Jagat shreshtha- Varashtha, Parameshthi-Lokatraya vidhaata -Asmekam or the Unique most-Lokatrayaashramam-Sudurjayam or Beyond Accomplishment- Janannaatham- Janmamrutyu jaraatigam or beyond the reach of birth-death-age; jnaanatikam-‘jnaana gamyam jnaana shreshtham’ or the the targettable-approachable much less achievable to the supreme most knowledge-sudurvidam or inexplicable-daaraaram or the highest giver-bhaktaanaam prasaada vihitaan varaan or the sole distributor boons to the well deserved devotees; such highest celestial vaanmna-jatila-munda- hrasvagreeva- madodara or of unstatured- crude – shaven- short necked- and big bellied – huge figured – high spirited- giant eared- deformed bodied Mahadeva Maheshwara. He is of ‘Aananairvikritaih’ or of deform faced; Paarthiva or of Giantlike bodied, or Vikrita of obnoxious form yet ever merciful; Mahadeva- Pujyamaana- Maheshvara- ‘Sashivastaata tejasvi prasaadaadyaatitegratah’ or of the most auspicious radiance far excellence far superior to that of Aditya. ‘Tasmin ghore sadaa paartha sangraame romaharshane’ - He is yet the terrible most in the battle front as his devotees are awe stricken at his deeds with their hairs stand erect- and eardrums get shrilled with their thrilled minds. His army gets enraptured in body and mind. As the followers get mesmerised his opposition stalwarts soaked in arrogance get subjected to smithereens. ‘Tasmai namastu kurvanto devaastishthanti vaidivi,’ from the high skies the ‘deva samuhas’ shower rains of flowers while human beings on earth prostrate with reverence and gratitudinal devotion. Tripuraasura samhara was a case in point. At the sametime, Ishvara as Kounteya in Maha Bhatata was aware Parama Shiva was described as the incarnation of ‘shaanta’ the most tranquil. He prayed to Him well before facing the uphill taske of Maha Bharata Battle facing stalwart battle heroes like Bheeshma- Drona adis and addressing Parama Shiva and his magnificence as follows: ‘ Rudraaya Shiti kanthaaya Kanishthaaya Suvarchase, Kapardine Karaalaaya Haryaksha varada’ : Rudra Deva with poisoned throat, Kapardi as altruistic, concerned, kind, responsive.,, and confident; Karaala or very horrifying to opponents; Haryaksha varada or the boons bestowed with tranquil eyes; Yamyaya or timeless; Rakta kshaaya or of blood red hairs, Sadvritte or of Noble Caused, Shankara, Kaamyaya or desire fulfiller, Haranetra or of auspicious looks, Sthaana or stable, Purusha or the outstanding and peerless male, Harakeshaya or mangalakara green hairs, Mundaaya or clean head shaven, Kanishthaaya or the youngest yet the Jyeshtha or the senior most, Svarchase or of sparkling physique. Parama Shiva is Bhsakara the emblem of radiance, Suteerthaaya or the the Resident of the hallowed punya kshertas, bahu rupaaya of of countless forms, Sharva the Omni Present, Priyaaya- Priyavaasaaya the hallmark of Love and the seat of Affection, Ushneeshine or of Figure of Heat and Light, Suvaktraaya or of noble faced,

Sahasraakshaaya or of thousands of eye visions, Meedhushe or ever bountiful, Gurishaaya- Sushantaaya- Pataye – cheeravaasine ‘/ skin dressed, Hiranya baahave or of golden hands of strength and shine; Raajannugraata or the King of Kings, Pataye dishaam or the overlord of dashadishas [viz. Kubera North – Yama South- Indra – Varuna West- Ishana North East- Agni South East- Nirruti North West- Brahmai Horizon and Vishnu Sapta Patalas] -Parjanya pataye or the Over Lord of Rains, Bhutanaam Pataye or the Overlord of Pancha Bhutas, Vrikshaa naam pataye, Gavaamcha pataye of the Head of cows and all other animals, Vrikshairaavritaaya or the entire trees and plants as surrounded by Maha Deva, Senaanye Madhyamaaya or the Central Figure of Soldierly and of Armies, Sruva hastaaya since Shiva is known as the chief holder of ladles in all the homa kaaryas; Dhanvine the bow which carries ‘paashupataastra’ in his battle escapades, Bhaargava or the symbol of extreme radiance and heat, He is of bahu rupa-vishvasya pati-Munjavaasa or the skin dressed, Sahasra shirase, sahatra nayane, sahasra baahave, sahasra charane! This is how and why Arjuna before the maha bhāratha battle sought refuge from Uma pati-Virupaaksha-Daksha Yagna destroyer! Maha Deva is known as ‘ bhuta pati- avyaya- kapadina-vrishaavarta or he as surrounded by bulls, his flagship too being Vrishabha dhvaja. Indeed He is Vrishapati-Vrisha shringa or horns, vrishanka, vrishabhodaara as of the patience typical of bulls, vrisha shara or as potent of bull like arrows sure to destroy the roots of enemies! Maheshwara is also Mahodara-Maha Kaaya and is clad with glittering skin. He is Lokesha-Varada-Munda or shaven-Brahmanya and Brahmana Priya. He carries Tishula- Varada-Khadga charma dhara-Pinaakina or the bow carrier popular as pinaaki, khadga dhara-Lokapati! Our earnest prostrations to Suresha-Shravana Sakhaa extremely fond of Lord Subrahmanya-Dhanvantaraaya and Priya dhanvaaya, Dhanvatara Acharya Swarupa! ‘Namostu bahurupaaya namaste bahudhanvine, namotu Sthhanave Nityam namastasmai sudhanvine, namostu Tripuraasuraantakaaya, Bhava samsaara saagara paraaya!’ Parama Shiva is also acclaimed as Maatrana- Ganaamna- Gavaamna-Yagjnaana-Apaamna- Trakshaaya of Trinetra-Triguna- Trishula- Trikaala of past, present, and future-Trikarana of mano vaachaa shravana- Tryayaavasthaa hara of baalya, youvana vaarthakya -Taapatraya hara or of Adhibhoutika, Adhi Daivika and Adhaatmika- Tri Margas for Mokshaprada of Jnaana, Karma and Upasana; Trividha Kankshas or three Natural Aspirations of Kanta, Kanaka and Keerti or Physical - Material-Fame and Tryagnis or Three fires of Kama/Lust, Krodha or Anger and Kshudha or Hunger.

[Note: Sankalpa of Shata Rudreeya Paaraayana and anantara puja naivedya and pradaksina is recommended.]

Reference of ‘ Shata Rudreeyam’ as detailed in Skanda Purana follows:

1)Brahma dedicated a golden Linga to Bhagavan Siva named *Jagat Pradhana* and prays it at His feet2) Sri Krishna set up a black coloured Linga called *Urjit* and prays to Siva’s head3) Sanaka and other Manasa Putras of Lord Brahma pray to Siva Hridaya (Heart) Linga as *Jagadrati*4) Sapta Rishis pray to ‘Dharbhaankura maya’ (Dharbha made) Linga called *Viswa Yoni*5) Devarshi Narada conceived Siva Linga as an all pervasive ‘Aakash’ (Sky) and prayed to *Jagatvija*6) Devaraj Indra prays to a Diamond Linga called *Vishvatma*7) Surya Deva prays to a copper Linga called *Vishwasruga*8) Chandra performs Puja to a Pearl Linga known as *Jagatpathi*9) Agni Deva prays to an Indra Nila Mani Linga named *Viswesvara* 10) Brihaspathi prays to a Pushparajamani with the name *Viswa Yoni*11) Sukracharya pays penance to a Padmaragamani Linga called *Viswakarma*12) A golden Linga is worshipped by Kubera called *Iswara*13) Viswa Deva Ganas perform puja to a Silver Linga called *Jagatgati*14) Yama Dharma raja pays his obeisance to a peethal (brass) Linga named *Shambhu*15) ‘Ashtavasus’ execute ‘Aradhana’ to a Glass made Linga called *Shambhu*16) Maruganas do puja to a Triloha Linga (three kinds of metals) called *Umesh / Bhupesh*

17) Raakshasas pay penance to an iron Linga and named Siva as *Bhuta Bhavya Bhavodbhava*

18) Guhyaka Ganas perform puja to a mirror-made Siva Linga named *Yoga*

- 19) Muni Jaigeeshva does Upasana to Brahmarandhra maya Linga named *Jaigeeswara Yogeeswar*
- 20) King Nimi considers the Ugal Netra or the Two Eyes as Parameswara Linga called *Sharva*
- 21) Dhanvathari worships Gomaya Linga (cow dung) in the name of *Sarva Lokewswareswara*
- 22) Gandharvas perform Puja to wood based Siva Linga named *Sarva Sreshtha*
- 23) Lord Rama did intense 'Japa' to 'Vidyunmani' Linga in the name of *Jyeshtha*
- 24) Banasura paid homage to Marakathamani Linga named *Varishtha*
- 25) Varuna Deva offers reverence to a Sphatikamani Linga named *Parameswara*
- 26) *Lokatranyakara* is the name given to a Linga made of Munga (Black Pearl) by Nagagana
- 27) Devi Saraswathi pays reverence to Suddha mukta maya Linga named *Lokatrayashrita*
- 28) Sani Deva performs 'Japa' on Saturday Amavasya midnight at Maha Sagara Sangama the Bhavari (Honey Bee) Swarupa Linga named *Jagannadha*
- 29) Ravana implored to a Linga made of Chameli flower and named it *Sudurjaya*
- 30) Siddhaganas paid respects to Manasa Linga called *Kama Mrityu Jaraatiga*
- 31) Raja Bali worshipped Yashamaya (Famed) Linga named *Jnanatma*
- 32) Marichi and other Maharshis pray to Pushpamaya (flowerful) Linga with the name *Jnana gamya*
- 33) Devathas who performed noble deeds made approbation to Shubhamaya Linga (Propitiousness) named *Jnaanajneya*
- 34) Maharshi Phenaj (foam) who drank Phena did Upasana to Phena Linga called *Saravid*
- 35) Sage Kapila performed Japa to Balukamaya Ling named *Varada*.
- 36) Saarasvat, the son of Devi Sarasvathi did Upasana to Vanimaya Linga named *Vaageeswara*.
- 37) Sivaganas made a Linga of Bhagavan Siva and provided penance to *Rudra*.
- 38) Devathas made a Jambu River golden Linga to pray to *Sitikantha*.
- 39) Budha prays to Shankhamaya (conchshell) Linga by the name of *Kanishtha*.
- 40) The Two Ashvini Kumars pray to Muktikmaya Parthiva Linga named *Suvedha*.
- 41) Ganesha made a Siva Linga made of Wheat Flour worships it by the name of *Kapardi*

- 42) Mangala Graha (The Planet of Mars) made a Buttermade Linga called *Karaala* to pray.
- 43) Garuda prays to an Odanamaya Linga named *Haryaksha*.
- 44) Kamadeva Manmadha prays to a jaggery made Linga called *Rathida*
- 45) Sachi Devi, the Consort of King Indra paid reverence to a Salt-made Linga *Buddhakesha*.
- 46) Visvakarma prayed to a Prasaadamaya (or of the shape of a Mahal / Building) Linga called *Yamya*.
- 47) Vibhishana made a dustfulof Linga called *Suhrutam* to pray.
- 48) Raja Sagar who brought Ganga from Siva's Head made a 'Vamsankura' Linga called *Sangat*.
- 49) Rahu made a Hing (asafoetida) made Linga named *Gamya* to worship.
- 50) Devi Lakshmi made a Lehya Linga named *Harinetra* and worshipped it.
- 51) Yogi Purush prays to Sarvabhuthatha Linga called *Sthaanu*.
- 52) Human beings prepare a wide variety of Lingas and worship them by the name of *Purusha*.
- 53) Nakshatras (Stars) pray to Tejomaya (full of Radiance) Linga called *Bhaga / Bhaskara*.
- 54) Kinnaras make a Dhaatumaya Linga by the name of *Sudeepth* for Japas.
- 55) Brahma Raakshasa Ganas pray to Asthimaya (Bones) Linga named *Deva Deva*.
- 56) Charanas worship dantamaya (full of Teeth) Linga called *Ramhas*.
- 57) Sadhya ganas pray to Saptaloka maya Linga titled *Bahurupa*.
- 58) Ritus worship Doorvaankura maya Linga named *Sarva*.
- 59) Celestial Damsel Urvasi prays to Sindhura Linga named *Priya Vasan*.
- 60) Apsaras perform Archana to Kumkuma Linga called *Abhushana*.
- 61) Guru Deva performs puja to Brahmachari Linga named *Ushnivi*.
- 62) Yoginis offer their obsequiousness to Alakthak Linga by name *Suvabhruk*.
- 63) Siddha Yoginis worship Srikhanda Linga named *Sahasraaksha*.
- 64) Dakinis perform puja to Lingas made of Mamsa or Meat and call Siva by the name of *Sumidhsha*.

- 65) Manna Ganaas worship Annamaya Linga called *Girisha*.
- 66) Agasthya Muni worships Vreehimaya Linga to Siva named *Sushanth*.
- 67) Muni Devala made Yavamaya Linga and called Siva with the name of *Pathi*.
- 68) Valmiki Muni made a Linga of Valmikas and prayed to *Cheera Vasa*.
- 69) Pratardan prays to Baana Linga named *Hiranyabhuj*.
- 70) Daityagana made Rayi made Siva Linga and prayed to *Ugra*.
- 71) Daanavas worship a Nishpaavaj Linga known as *Dikpathi*.
- 72) Baadal (Clouds) pray to Neeramaya (waterful) Lingas called *Parjanya*.
- 73) Yaksharaj made Maashamaya Linga and performed puja to *Bhutapathi*.
- 74) Pitruganas made Tilamaya (Sesame seeds) Linga and worshipped Siva as *Vrishapathi*.
- 75) Gouthama Muni worships Godhulimaya Linga named *Gopathi*.
- 76) Vanaprastha ganas display veneration to a phalamaya (full of fruits) Linga named *Vrikshavrita*
- 77) Karthikeya is highly devoted to Siva in the form of a stone Linga called *Senanya*
- 78) Ashtavatar Nag worshipped Dhanya linga called *Madhyama*.
- 79) Yagna Kartha prayed to Purusha Linga named *Sthruva hasta*.
- 80) Yama worships 'Kalaaya samaya' Linga called *Dhanvi*.
- 81) Parasurama prays to Yavaankura Linga named *Bhargava*.
- 82) Pururava prays to Ghritamaya (Gheeful) Linga by name *Bahurupa*.
- 83) Mandhata paid admiration to a Sugary Linga by name *Bahuyug*.
- 84) The clan of Cows utilises a Dugdhamaya Linga (full of Milk) for paying their respects and sincere devotion to *Nethra sahasrak*.
- 85) Pathivrata Sthrees (Women devoted to their husbands) worship to Bhatrumaya Linga called *Viswapati*.
- 86) Nara and Narayana worship Siva in the form of Mounji Linga named *Sahasra Sirsha*.
- 87) Pruthu worships Thaaksharya Linga known as *Sahasra Charan*.

- 88) Birds pay their homage to Vyoma Linga in the name of *Sarvatmaka*.
- 89) Prithivi prays to Gandhamaya Linga named as *Dvithanu*.
- 90) The entire Animal Kingdom prays to Bhasmamaya Linga known by the name of *Maheswara*.
- 91) Rishiganas perform Upasana to Jnanamaya Linga called *Chirasthan*.
- 92) Brahmanas do penance to Brahma Linga in the name of Siva as *Jyeshtha*.
- 93) Sesa Nag worships to 'Gorochanamaya' Linga named *Pashupathi*.
- 94) Vasuki Nag prays to Visha (poison) Linga with the name of *Shankara*.
- 95) Takshaka Nag prays to Kaalakutamaya Linga called *Bahurup*.
- 96) Karkotaka Nag pays esteem to Halahalamaya Linga named *Pingaksha*.
- 97) Shringi prays to Vishamaya Linga by the name of *Dhurjati*.
- 98) Puthras (Sons) perform in the name of Pitrumaya Linga (Fathers) called *Vishwarupa*.
- 99) Siva Devi worships Parama maya Linga named *Vyambak*.
- 100) Matsya and such other Jeevas pray to Shastramaya Linga named *Vrishakapi*.

Phalashruti : Whoever recites Shiva Shata Rudreeyam in the morning, the sins committed by the mind, tongue and action get vanished; diseases and fatigue get dissolved; fear and apprehension evaporate; and worries and anxiety disappear. Those who utter the hundred names of Parama Siva and make Salutations to Him as many times would instantly secure mental peace and contentment.]

Pashupati Naadha Rudra Subtly hidden in the inner self of all beings

Rikchekshare param vyoman yamin deva adhi vishve nisheduh yastam na veda kimrichaa karishyati ya it vidusta ime samaasate// Chandaamsi yajnaah katavo vrataani, bhutam bhavyam yaccha Vedaa vadanti, asmaan mayi shrirate vishvam etat tasminshanyo mayaayaa samniruddhaha// Maayaam tu prakritim viddhi, mayinam tu mahesvaram, tasyaavayava bhutaistu vyaaptam sarvam idam jagat//Of what avail is the study of Rig Veda or for that matter of the knowledge even all the Scriptures since after all such studies are rendered as futile if internal discipline is a discount and awareness of the Supreme is a casuality. Veda knowledge, performance of Rituals and Sacrifices and knowledge of the Supreme are indeed the ingredients of Faith in and constant strife for attainment; and the rest is all the play of Maya. Let it be realised for ever however that the whole Universe is Prakriti and Maya and even the play of Maya is again the play of the Almighty itself! Indeed Ishvara and Shakti are like the parents of the Universe. One should realise that Prakriti creates the worlds of the Real-Unreal Nature, protects them by her own energy of the three gunas and terminates the Universe by her own powers again at the instance of Ishvara and revives too again by her own energies! Thus goes the cycle of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhaara!

Yo yonim adhishthi eko yasmin idam sam cha vichaiti sarvam, tam Ishaanam varadam devam eedyam nichaayyemaam shaanti atyantameti// yo devaanaam prahavashchodbhyascha vishvaadhipo rudro maharsh ih, Hiranyagarbham pashyata jaayamaanam, sa no buddhyaa shubhayaa samyunaktu// Yo devaanaam adhipo yasmin lokaa adhishtiyaah, ya Ishesya dvipaadaschatus padah, kasmai devaayaa havishaa vidhema//The Singular Parama Shiva is the Originator of Existence of the Beings of the Universe as also of its dissolution and creates it again and again and that Supreme Energy viz. *Ishaanam varadam* or the only and unfailing source to bestow blessings to all in the Creation; truly indeed, those who understand His excellence would be destined to secure Peace. He is the origin of Devatva or of Devas and the distributor of their celestial powers; it was Rudra who visioned Hiranyagarbha Brahma who is the Supreme Architect and had enabled the mechanism of the Cycle of Births, Deaths and Births again! Rudra Deva is also the Over-Lord of Devas besides the two legged and four legged ‘Pashus’ thus having attained the title of Pashupati -naadha’!

Sukshmati-sukshmam kalilasya madhye, vishvasya srashtaaram aneka rupam, vishvasya – ikam pariveshtiraaram jnaatvaa shivam shantim atyantameti// Sa eva kaale bhuvanashya goptaa, vishwa - adhipah sarva bhueshu goodhah, yasmin yuktaa Brahmarshayo Devaascha tam evam jnaatvaa mrityu paashamschinatti// Ghritaata parammanam ivaatisukshmam jatva Shivam sarva bhuteshu guudham vishvasyakam pariveshtitaaram jnaatvaa devam muchyate sarva paashaih// Esha Devo Vishvakarma mahatmaa, sadaa janaanaam hridaye sannivishhtaah, Hridaa manishaabhi klipto, yad etad vidur amritaaste bhavanti//Rudra Deva is the ‘Sukshmaati sukshmam’, ‘vishvasya srashtaaram aneka rupam’ or the subtlest of the subtle, the Unique Creator of all the Beings of myriad forms is also the great enveloper of what all one could visualize; realisation of his splendour brings peace for ever. He is the unchallenged protector and the ultimate refuge point of all and the illustrious Sages are able to access Brahman the Final Abode of Bliss even severing the chords of death forever. Just as a thin film conceals the top layer of butter in milk, the embodiment of ‘Shivatva’ or auspiciousness of Shiva is concealed in one’s own inner cave of the body; the ‘ Vishvaikam pariveshtitam’ or that Unique Energy sustaining and filling up the Universe in Totality once recognised and realized is certain to break open the fetters of ‘Samsara’! It is that very ‘Paramatma’ that is right within the concealed as one’s own ‘Antaratma’ as seated in the heart, once visualised in the mind, brings to the frontiers of Immortality!

Yadaa tamastan na divaa na raatrir na sanna chaasacchiva eva kevalah, tadaksharaam tatsavitur varenyam, prajnaa cha tasmaat prashrataa puraani// Naiknam urthvam na chiryaanaacham ma madhye na parijagrabhat na tasya pratimaa asti yasya naama mahad yashah// Na samdrishe tishthati rapamasya, na chakshusaa pashyati kashchanainam, hridaa hridishtham manasaa ya enam, evam vidur amritaaste bhavanti// Ajaata iti evam yevam kashchid bheeruh praadyate: Rudra yat te dakshinam mukham tena maam paahi nityam// Maa nas toke tanaye maana aayushi maa no goshu

maa no ashvesu reerishah, veeraan maa no Rudra bahmitovadheer havihshmantah sada itvaa havamahe// The Supreme is symbolized with absolute identity of the Self as the 'savitur varenyam' or of neither darkness nor light but as flood of the highest level of splendour and as typically characterised as neither as a Being or a Non Being but as an entity that is imperishable; this is what the age old belief of Sages and Seekers of the Almighty! 'Nainam urthvam na tiryancham' The Inner Self again has no dimensions nor directions; neither above the level nor across, not in the middle nor in accord and simply perplexing and inexplicable. Essentially there is nothing comparable to it and is truly awesome and glorious! Paramesh –wara can never be visible by eyes or mind of commonality but with vision ultimate excepting through heart and mind of purity 'par excellence' and of the nature of divinity!! Indeed those who are successful in binding the Highest to one's heart and mind are blessed and become immortal! Once the concept of high order of devotion and dedication is observed, the hardest barriers of Bhagavan's gate ways get melted away and dissolved! Thus the prayers of utmost intensity stating most sincere commendations like : 'Rudra Deva! You are unborn, the most worthy of the worthiest, and the one who is eternal and so on then Parameshwara becomes surely susceptible to yield the fruits of His grace for sure! Shankara is indeed 'bhakti vashamkara' or is susceptible to devotion and faith and tends to melt away to mortal cries of obsessed prostrations like ' maam pahimaam!' '*Maa nas toke tanaye maana aayushi*' or RudraDeva! Do never hurt us not either as in my childhood or as grand childhood, penalize not my life; nor my cattle, horses and so on out of your anger'! Indeed, we seek to please you with our oblations through Agni Homas. Paramatma!, be merciful and do protect us for our deeds of omissions and lapses!



The Truth of the Truth, the paramount

Truth:

Ya eko jaanavaan Ishata Ishaanibhih sarvan lokaan Ishata Ishaaneebhih, ya evaika udbhave sabhave cha, ya etad vidur amritaaste bhavanti//Eko hi Rudro na dviteeyayaa tasthurya imaan lokaan Ishataan Ishaaneebhih, pratyana janaan tishthati santukochaanta kaale samshriyaa vishvaa bhuvanaani gopaah// Vishvatarachakshur uta vishvato mukho vishvato baahur uta vishvataspaat, sam baahubhyaam dhamati sampatatrair dyaavaa bhumee janayan deva ekah//Yo devaanaam prabhavaschiodbhavashcha vishvaadhipo Rudro marharshih, Hiranya garbham janayaamaas purvam sa no vbuddhya shubhaayaa samyunaktu/ The Great Reality is ever camouflaged by an almost blinding and all enveloping net as positioned firmly and spread across all over the length and breadth of the Universe. This has been cast as Maya the Make Believe and the Supreme Almighty himself is the Originator of this Maya with which He weilds endless powers. Indeed those very blessed ones who are able to vision through this thick screen of a maze become Immortal themselves! This Highest Reality is identified with Maha Deva Rudra who is unique and unparalleled as there is no place for a second one as the creator, preserver and withdrawer of all the Beings at the end of periodical intervals. Essentially Rudra Maha Deva is the embodiment of destructive powers while His alternate form is of creation and protection as well but the Ultimate Swarupa is of the Great Dissolution! This Single Form is of 'Atman' yet the 'Pratyag Atman' too; hence the Self as well as the Supreme Self as of being the *Rupam rupam praturupam!* This Singularity is the Origin and of ramification or of Plurality or of Multiplication as the Maha Deva is of face to face, an eye to eye, arm by arm, foot by foot and so on. Maha Deva is not only the Creator of the short lived humans downwards but also of the superior embodiments of Celestial Beings too. He as the Unique Supreme is also the originator of the Golden Seed viz. Hiranya Garbha; indeed the emphasis is of Cosmic Form viz. Virat Swarupa and now on Hirayagarbha.

Yaa te Rudra Shiva tanur Aghoraapaapakaashini, tayaa nastanuvaa shantamayaa girishaanta abhichaakasheeh// Yaam Ishuma girishanta haste bibhrarshi astave, Shivam giritra taam kurumaa himsheehi purusham jagat / Bhagavan Rudra! Shiva! You are indeed the manifestation of Auspiciousness, 'Aghora paapakaashini' or of Unfrightening and Placid Form as normally one might tend to describe you due to being a Destroyer of the Universe! What is more You hardly represent the nature of Evil and of Cruelty as indeed you are the destroyer of Evil Forces even as the personification of Tranquility and Benevolence. Dweller of Kailasa and of high altitude mountains, do kindly hold the arrows of auspiciousness but harm not beasts or humans of helplessness!

Delineation of the Truth and the desperation to attain It while facing death:

Tatah param brahma parambrihantam yathaa nikaayam sarva-bhuteshu goodham// Vedaaham etam purusham mahaantam aaditya varamtamasah parastaat, tameva viditvaa atimrityum eti naanyah panthaa vidyateyanaaya// Rudra Deva Ishwara is superior both to Hiranyagarbha and Virat Swarupa to the Antaryami the in dwelling Lord, to the Supreme Parameshwara. One would cross over death only by realising the Supreme of Sunlike splendour beyond darkness. There is no other way to sift darkness to Illumination: *naanyah panthaah vidyate yanaaya!* – or there is no short cut route that is ever possible! Bhagavad Gita vide the Akshra Para Brahma Yoga of VIII. 9 precisely emphasises this very Truth of Life: *Kavim Puranam anushasitaaram anoraneeyaama samanumaredyhaah, sarvasya dhaataaramanchitya rupam Aditya varnam tamasah parastaat//* or 'As the life's energy is about to close by nearing death, the dying person ought to perform desperate efforts to steer clear all other thoughts excepting concentrating thoughts of Paramatma visualizing his resplendent Sun-like form and breath the last as for sure he attains the form of the Supreme Itself!

Yasmaat paramam naaparam asti kinchit yasmaa naaneetyo na jyaayosti kinchit, vriksha iva stabdho divi tishthati ekas tenedam puurnam purushena sarvam//Tato yad uttarataram tad arupam anaamayam ya etad vidur amritaaste bhavanti,athetare dukkham evaapiyanti//

Parama Shiva surfiert with His own magnificence filled all over the Universe is like a tree of gigantic size and stature grown in Heaven and the trees of individual sizes of by far the less miniature heights are scatered in the forests of confusing images caused by illusions disallowing the growth of the seeds and saplings to plants and of trees of even some sizes. This is but a metaphorical statement to allow maximum human comprehension; but the Truth is that Rudra has neither form nor features and once this Concealed Truth is revealed, the Sages of 'Maha Jnaana'should surpass the barriers of Sorrows and perepheral Joys of Existence and accomplish Immortality!

A profile of 'Virat Purusha' the Cosmic Being is unsurpassed

Sarvaanana shiro greevah sarva bhuta guhaashayah, Sarva vyaatee sa bhagavan tasmaat sarva gatasshivah// Mahaan Prabhur vai Purushah satvashaisha pravartakah, sunirmataam imam praaptim Ishaano jyotiravyayah//

The Lord of the Universe Parama Shiva is deeply entrenched in the hidden cave of each and every Being as the all pervading and omni present Supreme in one's own face, head and necks. He is replete with the six principal features of Life viz. *Aishvaryasya samagrasya dharmasya yashasya shriyah, jnaana vairaagyaschaiva shannam Bhaga itiranaa/* or Total Lordship, righteousness, fame, opulence, wisdom and sence of renunciation as explained in Maha Bhagavata Purana. Indeed He possesses the energy of influencing the attainment of the purest and outstanding Prime Source of Imperishable Luminosity and Splendour

Angushtha maatrah purushontaraatmaa sadaa janaanaam hridaye sannivishthah, hridaa manveesho manasaabhi klipto yadaa etad vidur amritaaste bhananti// Sahasra sheershaa purushah sahasraahshah ahasra paat,sabhumim vishvato vritvaa ati atisthad dasaangulam// Purusha evedamsarvam yad bhutam yaccha bhavyam utaamritatavasyeshaano yad annenaatirohati//

The Inner Self is hardly of thumb size always resident of his heart the hub of distributing evergy arising from Praana the breathing; mind is the charioteer of the organs and senses. Those who realise the significance of the Self knows it all. The Virat Purusha or the Cosmic Person is stated to have endless number of heads, eyes, and feet of far reaching command and the numerical thousand each of these body parts is by way of suggestive magnitude. The Maha Purusha Ishvara encompasses and envelopes Bhumi on all the sides, but again this is an undersatement of 'dashangulam' or of ten inches seeking to express in brief as that expression briefly covers Sapta Lokas, Sapta Paataalas, Sapta Dvipas, Sapta Samudras, Sapta Parvatas, and so on apart from the 'Kaalamaana' the Eternal Time Schedule! Purusha eve vedam sarvam/ or the Maha Purusha Parameshwara is indeed the totality of the Cosmos, of whatever has been, is and will certainly be too!He is the Over Lord of the Universe and of Immortality quite irrespective of the considerations of the Past-Present and Future and what ever grows 'annatarena' or based on the basis of food and the resultant vital energy ! Incidentally, the Inner Self is no doubt well within the Body and its actions but clearly unaffected by its acts and their consequences



What all about is the Unimaginable Brahman as distinct from Maha Purusha and Prakriti!

Dve akshare Brahma pare tvanante vidyaavidye nihite yatra goodhe ksharam tvaavidyaa hi amritam tu vidyaa, vidyaavidye Ishate yastusonyah// Yo yonim yonim adhitishthati eko vishvaani rupaani yonischa saevah/ Rishim prashutam kapilam yastam agre jnaanair bibhrati jaayamaanaanam cha pashyet// Ekaikam jaalam bahudhaa vikurvan, asmin kshetre samharati esha devah, bhuyah shrastvaa patayas tatheshah sarvaadhipatyam kurute mahaatmaa//

The great divide of Maha Jnaana the Original Source of Knowledge viz. Vidya and Avidya the Ignorance manifested as the Maya is clear; the Permanent and Fleeting are the typical phenomena of the Universe and Life on the one hand and Brahman on the other! Brahman is the singular source of all the forms and facts of existence and Hiranyagarbha or Brahma as clearly distinguished from Brahman as the Intermediary between the two! ‘Yo yonim yonim adhitishthati eko vishvaani rupaani yonih’ or the Single Source sources the several sources and some Maharshis like Kapila might even put forth their thoughts of Sankhya philosophy differently initially! ‘Ekaikam jaalam bahudhaa vikurvan’ or the Supreme Lord of

the Universe spread out far and wide and up appeared several Devas all of whom were of individual luminosity and powers of their own ‘amshas’ and of course their own Selves, apart from the Greatest Self the Maha Purusha Prajapati Rudra Deva!

Sarva dishah urthvam adhashcha tiryak prakaashaayan bhraajate yadvanadvaan, eam sadevo bhagavaan varenyo yoni sambhavaan adhitishthati ekah// yaccha svabhaavam pachati vishvayonih, paasyaamscha sarvaa parinaamayeh yah sarvam eta vishvam adhitishthati eko gunaan cha sarvaan vinijayed yah// Tad veda guhyopanishatsu gudha, tadbrahma vedate brahma yonim, ye purvam deva rishayascha tadviduh, te tanmayaa amritaai vai babhuvuh//

Just as Surya Deva brightens all the worlds in all the ‘dasha dishas’ or the ten directions including across, above and below, so does- and more prominently yet subtly so- the Supreme Energy too the source of all the creatures be they the ‘yonijas’ or born from wombs, ‘andaja’ or born of eggs, or ‘udbhijas’ viz. sprung out from earth; or ‘budbhija’ or materialised from water drops! As and when they are born, the various Beings adopt themselves to their respective nature and characteristics and also their habitat and the Original Creator rules them all and the ‘sarva vishvam’ or the Universe in totality! This indeed the Truth of the Truth or the ‘Veda guhyopanishastu guddham’ or the quintessence of Vedas and Upanishads; this hidden meaning of Vidya is well realised by Brahma the Sourcer of Vedas and the Creator but also to Devas and Maharshis the Seers and Seekers of the nucleus of the Eternal Truth! In fact, the Seekers are aware of the step by step of Brahma Vidya as the karma kaanda, the method of seeking of Brahma by way of ‘yoga kaanda’, Upanishads reflecting the knowledge of Brahman, and of ‘Jnaana kaanda’ and finally the ‘tadatmya’ or merger of the Individual Self with the Supreme Self!

The ‘Karmaanubhava’ or the fall out experience of actions by the Embodied Self

Gunaanvayo yah phala-karma-kartaa kritasya tasyai va sachopabhoktaa sa vishva rupastrigunah tri vartmaa praanaadhipah samcharati sva karmabhih // Angushtha maatro Ravi tulya rupah samkalpaahankaara samanvito yah, buddher gunenatma gunena chaiva aaraagra maatro hi aparopi drashtah// Vaalagra shata bhagasya shatadhaa kalpitasya cha bhaago jeevah vijneyah sa chaanantyaayakalpate// Nava stri na pumaan esha na chaivaaya na pumumsakah yad yacchareeram aadatte tena tena a rakshyate// Sthlaani suuksmaani bahuuni chaiva rupaani dehee sva gunair vranoti kriyaa gunair aatma gunaischa tessaam samyoga hetur aparopi drishtah//

Having described about THAT, the majesty and grandeur of unrealisable Brahman, now about TVAM, or of the ‘Trigunas’ of Satva-Rajasa-Tamo gunas and ‘Trivartmaas’ or of ‘Dharmaadharma vichakshana’ or the deep sense of Virtue versus Vice ! Depending on the Great Mix of Positive and Negative Results of what all the Embodied Self has performed the resultant balance of the plus and minus accounts would qualify the Individual to the three distinct paths after the termination of one’s life in the inevitable cycle of existence of births and deaths and rebirths again viz. ‘Devayana’ leading to Brahma Loka as the highest life of with Brahma so vividly described in Kaushitaki Braahmana Upanishad I.iii-v; the ‘Pitruyaana’ for enjoyment in Swarga and other higher lokas as long as the balance of positive fruits lasts or the third of ‘manushya yaana’ or of rebirth after the negative balance is exhausted then back to life as some species of human or worse of entities of existence! The Individual Soul as of the size of a thumb or the heart of a live body; it is of the ‘Ravi tulya rupa’ or of the dazzle form of Sun bestowing meaningful thoughts and of perception as though that these endowments seek to seriously mobilise positive actions of virtue. The Individual Self is of hair splitting atomic formulation to the extent of division into innumerable units counting till potential infinity. This Self is sexless as It is neither male nor female and is capable of quickly prone to transformation instantly; *tad tad dharmaan atmani adhyasyaabhimanayate/* or the characteristics of the Individual Self are adapted almost instantly. Also the

Embodied Self is capable of adapting and conditioning itself to varied situations, thoughts, feelings, features, tastes, emotions, passions, food varieties and so on. Even practices of faith, ways of life and living styles are transformed too so easily that the Self itself wonders its own innate capability to transform with no trace of the previous situations. Indeed the Embodied Self assumes qualities, selects shapes, colours, features that are at once gross or subtle, that the possibilities of transformation are truly amazing!

Possibility of Realising ‘Bhavaabhaava’ Brahman by closest mental visualisation / Introspection

*Anaadi anantam kalilasya madhye vishvasya srashtaaram aneka rupam vishvasyaikam
pariveshhtitaaram jnaatvaa devam muchyate sarva paashaih// Bhaava graahyam aniidaakhyam
bhaavaabhaava karam hivam, Kalaa sarga karam devam, ye viduste jahustanum//*

Mahadeva Shiva is the marvel and awe of Cosmic Form of the Supreme Self who is the embodiment of joy and auspiciousness. His beginning and end is unknown and is recognised and felt only at ‘Pralayas’ or the Great Dissolutions and again at Punah Srishti when His skills of Architecture and Materialization of the Cosmos get prominence. It is He as the Outstanding Enveloper of Existence and Life; indeed whoever gets over the folder of ignorance and enters the hold of the illumination of knowledge gets freed from the confines of mortality. This knowledge is ‘bhaava grahyam’ or by the Universal Mind and not necessary with the corporal mind and only that is capable of receiving signals of the Maha Purusha or of the Virat Swarupa Shiva! Indeed, when Hiranyagarbha Brahma materialised the basic framework of the Universe- which indeed carried on by the Cosmic Person of Maha Deva, He created Pancha Bhutas, Physical Organs and MIND! Prashnopanishad vide VI.4. refers: *Sa praanamasrajata, Praanaacca shraddhaam kham vaayur jyotir aapah prithiveendriam Manah, annam annaad veeryam tapo mantraah karma lokaah lokeshu cha naama cha* / or ‘Hiranyagarbha as the Chief Creator from Nothingness manifested Praana the Life Force; from Praana He created Shraddha or Faith and Conviction, ‘Kham’ or Space, ‘Vaayurjyotiraapah’ or Air, Fire, and Water, besides ‘Prithvi-Indriya-Manah’ or Earth-Organs and **Mind**; ‘Annaat Veeryam Tapah’ or Food, Vigour and Self Control; ‘Mantraah karma lokaah lokeshu cha naamah’ or Veda Mantras, Rites, Worlds and Names, nomenclatures of Beings and Forms! Indeed whosoever knows of these facts and with special reference to the Universal Mind is eligible to break the shackles of Samsara!

From Cosmic Knowledge to the Vision of Brahman is furtherance to Bliss

*Svabhaavam eke kavayo vadanti, kaalam tathaanye parimuhya maanaah, devasyisha mahimaa tu loke
yenadam bhraamyate brahma chakram// Yenaavritam nityam idam hi sarvam, jnaah kaalakaaro
gunee sarvavid yah, teeshitamkarma vivartate ha, prithivyaapya tejonila khaanichintyam// Tat karma
kritvaa vinivartya bhuyah, tattvasya tatvena sametya yogam ekena dvaabhyaam tribhir ashtabhir vaa
kaalena chaivaatma-gunaishcha suksmaih//*

It is stated that the Cosmic course is the rotating image of the magnificence of the Almighty the Eternal as represented by a Brahma Chakra or Brahma Wheel. Some select Sages of extraordinary vision and knowledge strongly believe that Brahma signifies the First Cause of the Causes especially the Kaala Chakra or the Kaalamaana the revolution of the Time Cycle. *Brahma vaadino vadanti: kim kaaranam Brahma, kutah sma jaataa, jeevaama kena, kva cha sampratishthaah, adhishtitaah kena sukhetareshu vartaamahe brahma vido vyavasthaam/* or ‘BrahmaVadis initiate their discourse on the reason of existence and purpose of Life: what is Brahman like and what again is the meaning of living as an odd mix of fleeting joys and lasting hurdles and sorrows. ‘Kaalamaana’ or the Flow of Time is blameworthy due not only to the Adhi Bhoutika- Adhyaatmika-Adhi Daivika limitations of body sourced or mind sourced or God made Prakriti or Natural happenings, but also the aberrations and influences of the

interaction of body organs and senses. The concept of Kaalamaana or of the Time Schedule is further explained : Brahman enveloping the Universe entirely is the Originator of Kaala maana, who indeed is the Fund of Knowledge thereof as also the Supreme Controller as the *Kaalakaaro* as well as ***Kaala kaalo Kaala niyanta-upahartaa-kaalah sarva vinaashakaari!*** or the Administrator /Regulator- Reversor or Withdrawer-Preserver- Destroyer both recurrently and wherever felt the Grand Annihilator! As totally controlled by Him, He also creates the Pancha Bhutas or the Basic Five Natural Elements of Earth-Water-Fire-Air and Sky. Brahman apparently takes a break in the process of Srishti and on resumption then enters into merger with the Antaratma or the Inner Self of all the Beings in an evolutionary process numerically: viz. first and foremost into the Maha Virat Purusha or Maha Deva; the in two entities as Purusha and Prakriti- Devi Maya Shakti; then three as Trigunas of Satvika-Rajas-Tamas; then eighty entities of the five afore mentioned Basic Elements plus Manas or the Universal Mind; Buddhi or Understanding and Aham Kaara or Personal Ego of Me-Mine-My Image as the Self . Bhagavad Gita in Vijnana Yoga of Chapter VII.iv-v quoted: ***Bhumiraaponalo vaayuh kham Mano buddhirevacha, Ahamkaara iteeyam me bhinnaa prakritirastadhaa// Apareyamitastaanyaam prakritim viddhim paraam, Jeevabhutaam Maha Baaho, yayedam dhaaryate jagat//*** or ‘ Arjuna! I possess two Forms of Nature- one is Para Prakriti another Apra Prakriti; the former type comprises the Five Elements, Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkaaras this being the Para Prakriti with the orientation of Jeevas or of Beings in the Universe . The Apra Prakriti is called the Moola Prakriti Jaganmaata who is the bestower to the Beings. The Fourth stanza explains that Brahman having initiated act of Creation of three qualities or features distributes them among all the Beings. They then perform ‘Karma’ as per the mix of the three ‘Gunas’. As they seek to dedicate the fruits to Ishwara eventually and turn their thoughts into introspection, then they gradually shed actions either of virtue or vicious alike and divert inward intensely as their ultimate yearning is only for realisation of the Truth!

Adissa samyoga nimitta hetuh paras trikaalaad aalopi drashtah tam Vishvarupam bhava bhutam eedyam devam svachittastastham upaasya purvam// Sa vrikasha kaalaatkritibhih paronyo yasmaat prapanchah parivartateyam dharmaavaham paapanudam bhagesham jnaatvaastmasthan amritam vishva dhaama// Tam Ishvaraanaam paramam Maheshvaram, tam devataanaam paramam cha daivatam patim pateenaam paramam parastaat, vidaama devam bhuvanesham Eedyam// Na tasya kaaryam karanamcha vidyate na tat samaschaapi adhikashcha drishyate, paraasya shaktir vividhaiva shrutyate svaabhaavikee jnaana bala kriyaa cha// Na tasya kaschit janitaana chaadhipah//

Bhagavan is the very beginning as the Cause of Causes, and manifests Himself as the Union of Soul and Bodies of innumerable Forms and Features. He being the cause of the Kaalamaana the concept of Seconds upto Kalpas and even beyond till eternity as He himself is the Regulator of the ever existent Time, but for periodic interruptions of Pralayas and Maha Pralayas as a periodic Play Pastime of Creation of the Universe and its unimaginable pattern of kaleidoscopic images although with certain fixtures like Five Elements, Devaasuras representing virtue and vice and means of Salvation and Unification with His own reflection called Antaratma right within one’s own physical set up creating misleading images by Maya the Fund of Ignorance almost impossible to destroy except by vidya and its fruition of what is called ‘Karma Pariakvata’ fully backed by mind and deed, and finally leading to integration of ‘Thou and Thine’ and the Ultimate Truth of ***Asatomaasdgamaya Tamosomaa Jyotirgamaya!***

As even the Tree of Life is so huge yet perceptible by one’s imagination and Knowledge, Paramatma who revolves kaala chakra creating frictions and facilities at every step of existence of one’s life is most certainly beyond cognition of the height nor roots of the Tree of Life. However the roots might possibly be discovered by adedquate watering and fertilisation by weeding out rotten gatherings around the Tree and gradually treating with Jnaana or Vidya and ‘shraddha’ and ‘tapas’ to not only vision the Top but climb up to the heights of the Tree and submerge thereinto! That Supreme Energy of Brahman is the focal point of all the Deities of varied forms and intensities of energy being the Master of Masters: ***tam Ishvara***

–naam paramam Maheshvaram, tam Devataanaam paramamcha Daivatam! Without his nod of head, the Worlds come to a grinding halt and no action of an organ nor senses is ever possible. He is the Source of Intelligence and Wisdom, and even that of Ignorance and Darkness even as He Himself is the Spring of joys and sorrows, pushes and pitfalls. There is no Master of His, no Controller, being the Unquestioned Authority Himself. **Tasya Lingam, na kaaranam kaaranaadhipa/** He is stated to be the Lingam or the Hallmark Signature of the Unknown Force that motivates the Universe as created by Brahma with the aid of Parama Shiva-Maya combine; that outstanding embodiment of energy has neither progenitor nor a higher vitality; the Rudra-Maya combine is an ample evidence of smoke as the sure existence of Fire!)

Yas tantunaabha iva tantubhih pradhaanajaih, svabhaavatah deva ekah svam aavranot sa no dadhaad brahmaapyayam// Eko Devas sarva bhuteshu goodhassarva bhutaantaraatmaa karmaadhyak -shah sarva bhutaadhivaasas sakshee chwetaa kevala nirgunascha//Eko vaasi nishkriyaanaam bahunaam ekam beejam bahudhaa yah karoti, tam atmastham yenupashyanti dheeraas tesaam sukham shasvatam netaresham//

Just as a spider weaves out threads from within and also swallows the threads back withdrawing within itself periodically so does Paramatma creates various Beings and the Universe in totality; He sports with the material of staggering multitude with the active assistance of the Maya Shakti as the proverbial spider does with the unmanifested matter named ‘Pradhana’ and expands itself enveloping the worlds and materialises ‘naama -rupa- guna-karmaadi tantu’ or a fantastic range of nomenclatures, forms, characteristics and deeds even as the unique and invisible nucleus of featureless ‘Antaratma’ us the hidden spectator as the witness! ‘Eko vaashee nishkiyaanaam bahunaam eka beejam’ or the Unique seed which as actionless and inactive but materialising myriad images. The role of this Undefined Secret with no qualities and adjectives is highly venerable and what all a human being could do by way of conduct, sacrifices, deeds of high virtue and total dedication with unreserved faith might help Realisation leading to *sukham shasvatam* or Truthful Endlessness! While Katha Upanishad states’ *eko vaasi nishkriyaanaam buhunaam ekam beejam bahudha karoti/ Agnir yathaiko bhuvanam pratishtho rupam rupam pratirupo babhuva, Ekatasthaa sarvabhutaan yantaratamaa rupam rupam pratirupo bahischa// Suryo yathaa sarvalokasya chakshurna lipyate chakshuair baahya doshah, ekasthaa sarva bhuta antaraatmaa na lipyate lokadhukhena baahyah// Eko vashi sarva bhutaanantar- atmaa ekam beejam bahudhaa uyah karoti,tam atmastham yenupashyanti dheeraasteshaam sukha shasvatam netareshaam//Nityonityaanaam chetanshetanaameko buhunaam yo vidadhaati kaamaan, tamaatmasyam yenupashyanti dheeraah; tesaam shaantih shasvato netareshaam// Tadetaditi manyante nirdeshyam oaramam suk ham, katham nu tad vijaaneeyaam kimu bhaati vibhaati vaa// Na tara Suryo bhaati na chandrataarakam nemea vidyuto bhaanti kutoyam agnih, Tameva bhaantamanubhaati sarvam tasya bhashaa sarvam idam vibhati//*

The Self enters inside all the Beings, like Fire enters the world, by assuming varied forms and shapes; this is in its own raw form just like the sky as the body warmth. The Self again enters the world like Air does in varied forms, intensity of speed etc. as the breathing of the Beings. The Self is not disturbed by the sorrows or joys of the Being just as Sun- the eye of the Universe, is totally unaffected by the natural calamities and rejoicings in the world; the superimposition of the illness or the wellness of the concerned body is hardly a matter of concern to the Self as that indeed is supernatural beyond the material world. The Inner Self like the Supreme is therefore totally independent, unique, and all pervasive yet creates myriad forms all of the homogenous and untarnished Purity called Consciousness. It is stated that those discerning persons do visualise the Self in the hearts of themselves as that is not corruptible by material pulls nor subject to the influences of body organs and senses! May there be eternal peace and contentment to withdraw themselves into introspection and discard the frivolities and absorb the magnificence of the Self that is what Brahman all about! To a genuine query as to how one should know the Supreme Bliss; is it self radiant or not! The reply would inevitably be as to how Sun shines; how the

Moon and Stars are luminous; how do one would witness flashes of lightnings on the Sky and indeed how is Fire so beaming and glowing! Are not all these indications of that Brahman whose glory is brilliant!

Nityonityaanaam chetanaschetanaanaa eko buhunaam yo vidadhaati kaamaan samkhyaa yogadhigamyam jnaatvaa devam muchyate sarva paashaih// Na tatra Suryo bhaatina chandra taarakam, nemea vidyuto bhaanti kutoyam Agnih, tam eva bhaantam anubhaati sarvam, tasya bhaasaa sarvam idam vibhaati//

Indeed, Paramatma is : *Nityo nithyaanaam chetanas chetanaanaam eko buhunaam vidaa dhaatikaamaan/* or is Everlasting among the Everlasting, fund of Enlightenment among those with Enlightenment; the Singular among the multitude and the outstanding bestower of desires. He is the Cause of Causes to be possibly realised by distinction or ‘Saamkhya’ and Yoga or Realisation by fixation or sharply targetted like the central ‘bindu’ or the brightest possible nothingness alone! He is by far the brighter and radiant than Surya, Chandra and the huge galaxy of Stardom, lightnings put together and of much less of Agni’s significance!

VI.xv-xviii) *Eko hamso bhuvanasyaayasya mdhye sa evaagnih salile sannivishthaah, tameva viditvaati mrityum eti, naanyah panthaa vidyateyanaaya// Sa vishva krid vishva vid aatma yonir jnaah kaala kaaro gunee sarva vidyaah, pradhaana kshtrajnaa patih guneshah samsaara moksha sthiti bandha hetuh// Sa tanmayo hyamritaa Isha samstho jnaassarvago bhuvanasyaasya goptaaa ya Isha asya jagato nityam evaanaanyo hetur vidyate Ishaanaaya// Yo Brahmaanam vidadhaati purvam yovai vedaamscha prahinoti tasmai,tam ha devam aatmabuddhi prakaasham mumukshur vai sharanam aham prapadye//*

A Unique ‘Antaratma’ common to all the Beings in ‘Srishti’ or the Universal Existence is likened to a solitary Swan which is totally unaffected by the sweeping and fleeting clouds and rains on the ‘Hridayaakaasha’. This is like the Fire latent in the ferocious high tides of oceans that is capable of burning all kinds of material aspirations ; ‘tameva viditaati mrityum’ or deep realisation of this fundamental Truth is the only path of smashing material desires; indeed ‘naanyah panthaa vidyate yanaaya’ or there is no other short cut to success. The Maha Purusha is: ‘Vishva krid, Vishva vid’ is replete with the awareness of the happenings of the Universe; He is ‘Atma Yoni’ or Self generated, the Author of ‘Kaala maana’ or Times of Past, Present and of Future tenses, the embodiment of ‘Tri Gunis’ of Satva-Rajas- Tamas characteristics and the Creator-Preserver and Destroyer of Srishti as per the discipline the Kaalamaana which He himself created to follow! Now, once a Yogi is able to realise this Truth of Truth as the Causes of All the Causes then he is able to accomplish Eternity: *eva naanyo hetur vidyate Ishaanaaya* or once the Roots of the Causes, there would be nothing else that is to be Known! This omniscient force behind Srishti which hereto-fore embodied Brahma the Devaadhi Deva from out of the Center of the Golden Egg- half of the Universe is still Unknown any way-is the Origin of Vedas the Everlasting Source of Vijnana and Dharma is indeed the very last resort to liberation as there is no further origin and form of the destruction of the eternal cycle of births-deaths and births again.

]‘Avyaktam shasvatam Shivam anantam ajam avyayam’ or Unknown, Eternal, Auspicious, Eternal, Self Generated and Indestructible!

Nishkalam nishkriyam shaantam niravadyam niranjanam, amritasya param setum dagdhendhanam ivaanalam// Yadaa charmavad aakaasham veshataishanti manavaah, tadaa devam avigjnaaya dukkhasyaanto bhavishyati// Tapah prabhaavaad deva prasaadaaccha brahmaa ha svetaashvatarotha vidvaan, atyaashramibhyah paramam pavitram provaacha samyag rishi samgha jushtam// Vedante paramam guhyam purakalpe prachoditam, naaprashanantaaya daatavyam naa putrayaa shishyaaya

vaa punah// Yasya Deve paraa bhaktir yathaa deve gurau,tasyaite kathitaa hy arthaah prakaashante mahaatmanah//

Paramatma is an essence of Purity and Spotlessness as a singular identity of integration with no parts of division as there is 'Advaitam' or of Duality or Multiplicity; That Truth is actionless since other energies which too are self-generated managing the affairs of Existence of the Beings such as Brahma-Prajapati or Maha Purusha with the active assistance or Maya the Illusory Powers to run the system of as Life as assisted by the Sub Powers of Devas as materialised by the mutual inter-action of Maha Purusha and Maha Maya! Figuratively speaking, if only Akaasha or the Interminable Sky is like a piece of leather and capable of being rolled out then the Form and Feature of the Supreme is possible of Realisation and the search of Almighty and of Bliss is what one could ever aspire! The great Maharshi Svetaashvara thus concludes that from times immemorial Maha Jnanis and Maha Yogis have made all out efforts by the intense-most endeavors of high austerities and extraordinary dedication and faith backed of course by the proactive blessings of Brahman Himself but the search has been age-old and elusive but for flashes of lightnings but once the Truth is realised by thrusting into the Unknown Realms of Eternity then the Highest Mystery in the Vedanta and no Teacher or Guide could ever lead him to but only have to 'Swaanubhava' or Self Experience!

Yasya Deve paraa bhaktir yathaa deve tathaa Gurau, tasyate kathitaahi arthaah prakaashante mahatmanah, prakaashante mahatmanah/

Indeed the subject matter sought to be explained in the Svetashvatara Upanishad is the true reflection of the Eternal Truth and essence of the enormous endeavors of Sages of high commitment and total dedication to Paramatma Himself as the Outstanding Guidance and the Direction of dazzling Radiance and Bliss! Indeed that is the Eternal Path of Self-Realisation; yes that is the path of the splendour of Truth!

Source: Shvetaashvatara Upanishad

Magnificence of Parama Shiva – Kashmiri Shaivism

Parama Shiva manifested Maha Maya so as not to bother Him about the nitty-gritty of Universal Creation, Sustenance and Periodical Destruction. The cart each of the Beings is driven by one's mind and buddhi or

the heart aided by Five Horses on either side as Five Jnaanendriyas and Five Karmendriyas , even as the nucleus of Parameshwara being present inside as the mute spectator. The mind and buddhi as the co-drivers aided by ‘praana’ the vital force as the overall string, with which to help to drive the cart of the Maha Maya. It is the dexterity in the form of mind and buddhi that the individual could drive carefully avoiding pitfalls on the way and reach the destination of ‘Paramartha’. There are dark lanes of narakas on one side, births and deaths in the broad midways, and on another side the positive lokas of bhur-bhuva-svahas. The final destination is almost impossible to reach! Yet, the ones in constant struggle never leave hope , faith, and dedication to keep on moving and even struggle hardly in single digits on the ‘jaana patha’ seeking to reach milestones of swarga and further; but most of the Beings wither away through the cycle of of unending ‘ kaalamaanana’!

Bhagavan Maheshwara divisioned the ‘Anda Chatushtaya’ or the Four folded ‘Brahmanda’ viz. Shakti, Maya, Prakriti and Prithvi – or the Energy, the Ignorance/ Make Belief, the Nature and Earth. The entire Universe, replete with Parama Shiva, is all-resplendent in Abstract Form, Paripurmam or Entirety- He is on top of the Parama Tatwas viz.as detailed. Shuddha Tatwas or the Pure Elements viz.Shiva, Shakti, Sadaashiva, Ishwara, Sadvidya Mayi, and the Parama Tatwas representing the Swaswarupas or the Forms of Individual Selves as the Unique Integrated Maha Tatwa. The ‘Swa Swarupas’ are representative broadly of Chid-Ananda-Ichaa-Jnaana-Kriya the Pancha Maha Shaktis or alternatively Shiva,Shakti, Sadaa Shiva, Ishwara and Shudda Vidya . The Collective Form is named ‘Atyanta Chamatkaara Swaswarupa’ and there beyond the SHIVA TATWA.

Now what are the Tatwas in depth: Niyati Tatwa relates to where a Purusha resides specifically. Kaala Tatwa specifies the age, maturity of mind and characteristics , sex, and environment and such. Raaga Tatwa of the Purusha concerned, attachment accessories, aspirations and desires. The Purusha seeks fulfillment of this type of material wants. Vidya Tatwa is essentially knowledge based. Indeed knowledge is limitless and as much one acquires, so much more remains. Maha Maya obstructing the clear vision of Pure Consciousness due to ‘Shad Kanchukas’ or Six Layers / Coverings and ‘Malaas’ or defilements of Aanaava, Maayiya and Karma nature, being the inner most, the interior and the outer parts of the husk that cover in three layers before obtaining the pure grain or antaratma with neither desirable nor the totally free from the stains of the pristine Self! Pancha Bhutas, Panchendriyas and Tri-Tatwas viz. Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkara total up to Prakriti. Prakriti is the totality of the 23 products, each produced from the cause and effect cycle and together Prakriti and Purusha activate the entire universe compose of 36 tatwas!

From Prakriti upto Earth, creation encases ‘Chaitanyam’ or the Pure Consciousness by ‘dehabhava’ as concealed, just as chaff covering the food grain. This Chaitanyam is covered by Maya aided by indriyas or the sense organs to specific gross physical elements. Thus creative process is composed by seven steps beginning from Shiva-Shakti-Sadashiva-Ishwara-shudda vidya-maya and kala the creativity. Vigjnaana is a flow of Self Awareness and is conceptual only. Pure Shaivism feels that Supreme Consciousness is possible by ‘sambhavopaaya’ or ‘icchopaaya’ or as coincidental or as being desirable. It may be like the myth of a rope as a snake. But surely Maha Maya has no role in this illusion. Finally one concludes that the Self Consciousness and Supreme Consciousness are true mirror images since the former has no role in the pluses and minuses of the mortal bodies as per their panchendriyas, mind, buddhi sustained by vital force praana and the Individual Consciousness is a mute spectator only and surely the photo image of Paramatma!.



Being a great sportsman, Paramatma plays hide and seek with make-belief and reality and at times he kicks up a mendicant high to great fortunes. Universal Creation, Preservation and Dissolution akin to waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep sushupti appear in the Parameshwara Himself and on the ultimate state of the jeevatma merging into Paramatma the Supreme Himself! Just as the huge expanse of sky could never be tarnished and polluted by clouds, smoke or dust, could the acts of Maha Maya which are so mysterious and complex otherwise affect the Inner Self whose mirror image is Parameshwara himself! A Being is a soft target to 'sukha dukhas', 'mayaa vyamohas', 'janma-maranas' and several problems and predilictions.

When 'ghata gagana' or ether fills dust in a jar another ether elsewhere at another place too does not fill up with dust. Similarly some human beings might have a tragedy and death in one house but in another street another house might be enjoying a wedding pary. Thus 'sukha dukhas' are dispersed; Parmeshwara is totally unaffected by Maha Maya and in fact He created her himself to assume the Task of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhaara reperitively. Having dismissed the above misconception, Parameshwara also smashes up the 'agjnaana' that the Individual Self or the Antarama is separate from Paramatma as the fomer might be subjected to the pulls of panchendriyas and mind sustained by praana.

The entire Universe is the amalgam of three ingredients viz. Prithivi-Prakriti and Maya and these correspond to the the gross, the subtle and the most subtle. From Prithvi to Maya this Universe is full of differences. Gold which could be in varied forms and shapes like belts, bracelets or rings and similarly in other metals like silver, copper and zinc or alloys thereof. The Supreme Parameshwara is pure, ever tranquil, 'abheda' or undifferentiated, 'sama' or equable, 'sakalam' or complete, 'amritam' or ever lasting, 'satyam' or the singular manifestation of Truth, that rests in Shakti who is the appearance of natural radiance.

Enlightenment is three folded to know, to seek and attain. Only these Ichha-Jnaana-Kriya Shaktis are capable of accomplishing the Akaasha Kusuma the Parameshwara. Thus Sada Shiva the Immortal rests and depends on Maha Shakti. Parmeshwara has the facility of possessing the trident of Maha Shakti viz. the 'iccha-jnaana-kriya Shaktis' with which He could bestow the Beings of Atma Darshana.

Pure Shaivism thus sums up the concept thus: Iccha-jnaana- kriya , the three Shaktis named as the trident versus their perfect victories of materialism and their combined manifestation of Maha Maya who further makes the merger of the Beings with Parameshwara, even while the latter is totally aware that both the entities are just the same. He achieves the task of external creation of three eggs more with their infinite variety in order to make way into the external world as several subjects and objects to the process of expansion of the balance of the trident Shaktis amalgamated with two further Shaktis viz. 'Sat Chid Ananda' or the commanding power of Consciousness and that of Bliss coupled with the erstwhile Iccha-Jnaana-Kriya Shaktis this totalling five forms of Shiva-Shakti- Sadaashiva-Ishwara and Shuddha Vidya are together named Parameshwara. The Supreme Lord makes the wheel of Shakti and declares of 'Ahmata' or the 'I am-ness' showing various things in the mirror of the Universe the Maha Maaya.

This is how the wheels of Shakti groups are revolved by Parameshwara as His eternal sport stating 'Ahmata' or 'Sarvaswam Ahameva; 'It is Me' as the Universe is reflected like jars in a mirror. From me the entire Universe is derived in varied forms and feelings and essentially I alone am manifested in the bodies of all the Beings with panchandriyas and panchabutas with praana and mind besides all kinds of shades be it illumination or darkness akin to knowledge and ignorance. Besides the body and Indriyas, I create Shaktis in multi-faceted swarupas, and essentially by five principal forms with Sat-chit-ananda or the power pure consciousness and the might of bliss and so on. I am engaged in the play of the 'Srishti Sthiti Samhara'. In me the that the Universe is illuminated and I am the awakeness-dream stage-sushupti and paramartha saara. I am the Vishwa Rupa with hands feet and senses. Yet, even without body and Indriyas, I can see, hear sounds, breath, feel, think and move fastest. The entire Universe is my play ground and illuminate in all modes since the thread of unity ties in all beings like men and women, children , pashus , birds and inanimate beings too.



Falsity besides the break of the cycle of births and deaths as also the limitations of 'kaala maana' and so on get severed even as he finds himself in the effulgence of Parameshwara Himself basking in the eternity of Surya! Once the physical body is destroyed then whither does he dwell especially the full force of Maya Shakti is freed for ever! Then the husk and bran of the grain of his erstwhile form has no further regermination and no further 'aanava- maayiya and karma' tarnishings and defilements. He then attains a state of pure consciousness as of Lord Shiva Himself!

Once the gems of Supreme Vision are collected in the treasure house of one's own mystic heart, which indeed is akin to that of Maheshwara's Himself, then in that state of ecstasy, the Self would tend to announce that: 'I am all and everything'! Liberation from the revelation of Maha Shakti that is basically embedded on one's own true Self is Moksha which severs the knots of ignorance. Agjnana or fantasy of 'moha' or the perfect knot. This is what needs to be untied and then discover 'atma swatantra lakshama' or the true feature of freedom of the Self.

As the bonds of ignorance are slashed and liberation has dawned, then he realises that the bondage of physical body alone is the hindrance. Once the seed of life would be scorched it would not be capable of rebirth. As the body once destroyed the limitation on buddhi would be off and the Innerconsciousness merges the unique Pure Consciousness. Once an enlightened person gets the awareness that he is but an agent of whatever is being performed by him is but of Paramatma's volition only and that he was only of

mere instrumental nature. The jnaani who decides to execute an action of virtue gets inspired by his Atma Jyoti or the internal illumination.

The jnaani who decides to execute an action of virtue gets inspired by his Atma Jyoti or the internal illumination. This is how, the Antaratma of the concerned person of whose spiritual consummation is attained yet continues to exist, albeit with neither fear nor favour yet enjoying the sublimity and the play of divinity on the stage of the materialistic Universe! Such a semi insentient Being moves about and behaves without any normal 'deha vikaaraas' or bodily action-reaction syndromes like arrogance, happiness at achievements, anger, lust, fear, avarice and delusion, and receipts of admiration from the onlookers and so on like a dumb and speechless one.

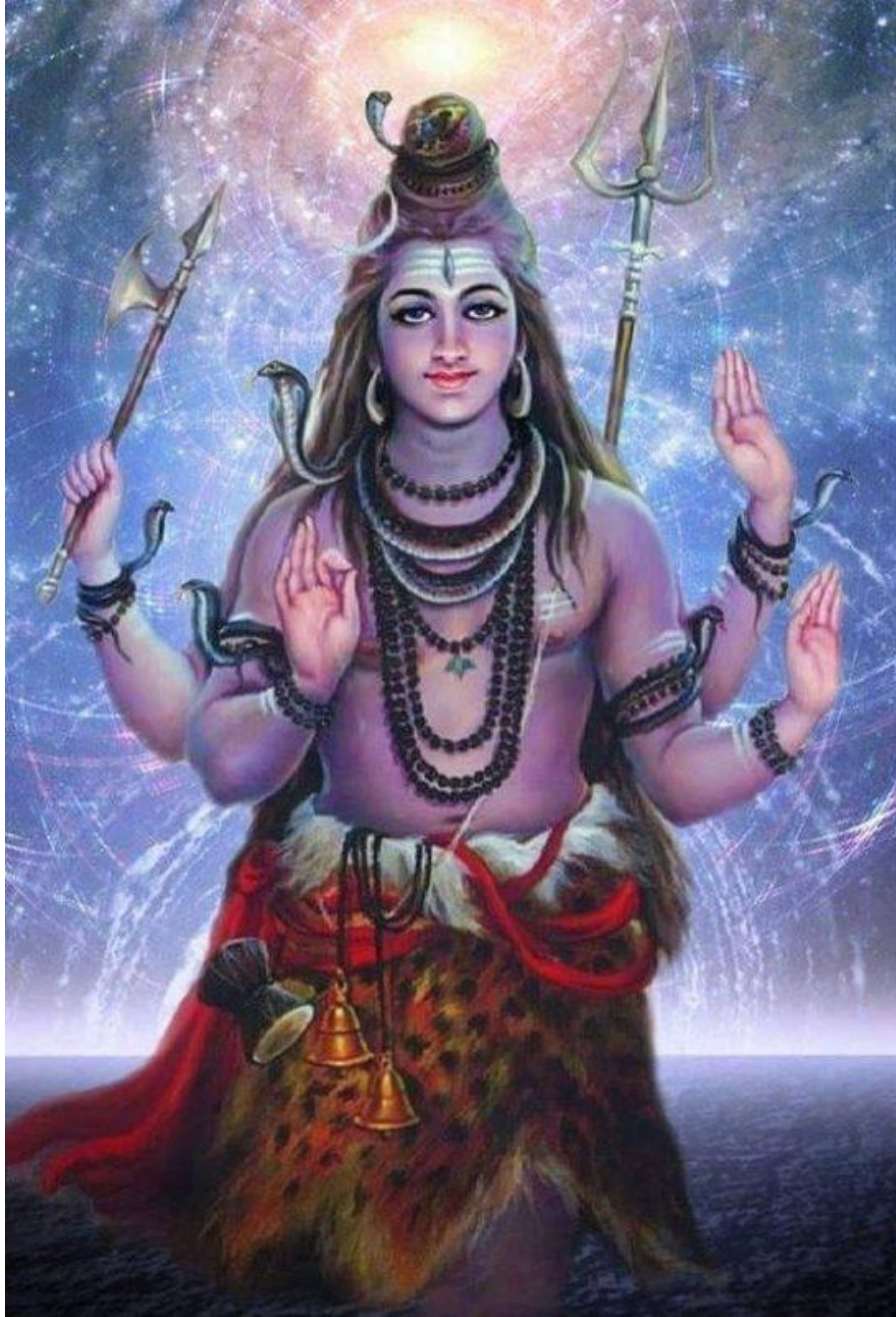
How in illuminated person is totally unaffected much unlike the normal embodied person. How indeed, 'mada' or conceit, 'harsha' or happiness and such human limitations could affect a person of the radiance of Atma Jnaana as he would already have had the vision of the non-dual Self! He would as well declare that He would be different as He was the all pervasive Brahman himself!! Since the person in that state of the periphery of 'atma jnaana' has no value of Brahma's worship, havana karyas, and of 'dwaita tatwa'; in that state of non duality, he has no need to worship of a secondary reality as He is Reality already. He has no need to visit Deva Mandiras. There is nothing distinct from Himself to which he has to greet, praise or worship any further! He would thus enjoin those 'bhaktas' and praise or pray to since he is already a liberated Being!

To a perfect and mature 'jnaani', either his or of another's is stated as the abode of the Self. This abode comprises of 'Shat Trimshat Tatwas' or thirty six Elements. Now, the tatwas are fully equipped with the respective senses too of the physical organism to perceive any external object. Thus the Jnaani realises his body is the temple of the Self. In other words one's own physical body is the abode of his self consciousness which is the 'antaratma' itself. In other words the bodily temple is akin to an external temple itself! The prayer by way of japa symbolises the thirty six tatwas by way of Atma tatwa or Ishvara tatwa and as praana the vital force named Prana Shakti by way of inbreathing and outbreathing and the channel of the spinal chord resulting in 'naada' the sound waves expressed as 'anaahata naada' arising from 'cakra madhyama' and its apex called 'Bindu'. In other words when the 'japa' of a mantra aimed at a certain form of deity, one's consciousness moves the vital breath in a swing of up and down even without one's knowledge and the resultant low sound creates ripples of spiritualism of varying degrees.

As in the Temple of Maha Bhairava Shiva along with his intrinsic Shaktis, incessant worship is carried on by way of abhisheka, tarpana, archana, homa karyaas and so on. What type of worship is done! The reply is 'Atma Paraamasha' or self analysis! Who are the 'parivaaraas' worshipped! These are 'Chitanya kaarana bhuta shaktis of Chid-Ananda-Icchaa-Jnaana-Kriya-and Vaibhava Swarupis along 'chakshu-rasana-vaak-ghraana-twak-shrotra indriyas'. Thus the Unity of diversity of inherent Shaktis signifies 'abheda-ananta-atma devata' and the 'naivedya arpanas' are executed by maamsa-rudhiramajjaadis at the samsaara-smashana shareera/ devaalayas!

An enlightened spiritualist who could vision the totality of the Universe as a single entity and could harness his own consciousness into that of a 'smashana' or the ultimate resting point of Beings should be able to realise his own body to be the symbol of the skeleton and drinks the essence of the Universe from his own skull with his own hands! This is the seemingly impossible but to a genuine spiritualist an easy austerity as a 'Vrata'. In other words a true spiritualist able to see his own dead body as but an example of nothingness and as a non- reality or Maha Maya at the threshold of Pure Conscious -ness represented by Pamameshwara; thus an austerity in the form of a 'vrata' towards seeking the Ultimate Truth of discovering the Inner Self as the Almighty alone manifests itself in countless forms and species! — Visiting a holy place or Tirtha yatra results in punya or merit and deaths in unholy huts of

chandalas would invariably transfer the Soul to narakas. This indeed the usual belief. But in what way does an already person of proven enlightenment get affected by further visiting punya kshetras?



Just as a grain of rice if separated from the husk and bran would not be utilised for sprouting like other grains, the pure consciousness in the enlightened Beings when separated from their coverings viz. the six 'kanchukaas' or coverings or the offsprings of Maya Shakti around, then the pure consciousness is like Shiva Himself.. The individuals are freed from the karmik and other defilements, then there is no reason as to why that seed would not sprout once again. The universe and its diverse objects is called by nescience or deep ignorance. The stages of a Being from the actuality or of awakeness-dream stage-sushupti- and finally the pragjnatwa despite the continuance of the physical body. However 'taadaatnya' or merger is possible only after the mortal body falls off. In other words, Samsaara begets Agjnana or Ignorance, swaatma

jnaana as a result of the removal of the six kanchukas and three malas of aanava-mayiya-karma phalas, jeevan mrityu stage might be possible when the self feels like the Supreme but 'tadaatmya' or final merger of the 'Prajnatwa' only after the body falls only.

In respect of the generally ignorant persons at the critical time of death the state of destiny causes a merit or otherwise; this may be so not only for a human being but in respect of an animal, bird or reptile but to a person of constant purification of the self with the incessant practice of virtue and merit, the minute of departure would be perhaps as chosen; to such a spiritualist already surfiat with the Shiva Tatwa the moment of departure would not be the simple issue of transmigration from one self to another self as per the destiny.

The Enlightened Self in him at that time of enlightenment visions the Supreme Self as a mirror image, even with or without the mortal body. Thus the embodied soul associated with the erstwhile karma and other blemishes, if any, would now not be adding further blemishes barring the past stock. Once the enlightened Self has the blessing of Paramatma to reveal Himself from mountain top as it were, that glimpse was no doubt invaluable from a distance. But the distant view is not visualised as the quintessence as all of the tatwas is not; the gradual steps reveal themselves as the mountain's elevations are crossed and clearer visions are facilitated.

After experiencing the pleasures of swarga and higher lokas, the spiritualist, fallen midway on the path of yoga, returns again and again to human births to enable him to further pursue the yogic path in fits and starts. But to the extent of the practice as per the steps earlier crossed in erstwhile births would be intact. Whatever had been gained and enjoyed is a running account of the previous births too. Therefore, who-soever could make all out efforts in as short number of repeated births and deaths as least needed instead prolonging the agonies of 'adhibhouthika'-adhyatmika-and adhidaivika- natures. This indeed is the substance of Shiva tatwa, the all pervasive Bliss of the Supreme Learning at the feet of Maha Deva Himself!

(Based on Essence of Paramartha Saara on Kashmiri Shaivism published by the website of kamakoti.org)

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Maha Shivaratri Jagarana Maha Phala – Chatur Yama Puja Vidhana

Maha Shivratri is a climax of Magha Masa popular for Magha Snaan as also Vasanta Panchami, Ratha Saptami, ; this is the climax of the Shukla Paksha on conclusion of these snanas during which the Shivratri has to extend into the Nisheeha or mid- night, that is two ghadiyaas past the fourteen ghadiyas there before; of such time extension occurs then Maha Shivaratri is reckoned as on the following day or therewise on the preceding day. This significant day coinciding with Sun Day or Tuesday attains added Shiva Yoga. A person intending to implement the Shivratri Vrata needs to observe ‘Ekabhukta’ or single meal on the Trayodashi and having done the Nitya karmaas in the morning of Chaturdashi and recite a Mantra Purvaka Sankalpa:

Shiva Raatri Vratam hyetat karishyehum Mahaa Phalam, Nirvighnam kuru Devaatratwat prasaadaa Jagatpatey/ Chaturda-shyaam niraahaaro bhutwaa Shambho parehani, Bhaksheyham Bhuki Muktyartham Sharanam my Bhaveshwara! (Jagadeshwara! This is my resolve to perform the most propitious Shiva Ratri Vrata and pray that with your grace the Vrata be completed without any kind of obstacles! I further resolve that on shall keep up fast on Chaturdashi and conclude it next forenoon only after the completion of of the formalities. Do bless me to achieve fulfillment!).

Then the Vrata Karta should take Tila Snaana again, keep ‘Tripundra Bhasma’ on the forehead and Rudraksha Maalaas, enter Shivaalaya /Pujaa Griha at the Pradosha Time, be seated as ‘Uttaraabhimukha’, after ‘Aachamana’ and Sankalpa with Shiva preetyartham Shiva Raatrou Shiva Pujaam karishye and initiate the Puja:

Yaama Pujas

The Text of the Puja is

Asya Shri Shiva Panchaakshari Maha Mantrasya, Vaama Deva Rishih, Anushthup chhandaha Shri Sadaa Shivo Devataa, Nyaasey Pujaney Japey viniyogah, Vaama Devaaya Rishiye namah, Shirasi Anushthupchandasey namah; Mukhey Shreem Sadaa Shiva Devataayai namah, Hridi Om Nam Tatpurushaaya namah, Hridaye Om Nam Aghoraaya,Paadayoh Om shim Sadyojaataaya namah, Guhye Om Vaam Vaama Devaaya namah, Murdhini Om yam Ishaayaaya namah, Mukhey Om Om Hridayaaya namah, Om Nam Shirase swaaha, Om mam Shikhaayai vashat, Om shim Kavachaaya hum, OmVaam Netratrayaaya voushat, Om Astraaya phat/

This was how ‘Nyaasa’ was done, then perform Kalasha Puja and take to Dhyaana:**Dhyaaye nityam Mahesham Rajata giri nibham chaaru Chandraavatamsam, Ratnaakalpojjvalaangam Oparashu Mrigahraabheeti hastam prasannam/ Padmaaseenam Samantaatsutamamara Ganair vyaaghrakruttim vasaanam, Vishvaadyam Vishwa vandyam nikhila bhaya haram Pancha Vaktram Trinetrām/**

After Dhyaana, Shiva Linga Prana Pratishtha be done while touching the Linga and performing Aavahan:” **Om Bhuh Purusham Saamba Sadaa Shiva maavaahayaami,Om Bhuvah Saamba Sadaa Sadaa Shiva maavaahayaami, Om Swaaha Saamba Sadaa maavaahayaami, Om Bhur-bhuvahswaha Saamba Sadaa Shiva maavaahayaami/**

Pushpaanjali:= **Swaamin Sarva Jagannaatha Yaavat Pujaavasaanakam,Taawatwam preetibhaavena Lingesminsannithim kuru/**

Upachaaraas (Services):**Om Sadyojaatam prapadyaami Sadyojaataayavai namonamah-Aasanam samarpayaami Om namasshivaaya; Om bhavey bhavey naati bhavey bhavaswaam Om Namasshivaaya Paadyam samarpayaami; Om Bhavodbhavaaya Om Namasshivaaya Arghyam samarpayaami; Om Vaama Devaaya namah Om Namasshivaaya Achamaneeyam samarpayaami;Om Jyeshthaaya namah Om Namasshivaaya Snaanam samarpayaami .**

These Upachaaraas would be followed by the Mula Mantraas as also Panchaamrita Snaanaas with Aapyaayasva Mantraas and Shuddhodaka Snaanaas with Aapohishthaa Mantraas. Brahmanaas would then render group recitals of Ekaadashi (or atleast one) Rudraas and Purusha Sukta while performing Abhishekaas mixed with Chandana-Kumkuma-Karpura waters. The Abhishekaas shall follow Tarpanaas as follows:



Om Bhavam Devam Tarpayaami, Om Sharvam Devam Tarpayaami, Om Ishaanam Devam Tarpayaami, Om Pashupatim Devam Tarpayaami,Om Ugram Devam Tarpayaami, Om Rudram Devam Tarpayaami, Om Bhimam Devam Tarpayaami, OmMahaantam Devam Tarpayaami,Om Bhavasya Devasya Patneem Tarpayaami, Om Sharvasya Devasya Patneem Tarpayaami, Om Ishanasya Devasya Patneem Tarpayaami, Om Pashupater -devasya Patneem Tarpayaami, Om Ugrasya Devasya Patneem Tarpayaami, Rudrasya Devasya Patneem Tarpayaami,Om Bhimasya Devasya Patneem Tarpayaami,Om Mahato Devasya atneem Tarpayaami/

Tarpanaanta Puja is executed then:

Om Shreshthaa namah, Om Namasshivaaya, Shri Saamba Shivaaa namah Vastram samarpaaami/ Om Namasshivaaya Achamaneeyam, Om Rudraaya Om Namasshivaaya Yagnopaveetam, Om Kaalaaya Namah Om Namasshivaaya Shri Chandanam, Om Balavikaranaaya Om Namasshivaaya

Akshataan Samarpanyaami, Om Balavika -ranaaya Namah Om Namasshivaaya Pushpaani –Bilva dalaani Samarpanyaami .

This Service with Pushpa-Bilwa-Akshataas should be offered while reciting Shivaashtottaraa- Sahasra Naamaavalis. There after other Services should follow:

Om Balaayanamah Dhupamaa ghrapayaami, Om Bala -pramathanaaya namah Deepam darshayaami, Om Sarva Bhuta damanaayanamah Naivedyam samarpayaami, Om Manonmanayaa namah Taambulam samarpa –yaami, Om namasshivaa Vedaahametam Saamraajya bhojyam Shri Saambashivaayanamah Neeraajanam darshayaami,

and the Mantra Pushpam samarpayaami viz.

Om Ishaanassarva- Vidyaanaam Ishwarassarva Bhutaa -naam Brahmaadipatih Brahmanodhipatih Brahmaa Shivomey astu Sadaa Shivom

The Yaama Pujas would thus be concluded by reciting the Twelve significant Shiva Naamaas viz:

Shivaaya namah, Rudraaya namah, Pashuopataye namah, Neelakanthaaya namah, Maheshwaraaya namah, Hari kashaaya namah, Virupaakshaaya namah, Pinaakiney namah, Tripuraantakaaya namah,Shambhavey namah, Shuliney namah and Maha -Devaaya namah

Finally after Aparaadha Kshamaa- Pradakshina-Saashtaanga Namaskaaraas, the Karta would leave Akshataas and water on the ground stating: Anena Pujanena Shri Saamba Sadaa Shiva preeyataam. Three more Yaama Pujas should be accomplished on the same lines with Jaagaranas, Hara naama Stutis, Purana Vachana especially of Shiva,Linga, Skanda, Markandeya orientations, Bhajanaas and so on with full involvement. Next morning after Nitya Karmas and Punah Pujaas, Paarana- Brahmana Bhojana Daanaas are concluded and the Vrata samapti be fulfilled by dedicating it to Maha Deva:

Yanmaadyakrutam Punyam tadrudrasya Niveditam, Tatprasaadaan Maha DevaVratamadya samarpitam, Prasanno bhavamey Shriman sadgatih pratipaadyataam/ Twadaalokana maatrena Pavbitrosmi na samshayah

(What ever Sukruti is achieved by this Vrata is dedicated to you as I am purified by your grace without doubt; do kindly accept my offerings and bestow Sadgati to me.)

Samsaara klesha dagdhashya Vratenaanena Shankara, Praseeda Sumukho Naatha Jnaana drishti padobhava

(Shankara! Kindly be pleased with this Vrata executed by me as per my ability and devotion; Parameshwara! As I am in the deep distress of the Ocean of ‘Sansaara’, do kindly grant me ‘Jnaanaa Drishti’ and liberate me with your grace and benevolence!.

Observance of Maha Shivratri and its significance



Austerities by way of day/night fasts and dedicated devotion on Maha Shivaratri falling on Krishna Paksha or dark fortnight of Phalgun month every year are considered as the sure steps to 'Iham and Param' viz. Happiness in the current phase of Life and Attainment of Salvation thereafter! In the early morning of Shivaratri day, a devotee should take a vow to observe day/night austerities. In the night of Shivaratri, there must be Archana, Abhisheka, Japa and full fledged worship either at a Temple or at home depending on convenience; actually the worship by way of continuous 'Maha Nyasayutha Abhisheka' with Archana along with 'Shodasopacharas' or the sixteen types of Services and Arti, but for the sake of convenience, the Puja may be repeated every three hours during the night along with Laghu Nyasa Abhisheka, Archana, Arti etc. The night long austerity must be followed by 'Punah Puja' next morning and Bhojan (meals) along Brahmanas, who should also be satisfied with 'Dakshinas'. After observing 'Shivarathris' for fourteen consecutive years, one could perform 'Udyapan' or successful completion of the Shivaratri Vrata.

'Maha Shivarathri jaagarana' even by mistake could yield fruits, let alone proper and systematic worship; this was illustrated by an incident said Sutha Muni at the congregation of Sages at Naimisaranya. There was a poor hunter named Gurudruha who became extremely hungry along with his family members on a whole day and that night happened to be a Shivaratri. He entered a forest on the eve of Shivaratri and waited for any animal to kill and satisfy the hunger; he waited near a waterbody over a bel tree nearby under which there was a Shiva Linga as a coincidence. Having waited for the first 'Prahara' (three hours) of the night, he was lucky to have sighted a female deer along with its kids approaching the water body to quench its thirst. He pulled out his bow and an arrow ready to aim at the mother deer and by a twist of fate the branch of the bel tree on which he sat moved, some bel leaves fell on the Shiva Linga and some water in a vessel carried by the hunter got spilt down on the Linga, thus performing the first Phahara puja. The deer which was very sensitive even to small sounds of leaves and water falling from the tree noticed that the hunter was ready to kill it. The animal made a sincere and convincing request to the hunter that if allowed it desired to leave the deer kids to their father and definitely return back to be killed

by him. Very reluctantly, the hunter agreed and let the animals leave. The second Prahara was closing but there was no trace of the mother deer. But the sister of the earlier deer approached the pond along her kids and the happenings of the earlier Prahara repeated viz.the hunter pulled out his bow and arrow, the bell tree leaves as also the water drops from the hunter's vessel fell on the Shiva Linga, the sister deer made a similar request and the hunter let the animal leave as he did to the earlier one, thus accomplishing the worship of the third Prahara. As the third Prahara was closing, the husband of the original deer came in search of the female deer and the kids and the earlier happenings repeated once again and the earlier Prahara puja too was executed successfully. It was a great sight of all the deers of both the families approached during the final Prahara and the hunter was delighted that he could have a feast any time but the earlier happenings repeated and the fourth Prahara worship too was implemented. But, after the fourth worship, Gurudruha's psychology was transformed; he repented for his evil thoughts and took a vow to eschew his erstwhile acts of violence. Bhagavan Shiva revealed Himself before Gurudruha as a transformed person and blessed him that in his next birth, he would be Nishad during Rama's incarnation and the latter would give him the boon of attaining Vaikuntha. (Shiva Purana)

Skanda Mahatmaya

=

Shakti hastam Virupaaksham Shikhvaaham Shadaanam, Daarunam- Ripu- Rogagham, bhaavayet kukkuta dhvajam/

Consequent to the flash back of Daksha Yajna Dhvamsa- Devi Sati's Yagjnaahuti- the Fury of Shiva Tandava – the Emergence of Shakti Peethas- Shiva's extreme tapasya-Devi Parvati's bhakti and service to Shiva the Maha Tapasvi-Indra Deva's secret plan for the wedding of 'Shiva -Parvati'- Brahma's boon to Tarakasura that only Parama Shiva's brilliant son could kill Tarakasura- Manmatha's flowery and amorous arrows disturbing Shiva Tapasya – Trinetra Prayoga burning Manmadha's physique yet rejuvenated by Maya Shakti- followed the glorious birth of Skanda Kumara and the extermination of Tarakasura for 'Loka Kalyana'.

As the Universal adversary Tarakasura's arrival on Prithvi and relentless tapasya to Brahma who granted the boon of invincibility, the Asura resorted to destroying 'varnaashrama vyavastha', 'veda brahmana kaaraagaara', 'stree maana bhangas'. He perpetrated untold harrassment to Maharshis and Celestials, declaring: 'I am Ishvara, Sarva Devata-Brahmana-Kula Devata' ! Maha Munis and Indraadi Devas approached Maha Vishnu who was in Yoga Nidra and thus approached Parama Shiva who left Kailasa for severe tapasya in deep mountain caves 'inognito'. Then there was an 'aakasha vaani' announcement that only Shiva Putra Skanda could destroy Tarakasura, and Indraadi Devas broke into rapturous dances. They made a desperate appeal to 'Maha Maya Shakti, Loka Rakshaakari, Paratparakala'; then a thunderous voice was heard that they should initiate prayers to Devi Parvati of my 'amsha' who had already appeared as Himaputri to reach Parama Shiva for performing nitya seva of Shiva – as a bhilini or mountain tribe woman to serve the latter for fetching puja dravyas like flowers, fruits etc in his tapasya with her singular desire to be the life partner. As Maha Maya thus assured, Indra and Devottamas convened a 'Meet' and the resolution was that Manmadha and Devi Rati be at once summoned to cooperate in the 'Maha Deva Karya of Shiva- Parvati Parinaya'! Kaama Deva with the request to Agni Deva to be involved in the divine task of Tarakasura Vadha so that even the 'achanchala manas' of Parama Shiva in deep tapasya might be diluted.

Kama Deva having reached the picturesque spot where Lord Shiva was in deep tapasya, he found the atmosphere was clean with gorgeous and green surroundings of huge trees, splendid and aromatic flowers, transparent flows of water, and in all a highly romantic yet ideal background for concentration. Manmadha hid himself in the bushes but the Lord realised that there appeared to be slight disturbance of plant trees and winds. From his celestial vision, Parama Shiva discovered Manmadha with pointed flowery arrows in both of his hands! He twisted his eye brows even as the 'Phala Chandra' on his forehead was alerted and raised his tone saying: who had created this sinful creature facing death! Kamadeva trembled in fear and prayed to Indraadi Devas in waste and looked up Maha Deva seeking pardon but the latter opened up His third eye above and His eyebrows opened up with a single flap and Manmadha was done to ashes instantly. Indraadi devaas were frightened in shudder and approached Maha Deva in repeated prostrations seeking his pardon as they did so only for Loka Kalyaana! Meanwhile Bhilini appeared, eased the tensions as thus displayed, cooled down Shiva gradually, pardoned the prostrating Indraadis in shivers and lightened the total atmosphere with diluted humour. Parama Shiva too smiled and invited the 'bhilini' and flew off by the Nandeeswara to Kailasa!

Ever during the honey moon period for several years, Devi Parvati continued her feelings of guilt in her inner conscience recalling the desperate and frustrated beggings of Indraadi Devas. In a distressed and

frantic Brihaspati the Acharya of Indradi Devas appeared in her vision while ‘samasta devaganas’ headed by Indra was performing Maya Yagjna for the destruction of Tarakasura. As intructed by Brihaspati and Indra, Agni Deva approached Devi Parvati and Shiva as a mendicant at their doorstep for begging; the startled Parama Shiva even advising Parvati to don her vastras at once, dropped his semen. Agni was taken aback as even a drop of the semen could burn off Prithvi and the entire samsaara could be turned into ashes. By this instant reaction, Agni swallowed the drops and spitted off the drops in Holy Ganga and purified himself and left away. Agni could never bring in sukha-shantis to the Lokas theresince! That was time when Surya entered the Tula Raasi in Shouramaana Kartika Month, when Agni Deva sought for Deha Shuddhi in the ‘ushah kaala’ snaana in pavitra Ganga and spitted off and got self purification, Agni could never bring in sukhs shantis to Lokas eversince. As Agni exited, Six Krittika Devis too were also seeking shuddhi snaanas and inadvertanly swallowed drops of Parama Shiva’s veerya but spitted off too on the ‘sarkhandas’ / grass roots on the river bank. Sage Narada seeking Shivadarshana noticed this scene in his microscopic vision and instatnly carried the ‘sarkhandas’ or the grass roots on the banks of Ganga to Devi Parvati and eventually a Six headed Shanmukha was born to Devi Parvati as caused by the Six Kritthika Devis! Narada exclaimed as follows:

Aagacchantaa maya drishto Gauri! Maarge tavaatmajah, Shanmukho dwaadashaa bhujo Suryakoti samaprabhah/ Gangaateere nipatisti tasyakste Shanmukho nu kim,koti kandarpashobhaadyo garjitakhobhitaakhilah/ Katham nishthutaakaari Gauri sundara baalake/

Devi Parvati! On my way to Kailasa, I noticed your magnificent and unparalleled son in an embroy form as with six faces and twelve hands with ‘koti Surya samaana kanti’ on the banks of holy Ganga. By his birth, samasta lokas are reverberated with shrieks of joy and relief!



On seeing the glorious countenance of Kumara, Devi Parvati was elated with 'tanmayata' as her breasts automatically sprang up with streams of milk and embraced and showered kisses on his cheeks, especially with his touch with mouth to start sucking. She then ruminated as where was Agni- Ganga-Krittikas-and Narada, leave alone Parama Shiva! As the boy grew up there was the namakarana ceremony for which Brahma Deva and Deva Guru Brihaspati arrived. The experts decided that since the Kumara was born in the month of Kartika, the boy's first name should be Kartikeya besides very many. However, since Six Krittikas were on the scene of his birth the boy be named as Shanmatura and Shanmukha or Shadaanana.. Since the Baalaka was destined to demolish Tarakasura, he be named as Tarakajit. Since he was born from Shiva veerya, he also be named as Skanda Deva. As the boy was to eventually be the Chief of Deva Sena, he be named as Senapati. In the celebrations of naama karana festival of Kumara, Devas and Muni gana were in raptures, Apsaras danced away, Narada Tumburas joined the musical reverberations of Gandharvas, and the entirety of three crore Devatas headed by Indra and overseen by Trimurtis blessed Kartikeya heartily. On this happy occasion, Indra and Devas who were already in attendance sought a special darshan of Karetikeya, made a special puja to him and as the latter was pleased, honoured Kartikeya to be the Head of Devasena with the title of Senapati. They then politely broached the topic of Lokakantaka Tarakasura vadha. As years rolled by with Kartikeya's vidya prapti and yagnopaveeta dharana, Kartikeya became mentally and physically mighty far behind his childhood experiences like his enamour to reach and kiss Chandra Deva and Brahma made a timely warning politely! But now, Kumara had since accomplished

buddhi of Brihaspati and shakti far beyond of Indra. Eventually he met his parents Shiva and Devi Parvati, praised Shiva on his famed victories like against Tripurasura ! Indeed, You are Sarvagjna, Sarvaantaryaami and Savavyaapi! Do very mercifully instruct me such a unique vrata pujaavidhana which is 'sarva siddhi daayaka, putra sampadvrisddhi daayaka, sarva paapa naashaka and dharmaartha kaama daayaka and most importantly sarva shatru vijaya shubha daayaka'!

The above is about the glory of Skanda Deva as per Ganesha Purana. There are three versions of Skanda Deva janana and Mahatmya in Padma Purana, Skanda Purana and Matsya Puranas; especially in regard to Skanda Kumara Janma and His everlasting magnificance.

Padma Purana first

It traces back the birth of Takakasura and his destruction by Lord Kumara Swami as follows: Sage Kashyap blessed his wife Diti to give birth to a great warrior 'Vajranga' who like a diamond was unbreakable and indestructible. Diti desired to avenge the killing of several Asuras in the past by Indra and asked Vajranga to defeat and bring down Indra imprisoned in person; on doing so, Diti put Indra to shame and released him saying that his subduing was worse than his death. Meanwhile, Vajranga did severe Tapasya to Brahma and the latter created Varangi as the wife of Vajranga. Brahma gave a boon to the pair that a Maha Shaktivaan called Tarakasura would be born after being retained for thousand years in confinement. There were harsh earthquakes and sea-uprisings when the Asura was born and the parents were filled with wild joy and excitement. As the boy attained youth, he turned out to be a frightening demon and developed friendship with other Asuras like Kujambha and Mahisha. Eventually, he reached a Pariyatra Mountain to perform Tapasya without food for hundred years, for another hundred years by consuming only dried leaves and for additional years by drinking water only. Brahma was pleased and gave a boon of invincibility except for a child of seven days of age, to be born of Shiva. After securing the boon from Brahma, Tarakasura raised a huge army of ten crore well-versed and trained soldiers along with the armies of renowned Asuras like Mahisha, Kunjara, Megha, Kaalanemi, Nimi, Manthana, Jambhaka and Sumbha. As Tarakaura declared war with Indra and Devas, Indra commissioned Vayu Deva as an emissary as per the advice of Deva Guru Brishaspati, but the mission failed and so did the proverbial Four ways of 'Rajaniiti' or the Art of Politics viz. Sama (War-Counselling), Daana (luring by gifts), Bheda or by using the dividing politics of the opponents and Associates and finally 'danda' or actual war. Yamaraja was the Senapati, the Commander sitting over his Vahana Buffalo; Indra sat on his Durjayta ratha (chariot) with Malini as his driver; and all other Devas like Agni, Vayu, Varuna, Kubera, Chandra and Aditya, besides Ashvini Kumars, Marudganas, Sandhyaganas, Yakshas, Gandharvas etc. But Tarakasura was too powerful to Devas whose soldiers were badly bruised and ran without direction. Indra and Devas approached Brahma and he replied that none excepting a seven day son of Shiva and Devi Parvati, called 'Kartikeya' could kill Tarakasura and none else in the world. At this juncture, Indra prayed to Sage Narada to advise further plan in the context of the birth of Kartikeya. The Sage designed a route-map of action, first to approach Himavanta and his wife Mena as also Parvati to prepare them to wed Mahadeva; to secure access to Mahadeva for his consent to let Parvati assist the former in his daily Pujas and approach Kama Deva and Rati Devi to stealthly despatch 'Pushpa Baanas' or Amorous Arrows of Love in favour of Parvati while she was in service to Mahadeva. But the Plan did not quite succeed as Mahadeva's eyes searched for Kama Deva and burnt him off with his third eye. As Devi Rati prayed to Maha Deva, the latter assured that Kama Deva would soon be created again as 'Ananga' or devoid of Physique. As Devi Parvati was shaken by the news of Kama Deva's turning into ashes, she decided to take to Tapasya; her father Himavan addressed the daughter to say: 'U' 'Ma' meaning 'Don't do so'! But still she left to such a Place to perform rigorous Tapasya where even Devas did not desire to visit and was so inaccessible at the heights of Himalayas. As the Plan as scripted by Narada Muni was not yet in place, Indra prayed to 'Sapta Rishis' to intervene. The Rishis tested her unambiguous decision to perform the severe Tapasya by arguing with her that she was bent on marrying Maha Deva and none else; in fact she

became angry with the Rishis that she reacted sharply against them and even condemned them to suggest any other name as her spouse excepting Shiva Deva. Sapta Rishis approached Maha Deva, underlined Parvati's strong mental make up to wed only Maha Deva and emphasised the angle of 'Loka Kalyan' or the Universal Cause of destroying Tarakasura which could be accomplished only through the wedding with Parvati. Taking the consent of Maha Deva, Saptarishis negotiated the transaction of the holy wedding of Shiva and Parvati successfully and smoothly. At the appointed Muhurtha, the Greatest, the Most Auspicious and Most Unique Wedding of Shiva Parvati was celebrated in which Vishnu and Brahma along with Lakshmi and Vani took active part and so did Indra, Devas, Dikpalakas, the Planets along with their spouses; Yakshas, Danavas, Kimpurushas, Pramathaganas and Piscachas were all thrilled; Gandharvas sang tuneful songs, Apsaras danced away to their glories and Maharshis and Muniganas chanted Vedas and Hymns. Such an event was neither commemorated in the Yugas that preceded nor followed. As Devi Parvati and Shiva were enjoying their post-wedding life in beautiful gardens and Sarovars, one fine morning Parvati desired to take her bath and sought to clean up her body dirt after applying scented oils and made an idol of a handsome boy whose head resembled that of an elephant. Shiva played with that idol of a boy for a while and threw it in Ganga who was Parvati's companion. Ganga brought the idol back from the flow and interestingly the boy became real with life and Devas called him as Gajanana and worshipped him; Brahma gave Gajanana the authority to head Ganas and was called as Ganapati or Ganadhyaksha ever since.

For a number of years, Shiva and Parvati were in a joyful mood after their marriage and there was little news for Indras and Devas about the possible arrival of Kartikeya who alone could terminate Tatakasura. Agni Deva took the form of a parrot and entered the Palace of Shiva and Parvati who found that Parvati was enjoying a bath in a Sarovar playing with lotus flowers and Lord Shiva was resting in his bed. She found six Krittikas in the Sarovar and told them that she was desirous of seeing the water drops inside the lotus bulbs; the Krittikas replied in fun that they would show the water drops provided they allow them also to share the joy of a child in her 'garbha'! The Krittikas further said that they should allow them too to own the child as their own as much as that of Devi Parvati and she agreed to the mutual deal; Krittikas showed the water drops inside the lotus bulb and drank them. As soon as she drank the water drops, there emerged a handsome and healthy boy from Devi Parvati's right abdomen with Sun-like luster and a powerful Physique wearing a 'Shula' and 'Ankush' in both of his hands. He was called 'Kumar' as many entities claimed parentage mainly of course by Lord Shiva and Devi Parvati but also the Krittikas and even Agni. The boy had six brilliant faces and was popularly called by several names viz. Vishakha, Shanmukha, Skanda, Shadaanana and Kartikeya. Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and various Devas gifted the Child several valuable souvenirs like Chandan, Malas, Dhup, Toys, Umbrellas, and Bhushans and instantly appointed him as the Senapati or the Commander-in-Chief of Devas. Lord Vishnu presented several 'Ayudhas' or Arms; Kubera provided ten lakh of Yaksha Sena; Agni gave his Tej (Radiance) and Vayu provided speed as his 'Vahan' (Chariot). Kumar desired to ascertain as to what he could do for them and in one voice they wanted the demon Tarakasura to be killed and Kumar assured saying: So be it! Inspired by what Skanda Deva guaranteed, Indra sent an emissary to Tarakasura saying that soon Indra and Devas would arrive to destroy the demon and his followers. Danavas wondered that an additional Shakti must have joined the Deva Sena as otherwise they would not dare send a messenger alerting them to come prepared for a battle! Tarakasura remembered Brahma's boon to him with the qualification of the risk of his death in the hands of a boy! Even Kalanemi and other Daityas had creepy feelings about the might of the stranger who joined the Deva Sena. As Tarakasura saw finally saw the so-called additional Shakti, he laughed away and made fun of the baby boy; he said that Devas did great injustice in projecting him ahead of them so that they could conveniently run away if need be! Kumar replied that there was no need to make fun of us since in a battle of 'Shastras', there was the brain power that was important but not the brute force; moreover, one did not require a huge serpent to kill an opponent but even a tiny snake could finish off the enemy by a small bite of poison! Bala Surya was always difficult to look at and never underestimate a boy! Even as Kumar's reply was over, the Asura threw a musala but the reply by way of a mighty Chakra from Kumar was instantaneous. The Daitya threw a metallic Bhindipal which Kumar

stopped merely by one of his hands. Kartikeya targetted a ferocious mace which made ear-blowing sound and the demon was hardly able to escape its impact. The demon then realised that this boy was not an ordinary kid and one had to be tough with him; he used a very powerful Shastra which was undone by Kartikeya instantly. Then Kartikeya came into his form and massacred thousands of demons and the so-called mighty demons like Kalanemi could hardly defend themselves and ran away to save their skins. As a last resort, Tarakasura hit Kumar's vahana of Peacock and going wild with this act, Kumara finally used the 'Nirmal Shakti' in his hands and threw it with force and speed and the Shakti dazzled the demon's vision; he tried his best but could not evade it since it flew behind wherever he went and ultimately pierced into his heart as the mountain-like Tarakasura fell making a thud, like a cloud-burst and the handful soldiers of the huge army of Davanas left behind alive ran for their lives. Devas went into a state of ecstasy with loud shouts and battle-cries of relief showering fragrant flowers all around, Gandharvas sang earsplitting songs of victory, Apsaras danced with gay abandon and the whole Universe wore a memorable look of unprecedented carnival. Vishnu and Brahma were highly satisfied that finally Dharma and Nyaya were vindicated by Kumara. Maha Deva and Devi Parvati seated on Nandi with Ganesha and Kartikeya flew across to Kailasa Mountain witnessing festivities all along the route! Devas affirmed that whosoever read, or heard or analysed the Story of Kartikeya would be blessed; his life-span would increase, would become healthy, popular, and contented in life without unfulfilled desires and at the end of Life would qualify for Salvation.



Skanda Purana too describes extermination of Tarakasura as follows: Lord Siva was engaged in continuous 'Tapasya' in recluse and was disinterested in usual activities following the self-immolation of Devi Sati's life after Daksha's insults at Daksha Yagna. The Demon Tarakasura did rigorous penance and obtained a boon of invincibility except by a child of Lord Siva as the latter was in meditation and was very unlikely to wed

and beget a child. Meanwhile King Himavant was blessed with a daughter Girija as Devi Bhagavati's incarnation and at her age of eight approached Lord Siva to help Him for His daily pujas and Bhagavan agreed reluctantly. In course of time as Girija continued to serve Parama Siva in the chores of worship, the Deities, who were frustrated with the dreadful deeds of wickedness of Tarakasura hurting Devas, Sages, and the Righteous Beings, planned that Manmadha the God of Love along with Devi Rati would use his flowery arrows to kindle thoughts of Love in Bhagavan's mind in favour of Devi Girija as a stepping stone for their wedding to beget a son to Siva and Girija who alone could kill the imperishable Tarakasura. But the plan of Devas got badly misfired, since Bhagavan's third eye of fury opened and Manmadha got burnt as ashes. The inconsolate Rati Devi appealed to Lord Siva as after all it was at the behest of Devas that Manmadha acted for a 'Devakarya' or a Divine Task and the brunt was borne by her husband! Devi Girija assured Rati Devi that she would help to revive Manmadha and also please Bhagavan to ask for her hand in wedding. She commenced such rigorous meditation as would shake up the whole Universe by not taking food for long, not even consuming dried leaves dropped from trees thus earning an epithet of 'Aparna' and finally even discarding water. As the Trilokas were ablaze with the heat of her Tapasya, Devas and Sages approached Lord Vishnu who assured that Bhagavan Siva was indeed a 'Purana Purusha' or the Most Ancient, approachable to one and all with clean mind; Varenya or Varaneeya (Devotion worthy) and the Paratpar Paramatma. Thus along with Brahma and Devas, Vishnu prayed for the vision of Pinakadhari Maha Deva who was in a Yoga Samadhi with Vasuki Serpent as Yagnopaveet or the Sacred Thread, Kambal and Aswatar Snakes as His earrings, Karkotak and Kulik as wrist ornaments, Shankh and Padma Serpents as shoulder ornaments, tiger skin as loin cloth, Bhagirathi Ganga and Ardha Chandra or half moon on His head inside the jatajut or His twisted hair and Blue Throat, while Nandi Deva too was nearby. As Lord Brahma eulogised Maha Deva, slowly the latter opened His eyes and described the prevailing situation created by Demon Tarakasura, Brahma's boon that only Bhagavan's son could kill him, the efforts made by Himaraja and Devi Girija whose Tapasya of extreme nature was bursting into flames across the Universe, the burning of Manmadha and Sati's agitation and finally the grand request being submitted to Bhagavan to wed Devi Girija which would eventually lead to the birth of an Illustrious Son who would exterminate the hazardous Demon Tarakasura. Bhagavan replied that as far as Kama Deva was concerned, the decision to burn him off was justified as all the Devas and such other Celestial Beings who had been victims of passion and worldly temptations were unstable of mind and action thus far and after Kamadahan or the destruction of Kama, they would all be like Himself and could all now concentrate in Samadhi the pursuance of Truth and Virtue and seek real bliss of Sat-Chit-Ananda; Bhagavan further said that 'Kama' would inevitably lead to 'Krodha' or anger, Krodha would lead to 'Sammoha' or infatuation and rigidity of thinking, Sammoha would further lead to 'Bhrama' or Maya / Illusion which would for sure camouflage Reality or Truth or the Everlasting; thus Kama the root cause be better put ablaze. Meanwhile Parvati was fully engrossed in high meditation. Bhagavan Siva was indeed impressed but desired to test her sincerity and unswerving attachment to Him. He took the form of a Brahmachari and enquired from Devi Girija's associates around her as to who she was and why was she performing such severe Tapasya? The associates replied to the queries and the Brahmachari had a hearty laugh that the Tapasya of such severity was a sheer waste as the Tapaswini was replete with ignorance since Rudra was an abhorable and wild person with a 'kapaala' (skull) in hand, a dweller of Smashaan (Burial Ground), an odd exhibitionist of poisonous serpents all over His Body, a bearer of Tiger skin as Loin Cloth, an unkempt and ugly hair style with water flowing from head, always in the highly inauspicious and disgusting company of Pisachas, Goblins, Pramatha Ganas and a typically crazy creation of God! This beautiful and attractive lady coming of a wonderful family background could indeed wed a Demi-God like Indra, Dharmaraja, Varuna Deva, Kubera, Vayu or Agni, but never ever that horrible species like Rudra! Devi Parvati got infuriated with white anger and asked the Brahmachari to be lifted and thrown out at once to have affronted such Mahatma; the stupid and arrogant person was an unpardonable sinner, a Veda-dushak and a brainless brute! Bhagavan Siva then showed up in His real form to Devi Parvati who felt shy and reminded Rudra that She was a reincarnation of Devi Sati and that She gave birth to Devi Meena with the immediate and noble cause of begetting a Son, who alone could free the Universe from the great peril of Tarakasura. On being asked her by Lord

Siva for a boon, Devi Parvati desired that Bhagavan should approach her father Himavanta to allow Him to wed her! To this Siva replied that Parvati had indeed declared her real form of Maya or Illusion and that of Maha Tatva which was a display of the interaction of three Gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas and that He would never extend His hand to 'receive' as Bhagavan was always a 'Giver'!! However, Bhagavan Siva deputed 'Sapta Rishis'-the illustrious Seven Sages viz. Marichi, Atri, Angeera, Pulasthya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha- to Himavanta's residence to formally present Devi Parvati and Himavanta proposed his daughter to wed Siva after consulting the bride's mother Mena and the co-Mountains like Meru, Nishadh, Gandhamadan, Mandarachal and Mainak. The Sapta Rishis who conveyed the most auspicious news to Siva and suggested that Lord Vishnu be immediately called and along with Him Lord Brahma, Indra, Dikpals, Devas, Rishiganas, Yakshas, Gandharvas, Nagas, Siddhas, Vidyadharas, Kinnaras, Apsaras and their spouses and cohorts. Sage Narada among the Sapta Rishis was commissioned to personally invite Vishnu, Brahma, Indra and Devas. Gargacharya was asked to supervise the rituals of the wedding and Viswakarma constructed the 'Mangala Vedika' or the Auspicious Platform to perform the Wedding and oversee the decorations. Chandra provided coolness in the atmosphere, Surya the luminosity, Vayu Deva blew fragrant airs and Indra organised dance, music and instrumental extravaganza. The Bridegroom arrived on Nandi, accompanied by Vishnu, Brahma and Devas, Maharshis, Pramathaganas, Rakshasas, Ghosts, Goblins, Pisachas and Spirits. Indeed the unprecedented and the Most Glorious Wedding of Siva-Parvati was the unique talk of the entire Universe. At the Wedding 'Muhurat', Himavanta declared: 'I, Himavanta of the Gotra and clan of Mountains have the greatest privilege of offering the hand of my daughter Devi Parvati to Parama Siva in the august presence of Brahma and Vishnu. In turn, I wish to know the Gotra and Vamsa of Bhagavan'. As Sage Narada lifted his Veena instrument, Himavanta stopped Narada not to play on it as a reply about the Gotra and Vamsa of Bhagavan; Narada told Himavanta that the Gotra and Vamsa of Maha Siva was 'Naad' or Sound and that was why Narada lifted the Veena as a reply! Bhagavan is 'Naadamaya' or the Embodiment of Naada and one could realise Siva only through Naada, as He has no Gotra and no Vamsa since He is above these nomenclatures and yet belongs to all Gotras and all Vamsas. He has neither beginning nor end; He is the Most Supreme Energy beyond comprehension! Then Himavanta gave the 'Kanyadaan' or the offering of his daughter saying: 'Imam Kanyaam thubhyamaham dadami Parameswara! Bharyartham prathi gruhneesha' (Parameswara! I am offering my daughter as your 'Dharma Patni'; kindly accept). After wedding, Maha Deva and Devi Parvati moved on to Mountain Gandhamadan to a luxurious and lonely place for their honeymoon. As Bhagavan's virility was so potent that parts of humanity were getting destroyed and Vishnu asked Agni Deva to take the form of a Hermit and asked Parvati to donate it and extended his hand which was immediately consumed by Agni even before Her eyes. Parvati got angry and cursed Agni to become 'Sarva Bhakshak' or he who consumes everything. Agni could not bear the brunt of the virility of Maha Siva and begged Him to show a way to pass it on to someone; Siva advised that the same be planted into virtuous women and Sage Narada annotated that such women of high merit taking bath on an early morning in the instant month of Magha would be attracted to Agni and his hot flames and they would be the best choice for the transfer of the virility in particles. As advised by Narada, Krittikas approached Agni seeking warmth from the cold morning and Agni transferred some drops of virility to the ladies through their skin pores. Krittikas got pregnant and their angry husbands gave a curse to them to roam on the Sky. They became Stars in a constellation and aborted their pregnancies. The major portion of the virility got left however on top of the Himalayas which was lifted by a crane and pushed into Ganges and the drops which were radiant like fire sparks got meshed up in the river bed plants (Sarkhand) of Ganges, who carried the foetus to a secluded place in the bushes thus emerging a Six Headed Child Kartikeya! As soon as the boy of highly chiselled face and limbs was born with extraordinary splendour, there was such illumination that travelled all over the Three Worlds instantly. Siva Deva and Devi Parvati appeared at once on their Vrishaba carrier and were overwhelmed with parental love and affection. Soon Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and the entire Devaloka assembled and so did Rishis, Yakshas, Gandharvas and all Celestial Beings. Veerabhadra and Pramathaganas as also the whole entourage of Maha Deva were ecstatic with boundless rapture. Devas put their chins up with indescribable relief that it would not be far for the greatest menace of Takakasura to be devastated by the new arrival on

the scene! The whole atmosphere was of liberation, festivity and celebration. The Deities commenced preparations of war to kill Tarakasura but a Celestial Voice was heard that victory would be assured only under the Leadership of Kartikeya and hence all the Devas requested Skanda to become the Chief of the Army of Devas. Meanwhile, Devasena, the daughter of Mrityu Devata, became his wife and hence Skanda was known as Deva Senapati. Kartikeya led the army of Devas of the rank of Indra, Agni, Vayu, Kubera and Yama Dharma Raja and was seated on an elephant. Tarakasura arrived with a huge army of mighty warriors who dominated and controlled the opponents initially. Indra's 'Vajra' was overpowered by Tarakasura's weapon called Shakti and wounded Indra. King Muchukunda who fought for Devas and sought to stop the domination of Daityas but Tarakasura felled him on the ground; Muchukunda wanted to use the 'Brahmastra' but was restrained by Sage Narada as that weapon would no doubt create havoc but would be ineffective to destroy Tarakasura and hence Kartikeya would have to be warmed up gradually. Veerabhadra swung into action and slaughtered thousands of Demons; Tarakasura realised that Veerabhadra was not easy to control and thus used his 'Maya' and assumed a thousand arms. Lord Vishnu suggested that the time was ripe to kill the Big Demon before he became more powerful and asked Skanda to charge him. With his mighty weapon Shakti on hand, Kartikeya chased Tarakasura but the latter retaliated with his own 'Shakti' and even got Skanda unconscious for a while. After quickly recovering his poise, Kartikeya prayed to his parents and released the Maha Shakti which was fortified with the blessings of Bhagavan and Bhagavati and finally annihilated Tarakasura who incidentally was a Great Siva Bhakta! But Siva Himself was so pleased at the valour of the lad who was more than a match to the Greatest Demon of the times who sent shock waves across the Three Worlds! While Devas and Gandharvas were engaged in unending praises and noise of resounding musical notes, Rishis were engaged in Vedic Hymns to please Kartikeya and there was ecstasy across the Globe. Whoever reads or hears the details of the historic victory of Deva Senapati over the obnoxious Demon would be rid of Sins of even great severity and magnitude. Sage Viswamitra recited the following Ashtottara Namavali (108 names) about Skanda Deva on the most significant day of Kartika Pournami of which Kartikaya is fond of as follows

(1) Brahmavaadi (Profounder of Parama Tatvas) (2) Brahma (Creator and the Reciter of Vedas) (3) Brahma Vid (The Exponent and Interpreter of Brahma Gyan) (4) Brahma Vatsala (The beloved of Lord Brahma) (5) Brahmanya (Brahmana Bhakta) (6) Brahmadeva (7) Brahmada (The Donor of Brahma Gyan) (8) Brahma Sangrah (The absorber of Vedardha or the Para Brahma's reality) (9) Sarvotkrushta Parama Teja (The Highest of All of Super Luminosity) (10) Mangala Mangala (The Most Propitious of the Propitious) (11) Aprameya Guna (He who has countless qualities) (12) Mantra Mantraga (The Quintessence of Mantras) (13) Savitrimaya (Full of Pranava or Omkara) (14) Sarvatra Aparajita (Always unconquerable) (15) Sarvatmika Mantra (The universally applicable Mantra) (16) Deva (Replete with Divinity) (17) Shadakshara Vatam Vara (The best reciter of Om Namassivaya) (18) Gava Putra (The Illustrious Son of Cow or Ganges) (19) Surarighna (The Destroyer of the Enemies of Devas) (20) Sambhava (He who makes the Impossible possible) (21) Bhava bhaavana (The Creator of the Universe in the form of Brahma) (22) Pinakini (The Carrier of Pinakini Dhanush in the form of Shankara) (23) Shatruha (The Terminator of Opponents) (24) Swetha (He assumes the form of a white Mountain or Himalaya) (25) Guudha (Born in a hidden place or He who has latent Shakti) (26) Skanda (He who jumps while walking) (27) Suraagrani (The Chief of Suras) (28) Dwaadasha (Who has twelve eyes and ears) (29) Bhu (Bhu mandala Swarupa or the Form of Earth) (30) Bhuvah (Antariksha Rupa or Of the form of Sky) (31) Bhavi (Bhavitva Rupa) (32) Bhuva Putra (Bhumi Putra as Siva's manliness was absorbed into Earth) (33) Namaskruth (Saluted by one and all) (34) Nagaraja (The King of Serpents) (35) Sudharmatma (Epitome of Virtue) (36) Naka Prushtha (He is the Base of Swarga as He is the Saviour of Devas) (37) Sanatan (He is Eternal) (38) Hema garbha (Born of Siva's gold-like semen) (39) Mahagarbha (Born of several mothers) (40) Jaya (Victorious) (41) Vijayeswara (The Deity of Victory) (42) Karta (The Performer) (43) Vidhata (The Preserver) (44) Nithya (Everlasting) (45) Nithyarimardana (The constant destroyer of enemies) (46) Mahasena (The Chief of a huge army) (47) Maha Teja (The most Illuminated) (48) Virasena (Commander of a Valiant army) (49) Chamupati (The Leader of Militia) (50) Surasena

(The Principal of an intrepid band of soldiers) (51) Suradhaksha (The Supreme Head of Devas) (52) Bhimasena (The Chief of a terrifying military) (53) Niramaya (Devoid of illness) (54) Shouri (The most gallant Son of Shankara) (55) Patu (Smart and Enterprising) (56) Maha Teja (The highly radiant) (57) Viryavan (Personification of Might) (58) Satya Vikram (Courageously Truthful) (59) Tejogarbhya (Agni Putra) (60) Asuripu (Antagonist of Demons) (61) Suramurthi (A byword for Devas) (62) Surojit (More gutsy than Devas) (63) Krutajna (Grateful to those who stand by Him) (64) Varada (Bestower of windfalls) (65) Satya (Satyavadi or He who stands for Truth) (66) Sharanya (Protector of those who seek refuge) (67) Sadhu Vatsal (Affectionate and kind to the Good) (68) Suvratha (Benefactor of those who perform good Vratas) (69) Surya Sankash (Luminous like Sun) (70) Vahnigarbhya (Begotten of Agni) (71) Ranotsuk (Enthusiastic of Battles) (72) Pippali (Consumer of Pippali) (73) Seeghraga (Travels at top speed) (74) Roudri (Son of Rudra) (75) Gangeya (Son of Ganges) (76) Ripudarun (Demolisher of Foes) (77) Kartikeya (Son of Kritikas) (78) Prabhu (Highly accomplished) (79) Kshanth (Forgiving and Patient) (80) Neela-damshtra (Blue Throated) (81) Mahamana (of large heart disposition) (82) Nigrah (Possessive of Restraint) (83) Netha (Leader) (84) Suranandana (Provider of happiness to Devas) (85) Pragrah (Controller of Enemies) (86) Paramananda (Extremely blissful) (87) Krodhagna (Alleviates the anger of Devotees) (88) Thad (Producer of heavy sound) (89) Vucchrit (High stamper of feet) (90) Kukkuti (Keeper of Cock as chariot flag) (91) Bahuli (Possessor of many useful implements) (92) Divya (Has Divine illumination) (93) Kamad (Fulfilled of desires) (94) Bhurivardhan (Has extreme amusement) (95) Amogh (Unconquerable and ever successful) (96) Amritada (Endower of Amrit) (97) Agni (Agni Swarup) (98) Shatrughna (Terminator of Opponents) (99) Sarvabodhan (Provider of Knowledge to one and all) (100) Anagha (Devoid of sins) (101) Amar (indestructible) (102) Sriman (Highly Prosperous) (103) Unnati (High Profiled) (104) Agni Sambhava (105) Piscacha Raja (King of Piscachas and Siva Ganas) (106) Suryabha (Akin to Sun God in radiance) (107) Sivatma (Siva Swarupa) and (108) Sanatana (Eternal). Phalasaruti: Those who recite the Ashtottara of Kartikeya become fearless, contented, and happy; a pregnant woman reads or hears the Ashtottara would be blessed with a son of virtue and fortune; and if unmarried girls read they are sure to secure ideal husbands.



Matsya Purana's

Skandopaakhyaana now: Brahma Manasa Putra Prajapati Dhaksha married Veerini and they were blessed with sixty daughters; of these daughters, ten were married to Dharma, thirteen to Maharshi Kashyapa, twenty seven to Chandra Deva, four to Arishtanemi, two to Bahuka and two to Krushaswa. Kashyapa's wives were Aditi, Diti, Danu, Vishwa, Arishta, Surasa, Surabhi, Vinata, Taamra, Krodhavasha, Ira, Kadru and Muni. Aditi begot Devendra, Upendra, Surya and all Devas. Diti gave birth to Hiranyakashipu and innumerable Daityas. Danu gave birth to Danavas; Surabhi the cows and other animals; Vinata the birds like Garuda; Kadru the Nagas and other reptiles; and so on. As Devas and Daityas developed mutual hatred and enmity, there had been periodical battles and each time Daityas defeated and occupied Swarga for long spells of time, Devas with the help of Narayana were regaining Swarga again and there had been as a result mass killings of Daityas and Devas had been enjoying the last laugh! Diti was unable to bear this let-down time and again. Kashyapa Muni taught to perform a severe Vrata which she performed meticulously for thousand years and after some time got pregnant. Indra came to know the purpose of Diti's Vrata viz. to bless her to conceive a boy who could terminate Indra and Devas, Indra utilised his powers / Siddhis of Anima and Parakaya; entered her womb and cut the foetus with the help of his Vjrayudha seven times making seven slices from each of the seven parts thus making forty nine 'Marudgnas'. After this tragic end, Diti once again prayed to Kashyapa to grant her a son who was indestructible even by a Vajra and as result of ten thousand years of Tapasya there was a mighty Daitya called Vajranga was born to Diti. As per Diti's instruction Vajranga brought Indra imprisoned to his mother. But Brahma and Kashyapa asked Vajranga to release Indra by saying: *Apamaano Vadha proktah Putra Sambhaavitasyacha, Asmadvaakyena yo mukto viddhitam mrutamevacha/* (Son! Respectable personalities like Indra ought to feel humbled and humiliated; hence release Indra on my

instruction.). Brahma also created Varangi so that Vajranga would wed her. Brahma instructed the couple to perform Tapasya in difficult situations, some times by raising hands, sometimes sitting with Panchagni around, sometimes sitting in deep waters and invariably without food and even water. Finally, the couple was blessed with a mighty and unique son, named **Tarakasura**. Fully understanding the purpose of his birth which his parents had strived for after performing thousands of years of Tapasya as also to fulfill the singular ambition of his grand mother to destroy Indra and Devas, Tarakasura took a vow at a grand conference of Daityas and Danavas-the descendents of Diti and Danu- and proceeded to Paritraya Parvat (the western side of Aravali and Vindhya mountain range and observed strict Tapasya during hundred year time-slots by rotation by way of ‘Niraahaara’ (without food), Panchagni (in the midst of Five huge Fire bodies) in sizzling summers, ‘Jala madhya’ inside in chilled running water in the worst winter nights, eating only fallen dry leaves, etc. Brahma had no option but to present himself and ask for his boons. He bargained of absolute invincibility and deathlessness but finally agreed that only a seven days long boy could kill him, if at all! Not far from the day when Brahma bestowed the boons, Tarakasura redesigned and reformed his lines of Military Forces and attacked Indraloka. A long-drawn and ferocious Devasura-Daitya ensued when there was considerable blood-shed in either side. Danaveswara Grasan and Yama Dharma Raja, Jambha and Kubera, Durjaya and Varuna, Mahishasura and Chandra, Kalanemi and Surya were the prominent opponents. As it looked that Devas were at the moment of collapse under the leadership of Tarakasura, Lord Vishnu sat on Garuda Deva and alighted on the battle field. All the Asura-leaders surrounded Vishnu and rained Astras against him in one go; Kalanemi shot sixty arrows, Nimi hundred arrows, Mathan fired eighty arrows, Jambhaka seventy, Shumbha ten powerful Astras, and many others as many as they could at just one target , viz. Narayana. Bhagavan Vishnu responded to all these arrows and shot severally and on one-to-one basis. The battle continued on and on; inspired by Vishnu Deva, Indra regrouped Deva Sena by strengthening patches and enlarging the volumes of the Deva Sena by recalling Yakshas, Gandharvas, and Kinnaras who brought their own powerful weapons. Vishnu called up for the assistance of *Ekadasha Rudras viz. Kapali, Pingala, Bheema, Virupaksha, Vilohita, Ajasha, Shasana, Shasta, Shambhu, Chanda and Dhruva*. The Rudra Swarupas dominated the battle field by annihilating thousands of Daityas. **Maha Daitya Gajasura** was torn into pieces and his skin was draped over the body of Kapila Rudra the Daityas made ‘hahaakaaras’ when they ran helter-skelter. Indra attacked Daitya Nimi and thumped his chest with his ‘Vajrayudha’. At the humiliation of the death of Gajasura by Rudra, **Jambhasura** challenged Indra and after a fearful skirmish, Lord Indra shot Brahmastra and the Daitya was killed instantly. But fully armed by the boon of invincibility, the end result was that Tarakasura over powered Devas, Vishnu was indeed aware of the boon to Tarakasura and withdrew from the battle and the defeated Indra and Devas were dislodged from Swarga. Indra and Devas reached Satyaloka to seek Brahma’s help and the latter predicted that soon the King of Himachala would be blessed with a daughter named Parvati who would be married to Parama Shiva and the couple would beget a child named Skanda; that boy after attaining seven days should kill Tarakasura. Brahma further told Devas that meanwhile they would have to be patient and that he had already chalked out action plans till the objective was achieved. Having assured Devas thus, Brahma called for Devi Vibhavari (Ratri Devi) and briefed her that Shiva’s earlier wife Sati Devi had immolated herself as she could not control her emotions arising out of her own father’s (Daksha Prajapati) misdeeds of insulting Bhagavan Shiva, that the latter avenged Sati’s self-immolation by destroying Daksha Yagna and Daksha and that Shiva was at the moment not in a mood to remarry but that the Sacred Wedding between him and Devi Parvati was of top urgency since the child of their union could save the entire universe as their son could only kill Tarakasura as per the boons that the Demon secured. The instruction of Brahma to Devi Vibhavari therefore was as follows:

*Virahokanthitaa gaadham Hara sangama laalasa, Tayoh sutapta tapasoh samyogah
swacchhubaananey/ Garbhastaney cha tanmaatruhu swena ruupena rajjaya/*

As both the ‘Tapaswinis’ would be tempted to unite with each other, she should enter Devi Parvati’s ‘garbha’ and imprint Shiva Deva’s manly image ther).

Then the virility so discharged would be carried by Agnideva and the Sarovara’s reefs that would carry the drops would help Krittikas to bring up the boy from the spills-over of Shiva’s virility; Devi Parvati would then retire to bed and would know only later that she gave birth to a boy. In the action plan, the next step as devised by Indra was to stimulate Shankara with feelings of romance and to create favourable situations around; indeed Kamadeva was able to succeed momentarily but when Shiva understood the game plan; Manmatha was burnt into ashes by Shiva’s ‘humkar’ followed by the opening of third eye in a split-second! Devi Rati was stunned at the sudden turn of events, since she felt that the Act of Madana Kumara was to usher in propitiousness and happiness as the worst menace of three Lokas would be rid of by the end of Tarakasura, pursuant to Shiva- Parvati’s wedding and the hastening of their son’s auspicious birth. Unfortunately, her husband became the victim, for no fault of his, as the entire drama was enacted by Indra Deva, who too could not be blamed since each step in Lord Brahma’s Action Plan was for the great advantage of the Universe as a whole. She stooped down at her husband’s ash-heap and while crying incessantly prayed to Bhagavan Shiva as follows:

Namah Shivaayaastu Niraamayaaya Namah Shivavaayastu Manomayaya/ Namah Shivaayaastu Suraarchitaaya, Tubhyam Sadaa Bhakta Kripaaparaaya/ Namoh Bhavaayaastu Bhavodbhavaaya, Namostu tey Dhwaasta mano bhavaaya/ Namostutey goodha mahaa vrataaya, Namostu Maaya Gahanaashrayaya/ Namostu Sharvaaya Namah Shivaaya, Namostu Siddhaaya Puraatanaaya/ Namostu Kaalaaya Namah Kalaaya, Namostutey Jnaana vara prasaadaaya/ Namostutey Kaalakatigaaya, Namoh Nisargaamala bhushanaaya/ Namostvameyaandhaka mardakaaya, Namah Sharanyaaya Namoh gunaaya/ Namostutey Bheemagananaanugaaya, Namostu Nanaa bhuvananakartrey/ Sarvaavasaaneyhyavi naasha netrey, Namostu Naanaa Jagatey Vidhhaatrey, Namostu tey Chitra phala Prayoktrey/ Namostu Bhaktaabhimata pradaatrey, Namah sadaa teybhava sanga hatrey/ Ananta rupaaya sadaiva tubhyamasya kopaaya namostu tubhyam/ Shashaanka chihnaaya sadaiva tubhya mameya maanaaya namah stutaaya/ Vrishendrayaanaaya Puraantakaaya, Namah prasiddhaaya Mahoushadhaaya/ Namostu Bhaktya -abhimata pradaaya, Namostu Sarvaarti haraaya tubhyam/ Charaachara vichaaravar maachaarya mutprekshita bhutasargam/ Twaamindu moulim sharanam prapanna Priyaaprameyam mahataam Mahesham/ Prayacchamey kaamayashah samruddhim, Punah Prabho jeevatu Kamadevah/Priyam binaa twaam Priya jeeviteshu, Twattoparah ko bhuvaneshwahaasti/ Prabhuh Priyaayaah prasavah priyaanaam, Praneetaparyaaya paraparaarthah/ Twameyvameko Bhuvanasyanaatho Dayaalurnmeelita bhakabheetih/

Parama Shiva! My salutations to you; you are the Spotless; the mental reflection of all the Beings; worshipped by all the Devas always; the epitome of kindness to the devotees; the Supreme Creator of the World; you burnt up Kamadeva, my husband and my deferential apologies to you for the diturbance caused when you were in a confidential Vrata. Kindly accept my devotion since you do protect those and who take refuge as they become victims of the forests of ‘Maya’; You are the Punisher as well as the Provider of Propitiousness; the Kala Swarupa /Appraiser of Time as also of Achievements since you are the Supreme Gyani / with the knowledge of those who transgress limits of time; You are the Form of Nature and the Wearer of Sacred and Untainted Ornaments; You possess spontaneous Might and destroy Evil Forces like Andhakraasura; the Nirguna devoid of features and the point of ultimate refuge; You are the Creator of several Worlds and the Scriptor of many Universes; the bestower of multiple benefits, the patented destroyer at the time of Pralayas as also the saviour of a few Beings at such extreme situations; the Enjoyer of the due ‘Yagnaphala’ which is liberally distributed to devotees; the demolisher of worldly desires; you possess myriad forms but your anger is unbridled; you are the coolness of Moon, the Symbol of self-esteem , the eulogy to all, the carrier of Nandi, the obliterator of Tripuras, the Source of ‘Aushadhis’/ medicines, the donor of desires, the remover of all difficulties, the Ultimate Regulator of

‘Achaaras’/ ‘Vichaaras’-traditions and customs; The ‘Acharya’ or the Unique Guide to the Moving and Immobile Object; The Over Seer of the entire Srishti; the Provider of Coolness and radiance to the Moon of his head; the Unparalleled Personification of Pure Love, Maheshwara! do kindly bestow everlasting fame and name to my husband Kama Deva with which he would get back to life; You are the one and only Saviour who could bring blossoms to his ashes; who else in the Universe could be competent to get my husband back to Life!.

Pleased by the ‘Stuti’ of Rati Devi, Maha Deva cooled down from his anger and pacified her to assure that she would secure her husband back after some time and would be popularly called ‘Ananga’. Disturbed by the happenings that happened as Kama Deva was burnt by Maha Deva and Devi Rati’s distress, Devi Parvati was rather disillusioned and decided to proceed to perform Tapasya. Her father gave her encouragement and said: *Umeti Chapaley Putri! na kshamam taavakam vapuh, Sodhum klesha swaruupascya Tapasah Soundarya darshiney/* (My daughter, you are too restless; ‘U’-stands for THIS and MA-stands for: ‘do not do this’; in other words: ‘you do not have to perform ‘Tapasya’; Your slender and tender body is not capable of withstanding Tapasya). As Himavan was pleading to his daughter not to think of Tapasya thus, there was a Celestial Voice (Akasha vaani) addressed to Himavaan which asserted that Parvati should not think in terms of Tapasya; *Umetinaama tey naasyaa Bhuvaneshu Bhavishyati, Siddhim cha Murtimatyashey Saadha vidhyanti chintitaam/* (Himaraja! what you uttered was that your daughter was really ‘Chanchala’ or highly unsteady and wavering; in the entire Universe her name shall be everlasting and would always be bestowing boons to the fulfillment of her ‘Bhaktas’). Indra Deva who was anxious to take further steps in expediting Shiva-Parvati’s wedding, called up the illustrious Sapta Rishis to ascertain the mind of Devi Parvati by visiting her personally and once convinced to visit Parama Shiva too to find out his inclination too. The Chief Negotiators were thus engaged in the delicate task which however had to be given a soft and swift push; they reached Parvati first and presented to her a negative picture of Shiva stating that he was perhaps not an appropriate candidate befitting her beauty and grace and that she might as well seek of another ‘greater’ and more presentable and qualified husband; they argued that he was a semi-clad, uncouth, funnily dressed, resident of ‘Smashaanas’/ grave yards, kapala dhari / wearer of skulls, bhikshukh / mendicant, with frightening eyes, apparently looking mentally unsound! Devi Parvati was rather annoyed and even surprised at the opinions expressed by the Sapta Rishis of their popular standing and affirmed:

Naaham Bhadraah kileycchaami Rutey Sharvaat Pinaakinah, Sthitamcha taaratamyena Praaninaam paramam twidam/ Dheebalai –shvaryaakaryaadi pramaanam mahataam mahat, Yasmaatra kinchitaparam sarvey yasmaat pravartatey/Yasvaishwaryamanaadyantam tamahamsharanam gataa, Eshamey Vyaavasaayascha deerghoti vipareetakah/ Bhadra Purusha Saptarshis! I am not at all ready to wed any unsteady and petty-minded entities, excepting Pinakadhari Shankara Maha Deva; despite what might be described about the greatness of other suitors, I am most emphatically anchoring my hopes on him, as he is the most certainly outstanding Maha Purusha, whose might, mind and magnificence are unparalleled. This unflinching resolution of mine might look odd to you; you may either concede or quit!

As the Saptarshis heard Devi Parvati, they were overjoyed; they said they were only testing her resolve before approaching Maha Deva to sound his mind. May this determination of yours be fulfilled soon! After all, how could the radiance of Surya be without Surya! How could the sparkle of a diamond be without the diamond! How could the meaning of ‘Aksharas’ (letters / alphabet) be detached from their ‘meaning/ implication’! Similarly how Devi Parvati could be disconnected from Maha Deva! So saying, the Saptarshis proceeded to Himalaya Mountain peak to meet Parama Shiva to sound him on the subject of the most auspicious wedding of Shiva-Parvati. They met the Veeraka the Dwarapalaka and sensitised him about the purpose of their visit and in course of time, Bhagavan met the Saptarshis. The latter being an Omniscient he said:

Jaaney loka vidhhanasya Kanyaa satkaarya mutthamam, Jaataa praaleya shailasya samketaka nirupanaah/ (I am aware that for the welfare of the whole world, the role of this damsel is quite significant; she is the daughter of Himavaan and you are desirous of proposing her for this task). *Satya muktaah kanthitaah sarvey Deva kaaryarthamudyataah, Tessaam twaranti chetaamsi kinthu kaaryam vivakshitam/* (This is indeed true that there has been considerable enthusiasm and haste, yet there would be some slow down in completing the task). *Lokayaatraanugantavya viseshana vichakshanaihi, Sevantey they yato Dharma tat pramaanaayaat parey sthitaah/* (The Vidwans would do well in properly following the formalities and the established traditions of 'Dharma', since this action plan would constitute a regular standard to the posterity). The implication of what Maha Deva stated was fully understood by Sapta Rishis and they left to the Palace of Himavanta instantly. They conveyed to Himavanta and his wife Mena the exciting news of Maha Deva's implicit consent to offer himself as the bridegroom to Devi Parvati. Mena said that normally the parents of the bride would propose an alliance but the bridegroom proposed instead! Anyhow, she asked that they might as well approach Parvati directly. The Rishis replied that the ground was already prepared and Parvati was in fact performing Tapasya only to accomplish Shiva's hand. In any case, they would approach her as a formality and in response, Parvati terminated her Tapasya and came back home. Parvati felt so anxious that the previous night before the wedding preparations commenced was like ten thousand long nights. Next morning at the 'Brahma Muhurta, the propitious acts were initiated; the 'Shadritus' or the Six Seasons arrived; Vayu Deva and Varuna Deva took up the cleaning operations of the huge mountain range to receive the Wedding Guests; Devi Lakshmi set various arrangements including the golden and silver vessels required; Chitamani and many other jewels were spread all over; Kalpa Vriksha and Kamadhenu were pressed into service; all kinds of 'Aoushadhis', 'Rasaayans', and 'Dhatu's' turned up to be of use in the food preparations. There at the 'Gandhamaadana' Mountain range, assemblies of Maha Munis, Nagas, Yakshas, Gandharvas and Kinnaras started hotting up. Brahma initiated the make-up of Parama Shiva and for a start, combed the 'Jatajutas' / the coarse hair and set the position of 'Chandra Khanda' right; Devi Chamunda decorated a big 'kapaala' on one side of Shiva's broad head and said that once a son was born from the wedding, the latter should fill up the skull with the blood of Tarakasura and gift that Kapala to her to enjoy the drink! Vishnu arrived with a golden 'Kirita' ('head gear) studded with 'Nava Ratnas' and well-ornamented with live snakes which added to the luster of the 'Sarpa Manis' on the heads of the snakes; Indra arrived in haste with the 'Gaja Charma' / Elephant Skin and draped it on the body of Shiva; Lord Vayu took over the charge of Nandeswara and took great pains to swathe a gold-laced white silk bejewelled with nine gems decorated on the back to make a cushioned seat on which Maha Deva could be seated comfortably; 'Loka Sakshis' (Ready Universal Evidences) Surya, Chandra and Agni Devas lit up the 'Three Netras' / Three Eyes with renewed radiance and radiation and garnished them with dark clouds as eye-tex; Preta Raja Yama Deva embellished Shiva's broad forehead with 'Chita bhasma' in three straight lines and ornamented his fore arms and wrists with strings of human bones; Kubera gifted invaluable jewellery made of nine gems studded in pure gold worn along with a heap of live and hissing snakes, while Varuna brought special 'Kundalas' / Ear rings with coiled Vasuki and Taksha serpents. As the bride groom got ready and sat comfortably on Nandeswara, the procession commenced with firm and dignifiedly slow steps and Bhudevi was in shivers with each step of Nandeswara carrying the Supreme Lord of Trilokas, and behind him were Vishnu, Brahma, Indra, Dikpalakas, the Nava Grahas, Devas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Pramatha Ganas and so on each with their wives, unless they had already reported to duty at the bride's Palaces. Veerak, the Dwarapalaka of Maha Deva, in the lead was addressing hoarse the surging crowds ahead of the 'Ratha' to make way and let it pass; after all, when Maha Deva was himself moving ahead, could any one in the hysteric mass of humanity resist the temptation of catching a glimpse of Bhagavan! Behind the Dignitaries following the procession were the celebrations of singing Gandharvas, dancing Apsaras, and the tuneful Kinnaras, further followed by Maharshis, Sages and Brahmanas reciting Vedas and Sacred Hymns. The whole Universe was charged with myriad emotions as the groom's party arrived at the bride's palace. At the 'Kalyana Mandapa', the Parvarta Raja Himavan was in a state of dazed ecstasy since Parama Shiva himself was his son-in-law.

Pranateynaachalendrena Pujitotha Chaturmukhah, Chakaara vidhinaa Sarvam Vidhimantra purah saram/ (Parvata Raja performed puja with respects to Brahma and with the full course of formal Mantras, the wedding was celebrated in tradition and dignity); Sharveya Paanigrahana maagneena saakshikamakshatam, Daataa Mahibhrutaam Natho hotaa Devaschaturmukhah/ Varah Pashupati Saakshaat Kanyaa Vishaaranistathaa (Then Parama Shiva wedded Parvati with Agni Saakshi or in the presence of Agni, when Daata / donor was Himavaan, Brahma as Hota (the Head Priest), Shiva as the bride groom and bride as Aranibhuta Devi Parvati.) Devas were extremely happy that the best was yet to happen; Indra gifted a golden umbrella, Gandharvas sang tuneful songs, Apsaras danced to their best, Kinnaras organised instrumental extravaganza and the whole world celebrated, but of course Daityas and Danavas who had ruled for thousand years were highly dejected quite understandably. After a few days the new couple of Shiva and Devi Parvati took permission of Parvata Raja Himavaan and moved back to Mandarachala. Years passed by and Shiva and Parvati continued to enjoy their marital bliss. Out of fun, Bhagavan Shiva teased Parvati once as follows:

Shareerey mama tatwaangi sitey bhaasya sitadyutih, Bhujaangee vaasita shuddhaa samslishtaa chandaney tarow/ Chandraatapena sampruktaa ruchirambaraa tathaa, Rajaneevaasitey pakshey drushti dosham dadaasimey/Devi Parvati! As your physical colour is rather dark and mine is fair, it looks that a dark serpent is circling a chandana tree! Also, there is a similie -comparison- of a shining Moon against the background of dark cloud on the sky!

Understandably, Parvati was not amused, and in fact, badly hurt, when Shankara made these remarks even as a joke. Instantly, she left out home and proceeded to perform ‘Tapasya’ to Brahma for a number of years to change her body colour. Any amount of pleading and supplication by Shiva did not change her mind. Meanwhile, the son of Andhakasura and the brother of Bakasura called ‘Aadi’ performed strict ‘Tapas’ to Brahma Deva and asked for the boon of ‘Amaratwa’ or immunity from death. As Brahma could not grant this advantage, Aadi amended the request that he should be able to convert his Body Form as per his wish; Brahma agreed provided that the Daitya could do so only twice. As Veerak was guarding the Entry Point of Shankara and as it was not possible to enter ‘Shiva dwar’, Aadi converted his Form as a snake and entered Shankara’s abode through an under ground hole and slithered in; thereafter Aadi assumed the Form of Devi Parvati, approached Maha Deva and pretended that she had given up Tapasya as the severity of meditation just to change of body colour from ‘Krishna Varna’ to ‘Gaura Varna’ was not worth the strict regimen. Parama Shiva was happy initially that she changed her mind and returned back to him. But on second thoughts and knowing that Parvati would not take a flippant decision to return without achieving her objective, he suspected the fake Parvati and killed the ‘Mayavi’ Daitya. The original Parvati Devi’s Tapasya pleased Brahma Deva and blessed her to change her body colour as she pleased either as of Gaura (white)Varna or of Shyama Varna; Parvati returned home to Maha Deva but the unwitting Veeraka, the ‘Dwarapalaka’ refused her entry to her own house! As any amount of convincing did not help Veeraka, Devi Gauri was tired out to reason him and finally gave a ‘Shaap’ that he would be born as a human and after the duration of the curse would return to her again. Parama Shiva was so excited as Gauri entered his interior bed room that a delegation of Devas headed by Indra was turned out saying that he was busy. Indra detailed Agni Deva to take the form of a parrot and peep in through a window as to what was happening inside their bed-chamber. Exactly at that time, the parrot peeped in when Shiva-Parvati were actually seen in action on their bed; Shiva noticed the parrot and recognised Agni. He scolded Agni and said now that he created ‘Vighna’ (obstacle) between him and Parvati and hence he might as well rectify the situation by drinking up his virility. The highly explosive drops shining like molten gold punctured Agni’s belly and got spread over the Maha Sarovar nearby. Several lotus flowers which got sprouted all over in the deep waters emitted strong and fragrant scents and the intoxication affected ‘Krittikas’ who happened to bathe in the Sarovar; the Krittikas desired to take the lotus leaves home but Devi Parvati jocularly remarked to the Krittikas that she could take the drops of water on the lotus leaves as well. In turn Krittikas joked that they would take the water home, provided

the child born of the water consumed by them should have equal right to the motherhood of the boy so born! As the deal was struck between Kritthikas and Parvati, the Krittika damsels gave the lotus leaves as also the water drops to Parvati. Subsequently, Devi Parvati drank up the water around the lotuses and from her right and left 'kukshis' gave birth to two male children later united into one and the child who had the extraordinary radiance of Surya Deva; each of the Six Krittikas shaped up one head each of the child; thus the boy was named 'Kumara' by Parvati; 'Kartikeya', 'Shanmukha', 'Shadvakra' by the Krittikas and as 'Vishakha' or the different 'Shakhas'/ branches of the lotus leaves that carried the golden drops. On Chaitra Shukla Shashthi, the child was declared as the 'Deva Senapati'/ the Commander-in-Chief of Devas. Vishnu gifted varieties of 'Ayudhas'/ Arms and 'Astras' or Mantrik Arrows. Kubera presented him a lakh-strong of yaksha army. Vayu Deva gave him a 'Mayura Vahana'/ Peacock Carrier, while Twashta Prajapati gifted a toy in the form of a Cock which could change its form as the boy wished. All the Devas presented souvenirs, prostrated before Skanda and extolled him:

*Namah Kumaaraaya Mahaa Prabhaaya Skandaayacha Skandita daanavaaya, Navaarka Viduydyutaye Namostutey, Namostutey Shanmukha Kaamarupa/Pinadwi nanaabharanaaya Bhartrey Namoraney Daarudaaranaaya, Namostu teyrka pratima prabhaya, Namostu Guhyaaya Guhyaaya tubhyam/ Namostu Thrailokya bhaayaapahaaya, Namostutey Baala kripaa paraaya, Namovishaalaamala lochanaaya, Namovishaakhaaya Maha Vrataaya/ Namonamastestu Manoharaaya, Namonamastestu Ranotkataaya, Namomayurojjwala vaahanaaya, Namostu Keyura dharaayatubhyam/ Namodhrutodagna pataakiney Namonamah Prabaavapranataaya testu, Namonamastey Varaveerya shaalininey, Kripaaparo nobhava Bhavyamurtey/ Kripaaparaa Yagnapatim cha stutvaa, Viromirowam twamaraadhi paadyaah, Yevam tadaa Shadwadanam tu sendraa mudaa santhushta Guhastatastaan/*Our Greetings to You, Kamarupa Shanmukha! You are Kumara, the radiant son of Maha Shiva and the destroyer of Danavas; your physical form is the glow of rising sun and of the heat of Agni; you are appropriately adorned, the Army Chief of Devas; the dreadful on the battle front; Guhya Rupa, the abolisher of fear in Trilokas in the Form of a Child; gifted with broad and clear eyes; Vishaakhaa! Our reverences to you as the practitioner of Maha Vratas; you are a terror in battle fields although of pleasant visage otherwise; you have a peacock as your carrier and wear a Keyura / wrist bangles; the high flier of flags; the bestower of boons to devotees; the high profile symbol of courage and strength; you possess a Magnificent Form. This was how Indra and Devas extolled Skanda. Even as Kumara was replying to assure Devas that very soon the desire of retrieving their lost glories would be fulfilled, an emissary of Tarakasura arrived and conveyed their Chief's message to Indra with a warning not to repeat his past mistakes of challenging a giant Daitya of the stature of that great Tarakaura who shook up the Universe and converted Devas as his servants; he also remarked that instead of playing balls and toys, the baby boy Skanda should gradually get acclimatised to battle fields and face mighty Asuras much later in life! As Tarakasura was in a jocular mood, Skanda Deva said: 'Taraka! Never underestimate the 'Shakti' of a kid; can you not realise that a baby serpent could perform permanent damage to you and that a boy who has 'Alpaakshara Gyan' in releasing 'Astras' could reach you directly to Naraka! Even while Skanda was conversing like this, Taraka threw a 'Mudgara' (hammer) and an agile Kumara destroyed it with his 'Vajraayudha'; Taraka threw a 'Bhindapaal' which was destroyed by Kumara's own hands. Skanda materialised a Gada / Mace and despatched it against Kalanemi Daitya who became furious and rained a stream of Arrows. These arrows had little impact on Skanda. Instead, Kalanemi and his associates were thrashed by Kumara and they had to sprint from the battle lines. Takakasura then appeared center-stage and was furious in releasing a powerful arrow which hurt Kumara Swami's 'Mayura Vahana'; The infuriated Skanda and threw the most potent 'Shakti Baana' which was indeed the decisive point that sealed Tarakasura's fate and the greatest menace in the Trilokas who dominated the scene for thousands of years was finally destroyed, even as Devas sounded 'dundhubhis' (large drums) and showered rose petals which filled up the Earth, Sky and the Nether lokas with the fragrance of Parijata flowers from Swarga. Gandharvas and Kinnaras sang mellifluous praises of Kumara and his proud parents, Apsaras were ecstatic and Sapta Rishis recited Mangala Mantras. Those who read or hear about the glories of Skanda would neither have sins nor diseases but lead a contented life ahead!

Important Lord Murugan Temples

Swami Malai: One of significant six Subrahmanya Kshetras worthy of visit in Dakshina Bharat viz. Tiruttani, Palani, Tiruchendur, Tiruppuramkunnam and Pazhamudircholai is Swami Malai-literally meaning God's Hill- some 30 km near Kumbhakonam at an elevation of 82 ft. totally dedicated to Swami Nathan, called locally as 'Tagapan Swami' or Father God! The legendary background was that the Lord taught the true meaning of OM or Pranava to Maha Deva himself! As Brahma Deva failed to interpret the word adequately to Kumara Swami, he chided him; when Maha Deva asked Kumara to explain in a convincing manner, he analysed the depth of the meaning he did so even as the father learnt it intently as though a Teacher to a Vidyarthi! The Swami Malai Temple performs 'shat kaala dainika puja' or six worships a day round the year, besides celebrates many festivals like Krittikai every month, Rathotsava in April, Vishakha in May, Navaratri in May, Kanda Shashti in October, Kartikai Utsav in November, Taipuccham in January and so on. The Golden Chariot utilised for all the festivals are made of 7 kg of gold and 85 kg of silver-copper alloy with sparkling illumination. There is a Sweta Vinayaka Temple made of white foam of Sea representing Ksheera sagara that created Amrit!

Palani: Some 38 km from Trichy and 100 km near Coimbatore is another Subrahmanya Kshetra of the reputed Six as mentioned above, the Abode of Dandayudhapani. There are two mythological references to this Temple; one is that since this Palani Hill was of the 'amsha' or of relationship with the highest mountain of the Universe viz. Meru, Sage Narada provoked Vindhya that the latter was, after all, not taller than Meru; this hurt Vindhya and tried to grow even taller as one side of the Universe was bright but the other side remained dark for ever since Sun became unreachable to the side at all. Parama Shiva asked Agastya Muni who was a resident of Kashi to teach a lesson to Vindhya; the Muni reached Vindhya who as a reverent to the Muni bent down and the Muni asked Vindhya never to stand. Agastya then moved to Dakshina Bharat to stay at Palani Hills for long before moving down further down to other Southern parts of Bharat. Another explanation about Palani Hills was that Sage Narada visited Kailasa to pay respects to Shiva and Parvati and gifted a Fruit of Jnana or Knowledge; he requested to conduct a test between Ganesha and Kartikeya viz. pradakshina or circumambulation of the Universe. Kartikeya instantly flew by his Peacock Vehicle while Ganesha performed a pradakshina and was rewarded with the Fruit. Kumara on return got furious and made Palani his abode as an ascetic assuming danda or a staff and 'koupeena' or loin cloth. Subsequently the parents Shiva and Parvati reached Palani to cajole the Dandayudhapani saying: *Gnaana paam nee Appa!* Or 'Indeed you are the personification of the fruit of Knowledge yourself, darling son!' There are daily worships including Kaala and Shanti Pujas- Alankaras-Aariti-Deepa- Swarna Ratha/ Golden Chariot Darshana. Festivals like Thai-Poosam/ Purnima, Tirtha Kavadi Yatras, Diamond Vel or Shula (javelin) yatras, Pankhuni Uttiram, Vaishakhas, Soora samhara etc. all drawing large crowds, especially due to the rope way facility up the hill, although many climb by steps owing to vows with or without foot wear or by Kavadis slung on shoulders!

Tiruttani: Yet another among the six Subrahmanya Tirthas is of Murugan Temple at Tiruttani, near by the border of Andhra Pradesh and distant by 84 km from Chennai up a hill of 250 ft elevation connected by good hill motorable road. Besides the Sanctum of Muruga, there are Temples of Mkahashasura Mardini, Veera Anjaneya, Arumuga Swami, Narasimha Swami, Mangaleshwara Shiva and so on. Besides Trikala Pujas and Deepa-aradhanas, festivals as observed at other Subrahmanya Tirthas as at Swami Malai are celebrated, especially Kanda Shashti, Nava Ratras, Krittikas and Vishakhas as also Shiva Ratri penances.

From Madurai to about 3 km is *Tiruppuramkkundam* and nearby there is a small mountain and up there is a cave inside which a Sarovar and a fairly big Mandir with a high rise gopura dedicated to Lord Subramanya, besides Murtis of Shiva-Parvati-Ganesha Idols; the belief is that Kumara's wedding was celebrated here and a row of Peacocks with Shiva- Parvati-Ganesha Murtis present as the audience! This is one of the six Subramanya sthalas of Dakshina Bharat. Passing by near the southern side of Vaigai river, one encounters a large Sarovara where the Ratha Yatra of Meenakshi-Sundareshwara Parikrama

terminates at the Maryamma Koil. *Palamoodicholai* hardly 2km from Alagar Koyil up the Mountain and this too is one another six Abodes of Lord Kumara as a Tiruppuruk kundam. This too is one of the six Subramanya sthalas of Dakshina Bharata.

Tiruchendur is among the Five most famous and Sacred Subrahmanya Tirthas in Bharat, viz. *Swami Malai, Tiruttani, Tiru- chendur, Palani and Tirukundram*. Tiruchendur is on the shores of the Sea and normally yattris perform Samudra Snana before entering this Sacred Kshetra, which has a large Mandapa after crossing which only the Main Temple unfolds the Lord's darshan. The Golden Murti of the Lord Swami Kartikeya is indeed brilliant both in terms readily arresting features and shape as also the artistic attraction readily experiencing inner vibration of feelings.

Vaitheswara Koil of Angaraka: Dharani garbhasambhutam Vidyurkanti sama prabham, Kumaram Shakti hastam tam Mangalam pranamaamyaham/ Being the son of Bhu Devi Mangala Deva is of the flashy brightness of a Lightning and he too like Lord Subrahmanya the embodiment of Power and Courage ever worthy of worship. The Temple of Lord Vaideeswaran the Supreme Deity of Healing and of Medical Treatment as the key to Arogya or Health is situated some 27 km of Chidambaram and 52km from Kumbhakonam. Built by Kulottunga Chola of 11th century, Vaideeshwaran Temple encompasses large precincts with a 5tier Gopuram with its principal Sanctum dedicated to Vaideeshwara Linga and a metal image of Muttukumara Subramanya, besides those of Nataraja, Soma Skanda, Angaraka as also stone sculptures of Durga, Dakshina murti, Surya, Jatayu, Vedas and Sampatti. Temples of Taila Nayaki standing with medical oils to cure diseases and another of Dhanvantari and Angaraka are in Place, besides a Vriksha Sthala with medicinal properties in the vicinity. Nadi Jyotisha written in Tamil Script is practised in Vaideeswaran extensively and near the Temple. Brahmotsavas during January- February, Kartigai Festival during November and Kanti Shashtis at Muttukumara Temple are big draws besides on Tuesdays.

Subrahmanya Kshetra: Within the State of Karnataka in South Kanara District is the renowned Koumara Kshetra where Parashu Rama established a Mukti Kshetra like Mookambika, Udipi, Gokarna etc. Mangalore is the nearest Railway Station from where Subrahmanya is some 40 km although the roads are through forests and dusty and rather difficult to reach in rainy season but recommended from November till May. Main Mandir is of Lord Subrahmanya as seated on a Mayuraasana or on a Peacock. On the platform up at the Temple He is a Shadaanana Murti or of Six Heads, with a Pratima of Sarparaja Vasuki in the middle and at the bottom is Sessa Bhagavan and facing the Temple is a Garuda Dwhaja stated to offset the impact of poisonous flames emitted by the Sarpas. There is a Bhairava Mandir to the South, a Mandir for Uma Maheshwara in the northern side, a VedaVyasa Samputa Nrisimha Mandir in the Southern side of the Main Mandir, besides a Parashurama Mandir again in South. In Kerala, the main places of worship are Kasargod, Payyanur, Haripad etc. In Andhra, Skandagiri in Hyderabad is famed while in East Godavari's Bikka volu is well known for worship of Subrahmanya Swami just as Karnataka has exclusive Temples venerated Him as Kukke Subrahmanya.

Apart from the famed Subrahmanya Khetras in Southern India, there has been a considerable following in North too. Pehova in Ambala of Punjab is the famed Swami Kartik Mandir near Prithishwar Maha Dev who is of Four Faces. Pilgrims worship him with oil and sindur as also perform Pitru Karyas on the banks of Sarasvati River. Swami Malai in New Delhi too has acquired great name for daily abhishakea pujas daily twice to the imposing figure of Lord Murugan at Vasanta Vihar. Worship of Kartikeya especially during Devi Navaraatras and all through the Kartika Month in West Bengal and Odisha is extensive. In Sri Lanka, there is a huge following of Murugan, especially at Jafna. Batu Caves in Kaula lumpur and ardent worship of Dandapani on Tank Road of Singapore are widely popular and so are in the Subrahmanya Temples in London, Midlands and Liester. Murugan worship is also widespread in USA, Canada, Australia, not to mention of Mauritius and South Africa.

Manidweepa – Know about the abode of Devi Bhagawati

Origin and Realization of Manidweepa

Maha Devi Herself explains that Maha Purusha and Herself was just the same as a lamp and reflection in a mirror and that She was neither a female nor a male, but a Unique Genderless Nirguna. Any changes witnessed are due to the interplay of ‘Antah Karanas’ or natural instincts like Mind, Buddhi, (Mental Power) and ‘Ahankara’ (Ego) on the one hand and ‘Maya’(Illusion) on the other. At the time of Creation following the Great Dissolution (Pralaya), the dissimilarities occurred as Gender, ‘Karma’ (Fate) and ‘Anthah Karanas’ all created by ‘Maya’. It was at that time of Creation, that The Supreme Energy assumed various ‘Vibhutis’ or Manifestations like Sri (Prosperity), Buddhi(Brainpower), Daya (Compassion), Dhriti (Tolerance), Smriti (Memory), Shraddha (Conviction), Medha (Acumen), Lajja (Shyness), Shanti (Peace), Nidra (Sleep), Pipasa (Desire), Vidya (Comprehension), Spriha (Awakeness or Alertness) and Shakti (Power). Maha Devi continued to state that She was the Para, Madhyama and Pasyanti (Mystic expressions of the Supreme Power indicating the Stages of Manifestations of the Eternal Force); She was Para Shakti beyond one’s Comprehension, Madhyama Shakti who was both Expressed and Unexpressed (Vyakta –Avyakta) and Pashyanti Shakti who was Fully Manifested and recognisable with Physical Form or Saakara Shakti; She was also present in thirty five million ‘Nadis’ through out a human body (the tubular organs of the body like arteries, veins, intestines, blood vessels, pulses etc. She was in Vasa (fat), majja (marrow), Tvak (skin) and Drishti (eye sight) clearly present in each and every part of ‘Samsara’. So was the case of non moving objects of Creation either animate or inanimate. Maha Devi further affirmed that She was seen as Brahmi or Sarasvati, Vaishnavi or Lakshmi, Eswari as Gauri, Indrani as Indra, Varuni as Varuna, and so on whose formations were all Hers, making the counterpart Purushas perform their tasks as the Maha Devi’s agents or instruments of action. She was the Gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas; Ahamkaras-Jnana Sakti (the Power of Knowledge), Kriya Sakti (The Power of Action) and Artha Sakti (The Power of Wealth or Maya the Illusion); The various Tatvas and Maha Tatva; and the interplay of Five Tanmatras or Subtle Elements viz. (Touch, See, Breathe, Hear and Taste) and Five Basic Elements (Earth, Air, Water, Fire and Sky) known as the Process of ‘Pancheekarana’ resulting in Five Causes. This was made into a Jeeva (Living Entity) and the Cosmic Totality of That would be Brahma, stated Devi Bhagavati! The features of the Three ‘Gunas’ or attributes were explained to Narada. Normally, Faith is known to exist in the form of three Gunas viz. Sattva Guna, Rajas Guna and Tamas Guna. Sattva is described as the fountain of Goodness and happiness in a pure form. Its colour is stated to be white standing for purity, integrity, happiness, contentment, forgiveness and faith. The Rajas Guna is stated to be red in colour and is featured as false pride, deceit, avarice, hatred and selfishness. The Tamo Guna standing for black colour is stated to feature ignorance, lack of resources, anger, fear and quarrelsomeness. There is no set identity of the Gunas but are intermingled and rapidly changeable. A person who is Good basically might spurt out into anger and pride and change over in the same breath to fear. But surely the resultant impact would be disastrous; An unfulfilled desire would lead to anger. Anger leads to obsession. Obsession leads to failure of memory (focussed thinking) and lack of memory leads to mental balance!

Manidweepa the Abode of Devi Bhagavati

Being far superior to Kailasa, Vaikuntha and Goloka, the Sarvaloka or Manidweepa is the residence of Devi Bhagavati in whom the entire Creation rests! Indeed She resides everywhere and anywhere but notionally at Manidweepa and the description is transcribed in detail by Maharshi Veda Vyasa apparently for the consumption of mortals to carry conviction into their consciousness. Surrounded by ‘Sudha

Sagara' (The Ocean of Nectar), Manidweepa has a strong iron enclosure of several Yojanas far and wide with four gates well guarded by Devas and Devis.

Within the First Enclosure, there is an Enclosure of white metal made of an amalgam of zinc and tin/copper which touches Heavens and is hundred times higher than the walls of the outer Enclosure. This Enclosure is interspersed with gardens and forests with a wide range of trees and plants, flowers with intoxicating fragrances, luscious fruits along with streams of fruit juices and gregarious animals and birds of staggering variety.

The third Enclosure is made of copper with a height of seven yojanas comprising several 'Kalpavrikshas', with golden leaves/ flowers and fruits yielding gems, fulfilling desires of any imagination. The King of the Gardens along with the wives Madhu Sri and Madhava Sri maintains an excellent Spring Season, where Gandharvas reside, rendering divinely songs and music.

The Fourth Enclosure made of lead with its wall height is again seven yojanas and within the Enclosure are the Sanatanaka trees with flowers whose fragrance reaches as far as ten yojanas and fresh fruits providing sweet juices of great quality and its King with the two queens Sukra Sri and Sudha Sri always maintains enjoyable mild summer where Siddhas and Devas reside here.

The Fifth Enclosure made of brass with a spread of ten yojanas is maintained by its Chief as a perennial Rainy Season accompanied by twelve of his wives, viz. Nabha Sri, Nabhyasya Sri, Sravasya, Rasyasalini, Amba, Dula, Niranti, Varidhara, Abhramanti, Megha Yantika, Varshayanti, and Chivunika. The Trees grown in the Gardens of this Enclosure are Hari Chandana.

The Sixth Enclosure is made of walls with five-fold irons and its Gardens grow Mandara Trees and creepers; the wives of its Chief are Isalakshmi and Urjalakshmi maintaining the Season of Autumn. Here again Siddhas reside with their wives.

The Seventh Enclosure of seven Yojanas of length is made of Silver, its Chief maintaining Hemanta (dewy) Season with his two wives Saha Sri and Sahasya Sri with Parijata as its main tree and flowers.

The Eighth Enclosure is made of molten gold with Kadamba garden in the center with Tapas Sri and Tapasya Sri as the wives of the King and the fruits of the trees yield honey that is consumed aplenty by Siddhas and wives who are the inhabitants and the season again is dewy.



The 'Navavarana' or the Ninth Enclosure is made of Pushparaga gems of Kumkum (saffron) colour which is abundant all over inside the Enclosure like forests, trees, rivers, flowers, lotuses, 'Mandapas' (Halls), pillars and so on. All the 'Dikpalakas' of High Regency reside in the Eight Directions of the Enclosure, with the thousand eye bodied Indra in the East in Amaravati on Airavata with Sachi Devi, 'Vajra Ayudha' or thunderbolt, the Celestial Apsarasas and the rest; Agni Deva in South East with his two wives Svaha and Svadha, his Vahana and other belongings; Yama Dharmaraja in the South with his 'Yama danda' (his Symbol the Celestial Rod) along with Chitragupta; Nirruti in the South West with his axe and wife representing Rakshasas'; Varuna Deva in the West with his wife Varuni and 'Pasa' (the noose), drinking Varuni honey and with the King of Fishes as his Vahana (Vehicle) and surrounded by aquatic animals; Vayu Deva in the North West with his wife, forty nine members of his Vayu family along with groups of Yogis adept in Pranayama and other practices along with his Deer Vahana; the King of Yakshas and Unparalleled Possessor of Gems and Jewels Kubera in the North along with his two

Shaktis Viriddhi and Riddhi and his Generals Manibhadra, Purnabhadra, Maniman, Manikandhara, Manisvargi, Manibhushana and Manikar Muktadhari; Rudra Deva in the North East with other Rudras who are angry and red eyed, armed and mighty, frightful and revolting, fiery mouthed and detestably distorted, some times ten handed or thousand handed, odd number footed and odd number mouthed; in the company of Bhadrakalis and Matriganas, Rudranis and Pramadhaganas making ‘Attahasas’ or reverberating screeches and so on.

Tenth Enclosure made of Padmaraga Mani inside which are the Sixty four ‘Kalas’ like Pingalakshi, Visalakshi, Vriddhi, Samriddhi, Svaha, Svadha and so on each of these having hundreds of akshouhini strong armies and individually each of these ‘Kalas’ have the unimaginable Power of destroying a lakh of ‘Brahmandas’(Universes)!

The Eleventh Enclosure is made of Gomeda Mani and within this are the sin-destroying and beneficent Maha Shaktis viz. Vidya, Hri, Pushti, Prajna, Sinivali, Kuhu, Rudra, Virya, Prabha, Nanda, Poshani, Riddhida, Subha, Kalaratri, Maharatri, Bhadra Kali, Kapardini, Vikriti, Dandi, Mundini, Sendhu Kanda, Sikhandini, Nisumbha Sumbha Madini, Mahishasura Mardini, Rudrani, Sankarardha Saririni, Nari, Nirayani, Trisulini, Palini, Ambika and Hladini.

The Twelfth Enclosure made of Diamonds and is the dwelling place of Bhuvaneswari, and is surrounded by Eight Shakties viz. Anangarupa, Ananaga Madana, Madanantara, Bhuvana Vega, Bhuvana Palika, Sarvasisira, Ananga Vedana and Ananda Madana; each of these Main Atteendants of Bhuvaneswari has a lakh of Attendants.

The Thirteenth Enclosure is made of Vaiduryas and the Residences of Eight Matrikas viz. Brahmi, Mahesvari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani, Chamunda and Mahalakshmi.

The Fourteenth Enclosure made of Indranilamani, which is the Most Auspicious Place of the Sixteen Petalled Holy Lotus with Sixteen Maha Shaktis resident viz. Karali, Vikarali, Uma, Sarasvati, Sri, Durga, Ushas, Lakshmi, Sruti, Smriti, Dhriti, Sraddha, Medha, Mati, Kanti and Arya.

The Fifteenth Enclosure made of ‘Mukta’ or Pearls inside which reside Eight Shaktis Ananga Kusuma, Ananga Kusuma Tura, Ananga Madana, Ananga Madanatura, Bhuvanapala, Ganganavega, Sasirekha, and Gangana Vegarekha.

The Sixteenth Enclosure which is made of Marakatha (Vaidurya) is hexagonal of Yantra Shape, and on the eastern corner of the Center is the Brahma with Devi Gayatri with Vedas, Sastras and Puranas as well as their Expansions; on the Western corner is Maha Vishnu and Savitri along with their own Expansions; on the North Western corner is Maha Rudra and Sarasvati with Rudra and Parvati Expansions and Sixty four Agamas and all Tantras; on the South Eastern side is the abodes of Kubera and Maha Lakshmi; on the Western corner side are the Couple of Madana and Rati Devi and on the North Eastern side are Ganesha and Pushti Devi.

The Seventeenth one is made of Prabala (Red like Saffron) Devi Bhagavati’s five Elements viz. Hrillekha, Gagana, Raktha, Karailika, and Mahochuchusma;

Finally, the Eighteenth Enclosure is built with Navaratnas (Nine Jewels) with Bhagavati in the Center with ‘Pancha Amnyas’ (Eastern Amnaya is Creation by Mantra Yoga, Southern is Maintenance by Bhakti, Western is Pralay by Karma Yoga, Northern is Grace by Jnana Yoga and Urdhva Amnaya is Liberation); ten Maha Vidyas (Kali,Tara, Chhinnamasta, Bhuvaneswari, Bagala, Dhumavati, Matangi,

Shodasi and Bhairavi) and Avataras viz. Bhuvanesvaris Pasamkusavari, Bhairavi, Kapala, Amkusa, Paramada, Sri Krodha , Triptavasarudha, Nityaklinna, Annapurnesvari and Tvarita .

Ratnagriha or the Crown Palace of Mula Prakriti or Maha Devi Bhagavati is beyond the Eighteenth Enclosure, built of Chintamani Gems with thousands of pillars built by Suryamani Gems or Vidyutkantamani Gems. Four huge ‘Mandapas’ or halls each with thousand pillars in the Palace are made of kaleidoscopic and artistic mix of ‘Navaratnas’ (The Nine Gems) viz. Mukta, Manikya, Vaidurya, Gomeda, Vajra, Vidruma, Padmaraga, Nila and Marakatas with dazzling lights and exhilarating perfumes suited to the Themes of the Halls designated as Shringara, Mukti, Jnana and Ekanta.

In the Central place of each of the Halls, there is a Very Special Chintamani Griha or the Sanctum Sanctorum on a raised platform with a plank supported by the four legs of Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and Mahesvara and the plank is Sadasiva Himself!

The Maha Tatvas are the stair cases leading to the Upper Chambers. Mula Prakriti and Maha Purusha constitute two halves of the Physical Formation of Maha Devi cum Maha Deva with Five Faces of Each Half, with corresponding three Eyes and four arms and armoury , one hand reserved exclusively for providing boons. The Attending Sakhies are those surrounding the ‘Ardhanarisara’ are Icchaa Sakti, Jnaana Sakti and Kriya Sakti who are always present with the Maha Bhagavati along with Lajja, Tushti, Pushti, Kirti, Kanti, Kshama, Daya, Buddhi, Medha, Smriti and Lakshmi in their physical Forms. The Nine Pitha Shaktis Jaya, Vijaya, Ajita, Aparajita, Nitya, Vilasini, Dogdhri, Aghora and Mangala are at the constant Service. Devi Bhagavati is simultaneously present in all the Mandapas; enjoying Vedas, Hymns of Praise, and Music in Shringara Hall; freeing Jivas from bondages in Mukti Hall; rendering advice and instructions in Jnana Hall and conducting consultations in Ekanta Mandapa with Ministers like Ananga Kusuma etc.on matters of vital significance related to Creation, Preservation and Destruction of Evil.Indeed the inhabitants of Manidweepa are all those who have attained Samipya, Salokya, Sarupya and Sarvasti. They have no Arishdvargas to overcome, no tatvas to gain, no gunas to regulate, no Yogas to perform, no ambitions or desires to fulfil. They have no concepts of time, death, age, distance, body, mind, light, season or the ‘Tapatriyas’. Human beings normally tend to describe the negativity of life always but the Eternal State of Perfect Equilibrium is some thing utterly unimaginable!

Maharshi Veda Vyas assured that reading, listening or imagining about Manidweepa and of the Glories of Devi Bhagavati would provide peace of mind, contentment and fresh springs of hope, purpose and direction of life especially when new projects or actions are launched as also when apprehensions, obstacles, diseases, tragedies or even death are envisaged! (**Source : Devi Bhagavata**)

Origin and Glory of Nandhishwara

A devout Brahmana as an ardent Shiva bhakta named Shilaada performed severe Tapasya on Nandi Mountain to Lord Shiva by eating nothing else but 'Shilaachurana' (rock powder) for hundred years seeking a boon to secure a highly virtuous son. Maha Deva was pleased and granted the boon provided that the boy to be named Nandi but owing to an indiscretion of his at the Shiva-Parvati wedding, he was cursed by Bhriгу Maharshi and would be destined to a human birth. Nandi was materialised from the cool rays of Chandra Deva as a child and the highly elated Shailada pampered the child and performed all the ceremonies of childhood. As Nandi grew and revealed that he would have to go back to Maha Deva soon, Shailaada was shattered and became uncontrollable.

Nandi then did Tapasya to Maha Deva for hundred years on the Mountain of Himalayas on one of the peaks called Haramukuta, where there was a lake called Kalodaka. Meanwhile Shilaada prayed to Devi Parvati to please allow Maha Deva to respond to Nandi's tapasya and was performing 'Yagna' on Mountain tops. Maha Deva proceeded towards the Haramukuta but as the route was rough and rocky, Devi Parvati could not proceed further and he alone without Parvati took a circuitous route on foot and on way crossed Shatadru, Vipasu, Iravati and Chandrabhaga, Vishnupada and the confluence of Vitasta and Sindhu to finally reach the Bharata Mountain. He took considerable time to ascend the peak, even as the Mountain grew higher and higher; the exasperated and exhausted Maha Deva grew up in his body stature and stamped his foot on the mountain's head since when the mountain known as 'Mundaprastha' could not bear the hit of Parameshwara, came out in human form and sought his pardon of Maha Deva. A water body emerged out of the stamping of the foot and was called Kripani Tirtha, subsequently known as Apsara Tirtha as that was the swimming pool of Apsaras. Then Parama Shiva was enchanted by the most charming Place called 'Brahmasara Tirtha' and could not resist the temptation of swimming in it and converted himself as a Swan! The bird broke the Mountain and saw for Himself the Sacred Place where Shailaada was performing Yagna to please Devi Parvati and him self to extend the human life of Nandishwara. As the Swan saw the Sacred Places of Vatika and Sandika where the Yagna was being organised, it also witnessed the Kapila Tirtha.

Lord Brahma saw Parameshwara in the Form of a Swan and prostrated before him. As Shakra was there too along with a group of Devas, he saw Brahma there and knelt down and prayed to him . As Shakra prayed to Brahma as above, Brahma replied that Maha Deva himself was before him in the Form of a Swan and alerted him to lead the Devas present too to join Shakra to pay tributes to Maha Deva directly and Indra paid homage. as follows:

*Namastey Deva Devesha Mayaavrutajagatraya, Yajamaano Mahi swam chathoyaagneendurka
Vaayaah/ Tanavastey Vinirdishta yaabhyarvyaptam Jagatriam, Braahmeem tanum tathaasthaaya
Raajaseem twam Jagadguro/ Lokaansrujaasi Bhutaatmamstava Kaaryam na vidyetey, Paorusheem
tanumaasthyaaya Saatwikeem twam Maheswara/ Paalayasyakhilam Deva thrailokyam saakshibat
sthitah, Kaalaakhyaam taamaseem krutwaa jagat samhaarasey tathaa/ Vrisha rupa dharmo
Dharmo
vaahanatwamupaagatah, Vaamaardham dayitaakaayam Brahmachari bhavo dhavaan/ Namah
Shashaanka lekhaanka jataabhaara Maheshwara, Gangaataranga nirdhuta jataa -bhaara namostutey/
Tripuraarey Namastestu Namastvandhaka ghaatiney, Shulaagra bhinna daityaamsha rudhiraadra
namostutey/ Kapaala maaliney tubhyam Parvatidayitaayacha, Ugraayudhaaya Bhimaaya
Bhimaayudha dharaayacha/ Urdhwa Lingaaya Sheeghraaya Krathaaya Kratanaayacha,
Maangalyaaya Varenyaya Mahaa Hamsaaya meedhushey/ Bheemaakshaaya Bhusundaaya Vyaala
Yagnopapeetiney, Kshamaswa mama Devesha yan mayaasi na Pujitah/ Tavaiva Mayaya purvam
mohitena Jagatprabho, Prasannosi dhruvam yena jnaatosi vai mayaa/ Suprasaadodi Devesha
pranatosmi Maheshwara/*

(Our obeisances to you Deva Devesha who has spread out ‘Maya’ or Illusion all over the Three Worlds; the Pancha Bhutas viz. Prithivi, Water, Radiance, Wind power, Sun, Moon and Sky are all the ramifications of Your ‘Swarupa’ or Form extended all over; You assumed the Brahmi Shakti of ‘Rajasa’ facilitating Creating, Satvika Shakti to administer and uphold the worlds as a Unique Witness and finally by taking the ‘Kala Swarupa’ perform ‘Jagat Samhara’ or demolition of the Universe; Dharma Swarupa! You take over the Form of a Bull and as an ‘Ardha Naareswara’ and as a ‘Brahmachari’ perform the killing of Daityas with ease and without effort; Our greetings to you, Shashakadhara, Maheshwara, Jatadhaari wet with the waves of River Gangaworn on your head; You were the devastator of Tripurasura and Andhaka; You look dreadful as the killer of Daityas with their bodies strewn on top of your ‘Shula’ with their gushing blood; the ‘Kapaala Maalinee’/ wears garlands of Skulls around neck; ‘Ugraayudhaya’/ Carrier of Fearful Weapons; Bhimaaya / Bhima Shankara Linga; ‘Urthwa Lingaya’; ‘Sheeghraaya’/ The Speediest; Krathaaya, ‘Krathanaaya’/ ‘Mangalyaya’ / The Most Auspicious; ‘Varenyaaya’ or the Most Excellent and Distinguished; ‘Maha Hamsaaya’/ the Outstanding and Unique Swan; ‘Bhusundaaya’ / like the Great Yogi /Trikala Gyani and renowned Master of Pranayama who built a Mountain like Nest on Kalpa Vrikshka on Meru; and ‘Vyala Yagnopaveeta’/ wearing a serpent as his Sacred Thread. By so saying, Indra sought Hara Prabhu as he was overcome by a severe Maya / Illusion and could not recognize Maha Deva as the Great Swan).

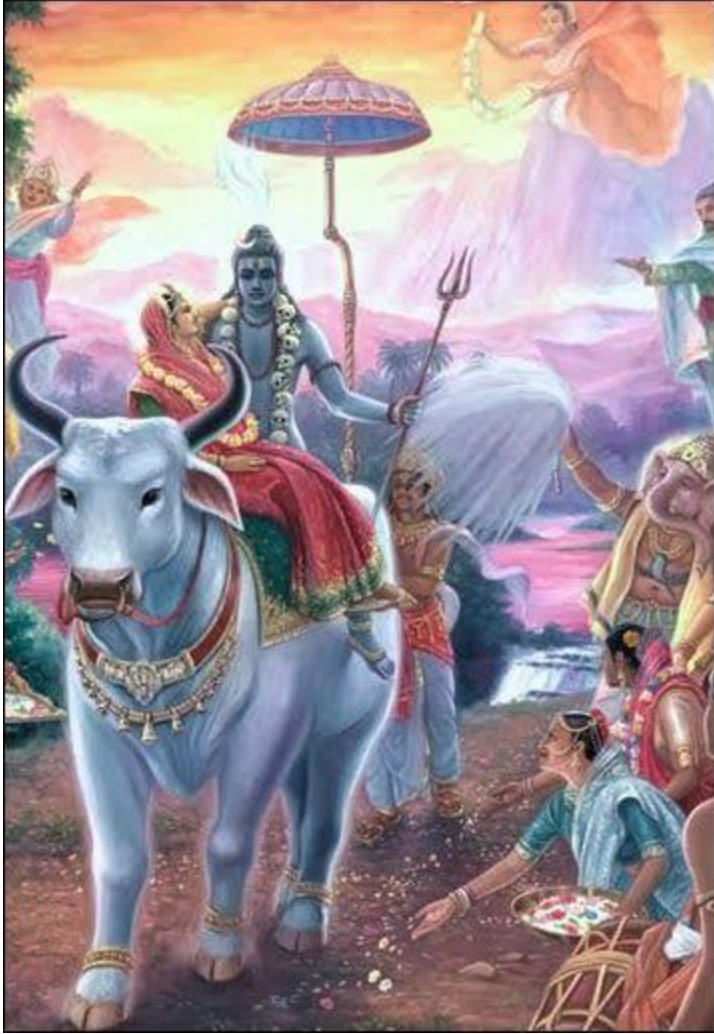
As Indra’s eulogy was over, Maha Deva discarded his Form as a Swan and as Lord Brahma, Indra and Devatas too were present along with Devi Parvati to Kalodaka where the Yagna was being performed and further proceeded the Place where Nandi was performing his Tapasya. Nandi was weak and was almost dead. Having revived him, Maha Deva gave back Nandi’s past birth’s memory that he was a ‘Pratihaari’ (Gate Keeper) of Kailasha, that as Brahmana Shilaada’s penance and Bhriгу Maharshi’s Shaapa to Nandi coincided, the latter took to a human form and did penance to seek extension of life to please his father Shilada who had attained salvation herebefore.

Maha Deva then blessed Nandi:

Ganeswaratwamaasaadya mayaa saha nivatsyasey/ Asmaad Yojana maatrena Purvey bhaagey Gano mama, Twayaa saartham navatsyaami Bhutwaa Bhuteswaro Harah/ Tava Nandina pratishthaanam Vasishtho Bhagavan Rishih, Kartaa Desho shubhey tasmin mama chaapyuta Bhutaley/ Sannidhaanam karishyaamastatra nityam vayam Dwija, Purvotpannah sa Jyeshthesha-statra Lingo mama Dwija/ Tatraapi Sannidhaanam tey Nityam Vijnatumarhasi, Rishikoti Sahasraani madbhaktyaa vaa Dwijo ttama/ Tatra samsnaapayanti sma Jyeshthesham tey sadaiva tu, Brahman Divyena toyena shubheynno -ttara maanasaat/ Teshaam tapah prabaavena Bhaktya cha mama Paarshada, Sodarasya cha Naagastha sthaanamuttara maanasah/ Swayam praapto Mahaabhaava tatra ramsyasi nityashah, Yashmaaddeshaatta -dhaa yaati Dakshinena Mahaanadi/ Hiranyayani puraaya jalaa naamnaa Kanaka vaahini, Jyeshthesho vasati bhutairvasa praakaamyatey Dwija/

(Maha Deva blessed Nandi to secure a significant status among ‘Shiva Ganas’ and stay about a Yojana away to the East of that Place where he himself would be present at Hara Bhuteshwara in the Form of **Jyeshthesha Linga** and Sage Vasishtha would install Nandi as also of himself in his presence. He also assured Nandi that both he and Jyeshthesha would reside at that Place together always in his ‘Sannidhi’ and that Maha Deva’s devotees of ‘Rishi Koti’ would perform ‘Abhishekas’ with the Sacred Waters of the Lake ‘**Uttara Maanasa**’. Nandi prostrated before Maha Deva and the latter himself accompanied Nandi to reach Uttara Maanasa Lake – flowing from ‘Hiranayani’/ ‘Kanakavaahini’ atop the peak of ‘Haramukuti’ mountain). [Nilamata Purana]

Nandishwara in Linga Purana



Maharshi Shilada approached Indra Deva to bless him to a highly renowned and virtuous son who would be ‘Ayonijam’ and ‘Mrityuheenam’ or unborn to a woman and deathless. Indra Deva expressed his inability and said: ***Na durlabho Mrityuheenastwa Putro hyayonijah, Mayaa cha Vishnunaa chaiva Brahmanaa cha Mahatmanaa/*** (It is not possible for Brahma or Vishnu to grant a son who would be unborn to a woman and would not die).

Maharshi Shilada then performed severe Tapasya for thousands of years and his body got degenerated to such an extent that it became a skeleton full of worms. Finally, Maha Deva granted his vision and Shilada’s wish: *Tawa Putro bhavishyaami Nandi naamnaa twayonijah, Pitaa bhavisyaaasi mama Pitruvey Jagataam Muney/* (I shall grant you a son with the name of Nandi and he would be my son and would be popular like wise).

Then Nandi was born at Yagna Bhumi with the features of Maha Deva himself with Trinetras, Chaturbhjas and as Jataa mukuta and Vajra-Sarpa dhaari when Devatas rained fragrant flowers, Apsaraas danced and Gandharvaas sang tuneful hymns in praise of Lord Shiva and Nandi. Vasus, Rudras and Indra prayed respectfully and Devis like Lakshmi, Jyeshtha, Diti, Aditi, Nanda, Shachi, Bhadra and others rendered ‘Stutis’ to Nandi. Shailada Muni commended Maha Deva as well as Nandishwara and expressed his total satisfaction and gratitude.

As Nandishwara was taken into the 'Parnashala' or thached home of Shailada, Nandi assumed a human Rupa instead of Deva Swarupa. Shailada Muni was overjoyed, performed the child's Jaata Karma and other Vedic Tasks and on the son's attaining seven years performed his Yagnopaveeta dharana and 'Upaasana' of Gayatri and tendered him to the Ashram of Maharshi Mitraavaruna. The Guru taught Veda Vidya, Shastras and other Scriptures, besides Dhanur Vidya, Ayur Veda and MantraVidyas, Chatushashti Kaalas, Ashrama Dharmas and so on. Mitraruna was very proud of the student and so was Muni Shilada; the Guru then blurted at that time of Nandi's exit from Ashram that doubtless Bala Nandi displayed extra-ordinary brilliance as a fulfilled Scholar and accomplishment but was shortlived!

Shilada fainted at this disclosure for long and after regaining normalcy took to extreme Tapasya again to Maha Deva; even as Shilada was engaged in Tapasya, Shiva appeared, fondled Nandi, assured him not to get disturbed from what was stated by his Guru. He said that actually he sent messengers that Nandi's life was almost over since his human birth would anyway be of Tapatrayas and hence he was terminating the Manava Janma to bestow Everlasting Life; by so saying, Maha Deva touched Nandi so that his physical body would fall down with his Jataa Mukuta etc and secure a permanent Rudra Rupa.

The Place where the human form of Nandi's 'Jatajuta' fell on Earth was materialised into a Sacred River called Jatodaka and Nandi's new Form was of a 'Vrishabha'; Parama Shiva himself performed 'Abhisheka' on the new Form of Nandi and that Place came to be called Vrishadhvani, Jambunada or Panchanada and Vishwakarma gifted a Golden Mukuta or Headgear and Kundalaas or Ear Rings.

Thereafter Nandishwara familiarised with his mother Devi Girija and also the Ganaas, whom he was empowered as their Chief. Devi Parvati endeared the son who prostrated before her with veneration. Maha Deva declared to the Tri Lokas that Nandishwara was the son of Shiva and Parvati. Devas headed by Indra, Brahma, Vishnu, Dikpalakas, Maharshis, besides Yaksha-Gandharva-Muni and Yogi ganaas were all invited to a huge event where Nandishwara's unique name was fame were known all over, where ever Maha Deva was known and indeed Maha Deva was acclaimed as the Supreme Lord of the Universe.

Parama Shiva granted a boon to Nandishwara that He would be in the 'Sannithi' (Presence) of Shiva always and any kind of worship to himself would be incomplete without any Service to Nandi ! Even great sins of the magnitude of Brahma hatya could be nullified by Shiva Puja but at first, Nande -swara should be propitiated without fail; *Aadov kuryaanamaskaaram tadantey Shivataam Vrajat/* [Linga Purana]

Nandishwara in Varaha Purana



While Varaha Deva delineated the prominence

of Vishnu oriented Tirthas as above to Bhū Devi, Sage Sanatkumar the 'Manasa Putra' (Mind-born son) of Lord Brahma approached the Lord and expressed happiness about the termination of Demon Tarakasura by Maha Deva as the whole World was rid of the menace, especially by Indra and Devas. But Sanatkumara felt that one mystery was still nagging in his mind as to why there were three Gokarneswara Tirthas, one the North Gokarna, another the Dakshina Gokarna and the third was Shringeswara. Lord Brahma explained the background in some detail: The Northern Peak of Mandarachal Mountain known as Munjavan is picturesque where a Nandana Garden existed with most alluring surroundings of glittering precious stones and heaven-like ambience of streams, flowers and fruits where Devas made their temporary resting places and so did Celestial Beings like Kinnaras who sang their sweetest tunes and performed their dances. Most significantly, Maha Deva used to often grace the Place in the form of 'Sthanu Parameswara'. In the subsequent Treta Yuga, a Maha Muni called Nandi carried out a rigorous Tapasya for thousand years experiencing icy cold and extreme heat and Parameswara having tested his steadfast fortitude and unnerving faith finally gave 'Sakshatkar' and asked boons to bestow; but Nandi never yielded for 'Prabhutva, Amaratva, Indratva, Brahmatva, Lokapaalatva -Royalty, Immortality, the position of Indra, Brahma, Lokapaala –but his Bhakti should be eternal, or else there should not be Bhakti at all! Very gladly, Shankara awarded the World's highest windfall that Nandi would be unique like Shiva Himself, that he would be the conduit between all Devas and Danavas, Indra and Brahma and all the Highest Powers that be as Shiva's own conscience! Thus Nandi the Head of Nandi Ganas became Trinetra, with Trishul, Danad, Pinaki, etc. like Second Shankara! In course of time, none could ever witness Shankara's physical form as He had turned Himself as a Deer in the Sleshmatak Forest, a fact not known to Nandi even! Led by Nandi, all the Deities including Indra made vigorous searches the World

over but to no avail. Lord Brahma in His inner vision over Tapasya discovered Parameswara as a Deer in the Sleshmatak Forest not far from the renowned Pasupathinath Temple in Nepal. Indra, Brahma and Narayana reached the Forest and found the uni-horn Deer, chased it and nearly caught hold of the horn – Indra the top portion, Brahma the middle and Vishnu the lower portion. Unfortunately for them, the horn gave way into their hands as three parts and all the three cursed their own helplessness. A voice was then heard that the three of them were able to catch only the horn and that too in three pieces. If only the entire body were caught and installed then Dharma Dhenu (the Cow of Virtue) would have been on all four legs. Anyway, they should install their respective pieces of the horn-the upper portion as Uttar Gokarneswar, the middle portion as Dakshina Gokarneswar and the lower portion at Slesheswar. Lord Shiva further said that on the foot hills of Himalayas called Nepal, He would in any case emerge on His own with four resplendent faces in four directions which would be famous as ‘Sariresh’ (Pashupathinath); Sudarshan Chakra of Sri Krishna tore the Mountains enabling Indra to terminate several Demons like Daman and the place became occupied with Mlecchhas eventually but Surya Vamsa Kshatriyas uprooted Mlecchhas and established a Hindu Kingdom. It is at this Illustrious Place where the Sacred Bagamati River originating from Himalayas flows that Slesheshvar Param Guha or the Sancrosant Cave had surfaced. There are any numbers of streams flowing where even a touch of the waters would destroy sins. To the South of Slesheswar is situated the ‘Anashak’ Tirtha which allows firm steps towards Mukti. Another Tirtha called ‘Bhrigu Prapatan’ destroys ‘Arishat Vargas’ (Six Enemies) viz. Kama (Desire) and Krodha (Anger); Groups of ‘Apsaras’ (Celestial Dansueses) take off by Vimans from this Place to ‘Swarga’. Lord Brahma Himself established ‘Brahmodabhed’ Tirtha which has the reputation of abolishing ‘Rajo guna’ if a devotee takes bath with Indriya-Nigrah or limb control for a year to qualify him to ascend to Brahma Loka. There is also a ‘Gorakshak’ Tirth a visit of which would bestow the benefit of ‘Sahasra-Daan’ or Charity of Thousand Cows. A Climb of Gauri Shikhar provides Devi- Sayujya. Down under the Mountain a bath in Baghamati River at ‘Ratna Kund’ blesses attainment of Skandalok. Even a simple bath at ‘Panchanadi Tirtha’ bestows the Punya of performing ‘Agnishtoma’. To North of Slesheswar is ‘Pranthakapaniya’ Tirtha where Gandharvas were renowned to worship Shiva. To North West, a sincere bath in ‘Brahmodaya Tirtha’ along with ‘Sandhyopasana’ would assure that there would be no visit to ‘Mrityu loka’ and that there would not be any difficulties for the rest of life. The devotees who perform Pitra Tarpana and Shraddha in the Sangam Place of Bhagmati and Manivati Rivers would most certainly accomplish the best of Shiva Devas’ blessings/ Lord Indra situated the top portion of the ‘Shringa’ at Swarga itself. Brahma set up the middle portion of the Deer Horn at Gokarna and Lord Vishnu set it up at Shringeshwar. But Bhagavan’s body without the Horn has infinite forms! For example, Ravanaasura secured one linga which got entrenched in Earth because of the trickstery of Ganesha and tried to pull it tight and gave up! [Gokarna in North Karnataka is a Siddha Linga at Mahabaleswar Temple; the coverings of the Atma Linga sought to have been brought by Ravana fell at Dharieswar, Gunavantheswar, Murudeswar and Sajjeswar Temples, as popularly believed]

Tamil Purana Tiruvalaidal mentions another story in which Nandi took the form of a whale as Devi Parvati lost her concentration while Shiva was explaining the meaning of Vedas to her. Parvati incarnated as a fisherwoman for the atone. To unite his master and his beloved wife, Nandi took the form of a whale and started to trouble the people. Fisherwoman Parvati’s father told that anyone who killed the whale would marry his daughter. Later Lord Shiva took the form of a fisherman, killed the whale and got Parvati in her previous form. Nandeshwara is stated to have learnt the secrets of Agamic and Tantrik Shastras from Devi Parvati herself and taught Brahma Manasaputras of Sanaka- Sanandana-Sanatana and Sanat Kumaras. The Nandi Naatha Sampradaaya appears to have been spread in ‘Ashta Dashas’ or Eight Directions. Agamas are stated to describe Nandeshwara as an anthropomorphic form with the head of bull but with four hands with an axe, mace, an antelope and an ‘abhaya mudra’ assuring protection. This type of form is followed severally in India as also in South East Countries especially in Cambodia within the ‘Alaya Garbha’ or the ‘sanctum sanctorium’ signifying ‘Atma Jnana’ or the Awareness of Jeevatma unified with Paramatma or the unification of the Self and the Supreme

KAAMA DHENU-GO MAATA

Kama Dhenu:

‘Kamadhenu’ the Celestial Cow assures fulfillment of well deserved needs in both the contexts of ‘iham and param’ or during the ongoing and subsequent lives’. The popular Picture Post Cards depict Kama Dhenu with its forehead ‘s upper part as of Parama Shiva with the symbolic AUM as the saffron spot while its nether part just above the nostrils with Gayatri and Sarasvati; its horns as Vishnu and Brahma; the base of the horns as Ganesha and Kumara Swami; its mane with pancha bhutas, the tail as Lakshmi and Durga; the tail end as Prakriti / Maya; the stomach with the spread of Narada, Sanaka- Sanandana- Sanaatana- Sanaka Kumaras, Sapta Rishis; the four legs being Chaturvedas, and its udder right above Shiva Linga from where the Sacred Rivers are originated.

Two interesting stories are mentioned in Puranas about this’ Desire Fulfilling’ Heavenly Animal

I) It was Prithu Chakarvarti who controlled Bhumi (Earth) as the latter took the Form of a Cow and sought to run away as was she was expected too much from her by various sections of the Universe. But Prithu Chakravarti (literally he whose chariot wheels move forward swiftly without being interrupted by any opponent party) however chased and forced her to yield maximum milk to one and all in the form that they desired it. Prithu himself milked her having converted Swayambhu Manu as the calf and made her yield food grains to all, while in regime of the then King Vena the staple food was of flowers and fruits. Various sections of the world milk as the material as they desired; for instance, Rishis converted Chandra as a calf, Brihaspati as the milkman, Tapomaya Brahma as the milk and Vedas as the container to fill up the milk; Devas made Indra as the calf, Surya as the milkman and Pushtikaahara’ or healthy food as milk; Pitru Devas requested Yamadharma Raja as the calf, Antaka Deva as the milk man and ‘Swadha’ as the milk; Nagas selected Takshaka as the calf, Iravata Serpent as the milkmen and Visha (Poison) as the milk; Asuras appointed Mathu Daitya as the milkman, Virochana as the calf and Maya (Illusions) as the milk; Yakshas preferred Kubera as the calf, Rajananaabha Yaksha as the milkman and ‘Antardhaana Vidya’ or the Art of Disappearance as the milk; similarly all other species selected their own Milkmen and calves and Gandharvas opted milk in the form of fragrance; Rakshasas opted for blood, Mountains preferred ‘Aoushadhis’ and soon thus satisfying every one in his governance!

II) Chakravarti Kartaveerya visited the Ashram of Jamadagni couple with his countless chaturanga bala akshouhinis who were taking refreshing bath and swim. The Muni couple invited the Chakravarti and the huge army and hosted a fabulous and highly rich and lavishing lunch with pancha bhakshya bhojana. Well before this lunch invitation the Muni Couple prostrated before the Kamadhenu in the ashram’s backyard and entreated her to preserve their dignity to fulfill the invitation of lunch for the Royal Guest of honour and his mammoth number of the army. The shocked Chakravarti exclaimed as how such massive bhojana was possible to an equally huge army and requested the Muni and wife to explain out of his astonishing miracle. As they revealed the truth of mother Kamadhenu’s grace and help, instantly the Chakravarti raised his tone and asserted that each and every asset in his command ought to be under his command. The Muni replied: Chakravarti! I am after all a Muni eking my life with what ever ‘kandamula

bhakshana' is possible in forests; how do you realise that this ashram could offer 'pancha bhaksshya paramaannas' to the Royalties and 'akshouihinis' of sena is possible otherwise. You are of Vishnu swarupa and accepted my 'aatithya' as that is a great honour and trilokas could proudly state that Chakravari Kaartaveerya was honoured by his visit along with his glorious sena which was of akshouihinis strong and the Muni served fabulous meal with pancha bhalshyas! But still the Chakravarti kept on insisting that Kamadhenu ought to be taken away even by force and left the ashram in a huff and disgust, even as the Muni kept on pleading and finally stated that the Chakravarti visited the ashram as a green parrot but finally turned as a crow!

GO MAATA

Cow Is The Abode Of All The Gods '*SARVE DEVAAH STHITA DEHE SARVA DEVAMAYEEHI GAOU*'. The Vedic scripture states that all the demigods and demigoddesses reside in the every atom of cow's body. All the mythical worlds exist in the limbs of a cow. The cow symbolizes the dharma itself. Therefore the cow itself is as holier, as the deities. Cow is a personified statue of love and affection. In Padma Purana it is said that; "All the holy places reside in their feet, and the goddess of fortune Laksmi resides in their vulva & Ganges resides in urine. In scriptures some diseases are said to be due to sinful actions performed in previous lives which we have to bear. As we know Ganga resides in cow urine, and river ganga is the destroyer of sins, thus cow urine destroys such previous sins and so diseases are cured. 'Hindu theologians put the number of gods and goddesses in a cow's body at 330 million. Cows constitute the stairs that lead to heaven; Serving and praying to them will lead to Nirvana for 21 generations to come. By serving the cow with devotion, Lord Hari becomes pleased. Therefore one should never go to bed or rise in the morning without reciting the names of cows. To assist a departed - loved one's soul in crossing the cosmic chasm in the after world, a cow is being donated to a Brahman. Cow is personified as Kamdhenu goddess and are able to grant every wish; nothing in the world is superior then them. Cows helps in cleansing the sin. There is nothing unattainable for one who is devoted to cows. The one morsel given to the cows reaches all the demigods and demigoddesses. That's the reason why scripture says that to satisfy all the gods and goddesses and the ancestors at the same time, and to make them happy one should give the cow eminent love, care and devotion. There is no ritual equal to giving love and devotion to a cow. Every part of cow's body has a religious significance. She is receiver of the auspicious rays from all heavenly constellations. Thus it contains influences of all constellations. Wherever there is a cow, there is influence of all heavenly constellations; blessings of all Devas are there.

Cow is the only divine living being that has a surya ketu nadi (vein connected to sun) passing through her backbone. Therefore the cow's milk, butter and ghee have golden hue. This is because Surya ketu Vein, on interaction with solar rays produces gold salts in her blood. These salts are present in the cow's milk and cow's other bodily fluids, which miraculously cures many diseases. Vedic cow was the mother of all entities in past, present and will be in future. Mother is one who can give life to her offspring. She is the one who gives nourishment, joy and life. One who gives death, disease and pain how can that be our mother? Mother cow nourishes our goodness in life. Cow nourishes earth and living entities on it by her dung and urine. She nourishes men by her milk and curd. She nourishes the demigods by her ghee. When

demigods are nourished the rains and seasonal changes happen on time. As at present there is lack of cow ghee and all of the above: men, earth and demigods are not properly nourished. So we see so many natural calamities happening in quick succession. We might name them natural calamities but infact they are due to the lack of cow milk, curd, urine, dung and ghee.

Brahma and Vishnu on the root of two horns. All the sacred reservoirs and Vedavyasa on the tips of the horns .Lord Shiva on the centre of the head-Parvathi on the edge of head .Kartikeya on the nose. Kambala and Ashwatara Devas on the nostril . Ashwini Kumaras on the ears.Sun and Moon in the eyes. Vayu in dental range.Varuna on the tongue. Saraswathi in the sound of cow.Sandhya goddesses on the lips .Indra on the neck. Raksha Ganas on the loose skin hanging under the neck . Sadhya Devas in the heart. Dharma on the thigh. Gandharvas in the gap of hoofs. Pannaga at the tips.Apsaras on the sides. Eleven Rudras and Yama on the back. Ashtavasus in the crevices. Pitru Devas on the ides of umbilical joint. 12 Adityas on the stomach area. Soma on the tail. Sun rays on the hair.Ganga in its urine. Lakshmi and Yamuna in the dung.Saraswathi in milk.Narmada in curd. Agni in ghee. 33 crore Gods in the hair.Prithwi in stomach, oceans in the udder. Kamadhenu in the whole body.Three Gunas in the root of the brows.Rishis in the pores of hair.All the sacred lakes in the breathe.Chandika on the lips.Prajapathi Brahma on the skin. Fragrant flowers on nostrils.Sadhya Devas on the arm-pit.Six parts of Vedas on the face. Four Vedas on the feet.Yama on the top of the hoofs.Kubera and Garuda on the right.Yakshas on the left. Gandharvas inside. Khecharas in the fore of the foot. Narayana in intestine.Mountains in the bones. Artha, Dharma, Kama and Moksha in the feet. Four Vedas in the mooing sound.

Vedas

The name for cow in the Vedas is known as aghnya which means invioable. Another name is ahi which means not to be killed and another is aditi which means never to be cut into pieces. The Aghnya cows which are not to be killed under any circumstances may keep themselves healthy by use of pure water and green grass, so that we may be endowed with virtues, knowledge and wealth. (Rigveda 1.164.40 or Atharv 7.73.11 or Atharv 9.10.20 . The aghnya brings us health and prosperity. (Rigveda)There should be excellent facility for pure water for Aghnya Cow. (Rigveda 5.83.8)"The divine doctrine of the Vedas directs us that if one aspires to obtain all the luxuries and comforts available in the material realm, one should serve the cow with great attention." She is like the mother of the cosmic Forces, the daughter of the cosmic Matter, the sister of cosmic Energy, the centre of the ambrosia. I address to men of wisdom -- kill not her, the sinless inviolate cow.- The divine cow, herself is skilled in eloquence, gives speech to others, who comes surrounded by every kind of utterance, who helps me for my worship of the divine forces, it is only the fool that abandons her.- May cows come and bring us good fortune; let them stay in our cowsheds and be content in our company. May many colored cows bring here prolific milk for offerings to the resplendent Lord at many dawns.- The resplendent Lord bestows affluence on the devotee who offers worship and oblations. He takes not what belongs to the worshiper and gives him more; thereby increasing his wealth more and ever-more, he places the devotee in fortified positions, free from danger. - Let not the cows run away from us, let no thief carry them away; let no hostile weapon fall upon them. May the master of the cattle be long possessed of them, with the milk products of which he makes offerings and with which he serves the godly men.- Let not the cows fall a victim to the arrogant, dustspurning war-horse. Let them not fall into the hands of a butcher or his shop. Let the cattle of the man, the householder, move about freely and graze without fear. - May the cows be our affluence; may the resplendent Lord grant us cattle; may the cows yield food (milk and butter) of the first libation. These

cows, O men, are sacred as the Lord resplendent Himself --the Lord whose blessings we crave for, with head and heart.- O cows, you strengthen even the worn-out and fatigued and make the unlovely beautiful to look on. Your following is auspicious, and makes my dwelling prosperous. Great is the abundance that is attributed to you in our religious ceremony.- May you, O cows, have many calves grazing upon good pastures and drinking pure water at accessible ponds. May no thief be your master. May no beast of prey assail you and may the dart of vital Lord never fall on you.- O resplendent Lord, a giver of virility as you are, may we have by your blessings the sturdy bulls for insemination and let us have plenty of nourishment for the cows.

Yajur Veda 13.49 :-Do not kill cows and bulls who always deserve to be protected. The cow is illustrious and inviolable, therefore do not slay her (Yajurveda 13.42). Yajurveda 23.48:- “Brahman can be said to be effulgent like the sun, the outer space can said to be vast like the ocean, the earth can be said to be showering all benedictions of life like Indra showers rains, but a cow’s motherly nature cannot be compared to anything or anyone. There is no mother like the cow.” The cow is inviolable and she yields ghee for the people, therefore do not slay the cow, (Yajurveda 13.49)". "O cow you are adorned by all men and god who desire possessing you. You are like Aditi not poor; give us ample milk. You should never be killed and you are truly great. You have a lot of names. You have been invoked to our Yagna. You must make the gods aware about our beautiful Yagna immediately. (Yajurveda 8.43)The one who protects and sustains hundreds and thousands, one who is the fountain of milk, one who supplies people with milk , one who is aditi[who ought not to be cut into pieces] do not torture such cow in this world [yajurveda 12.49]

According to Atharva-Veda :- “Cow is the mother of Rudras, daughter of the Vasus, sister of the Adityas and reservoir of nectar. I have preached this to every thoughtful person and told that “do not kill the ‘innocent’ and ‘never to be killed’ cow. In the Atharva-Veda, it is said that cow’s milk helps overcome debility and regain lost physical and mental health. It promotes intelligence.

Purana- Itihaasas-Upanishads

According to Garuda Purana:- those who are destined to go to heaven are supposed to grab the tail of a cow that appears on the banks of the river Vaitarani to be led safely across to the ethereal shores of Vaikuntha. Padma Purana :“A person who daily touches a cow after taking bath becomes liberated from all sinful reactions. Those who smear themselves with the dust from the hooves of the cow are said to have taken bath in all holy places. Such people become free from all types of sin.” — Padma Purāna, Sristi Khanda 57.165 . The Agnipuran says that :- the cow is a pure, auspicious animal. Looking after a cow, bathing it and making it eat and drink are commendable acts. Cow dung and urine are said medicinal properties. The milk, curd, butter and ghee are all used in religious ceremonies. Whoever offers a morsel of food to the cow before eating attains salvation. Whoever gives a cow in charity benefits the whole family. Wherever a cow lives the place becomes pure. The touch and care of cows absolves one of sins. In the Agni Purana, Dhanvantari said to Acharya Susruta ‘To care and to bathe the cow is like cleansing ones sinful reactions.’ According to Gavopanisad:- ‘Cows are the cause of obtaining the topmost grains, they are the bestowers of the pure ghee offered to the demigods in sacrifice. The svaha and vasat-karas both are dependent on the cows.’ ‘One should see, offer obeisances to, and circumambulate the cow. By doing so, one is supposed to have circumambulated the entire earth with its seven islands. The cow is the mother of all. She gives happiness to everyone. People who desire prosperity should daily

circumambulate the cow.’ In the Markandeypuran, it is said that :- the welfare of the world depends upon the cow. The back of the cow is symbolic of the Rig-Veda, the body of Yajur-Veda, the mouth of Sam-Veda, the neck of the household deity and the good deeds and the soft body hair are like the mantras. Cow dung and Urine give peace and good health. Wherever a cow lives the virtues are never wasted. A cow always promotes contentment. In the Vishnumriti, it is said that :- the land on which cows live is pure. Cows are pure and auspicious. They promote the welfare of mankind. They help make a Yagya successful. By serving Cows one gets rid of sins. Their dwelling is like a pilgrimage. One becomes virtuous through reverence of cows. In the Skandpuran, it is said that cow dung purifies the courtyard and temple. In the Bhagavad Gita, Shri Krishna said, ‘Amongst cows, I am Kamdhenu’. In the Mahabharata, it is said that a cow given in charity becomes like kamdhenu through its virtues and returns to the donor in the next birth. Through her virtues the cow protects the donor from the darkness of hell just as air protects and guides a boat from sinking and helps it steer through the vast ocean of life. Just as a mantra acts like a medicine to destroy disease, in the same way a cow given in charity to a good person protects one from all sins. In the Mahabharata, Kurmpurana, Yagyavalkya Smriti and several other religious texts, it is said that whoever gives a cow in charity shall always be happy and content and attain heaven after death. It is believed that after death, before heaven one reaches Vaitarni River. To cross it one can hold the tail of the cow and finally reach heaven. In the Visnu-dharmottara it is said that :- One should provide the best possible care and comfort for the cows. If possible, one can arrange for the purchase and transport of dry and green grass for the cows. One can purchase suitable land for the grazing of the cows. One can arrange for providing salary for the workers in the cow-sheds. One should never compromise on the quality of construction of a cow-shed, one should never stop a cow from drinking or eating. One should not treat a cow like other ordinary animals. One should never use the grazing land of the cows for any other purpose and thus deprive the cows of grazing. On ploughing the land used for the grazing of cows with a plough or other instruments one is punished to suffer in terrible hell for the duration of 14 manvantaras. In the Brihat Parasara-smriti, it is written: ‘Simply by eating grass, the cow give us milk. From milk, ghee is produced by which demigods become satisfied. So how can one neglect the cow ? Simply by her association, a person becomes purified. By serving her, one achieves unlimited wealth, and by donating cows, one can transfer himself to heaven. There is no wealth superior to the cow. All the demigods reside in different parts of her body. By serving the cow with devotion, Lord Hari becomes pleased. Her milk nourishes human beings. How can such a cow not be worshipable. The Gomati-vidya Parashurama says ‘Wherever the thirsty cow drinks water from, that body of water is as good as the Ganga, Yamuna, Sindhu, or Sarasvati. In the body of the cows, all holy places and rivers are present. Lakshmidivi resides in cow dung. Simply by the cow’s touch and sight, she purifies all living entities. Among all purified objects, she is most pure, and among all auspicious objects, she is the most auspicious.’ In the Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.16.10, Krsna Himself states, “The brahmanas, the cows, and the defenseless creatures are My own body. Srimad-Bhagavatam Purana “The principal sign of Kali-yuga is that lower class sudras, or men without brahminical culture and spiritual initiation will be dressed like administrators or kings and the main business of such rulers will be to kill the innocent animals—especially the cows and bulls who shall be unprotected by the bona fide vaisyas.” (SB 1.17.1)

According to the Scriptures among 84 lakh species of life sacred cow is the only creature of Lord whose feces and urine is virtuous and acts as purifier, and it is believed that by worshipping the holy cow one gets the grace of all 33 crore demigods. And that’s the reason why cow is worshipped till today. During the Vedic period the riches of a householder was counted in terms of the cow he maintains. A normal

ranked householder maintains a herd of one hundred cows. And the rich householder is the one who maintains a herd of thousand cows and they were being addressed as. Earlier it was essential to maintain cows at home and there are several reasons behind this: -By serving the cows virtue is increased and sins are destroyed. All Shrines resides in Cow's hooves. By serving the mother cow and protecting the cow breed, earth can be protected from invasive diseases. Everyone should gave morsel to the cow, and should gave a part of their income in the service of the cow. Cattle are integral part of this huge canvas of agriculture. We use oxen to plough, to pick and move harvested crops, in irrigation, cow manure as fertiliser, and cow urine as insecticide. India has more than 6,00,000 villages, many which do not have asphalted motorable roads. In hilly regions where even a horse cannot tread, oxen can pull their carts with ease. "Nandi", a bull that belongs to the sacred cow family, is considered the vehicle of Lord Shiva. We can find statues of Nandi having a special place of worship in every Shiva temple. Seeing the black bull along with Lord Shiva has astrological significance in Indian Astrology. It is said that we can overcome the bad effects of planets in our natal horoscope on regularly seeing Nandi and Lord Shiva in temples. It is a belief that where ever a Cow is tied in a given premises, that place would have all the Vastu related ill effects nullified. We find many cow worshipers decorating cows with anklets. It is a belief that when we see the ankles of the cow we protect ourselves from unforeseen deaths.

Cow-milk, Cow-curd, Cow-ghee, Cow dung and Cow urine are known as panchgavya . And from this panchgavya medicines are made. Which is best for our health. Godugdha (cow milk): As per Ayurveda, cow milk has fat, carbohydrates, minerals and Vitamin B, and even a capacity for body resistance to radiation and for regenerating brain cells. Rig Veda (1-71-9) states:-Cow milk is Amrita..It protects us (from disease). Hence Protect the cows. Atharva Veda states:-The Cow, through its milk, transforms a weak and sick person into an energetic person, provides vitality to those without it and by doing so, makes the family prosperous and respectable in the "civilised society"

Drinking cow milk gives strength and increases the pure qualities in the human mind. Cow's milk is fat free and thus it doesn't increase obesity. It is also helpful in curing various womens health problems. cow milk is the best natural food for babies and growing children because of it's high content of calcium for developing strong bones and teeth. Cow milk, when taken hot just before bed-time, not only nourishes the finer brain tissues, but also helps us get sound sleep, while at the same time replenishing the body so that we wake up fresh, alert, and full of energy. Goghrita (ghee): The best ghee, it is, as per Ayurveda useful in many disorders. In yajna, it improves the air's oxygen level. The Vedas describe "ghee" (melted-dehydrated butter or butter oil) not only as an ingredient essential for performing "Yagna or Havan" but also as the first and the most essential among all foods. There are, therefore, prayers in Rigveda(10-18-2) and Atharva Veda (3-12-1 and 3-12-4) seeking that God may provide us with so much of ghee that our houses are always full of this most nutritious food. The 8th Mantra of 12th khand of the 3rd chapter of Atharvaveda (3-12-8 Atharva Veda) emphasises the importance and value of ghee by referring to the "stream of ghee- full of elixir – "ghritasya dharamariten sambhritam". Similarly At several other places in the Vedas, ghee has been described as a (flawless) Nirdosh food, which increases body vigor and vitality (Rigveda – 10-19-7). The use of ghee strengthens the body and helps enhance the life span (Atharva Veda (2-13-1).

According to Bhav Prakash Nighantu, cow-ghee is helpful for eye sight, improving digestion. 'Tridosh Nashak', energetic, brain tonic, ageing factors, Tonic, fragrant, 'Madhuri', Cold and over all the best of the 'ghee'. 10 grams. Of cow ghee used in fire of Yagya produces one ton of oxygen and it has that much

power that it can destroy the ill effects of nuclear radiation from the atmosphere. And that's why we lit lamps or diyas filled with cow ghee in temples. When cow's ghee is burned with rice it produces Ethylene oxide, propylene oxide and Formaldehyde. Ethylene oxide and Formaldehyde give immunity against bacteria which are used in operation theatre. Propylene oxide induces rain. Therefore, sacrifice done with cow ghee purifies atmosphere and induces rain.

Rigveda (10-179-3) aptly describes 'Dahi' (curd); 'Milk has first been 'cooked' or processed in the udder of cow and thereafter, it has been cooked or processed on fire and therefore 'Dahi' (curd) made out of this milk is really healthy, fresh and nutritious. A person doing hard work should consume this Dahi during mid-day when the sun is shining'. Yogurt and buttermilk are both natural digestives and protect the stomach against infection. Yogurt, lassi, and buttermilk, also help in cooling the body during hot summer days. Yogurt is also highly recommended by Ayurvedic doctors for women during pregnancy. They say when taken daily with breakfast, it helps protect expecting mothers from miscarriage, premature delivery, as well as complications at the time of birth. Ayurvedic doctors also say that a daily intake of yogurt helps protect against birth deformities in new born babies.

Cow butter raises the beauty, is blood purifier, paralysis and Asthma are controlled. By burning cow butter with rice, extremely important gases such as Ethylene Oxide and Propylene Oxide are formed. Ethylene Oxide being a microbe-immuniser (Or microbe-insulator) is used in the operation theatres as well as in making lifesaving drugs. Scientists regard Propylene Oxide as the basis of artificial rains.

Panchamrit the Holy Nectar Offered to the Gods. No pooja is complete without panchamrit—a combination of 5 holy things :- cows milk, sugar, cows curd, cowsghee, honey and tulsi leaves. It is offered to the gods and then to the devotees.

Gomutra (urine): It contains Potassium, Sodium, Nitrogen, Phosphate, Urea, Uric Acid, which acts as medicine in many diseases. Eight types of urine are used for medicinal purpose nowadays, among which cow urine is held to be the best. The Americans are busy patenting it. It has anti-cancer, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and antioxidant properties. Gomutra (urine): has immune-modulator properties, which makes it useful for immune deficiency diseases. In the classics there are many references to cow urine as a drug of choice. Even the Parsis follow this practice. It enhances longevity and provides mental and physical strength to heart. It balances bile, mucous and air (TRI-DOSH) and thus cures the diseases. Cow urine contains copper, which is converted into gold inside the human body. It removes all toxicity. Cow urine is a divine medicine and is a natural pesticide for crops. At the time of milking there is a sudden increase in the amount of lactose present in Cow's urine, which strengthens the heart and is beneficial in cardiovascular diseases. Anti Cancer properties of cow Urine: Cow Urine Therapy is suggested to possess potent Anti Cancer abilities. The following properties are listed as responsible for Anti Cancer Results. DNA repairing potential: Cow urine efficiently repairs the damaged DNA. Damage of DNA by chemicals is the major cause for Cancer. This property reduces the spread of malignant cancers and helps fight tumours. Antioxidant Property: The volatile fatty acids show antioxidant properties which control damage in DNA. Antimicrobial Activity: Many viruses cause cancer. These microbes are killed by cow urine. Anti free radicals: Free radicals are molecules, which have lost electrons. These free radicals attack the nearest stable molecule and steal the electron. They can attack enzymes, fat, proteins, etc and cause DNA to mutate. The free radicals cause cell damage thereby inducing tumour cell growth or causes aging. Cow urine prevents free radicals. Cow urine is disinfectant and prophylactic and thus purifies atmosphere

and improves the fertility of the land. Gomutra, though it is inanimate, has the ability to attract Divine Consciousness (Chaitanya) which in turn creates an increase in the Sattva component and therefore facilitates spiritual healing. One may question why an Indian cow's urine has such special healing abilities. Just as water has the innate property to cleanse and fire to burn, the Indian cow is the only animal which has the ability to attract the frequencies of all the Deities in the universe. As a result, any discharges or by-products such as milk, Gomutra (cow's urine) and cow dung inherit these frequencies and are considered sattvik. The Indian cow's urine has the ability to attract up to 5% of the frequencies of all the Deities in the universe. Charaka Samhita, Sushrut, Vaghbhati and Nighantu, Ratnakar, etc. Proved the utility of cow dung and urine for sustainable agriculture as well as for disease prevention.

The cow dung is not faeces, but a purifier. It helps produce the best quality grains, fruits, and vegetables when used as manure. The place, where the religious ritual is to be performed, is cleaned and made pure by coating it with a layer of cow dung. A fire is often lit with dung cakes, sandalwood, gugal, etc to provide fragrance and cleanse the surrounding environment. It is not possible to do this on fire lit with kerosene or gas or electric stove. Pure ghee made with cow milk poured on burning cow cakes dung, produces a smoke that subsides the effect of poisonous gas. The cow-dung is an efficacious disinfectant and often used as fuel in lieu of firewood. Cow dung has antiseptic, anti radioactive and anti thermal properties. Cow dung is also used to line the floor and walls of buildings owing to its insect repellent properties for some types of insects (not flies or dung beetles), and it is also used in auspicious ceremonies. In 1984, gas leak in Bhopal killed more than 20,000 people. Those living in houses with cow dung coated walls were not affected. Atomic power centres in India and Russia even today use cow dung to shield radiation. African deserts were made fertile using cow dung. Valuable fragrant incense sticks are prepared out of cow dung. When we burn cow dung, it balances atmospheric temperature and kills germs in the air. We can reduce acid content in water by treating it with cow dung. Cow manure contains Vitamin B12, and perhaps some who are vegetarian obtain their vitamin from eating vegetables that are contaminated by fertilizers containing dung. According to research done by Dr. King of Madras cow dung has the strength to destroy cholera germs. "The cow absorbs negative energy and gives out positive one. This is the reason why there is a tradition in our country to correct the griha vastu and pitradoshan with the help of a cow.

The horns and back hump of the cow are like two powerful pyramids. One receive the strengths of the stars and sun through the medium of cow dung, milk, curd, ghee, etc. The place where the cow is tied does not produce any vastu related ill effects. Serving the cow with chapatti and jaggery calms down the malefic effect. Circumambulating the cow is considered to be very sacred Hindu ritual. It is equivalent to visiting all of the holy places connected to Hinduism. Cow is the only creature which inhale oxygen and exhale it too. Just as the peepal tree and tulasi plant are known to circulate oxygen, similarly Hindu mythology believes that cow is the only animal which purifies the air. Most of the Yagnas/Homas (Sacred Fire) conducted by Hindus prefer to pour Cow ghee into the sacred fire. The reason for this is that for every one spoon of pure ghee that is poured on burning cow dung (in homa), one-ton of pure air is produced in the air. Therefore ghee made with cow milk is used in igniting sacrificial fires that are a regular ritual of the Hindus.

PANCHGAVYA is a system of medicine like Allopathy, Homeopathy and Naturopathy. As per the ancient AYURVEDIC literature there are number of pharmacological applications derived from these five substances. PANCHGAVYA is also abundantly used in the treatment of arthritis, renal disorders,

diabetes, acidity, asthma and gastrointestinal track disorders. PANCHGAVYA remedies are considered as potent anti-cancer and anti-HIV agents. By coming in contact with the cow all infectious diseases like cough and cold get destroyed. Indian Vedic Cow is the only divine living being that has a SURYA KETU NADI (vein connected to sun) passing through her backbone. Therefore the cow's milk, butter and ghee has golden hue. This is because Surya ketu Vein, on interaction with solar rays produces gold salts in her blood. These salts are present in the cow's milk and cow's other bodily fluids, which miraculously cures many diseases. If by chance some poisonous or harmful material enters cow's food, she absorbs it in her flesh. She does not let it go into cow urine, cow dung or milk or releases in very small quantity. These results were compared by other researchers around the world with other animals by feeding them various items and then testing milk and urine. Therefore cow urine and dung are pure and removes toxins. Cow milk is certainly anti-toxin. Cow urine is included in "panchgavya". "Panchgavya" is said to be curer of all diseases from bone to skin of all life. The cow has Aura of 15/20mtrs which can keep away all kind of insect/reptiles & disease. Hence in vedic time all people kept cows in their courtyards & cleaned homes with dung & urine. The medicine for either HIGH BP or LOW BP is very simple. You have to just show some love to the cow by rubbing on the back of the cow for five to ten minutes. It will balance both HIGH BP and/or LOW BP. In Hindu culture, there are 16 religious rituals (Sanskar) starting from birth (in fact there is one sanskar even before birth!) to death and none of these rituals can be performed without dung. It is essential to attain or provide purity to the mind, to the environment or surroundings, to the mental status and to the ingredients which are utilized at the time of performing any religious ritual. Scriptures say that if dying man is laid down on the bed of kusha grass spread on the land purified by cow-dung, he becomes absolved of all his sins.

Paraashara Smiriti explains: Pancha gavya vidhana: Panchagavya: Gomutram gomayam ksheeram sarpih kushodakam, Nirdrushtam pancha -gavyantu pavitram papa naashanam/ (Cow's sacred urine, dung, milk, curd and ghee besides kushajala constitute the Panchagavyas which uproot multiple sins). These items are to be mixed in the prescribed proportion of one pala or eight tolas of urine, three palas of curd, one pala of ghee, half-ring finger measure of gomaya, one-seventh of the mix to be added by one pala of 'kushodaka'. *Gayatraa gruhyā gomutram gandhadwaareti gomayam, Aapyaayasweti cha ksheeram Dadhikraavneti vai dadhi/ tejosi shukramotyaaajyam Devasya twaa kushodakam, Panchagavyaamruchaa putam syapayedagni sannidhou/ Aapohishtheti chaalodya maa nastoketi manrtayet/* (Explanation of the above is as follows: Cow's urine along with Gayatri mantra; cow dung with *Gandhadwaaraam dhuraadarsheem nitya pushtam kareeshineem Ishwareegum Sarva bhutaanaam taamihopahvaye shriyam/* Cow's milk: *Aa pyaayasva sametute te vishwatayh soma vrishniyam, bhavaa vaajasya sangadhe/* Cow's curd: *Dadhikravanno akaarisham jishnorasvasya vajina, Surabhi no mukhaa karat Prana ayoogumshi taarishat/* Cow's ghee: *Tejosi shukramasi jyotirasi Devovah savitotpunaatwacchid - rena pavitrena vasoh Suryasya rashmibhih/ Kushodakam: Devasya twaa savituh prasave Ashwinoh baahubhyaam pushno hastaabhyaam/* All these are mixed reciting: *Aapohishthaa mayobhuvah taana urjyedadhaatana maheranaaya chakshuse yovasshiva tamorasah tasyabhajayatehanah ushiteeriva maatarah tasmaa aranga maamavo yasya kshayaaya jinvadha apojana yathaachanah/* Then perform 'abhi mantra' to the mix and recite: *Maana- stoke tanaye maana ayushimaano goshumaano ashwureerishah veeraanmaano Rudrabhaamito vadheer havishyanto namasaa vidhematey/*) Later on, the upper portion of the mix likened to a parrot of bright green of about the size of seven kusha grass pieces be lifted up and be offered to Homaagni with the Mantras of Rig Veda like Iravati, Ivam Vishnurvi chakramey, Maana nasteke tanaye etc. and the remaining portion be consumed by the Karta by reciting

Pranava Mantra. On entering the body of the Karta, the Pancha Gavya should dissolve his hardened mass of sins from his bones, blood stream and skin pores like the offering made to Agni Deva by the Homa thus performed! *Pavitram trishu Lokeshu Devataabhiradhishthitam, Varunaschiva domutrey gomaye Havyavahanah, Dadhin Vaayuh Samudrishtah Somah ksheere dhrutey Ravih/* (The Devas who are present in all the Tri-Lokas are represented in the Pancha gavya as follows viz. Varuna in Go mootra, Agni in cow dung, Vayu in the curd, Chandra in the milk and Surya Deva in the ghee!)

The famous Italian scientist Prof. G.E. Bea God has proven the fresh cow dung kills the germs of Malaria and T.B. According to Shantilal Shah, President, International Cardiology Conference Cow's milk is specifically beneficial to heart patients. According to Russian Scientist Sirovish, Cow's ghee has immense power to protect human body from the ill effect of radioactive waves. Japan used cow dung to get protection from atomic emissions. A pamphlet issued by the Illinois Department of Agriculture (US) states that : ' The cow is a most wonderful laboratory. She takes the grasses of the pasture and the roughage of the field and converts them into the most perfect food for man. In that food there is a mysterious something which scientists have found essential to the highest health of the human race and which can be found nowhere else. Men have sought for centuries the fabled fountain of youth. The nearest approach to that fountain which has yet been discovered is the udder of the cow' .

Ancient Hindu wisdom on the medicinal properties of cow urine is borne out by two patents granted in the US for cow urine distillate (Patent numbers 6410059 and 6896907). Global patent has been granted for cow urine, neem and garlic as a pest repellent and for fungicidal and growth promoting properties for different crops (WHO 2004/ 087618A1). US patent has been granted for strains from Sahiwal cow milk for plant growth promoter phytopathogenic fungi controlling activity, abiotic stress tolerating capability, phosphatic solubilisation capability, etc. And CSIR has filed for a US patent for amrit pani, a mixture of cow dung, cow urine and jiggery, for soil health improvement properties. China has granted the distillate a patent as a DNA protector. Scientists at Michigan State University have developed a way to transform cow dung into fiberboard, which can be used in flooring and furniture; They say fiber from processed and sterilized cow manure could take the place of sawdust in fiberboard, which is used to make everything from furniture to flooring to store shelves.' According to a research published in Russia, A relationship between increasing number of butcher houses and earth quakes is being proven. Around 32 different types of medicines are being prepared out of Indian breed of cow's urine and dung which are being recognized by the governments of Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan etc.

Cow has a sharp sixth sense. As per an epic story, the cow could once talk. It predicted an impending accident to its master and helped him avoid it. The God then made the cow dumb for changing what was destined. Cows respond to the joy and suffering of people. There are many examples of cows shedding tears and even refusing food empathising with their masters. Sensing Danger: Lathur in Maharashtra had a devastating earthquake on 30 September 1993. Devani breed of cows in that place had been behaving strange, crying and jumping around a few days before this as a warning to the people. We could not decipher the message. Similar things happened before Tsunami in 2004 too. Then, Baraguru, Amblacheri and Kangayam breed of cows behaved strangely.

Cow is also an animal, but she is endowed with no other animal (not even human beings) would! These are some truths about go-matha. If a cow eats something poisonous by mistake, and we drink its milk, will we fall ill? To find out, one cow was regularly fed a particular quantity of a poison every day.

After 24 hours, its blood, urine, dung and milk were tested in a lab to check where the poison could be found. In this way, the tests were done not for 1 or 2 days, but continuously for 90 days in All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi. The researcher did not find any trace of poison in milk, blood, urine or dung of that cow. Then where did this poison fed for 90 days go? Just like Lord Shiva held poison in his throat, the go-matha hid the entire poison in her throat.

This is a special quality that no other animal has. This is the one creature that inhales oxygen and also exhales oxygen. Cow milk has the quality of countering poison. There are diseases that medical science has not yet understood; urine of Go-matha has the power to cure them. If cow-ghee and rice are cooked together, two powerful gases called ethylene-oxide, propylene-oxide are released. Propylene-oxide is the best gas used for creating artificial rain. Cow-urine is the world's best killer of microbe. With medicines made using cow dung and cow urine, stomach-related ailments can be cured. We can save ourselves from radio-waves by plastering the home floors and area outside home with cow-dung. Cow-dung has the power to destroy the microbes causing cholera. If 10 grams of cow-ghee is put in fire (yagnya), 1 ton of oxygen is generated. Cow-urine is as sacred as Ganga jal. Before providing the holy cow her sacred place in the society, it is important to know about her spiritual and scientific glory. Or otherwise it would be like having a blank cheque but not realizing the cheque's value. Therefore here we are briefly discussing about the holy cow's divine glory. In India cow is a culture. Gaay (Cow), Gopal (lord Krishna), bhagavad gita (Lord Krishna's discourse), gayatri (The vedic mantra) and ganga (the holy river) are considered to be the breath of spiritually living India.

From ancient times Hinduism has provided a mother status to the divine cow, and cow is always considered as holy and sacred. The womb of the cow is considered to be heaven. And the place where she stands is sacred. In Hinduism there is a strong belief that by worshipping the holy cow one gets the grace of all 33 crore Gods and Goddesses, and that's the reason why cow is worshipped till today.

Cow is also known as 'kamdhenu' (the wish fulfilling mythical mother). The foam from cows milk is equal to Amrut. Cow is the ladder to climb to heaven. She can provide all the happiness that one can think of from this world and the next world. From time immemorial, India knows about the glory of the holy cow, and in our Vedic texts there are various stories regarding God's birth to protect the Sacred Cow.

The special position that the cow enjoys in Hinduism developed during the period of Lord Krishna. Due to lord Krishna's devoutness and love for cow, various names like Govind, Gopal are always being associated with him. Not only this Krishna also dedicated his teenage for the service of the holy cow. Cow is sacred because Krishna himself was fond of its milk and, no other milk provides the nutritional and other qualities that cow's milk provides. In the Srimad-Bhagavatam, Govardhan Hill is glorified as the best devotee because of supplying water, soft grass, caves, fruits, flowers, and vegetables to Krsna, Balarama, the cowherd boys, and the cows.

Lord Shiva can always be seen with the snow-white bull named Nandi who is considered as lord's vehicle, Nandi can be seen at the entrance to the Shiva temples. Nandi represents Dharma and stood for the salvation of departed soul on the other side of death. Bull is a symbol both of power and ignorance which suggests that Lord Shiva removes ignorance of his devotees and gives them the power of wisdom. In Sanskrit a bull is called 'Vrisha' which also means 'righteousness'. The Nandi bull beside Lord Shiva indicates that He is the eternal companion of righteousness. Lord Ram's forefather king Dileep himself went to the forest to serve the cow.

Even today because of this great devotion in Hinduism cow is considered to be adorable. Cows are the goddesses of the gods and the refuge of all auspiciousness. Cow has all pantheons' beatific element. Demigods also use to worship the holy cow. In fact because of the cow's qualities she is regarded as mother in our tradition. In India a religious day starts with cow's worship. She has her own prominence in various religious festivals. Especially festivals like Diwali and Sankranti are cow related celebrations. Cow related products are required in various rituals. Cow is thus an integral part of our lives. Cow is the mother of the universe: Cow is a mother that gives birth to a child, feeds the child on her milk till the initial stages of the childhood but cow is such a mother who feeds us the entire lifetime. At the time of death also, cow curd is provided to the dead. She is mother, she is grandmother, and she is great-grandmother too. She feeds everyone on her milk. She is the mother of entire world. She protects us. In night at one place thief came, then at that time cow broke the rope and chased the thieves and made them run away. She protects us like a mother, she nourishes us like a mother, and also gives us her love and affection like a mother. By remembering the mother cow one's conscience gets refined. By affectionately rubbing, petting, stroking a cow one gets recovered from incurable diseases, if you understand and think it is fair, then do it yourself and see the result. By protecting the cows, we are naturally protected. Nowadays people have stopped knowing about cow's glory. By cow's blessing both this world and the next world gets improved. By mother cows grace impossible becomes possible.

A cow has a unique power, if one delights them, and keeps them convinced, then they give pleasure by all means and protects everyone. If one honestly care for cows and protects them then there will be no shortage of any resources for their upkeep and maintenance, just do it wholeheartedly and you can see the result by yourself. If we keep one or two cows in our house's backyard then very easily they will be taken care off. Nowadays people's sentiments have really diminished regarding cows.

Mother cow bestows all four – Dharma, Artha, Kaama, Moksha. The medicines made out of cow urine have significant benefits. If someone hurts the cow, then he himself gets hurt! This is like the statement: *Dharmo rakshati rakshitah/ Like wise : Gaavo rakshati rakshitah/ Finally : Go Brahmanebhyah Shubhamastu nityam , Lokaassamstah Subhamastu Nityam/*

Sampurna Ramayana Saramsha

Aadho Rama tapo vananu gamanam, hathvaa mrugam kanchanam, Vaidehi haranam, jatayu maranam, Sugreeva sambhashanam, Bali nigrahanam, samudhra taranam, Lanka pureem dahanam, paschad Ravana Kumbhakarna madanam, ethat iti Ramayanam/

The Epic Ramayana is summarized as Shri Rama went to forest of Dandakaranya, chased the false deer of Maricha, Maha Jatayu was killed by Ravana, negotiated with Sugreeva to kill Baali, Maha Samudra was crossed with the help of the Monkey Brigade, Lord Hanuman burnt off Lanka, and the Lord killed Kumbhakarna and Ravana. This is Ramayana in summary!

Swayambhu Manu performed Tapasya to Lord Vishnu for thousand years and when the latter appeared, Manu desired that he would like to have Vishnu as his son. The Lord agreed and said that in fact as a part of the task of Preservation of 'Dharma' (Virtue), he would like to appear on Earth from time to time as and when Dharma was threatened and Evil Forces gathered momentum; he seemed to have declared:

Paritranaaya Sadhuunaam vinaasaaya cha dushkrutaam, Dharma samsthaapanaarthaaya sambhavaami yuge yugey!

I will most certainly take human birth to revive Dharma and punish the Evil from time to time.

As promised by Lord Vishnu, Swayambhu was born in Raghu as King Dasaratha and became the father of Shri Rama in Treta Yuga, as Vasudeva in Yadava Kula in Dwapara Yuga and one thousand Divya Years hence as Brahmana Harigupta in Samhal Village in Kali Yuga. The two brothers Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu of the Satya Yuga were born as Ravana and Kumbhakarna in Treta Yuga. Muni Pulastya's son was Muni Vishvava and the latter's wife was Kaikashi; Ravana and Kumbhakarna were born to Vishvava and Kaikeshi respectively. Kaikeshi also gave birth to Surpanakha and later on to the virtuous devotee of Narayana, named Vibhishana. Ravana brothers performed severe Tapasya and secured boons of invincibility from Devas, Danavas and Rakshasas and harassed Devas who fled from Swarga and prayed to Vishnu who assured that he would soon be born to King Dasaratha as Rama and demolish the entire race of Ravana; Vishnu also asked Devas to assume the births of 'Vanaras' and assist in this holy task. In the Surya Vamsa, Vaivasvata Muni begot King Ikshvaku and Dasaratha was born to Ikshvaku. Devi Koushalya was born to the King of Koushalya and was wedded to King Dasaratha at Ayodhya on the banks of River Sarayu. Dasaratha also married Sumitra and Kaikeyi. He became a powerful yet righteous King with Sage Vasishtha as the Raja Guru and performed the Putra-Kameshthi Yagna. From the 'Agni Kunda' at the eventful Yagna, a Maha Purusha appeared to Dasaratha and assured that Lord himself would soon be born to him to save the Devoted and destroy the Evil. He handed over a 'Paayasa Patra' for distribution to the three Devis; The highly elated Dasaratha walked in to the palace of the Queens and approached Devi Koushalya the Prime Queen and offered half of the Payasa to her. Of the remaining half, Dasaratha offered half to the second wife Devi Sumitra. Half of the remainder half was offered to the third Queen Kaikeyi. But still there was further remainder which was awarded to Devi Sumitra yet again. The queens were extremely delighted at the final outcome of the Putra Kameshthi Yagna, the grand appearance of the Maha Purusha from the 'homaagni jvaalaas', his offer of the 'paayasa patra' to the King and the distribution of the paayasa as per king's own reckoning. The populace of the Kingdom were thrilled with joy too at the swift events in the kingdom starting off from the horse sacrifice to Putra kameshthi to the appearance of Maha Purusha from the flames, the entire episode thereafter, now awaiting the arrival of Raja Kumaras!. Sage Vasishtha named the eldest as 'Shri Rama' since that was the 'Swataha Siddha' name as he was the husband of Sri Devi and the equivalent of

Vishnu's Sahasranaamaas, providing salvation to the devotees and since his birth was in Chaitra month dear to Vishnu.

Shriyah kamalavaasivya ramaneya Maha Prabhu Tasmaachhari-Rama ithyasya naamaa siddham puratanam/ Sahasranaamnaam shrishasyatulyam mukti pradam nrunaam, Vishnumaasi samutpannoVishnurityabhidheeyate. .



As the boys grew up, Rama and Lakshmana was one pair and Bharata and Shatrughna was another. In the meantime, Bhagavati Lakshmi was materialized as King Janaka found her while digging Earth in Yagna by a plough top called 'sita' and thus named Sita and most endearingly brought up as his own daughter.

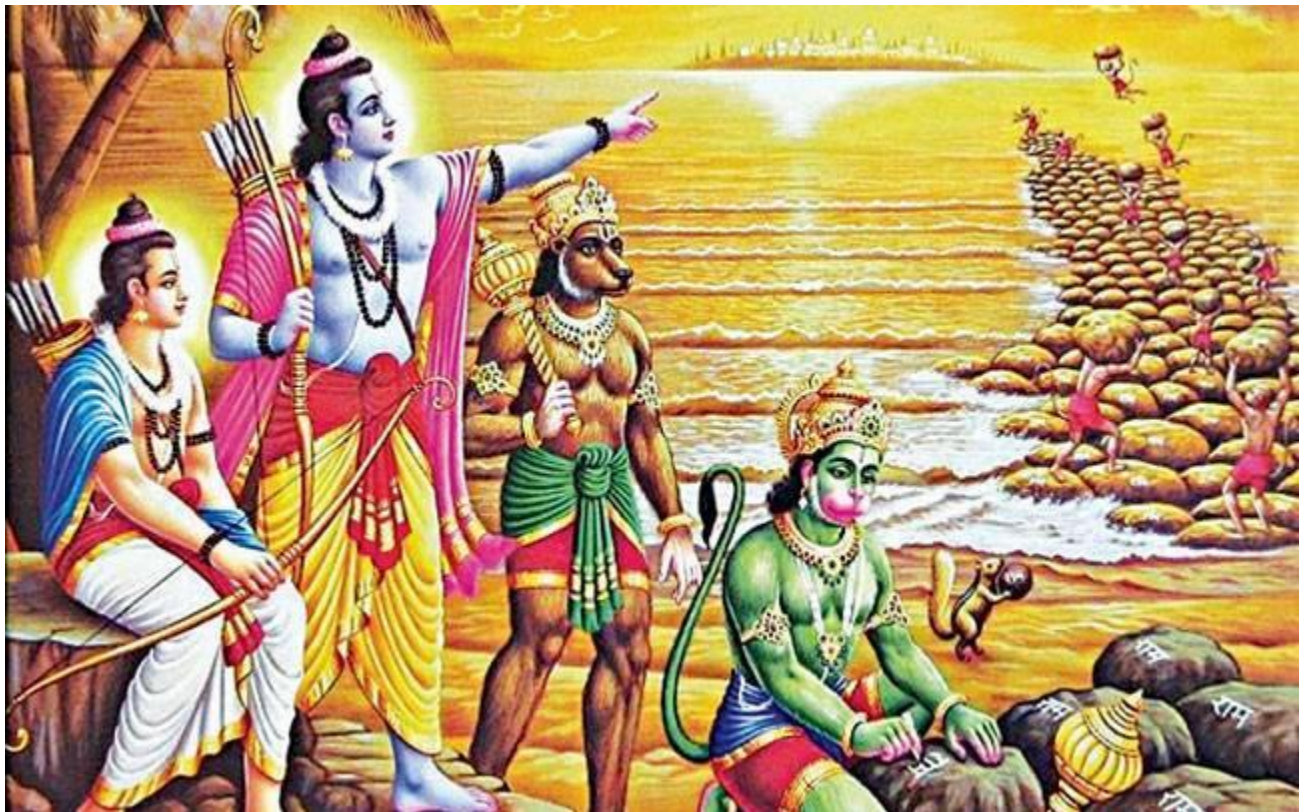
As the sons of King Dasaratha became youthful, Sage Vishvamitra derided that Rama and Lakshmana should protect one Yagna being organized by him on the banks of Ganga, since there were always threats of Rakshasas to destroy Yagnas by pouring blood and such other foul material. Very reluctantly, Dasaratha allowed to let them go to protect the Yagna which apparently served many purposes as subtly

planned by the Sage: one to let the World Realize that Rama a mere teen-ager was of Vishnu 'Amsa' and introduced Rama to the Rakshasas that they should better beware; Vishwamitra could teach the nuances of Shastra-Astra Vidya to the brothers; to afford an exposure to Rama at Sita Swayamvara among the great Kings of the day including a warning to Ravana that the Avatar of Vishnu had arrived; and also to consummate the Sacred Wedding of Rama and Sita. As visualised the Sage, all these and many other events took place: the killing of Rakshasi Tadaki and the Rakshasa called Subahu as also the use of 'Vayavyastra' to sweep away demon Maricha to a far off place so that he would have to float again at a later date to assume the role of 'Maya Golden Deer' before Devi's abduction by Ravana; the liberation of Devi Ahalya by giving her normal form from a stone due to Sage Gautami-her husband's curse; the smash of Shiva Dhanush; the wedding of Rama and Sita apart, Lakshmana was married to Urmila, Bharat to Mandvi, and Shatrughna with Shrutikirti; the rupture of Parasurama's ego by the shatter of Vaishnava Dhanush and his exit from the active life into the Ashram of Nara-Narayana.

Even as the City of Ayodhya was going in euphoria with preparations of Shri Rama's becoming the Yuva Raja (the Heir Apparent) of the Kingdom, Devi Kaikeyi declared her intention known that Rama should proceed for a fourteen year long spell of 'Vana Vasa'(forest life) and Bharata to become the Heir Apparent; this was in the light of a boon that Dasaratha gave to Kaikeyi as she saved him on a war front and she reserved to demand it at this juncture as per the old and physically handicapped and mentally vicious Mandhara. Bharat was out of station at his maternal uncle's place and did not know about the demand; Devi Sita insisted accompanying Rama and so did Lakshmana; Dasaratha was in a swoon, followed by death; the entire population of the Kingdom was crest-fallen; Bharata insisted on Rama's return but on the latter's refusal took Rama's footwear kept on the Throne which was worshipped daily and he became a temporary Care Taker Administrator on behalf of King Rama.

Rama, Sita and Lakshmana then reached the mountain of Chitrakoot for a brief stay at the Ashram of Bharadwaja, further on to the Ashram of Atri Muni where the Muni's wife Devi Anasuya enlightened the regulations of a 'Pativrata' and finally entered the Dandakaranya where they stayed for long with Munis visiting their 'Panchavati' (a thatched cottage). One frightful day, demoness Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana and Kumbhakarna, arrived at the Parnashala and proposed to Rama. Lakshmana cut off her ears and nose and as retaliation two Rakshasas attacked Rama and Lakshmana and the latter killed the demons. Surpanakha approached Ravana who planned the attraction of the golden deer disguised as Maricha. Sita was tempted to secure the deer and Rama alone chased the Maya Mriga and killed the demon while the latter shouted loudly the name of Rama to mislead Sita and Lakshmana so that Lakshmana would leave Sita and Ravana could enter the scene. Lakshmana drew a line around Panchavati with Mantras and asked Sita not to go beyond the line. Ravana arrived as a Muni and asked for alms and Sita wanted him to enter the line but Ravana did not and insisted Sita to come out. As soon as she came out, Ravana appeared in his original form and abducted her by his Pushpak Viman. As Sita was sobbing loudly, the giant bird Jatayu, who was a friend of Dasaratha, made desperate attempts to stop Ravana's Viman but the mighty Ravana slashed the bird's wings as it fell down in a faint. As Rama and Lakshmana did not find Sita on their return, they frantically searched and the dying Jatayu conveyed that Sita was abducted by Ravana. Having performed obsequies to Jatayu, Rama and Lakshmana reached the Ashram of Devi Shabari a unique devotee of Shri Rama and treated the brothers with fruits and Rama gave her the boon of Vishnu Sayujya. Hanuman met Rama and Lakshmana and assured all kinds of assistance to Rama in finding Sita and eventually to destroy Ravana and his clan. He introduced the fugitive King of Kishkindha named Sugriva, raised confidence to Sugriva in killing his valiant brother Vaali who occupied his throne and after reoccupying his throne sent Hanuman to Lanka in search of Sita. The mighty Hanuman crossed the ocean and spotted Sita in Ashoka Vatika sobbing under an Ashoka tree. Hanuman convinced Sita as a devotee of Rama by showing Rama's ring and assured her that very soon Rama and Lakshmana would reach Lanka with a huge Vanara Sena (Monkey brigade), kill Ravana and his entire followers and relieve her of bondage. Hanuman created havoc in the Ashoka vatika by

killing all the security personnel, five Senapatis, seven sons of Ravana's Ministers, and a son of Ravana. Indrajit the elder son of Ravana who also was a reputed warrior having defeated Indra and specialized in wars on the clouds thus securing the epithet of 'Meghanadha' encountered Hanuman who feigned Indrajit's control; Hanuman was face to face with Ravana in the latter's court and allowed himself to let his tail burn which was extended endlessly and destroyed a large part of Ravana's City as a warning to him that soon Rama and Lakshmana would arrive at Lanka to destroy Ravana and his entire tribe. On return to Kishkintha, Hanuman conveyed Rama and others about Sita's bondage. Rama, Lakshmana and the mammoth Vanara Sena under Sugriva's leadership arrived on the sea coast to reach Lanka on the other side of the Ocean. Rama prayed to Samudra Deva (the Deity of the Ocean) to reduce the force of the violent tides and when Samudra Deva did not relent was even ready to punish the Deity. Samudra Deva facilitated the construction of Rama Setu or the Bridge in the name of Rama across the Ocean; huge boulders were thrown into the Ocean with the name of Rama inscribed and the boulders floated enabling the construction of the Bridge. Meanwhile the younger brother of Ravana called Vibhishana, a staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu approached Rama for refuge and soon became a confidant of Rama about matters related to Ravana and his associates.



Having crossed the Rama Setu, the gigantic and mighty Monkey Brigade commenced furious battle with the gallant Rakshasas. Indrajit who was a highly renowned warrior fought and killed thousands of Vanaras and succeeded in tying Rama and Lakshmana with 'Nagastra', when Garuda the Carrier of Vishnu appeared and the snakes withered away. Meanwhile Kumbhakarna, another brother of Ravana who had a giant figure fought recklessly killing tens of thousands of Rama Sena, but finally fell down to the torrential rain-like arrows of Shri Rama. Indrajit attacked Lakshmana and made the latter unconscious when Hanuman brought Sanjeevini Mountain with medicinal shrubs got Lakshmana revived; in the fierce battle that followed, Rama and Lakshmana destroyed Indrajit. In the meantime, Ravana desired to perform an 'Abhicharatmika' (Evil-oriented) Yagna out of desperation for Victory, but a few brave

Vanaras got scent of it and destroyed the Yagna. Then Ravana rode into the battle by his chariot with his entire army of massive strength comprising elephants, horses, chariots and infantry and massacred Vanaras. Indra sent his Divya Ratha (Divine Chariot) to Shri Rama with Matangi as the Charioteer and the Greatest Battle of Treta Yuga was fought for seven days and nights, even as all the Devas headed by Indra, besides Brahma and Rudra, watched the Grand Spectacle of Rama-Ravana Yuddha! Rama had systematically smashed Ravana's ten heads, but the destroyed heads were sprouting again and again and Ravana was thundering world shaking shrieks to show Rama's helplessness. Lord Shiva gave a boon to Ravana to let the smashed heads were revived again and again. Finally, Rama pulled up his most powerful 'Brahmastra' to destroy a stock of 'Ambrosia' in his belly (as hinted by Vibhishana) and crushed his chest which pierced through Earth and crashed into Rasatala into the nether world. Instantly, Devas who were visioning the proceedings from the Skies went into ecstasy showering rain of scented flowers on Rama; Indra, Brahma and Rudra were relieved; Gandharvas and Kinneras sang tuneful of lyrics of the Lord; Apsaras danced with immense joy; Sanaka and Sanandana brothers who gave a curse to Jaya and Vijaya the Dwarapaalakas of Vaikuntha as they were obstructed entry to vision Vishnu were satisfied that out of three births the first human birth was completed; Maharshis and Siddhas recited Vedas and Scriptures as also hymns extolling Shri Rama. Rama then appointed Vibhishana as the King of Lanka and blessed him and his progeny to rule till the next Pralaya!

Thereafter Devi Sita was directed to prove her 'Pativratya' (Purity) by entering into an 'Agni Kunda' since she stayed away for long time in Lanka before a huge gathering of spectators; even Devas, Brahma and Rudra witnessed the scene, let alone Rakshasas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, human beings etc. Agni Devata himself brought back from the Agni Kunda and declared Devi Sita as an ever Pure, Chaste, Blameless and a peerless epitome of Pativratiya. Besides installing Vibhishana as the King, Indra and Devas too were bestowed with their lost glories denied to them for long due to the much-hated Ravana and his clan. The precious possessions of Swarga like Pushpaka Vimana of Kubera Deva were restored to the respective Devas. Accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana as well as Hanuman, Sugriva, Vibhishana, Vanara Yoddhas (Warriors) including Jambavanta, Nala, Neela, Subhaga, Sharabha, Sushena, and all the survivors among Vanara Sena crossed the Rama Setu, proceeded to the site of 'Shiva Linga Pratishtana' at Rameshwara and further on to Ayodhya to join the celebrations of Victory and Rajabhisheka. On return an anxious Ayodhya awaited the 'Maryada Purushottam', the Epic Hero and the Most Significant Avatara of Treta Yuga, proving once again that Lord Vishnu would assume human birth again and again as and when Dharma was in jeopardy and Adharma tended to take an upper hand in the Universe.

Shri Rama's departure from Lanka, his coronation & Ramarajya

Lord Shri Rama, the Epic Hero of Ramayana, after the killing the infamous Ravana at Lanka provided great relief to Indra and Devas, Rishis and the virtuous as also the entire humanity. While narrating the Events, Sesha Nag was in a trance as the spell of Shri Rama was so intense that the Illustrious Serpent, whose bed Bhagavan Vishnu- the incarnation Shri Rama- rested on. Lord Rama bestowed the Kingship of Lanka to Vibhishana, the younger brother of the slain Ravana and sat on Pushpaka Viman along with Devi Sita, Lakshman, Hanuman, Sugriva and various other stalwarts who fought in the Battle with Ravana. Even as the Pushpaka Viman took off from Lanka to Ayodhya, there were showers of scented flowers and reverberating sounds of 'Dundubhis' (drums) from the skies by Devas and on the entire route on Earth there were loud recitals of Veda Mantras by Rishis and Brahmanas signifying the 'Vijaya Yatra' or the Victorious Return to Ayodhya. Raghunandan Rama showed to Sita some glimpses of Places like the Rama Setu by which Vanara Sena or the Monkey Brigade crossed the Ocean, Kishkindha where he met Sugriva and Hanuman, and the spots where he and Lakshmana searched for Sita. The Pushpak Viman approached Nandigram, where all these years of 'Rama Vanavas' King

Bharat was ruling Ayodhya on behalf of Shri Rama by decorating the latter's footwear on the Throne, Hanuman was asked to fly earlier and inform Bharata. As the Vimana touched the ground, there was a high moment of emotional meeting of Rama and Bharata. As advance notice was sent, the entire City of Ayodhya prepared itself with festivities and colourful receptions with joyous singing and ecstatic dances to welcome the Maryada Purusha Shri Rama, Maha Sadhvi Sita, the illustrious brothers Lakshmana and Bharata.

With the Pushpak Viman descending down, the entire population of Ayodhyapuri went rapturous rendering high-pitched slogans viz.: Victory to Shri Rama, Victory to Devi Sita, Victory to Lakshmana and Victory to Raja Bharata. Dressed in their best attires befitting the euphoric moments of bliss, the 'Puravasis' had no bounds of joy in welcoming the Hero and his Parivar emerging from the Viman. The high tides of humanity who suppressed their emotions during his absence of for fourteen long years were surcharged with passions and inexplicable hilarity. Shri Rama first entered Devi Kaikeya's Chambers and after prostrating before her asked her if there were any other wishes of hers yet unfulfilled! She stooped her head down in shame and could not utter one word out of remorse and anguish. From there, Shri Rama accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana visited Devi Sumitra and Shatrughna and postrated to her too; she expressed overflowing grief and relief and profusely thanked Rama for his highest consideration for her son Lakshmana. Further on both Rama and Sita entered the Chamber of Devi Kaushalya who swooned first for some time and after recovery embraced the son and daughter-in-law and declared that Sadhvi Sita was the finest example of womanhood for ever!



After all the euphoria subsided, Bharat called the Ministers, Astrologers and Maharshi Vasishtha to decide on the time and date of Shri Rama Pattabhishekam (Coronation). The Historic Celebration of

‘Rama Rajabhisheka’ was a landmark in Treta Yuga attended by Lord Brahma, Devas, Maharshis and the highly satisfied ‘Praja, and heralded the highly famed Rama Rajya. As Rama was seated as its Head on the Naksha (Atlas) of ‘Sapta Lokas’ of Prithvi, all the Devas, Daityas, Nagas, Yakshas, Asuras, and of course the entire humanity were performing their respective duties with devotion and care as per established regulations of Dharma (Virtue), Nyaya (Justice), Law and Order, and Social Security. Sadhus and Sages were happy as never before, none resorted to foul means of any kind, women folk had no difficulties and they too observed the regulations as Pativratas; Sacred Activities like Yagnas, Vratas, Punya Karyas, Tirtha Yatras, Daanas, Dhyanas, and Veda Pathanas were in full swing. In response to Rama’s appeals Daityas, Maha Sarpas and other Power Joints of the Rajya, none dared to follow the ways of the Evil. To Devas too Shri Ram made requests not to impose any ‘Adhi Daivika’ based problems such as natural disasters like Earth quakes, floods and droughts or excessive rains or ‘Akaala Maranas’ or premature deaths. The Praja in Rama Rajya were instructed to observe the ‘Varnaashrama Vidhana’, perform useful tasks like construction of wells, Sarovars, Temples, Choultries, Udyanavanas or Public Gardens, Pashu Palana or raising cattle, farming and such useful engagements rather than indulge in unhealthy and anti- social activities such as thieving, pilfering, causing hurt to others, amassing money and squandering for foul tasks, prostitution, betting, racing, drinking and yielding to immoral activities. As Shri Rama was an ideal Institution of ‘Sishta Rakshaka’ (Protector of Virtue and Justice) and ‘Dushta Sikshaka’ (Punisher of the Evil), the normal Praja (General Public) proved to be a darling King owing to his suave and benevolent treatment and as a severe chastiser and Task Master of wrong doings.

As a petty minded Washerman in the Rama Rajya scandalised Sadhvi Sita once that after all she stayed in Ravana’s Lanka for long enough and was not above suspicion concerning her character, Maryada Purusha Shri Rama abandoned her so as to set an example to his Praja. Devi Sita was right at that time pregnant too. This was the time when Rama intensified the strictness of his administration in the Kingdom. Lakshmana drove the chariot and abandoned the Pativrata shiromani Devi Sita even as Maharshi Valmiki provided ready asylum.

Agastya Maha Muni visited Rama once and in the course of exchange of views, Rama desired to know from Agastya about Ravana’s background, who was the Villian-in-Chief of Ramayana forcing Rama to wage a battle with the Demon for kidnapping Devi Sita. Agastya Muni informed Shri Rama that Lord Brahma’s son was Pulastya and the latter’s son was Vishwavaka with two wives viz. Mandakini and Kaikasi. Mandakini begot Kubera who by virtue of his Tapsya became the Chief of Yakshas and a Pushpak Viman. Ravan, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana were the sons of Kaikasi. Kubera performed sincere and strict Tapasya and achieved the position of a ‘Loka Palaka’ and possessed a Vimana too; he was coming and going to meet his parents by the Vimana. Kaikasi was jealous of Mandakini and so were Ravana and Kumbhakarna against Kubera. This prompted Ravana brothers to perform Tapasya, although Vibhishana did the meditation for noble reasons. Lord Brahma was pleased with Ravana’s Tapasya and blessed him to become the King of a large Kingdom and made him superior to Devas; as a result Devas fled from Swarga. Ravana occupied Lanka too and forcibly took away Kubera’s Viman. Although Ravana and Kumbhakarna were Brahmanas, they took to the habits of Rakshasas, while they suffered Vibhishana who was virtuous and devoted. But as the evil actions of Ravana and Kumbhakarna were reaching a point of no return, Devas and Indra reached Brahma for help and along with Rudra they all approached Lord Vishnu. The latter declared (by way of an Akaasha vaani or the Voice of Skies) that soon a high merited King of Ayodhya of Surya Vamsa of the clan of ‘Ikshvaaku’ named Dasaratha would beget four sons from three wives viz. Rama to the eldest wife Kousalya, Lakshmana and Shatrughna to Sumitra and Bharata to Kaikeyi. The declaration also stated that Rama and Lakshmana would completely destroy Ravana and Kumbhakarna as well as their offspring and install Vibhishana as the King of Lanka in a completely new set up following Dharma and Justice. The Akashavaani further said that several Devas would be born as ‘Vaanas’ or monkeys and bears. This was the retrospect of the demolition of Ravana, Kumbhakarna and others of the Clan.



Having learnt of the

family background of Ravana and others from Maharshi Agastya, Rama felt extremely remorseful that he had perpetrated 'Brahma hatya' since Ravana was from Brahmana vamsa which was the like the unique tree bearing the various branches of Vedas and Shastras. Agastya told Rama that he was the incarnation of Vishnu who was the Kartha (Originator), Palak (Preserver) and Samharak (Destroyer) and Devi Sita was Maha Vidya Herself and the extreme evil exercised by Ravana gave relief to the world and as such what Rama did was laudable but not regretful. However if there was the least feeling of regret, he might as well perform Aswamedha Yagna as the famous King Manu, Sagara, Marut and Nahusha's son Yayati had in the past and attained 'Parama Pada'. Thus the inspiration to perform the Yagna came forth from Agastya Muni.

As a first step, a suitable, sturdy and steady horse was selected with excellent features. Then under the supervision of Vasishtha Muni, the Kingdom's Chief Rishi, Shri Rama tilled a four yojana wide and long bhumi on Sarayu River banks with a golden plough; selected a suitable Yagna Vedika (Platform) with the required number of Mandapas and Agni Kundas decorated with jewels; invited Maharshis and Tapasvis of high standing like Narada, Asita, Parvat, Kapila, Jaatukarnya, Angira, Aashtishena, Atri, Goutami, Haarita, Yagnavalkya, and Sarvat; constructed suitable Ashramas for the Invitee Rishis and disciples; Conferences were held to decide on the format, procedure and daily programing; prescribed do's and don'ts of physical, moral and spiritual content; 'niyamas and nigrahas' (norms and restrictions) etc. Lakshmana brought the Yagnashwa at the appointed time, formal Pujas were performed by Brahmanas and 'Suvasini' Women; the Surya Vamsa flag of Victory was hoisted on the horse; a gold sheet was hung around the horse-neck with an Inscription saying that the horse belonged to Shri Rama and whosoever stopped it would be severely punished; Shatrughna was made over-all in charge of the huge armed Sena

(Army), elephants, horses, chariots and carts leading the Yagnashwa; Pushkala the son of Bharata was made in charge of the rear side of the 'Ashwa'; Bhakta Hanuman headed the entourage and at the most propitious Muhurta the Yagna Horse was released, along with the recitals of Veda Mantras and 'Mangala Vadyas' amid big shouts of Victory to Shri Rama Chandra. The Procession with the Yagnashva in the lead moved on with instruction from Shri Rama that the course of the Ashwa should not be conducted as the horse would move freely. The first halt was at the Avicchitra Nagari where there was a noted Temple of Devi Kamakshi who appeared before King Samuda performing Tapasya and gave the boon of invincibility; she also asked the King to offer his entire Kingdom and riches to Shatrughna as he would pass through the Nagari along with the horse of Ashvamedha Yagna to be conducted Shri Rama of Surya Vamsha and the killer of Ravana. Accordingly, Shatrughna was given all kinds of honours by King Samuda. After a three day halt, the King made his son a 'Samanta Raja' of Ayodhya and moved on along with Shatrughna and Pushkala.

As the Yagnashwa moved on nearing the Ashram of Sage Chyavana and Devi Sukanya, Pradhan Mantri Sumati who was in the entourage of Shatrughna explained their episode: The son of Sage Bhrigu named Chyavan was engaged in very rigorous Tapasya when King Sharyati was performing 'snaan' in the River Narmada and Tarpana to Devas and Pitras; the Princess Sukanya along with her companions was moving about in a forest on the banks of Narmada. Out of fun, Sukanya nearing a bush pierced with a piece of wood into perhaps a couple of glittering worms, but got alarmed when blood spilt out and there were trebles of Earth and lightnings. She ran and informed her father who was resting on the river banks about the incident. The King went up to the bush and found to his horror that Sunanya did not pierce the lighting worms but the eyes of a Sage engrossed in Tapasya, causing him to blindness. The King apologised profusely and offered his teen age daughter to the sick and aged Sage in wedding as a compensation. The daughter Sukanya served the Sage with sincerity and once the two Asvini Kumar Brothers who were passing by were impressed with her 'Pativartya' (seva to husband) and gave her the boons of eye sight to her husband as also youth and charm. In gratitude, the Sage Chyavan, by virtue of his Tapasya, gave the boon to Ashvini Kumars to secure sips of 'Somarasa' (the Celestial Drink) denied to them hitherto as also fulfilled Devatva with eligibility for enjoying 'havis' or the fruit of Yagnas. Lord Indra was furious at these boons to Asvini Kumars and raised his hand to punish them all but the Sage Chyavan in turn held Indra's hand tight and Indra had no option to grant the boons to Ashvini Kumars! While Mantri Sumati narrated the Story of the Sacred Couple of Sage Chyavan and Devi Sukanya, the 'Sacrifice Horse', Shatrughna and the entire entourage reached the Ashram, worshipped them and requested them to visit the Place of the Rama Yagna, as Hanuman carried the Chyavana couple to Rama Chandra and the Place of the Maha Yagna in progress. As the Yagnashva moved ahead, Pradhana Mantri Sumati told Shatrughna that they were about to reach Neelachala and the Sacred Temple of Bhagavan Purushottama with four arms on the Mountain top. They reached Ratnaathata Nagar where King Vimal who became extremely excited and organised refreshments to the entire entourage. He also made a symbolic dedication of his Kingdom to Shri Rama and gave away valuable gifts to Shatrughna and others. King Vimal narrated an unusual story about the incidents which happened in the past about the Neelachala Mountain. He quoted a Brahmana visiting the Neelachala Mountain and found outside the Purushottama Temple there were a few Tirtha Yattris who possessed four hands armed with Gada, Chakra, Saranga and a lotus. Similarly a Kirata (Hunter) saw spectacles of a few children with 'Chaturbhjas' armed likewise with glittering robes! When the children were asked by the Kirata, they said that a few morsels of Maha Prasada which fell on the ground were eaten, they came out with the Chaturbhujas! From Neelachala, the Yagnashva halted at Chakranga Nagar ruled by King Subahu, where Prince Daman felt that the manner the Ashwamegha was publicised all over the World smacked of pride and ego and ordered his Senapati to keep his army ready to fight. On behalf of Shatrughna, Raja Pratapagna shouted that the Yagnaashva disappeared and Prince Daman replied that he had kept the horse and if possible might get it back after a fight! A battle ensued and Raja Pratapagna was defeated by Daman. Shatrughna wondered as to who was this imp of a Raja Kumar called Daman who did considerable damage to elephants, horses and chariots and felled on ground the capable Raja Pratapagna wounded with blood!

Price Pushkala the son of Bharata was so angry that he swore to control or kill Daman. A fierce battle took place and finally Pushkala defeated Daman Kumar whose body was profusely bleeding and his horse took back to the Court of King Subahu. The King, his brother Suketu who was a master of Gada Yuddha (Battle of Maces) and Subahu's son Chitranga an expert of Battle Designs had all appeared together and designed a 'Krouncha Vyuha'; the entire strength of the sea-like army of Subahu was mobilised and put Shatrughna on red alert. The most powerful warriors of Subahu were kept at the tactical head position and sides of the 'Krouncha Pakshi's war design. Subahu was in desperate and distressed condition as his son was bleeding with wounds on death bed; revenge was the watchword of Subahu's entire army. Shatrughna knew the seriousness of the situation as a minor scuffle restricted to Daman and Pushkala had snow-balled into a full-fledged battle with military offensives and complicated battle designs. He addressed the Shri Rama Sena and exhorted its warriors that the situation was such that had to be faced with alertness, valour and brain power to be able to break the Krouncha Vyuha. Raja Lakshminidhi the son of King Janaka took a vow that he would face Suketu and destroy the Vyuha designed by the latter in no time. There was a one-to-one battle as both were equally worked up and it continued for long time with ups and downs. The warriors then took to 'Gada-Yuddha' (mace-war) and it prolonged for long time; finally, Lakshminidhi was able to overpower Suketu and there were shouts of relief resounded while both the parties appreciated with each other. In the battle that continued, Pushkala killed Chitranga. Subahu was extremely upset with the killings of his brother and son and became most desperate to kill thousands of warriors, elephants, horses and foot-soldiers and finally challenged Shatrughna. Hanuman who was providing cover to Shatrughna as he was in the defensive position and received showers of arrows of King Subahu which hurt Hanuman. The highly enraged Hanuman kicked King Subahu on his chest by his powerful feet and grounded him. It was in a stage of stupor, the King witnessed a vision when Brahma and Devatas were eulogizing Shri Rama as an Avatar of Vishnu. Having realised his folly, he made desperate shouts to Daman, Suketu and Vichitra saying that Shri Rama was none else but Bhagavan Vishnu and the battle should end forthwith. There after he apologised to Shatrughna for what all had happened, performed 'Atmarpana' (Surrender) and returned the Yagnashva with honour. As the Yagnashva moved on for a few days, suddenly there emerged a frightful darkness since close friends of the deceased Ravana, two Rakshasas of Patalaloka named Vidyunmali and Ugradamshttra wanted to avenge Ravana's death and luckily for them an opportunity came on its own with the launch of the Yagna and to trap the Rama Sena by hiding the Yagnashwa. The Rakshasa Brothers succeeded in hiding the horse. Bharat Kumar Pushkal made a deadly declaration that if he did not return with the Yagashwa, then he should be deemed a fictitious devotee of Shri Rama. Hanuman too took a similar vow. Other warriors too took vows and Shatrugna was not far behind. Meanwhile the Rakshasa Brothers shouted: where is Rama; we want to kill him and take revenge! Vidyunmali straightaway targetted Pushkala and threw a 'Shakti' on his chest, while Pushkala rained arrows on the Rakshasa and the latter's chest was pierced through as lot of blood flowed out from his heart and Vidyunmali fell on the ground unconscious. Reacting to this sharply, Ugradamshttra threw a red-hot Trishul from the Demon's viman on Pushkal's heart and the latter fell unconscious inside his chariot. Hanuman witnessed that Bharat Kumar Pushkal was in risk and instantly expanded his body to pull down the Rakshasa occupants of the Viman, especially Ugradamshttra and hurled a hot Trishul on the Rakshasa, who in turn used his Maya to bring in a complete cover of darkness in which it was difficult to perceive who was a companion and who was an opponent. Witnessing these fast developments, Shatrughna took the name of Shri Rama and slashed the Cover of Maya that Ugradamshttra brought in by one arrow and with another quick arrow of Sammohanastra on the battle field. By yet another arrow, he brought down the Viman from where Ugradamshttra was fighting. The demon used 'Paashupatastra' against Shatrughna and the latter had no option but to utilise 'Narayanastra' to balance the former. Meanwhile a recovered Vidyunmali was about to toss a Trishul on Shatrughna but a smart Shatrughna hacked the hand of Vidyunmali with an arrow and simultaneously flinged another arrow to pitch down the demon's head. Soon after in quick action, Shatrughan also hurled a 'kripan' (Small knife) on Ugradamshttra and killed that demon brother too. As the Yagnyashva ambled along towards the banks of River Narmada, Prime Minister Sumati suggested to Shatrughna a quick visit to the Ashram of Muni Aranyaka. When the Muni was informed by Sumati that

an Ashwamedha Yagna was being performed, the Sage replied that those foolish persons who were wasting their time and energy in performing Yagnas and Vratas during the short life span should be advised to best utilise their time to Shri Rama 'Smarana' (Memory) as Shri Rama was itself an Yagna, a Vrata, a Puja, a Maha Mantra, Veda and Shastra. Then Suman introduced Shatrughna, Bharat Kumar, Hanuman and others and the Sage was thrilled to see them all and re-emphasised that there was no other Deity like Shri Rama and no there bhajan better than his. Shatrughna then arranged Muni Aranyaka's visit to Ayodhya and the Muni after meeting Shri Rama in person felt so satisfied that he did not wish for anything else in life and by the grace of Shri Rama left for Vishnu loka! The Yagnashva reached the beautiful and properous Devapura at Vindhya where even building walls were made of precious stones and the King Veeramani was an extraordinary devotee of Bhagavan Shiva. The elder Prince Rukmanga arrested the Yagnashwa and brought it to the Capital but since he came to know that the horse belonged to Shri Rama in connection with a Yagna, the King was hesitant to approve the action. Nor Shiva, who was prayed to by the King; the latter said that since the the action was already taken, it would not be in tune with Kshatriya Dharma to take a retreat step. By way of assurance, Shiva too resolved to fight with Lord Rama, since Shiva as a devotee of Sri Rama had as much responsibility to the King who also was a great devotee of Shiva. Thus a vicious circle got into motion. Meanwhile, Brahmarshi Narada alerted all concerned ie. Shatrughna, Shri Rama, the King Veeramani and the typical 'Kalaha Priya' readied the armies of both Sharughna and the King. Raja Veeamamari called his Senatpati and got an excellent army ready and Sharughna advised Rama's army to get readied too. The opening duel was of Rukmanga and Pushkal. Rukmanga recited a Mantra and the chariot of Pushkala commenced 'Bhubhraman' (circling fastly). With difficulty the Rath was stopped but the enraged Pushkala recited a return Mantra which made Rukmanga's chariot fly right up to the Surya mandal where it got burnt and fell down but Rukmanga was thrown out unconscious. King Veeramani was alarmed with fury approaching Pushkala and as a chain reaction Hanuman sought to reach Pushkala for rescue but Pushkala became over confident and prevented Hanuman and asked the latter to help Shatrughna instead. There was a one-to-one battle between Pushkala and Veeramani and by using a mighty arrow in the name of Shri Rama made Veeramani unconscious. Surprisingly, Bhagavan Shiva himself entered the battle field at this juncture as King Veeramani the unique devotee of Shiva fell unconscious! Shiva instructed Veerabhadra to help Veeramani and Nandi to control Hanuman. Thus Veerabhadra killed Pushkala, Shiva Himself made Shatrughna unconscious; at the same time appreciated Hanuman's valour. Hanuman addressed Bhagavan Shiva saying that quite often, Shiva was confirming his devotion to Vishnu and his Avatar Shri Rama, but it was surprising that this time he was fighting against Shri Rama! Hanuman replied that King Veeramani was a great devotee of his and it was a 'Maryada' or Courtesy to defend a devotee just as Rama too would defend his devotees likewise! Basically both were two entities of the Paramatma! Then Hanuman asked Bhagavan Shankara for granting boons to let all the persons who died in this battle be resuscitated. Shri Rama made his presence at the battle field when Shiva prostrated; Shatrughna, Hanuman and all the rest were highly surprised and the persons who were declared dead in the battle came back alive and all were happy. Shri Rama then explained to one and all that the Dharma of Deities was to safeguard the interests of their Bhaktas and what Shiva did in defending King Veeramani and his side was the best that he had done; that his heart was full of Shiva and vice-versa and those thought other wise would be dispatched to Kumbhapaka Naraka! Those who were Shiva's devotees were Shri Rama's beloved Bhaktas and those who were Shiva followers were Vishnu's devotees too.

Sesha Nag described to Sage Vatsayan that as the Sacrificial Horse reached the precincts of Valmiki Ashram, Shi Rama's sons Lava and Kusha -who were unaware that Rama was their father as Devi Sita staying in Valmiki Ashram under the care of the Sage's care did not inform the twin boys of the relationship as they were born in the Ashram after Rama abandoned Sita-reacted sharply against the inscription on the Golden Plate hung around the Yagnashva; they tied the horse and brought it inside the Ashram.



The soldiers accompanying the horse ignored the two boys who tied the horse out of child play and started untying the horse and instantly, the hands of the soldiers were severed as they ran to Shatrughna to inform the incident. Understandably, Shatrughna grew angry but felt that the boys who did this might not be ordinary but might have perhaps been Devatas at the behest of Indra! Thus he ordered his Senapati Kaalajit to quickly alert the Army for a full-fledged battle. In the battle that ensued between the Senapati and Lava Kumara, the Senatapti was killed and there was allround 'hahakar' (frightened shouts) from the Army. Shatrughna asked Pushkal to take a big Army and proceed against the boy Lava. Pushkal said to Lava that he would be gifted a chariot so that both might fight on equal terms; as a reply, Lava destroyed Pushkal's chariot instantly and asked Pushkal now grounded was heckled by Lava on 'equal terms'! In the battle that followed Pushkal rained arrows on Lava and in response despatched a cobra like poisonous arrow aimed at Pushkal's chest and the latter fell flat on the ground. Hanuman who was nearby took the body of Pushkala to Shatrughna who instructed Hanuman to kill Lava mercilessly. The highly charged Hanuman hurled huge trees and boulders and Lava cut them to pieces as a sport. By the severity and swiftness with which poisonous arrows were flinged at Hanuman, the latter could not control himself even as the gigantic body that he assumed fell flat on the ground! The highly puzzled Shatrughna wondered as to who these two boys were who felled the Most Valiant Hanuman himself! As he drove the Golden Chariot towards the boys, he felt that their resemblance with Shri Ram was so striking that he asked them as to who they were and what their parentage was. The boys gave a stiff reply that it was not essential to know such details since their horse was captured by them and let him try if he could retrieve it. In the course of the battle, Shatrughna was stunned and stumbled as he had to quickly change his bows that were broken and the chariots that were destroyed and was finally knock down with unconsciousness. As Shatrughna was hit, Raja Surath and others surrounded and resorted to 'Adharma Yuddha' or unjust battle and caused Lava to hurt into unconsciousness. As the news of Lava's state was informed, Devi Sita

was informed and Kusha hurried to the warfront and instantly faced Shatrughna who by now got revived and nodoubt knew that Kusha and Lava were twins and the sons of Shri Rama, but the most furious Kush had was on attack with the ‘Narayana Astra’ hurled on Shatrughna but this powerful arrow was turned ineffective. In reply, Shatrughna took a vow in the name of Shri Rama and rleased an arrow but the desperate Kusha took the vow on his Mother Devi Sita and retaliated. Shatrughna fell unconscious again.Sugreeva took over the position of Commander in Chief and fought with Kusha as also with Lava who recovered again by then. Sugreeva too fell down and Lava and Kusha tied both Sugreeva and Hanuman and carried them to Devi Sita who was aghast to witness the Maha Viras in that condition. The boys relented to her instruction to release them but as per Kshatriya Dharma they would have to return to the Battle Field. On releasing both Hanuman and Sugreeva, Devi Sita came to know that Shatrughna was lying unconscious. Devi Sita then remembered Shri Rama and addressed Surya Deva that if she were to be a true Pativrata, Shatrughna should be revived and not only that who ever lost their lives in the Battle should be also revived! Indeed her wish was fulfilled and all was well. As per Sita’s instruction, Lava and Kusha released the Yagyashva and the entire entourage headed by Shatrugna returned to Ayodhya after the successful Victory tour of Yagyashva and all the defeated Kings who clashed with Rama Sena were paraded before Shri Rama. But Shri Rama was more curious to learn more about the valour of Lava and Kusha. He was keen on Devi Sita’s return to Ayodhya and despatched Lakshmana to bring her back, but she refused to return.

Meanwhile, Maharshi Valmiki had deftly reconstructed the proceedings of Ramayana in which he scripted 24000 shlokas over five hundred sargas and seven khandas including Uttara Ramayana. Then Maha Jnaani Valmika wondered whether there could be any personage who could recite as a musical sonnet to let the contents by publicised to the public. Even as he was wondering likewise, the two popular Raja Kumaras Lava and Kusha appeared on his memory screen in the robes of Muni Kumaras and touched his feet respectfully. These two illustrious lads were very intelligent having learnt Veda Vedangas as also the Kshaatra Dharmas from himself! Then he had taught the proceedings of Ramayana upto the date so far.

*pāṭhye geye ca madhuram̐ pramāṇais tribhir̐ anvitam, jātibhiḥ saptabhir̐ yuktam̐
tantrīlayasamanvitaṃ/ hāsya śṛṅgāra -kāruṇyaraudravīrabhayānakaiḥ, bībhatsādirasair̐ yuktam̐
kāvyam̐ etad agāyatām/*

Valmiki Maharshi described to Lava-Kusha Kumaras not only the full details of Ramayana but also the methodology of singing the entire sonnet as per the Nava Rasas as also of sweetness of shortened-medium-elingated ‘swaras’ of voice sounds; further the singing should be as per anvitas- shadaja-andsapta swaras, my the veena the stringed musical instrument. The singing needs also as per ‘taala- and nava rasaas’ of shringara-karuna-hasya-rouudra-bhayanaka and so on. Both Lava and Kusha were also saturated with Gandharva Vidya and its ‘sthaana shabda’ comprising ‘mandra-madhyama and taararupa trividha swaraas’. From the hridaya grandhi or of the heart base or kantha grandhi and shira grandhi, the sounds originating from heart-throat-and head, the swaras are originated as mandra-madhyama-taara or bass-medium-pitched up. _

Nava Rasaas: Shringara Rasa is representative of romance- Bibhibhatsa Rasa is on account of reaction to the appalling behavioral pattern of the nature of human and other species-Roudra Rasa is generated by anger-Adbhuta Rasa is the outcome of high esteem and awful wonder of Bhagavan’s bravery and valor-Bhaayanka Rasa emanated from instant reaction of several hissing cobras all over-Veera Rasa reflects the puzzling awe of such as of the blood red colour imbibed into the red lotuses-Haasya Rasa is due to ‘sakhee- sakhaa jana kreedaa svabhaava- Karuna Rasa in response to Bhakti jana’s unstinted and heartfelt devotion- and Shanti is as the Final Destination of ‘Tadaatmyata’ with Prakriti and Parameshwara!

Gandharva Vidya: Narada Purana explains: In the Swara Shastra, the Swara of Archika is related to Rig Veda, 'Gaandhik' is to 'Gaadha' and 'Saamik' is to Sama Veda. A 'Swara' is according to 'Ruchas' (Hymns) and their variations, while in 'Gathas' or metered rhythmic verses Sama Veda has 'Vyavadhaanas' or pauses. In the entire 'Vangmaya' Shastra (Vocabulary), pronunciation originates from 'Vakshasthala' (chest), 'Kantha' (throat) and 'Mastaka' (head); from the chest emerges the low level sounds normally resorted to morning singing, from the Kantha emerge the medium and very broad variety of sounds and from Mastaka are emanated high pitch sounds and their variations of volume. The *Sapta Swaras*-Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, and Ni-are 'Prathama' (Shadaja), 'Dwitiya' (Rishabha), 'Tritiya' (Gandhara), 'Chaturtha' (Madhyama), 'Mandra' (Panchama), 'Krushta' (Dhaivata) and 'Atiswara' (Nishadha). Shadaja-Sa- stands for 'Sagar' (Sea) with peacock as the representative bird, 'Muladhara' (the base of the spine) as the Chakra (body part) and the ruling Deity as Ganapati. Rishabha Re-means bull representing the bird Skylark, 'Swadhishtana' or genital as the Chakra and the ruling Deity is Agni. Gandhara Swara 'Ga' means Gagan or Sky with goat as the representative animal, 'Manipura' (solar plexus/ naval) as the Chakra and Rudra is the concerned Deity. Madhyama-Ma-means the Middle, represented by the bird dove, Anahata (heart) being the relevant body part and Vishnu as the Ruler concerned. Panchama-Pa-means the fifth, represented by nightingale and 'Vishuddha' (throat) as the relevant body part and the Ruling Deity is Sage Narada. The Swara titled Dhaivata-Dha- means Dharti or Earth, the representative animal being horse, the relevant Chakra being 'Aajna' or the third eye and the Ruler being Sada Shiva. The Seventh Swara viz. Nishada-Ni- meaning Hunter and standing for the animal Elephant, has 'Sahasrara' (the crown of the head) as the body part, the Ruler being Surya as the Deity. Besides the Swaras, Shadaja, Madhyama and Gandhara are known as three '*Graamaas*' (gamut or scale in music). Those who render 'Saama Gana' approve twenty graamas in Madhyama Swara, fourteen in Shadaja and fifteen in Gandhara.

Rupalakṣaṇasaṁpannau madhurasvarabhāṣiṇau, bimbādivoddhṛtau bimbau rāmadehāt tathāparau/

Lava Kusha Kumars are stunningly handsome with excellent natural qualities, speaking in sweet voices in their conversational style. They are just like Shrirama's prototypes worthy of high appreciation; as and when they converse in the congregations of Rishis or Brahmana panditas, Shri Rama charitra's singing was always thrilling. Once in one of such 'sabhas', the Munis were in trance shedding tears of ecstasy responding with expressions of boundless joy as the stanzas and their tuneful singing was *par excellence!* As the incidents of Ramayana were described as per the contexts, the Munis and Panditas were so much enraptured that some gifted them stood up clapping and gifted valuable clothing, 'mriga charmas' on which they were seated and 'rudraaksha maalaas' and 'yagjnopaveetaas' even! Some gifted 'kamandulas' or carrying sacred water vessels, 'mekhalas' or traditional shawls, walking sticks, 'yagjna paatras' or vessels for Pure Sacrifices, and even their own 'koupeenaas' or underwears even;. All of them were clapping in high appreciation and blessings for the long life and auspiciousness to the boys.. As the lads were singing, they were dancing away as per the tune and the emotion concerned, while swinging the veena instrument, and swaying their fresh flower garlands drawing ready attention to the flocking onlookers. One day, Bharat noticed the gathering appreciative of Lava Kusha's Ramayana's song and dance sequence in the open public, and invited them to a concert in the Royal Court in the presence of Shri Rama himself. At the conclusion, Shri Rama remarked addressing Lakshman, Bharata and Shatrughnas: 'These young lads had rendered Ramayana with such gusto and passion in such realistic style and this concert could be worthy repeatedly to organised manner'. As per the royal decree, crowds got bewitched to trances concert after concert to the unparalleled ecstasy and excitement of the public crowds at various theaters and road shows.

The boy's sang the entire Ramayana since the birth of Shri Rama and brothers, including Sita's abandon; Lakshmana leaving her to her fate; her rescue by Maharshi Valmiki her 'Agnatavasa' delivery of the twin brothers; the Sage's excellent training of the boys in warfare and Kshatriya Dharmas, knowledge of

Administration and of Kingship; Shri Rama's popularity with Sages, citizens, and each and every being as Maryada Purusha; Sage Vishwamitra's insistence to safeguard his Yagna and the killing of Demoneess Tataka and Subahu; Sita's Swayamvara; Kaikeyee's desire to Bharata's becoming the Heir Apparent and Ram's Vanavasi; killing of notorious Rakshasas, Sita's 'Apaharana' (kidnap) by Ravana; Rama's befriending with Sugreeva and Hanuman; Hanuman's trip to Lanka to trace Sita; the crossing of the Ocean; the killing of Ravana and the entire clan, Vibheeshana becoming the Lanka King; the Rama Rajya; Rama abandoning Devi Sita on the basis of a Secret Report of a washerman's allegation about Devi Sita's character notwithstanding Sita's pregnancy; and Rama performing Ashvamedha Yagna. Shri Rama was overwhelmed with emotions at the ballad sung by the twins, his pride to have secured such illustrious twins and the remorse to have abandoned Sadhvi Sita. Already, Sage Valmiki arrived to attend the Ashvamedha Yagna as a respected Guest of Honour at Ayodhya. He narrated how Devi Sita was fortunately seen by him in the forest that Lakshmana abandoned her; her transfer to his Ashram and her continuous grief, the birth of Lava and Kusha, his upbringing with considerable training in Dhanur Veda, Fine Arts, and what all was required by an ideal Kshatriya and a King including the nuances of Administration, Yoga and Siddhis and an exemplary human being worthy of the sons of a Maryada Purusha. Valmiki further stated that he visited Varuna Deva, Agni Deva and other Lokapalakas who had unanimously referred to Devi Sita's purity and piety as a Maha Pativrata Sadhvi born into this world; a ready proof of her 'Shuddhata' and highest devotion to Shri Rama was the coming back alive of lakhs of dead persons at the various battles en route the travel of the Yagnashva, since she wished so!

Having heard what all Maharshi Valmiki stated in Public and in the midst of the most recognised and pious Sages-in-Chief soon after the Great Singing of Ramayana by Lava and Kusha, Shri Rama asked Lakshman to visit Valmiki Ashram and invite Devi Sita to Ayodhya, in the context of the Victory Celebrations as also the Sacred and Historic Termination of Ashvamedha Yagna. As Lakshmana reached the Ashram and requested Devi Sita, she asked him as to how could she return to Ayodhya having been humiliated and discarded with baseless allegations. Lakshman narrated most convincingly as to what all happened at Ayodhya, how the Twins sang Ramayana and the spontaneous reactions and glorious comments about Devi Sita from the Maharshis, Devas and Loka Palakas (as reported by Sage Valmiki). He prostrated before her and requested her to visit Ayodhya. The Ashvamedha Yagna concluded with the display of the pride of Surya Vamsha, the unreserved gaiety of the Praja of Rama Rajya, the relentless recitals of Veda Mantras by the Maharshis, the blessings of Brahma and Maha Deva; the showers of flowers from the heavens by Indra, Loka Palakas, Pancha Bhutas and Devas; the joyous singing of Gandarvas and the celestial dances of Apsaras. Most interestingly, even by the touch of Shri Rama the Yagnashva (Sacrificial Horse) turned into a human being redeemed after the touch, since Sage Durvasa cursed the person in the past and when sincerely apologised gave the boon of Rama's sacred touch. Sesha Nag assured Sage Vatsayana that whoever heard or read the proceedings of Shri Rama's Ashvamedha Yagna would get rid off Maha Patakas, secure prosperity, excellent health, and contentment in life; even a chandala or athiest would attain 'Parama Pada'!

Sita's Paramadhaam and termination of Rama Avatar



After the successful completion of Ashvamedha Yagna, Shri Rama continued his normal routine of observing celibacy and administration. Shatrughna killed Lavanasura and ruled Madhurapuri; Bharat administered both the banks of River Sindhu and controlled Gandharvas; Lakshman conquered Madra desha, installed his sons as the Kings and returned to Rama for providing service to him. Shri Rama did Ashvamedha Yagna, after installing a Golden Pratima of Sita; in fact he performed several Yagnas in the same manner. Sage Valmiki exhorted Rama about Sita's spotlessness and piousness time and again and Shri Rama finally opined that indeed he was fully aware of her chastity and purity but since the allegation came from the Praja (Public), Sita should prove her innocence before the people. Sita then declared in a huge Sabha that if she performed puja to any body else excepting Shri Ram in her mind, thought, tongue or action then my mother Bhudevi might take her into her mother's fold. Immediately, there was an Earth-quake and Sita entered into a huge cleavage. Bhudevi herself lifted Sita into her belly and the great Garuda, the Carrier of Lord Vishnu, lifted her from Rasatala to Vishnu loka as seated on a Golden Vimana. Sita Samahit sthala called 'Sitamarhi' is near the national highway No. 2 and also connected with Allahabad and Varanasi railway line with Jungiganj, the nearest railway station. It is a well known Hindu pilgrimage and a famed tourist spot; it is said that this temple is the place where Devi Sita went into the earth when she willed it by herself

After Sita's disappearance, Shri Rama ruled for eleven thousand years. One day, an old Tapasvi came to see Shri Ram and told him that none should enter his Chamber while he was giving an important message from Lord Brahma in secrecy. Shri Rama called Lakshmana and instructed that none should be allowed to enter as long as he was conversing with the Tapasvi and otherwise that person should be punishable with death. Lakshman himself stood at the door and ensured that none would disturb. The Tapasvi conveyed that since the death of Ravana, Kumbhakarna and other demons Rama was to live for eleven thousand

years and that it was time for Rama to leave Earth and return to Vaikuntha. While this secret conversation was going on, Durvasa Maharshi arrived and wished to meet Shri Rama, but Lakshmana declined entry stating that a representative of Brahma was in an important conversation and that he could not see Shri Rama then. Durvasa grew angry and threatened Lakshmana with a severe curse if he did not permit entry. As there was no other alternative between Rama's instruction and Durvasa's threat of curse, Lakshman entered River Sarayu, taking his original Swarupa of Ananta Naga with thousand hoods. After the meeting with Kaala Deva in the form of the old Tapasvi, Rama realised that Lakshman also having gone, it was time for him also to terminate his 'Avatar'; he established Kusha in Kushavati Kingdom and Lava in Dwaravati as their Kings. Taking a hint from Shri Rama, Vibishana, Sugriva, Jambavan, Hanuman, Neela, Nala, Sushena and Nishada Raja Guha arrived. Shatrughna performed the coronation of his sons at Ayodhya. The rest of them said that they would not like to stay back on Earth in the absence of Rama even for a moment. But Rama asked Vibishana to continue in power at Lanka for long time and instructed Hanuman to continue on Earth forever to sustain the message of Shri Rama. The rest of them accompanied Shri Rama into the Sacred Sarayu River. Bharat, Shatrughna, and all the citizens of Ayodhya along with their wives, Mantris, Servants, Vedikas, Brahmanas, the nearby animals, birds, and all other Beings who accompanied Shri Rama never looked back. As Shri Rama went deep into the River, Lord Brahma, Devas, Rishis and all Celestial Beings extolled Raghunatha even as He took the Huge Form of Maha Vishnu with his four hands along with Bharata as Shankha, Shatrughna as Chakra, as also Gada with Sri Devi and Bhudevi beside Him.

Note: The above Script is mostly based on the 'Essence of Padma Purana' excepting the portions of Maharshi Valmiki's Trance and Lava Kusha's Ballad Singing from the 'Essence of Valmiki Baala Ramayana'; both of the above Scripts were released vide kamakoti.org-articles & books section.

Annexures:

A) Shri Rama's Uttara Bharata Parikrama before wedding with Devi Sita

Sri Rama's route From Ayodhya to Janakpur was the route used by the bridegroom and his 'baraatis' or the Party as also to return to Ayodhya after the Rama-Sita marriage in Janakpur acquired the name 'Ram-Sita Marg' long ago. The route of the 'baraatis' is an excellent Road and millions of pilgrims actually cover the distance on foot till date out of veneration!

Shri Rama and Lakshmana guided by Maharshi Vishwamitra, however took another route to reach Janakpur after the slaying of Tataka in Tatakavan (Forest of Tataka).

1) Azamgarh: Uttar Pradesh: Shri Ram was only fifteen years old when he and Lakshman set out with Vishwamitra to annihilate the demons who were polluting and obstructing the sacred rituals of his Yagna (fire sacrifice). Their first halt was on the banks of the River Sarayu, twenty kilometers from Ayodhya.

Valmiki's Ramayan describes the tranquil setting against which, Vishwamitra taught the princes about the art of 'bal' and 'atibal' which endowed them with immunity from disease and eternal good health besides freeing them from pangs of hunger and thirst.

2) Balliya: Uttar Pradesh: Walking past Azamgarh, Shri Ram, Lakshman and Sage Vishwamitra reached Balliya where River Sarayu merges with the holy river Ganga. This haven on the banks of the Sarayu was the chosen place for sages who spend long hours in meditation. Shri Ram rested here in the night before he set out at dawn crossing river Ganga to reach Vishwamitra's Siddhashram. At night, before the princes went to sleep, Vishwamitra narrated to them the story of 'Kama Deva' the God of Love who was burned to ashes there by Lord Shiva.

3) Buxar: Bihar :Tataka Vadha:- After crossing the holy Ganga, Shri Ram and Lakshman reached a dense forest where demoness Tataka lived. The dreadful forest was known as Tatkavan. Shri Ram ended Tataka's reign over the forest by slaying her and freeing its inhabitants from terror. The forest stretched between Bharoli and Baksar in Bihar. Shri Rama performed the first task of his "avtaar" (incarnation) here by destroying the evil demoness.

4) Siddhashram: Buxar, Bihar: Vishwamitra's Siddhashram was located not too far from Buxar. Siddhashram, according to Adhyatma Ramayan was a social ashram where religious instruction was imparted to people. Shri Ram and Lakshman sojourned in the ashram for three days after Shri Ram killed Mareech and Subahu, the demons who were tormenting Vishwamitra by spoiling his Yagna with bones and blood. Lakshman destroyed the demon while Shri Ram took on the mighty Maricha, son of Tataka.

There are villages existing today on the banks of the River Ganga with the names Marich and Subahu.

5) Ahilya Uddhar: Ahroli, Buxar, Bihar. Three kilometers from Buxar in the northern direction is the village Ahroli. Rishi Gautam had his ashram here. According to Ram Charita Manas it was here that Shri Ram delivered Ahilya, the beautiful wife of Rishi Gautam, from a curse of her husband, which had turned her into stone. When Shri Ram and Lakshman left Siddhashram they crossed River Ganga and River Sonbhadra and set foot on the soil of Ahroli village, which still exists in Buxar district.

6) Sonbhadra River, of Gajendra Moksha Fame, Sonpur, near Patna, Bihar: Parev and Trigama are two places of significance. They have a distance of five kilometers between them. When Shri Ram and Lakshman crossed River Sonbhadra, they reached a place before Patna where they spent a night before moving on to Janakpur.

7) Vishala Nagri, Hajipur, Bihar (near Patna). Shri Ram and Lakshman crossed River Ganga and reached this town with Rishi Vishwamitra who guided them to a garden to rest for a while in its fragrant surroundings.

8) Ahilya Ashram, Darbhanga, Bihar: Valmiki's Ramayan says Gautam Rishi's ashram was in Mithila. Ahilya resided there as Shila. The place was therefore named as Ahiyari after her. Thaiyavalk (Jagvan), Shringi (Srinyaya), Bhringi (Bhairav) and Gautam Rishis lived there.

9) Vishwamitra Ashram: Bisaul, Madhubani, Bihar. Bisaul was Rishi Vishwamitra's place of residence. After reaching Janakpur Rishi Vishwamitra stayed there and he set up his ashram in a garden. B) Phulhar Village (Jamuni), Madhubani, Bihar was situated in one of Raja Janak's prime gardens. It was in Jamuni (Madhubani) and was celebrated for a Gauri Temple where Sita prayed regularly. After paying obeisance to his Guru Vishwamitra when Shri Ram entered the floral section of the garden, Sita, who was present there, got her first glimpse of Shri Ram.

10) Matihani: Janakpur, Nepal. In the vicinity of Janakpur was Matihani from where, according to folklore, mud was collected and taken to create the venue for the marriage of Shri Ram and Sita. Matihani has become a sacred place as even today maidens for their marriage take mud from here.

B) Janakpur, Nepal: Janakpur was the capital of Raja Janak's kingdom. It lies 20 kilometers from India's border and is known for a temple of Ma Sita which attracts pilgrims round the year.

C) Rangbhoomi: Janakpur. It is believed that the Dhanush Yagya (competition for lifting of the bow) or Sitaswayamvar, as is popularly understood was announced before an invited royal gathering in a huge maidan (field) close to the present Janaki Mandir. It was here that Shri Ram picked up the Shiv Dhanush and broke it into two halves with ease. The important places in Janakpur include Matihani, Rangbhoomi, Dhanusha Mani Mandap. All of them are associated with the legend of Shri Ram and Sita's marriage.

11) Sita Marhi, Bihar: According to beliefs, Mithila, one of the principalities of Raja Janak's Kingdom was passing through the trial of drought and famine. Following royal tradition, Raja Janak took out the golden plow and went to an arid field to plough the soil and appeal to the gods for rain. While performing the ritual, the plow got stuck in a deep groove in the soil. The king's men rushed to pull the plow out of the depth of the soil and lo and behold there was a girl child waiting for help. The childless king happily adopted her as his daughter and named her "Sita", the Sanskrit term by which the cutting side of the plow is known. The name of the village, Sitamarhi, is derived from the name Sita as a result. Travelers going to Janakpur in Nepal invariably stop at Sitamarhi for a "darshan" (sighting) of the land where Sita manifested in the soil.

12) Sitakund Motihari, Bihar : It is said that the 'baraatis' (procession of the bridegroom's family) while returning to the kingdom of Ayodhya after the Ram-Sita marriage stopped at Sitakund Motihari for a little rest. They bathed and freshened themselves in the Sita Kund. One of Sita's bangles fell in the kund (pond), it is believed. The baraatis (Bridegroom's family) offered a puja (worship) to Lord Shiva here. Sitakund is located 20 kms from Motihari in the South Direction. It is a well-known place in the

Northern Indian Belt. Then the baratis arrived at Derwan, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh is not far from Sitakund. The baraatis (Bridegroom's family) had camped at this place and hence the name Derwan. The word "Dev" in Hindi means camp.

13) Dohri Ghat, Mhow, Uttar Pradesh: The true meaning of Dohari is Do Hari, i.e. Two Haris. One commonly used name in the worship of Lord Vishnu is Hari. As per Valmiki Ramayan, the baarat was on the way to Ayodhya when the earlier Avtaar (incarnation) of Vishnu, Parashuram, stopped the baarat at this place on the banks of the river Sarayu. Parashuram tested Shri Ram and realized who he was. Both the Haris (Parashuram and Ram, the two Vishnu avatars) met here and Parashuram returned to Mahesgiri Mountain after offering his respects to Ram. Raja Dashrath and the "baraatis" then continued their journey back to Ayodhya with Shri Ram.

B) Shri Ram's Vanvasa Parikrama:

It is more difficult to chart a route for Ram's journey during his period of exile. Firstly this is pan- India journey, secondly, Ram, Lakshman and Sita also wandered in the Dandaka Forest for more than 10 years. This mighty forest would encompass in today's date almost the entire state of Madhya Pradesh including

parts of Gujarat and Maharashtra on the West and Karnataka on the South. Hence this makes it even more difficult. Still one might charter a basic route. There are many places that Ram visited during this 14 year period during which he had the good fortune of meeting with some of most enlightened sages and beings of that period. They were of course very delighted to meet with Ram themselves with many of them having been foretold the coming of Ram, they waited for years conducting severe penance for that fortunate time to arrive.

1) Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh: was the capital city for the Isvaku Dynasty (Suryavanshi) of Kings. This was also the city where Son of Dasrath, Shri Ram was born (appeared). In twelve kilometers vicinity of Ayodhya there exist holy places like Vedi Kund, Sita Kund, Janaura etc. that are also part of the journey of Shri Ram's 'vanvas' (exile) route. It was also from Ayodhya that Shri Ram started his journey along with Sita and Lakshman. Ayodhya was a majestic city comparable to any international city of modern times almost eleven kilometers in length full of parks, gardens, theatres and modern infrastructure and facilities for its citizens. The citizens of Ayodhya loved their Kings. It was at Tam sa River, Uttar Pradesh that Shri Ram along with Sita, Lakshman and Sumantra Minister (Mantri) rested on their first night. The modern name for Tamsa River is Madhar River and the place from where she flows is called Gora Ghat. This place is about twenty kilometers from Ayodhya. On the banks of the Tamsa River there is a place known as Purva Chakiya. The citizens of Ayodhya followed Shri Ram until this spot after their dearest Ram departed from Ayodhya. Shri Ram, Lakshman and Sita disguised themselves and left this spot in the middle of the night so that none of the people would be able to follow him.

2) Sultanpur , Uttar Pradesh on the banks of Gomati River that Sage Valmiki had an ashram. It was from here that Shri Ram crossed the Gomti river. The old name of Sultanpur was Kushannathpur, which was named after the son of Ram, 'Kush'. Vadrathi River, Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh The present day name Sarkani River which is situated around 8 kilometers from Pratapgarh in the Eastern Direction. Shri Ram had crossed this river near the town of Mohanganj, as per Valmiki Ramayan. Sandika River (Sayi River), Mohanganj, Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh is situated at a distance of twelve kilometers from Pratapgarh. This is place is also commonly known as Dev Ghat. Shri Ram has crossed this river from this spot. There is also a Shiv Temple here that was established by Bharat. This place has been mentioned in the Valmiki as well as Tulsi Ramayan. Further, Balukini River, Pratapgarh, Ramkaleva, Uttar Pradesh is approximately 15 kilometers from Pratapgarh in the Southern Direction. Shri Ram had crossed this river here as has been mentioned in the Valmiki Ramayan.

3) Prayag (Allahabad), Uttara Pradesh:

A) Shringverpur or the current name Singrora, the capital of Nishad Raj Guha. This place is situated around twenty kilometers North of Allahabad. Shri Ram had rested on a bed of grass here. The next morning he crossed the Ganga River from here and proceeded to the Bharadwaj Ashram. The incident of 'Kevat Prasang' took place here.

B) Sita Kund, Shrinverpur, Prayag. This holy pond is around two kilometers from Shrinverpur. It was from here that Shri Ram sent back their beloved minister Sumantra to Ayodhya.

C) Sangam, Prayag: This is the divine meeting place of the three holy rivers of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. Shri Ram himself praised this spot for its spiritual powers, which could uplift mankind. Bharadwaj Rishi had his ashram here. Shri Ram had rested in this ashram for a night. Ram Charita Manas as well as Valmiki Ramayan give a lot of importance to this place.

D) Yamuna Ghat, Simri, Prayag: Shri Ram along with Lakshman and Sita crossed the Yamuna River. In the Valmiki Ramayan the reference to Lakshman constructing a boat to cross the river has been made for this place. After resting overnight on the Simri Ghat Shri Ram crossed the river using the boat made by Lakshman. There are many places on the banks of the Yamuna related to the exile period of Shri Ram like Akshay Vat, Sita Rasoi (Jasra Bazaar), Rishiyan (the abode of Rishis), Murka (Hanuman Mandir).

4 Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh:

A) Ramnagar: Shri Ram walked along the banks of the Yamuna River in his onward journey. After crossing the Yamuna River, he reached what is known in today's time as Ramnagar. This place is birthplace of Tulsi Das, the great poet who has written Ram Charita Manas.

B) Valmiki Ashram, Lala Pur, Chitrakoot: After visiting Sage Bharadwaj's Ashram, Shri Ram reached Valmiki's Ashram and he spent the night here. It was here that Sage Valmiki himself suggested to Shri Ram to make Chitrakoot his home for a few days.

C) As suggested by Sage Valmiki, Shri Ram reached Chitrakoot Dham. Shri Ram made his ashram on the Kamadgiri Mountain near the Mandakini River. There were many sages, holy men and Rishis who had made their ashrams (abodes) near the Kamadgiri Mountain. It was this divine spot where Shri Bharat met with Shri Ram and took his padukas (slippers) with him to Ayodhya to place on the throne. Chitrakoot has many places of pilgrimages in its vicinity like Madakini River, Bharatkoop, On the banks of the Mandakini River – Spatik Sheela, Hanuman Dhara and Atri Ashram, Gupt (Secret) Godavari. All these sacred places strengthen the place of Chitrakoot as a one of the most important places of pilgrimages while tracing the footsteps of Shri Ram's journey of exile. After the visit of Bharat to Chitrakoot, many citizens of Ayodhya had started to visit this place. Many of the holy men and sages in this area started to feel disturbed by the presence of so many people and it then that Shri Ram decided to leave this place. Hence all in all Shri Ram would have stayed in Chitrakoot for only about one or two years only. The majority of his exile period he spent in the Dandak Forest.

D) Amravati, Chitrakut, Uttar Pradesh: Around 7 kilometers from Atri Ashram, in the middle of the jungle, there is a beautiful place called Amravati. One of the ancestors of Shri Ram called Ambrish had conducted an intense penance here for many years. After leaving Chitrakut, Shri Ram came to Sage Atri's Ashram. It was here that the Sati Anusuya (pure and chaste wife of Sage Atri) gave the sermon of 'Pati Vrata Dharma' (service to husband) to Mother Sita. After resting in Sage Atri's Ashram for one night, Shri Ram spent the next night at the place of penance of Ambrish (his ancestor). It was in this forest that Shri Ram killed the Rakshas named Viradh. In the vicinity of Amvarti there is a village called Jamunihayi. There is a very dark and dangerous looking pit called 'Viradh Kund' (pond). This pit is situated three kilometers from Amravati. After killing the demon Viradh, Shri Ram had buried him here.

5) Sharbang Ashram, Satna, Madhya Pradesh: Around 13 kilometers from current day Chithara Station, Satna, Madhya Pradesh is probably where the Shabrang Ashram of the Ramayan is situated. After the slaying of Viradh, Shri Ram visited this ashram. It was here that he had the divine 'darshan' (sighting) of the God Indra. After having the 'darshan' of Shri Ram, Shabrang Rishi with the help of his Yogic Fire destroyed his body and attained salvation.

6) Ramtek, Nagpur, Maharashtra: Ramtek is a beautiful mountain near the city of Nagpur. Shri Ram stayed here for some time. This mountain is also connected with the writer Kalidas who wrote the famous poem 'Meghdoot' according to some historians. Approximately 9 kilometers from here there is a place

called Salbardi near which there is a pilgrimage spot called Sita Nahani. According to popular legend, Shri Ram proceeded to the ashram of Sutikshan Muni from here.

7) Nasik, Maharashtra:

A) Sutiksha Muni Ashram: Sapta Srungi; After meeting with Sharbang Rishi, Shri Ram reached the ashram of Sutikshan Muni who had spent 10 years in the Dandaka Forest before reaching here. Sutikshan Muni was the disciple of Agastya Rishi. Shri Ram rested here for some time. He killed many of the demons residing in this area and also took a vow that he would rid this area of all the evil influences. There is an ancient temple of Goddess Sapta Srungi here, which attracts many pilgrims. It is said that Markandeya Rishi wrote the Durga Saptastuti at this holy place. According to popular legend, Durga Ma killed the demon Mahisasur at this place, which is represented by a hole in the mountain, which can be seen till today. The demon was hiding behind the mountain when Durga attacked him.

B) Agastya Ashram: Pimparner, Nasik: Approximately 16 kilometers North of Nasik there is an ashram called Agasteshwar Ashram. Sutiksha Muni had guided Shri Ram to his Guru Agastya Rishi. Sage Agastya presented Ram with many divine weapons and powers here. He also advised Ram to make his Ashram on the banks of the Godavari River and live there.

C) Panchavati: Nasik; On the banks of the Godavari River there is place popularly known as Tapovan, which is the actual Panchvati of the Ramayan era. It was here that Shri Ram, Lakshman and Sita resided here in a small hut. The incident of the cutting off the nose of Demoness Shupnaka took place here. It is from here that 'Nasik' derived its name as the Sanskrit name for nose is 'Nasika'. Khar, Dhooshan, Trishara and 14,000 other Demons were slain by Shri Ram in this area after they attacked Shri Ram on hearing about this incident from their sister. The kidnapping of Sita by Ravan, The slaying of Mareech and the Slaying of Jatayu by Ravan all took place in a forest known as Jansthan in this area. In the ancient times, the ashram of Gautam Rishi was in the holy town of Trimbakeshwar (one of the twelve Jyotirlingas) nearby. In order to release himself of the burden of a curse on him, Gautam Rishi had created the Godavari River.

8) Tuljapur (Maharashtra): There is a famed temple of Devi Tuljabhavani here. It is believed that Shri Ram and Sita roamed in the forests near the temple. It is also here that Lord Shiva and his wife Sati came for the 'darshan' of Shri Ram and Sita. Sati took the form of Sita and tried to get close to Ram in order to test his purity.

9) Ramdurg, Belgam, Karnataka: A) Kaband Ashram: Kardigud, Near Ramdurg, Belgaum, Karnataka In the Indian state of Karnataka there is a village called Kardigud where it is believed that Kaband Ashram was situated. Shri Ram and Lakshman slayed the demon Kaband here. After he was killed, Kabandh became a Gandharva and left for his heavenly abode. Before leaving he had requested Shri Ram to visit the Ashram of Shabari. B) Shabri Ashram: Sureban, Near Ramdurg, Belgaum: Around 14 kilometers in the Northern direction from Ram Durg, near the town of Gunga is placed called Sureban. This is place where Shabri, who was a disciple of Sage Matang lived. She had waited long years for her dear Ram to arrive, and on his arrival she fed him berries which she had tasted herself to make sure that they were sweet. This angered Lakshman but Shri Ram pacified him because he could see her intense love and devotion towards him. It was Shabri who then instructed Ram to approach Sugreev in the search for his beloved wife.

10) Hampi, Karnataka :

A) Hanuman Halli: Koppal, Hampi: This was the place where Hanuman met Shri Ram and Lakshman for the first time. In fact Sugreev had sent Hanuman to meet with them in order to make sure that they were not the spies of his brother and archenemy Bali. The mighty Hanuman lifted Shri Ram and Lakshman on his shoulders and took them on Rishimukh Parvat to meet with Sugreev. The capital city of Sugreev 'Kishkinda' is also near by.

B) Bellari, Hampi: Near the ancient Kishkinda, around four kilometers from the town of Hampi, there exists a Mountain called Malbhavant (Prastravan) where Shri Ram has spent the monsoon season. The places to see around this area include Bali Bandara, Anjani Parvat (mountain), Matang Rishi Mountain, Spatik Sheela. It was on the Spatik Sheela that the Vanar (monkey) Sena (army) had collected for the first time. Hanuman had given the news of Sita to Shri Ram at this place.

11) Tiruchallapalli, Tamil Nadu: The old name for this town is Trishirapalli. This was the abode for Ravan's brother Trishira and so named after him. On the banks of the Kaveri River here there is a beautiful Shiva Temple, which is said to destroy sins. According to popular legend, Shri Ram had prayed to Lord Shiva here in order to free himself of the sin of slaying Khar and Dooshan. On his way to Lanka, Shri Ram had stayed here.

12) Rampad, Kodikarai, Vedaranyam, Tamil Nadu: Along with the entire Vanar (monkey) Sena (army), Shri Ram had proceeded towards the Southern direction from this town. It was also from this place that Shri Ram had the first view of the sea. The footprints of Shri Ram are still found in the forests of this area.

13) Ramanadhapuram, Tamil Nadu: Ramnathpuram is on the shores of the waters bodies on the Southern tip of India. It is on the way to holy pilgrim town of Rameshwaram. It is believed that the foundation stone of the Ram-Setu Bridge constructed by Ram and the entire army to cross over to Sri Lanka is placed here in a small village called 'Chedu Karai'. One can still see the foundation stones of this architectural wonder ten feet below the waters of the ocean. Vibhishan, after having been insulted by Ravan came to seek the help of Ram at this place. The entire strategy for the war was also devised in this town.

Places worth to visit in the neighborhood include Vilundi Tirth, Ekanth Ram, Agni Tirth, Ram Jaroka, Kodanda Ram Mandir, Jata Tirth and Darbhashainam. It is believed that it was in Darbhashainam, that Shri Ram made a Darbhashayana (a seat of grass) and prayed to Varun Devta (God of the Sea) for three continuous days for giving him passage to Lanka. Varun Devta appeared after three days and advised Ram to build a bridge across the sea to Lanka.

14) Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu: Rameshwaram is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas in India. Shri Ram had established a Shiva Linga Temple here using the sand from the sea. Approximately one or two kilometers from this Temple, Nala vanara (monkey) along with the other vanaras (monkeys) had made the bridge to Lanka. This bridge was constructed in five days only. Shri Ram crossed over to Lanka with his entire army using this bridge and camped at Suvel Parvat (Mountain). NASA has used modern satellite technology to photograph this bridge and they have actually unearthed an ancient bridge connected India to modern day Sri Lanka!

15) Dhanushkoti: Skanda Purana in reference to Setu Mahatmya describes: ' On the shores of the Southern Seas is the most sacred and boon-bestowing Dhanushkoti which is also the high point of destroying ' Maha Patakas' like Brahma Hatya, Suraapaana, Swarna harana, Guru-Shishyadi gamana. This is also the provider of plentiful prosperity and Kailasa Moksha Prada. It uproots indebtedness and poverty for ever. Incidentally, Dhanushkoti partially got submerged into Sea owing to recent cyclonic devastation and partly ascribed to Shri Rama's own arrows. This historic meeting point of three high Seas

of Hind Sagara-Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea is the hallowed Tirtha for Sacred Snaanas, Shraddha-Pinda pradaanas and Daanas. The Legend continues to state that Lord Shri Rama after killing Ravana and his generation except Vibhishana who was subsequently made the King of Lanka, there followed a series of awe-inspiring incidents like Devi Sita's Agni Pariksha, Hanuman's despatch to Kasi to fetch a genuine Shiva Linga for installation at Raneshwara, his delayed action to do so, Devi Sita's installation of Sand Linga, and travel by Pushpaka Vimana back to Ayodhya for the most auspicious Shri Sita-Rama Kalyana at Ayodhya!

C) Maha Parikrama:

Bhagavan Shri Rama's Bharata Tirtha Yatra as sourced from 'Ananda Ramayana' covered the following Maha Kshetras:

Commencing from Ganga-Sarayu Sangama, Shri Rama proceeded to Prayaga, then crossing Vindhya - chala reached Kashi. He then installed Rameshwara Linga on the banks of Varana, performed Kartika 'Snaana' at the Panchaganga Ghat of Ganga. He then facilitated the construction of Rama ghat and Hanuman ghat and stayed at Kashi for a year. It was in this connection, Ananda Ramayana is quoted: '

Tatha chakaara Ramopi ghata bandhanam uttamam, Drishyate pratyaham Kaashyaam Raamah sa Sityaya/ Chakaara Pancha Gangaayaam Karthika snaanam uttamam, Kashivasam varshamekam chakaara Dharmatahparah/

Lord Rama constructed the Ghats on the banks of River Ganga while visioning Kashi daily along with Devi Sita and performed year long Pancha Ganga Ghaat Snaanas – stated to be the Sangama of Five Sacred Rivers of Ganga, Yamuna, Sarsawati, Kirana and Dhutapata as 'Antarvahinis' also called Vishnu Kanchi Tirtha or Bindu Madhava Tirtha. These 'Snaanas' acquired additional significance as they coincided with the auspicious month of Kartika. During his year long residence at Kashi, Shri Rama paid his respects to all the Temples of Kashi while executing 'daana- dharmas' and gave away the puja materials of patra-pushpa-phala-paniyas. The Lord had the divya darshana of Bhagavan Vishvanatha and proceeded to other Kshetras; he visited Chyavana Ashrama, Shrona Ganga Sangama, Ganga-Gandaki Sangama, Narayan-Gandaki Sangama, Harihara Kshetra or Sonpur as famed for Gajendra Moksha by Maha Vishnu, and *Rajagriha. [Rajagriha as the Pancha Saraswati Sangama of water flows from Brahma kund -Kedarnath- Sita kund, Vaitarini, Vaanari kund. Rajagriha is also the confluence place of Pancha Parvatas of Vaibhavar, Vipulachal, Ratna giri, Uday giri and Swarna giri. Both Rajagriha and the adjacent Nalanda are famed for eighteen Buddha Viharas as also Jain Tirthas. The adjacent Kundinapur is also stated as the birth place of Rukmini Devi, the Patta Mahishi or the Principal Queen of Lord Krishna.

Lord Rama then visited River Sarayu and Dadri Tirtha near Baliya, proceeded to Gaya Kshetra

Gayaa -yaamnahi tat snaanam yatra titha a vidyate, Sannidhyam sarva tirthaanaam Gayatirtham tato varam/ Brahma jnaana kim saadhyam gogrihe maranena kim, vaasena kim Kurukshetre yadi putro Gayaam vrajet/

There is no other Tirtha like Gaya Tirtha; among the four major means of 'mukti' are accomplish – ment of Brahma jnaana, Kurukshetra nivasa, death at a cow shed, and pinda daana by one's sons!

Lord Shri Rama then would recall Lord Vishnu's Leelaas . After Gaya, Lord Ram visited Magadha and crossed Phalgu River. He then visited Vaidyanath Jyotir Linga, Ganga dwaara sagara, Purushotama or Jagannatha, Godavari, Krishna, Paana Nrisimha (near Guntur -Andhra) – a Sacred Salagram which

consumes Sugarcane Juice while half consumed but released half as prashad; Shrishala- Mallikarjuna Kshetra , Ahobila, Pushpagiri, Pampasara, Bheema kunda Kapila dhara, Sheshachala, Kalahasti on the banks of Suvarna River; Kanchipura Ekamreshwara, Bhagavati Kamakshi and Varadaraja; Pakshi Tirtha off 35 km Chennai on the Vedagiri mountain's Shankara Tirtha attracting white skies every mid day being Rishis cursed in repetitive births as evidenced by Dakshina Murti as Swayambhu Shiva Linga; Arunachala, Chidanbaram, Siddha Kshetras on Kaveri banks; Swetaranya; Mayuram or Mayavaram; Dakshina Brindavana; Kamalaalaya or Tiruvarur; Dakshina Gaya; Dakshina Dwaraka or Mannargudi; Dhanushkodi; Jatayu Tirtha; Gandamadana; Kaanyakumari; Adikesha or Tiruvattar; Ananta shayana or Tiruvanatapurm, Krita mala or Kutrala Snaana; Madura Meenakshi; Srirangam; Subrahmanya Kshetra; Mahendrachala or Parashurama Kshetra; Bhimeshwara or Bhimashankara, Kolha pura; Panduranga; Bhima sangama; Nala Durga; Tuljapur; Bhramarambha; Nageshwara Jyotirlinga; Purna-Goda Sangama; Pratishtan puri or Paithan; Trayambakeshwar; Sapta shringa; Sutikshnaashram; hrishneshwar; Viraja Kshetra; Ramagiri; Narmada tata Onkareshwara; Taapi; Pancha araswati Sangama; Somanatha; Sabramati snaana and Shankoddhara; Gomati Nadi snana; Dwaraka as among Saptapuris even then; Pushkara; Jwalamukhi; Deva Prayaga; Alaknanda; Badarikaashrama; edareshwara; Maana Sarovara; Sumeru and Kailasa. Bhagavan Shankara himself welcomed and paid tributes for his Bharata Yatra. On his return journey, Lord Shri Rama visited Haridwar, Kurukshetra, Madhuvan, Brindavan Gokula, and Govardhana. After bathing in River Kshipra Lord Rama worshipped Mahakaal, darshana at Hastinapura, proceeded to Naimisharanya. Lord Shri Rama then performed holy baths viz. Gomati Snaana, Brahma Vaivarta snaana, and Tamasa snan, and perfected his glorious return along with Devi Sita and Adishesha Swarupa Lakshmana Bhagavan.

Shri Rama Rama Rameti rame Raame manorame, sahasra naama tattulyam Ramanama varaanane/

Sri Rama Charitra

Swayambhu Manu preformed Tapasya to Lord Vishnu for thousand years and when the latter appeared, Manu desired that he would like to have Vishnu as his son. The Lord agreed and said that in fact as a part of the task of Preservation of 'Dharma' (Virtue), he would like to appear on Earth from time to time as and when Dharma was threatened and Evil Forces gathered momentum; he said: *Paritranaaya Saadhuunaam Vinaashaaya cha Dushkrutaam, Dharma samsthaapanaarthaaya sambhavaami yuge yuge!* (I shall no Doubt take human birth to revive Dharma and punish Evil from time to time). As promised by Vishnu, Swayambhu was born in Raghukula as King Dasaratha and became the father of Shri Rama in Treta Yuga, as Vasudeva in Yadava Kula in Dwapara Yuga and one thousand Divya Years hence as Brahmana Harigupta in Samhal Village in Kali Yuga. The two brothers Hirankaksha and Hiranyakashipu of the Satya Yuga were born as Ravana and Kumbhakarna in Treta Yuga. Muni Pulastya's son was Muni Vishvava and the latter's wife was Kaikashi; Ravana and Kumbhakarna were born to Vishvava and Kaikeshi. Kaikeshi also gave birth to Surpanakha and later on to the virtuous devotee of Narayana, Vibhishana. Ravana brothers performed severe Tapasya and secured boons of invincibility from Devas, Danavas and Rakshasas and harassed Devad who fled from Swarga and prayed to Vishnu who assured that he would soon be born to King Dasaratha as Rama and demolish the entire race of Ravana; Vishnu also asked Devas to assume the births of 'Vanaras' and assist in this holy task.

In the Surya Vamsa, Vaivasvata Muni begot King Ikshvaku and Dasaratha was born to Ikshvaku. Devi Koushalya was born to the King of Koushalya and was wedded to King Dasaratha at Ayodhya on the banks of River Sarayu. Dasaratha also married Sumitra and Kaikeyi. He became a powerful yet righteous King with Sage Vasishtha as the Raja Guru and performed the Putra-Kameshthi Yagna. From the 'Agni Kunda' at the eventful Yagna, Maha Vishnu Himself gave 'darshan' to Dasaratha and assured that he would soon be born to him to save the Devoted and kill the Evil. He handed over a 'Ksheera Paatra', the

pot of milk, to the three Devis; Kaushalya and Kaikeyi took half each and gave half of their portions to Sumitra; thus the eldest boy was born to Kaushalya, Bharat was born to Kaikeyi and Lakshmana and Shatrughna were born to Sumitra. Sage Vasishtha named the eldest as 'Shri Rama' since that was the 'Swataha Siddha' or natural gifted name as he was the husband of Sri Devi and the equivalent of Vishnu's Sahasranaamaas, providing salvation to the devotees and since his birth was in Chaitra month dear to Vishnu.

Shriyah kamalavaasivya ramaneya Maha Prabhu Tasmaachhari -Rama ithyasya naamaa siddham puratanam/ Sahasranaamnaam shrishasyatulyam mukti pradam nrunaam, Vishnumaasi samutpanno Vishnurityabhidheeyatey



‘As the boys grew up, Lord Ram and Lakshmana was one pair and Bharata and Shatrughna was another. In the meantime, Goddess Lakshmi was materialized as King Janaka found her while digging Earth in Yagna by a plough top called ‘sita’ and thus named Sita and most endearingly brought up as his own daughter. Sage Vishwamitra derided that Rama and Lakshmana should protect one Yagna being organized by him on the banks of Ganga, sine there were always threats of Rakshasas to destroy Yagnas by pouring blood and such other foul material. Very reluctantly, Dasaratha allowed to let them go to protect the Yagna which apparently served many purposes as subtly planned by the Sage: one to let the World Realize that Rama a mere teen-ager was of Vishnu ‘Amsa’ and introduced Rama to the Rakshasas that they should better beware; Vishwamitra could teach the nuances of Shastra-Astra Vidya to the brothers; to afford an exposure to Rama at Sita Swayamvara among the great Kings of the day including a warning to Ravanasura that the Avatar of Vishnu had arrived; and also to consummate the Sacred Wedding of Rama and Sita. As visualised the Sage, all these and many other events took place: the killing of Rakshasi Tadaki and the Rakshasa called Subahu as also the use of ‘Vayavyastra’ to sweep away demon Maricha to a far off place so that he would have to float again at a later date to assume the role of ‘Maya Golden Deer’ before Devi’s abduction by Ravanasura; the liberation of Devi Ahalya by giving her normal form from a stone due to Sage Gautami-her husband’s curse; the smash of Shiva Dhanush; the wedding of Rama and Sita apart, Lakshmana was married to Urmila, Bharat to Mandvi, and Shatrughna with Shrutikirti; the rupture of Bhagwan Parshuram’s ego by the shatter of Vaishnava Dhanush and his exit from the active life into the Ashram of Nara-Narayana.

Even as the City of Ayodhya was going in euphoria with preparations of Shri Rama’s becoming the Yuva Raja (the Heir Apparent) of the Kingdom, Devi Kaikeyi declared her intention known that Lord Ram should proceed for a fourteen year long spell of ‘Vana Vasa’ (forest life) and Bharata to become the Heir Apparent; this was in the light of a boon that Dasaratha gave to Kaikeyi as she saved him on a war front and she reserved to demand it at this juncture. Bharat was out of station at his maternal uncle’s place and did not know about the demand; Devi Sita insisted accompanying Rama and so did Lakshmana; Dasaratha was in a swoon, followed by death; the entire population of the Kingdom was crest-fallen!

Bharata insisted on Rama’s return but on the latter’s refusal took Rama’s footwear kept on the Throne which was worshipped daily and he became a temporary Administrator on behalf of King Rama.

Rama, Sita and Lakshmana the reached the mountain of Chitrakoot for a brief stay at the Ashram of Bharadwaja, further on to the Ashram of Atri Muni where the Muni’s wife Devi Anasuya enlightened the regulations of a ‘Pativrata’ and finally entered the Dandakaranya where they stayed for long with Munis visiting their ‘Panchavati’ (a thatched cottage).

One frightful day, demoness Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana and Kumbhakarna, arrived at the Parnashala and proposed to Rama. Lakshmana cut off her ears and nose and as retaliation two Rakshasas attacked Rama and Lakshmana and the latter killed the demons. Surpanakha approached Ravana who planned the attraction of the golden deer disguised as Maricha. Sita was tempted to secure the deer and Rama alone chased the Maya Mriga and killed the demon while the latter shouted loudly the name of Rama to mislead Sita and Lakshmana so that Lakshmana would leave Sita and Ravana could enter the scene.

Lakshmana drew the famed ‘Lakshmana Rekha’ a line around Panchavati with Mantras and asked Sita not to go beyond the line. Ravana arrived as a Muni and asked for alms and Sita wanted him to enter the line but Ravana did not and insisted Sita to come out. As soon as she came out, Ravana appeared in his original form and abducted her by his Pushpak Viman. As Sita was sobbing loudly, the giant bird Jatayu, who was a friend of Dasaratha, made desperate attempts to stop Ravana’s Viman but the mighty Ravana slashed the bird’s wings as it fell down in a faint.

As Rama and Lakshmana did not find Sita on their return, they frantically searched and the dying Jatayu conveyed that Sita was abducted by Ravana. Having performed obsequies to Jatayu, Rama and Lakshmana reached the Ashram of Devi Shabari a unique devotee of Shri Rama and treated the brothers with fruits and Rama gave her the boon of Vishnu Sayujya.

Hanuman met Rama and Lakshmana and assured all kinds of assistance to Rama in finding Sita and eventually to destroy Ravana and his clan. He introduced the fugitive King of Kishkindha named Sugriva, raised confidence to Sugriva in killing his valiant brother Vaali who occupied his throne and after reoccupying his throne sent Hanuman to Lanka in search of Sita. The mighty Hanuman crossed the ocean and spotted Sita in Ashoka Vatika sobbing under an Ashoka tree. par convinced Sita as a devotee of Rama by showing Rama's ring and assured her that very soon Rama and Lakshmana would reach Lanka with a huge Vanara Sena (Monkey brigade), kill Ravana and his entire followers and relieve her of bondage. Hanuman created havoc in the Ashoka vatika by killing all the security personnel, five Senapatis, seven sons of Ravana's Ministers, and a son of Ravana. Indrajit the elder son of Ravana who also was a reputed warrior having defeated Indra and specialized in wars on the clouds thus securing the epithet of 'Meghanadha' encountered Hanuman who feigned Indrajit's control; Hanuman was face to face with Ravana in the latter's court and allowed himself to let his tail burn which was extended endlessly and destroyed a large part of Ravana's City as a warning to him that soon Rama and Lakshmana would arrive at Lanka to destroy Ravana and his entire tribe. On return to Kishkintha, Hanuman conveyed Rama and others about Sita's bondage.

Rama, Lakshmana and the mammoth Vanara Sena under Sugriva's leadership arrived on the sea coast to reach Lanka on the other side of the Ocean. Rama prayed to Samudra Deva (the Deity of the Ocean) to reduce the force of the violent tides and when Samudra Deva did not relent was even ready to punish the Deity. Samudra Deva facilitated the construction of Rama Setu or the Bridge in the name of Rama across the Ocean; huge boulders were thrown into the Ocean with the name of Rama inscribed and the boulders floated enabling the construction of the Bridge. Meanwhile the younger brother of Ravana called Vibhishana, a staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu approached Rama for refuge and soon became a confidant of Rama about matters related to Ravana and his associates.



Having crossed the Rama Setu, the gigantic and mighty Monkey Brigade commenced furious battle with the gallant Rakshasas. Indrajit who was a highly renowned warrior fought and killed thousands of Vanaras and succeeded in tying Rama and Lakshmana with 'Nagastra', when Garuda the Carrier of Vishnu appeared and the snakes withered away. Meanwhile Kumbhakarna, another brother of Ravana who had a giant figure fought recklessly killing tens of thousands of Rama Sena, but finally fell down to the torrential rain-like arrows of Shri Rama. Indrajit attacked Lakshmana and made the latter unconscious when Hanuman brought Sanjeevini Mountain with medicinal shrubs got Lakshmana revived; in the fierce battle that followed, Rama and Lakshmana destroyed Indrajit. In the meantime, Ravana desired to perform an 'Abhicharatmika' (Evil-oriented) Yagna out of desperation for Victory, but a few brave Vanaras got scent of it and destroyed the Yagna.

Then Ravana rode into the battle with his entire army of massive strength comprising elephants, horses, chariots and infantry and massacred Vanaras. Indra sent his Divya Ratha (Divine Chariot) to Shri Rama with Matangi as the Charioteer and the Greatest Battle of Treta Yuga was fought for seven days and nights, even as all the Devas headed by Indra, besides Brahma and Rudra, watched the Grand Spectacle of Rama-Ravana Yuddha! Rama had systematically smashed Ravana's ten heads, but the destroyed heads were sprouting again and again and Ravana was thundering world shaking shrieks to show Rama's helplessness. Lord Shiva gave a boon to Ravana to let the smashed heads were revived again and again. Finally, Rama pulled up his most powerful 'Brahmastra' to destroy a stock of 'Ambrosia' in his belly (as hinted by Vibhishana) and crushed his chest which pierced through Earth and crashed into Rasatala into the nether world. Instantly, Devas who were visioning the proceedings from the Skies went into ecstasy showering rain of scented flowers on Rama; Indra, Brahma and Rudra were relieved; Gandharvas and

Kinneras sang tuneful of lyrics of the Lord; Apsaras danced with immense joy; Sanaka and Sanandana brothers who gave a curse to Jaya and Vijaya the Dwarapaalakas of Vaikuntha as they were obstructed entry to vision Vishnu were satisfied that out of three births the first human birth was completed; Maharshis and Siddhas recited Vedas and Scriptures as also hymns extolling Shri Rama.

Rama then appointed Vibhishana as the King of Lanka and blessed him and his progeny to rule till the next Pralaya!

Thereafter Devi Sita was directed to prove her 'Pativratiya' (Purity) by entering into an 'Agni Kunda' since she stayed away for long time in Lanka before a huge gathering of spectators; even Devas, Brahma and Rudra witnessed the scene, let alone Rakshasas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, human beings etc. Agni Devata himself brought back from the Agni Kunda and declared Devi Sita as an ever Pure, Chaste, Blameless and a peerless epitome of Pativratiya.

Besides installing Vibhishana as the King, Indra and Devas too were bestowed with their lost glories denied to them for long due to the much-hated Ravana and his clan. The precious possessions of Swarga like Pushpaka Vimana of Kubera Deva were restored to the respective Devas. Accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana as well as Hanuman, Sugriva, Vibhishana, Vanara Yoddhas (Warriors) including Jambavanta, Nala, Neela, Subhaga, Sharabha, Sushena, and all the survivors among Vanara Sena crossed the Rama Setu, proceeded to the site of 'Shiva Linga Pratishthana' at Rameshwara and further on to Ayodhya to join the celebrations of Victory and Rajabhisheka. On return an anxious Ayodhya awaited the 'Maryada Purushottam', the Epic Hero and the Most Significant Avatara of Treta Yuga, proving once again that Lord Vishnu would assume human birth again and again as and when Dharma was in jeopardy and Adharma tended to take an upper hand in the Universe.



Now the activities of Lord Shri Rama, the Epic Hero of Ramayana, after the killing the infamous Ravana at Lanka providing great relief to Indra and Devas, Rishis and the virtuous as also the entire humanity. While narrating the Events as per Padma Purana as above, sesha was in a trance as the spell of Shri Rama was so intense that the Illustrious Serpent, whose bed Bhagavan Vishnu- the incarnation Shri Rama- rested on. Lord Rama bestowed the Kingship of Lanka to Vibhishana, the younger brother of the slain Ravana and sat on Pushpaka Vimana along with Devi Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Sugriva and various other stalwarts who fought in the Battle with Ravana. Even as the Pushpaka Vimana took off from Lanka to Ayodhya, there were showers of scented flowers and reverberating sounds of 'Dundubhis' (drums) from the skies by Devas and on the entire route on Earth there were loud recitals of Veda Mantras by Rishis and Brahmanas signifying the 'Vijaya Yatra' or the Victorious Return to Ayodhya. Raghunandan Rama showed to Sita some glimpses of Places like the Rama Setu by which Vanara Sena or the Monkey Brigade crossed the Ocean, Kishkindha where he met Sugriva and Hanuman, and the spots where he and Lakshmana searched for Sita. The Pushpaka Vimana approached Nandigram, where all these years of 'Rama Vanavas' King Bharata was ruling Ayodhya on behalf of Shri Rama by decorating the latter's footwear on the Throne, Hanuman was asked to fly earlier and inform Bharata. As the Vimana touched the ground, there was a

high moment of emotional meeting of Rama and Bharata. As advance notice was sent, the entire City of Ayodyha prepared itself with festivities and colourful receptions with joyous singing and ecstatic dances to welcome the Maryada Purusha Shri Rama, Maha Sadvhi Sita, the illustrious brothers Lakshmana and Bharata. With the Pushpak Viman descending down, the entire population of Ayodhyapuri went rapturous rendering high-pitched slogans viz.: Victory to Shri Rama, Victory to Devi Sita, Victory to Lakshmana and Victory to Raja Bharata. Dressed in their best attires befitting the euphoric moments of bliss, the 'Puravasis' had no bounds of joy in welcoming the Hero and his Parivar emerging from the Viman. The high tides of humanity who suppressed their emotions during his absence of for fourteen long years were surcharged with passions and inexplicable hilarity.

Shri Rama first entered Devi Kaikeya's Chambers and after prostrating before her asked her if there were any other wishes of hers yet unfulfilled! She stooped her head down in shame and could not utter one word out of remorse and anguish. From there, Shri Rama accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana visited Devi Sumitra and Shatrughna and postrated to her too; she expressed overflowing grief and relief and profusely thanked Rama for his highest consideration for her son Lakshmana. Further on both Rama and Sita entered the Chamber of Devi Kaushalya who swooned first for some time and after recovery embraced the son and daughter-in-law and declared that Sadvhi Sita was the finest example of womanhood for ever! After all the euphoria subsided, Bharat called the Ministers, Astrologers and Maharshi Vasishtha to decide on the time and date of Shri Rama Pattabhishekam (Coronation). The Historic Celebration of 'Rama Rajabhisheka' was a landmark in Treta Yuga attended by Lord Brahma, Devas, Maharshis and the highly satisfied 'Praja, and heralded the highly famed Rama Rajya. As Rama was seated as its Head on the Naksha (Atlas) of 'Sapta Lokas' of Prithvi, all the Devas, Daityas, Nagas, Yakshas, Asuras, and of course the entire humanity were performing their respective duties with devotion and care as per established regulations of Dharma (Virtue), Nyaya (Justice), Law and Order, and Social Security. Sadhus and Sages were happy as never before, none resorted to foul means of any kind, women folk had no difficulties and they too observed the regulations as Pativratas; Sacred Activities like Yagnas, Vratas, Punya Karyas, Tirtha Yatras, Daanas, Dhyanas, and Veda Pathanas were in full swing. In response to Rama's appeals Daityas, Maha Sarpas and other Power Joints of the Rajya, none dared to follow the ways of the Evil. To Devas too Shri Ram made requests not to impose any 'Aadhi Daivika' based problems such as natural disasters like Earth quakes, floods and droughts or excessive rains or 'Akaala Maranas' or premature deaths. The Praja in Rama Rajya were instructed to observe the 'Varnaashrama Vidhana', perform useful tasks like construction of wells, Sarovars, Temples, Choultries, Udyanavanas or Public Gardens, Pashu Palana or raising cattle, farming and such useful engagements rather than indulge in unhealthy and anti- social activities such as thieving, pilfering, causing hurt to others, amassing money and squandering for foul tasks, prostitution, betting, racing, drinking and yielding to immoral activities. As Shri Rama was an ideal Institution of 'Sishta Rakshaka' (Protector of Virtue and Justice) and 'Dushta Sikshaka' (Punisher of the Evil), the normal Praja (General Public) proved to be a darling King owing to his suave and benevolent treatment and as a severe chastiser and Task Master of wrong doings.

As a petty minded Washerman in the Rama Rajya scandalised Sadvhi Sita once that after all she stayed in Ravana's Lanka for long enough and was not above suspicion concerning her character, Maryada Purusha Shri Rama abandoned her so as to set an example to his Praja.

This was the time when Rama intensified the strictness of his administration in the Kingdom. Sesha Nagnarrated to Vatsyayana that Agastya Maha Muni visited Rama once and in the course of exchange of views, Rama desired to know from Agastya about Ravana's background, who was the Villian-in-Chief of Ramayana forcing Rama to wage a battle with the Demon for kidnapping Devi Sita. Agastya Muni informed Shri Rama that Lord Brahma's son was Pulastya and the latter's son was Vishwavaka with two wives viz. Mandakini and Kaikasi. Mandakini begot Kubera who by virtue of his Tapsya became the

Chief of Yakshas and a Pushpak Viman. Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana were the sons of Kaikasi. Kubera performed sincere and strict Tapasya and achieved the position of a 'Loka Palaka' and possessed a Vimana too; he was coming and going to meet his parents by the Vimana. Kaikasi was jealous of Mandakini and so were Ravana and Kumbhakarna against Kubera. This prompted Ravana brothers to perform Tapasya, although Vibhishana did the meditation for noble reasons. Lord Brahma was pleased with Ravana's Tapasya and blessed him to become the King of a large Kingdom and made him superior to Devas; as a result Devas fled from Swarga. Ravana occupied Lanka too and forcibly took away Kubera's Viman. Although Ravana and Kumbhakarna were Brahmanas, they took to the habits of Rakshasas, while they suffered Vibhishana who was virtuous and devoted. But as the evil actions of Ravana and Kumbhakarna were reaching a point of no return, Devas and Indra reached Brahma for help and along with Rudra they all approached Lord Vishnu. The latter declared (by way of an Akaasha vaani or the Voice of Skies) that soon a high merited King of Ayodhya of Surya Vamsa of the clan of 'Ikshvaaku' named Dasaratha would beget four sons from three wives viz. Rama to the eldest wife Kousalya, Lakshmana and Shatrughna to Sumitra and Bharata to Kaikeyi. The declaration also stated that Rama and Lakshmana would completely destroy Ravana and Kumbhakarna as well as their offspring and instal Vibhishana as the King of Lanka in a completely new set up following Dharma and Justice. The Akashavaani further said that several Devatas would be born as 'Vaanas' or monkeys and bears. This was the retrospect of the demolition of Ravana, Kumbhakarna and others of the Clan.

Having learnt of the family background of Ravana and others from Maharshi Agastya, Rama felt extremely remorseful that he had perpetrated 'Brahma hatya' since Ravana was from Brahmana vamsa which was the like the unique tree bearing the various branches of Vedas and Shastras. Agastya told Rama that he was the incarnation of Vishnu who was the Kartha (Originator), Palak (Preserver) and Samhara (Destroyer) and Devi Sita was Maha Vidya Herself and the extreme evil exercised by Ravana gave relief to the world and as such what Rama did was laudable but not regretful. However if there was the least feeling of regret, he might as well perform Aswamedha Yagna as the famous King Manu, Sagara, Marut and Nahusha's son Yayati had in the past and attained 'Parama Pada'. Thus the inspiration to perform the Yagna came forth from Agastya Muni.

As a first step, a suitable, sturdy and steady horse was selected with excellent features. Then under the supervision of Vasishtha Muni, the Kingdom's Chief Rishi, Shri Rama tilled a four yojana wide and long bhumi on Sarayu River banks with a golden plough; selected a suitable Yagna Vedika (Platform) with the required number of Mandapas and Agni Kundas decorated with jewels; invited Maharshis and Tapasvis of high standing like Narada, Asita, Parvat, Kapila, Jaatukarnya, Angira, Aashtishena, Atri, Goutami, Haarita, Yagnavalkya, and Sarvat; constructed suitable Ashramas for the Invitee Rishis and disciples; Conferences were held to decide on the format, procedure and daily programing; prescribed do's and don'ts of physical, moral and spiritual content; 'niyamas and nigrahas' (norms and restrictions) etc. Lakshmana brought the Yagnashwa at the appointed time, formal Pujas were performed by Brahmanas and 'Suvasini' Women; the Surya Vamsa flag of Victory was hoisted on the horse; a gold sheet was hung around the horse-neck with an Inscription saying that the horse belonged to Shri Rama and whosoever stopped it would be severely punished; Shatrughna was made over-all in charge of the huge armed Sena (Army), elephants, horses, chariots and carts leading the Yagnashwa; Pushkala the son of Bharata was made in charge of the rear side of the 'Ashwa'; Bhakta Hanuman headed the entourage and at the most propitious Muhurta the Yagna Horse was released, along with the recitals of Veda Mantras and 'Mangala Vadyas' amid big shouts of Victory to Shri Rama Chandra. The Procession with the Yagnashwa in the lead moved on with instruction from Shri Rama that the course of the Ashwa should not be conducted as the horse would move freely. The first halt was at the Avicchitra Nagari where there was a noted Temple of Devi Kamakshi who appeared before King Samuda performing Tapasya and gave the boon of invincibility; she also asked the King to offer his entire Kingdom and riches to Shatrughna as he would pass through the Nagari along with the horse of Ashvamedha Yagna to be conducted Shri Rama of Surya

Vamsha and the killer of Ravana'sura. Accordingly, Shatrughna was given all kinds of honours by King Samuda. After a three day halt, the King made his son a 'Samanta Raja' of Ayodhya and moved on along with Shatrughna and Pushkala.



As the Yagnashwa moved on nearing the Ashram of Sage Chyavana and Devi Sukanya, Pradhan Mantri Sumati who was in the entourage of Shatrughna explained their episode: The son of Sage Bhrigu named Chyavan was engaged in very rigorous Tapasya when King Sharyati was performing 'snaan' in the River Narmada and Tarpana to Devas and Pitras; the Princess Sukanya along with her companions was moving about in a forest on the banks of Narmada. Out of fun, Sukanya nearing a bush pierced with a piece of wood into perhaps a couple of glittering worms, but got alarmed when blood spilt out and there were trebles of Earth and lightnings. She ran and informed her father who was resting on the river banks about the incident. The King went up to the bush and found to his horror that Sunanya did not pierce the lighting worms but the eyes of a Sage engrossed in Tapasya, causing him to blindness. The King apologised profusely and offered his teen age daughter to the sick and aged Sage in wedding as a compensation. The daughter Sukanya served the Sage with sincerity and once the two Asvini Kumar Brothers who were passing by were impressed with her 'Pativartya' (seva to husband) and gave her the boons of eye sight to her husband as also youth and charm. In gratitude, the Sage Chyavan, by virtue of his Tapasya, gave the boon to Ashvini Kumars to secure sips of 'Somarasa' (the Celestial Drink) denied to them hitherto as also fullfledged Devatva with eligibility for enjoying 'havis' or the fruit of Yagnas. Lord Indra was furious at these boons to Asvini Kumars and raised his hand to punish them all but the Sage Chyavan in turn held Indra's hand tight and Indra had no option to grant the boons to Ashvini Kumars! While Mantri Sumati narrated the Story of the Sacred Couple of Sage Chyavan and Devi Sukanya, the 'Sacrifice Horse',

Shatrughna and the entire entourage reached the Ashram, worshipped them and requested them to visit the Place of the Rama Yagna, as Hanuman carried the Chyavana couple to Rama Chandra and the Place of the Maha Yagna in progress.

As the Yagnashva moved ahead, Pradhana Mantri Sumati told Shatrughna that they were about to reach Neelachala and the Sacred Temple of Bhagavan Purushottama with four arms on the Mountain top. They reached Ratnaathata Nagar where King Vimal who became extremely excited and organised refreshments to the entire entourage. He also made a symbolic dedication of his Kingdom to Shri Rama and gave away valuable gifts to Shatrughna and others. King Vimal narrated an unusual story about the incidents which happened in the past about the Neelachala Mountain. He quoted a Brahmana visiting the Neelachala Mountain and found outside the Purushottama Temple there were a few Tirtha Yattris who possessed four hands armed with Gada, Chakra, Saranga and a lotus. Similarly a Kirata (Hunter) saw spectacles of a few children with 'Chaturbhjas' armed likewise with glittering robes! When the children were asked by the Kirata, they said that a few morsels of Maha Prasada which fell on the ground were eaten, they came out with the Chaturbhujas!

From Neelachala, the Yagnashva halted at Chakranga Nagar ruled by King Subahu, where Prince Daman felt that the manner the Ashwamegha was publicised all over the World smacked of pride and ego and ordered his Senapati to keep his army ready to fight. On behalf of Shatrughna, Raja Pratapagna shouted that the Yagnaashva disappeared and Prince Daman replied that he had kept the horse and if possible might get it back after a fight! A battle ensued and Raja Pratapagna was defeated by Daman. Shatrughna wondered as to who was this imp of a Raja Kumar called Daman who did considerable damage to elephants, horses and chariots and felled on ground the capable Raja Pratappagna wounded with blood! Prince Pushkala the son of Bharata was so angry that he swore to control or kill Daman. A fierce battle took place and finally Pushkala defeated Daman Kumar whose body was profusely bleeding and his horse took back to the Court of King Subahu. The King, his brother Suketu who was a master of Gada Yudhha (Battle of Maces) and Subahu's son Chitranga an expert of Battle Designs had all appeared together and designed a 'Krouncha Vyuha'; the entire strength of the sea-like army of Subahu was mobilised and put Shatrughna on red alert. The most powerful warriors of Subahu were kept at the tactical head position and sides of the 'Krouncha Pakshi's war design. Subahu was in desperate and distressed condition as his son was bleeding with wounds on death bed; revenge was the watchword of Subahu's entire army. Shatrughna knew the seriousness of the situation as a minor scuffle restricted to Daman and Pushkala had snow-balled into a full-fledged battle with military offensives and complicated battle designs. He addressed the Shri Rama Sena and exhorted its warriors that the situation was such that had to be faced with alertness, valour and brain power to be able to break the Krouncha Vyuha. Raja Lakshminidhi the son of King Janaka took a vow that he would face Suketu and destroy the Vyuha designed by the latter in no time. There was a one-to-one battle as both were equally worked up and it continued for long time with ups and downs. The warriors then took to 'Gada-Yuddha' (mace-war) and it prolonged for long time; finally, Lakshminidhi was able to overpower Suketu and there were shouts of relief resounded while both the parties appreciated with each other. In the battle that continued, Pushkala killed Chitranga. Subahu was extremely upset with the killings of his brother and son and became most desperate to kill thousands of warriors, elephants, horses and foot-soldiers and finally challenged Shatrughna. Hanuman who was providing cover to Shatrughna as he was in the defensive position and received showers of arrows of King Subahu which hurt Hanuman. The highly enraged Hanuman kicked King Subahu on his chest by his powerful feet and grounded him. It was in a stage of stupor, the King witnessed a vision when Brahma and Devatas were eulogizing Shri Rama as an Avatar of Vishnu. Having realised his folly, he made desperate shouts to Daman, Suketu and Vichitra saying that Shri Rama was none else but Bhagavan Vishnu and the battle should end forthwith. There after he apologised to Shatrughna for what all had happened, performed 'Atmarpana' (Surrender) and returned the Yagnashva with honour.



As the Yagnashwa moved on for a few days, suddenly there emerged a frightful darkness since close friends of the deceased Ravana'sura, two Rakshasas of Patalaloka named Vidyunmali and Ugradamshttra wanted to avenge Ravana's death and luckily for them an opportunity came on its own with the launch of the Yagna and to trap the Rama Sena by hiding the Yagnashwa. The Rakshasa Brothers succeeded in hiding the horse. Bharat Kumar Pushkal made a deadly declaration that if he did not return with the Yagashwa, then he should be deemed a fictitious devotee of Shri Rama. Hanuman too took a similar vow. Other warriors too took vows and Shatrugna was not far behind. Meanwhile the Rakshasa Brothers shouted: where is Rama; we want to kill him and take revenge! Vidyunmali straightaway targetted Pushkala and threw a 'Shakti' on his chest, while Pushkala rained arrows on the Rakshasa and the latter's chest was pierced through as lot of blood flowed out from his heart and Vidyunmali fell on the ground unconscious. Reacting to this sharply, Ugradamshttra threw a red-hot Trishul from the Demon's viman on Pushkal's heart and the latter fell unconscious inside his chariot. Hanuman witnessed that Bharat Kumar Pushkal was in risk and instantly expanded his body to pull down the Rakshasa occupants of the Viman, especially Ugradamshttra and hurled a hot Trishul on the Rakshasa, who in turn used his Maya to bring in a complete cover of darkness in which it was difficult to perceive who was a companion and who was an opponent.

Witnessing these fast developments, Shatrughna took the name of Shri Rama and slashed the Cover of Maya that Ugradamshttra brought in by one arrow and with another quick arrow of Sammohanastra on the battle field. By yet another arrow, he brought down the Viman from where Ugradamshttra was fighting. The demon used 'Paashupatastra' against Shatrughna and the latter had no option but to utilise 'Narayanastra' to balance the former. Meanwhile a recovered Vidyunmali was about to toss a Trishul on Shatrughna but a smart Shatrughna hacked the hand of Vidyunmali with an arrow and simultaneously flung another arrow to pitch down the demon's head. Soon after in quick action, Shatrughna also hurled a 'kripan' (Small knife) on Ugradamshttra and killed that demon brother too.

As the Yagnyashva ambled along towards the banks of River Narmada, Prime Minister Sumati suggested to Shatrughna a quick visit to the Ashram of Muni Aranyaka. When the Muni was informed by Sumati that an Ashwamedha Yagna was being performed, the Sage replied that those foolish persons who were wasting their time and energy in performing Yagnas and Vratas during the short life span should be advised to best utilise their time to Shri Rama 'Smarana' (Memory) as Shri Rama was itself an Yagna, a Vrata, a Puja, a Maha Mantra, Veda and Shastra. Then Suman introduced Shatrughna, Bharat Kumar, Hanuman and others and the Sage was thrilled to see them all and re-emphasised that there was no other Deity like Shri Rama and no there bhajan better than his. Shatrughna then arranged Muni Aranyaka's visit to Ayodhya and the Muni after meeting Shri Rama in person felt so satisfied that he did not wish for anything else in life and by the grace of Shri Rama left for Vishnu loka! The Yagnashva reached the beautiful and prosperous Devapura at Vindhyas where even building walls were made of precious stones and the King Veeramani was an extraordinary devotee of Bhagavan Shiva. The elder Prince Rukmanga arrested the Yagnashva and brought it to the Capital but since he came to know that the horse belonged to Shri Rama in connection with a Yagna, the King was hesitant to approve the action. Nor Shiva, who was prayed to by the King; the latter said that since the action was already taken, it would not be in tune with Kshatriya Dharma to take a retreat step. By way of assurance, Shiva too resolved to fight with Lord Rama, since Shiva as a devotee of Sri Rama had as much responsibility to the King who also was a great devotee of Shiva. Thus a vicious circle got into motion. Meanwhile, Brahmaarshi Narada alerted all concerned i.e. Shatrughna, Shri Rama, the King Veeramani and the typical 'Kalaha Priya' readied the armies of both Shatrughna and the King. Raja Veeramani called his Senapati and got an excellent army ready and Shatrughna advised Rama's army to get readied too. The opening duel was of Rukmanga and Pushkala. Rukmanga recited a Mantra and the chariot of Pushkala commenced 'Bhubhraman' (circling fastly). With difficulty the Rath was stopped but the enraged Pushkala recited a return Mantra which made Rukmanga's chariot fly right up to the Surya mandal where it got burnt and fell down but Rukmanga was thrown out unconscious. King Veeramani was alarmed with fury approaching Pushkala and as a chain reaction Hanuman sought to reach Pushkala for rescue but Pushkala became over confident and prevented Hanuman and asked the latter to help Shatrughna instead. There was a one-to-one battle between Pushkala and Veeramani and by using a mighty arrow in the name of Shri Rama made Veeramani unconscious. Surprisingly, Bhagavan Shiva himself entered the battle field at this juncture as King Veeramani the unique devotee of Shiva fell unconscious! Shiva instructed Veerabhadra to help Veeramani and Nandi to control Hanuman. Thus Veerabhadra killed Pushkala, Shiva Himself made Shatrughna unconscious; at the same time appreciated Hanuman's valour. Hanuman addressed Bhagavan Shiva saying that quite often, Shiva was confirming his devotion to Vishnu and his Avatar Shri Rama, but it was surprising that this time he was fighting against Shri Rama! Hanuman replied that King Veeramani was a great devotee of his and it was a 'Maryada' or Courtesy to defend a devotee just as Rama too would defend his devotees likewise! Basically both were two entities of the Paramatma! Then Hanuman asked Bhagavan Shankara for granting boons to let all the persons who died in this battle be resuscitated. Shri Rama made his presence at the battle field when Shiva prostrated; Shatrughna, Hanuman and all the rest were highly surprised and the persons who were declared dead in the battle came back alive and all were happy. Shri Rama then explained to one and all that the Dharma of Deities was to safeguard the interests of their Bhaktas and what Shiva did in defending King Veeramani and his side was the best that he had done; that his heart was full of Shiva and vice-versa and those thought other wise would be dispatched to

Kumbhapaka Naraka! Those who were Shiva's devotees were Shri Rama's beloved Bhaktas and those who were Shiva followers were Vishnu's devotees too. Sesa Nag described to Sage Vatsayan that as the Sacrificial Horse reached the precincts of Valmiki Ashram, Shri Rama's sons Lava and Kusha -who were unaware that Rama was their father as Devi Sita staying in Valmiki Ashram under the care of the Sage's care did not inform the twin boys of the relationship as they were born in the Ashram after Rama abandoned Sita-reacted sharply against the inscription on the Golden Plate hung around the Yagnashva; they tied the horse and brought it inside the Ashram. The soldiers accompanying the horse ignored the two boys who tied the horse out of child play and started untying the horse and instantly, the hands of the soldiers were severed as they ran to Shatrughna to inform the incident. Understandably, Shatrughna grew angry but felt that the boys who did this might not be ordinary but might have perhaps been Devatas at the behest of Indra! Thus he ordered his Senapati Kaalajit to quickly alert the Army for a full-fledged battle. In the battle that ensued between the Senapati and Lava Kumara, the Senapti was killed and there was allround 'hahakar'(frightened shouts) from the Army. Shatrughna asked Pushkal to take a big Army and proceed against the boy Lava. Pushkal said to Lava that he would be gifted a chariot so that both might fight on equal terms; as a reply, Lava destroyed Pushkal's chariot instantly and asked Pushkal now grounded was heckled by Lava on 'equal terms'! In the battle that followed Pushkal rained arrows on Lava and in response despatched a cobra like poisonous arrow aimed at Pushkal's chest and the latter fell flat on the ground. Hanuman who was nearby took the body of Pushkala to Shatrughna who instructed Hanuman to kill Lava mercilessly. The highly charged Hanuman hurled huge trees and boulders and Lava cut them to pieces as a sport. By the severity and swiftness with which poisonous arrows were flinged at Hanuman, the latter could not control himself even as the gigantic body that he assumed fell flat on the ground! The highly puzzled Shatrughna wondered as to who these two boys were who felled the Most Valiant



Hanuman himself! As he drove the Golden Chariot towards the boys, he felt that their resemblance with Shri Ram was so striking that he asked them as to who they were and what their parentage was. The boys gave a stiff reply that it was not essential to know such details since their horse was captured by them and let him try if he could retrieve it. In the course of the battle, Shatrughna was stunned and stumbled as he had to quickly change his bows that were broken and the chariots that were destroyed and was finally knock down with unconsciousness. As Shatrughna was hit, Raja Surath and others surrounded and

resorted to 'Adharma Yuddha' or unjust battle and caused Lava to hurt into unconsciousness. As the news of Lava's state was informed, Devi Sita was informed and Kusha hurried to the warfront and instantly faced Shatrughna who by now got revived and nodoubt knew that Kusha and Lava were twins and the sons of Shri Rama, but the most furious Kush had was on attack with the 'Narayana Astra' hurled on Shatrughna but this powerful arrow was turned ineffective. In reply, Shatrughna took a vow in the name of Shri Rama and released an arrow but the desperate Kusha took the vow on his Mother Devi Sita and retaliated. Shatrughna fell unconscious again. Sugreeva took over the position of Commander in Chief and fought with Kusha as also with Lava who recovered again by then. Sugreeva too fell down and Lava and Kusha tied both Sugreeva and Hanuman and carried them to Devi Sita who was aghast to witness the Maha Viras in that condition. The boys relented to her instruction to release them but as per Kshatriya Dharma they would have to return to the Battle Field. On releasing both Hanuman and Sugreeva, Devi Sita came to know that Shatrughna was lying unconscious. Devi Sita then remembered Shri Rama and addressed Surya Deva that if she were to be a true Pativrata, Shatrughna should be revived and not only that who ever lost their lives in the Battle should be also revived! Indeed her wish was fulfilled and all was well. As per Sita's instruction, Lava and Kusha released the Yagyashva and the entire entourage headed by Shatrughna returned to Ayodhya after the successful Victory tour of Yagyashva and all the defeated Kings who clashed with Rama Sena were paraded before Shri Rama. But Shri Rama was more curious to learn more about the valour of Lava and Kusha. He was keen on Devi Sita's return to Ayodhya and despatched Lakshmana to bring her back, but she refused to return. She agreed however to send Lava and Kusha after Sage Valmiki trained the boys to sing a ballad before Shri Rama and others. The boy's sang the entire Ramayana since the birth of Shri Rama and brothers, including Sita's abandon; Lakshmana leaving her to her fate; her rescue by Maharshi Valmiki her 'Agnatavasa' delivery of the twin brothers; the Sage's excellent training of the boys in warfare and Kshatriya Dharmas, knowledge of Administration and of Kingship; Shri Rama's popularity with Sages, citizens, and each and every being as Maryada Purusha; Sage Vishwamitra's insistence to safeguard his Yagna and the killing of Demoness Tataka and Subahu; Sita's Swayamvara; Kaikeyee's desire to Bharata's becoming the Heir Apparent and Ram's Vanavasi; killing of notorious Rakshasas, Sita's 'Apaharana' (kidnap) by Ravana; Rama's befriending with Sugreeva and Hanuman; Hanuman's trip to Lanka to trace Sita; the crossing of the Ocean; the killing of Ravana and the entire clan, Vibheeshana becoming the Lanka King; the Rama Rajya; Rama abandoning Devi Sita on the basis of a Secret Report of a washerman's allegation about Devi Sita's character notwithstanding Sita's pregnancy; and Rama performing Ashvamedha Yagna. Shri Rama was overwhelmed with emotions at the ballad sung by the the twins, his pride to have secured such illustrious twins and the remorse to have abandoned Sadhvi Sita. Already, Sage Valmiki arrived to attend the Ashvamedha Yagna as a respected Guest of Honour at Ayodhya. He narrated how Devi Sita was fortunately seen by him in the forest that Lakshmana abandoned her; her transfer to his Ashram and her continuous grief, the birth of Lava and Kusha, his upbringing with considerable training in Dhanur Veda, Fine Arts, and what all was required by an ideal Kshatriya and a King including the nuances of Administration, Yoga and Siddhis and an exemplary human being worthy of the sons of a Maryada Purusha. Valmiki further stated that he visited Varuna Deva, Agni Deva and other Lokapalaks who had unanimously referred to Devi Sita's purity and piety as a Maha Pativrata Sadhvi born into this world; a ready proof of her 'Shuddhata' and highest devotion to Shri Rama was the coming back alive of lakhs of dead persons at the various battles en route the travel of the Yagnashva, since she wished so! Having heard what all Maharshi Valmiki stated in Public and in the midst of the most recognised and pious Sages-in-Chief soon after the Great Singing of Ramayana by Lava and Kusha, Shri Rama asked Lakshman to visit Valmiki Ashram and invite Devi Sita to Ayodhya, in the context of the Victory Celebrations as also the Sacred and Historic Termination of Ashvamedha Yagna. As Lakshmana reached the Ashram and requested Devi Sita, she asked him as to how could she return to Ayodhya having been humiliated and discarded with baseless allegations. Lakshman narrated most convincingly as to what all happened at Ayodhya, how the Twins sang Ramayana and the spontaneous reactions and glorious comments about Devi Sita from the Maharshis, Devas and Loka Palaks (as reported by Sage Valmiki). He prostrated before her and requested her to visit Ayodhya. The Ashvamedha Yagna concluded with the

display of the pride of Surya Vamsha, the unreserved gaiety of the Praja of Rama Rajya, the relentless recitals of Veda Mantras by the Maharshis, the blessings of Brahma and Maha Deva; the showers of flowers from the heavens by Indra, Loka Palakas, Pancha Bhutas and Devas; the joyous singing of Gandarvas and the celestial dances of Apsaras. Most interestingly, even by the touch of Shri Rama the Yagnashva (Sacrificial Horse) turned into a human being redeemed after the touch, since Sage Durvasa cursed the person in the past and when sincerely apologised gave the boon of Rama's sacred touch. Sesa Nag assured Sage Vatsayana that whoever heard or read the proceedings of Shri Rama's Ashvamedha Yagna would get rid off Maha Patakas, secure prosperity, excellent health, and contentment in life; even a chandala or athiest would attain 'Parama Pada'!

Sita's 'Paramadhaam and termination of Rama Avatar

After the successful completion of Ashvamedha Yagna, Shri Rama continued his normal routine of observing celibacy and administration. Shatrughna killed Lavanaura and ruled Madhurapuri; Bharat administered both the banks of River Sindhu and controlled Gandharvas; Lakshman conquered Madra desha, installed his sons as the Kings and returned to Rama for providing service to him. Shri Rama did Ashvamedha Yanga, after installing a Golden Pratima of Sita; in fact he performed several Yagnas in the same manner. Sage Valmiki exhorted Rama about Sita's spotlessness and piousness time and again and Shri Rama finally opined that indeed he was fully aware of her chastity and purity but since the allegation came from the Praja (Public), Sita should prove her innocence before the people. Sita then declared in a huge Sabha that if she performed puja to any body else excepting Shri Ram in her mind, thought, tongue or action then my mother Bhu Devi might take her into her mother's fold. Immediately, there was an Earth-quake and Sita entered into a huge cleavage. Bhu Devi herself lifted Sita into her belly and the great Garuda, the Carrier of Lord Vishnu, lifted her from Rasatala to Vishnu loka as seated on a Golden Throne. After Sita's disappearance, Shri Rama ruled for eleven thousand years. One day, an old Tapasvi came to see Shri Ram and told him that none should enter his Chamber while he was giving an important message from Lord Brahma in secrecy. Shri Rama called Lakshmana and instructed that none should be allowed to enter as long as he was conversing with the Tapasvi and otherwise that person should be punishable with death. Lakshman himself stood at the door and ensured that none would disturb. The Tapasvi conveyed that since the death of Ravana, Kumbhakarna and other demons Rama was to live for eleven thousand years and that it was time for Rama to leave Earth and return to Vaikuntha. While this secret conversation was going on, Durvasa Maharshi arrived and wished to meet Shri Rama, but Lakshmana declined entry stating that a representative of Brahma was in an important conversation and that he could not see Shri Rama then. Durvasa grew angry and threatened Lakshmana with a severe curse if he did not permit entry. As there was no other alternative between Rama's instruction and Durvasa's threat of curse, Lakshman entered River Sarayu, taking his original Swarupa of Ananta Naga with thousand hoods. After the meeting with Kaala Deva in the form of the old Tapasvi, Rama realised that Lakshman also having gone, it was time for him also to terminate his 'Avatar'; he established Kusha in Kushavati Kingdom and Lava in Dwaravati as their Kings. Taking a hint from Shri Rama, Vibishana, Sugriva, Jambavan, Hanuman, Neela, Nala, Sushena and Nishada Raja Guha arrived. Shatrughna performed the coronation of his sons at Ayodhya. The rest of them said that they would not like to stay back on Earth in the absence of Rama even for a moment. But Rama asked Vibhishana to continue in power at Lanka for long time and instructed Hanuman to continue on Earth forever to sustain the message of Shi Rama. The rest of them accompanied Shri Rama into the Sacred Sarayu River. Bharat, Shatrughna, and all the citizens of Ayodhya along with their wives, Mantris, Servants, Vedikas, Brahmanas, the nearby animals, birds, and all other Beings who accompanied Shri Rama never looked back. As Shri Rama went deep into the River, Lord Brahma, Devas, Rishis and all Celestial Beings extolled Raghunatha even as He took the Huge Form of Maha Vishnu with his four hands along with Bharata as Shankha, Shatrughna as Chakra, as also Gada with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi beside Him.

Devi Tulsi Mahatmaya

Tulasi leaves yield a volatile oil called eugenol possessing anti bacterial properties which are anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory and expectorant promoting maximum respiratory assistance

Tulasyamrita janmaasi sadaa twam Keshava Priyey! Keshavaartha chinomi twaam Varadaa bhava shobhaney/ Twadanga sambhavairnityam pujayaami yathaa Harim, Tatha kuru Pavitrangam Kalou mala vinaashini/Tulasi! You are born from Amrita and are the beloved of Keshava always. I select excellent leaves from your Tree for the puja of Bhagavan. Do become the provider of boons from this Puja and enable it in a manner that it pleases Bhagavan Keshava. Mother Tulasi! Only you could clean up the mess of Kali Yug and provide a sense of direction to absolve me of my sins.

Origin of Devi Tulasi

The daughter of King Dharmadhwaaja and Malati was named *Tulasi* as both men and women could not weigh the beauty and charm of the Child-Tulanaasmartha- she was named as Tulasi. Being a 'Jatismara' with the memory of her previous births, Tulasi performed very strict Tapasya to Brahma Deva who appeared and asked Tulasi to seek a boon.

Tulasi recalled that she was in her earlier birth she was a Gopi by the same name as Tulasi, that she was in Goloka as a close companion of Devi Radha and was fond of a boy called Govinda who was too a Gopa boy in the 'Raasa Samaaja' or the Circle of Gopa-Giopikas, that their freindship blossomed into lust, that Devi Radha cursed the lovers to be born into 'Martyaloka' in Bhuloka and assured that on performing Tapasya to Brahma Deva the latter would give the boon of marrying Shri Krishna. Brahma smiled and told Tulasi that the same Gopa was already born with the 'Amsha' of Shri Krishna as a Danava King called Shankhachooda residing in Samudra, who was invincible to even Parama Shiva and that he would be her husband initially and subsequently wed Vishnu Deva as his very dear wife when Tulasi would become a Tree /Shrub when the whole Universe would worship as *Vrindaavani*. Devi Tulasi was thrilled at what Brahma revealed about the future course of events, but had a lurking fear of Radha Devi as to whether she would make this dream-like future possible as predicted by Brahma. Brahma again smiled and taught the procedure of pleasing Devi Radha by a Shodashopachara Mantra, Radha Stotra, Kavacha and Puja Vidhana. Tulasi was determined to please Radha and performed incessant 'Raadhho - paasana' or the contant memorising of Radha Devi.

Devi Tulasi weds Danava King Shankhachooda

In course of time, Tulasi had dreamt of a handsome youth and on the next day a Yogi called Shankhachooda landed at 'Badarivana' who practised Shri Krishna Mantra and Kavacha, thanks to Jaigeeshva Muni. As Tulasi got his darshan at a common place she was readily got attracted to him and vice versa. They exchanged pleasantries as also serious matters of Vedanta content, especially in the background of both of them being Jatismaras, when Brahma appeared and encouraged their Gandharva Vivaha. Even as Shankhachooda was enjoying his new marital life, he was simultaneously warring with Devas, as he was essentially a Danava and tortured Devas and forcibly dislodged them from Indraloka. He acquired three crore 'Dhanurdhaaris', three lakh race horses, five lakh top rate elephants, Trishula dhaaris, countless chariots, and highly trained Maharathis and virtually became an unconquerable force in the entire Universe. On top of it he was a staunch Krishna devotee and the latter himself bestowed a talisman which fortified his prowess further. Shri Krishna was no doubt aware that the Danava King was performing all acts of Viciousness, brutality and violence; yet the demon's staunch devotion to him far outweighed his vices and cruelties to Devas, Maharhis, Sages and Brahmanas.

Shiva who mediated peace and then fought with no result

The alarming situation prompted Bhagavan Shiva to advise the Danava King and mediated peace with Devas. He used all his skills and powers of bringing about rapprochement; he said: 'Raja! You release the kingdom of Devas and make me and every body happy; you enjoy your own Kingdom and desist from fraternal enmities as Daityas, Danavaas and Devatas are all from the Kashyapa Muni and the own sisters of Diti, Danu and Aditi respectively. Brahma hatya and Jaati droha would be equally despicable etc. He also threatened that besides Indra, Surya, Yama, Varuna, Vayu, Shaneswara, Kubera etc. the illustrious Kumara, Nandi, Bhadra Kaali and he himself too would fight against him and the opponents. But the good advice given by Maha Deva himself fell flat on Shankhachooda's deaf ears and the great battle of Devas and Daanavas which could have been avoided did take place due to the persistence of one Daitya King Shankhachooda! The Danava King descended to the battle field adorned with the Dhanush and arrows that Bhagavan Vishnu gifted to him once. Skanda initiated the battle by destroying Shankha - chooda's chariot, Kavacha, the charioteer and his headgear and making the Danava faint. But the latter recovered quickly and took up a Vishnu Shakti and attacked Skanda, by the powerful strike of which Skanda fell down. Devi Kaali took over and assaulted the Danava who was an expert in Maya Shakti and dodged the Devi. Bhagavan Shiva revived Skanda by his Jnaana Shakti in a moment. Maha Deva then declared a fullfledged war in which Indra was pitted against Vrishaparva, Surya Deva against Viprachittha, Chandra against Dambha, Kaala Deva against Kaleswara, Agni against Gokarna, Kubera versus Kalakeya, Vishwakarma against Mayasura, Mrityu Devata against Bhayankara, Yama Raja against Samhara Danava, Varuna against Kalivinka, Vayu versus Chanchalasura, Budha against Ghritaprishtha and Shanaischara versus Raktaksha, Jayanta versus Ratnasaara, Vasugana versus Varchogana, Nalakubara versus Dhumra, Dharma vs. Dhanurdhara, and Mangala vs. Mandukasha. The Adityaganas, Ekadasha Rudras, Rudra ganas headed by Nandeswara, Gandharvas, Yakshas and Kinnaras were all at the battle where the Danava Sena was annihilated mercilessly and there were streams of blood and floating dead bodies of soldiers and animals on the battle front. As there was a climatic moment at the combat, Maha Kali released Brahmastra at the Danava King who retaliated with another Brahmastra with the result was a nought. Then Devi Kaali initiated the Mantra to release 'Brahmastra' when a Celestial Voice was heard to say: King Shankhachooda is a 'Maha Purusha' (Illustrious Noble Being) and Pashupatastra should not be released against him, since he would not be killed by it. In fact, as long as a 'Kavacha' (Shield) given by Shri Hari was carried on his body and as long as his wife's 'Pativratya' (High devotion to her husband) would last, the Danava would continue to be indestructible as these were the boons to him by Brahma. Bhadrakali then refrained from attacking the King but concentrated on destroying the rest of the Danavas and their Chiefs and so did the other Devas. Meanwhile, Bhagavan Vishnu took the form of an old Brahmana and approached for a boon. When Danava King replied that he could grant him anything, the Brahmana asked for the 'Krishna Kavacha'; the Danava King who abided by his word parted with the Kavacha.

Vishnu impersonates as Shankhachooda and took Tulasi into bed

Bhagavan Vishnu then assumed the Form of Shankhachooda and entered Devi Tulasi's interior room in a delightful mood saying that he won the battle and wished to rest. Devi Tulasi was full of joy and in a celebrating mood of relaxation; the Maya Shankhachooda and Devi Tulasi were happy in their union and thus Tulasi's pativratya got affected. As both the hurdles of 'Krishna Kavacha' being donated by the Danava King to a Brahmana and the ruin of Tulasi's Pativratya by Vishnu impersonating as Shankhachooda were removed, it was easy for Mahadeva terminating the Danava King who returned to Devi Radha's Rasa-leela party at Goloka as Sudama and Bhagavan Krishna and Devi Radha welcomed him back into their fold. From the body bone remains of Shankhachooda emerged several kinds of

‘Shankhaas’ (conchshells) which was not only adorned one of Shri Krishna’s hands but had since then found a permanent place in every Puja of Govinda.

Mutual curses of Tulasi and Vishnu -Tulasi as a tree and Vishnu as rock / Saalagraama

Meanwhile Devi Tulasi suspected the Maya Shankhachooda and as Vishnu revealed himself she was upset that original Danava King was no more, cursed Vishnu to become a ‘Paashaana’(rock piece) since he was unscrupulous and heartless and played the drama and removed her husband from the scene; eversince formal Vishnu Puja had been through the Sacred Form of a *Shaaligraama*.

Lord Vishnu then gave a reverse curse that Tulasi would become a holy River Gandaki as also as a Sacred Tree / shrub worshipped all over the Universe including Bhuloka, Swargaloka and Pataalalokas. Vishnu however softened and said that ‘Abhisheka’ with Tulasi leaves to Narayana would provide the same effect as ‘Sampurna Snaanas’ or baths in all hallowed places including Sarva Kshetras; performing several Yagnas; satisfying Shri Hari with thousands of Abhishekas of holy waters along with ‘Tulasi Dalaas’; thousnad ‘godaanas’ to equate a Tulasi patra daana; serving tulasi water at the time of a death; any puja with Tulasi to any Deity as good as lakhs of Ashwanmedha Yagnas or death with a tulasi on hand resulting in access to Vaikuntha. If a person swears with a Tulasi on hand, his pledge is considered to be an unquestioned belief and breaking the vow with a Tulasi would attract Kalasutra and Kubhipaaka Narakas.

Bhagavan Shri Hari futher said that in order to make her curse to him true, he would become black ‘Paashaanas’ (Saligramas) on the banks of River Gandaki and several ‘krimi keedas’ would bite the imprints of Shri Chakra thus becoming eligible for worship. Those Saligrams which have the colour of Cloud / Shyama Varna would be callled Lakshmi Narayana; those stones which have one door and four chakras are called ‘Vanamaali’; stones of light blue colour are called ‘Lakshmi Janaardana’; those with two doors, four chakras and a cow’s horn are called ‘Raghavendra’; small stones with two chakras of black colour are known as ‘Dadhi Vaamanaas’; very small stones with two chakras and vanamaali are called ‘Shridhara’; round stones with clear chakra and Vanamali sign are ‘Damodaras’; and so on.

Narayana Rishi described the Puja to Devi Tulasi with the ‘Dasaakshara’ (Ten worded) Mula Mantra / Beeja Mantra viz. (OM) *SHREEM HREEM KLEEM AIM BRINDAAVINYAI SWAAHAA* comprising Lakshmi Beeja Mantra (Shreem), Maya beeja (Hreem), Kaama bija (Kleem) and Vaani beeja (Aim). After reciting the Mantra, formal Puja must be performed, followed by offering ghee soaked Deepa, Dhupa, Sindura, Chandana, Naivedya and flowers followed by the ‘Stuti’ that Vishnu himself recited:

Vrindaa rupascha vrikshaascha yadaiktra bhavanti cha, Vidhurbhudaastena Vrindam matpriyaam taam bhajaamyaham/ Puraa babhuva yaa Devi twaadow vrindaavaney vaney, Tena Vrindaavani khyaataa soybhaagyam taam bhajaamyaham/ Asamkhyeshu cha viseshu pujitaa yaa nirantaram, Tena Vishwapujitaakhyaam Jagat-pujaam bhajaamyaham/ Asamkhyani cha Vishwaani pavitraani yayaa sadaa, Taam Vishwapaavaneem Deveem virahena smraanyaham/ Devaa na tushtaah pushpaanaam samuhena yaya vinaa, Taam Pushpa saaraam Shradhdhaam cha drashtumicchhaami shokatah/ Vishwey yatpraaptimaatrena bhaktaanando bhaveda dhruvam, Nandini tena vikhyaataa saa preetaa bhavataabhi mey/Yasya Devyaastulaa naast Visweshu nikhilshu cha, Tulasee tena vikhyaataa taam yaami sharanam priyaam/ Krishna jeevana rupaa yaa shaswatpriyatamaa Sati, Tena Krishna jeevaneeti mama rakkshantu jeevanam/

(When Vrinda tree and another kind of tree look alike, then intelligent persons call the group of trees as *Vrinda* only! It is that Vrinda which is popular that I pray; my greetings to that auspicious Devi who emerged in ancient times in Brindavana and was called as *Brindaavani*; I implore that unique tree which is worshipped among innumerable other trees and is called as *Vishwa pujita*; I greet that universally revered tree in veneration; it is the *Pushpasaaraa* which is held in high esteem among several other flowers and is meditated by all Devas that I yearn to vision with emotion and anxiety; may Tulasi be kind to me as she is known for spreading happiness around and fulfil one's desires and that is why her epithet is *Nandini*. I seek shelter from that Devi whose inherent values are impossible to weigh (tulana) and therefore called *Tulasi*. It is that Vrinda Swarupa who is considered as *Krishna jeevani* that protects the life of Shri Krishna!).

In short, Tulasi Stotra is: *Vrindaa Vrindaavani Vishwapijita Vishwapaavani, Pushpa -saaraa Nandini cha Tulasi Krishna jeevani/ Etannaamaashtakam chaiva Stotram Naamaartha samyutam, yah pathet taam cha sapujya soshwamedha phalam labhet/* After the Stotra as above, the formal Puja comprising the 'Shodashopacharaas' are required to be performed by men and women for prosperity, long and healthy life. This is the version of Brahma Vaivartha Purana.

Worship to Devi Tulasi and Salagramas



Traditionally a passionate devotee of Narayana, Deva Savarni's son Vrishadhvasa turned out to be a fanatic of Maha Deva to the extent of criticising Narayana. Surya Deva felt hurt not because of Vrishadhvasa's devotion to Maha Deva but of the remarks against Narayana. Sun God cursed the devotee that he would be poor forthwith. This irritated Maha Deva and wished to punish Surya Deva, but

Narayana pacified Maha Deva saying that the Trinity were of the same status after all. Maha Deva no doubt reconciled but desired to punish Vrishadvaja for his foul mouth. But Vrishadvaja died and so did his son Rathadvaja. The latter had two pious sons, Dharmadvaja and Kusadvaja who worshipped Maha Lakshmi and became Kings. Maha Lakshmi blessed Kusadvaja with a pious daughter Kamala who became a yogini called Vedavati. While at her Tapasya, Ravana confronted Vedavati and made amorous approaches touching her hands. She became furious and cursed him that soon enough he and his family would be destroyed; thus saying she immolated herself in Yoga Fire. Eventually, Maha Vishnu and Lakshmi incarnated as Sri Rama and Sita and were destined to undergo on 'Vanavasa' (Forest Life), during which period Agni Deva in the form of a Brahmana informed that soon Ravana would plan to kidnap Sita Devi and desired that a fake Sita would be replaced by the original as advised by Devas and that this secret should not be made known even to Lakshmana. Thus the original Sita was protected by Agni and Ravana mistook the fake Devi all along. As Ravana died and Fake Sita was put to 'Agni Pariksha' (the FireTest), Agni Deva replaced the real Devi instead. Chhaya Sita was asked to practise Tapasya at Pushkara Tirtha and reappear in Dvapara Yuga as Draupadi in Dvapara Yuga. Thus Vedavati was known as Trihayani, the root cause of destroying Evil Doers in three Yugas.

Devi Tulasi was the daughter of Dharmadvaja and she too turned out to be a Tapasvini, performing extremely severe sacrifices like meditation with 'Panchagni' or Fires on five sides of her body – on four directions and on top. Lord Brahma knew her desire of wedding Narayana Himself. He explained to her that she was fully aware that She was a 'Jatimara' (person having knowledge of previous birth), that she was Devi Tulsi Gopi in her previous birth as a maid of Radha desirous to have union with Krishna in a 'Rasakreeda' (dance performance) which was not liked by Radha who cursed her to quit but Krishna advised her to take a fresh birth as the daughter of Dharmadvaja as a Tapasvini. Brahma in turn explained to Tulsi that there was a Gopa (Cow boy) named Sudama who was of Krishna's 'Amsa' (a part Extension) – also a 'Jatimara' - as he too was cursed by Devi Radha to become a demon now called Sankhachooda. After marrying him, Lord Brahma said that she would eventually attain union with Krishna as the latter would curse Tulsi to become a Sacred Tree to be prayed to all over the world. Brahma blessed Tulasi to become a Siddha to secure a good husband and also taught to her Radha Mantra, Radha Kavacha, Radha Stora and the method of Radha Worship to conquer her confidence and in the long run she would secure Krishna Himself. At the same time, Sankhachooda too got enamoured of Tulsi and, with the blessings of Lord Brahma, married her in Gandharva style. But as the Demon tormented Devas and drove them away from their seats, they went in a deputation to Brahma and further on to Sankara who approached Maha Vishnu. But the latter explained that in his earlier birth the demon was Krishna's Rasa Parishad Chief Attendant Sudama who was cursed by Devi Radha to become a Danava and as a Jatimara, he knew he had the Narayana Kavacha to protect himself, but Mahesvara could terminate him by a 'Sula' weapon that would be provided by Himself (Vishnu) and that He also would spoil the chastity of the demon's wife Tulsi, who too was a Gopi and again a Jatimari. Thus planned Maha Vishnu and asked Devas to get ready for the Deva-Danava War. Mahesvara pitched His huge tent on the banks of River Chandrabhaga, sent an Emissary, Chitraratha, who was taken aback by the strength of the Danava King's mammoth army of three koti (Crore) warriors surrounding the Danava King and another seven crore moving outside. The Emissary cautioned the Demon that besides Devas, Brahma and Maha Deva under the commandership of Skanda would all be on battle and the demon's army would only be fodder to the killing sprees of the Devas side of the battle, more so since Vishnu Himself gifted a powerful 'Sula' to Mahesha to terminate the Danava King.; as such it still would not be too late for the Danavas to withdraw to Patala. But the Demon King invited all the force to fight the next morning itself! In the hundred year long battle that followed, Devas and Danavas fought close- tooth to tooth and nail to nail; Mahendra pitted against Vrishaparva, Bhaskara to Viprachitti, Agni to Gokarna, Kubera to Kalakeya, Visvakarma to Maya, Yama to Samhara, Varuna to Vikumka, Budha to Dhritaprishta, Sani and Raktaksha, Eleven Rudras to Eleven Bhayankaras and so on. The Danava King utilised a Shakti Arrow which made Kartika senseless and Bhadra Kali made such a roar which frightened thousands Danavas to death. Brahma used Brahmastra which proved ineffective. Siva desired to use

‘Pasupathastra’, but a Brahmana appeared and stopped its usage since that would destroy the whole world. Then the Brahmana (Maha Vishnu Himself) spread His Vishnu Maya and influenced Sankhachooda to part with his Narayana Kavacha and finally terminated the Danava King by the ‘Sula’ gifted by Narayana to Mahesvara. Meanwhile Vishnu Maya was spread again and Devi Tulasi was made to believe that the Danava King Sankachooda won the battle and Maha Vishnu assuming the form of the King was cheated as Tulsi welcomed him and got her chastity spoilt simultaneously. But she got suspicious in their union and being afraid of a curse from her, revealed Himself. She was overcome by grief as her beloved husband lost his life and worse still her chastity was affected. Thus Tulsi cursed Vishnu to turn as a stone.

Maha Vishnu consoled her and asked her to assume an extra-terrestrial form as His wife, as the entire drama was enacted by Himself and assured her that she would be His better half in Vaikuntha besides Maha Lakshmi and as a Tulsi Tree would bestow boons to her devotees in the entire Universe. Whatever happiness that He would receive from the ‘Abhisheka’ (Mantra filled bathing) of Himself thousand times would be bestowed by offering a single leaf of Tulasi; that the benefit of giving away as offerings of several cows would be equated to an offer of a Tulsi leaf; if a dying person is administered a Tulsi leaf, [preferably with Ganges Water], his access to heavens is assured; whoever drinks Tulasi leaf water daily gets the benefit of performing horse sacrifices; Plucked Tulasi leaf kept in the night in a house wards off evil spirits and bad dreams; decorating Tulasi leaves on a Deity is propitious and gifting items along with the leaves is considered as auspicious to the donor and the receiver alike. Contrarily, plucking Tulasi leaves in the nights, particularly on a full Moon or the twelfth day of a month (Pournami or Dvadasi), or twilight timings, mid-days, while applying oil, during impure days of ‘Asuchi’, or while donning dresses is strictly prohibited as it attracts great sins. Worship to Tulasi (Holi Basil) done with pure body and heart in a formal manner would certainly bring about excellent peace of mind and spiritual contentment. The every place of Her puja is a Brindavan or a Garden of several plants / trees. She is worshipped by the Eight names as Brinda, Brindavani, Visvapujita, Visvapavani, Tulasi, Pushpasara, Nandani and Krishnajivani. She is worshipped by the ten worded Seed Mantra: *Srim Hrim Aim Kleem Brindavanai Svaha*.

As regards Tulasi’s curse to Vishnu to turn as a stone, the Lord consented to become a Stone or ‘Salagram’ worthy of performing worship as a Symbol of Vishnu and such special Stones are available on the banks of River Gandaki, whose Principal Deity is Tulasi Herself. Such Stones are natural formations of various sizes, forms, convolutions and ‘Chakras’ (circular formations), embodying armoury or ornaments of the Lord and are kept at Puja Mandirs (Worship Places) of individual households for Daily and Regular Pujas or at Public Places of Devotion. But care must be taken that the Salagram, Conchshell and Tulasi leaves are placed and worshipped all together, lest separation of any of the three items is warned is considered as a great blunder, as it might yield negative results. Normally males perform the Salagrama Puja. Further, the Pujas ought to be performed with all purity and devotion with Vedic Mantras by way of milk ‘Abhishekas’, flowers, Tulsi leaves, lighting, Naivedyas and such other ‘Sevas’ (services). Since the Pujas are to be done daily and there should not be failures on that count, and if necessary, the person(s) could be different, but the Puja be performed on a regular basis. This is also detailed in the Purana of Devi Bhagavata.

Effects of Daily Worship of Tulasi

Maharshi Veda Vyasa enlightened a congregation of Sages that Bhagavan Maha Deva described the benefits of Tulasi Tree (Holi Basil) to Kartikeya as it is highly auspicious, desire-fulfilling, very dear to Bhagavan Vishnu and hence called ‘Vaishnavi’; in fact, Vishnu considers Tulasi on par with even Lakshmi and far above the ranking of all other leaves and flowers. Daily worship to Bhagavan Vishnu with Tulasi leaves is considered as effective and propitious than even Daana, Homa, Yagnya and Vratas.

Needless to say that Tulasi Puja to Bhagavan Vishnu bestows brightness, happiness, luxury items, fame, Lakshmi, noble ancestry, good wife and children, wealth, health, 'Gyan', Vigyan, Veda and Vedanga , Shastra, Purana, Tantra and Samhitas.

Keeping a Tulasi Garden nearby is as effective and easy as keeping Lord Shri Krishna Himself and thus retaining laksh, Brahma and all other Devas. Thus a short-cut method is worshipping Tulasi to be able to keep all the Deities happy. As a corollary, Pretahs, Piscachas, Kushmandas, Brahma rakshasas, Bhutas and Rakshasas are nowhere in the vicinity and so would be far away from sins, fears, diseases and wants. In Kali Yuga, one effective way is to perform Tulasi Puja, Kirtana, Dhyana, Dharana and other means of worship to dry out and burn off all kinds of Sins and consolidate the path of reaching Swarga and Moksha.

Bhagavan Shankara stated:***Pujaney kirtaney dhyaney ropaney dharaney Kalou, Tulasi dahatey paapam Swarga moksham dadaaticha/ Upadesham dadeydasyaah swayamaacharatey punah, sa yaati Paramam Staanam Madhavasya nicketanam***/Lord Vishnu said that in all those tasks which were dear to him like Yagnas, Vratas etc. worship with even with one Tulasi leaf enhances the value of such tasks. Further, those who worship Tulasi attain the same fruits of worshipping Gurus, Brahmanas, Devatas and Tirthasi. If one retains a leaf of Tulasi while dying has a path leading upwards to heavens. Those who worship Tulasi regularly and sincerely would not have to take 'Punarjanma' (another birth)! Mere 'Namocchharana' or taking the name of Tulasi frightens Asuras but pleases Vishnu immensely; blessed are those in Kali Yuga who perform puja of 'Shaligramas' or Replicas of Maha Vishnu with Tulasi. What could Yama Raja say to Tulasi :

Tulasyamrita janmaasi sadaa twam Keshava Priyey! Keshavaartha chinomi twaam Varadaa bhava shobhaney/ Twadanga sambhavairnityam pujayaami yathaa Harim, Tatha kuru Pavitrangam Kalou mala vinaashini/Tulasi! You are born from Amrita and are the beloved of Keshava always. I select excellent leaves from your Tree for the puja of Bhagavan. Do become the provider of boons from this Puja and enable it in a manner that it pleases Bhagavan Keshava. Mother Tulasi! Only you could clean up the mess of Kali Yug and provide a sense of direction to absolve me of my sins). [Tulasi leaves yield a volatile oil called eugenol possessing anti bacterial properties which are anti- microbial, anti-inflammatory and expectorant promoting maximum respiratory assistance].

Tulasi Puja is forbidden in Ganesha Pujas as Devi Tulasi was infatuated with Ganesha who cursed her

It is against background that Tulasi Leaves are forbidden in Ganesha Puja. Though Tulsi is considered very auspicious but due to involvement of curse it is prohibited to use tulsi leaves at the time of pooja; one might notice in the course of the Eka Vimshati or 21 leaf pujas of Ganesha puja just one tulasi leaf is offered to Ganesha as an exception. Once Lord Ganesha was engaged in deep meditation. As Ganesha was doing pooja, there came Tulsi. The moment she saw Ganesha, she fell in love with him and requested him to take her as his wife. But Lord Ganesha had turned down the offer but on her continued pestering cursed her that she would marry a demon. After the curse Ganesha took pity on Tulasi and blessed her to be Lord Vishnu's beloved.

Ganesha Vrata Vidhana, be it on Bhadra pada Chaturthi or Sankata Chatuthi or otherwise, the 'Eka vimshati Patra Puja' avoids Tulasi Puja except as of tokenism!

But the glory of Tulasi Puja remains for ever!

Bhagwad Gita – A summary of 18 Chapters

As Bhagavan Vishnu was in ‘Yoga Nidra’(Yogic Slumber) on Sesha Nag in the midst of Ksheera Sagara (Ocean of Milk) stating that he was meditating Bhagavan Maheswara, Devi Maha Lakshmi wondered as to why did Vishnu assert that he was Paramatma himself and none else! Did he not ask Arjuna in no uncertain terms that he should fight without hesitation and dedicate all actions and results to Him, since He was the Cause, the Causation and the Causer! Fully endorsing what Devi Lakshmi said, Bhagavan defined that out of the Eighteen ‘Adhyayas’ (Chapters) of Bhagavad Gita, five Adhyayas constituted five of his Faces, ten Adhyayas were his ten hands, one Adhyaya was his belly and two were his two feet. He further gave the illustration of Susharma and said that intelligent people like him who read an Adhyaya of Gita a day or half of it or a quarter, or atleast a stanza, would certainly secure Mukti.

Susharma was no doubt a Brahmana by birth but was a chronic sinner; he did neither dhyana nor japa, neither homa nor ‘Atithi Satkar’ or Puja of Guests; on the contrary he was a drunkard, meat eater and a regular womanizer. One day he died of a snake bite. After experiencing retribution in various ‘Narakas’, he was born as a bull and served under an oil-extractor for seven to eight years and died out of hard work and exhaustion. A few persons contributed prayers for the animal’s salvation and among them was a ‘veshya’ (prostitute) who donated some ‘Punya’ on her account. In the rebirth the bull became a pious Brahmana in the same village as a ‘Jyatismara’ with the gift of memory of the past birth. He met the Veshya and enquired as to which Punya that she donated at the death of the bull. She said that she bought a parrot which used to mutter some lines of a stanza always although she did not guess what was it but surely that muttering had highly soothing effect. The Brahmana asked the Parrot and the latter said that she was earlier in an Ashram in a cage where a Rishi was teaching something to his disciples and it learnt it but a hunter stole the bird and sold to the Veshya. The Rishi conveyed that he taught the **First Chapter of Gita!** That was the Punya which the Veshya acquired from the parrot’s muttering that was learnt at the Ashram. Such was the Mahtmya of the First Chapter.



Bhagavan Vishnu then explained to Devi Lakshmi the significance of the **Second Chapter of Gita**. A Veda Pandit Deva Sharma of Purandarapura in Dakshina Bharat was anxious to learn and attain 'Tatwa Gyan' and came across a visiting Mahatma about his desire. The Mahatma directed Deva Sharma to a Goat Keeper called Mitravan at Sowpur in a forest seated on a rock on the banks of a river bed nearby. Mitravan narrated one of his experiences about a tiger approaching a helpless goat; all other goats fled away but this one waited as though it welcomed the tiger to eat him up. The tiger hesitated and asked the goat as to why he had the courage to stand firmly but did not run. The goat questioned as to why the tiger did not pounce on her! The tiger replied that her hunger subsided suddenly. Both the tiger and the goat met a Mahatma in the forest and he asked them to approach a Vanara Raja (Monkey). The Vanara Raja replied that there was a highly religious Brahmana named Sukarma who meditated in a Shiva Temple not far off for long time. When Sukarma was asked, he said that one Maha Purush appeared in the Temple and Sukarma requested him to teach him Tatwa Gyan. The Maha Purush asked Sukarma to read an inscription on a rock nearby the Temple from the Second Chapter of Gita emphasizing the importance of 'Abhyasa' or Practice.

Having said this, the Maha Purush disappeared. The Second Chapter states: *Karmaneyyaadhi kaarastey maa phaleshu kadaachana, maa karmaphala heturbhuh maa tey sangostva karmani*/(Partha! You have freedom only to perform your duty. The rest is not relevant to you. But You should perform the ‘Karma’ without expecting the fruits). Bhagavan defined a Tatva Gyani as follows: *Dukhsheshvanu dvignamanaah Sukheshu vigataspruhah, Veeta raga bhayakrodhah Sthidheermuniru chyatey* (A Stitha-Pragna or a Tatva Gyani is he who is least disturbed when there is unhappiness and difficulty and gets elated when there are reasons to be delighted; if one could practise equanimity without desire, fear or anger, that only is the feature of Tatva Gyan (Sthita Pragnyatwa). Thus the chain of Deva Sharma-the Mahatma-Mitranvan the Goat Keeper-the Tiger and the Goat-the Vanara Raja-Sukarma and the Maha Purush revealed the Message of Tatva Gyan which simply stated that one should practice one’s own duty and Tatva Gyan would unfold itself!

Describing the Mahatmya of the **Third Chapter of Gita titled Karma Yoga**, Bhagavan cited the example of a Brahmana named Jada who practiced the profession of a ‘Vaishya’ or of business. He amassed wealth from this line but became a victim of vices. He desired to earn more and travelled to a far off city. On way he halted for the night and slept off under a tree in a village. A gang of robbers looted and killed him and he turned to be a ‘Pretaatma’ (goblin) and resided on the same tree. Jada’s son was a dutiful Brahmana and followed the duties of a Brahmana. As he was concerned of his father’s whereabouts, the son asked a friend of his father and he conveyed that the latter was looted and killed on way in a village under a tree. Being highly saddened by the news, he proceeded to Varanasi to perform the obsequies of his father and coincidentally halted under the tree of the same village where his father also halted for an overnight stay and got killed by the gang of robbers. Before he desired to sleep, the son recited the Third Chapter of Gita; his father who was also on the same tree as a Preta appeared before the son, and while boarding an air-plane to Vaikuntha since he was redeemed as a result of the recital of the Third Chapter of Gita, he asked his brothers also to revert to the Brahmana Varna at once and observe the duties concerned and more importantly recite the Third Chapter. Since Jada’s son was also visiting Varanasi anyway as planned by him, the son should invoke the forefathers of the Vamsa by reciting the Karma Yoga or the Third Chapter of Gita so that they too would realize Salvation. The principal message of the Third Chapter stressed: *Shreyan swadharmo vigunah pardharmatswanushthaat, Swadharmey nidhanam shreyah Para Dharmo bhayaapah* (Even if one feels that the ‘Dharma’ or duty of somebody else’s is attractive, one must observe one’s own Dharma since ‘Para Dharma’ or Dharma of others is worse than death). Another significant instruction given by Krishna to Arjuna in this Chapter stated: *Mayi sarvaani karmaani sanyasyadhyatma chetasa, niraaseermamo bhutwa yudhyasya vigata jwarah* (Partha! I create all actions and hence perform your duty targetting me and leaving results to me and fight). As the son followed his father’s instruction in letter and spirit and all the forefathers flew to Vaikuntha by air-planes, Yama Dharma Raja was concerned that several ancestors were leaving away to Vaikuntha from Narakas as per the directive of Vishnu dootas and thus double-checked from Lord Vishnu and the latter endorsed the instructions. As Yama Raja enquired of Vishnu whether there were further instructions to him, the latter replied that he should better perform Yama Raja’s own Swadharma!

Bhagavan Vishnu narrated to Devi Lakshmi the illustration of Mahatma Bharat worshipping at Vishwanatha Temple of Varanasi on the banks of Ganga, while signifying the Mahatmya of the **Fourth Chapter** of Gita- Jnaana Yoga. One day, he desired to rest under the shade of two bilva trees which were located side by side with a gap of five-six feet. Bharat kept his head at the bottom of one bilva and placed his feet at the bottom of another tree and recited the Fourth Chapter and after a while left for his home. Even as he was leaving, he found that the trees were fast drying up and when he reached home he found two ‘Kanyas’ (young girls) at his house. The Kanyas thanked Bharat profusely and said that were relieved of a curse by a Tapasvi named Satyatapa that they received at a curse at a Kshetra called ‘Chhinna Paapa’ (Relieved of Sins) on the banks of River Godavari. The two Kanyas were two ‘Apsaras’ bathing half nude seeking to entice the Tapasvi at the behest of Lord Indra since the latter felt a threat to his Throne at

Swarga, whereas the Tapasvi's desire was to attain 'Jeevan Mukti' or Mukti while he was alive; hence the curse that the Apsaras should turn as trees at Varanasi on the banks of Ganga. When the Apsaras pleaded for mercy, the Tapasvi agreed to get their original forms when a Mahatma called Bharat would one day rest under the trees reciting the contents of Jnana Yoga in the Fourth Chapter of Gita. The redeemed Apsaras took up to the regular recitation of the Fourth Chapter of Gita. Incidentally, it was in this this Adhyaya titled 'Jnaana Yoga' that Lord Krishna declared: *Yadaa yadaahi Dharmasya glaanir bhavat Bharata! Abhyuddhhaana madharmasya sadaatmaanam srijaamyaham/ Paritraanaaya Saadhunaam vinashaya cha dushkirtman, Dharma Samsthaapanaarthaaya Samshavami Yuge Yuge* (Arjuna! As and when Dharma is affected adversely and Adharma prevails, I shall take the 'Avataras' (incarnation) to vindicate the cause of the Virtuous and destroy the Forces of the Evil!)

Underlining the magnitude of the **Fifth Chapter** of Bhagavad Gita, Lord Vishnu told Lakshmi example of a Brahmana named Pingala of Madra Desha, ignoring his responsibilities as a Brahmana but built up expertise in music and dance and eventually achieved reputation in the profession as also proximity to the King as his favourite. He married a woman of low caste called Pingali alias Aruna. One night, being jealous of Pinala, Aruna killed him in his sleep. He suffered in Narakas and was born eventually as a vulture and afer her death due to pox, Aruna was reborn as a parrot. Being aware of the memory of previous life, the vulture saw the parrot and tore it apart as the latter was dropped in a pond. A hunter spread a net and the vulture was entangled and died as he threw the vulture's body too fell in the same water body as the parrot fell. Suprisingly, both the birds achieved salvation! They asked Yama Dharma Raja as to what was the reason for both the sinners of equal guilt to head for Swarga since Pingala left the duties of a Brahmana and had loose morals while Aruna killed Pingala! Dharma Raja explained that their dead bodies fell in the same water body leading to a River on the banks of which was a pious Brahmana always reciting the Fifth Chapter of Karma Sanyasa Yoga in Gita!

Bhagavan Vishnu narrated to Devi Lakshmi the value of **Sixth Chapter** of Gita entitled Jnana Yoga and described the virtue, fame and high charitable disposition of the King Janashruti. Even Devas made flying trips as 'Hamsas' (Swans) to his Kingdom on the banks of River Godavari with Pratishtanapuri as its Capital to appreciate the noble deeds being executed by the King. Once the King while strolling on the top of the Palace overheard the remarks of flying Hamsas that the King's greatness and virtue were nearing even those of Mahatma Reik's who was residing at Manikeswar on the top of Himalaya Mountains beyond the Kashmira Region. The King immediately decided to visit Manikeswara at the Temple of Bhagavan Chandrasekhara where Mahatma Reiki stayed. On way from the Pratishtanapuri, the King along with his big entourage passed through several important Tirthas and worshipped Kasi Vishwanath, Gadadhar at Gaya, Shri Krishna at Mathura near Kalindi (Yamuna) and on to Kashmirapuri where he stopped over at the Manikeshwara Temple of Bhagavan Shiva. At the main Dwara of the Temple, the King spotted a beggar-like Sadhu stationed on an empty cart under a big tree. The King's Sarathi (charioteer) introduced the King to the Mahatma who made kind enquiries about the various charities, constructon of temples, water bodies and public gardens as also Yagnas and Vratas that the King was responsible for. Then the King sought to donate several chariot-full of gifts of Dhana (money)- Dhanya (foodgrains), Cattle, Jewellery and clothes. The Mahatma became suddenly furious and shouted on the King in white anger: 'Arre Low Class fellow! You think you can buy me with these gifts? Has not somebody told you about me? Take these away and get lost!' The King was dazed at this sudden spurt of the Mahatma's rage and was afraid that he might not give a 'shaap' (curse) to him. The King profusely apologized and fell on his feet shivering with fear and shame. After the Mahatma cooled down, he conveyed to the King that he always recited the Sixth Chapter of Gita on 'Jnaana Yoga': *Yadaa hi nendriyaartheshu na karmaswanu- shajjetey/ Sarva sankalpa sanyaasee yogaarudhastha dochatey* (A Saadhaka or Yogi would become ripe only 'Indiras'-body parts of external and internal nature- and their desires are left out, Karmas or duties are too avoided subduing the feelings of the giver or the taker and the totality of the 'You' or 'I' is avoided then only one becomes a Yogi).

Somewhat on the lines of the Brahmana Jada in the Third Chapter earlier, Shankhakarna too followed the Vaishya profession, became extremely rich and desired to marry for the fourth time and proceeded to a neighbouring village. But on way, he was bitten by a serpent and died and was born again as a serpent. He came in the dreams of his sons as a serpent and conveyed that he did crores of cash and jewellery at such and such a shrub in the backyard of their home. Next morning, the brothers dug up at the location as per the dream, but a serpent appeared, desired to ascertain their identity and said that they should recite the **Seventh Chapter of Gita** titled Vigyan Yoga at once. To their utter surprise, the serpent took the form of their father, handed over huge reserve of gold and jewellery to the sons and boarded a Viman destined to Vishnu Loka. The sons were all virtuous, performed Yagnas, charities and such other noble tasks as digging up wells, water bodies and construction of choultries, rest houses etc. for public benefit. Most importantly however was the recitation of the Seventh Chapter of Gita and attained Vishnu Loka! The essence of this Chapter was stated by Bhagavan to Arjuna as follows: *Beejam mam Sarva bhutaanaam viddhi Parthah Sanatanam, buddhirbuddhimatamasmi Tejastejasvinamaham/ Balam balavataam chaham kamaraga vivarjitam, Dharmaa virudho bhuteshu kaamosmi Bharatarshabha/* (Partha! Do realize that the timeless seed responsible for germinating the entire Creation is me; I am the Intelligence to the intelligent; Radiance to the radiant, Physical Power to the powerful etc. I am also the desire and hatred; virtue to the virtuous, vice to the vicious and so on!).



About the 'Mahatyma' of the **Ashtama Adhyaya**, Lord Vishnu gave the example to Devi Lakshmi of Bhava Sharma who lived in Amardakapura in Dakshina Bharat. Being a Brahmana by birth, he married a 'Veshya' and was a meat-eater, wine drinker and a debauche. Once he and his wife were drunk dead and became huge 'Tada Vrikshas'(Palm Trees). Another Brahmana couple called Kushibal and Kumati were wrong examples of deceit, greed, and anger. Kushibal used to accept 'daanaas' of horses and 'Kaala Purusha Pratimas' and were also involved in base tantras. This couple died and turned out to be 'Brahma Rakshasas' and made the 'Tada Vrikshas' as their abode. Once a Vedavedya Brahmana came to rest under the trees, when the Rakshasa couple appeared and asked as to how they could get rid of their Rakshasatva and obtain 'Mukti'. The Brahmana said: 'Brahma Vidya's Upadesha' or teaching, 'Adhyatmika Tatva Vichara' or the Awareness of Inner Consciousness and Karma Vidhi Gyana or the Knowledge of performing Karmas / deeds are the three factors which could redeem them! Then the Brahma Rakshasi got confused and said: *Kim tat Brahma! Kim adhyantakam! Kim Karma!* (Who is this Brahma? What is this Adhyatma? And which is this Karma?) As soon as the Brahma Rakshasi muttered these words, a miracle happened and the Brahma Rakshasa couple attained 'Mukti' and so did the Palm Trees/ Bhava sharma couple! These were the opening lines of **the Eighth Chapter** of Bhagavad Gita entitled Akshara Brahma Yoga and hence the miracle! The further lines of the stanza stated: *Adhi Bhutam cha kim proktam Adhi Daivam ki muchyatey/* (What is Adhi Bhutam? What is Adhi Daivam?) To this question of Arjuna, Bhagavan Krishna's reply was: *Aksharam Brahma Param Swabhaavodhyaatma muchyatey, Bhuta bhaavodbhava karo virangah karma sanjnitah* (Arjuna! The Supreme and Indestructible Soul is Brahma; His nature is Adhyatmika, Adhi Bhautika and Adhi Daivika)!

The significance of the **Ninth Chapter of Gita** was explained by the instance of a goat being given as a sacrifice at a Yagnya by a Brahmana named Madhava who resided at Mahismati Nagar on the banks of River Narmada. The goat talked suddenly in raised human voice to the surprise of the 'Ritviks' performing the Yagna as also the audience and said that the Yagna was of no avail since it was certain that human beings would have to be born again, their old age and death were inevitable; the goat also said: 'Look at my fate; you are going to kill me now!' Then the onlookers enquired of the goat as to who was it in its earlier birth? The goat replied that he was a Brahmana who desired to perform a sacrifice of a goat kid to appease Devi Chandika, as his son was extremely ill; but Devi Chandika was furious to kill a goat kid to save a child and cursed the Brahmana to become a goat; thus said the goat to the Ritviks and others at the Yagna. It further narrated that in Kurukshetra, a King named Chandra Sharma gave a Kala Purusha Pratima as a 'daan' in connection with a Solar Eclipse and from the Pratima a Chandala couple surfaced about to devour both the King and the Brahmana but the Brahmana was quick in reciting the Ninth Chapter of Gita titled 'Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga' of Gita and the Chandala couple named 'Paapa' (Sin) and 'Ninda' (Blame) disappeared. Bhagavan in this Chapter says: *Ananyaschintanaamto maam ye janaah paryupaasatey, Tessaam nithyaabhi yuktaanaam yogakshemam vahaamyaham* (Those who always think and meditate of me always, I look after them and assure them of their welfare)! Eversince then, the King always recited and reflected of the contents of the Adhyaya and eventually The goat which narrated the incident of Chandra Sharma was released to freedom.

Bhagavan Shankara gave the example to Devi Parvati of Brahmana Dhirabuddhi residing in Kashipura who was an unparalleled 'Vedarupi'(the form of Vedas) who could readily vision 'Atma Tatva'; it was widely believed that Bhagavan Shankara always held on to Dhirabuddhi's hand, run along with him and care for him wherever the Brahmana moved with affection and consideration. What indeed was the kind of Tapa- Homa-Dhyana that Dhirabuddhi performed to deserve this unique treatment that Bhagavan took such concern about him! Once when Bhagavan sat on the mount of Kailash, one Hamsa (Swan) fell at His feet and narrated that it fell with a thud down while flying above in a Sarovar in Saurashtra; the usually white swan got blackened. The Swan told Bhagavan that a lotus shub with five beautiful flowers was

responsible for this incident; it said that as soon as it flew across the shrub it released sixty five bees when it actually fell and thus its form got black. The Lotus Shrub was in its third previous birth a Brahmana house wife called Sarojavadana, who no doubt was a Pativrata but was attracted too much to a Myna Bird in a cage in their home and was unmindful of her husband's callings as she was immersed in play with the bird; the husband got furious and cursed her to become a Myna bird. The cursed Myna was brought up by a Muni Kanya where the Muni regularly recited the 'Vibhuti Yoga Adhyaya' which was the **Tenth Chapter of Gita** and she learnt the contents fully; in her next birth, the Myna bird was born as an Apsara. Sage Durvasa was performing Tapasya on the banks of a Sarowara when the Apsara was bathing and out of fury, Sage Durvasa cursed the Apsara to become a Lotus shrub which was crossed by the Swan and became black in its form. Such was the power of Vibhuti Yoga (the Tenth Chapter) in which Lord Krishna told Arjuna that all kinds of 'Vibhutis'/ manifestations were his own like radiance, Shaktis, Virtue, Meditation, prosperity and victory. The Vibhutis would include the Swan crossing the lotus shrub was out of ignorance; Brahmani Sarojanavadana's attraction to the Mynah Bird; her husband's anger causing the creation of another Mynah; the cursed Mynah's learning of the 'Dashama Adhyaya' from the Muni; her becoming an Apsara, Sage Durva's curse out of anger crating a lotus shrub, Dhirabuddhi's Vision of Atma Tatva and Parameswara's great affection for Dhirabuddhi!

There would be thousands of instances that would signify the **Eleventh Chapter of Gita** regarding 'Vishva Sandarshana Yoga' and Bhagavan Shiva described only one to Devi Parvati. In Meghankara Nagar on the banks of River Pranita, there was a Parama Bhakta of Vasudeva called Sunandana Muni who undertook a Kshetra Yatra and on way had to halt over a night in a village. The Village head noboubt welcomed the Muni but said that there was a Rakshasa in the village with whom there was an understanding not to kill any villager but might eat up any stranger who did not specify by the Village head; but the Rakshasa ate up the Village head's son himself by mistake. Sunandana Muni asked the Village head as to how this Rakshasa came to this Village. The background was that there was a Brahmana in the village engaged in farming and used to look after his own farm inthe nights. A huge vulture chased a traveller staying overnight in the village near the Brahmana farmer's farm; as the traveller shouted for help since he fell in a ditch and could not pull up by himself, the Brahmana Farmer though could give a helping hand to save the traveller but did not bother. An infuriated Tapasvi cursed the Brahmana Farmer to become a Rakshasa in the village. When the latter begged for mercy, he diluted the cusre saying that if any Buddhiman recited the Eleventh Chapter of Gita and also explain its meaning to the Rakshasa then the latter could be liberated from the Rakshasatva. On knowing the background, Sunandana Muni recited and explained the contents of the Adhyaya to the Rakshasa and latter was liberated. Not only that, all the men and women who were killed by the Rakshasa including Village head boy son were lifted up by a Viman to Vishnu loka. The Chapter stated: *Anaadi madhyantamananta veeryam, Ananta baahum Sashi Surya netram/ Pasyaami twaam deepta hutaasa vaktram, Swatejasa vishwamidam tapantam/* (I am enabling you the Vision of the Supreme Form who has no beginning or end; whose might is unlimited; who has innumerable hands; who possesses Surya and Chandra as his eyes; who has a fiery and radiant face like Agni and who has a powerful and red-hot scorching Form.)



One of the major highlights of Bhagavad Gita was the **Bhakti Yoga (Twelfth Chapter)** explained by Shri Krishna to Arjuna as was narrated by Bhagavan Shiva to Devi Parvati. In Kolhapuri of south-west of Bharata Varsha, the most reputed Maha Lakshmi Temple had been fulfilling the desires of Bhaktas for centuries. A young Prince came into the Temple and prayed to her very earnestly as follows: ‘Mother! You are the Icchaa Shakti, Jnaana Shakti, and Kriya Shakti all rolled into One Swarupa; You are the Nishkala, Nirmoha, Nitya, Niraakaara, Niranjana, Antarahita, Antahkarana, and Niramaya; You are the Shatchakra Bhedini, Anahata Dhvani, Bindu, Naada and Kalaa; You are Para, Pashyanti, Madhya and Vaikhari; Brahmi, Vaishnavi, and Maaheswari, Vaaraahi, Naarasimhi, Iaindri, Kaumari, Chandika, Savitri and so on. Maha Lakshmi was pleased with the eulogies and asked the Prince of his desire. He told her that his father King Brihadhratha had half-done an Ashwamedha Yagna and died, that although the horse returned successfully after Vijaya Yatra (Victory Travel) it had suddenly disappeared and that his prayer

was to secure the missing horse and bless him to complete the Yagna. Bhagavati Lakshmi directed the Prince to approach Siddha Samadhi Muni at the entrance of the Temple and the needful would be done. Siddha Samadhi was approached and the Prince was astonished to vision a few Devatas responsible for the theft of the Yagnashwa at the behest of Indra! He pulled them up and commanded that the horse should be in its original position at once. The Prince was so impressed that he was emboldened to request the Siddha Samadhi to revive his dead father since his body was still in oil at the Yagnashala. The Muni smiled and asked the Prince to take him to the Yagnashaala. Having reached there, the Muni sprinkled ‘Mantrajal’ and the King emerged afresh from the oil and completed the Yagna successfully. When asked as to how the Muni could miracles to reprimand Devatas to secure the missing horse and also revive the King to life, the Muni’s cool reply was that the powers attained was due to the constant recitation and dedication to the Bhakti Yoga (Twelfth Chapter) of Bhagavad Gita alone and nothing else! The Sacred Book states: *Yo na hrushyati na dveshti na shochati na kaamkshati, Shubhaashubha paritya - gee bhakti maanyassa me priyah/* (A devotee who is free from likings and dislikings as also from happiness and unhappiness, and who dedicates all my deeds to me totally is my favourite); *Etu Dharmya amritamidam yathoktam paryupaasatey, Shraddhadhaana matparaah bhaktaastheva mey priyah/*(Those devotees who keep unreserved faith in me and observe Dharma as I prescribe are my most beloved ones).

Describing the Mahatmya of the **Thirteenth Chapter** of Gita titled ‘Kshetra Kshetragna Yoga’, Maha Deva told Devi Parvati that on the banks of River Tungabhadra in the Southern part of Bharata Varsha, there was a popular Kshetra called Harihara Nagar where Vedic Brahmana Hari Dikshith lived. His wife named Kuvaacha was however a characterless slut. Looking for a male companion one night, she treaded into a forest and faced a tiger. The tiger felt that if the woman was of morality then she would not kill her but otherwise she certainly would. As the tiger killed the woman, she landed in several Narakas like Rourava and was reborn as a Chandalini. As she grew, she became a victim of diseases and reached a Temple of Jambhaka Devi where a Brahmana always recited the thirteenth chapter of Gita; the purport of the Adhyaya was to distinguish the Kshetra and Kshetragna. Steeped into the world of vice, the soul of Kuvaacha had in the past gone through Narakas as an iron rod went through white heat. Also as a Chandalini with diseases in the current life, she underwent difficult times due to diseases and continued ill-health; thus she realized Kshetra Gyana from Devi Jambhaka Temple when the Brahmana explained the meaning of the Chapter verse by verse and she finally reached Vishnu dhama! *Idam Shareeram Kounteyah Kshetramityabhi dheeyatey, Etadyo vethhi tam praahuhu Kshetragna iti tadvidah/* (Kounteya! This body is known as the Kshetra; by inference, those who realize this truth that if one does honest effort, the Kshetra could lead to ‘Ishvara Praapti’). *Kshetragnam chaapi mam viddhi Sarva kshetreshu Bharata! Kshetra Kshetragna yorjnaanam yatthad jnaanammam mama/* (Arjuna! Do realize that I am the Kshetragna; the real Jnaana is the awareness of the Kshetra and Kshetragna)!

The **Fourteenth Chapter of Gita- Gunatraya Yoga**-highlighted the ‘Bhava bandhana Vimochana’ (Relief from the shackles of Samsara) and gave the illustration of the King of Simhala Dwipa viz. Vikrama Betala, who went on a hunting spree on horses showing the way in a forest chasing a few hares. The hares crossed a breach which the dogs could not cross easily and there was a peaceful Ashram of Muni Vatsa who along with his disciples always recited the ‘Gunatraya Vibhaga Yoga’ of Gita. One of the disciples of the Muni cleaned up his feet with water before entering the Prayer Hall of the Ashram where the recitation was practiced. The sand and water mix became muddy and the hares fell in the slush; as soon as the hares fell in the slush, they were lifted by a Vimana bound for Vishnuloka thanks to the Mahatmya of the recitation of the Adhyaya. Meanwhile the chasing dogs arrived and having fallen in the slush they too were airlifted in the form of Gandharvas. The King Vikrama reached the Ashram and the Prayer Hall and asked the Muni for the reason that the hares and horses went to higher lokas. The Muni explained that there was a Brahmana called Keshava and his wife Vilobhana were both vily; the Brahmana killed the wife and was turned as dogs and the wife was born as hares. Both of these thus were beneficiaries of the Recitation of the Fourteenth Chapter of Gita. The message of the Adhyaya was given

by Krishna as follows: *Gunaanetaanateetya treen dehi deha samudbhavaan, Janmamrityu jaraa dukkhaihi vimuktomrita masnutey/* (Once the three gunas of Satva, Rajasa and Tamasa which are responsible for the ration of old age and death, then the Beings break away from the chains of Samsara and attain Salvation.). *Maam cha yopyabhichaarena Bhakti yogena sevatey, sa gunaan Smateethyaitaan Brahma bhuyaya kalpatey/* (He who worships me with unreserved devotion would cross the barriers of the three Gunaas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas and would become eligible to step into the 'Parama Brahma Sthiti' or Highest Salvation!)

The Fifteenth Chapter titled Purushottama Prapti Yoga refers to two distinct Beings named Kshara and Akshara. One is who enjoys life as it is faced with pleasures of life; his prepared for good and bad experiences and carries on daily duties and obligations in the surroundings that he lives within. The life that he leads in the 'samsara' is compared to a gigantic Ashvattha Tree with sprawling branches, its drooping leaves, and deep rooted and ever expanding foundation. *Urthvamuulamaddhasshaakham ashvattham praahuravyayam, cchandaamsi yasya varnaani yantam veda sa vedavit/* On the other hand Akshara is totally indifferent to what the surrounding 'samsara' and its very many and endless distractions and keeping aloof with introspection of what is beyond life and the heavy mix of pleasures and pains that it offers seeks to the Truth of Life beyond. Thus this chapter depicts what is Kshara and Akshara and the secret which is Purushottama!

Maha Deva cited the example to Devi Parvati of an arrogant and uncontrollable elephant named Arimardan belonging to King Khangabahu of Saurashtra in Gujarat, while signifying the **Sixteenth Chapter of Gita** titled 'Daivasura Sampad Vibhaga Yoga'. A number of elephant tamers from the neighbouring Kingdoms landed to control Arimardana, not only to secure hefty Prizes of high value but also name and fame but to no avail. Heavy iron rods, piercing tridents and such other weapons were used but despite streams of blood flowing from the body, the animal was getting further wilder. One Brahmana arrived at the scene and touched the elephant with affection and everybody was taken aback since it was not even allowing touching it earlier. Queried as to how the miracle happened, the Brahmana that he attained Siddhis due to the relentless recital of the Sixteenth Chapter of Gita. The King then ordered that the elephant be freed and move about freely on the streets of the Nagar and even children used to play with it for fun! *Dambho darpohi maanascha krodhatparaarushya meyvacha, Agnaanam chabhi jaatasya Partha! Sampadaaasurim/* (Partha! Ignorance, arrogance, pretentiousness, egotism, anger and self-image are all natural phenomena of Asuras). *Trividham narakasyedam dwaaram naasana maatmanah, Kaamah krodhastatha lobhah tasmadetatrayam tyajet/* (The three enemies of human beings viz. Kama (desire), Krodha (fury) and Lobha (avarice) are the destroyers of one's own Soul and are the Entry Points of Naraka; that is why the intelligent persons avoid these). The ignorance of the elephant misdirected him and taming was accomplished by affection, peacefulness, humility and character.

The Seventeenth Chapter of Bhagavad Gita viz. Shraddhatraya Vaibhava Yoga was illustrated by the Story of King Khangabahu of Simhala Dwipa, his servant Dussahana and their elephant. Once Dussahana drove the elephant in a race, made it run too fast by poking it by an 'Ankusha' and out of annoyance the animal dropped Dussahana dead. The servant in his next birth was born as an elephant and was born in the same Royal Court. The new elephant (Dusshahana) was gifted by the King to a Poet who in turn sold it to the King of Malwa for a good price. But on reaching Malwa, the elephant took suddenly ill and died without food and water. Many experts treated the elephant but to no avail. Medicines, charities and prayers did not help but finally a Brahmana recited the Seventeenth Chapter of Gita and the elephant got recovered and slowly stood up only to collapse and die. The Brahmana who recited the Chapter explained that the dead elephant in his earlier birth he was servant Dussahana and as a result of the holy recitation he attained Moksha. King of Malwa continued the reading of the Seventeenth Chapter and attained Sayujya there after. *Satvaanu rupa sarvaswa shraddhaa bhavati Bharata, Shraddha mayoyam purusho*

yoyacchhadrassa evam sah/ (Arjuna! The features and ways of life are normally shaped in every human being by his own 'swabhava' or personal traits).

The **Eighteenth and last Chapter of Gita** named Moksha Sanyasa Yoga contained the quintessence of Vedas and Shastras signifying the termination of Samsara Bandha or the shackles of Life. It is the destroyer of 'Arishadvargas' of Kama, Krodha, Moha, Mada, Lobha and Matsarya; the final goal of Siddha Purushas; the Rest-Home of Indra and Devas; and the High Point of Entertainment of Sanaka, Sandanda, Sanatana and Sanat Kumaras. Sincere recitation of this Grand and Concluding Chapter of Gita constitutes sure steps forward to Moksha or complete break-away from the endless cycle of life! When Lord Indra was enjoying a dance and music programme of Rambha and other Deva Kanyas, a group of 'Vishnu dootas' arrived in Swarga and announced the arrival of a new Indra soon! Indra wondered whether the incumbent Indra performed Hundred Yagnas successfully; constructed lakhs of water bodies; planted crores of trees for the joy of the travelers; organized countless 'Anna daanas' and charities etc. like he did. He reached Bhagavan Vishnu lying in 'Yoga Nidra' on 'Ksheera Sagara' (the Ocean of Milk) and asked him in an agitated tone as to why his 'Indratva' was at stake! Smilingly, Lord Vishnu replied that the Indra-Elect was a consistent reciter of the Eighteenth Chapter of Gita and that he too could retain his position by performing the same. Indra visited the Kalikagram on the banks of River Godavari by taking the form of a Brahmana and having been so impressed by what he observed there, felt that the position of Indra was none too significant to that of Indra-elect but surely deserved Vishnu Sayujya! Who ever heard or recited even the Mahatmya of Bhagavad Gita would be entitled to 'Yagna Phala' or the Fruits of Performing Yagna.

The Supreme Message of the Final Chapter-and indeed of entire Gita-is summed up as: *Sarva Karmanyapi sadaa kurvaano madvyapaashrayah, Matprasaadaadavaapnoti Shasvatam Padamavyayam/* (Do accomplish the everlasting and indestructible 'Parama pada' by performing the needful 'Karmas' and keeping complete faith in the Everlastingness!

Panchikarana

There is an interesting process of **Panchikarana** described by Paingala Maharshi a true disciple of Maharshi Yagyavalkya the originator of the Taittiriya branch of Yajurveda as learnt from Surya Bhagavan himself!

‘Jagadsrashta’ having realised that at the very beginning, there was nothing except ‘tamas’ or inactivity, inertia and total sluggishness which might be as well be termed as a state of ‘sat-chit-ananda’. Then He initiated the srishti of subtle elements which eventually took to forms and the gross elements. Now, dividing each of the gross elements- viz. from Aakasha to Vaayu to Agni to Water to Bhumi which were eventually named as the Pancha Maha Bhutas of ‘Prithivi- Aapas- Tejas- Vaayu and Aakaasha’ – is termed as ‘**Panchikarana**’. The process involves each of the five elements splitting into two halves and one half of each further spilling into four parts. Thus we have space splitting into two and one of the halves further splitting into four parts. Like that each of the elements undergoes divisions. The four of one-eighth parts are now distributed to other elements. Thus air, fire, water and earth each of them get one eighth of Aakasha. Similarly the other elements get distributed giving again one full for each of the units. Thus Akasha retains half of its own and one -eighth of other Elements. This process is called Panchikaranam or grossification of the five of the Elements in their subtle or fundamental nature. In other words, division of each of the Elements by two equal parts and further into four equal sub parts with each of the other four elements and so on and such ‘quintipli -cation process’ is known as ‘**Panchikarana**’ or a systematic admixture of all the Pancha Bhutas into a warp-weft process of each formation of weaving a cloth!

Sa pancha bhutaanaam rajomsham chaturtha kritvaa bhaaga trayaat pancha vrityaatmakam praanam asrajat/ Sa tehaam turya bhagena karmendriyaani asrajat/

As the inherently interactive feature of the Panch Bhutas/ Five Universal Elements carry out the five fold actions, the principle of life becomes responsible for organ oriented actions of its existence. Thus the characteristic ‘**tamas’ leads to ‘rajas’**. On this analogy of ‘sthaanutva’ or inertia or inactivity which is the characteristic of ‘tamas’, activity or ‘rajasatva’ is energised. The Pancha Bhutas on the principle of ‘Panchikarana’ turn into four parts. In the process, three parts thereof of the four parts, **Praanam** or the life energy, gets initiated. This vital energy evolves itself into **Panchaendriyas** comprising further into a) Pancha Jnanendriyas viz. Ghrana-Rasa- Chakshu-Shrotra-Twak or smell, taste, see, hear and touch b) Pancha Karmendriyas viz. nose-tongue- eyes- ears- skin respectively and c) Pancha Tanmatras: Light, sound, taste, smell and consciousness. Thus the Virat Purusha in the process of Panchikarana, the fourth part facilitates the appearance of organs and action. Panchakaas constitute the chain like of **Pancha Brahmas**: Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Ishana, Sada Shiva- **Pancha Lingas**: Ekamreshwara at Kanchi-Bhu Linga; Jambukeashwar Linga-Aapas or Water Linga; Tiruvannamalai -Tejas or Fire Linga; Kalahasti: Vayu Linga; Chidambaram: Akasha Linga Representing the Pancha Bhutas or the Five Elements of Prithivi (Earth), Aapas (Water), Tejas (Radiance), Vayu (Air) and Akasha (Sky)- **Pancha Koshas**: or Five Sheaths of Human Body called Annamaya (Physical Energy), Praanamaya (Vital Energy), Manomaya (Mental Faculty), Vigyanamaya (Buddhi or Sharpness of Discrimination) and Ananda maya (Bliss)- **Panchangas** signify the following aspects comprehensively viz. Tithi, Vaara, Nakshatra, Yoga, Karana- **Panchagnis** are Garhyapatya Agni for cooking in homes-Aavahaniya to invoke Surya Deva- Dakshinagni or Atmospheric Agni in the form of Lightnings or that which is invoked in Dakshina disha, Saabya and Avaastya for Vedic Purposes- **Pancha Shikhas** or the five tufts on the top of the head ie is the Place of the Cerebral Nucleus (Sahasrara) representing intellect, memory, farsightedness, duty and knowledge- **Pancha Naadaas**: Naada or what caused the Union of Purusha and Prakriti; Naada variations are: the Panchamaya Naada or the Source of Subtle Sound, Sukshmamayi Naada or the Minutest Sound,

Pashyanti Naada or the Perceptible Inner Sound or Voice, Medhyamayi or the Intellectual Sound and Vaikhari or the Articulated Sound; again Naada encompasses Five Features viz. Samanyaya or Togetherness of Prakriti and Purusha-Maya and Reality, Sambandha or relationship, Kshobaka or Inducer / Activator; and Kshobhya or the Activated and Kshobana or the Activity or the nion referred to earlier. In brief, Naada is the resultant of Connection of Inducement, Exciter, Excited and Union – **Pancha Vaktra Shiva** or the Representation of Five Faces of Shiva : Aghora looking Southwards, Ishaana looking North East, Tat Purusha visioning East, Vamadeva who is North-Faced and Sadyojata facing the West.

Sadyojaata represents Shrishti Shakti or of Creation, Vama Deva represents Sthiti Shakti or of Sustenance, Aghora represents Samhara Shakti or of dissolution, Tatpurusha represents Tirodhana Shakti or the power of Concealment and ‘punah srishti’ or creation again and Ishana represents Anugraha Shakti or of the Power of Blessing . Thus the rhythmic property of the Panchikarana process and converting the Five Elements into four parts out of the totality of its three portions and eventually the Inner Consciousness is constituted again with its five fold functionality thus the perceptual five organs are generated.

Pancha Bhuta Lingas: Ekambareshwara at Kanchi-Bhu Linga; Jambukeashwar Linga-Aapas or Water Linga; Tiruvannamalai -Tejas or Fire Linga; Kalahasti: Vayu Linga; Chidambaram: Akasha Linga Representing the Pancha Bhutas or the Five Elements of Prithivi (Earth), Aapas (Water), Tejas (Radiance), Vayu (Air) and Akasha (Sky), Five Lingas were manifested as follows:

1. Prithvi Linga as Ekambareshwara with Kamakshi as his consort at Kanchipuram in Taminnadu;
2. Jala (Water) Linga as Jambukeshwara with Akhilandeshwari as his consort at Tiruvanaikaval in Trichinapalli, Tamilnadu;
3. Tejo Linga as Arunachaleshwara with Unnamalai Devi as his consort at Tiruvannamalai again in Tamilnadu;
4. Vayu Linga as Kalahasteswara with Devi Jnana Prasoonamba as his consort at Kalahasti in Andhra Pradesh and
5. Akasha Linga as Vaidya Nateshwara / Nataraja along with Devi Shivakami at Chidambaram in Tamilnadu.

Prithvi Linga called Ekambareshwara manifested on its own to enable Bala Kamakshi to perform Tapasya in the vicinity of a Ekambara Vriksha or a Mango Tree in Kanchi Kshetra. The Linga is of hand size of the shape of a Plantain Tree flower signifying the imprints of the bracelets of Mahadeva’s embrace of Devi Parvati! The legend of the manifestation of the Linga was that as crores of Shaktis who claimed equality to Parvati, Mahadeva smiled and all the Shaktis got disrobed and Parvati closed his three eyes so that he did not have to see their nudity. But when Mahadeva’s eyes were closed there was Pralaya and ‘Surya Chandradi Devas’ disappeared. Parvati was stunned and regretted her indiscretion which actually was an extraordinary sin as the entire Universe was extinguished! Parvati fell on Shiva’s feet and he asked her to take the Swarupa of a Bala and perform Tapasya in Kasi first as Katyayani the adopted baby of Katya Muni; at the time of famine in Varanasi, Bala provided food all the population of Kasi and got the encomium as Devi Annapurna. Subsequently Bala shifted to Kanchi as directed by Mahadeva and did Tapasya under the Ekamara Vriksha at Kanchipura and grew up as Kamakshi; that indeed was the background of the Ekambareshwara Linga. The Jala Linga at Jambukeshwara manifested on its own under a Jambu tree in forest in Tiruvanai -kaval near Chandra Tirtha a tributary of River Kaveri. The legend was that there were two members of Shiva Ganas called Pushpadanta and Malyava who were cursed to become an elephant and a spider; they both worshipped the Jala Linga in their own ways; the elephant with flowers and bathing the Linga with its trunk while the spider ensured that tree leaves would not fall on the Linga by spinning a web . The elephant complained that the spider made the Place dirty above the Linga and the spider defended that the falling of tree leaves would convert dirtier. In the quarrel that followed both died and Shiva granted Kingship to the Spider in its next birth and the elephant was reborn again in the same form and the King built several Shiva Temples including the Jambulinga Temple in

which the Shiva Linga was partly submerged in water. Arunachaleshwara Linga in Tiruvannamalai has the legend that both Brahma and Vishnu found an 'Agni Stambha' or a huge Pillar of Fire and their efforts to know its beginning and end proved futile. Brahma performed Manasika Puja or worship in mind and so did Vishnu; pleased by their devotion granted them the boon to convert the endless Agni Stambha to a miniaturized Linga which could be worshipped not only by Devas but human beings also. Interestingly, even at the Pralaya or the Great Dissolution the Land of Arunachaleshwara was in tact. The Arunachala Mountain Range has Pancha Mukhas or the Five Faces of Lord Rudra viz. Tatpurusha, Aghora, Sadyojata, Vamana Deva and Ishana. It is strongly believed that a full 'Pradakshina' or circumambulation of the fourteen km distance of the Mountain would be as good as a Pradakshina of Maha Deva himself. A huge mass of devotees push around the Mountain barefooted on every full moon night and the Pournami of Chaitra Month happens to be very special culminating into a ten day festival of 'Kartika Deepa Darshana' when a mammoth lamp is lit in an open vessel with three tonnes of ghee atop the mountain. Shri Kalahasteswara Linga too was stated to be a Swayambhu or Self-Generated on the banks of River Swarnamukhi some 36 km away from Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh. This is essentially a Vayu Linga and successive Kings of Chola, Raya, Pallava and Pandya Vamshas made enormous contributions of the Buildings of this famed Shiva Linga. The Temple has the Legend that Three Species of God's creation viz. a Spider called Shri, a Snake called Kaala and an Elephant called Hasti were very devout followers of the Swayambhu Linga; Shri the Spider weaved cobwebs on the top of the Linga as Kala the serpent placed Gems on the Top of the Linga and the Hasti collected waters from the Sarovaras and by throwing sharp currents of water worshipped by way of 'Abhishekas' or washings of water. Thus the Spider-Snake-Elephant trio worshipped Shiva on their own thus justifying their Actions. Another Story of Kalahasti related to a legend of Bhakta Kannappa a hunter who offered his hunt as Naivedya or offering every day. One day the Linga showed three eyes weeping and bleeding blood. Kannappa had extreme anguish and cut and fixed one of his own eyes to that of Maha Deva. As the latter's second eye too commenced crying, Kannappa never hesitated and fixed his second eye on Maha Deva's face. That was the heightend faith of Kannappa. Maha Deva appeared and restored the eyes of Kannappa and desired that he should be near to the Linga and ever since he joined the band of sixty three Nayanars in the vicinity of Kalahasteswara. The Kalahasti Temple is reputed to ward off Rahu-Ketu Doshas or deficiencies of Graha Dosha, Sarpa Dosha or of unmarried women or women of barrenness.

Shri Nateshwara (Akasha) Linga at Chidambaram in Tamilnadu is famed for the 'Chidambara Rahasyam' or the Secret of 'Shunya' or 'Nothingness' of the Universe signifying 'Akasha' and the Ever-Repetitive Cyclical Process of Srishti-Sthiti-Laya or Creation-Preservation-Termination. The legend is that Adi Sesa, the bed of Lord Vishnu, desired to witness the Cosmic Dance of Maha Deva and came down to Earth as Patanjali or the one who descended. A high devotee of Shiva called Vyaghrapada who prayed to Mahadeva to grant him the powerful paws of a tiger with which to pluck the leaves of Bilwa Trees for worship also desired to witness Shiva's Cosmic Dance. Maha Deva along with Devi Shiva Kami gave an appointment to Patanjali and Vyaghrapada to witness the Unique Shiva Tandava or the Cosmic Dance of Shiva. Lord Vishnu as well as Brahma and Devas went into ecstasy as they were fortunate to vision the spectacle of the Tandava.

Now, Virat Purusha is in the further process of 'panchikarana'; the self consciousness of the Beings is protected by the gross elements. In other words, individual consciousness is activated and the cycle of Pancha Bhutas- Panchendriyas- Pancha Koshas and so on gets into place. Paramatma the Avyakta with perhaps but a particle of Illusion or Maya thus rotates the Universe and Its Beings converts into ACTION and thus the gross-subtle-and causal. Indeed THAT begets THESE- THIS-and THAT again and again. Each of the Beings of Three Forms of Gross and so on, Tri Gunas, Three Stages of Life of Birth- Death- and Birth again, and of Three 'Avasthas' of Jaagrata- Svapna- Sushupti are subjected to the potter wheel of the Cycle of Time, which keeps whirling-whirling-and whirl again endlessly! In other words, the concept of Maya the Illusion – the hard outer shell of the body hiding the Antaratma the Interior Soul

basically anchored to Material Sources. This in turn is based on Tamas or Ignorance, Rajas or Passion, Sathva the Essential Goodness. The examples of firewood, smoke and fire are cited as Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Sustainer, and Ishvara the negation of Maya. The feature of Tamas is akin to material well being characterised by women, wealth, power and evil. The Rajas is akin to acquisition of knowledge, devotion, yoga and sacrifice and finally the Satva or Dharma and the release of Inner energy to align with the Supreme through the layers of Hiranyagarbha- Maha Purusha- the Body- Pancha Bhutas- Panchendiyas and the further Panchikarana!

As the rhythmic pattern of the Panchikarana is continued , the inner consciousness gets constituted and alongside with mental calibre, thinking capacity, and self sense. Memory, resolve, affection, capacity to sift truth and untruth, decision making and such other judgments are the Mind.

Mind is the key indicator of Reality and Falsity as the Wise extol Mind and sift Truth from Untruth:

Among the various body attachments of the Individual Self with distinct features, back-up Devatwas, functional specialisations and so on, Mind happens to be the outstanding body asset. The Mind is considered as the interior -most chamber of the heart and is likened to the inner grain of say rice or barley. Mind reveals every thing and in fact the Individual Self is identified with it and its brightness. It is considered by Yogins as the prime commander of the various other body parts. Mental stamina and stability are the cause and effect alike of meditation to the Supreme; indeed mind is Brahman and identical since ‘one becomes precisely as one meditates upon the Almighty’! Then follow the other physical components like the throat, the face, the heart, the ‘bhrumadhya’ the mid space of eyebrows are all the depositaries of thinking and of perception. Among the other seats of perception are of sound, vision, taste, smell. The adhishtaana Devatas controlling the perceptions include Digdevatas, Vaayu, Surya, Varuna, Ashvini Kumars, Agni, Indra, Upendra, Mrityu, Chandra apart from the Tri Murtis as the Creator-Sustainer and Terminator.

The sharpness of Mind and the depth of Understanding are the essential inputs to access ‘Mahat’ / Bliss:

No person with enlightenment is ever afraid of facing trying situations once he has realised Bliss which is Brahman. This situation follows due to the strength of mind even in the physical framework of a human being; more so when the internal self is buttressed with knowledge. In such a situation, faith is stated as one’s head, righteousness is the right side of the body, truth the left side and concentration is the body and **Mahat** or the First Born Intellect or the depth of absorption which is all-pervading named Satya Brahman (Praja pati) is the stabilising tail; Intellect as the varied form of Satya or Truth as the ‘hridaya’ too. Meditation is targetted to Prajapati Brahman who has been described as his ‘hridaya’ or intellect; further qualification of that Hridaya-Intellect-Brahman pertains to Truth as well. That Truth is Satya Brahman; the expression ‘tat’ or ‘that’ is repetitive since Hridaya-Intellect-Brahman and now the Truth all refer to just the same. The phrase ‘Satyameva’ also signifies the idioms Sat or Tyat viz. Murtha (Gross) and Amurta or Subtle, th gross body being ‘Pancha bhutaatmikaa’ or of Five Elements and is unconquerable by enemies like ‘Arishadvargas’ or Kaama-Krodha- Lobha-Moha-Mada Matsaras; indeed Satya Brahman is invincible, the very first born and all pervading!

Then at the receiving end of Pancha koshas of a Being:

The Five Sheaths of Human Body are called Annamaya (Physical Energy), Praanamaya (Vital Energy), Manomaya (Mental Faculty), Vigyanamaya (Buddhi or Sharpness of Discrimination) and Ananda maya

(Bliss). The sheath of Food is what Earth yields and that is the essence of the intake of the Beings. As that constitutes the gross body, the vital energy praana in the five principal forms of ‘praanopaana udaana vyaana samaana’ forms and that sheath of the pancha koshas is titled ‘praanamaya jeeva’ in the context of the vital principle. Then the Manomaya kosha is based on perception and of mental depth. These three ‘koshaas’ of food-life- and mind lead to discrimination arising from vigjnaana the knowledge. Now the causal body is Bliss which leads to ‘Chit or Ananda’. In the ultimate analysis, Brahman is Bliss; it is from bliss that the Universe is initiated from, preserved along and terminated into! This Ultimate Truth is realised after prolonged and intensified disclosure by Bhriгу as imparted by Varuna Deva in several stages and layers of revelations stating from ‘Annam Paramatma’ to ‘Praano Brahmeti’ to ‘Mano Brahmeti’ to ‘Vijnaanam Brahmeti’ to finally ‘Anando Brahmeti’! He who realises thus is totally saturated with bliss as the unique possessor and enjoyer of the essence of food, the best of the quality of Life, of progeny, cattle, auspiciousness, fulfillment of life and acme of glory! A step by step revelation of Paramatma the Embodiment of Ecstasy is a process of evolution from existence of Life supported by Food or nourishment, activated by ‘Pancha Pranas’, driven and reinforced by mental strength, strengthened and qualified by a strong base of knowledge and finally surfeited with an enormous mass of Ultimate Spiritual Ecstasy designated as Bliss! The analysis of Brahman is a balance of macrocosmic complex structure of Brahman/ Paramatma made of Pancha Bhutas or Five Elements, besides the Celestial Forms of Surya-Chandra Nakshatras, Indra, Prajapati and Brahman to the microcosmic mirror form of Antaraatma embodied by Nature with Panchendriyas, essence of food, praana, manas, vijnana, topped up by Mahadananda the Brahman! The gross body thus possesses five Panchendriyas comprising five jnaanendriyas and karmendriyas of each, Pancha Praanaas, Pancha Bhutas apart from Self Consciousness, besides antahkarana chatustaya or mind- buddhi-chitta or store house of memory as applied to deep thinking and ahamkaara or self awareness which is loosely named ego.

The totality of all these characteristics is called **Ashtapura or the Subtle Body**. As per the command of Paramatma, the gross body of Beings get directed to the state of Virat Atma or of the State of **Vishva** or Self Consciousness named as Antaratma. That may be termed as Body Awakening.

Subsequently, the Body envisages the next stage of **Taijasa**. This stage envisions the world of appearances which is what ‘dreams’ denote of. Then follows Paramatma’s directive His own conceptual and purely reflective SELF or the Antaraatma -as self conditioned by Maya the Illusion – to attain the next stage of **Pragjna**, the State of Indifference which is ‘en route’ to the quest of Truth. That indeed is what Vedas affirm as **That Thou Art**.

Thus the Awareness or Consciousness as enlivened in an individual body is awakened from the pitch darkness of Maya the shrouded Ignorance quite in disregard of the material demands of Panchendriyas and a misdirected Mind continues the search for the road of Truth which after all right within the Self after crossing the hurdles of Awakeness- the Illusions- and Indifference defying the Illusions of the empirical state and then and thus the Truth. The successive stages are of waking-dreaming-deep sleeping – faded awareness or of sub consciousness and then The Truth. All the Beings in the vast Srishti are blessed with the faculty of perception, barring some exceptions, as they could hear, see, smell, feel and touch, with the kindness of the respective Deities of the organs concerned. This is in the state of awakening. The individual’s Inner- Consciousness is known as being in the ‘bhru madhya’ or the mid point of one’s eyebrows as that awareness is able to watch all the body parts from top to bottom or from head to foot. Then like an emperor who keeps a vigil on his subjects, the person concerned keeps enjoying the benefits from his subjects and the activities expected by them are in good place. Then the emperor gets tired with fatigue the sense organs are tired too and then shift over to another body afresh. This is denoted by shifting the perceptions from one body to another. Hence from the state of awakening to a dream stage.

Then **Vishva or the Inner Consciousness reaches the next state viz. Taijasa.** That precisely coincides with the absorption of the body structure which thus become non functional with periodic rest and interregnum. That is the time for rest of the Self and its esrtwhile busy activity. Like a bird gets tired with ever active day time activities of flying, hunt for food, and periodic ease all through the day, by performing activities of sniffing, tasting and grabbing its food even while supplying their nonflying kids too tend to return to the nest for rest, it reaches the nest awaiting for the next dawn's day break, the body too is rested and the Individual Soul quite tired of the body's activities enjoys bliss for a while. That indeed is the principle of Non interference of the Self quite disrespective of the body activities. The sleeping state is thus described as the state of ignorance experienced by the Self as of a temporary break of bliss free from the body activities.

The state of death is like that of loss of self consciousness, as caused by the sudden occurrence of say the fusing of the flow of electricity or a breakdown of sense perception; this is like a striking of a hammer or a tremor. Thus the state of sleep, objectivity is obliterated and a sense of faded dimness sets in. As Lord Brahma manifested 'srishti' from a meagre grass root, the status of gross bodies thus generated are ever apprehensive of facing decay and death. The stages of life be described by the inevitability of death! These indeed are the 'jagrat-svapna-sushupti-moorchaavastha' or waking-dreaming-sleeping-and fainting stages, before the inevitability of death. This finality occurs as the organs of perception and action cease to function and the remote controls of the Five Basic Elements get severed. The body senses as wrapped up in the Elements disappear and the Inner Consciousness gets a temporary reprieve. Meanwhile, the plus and minus accounts are closed for a while and get re- initiated again with the carry forward of the body yet the consciousness gets a holiday and gets hinged once again. It might be the termination of the life's journey of the 'Mahatmas' only exceptionally as with the nil accounts of 'karma sanchaya'.

The remote possibility of bondage of the cyclical births-deaths-and births again and again is only under the tutorship of a co enlightened Teacher alone, backed solidly by spriritual knowledge, indriya nigras, and lakshya saadhana. This Purusha is hidden in all beings from Brahma to bunch of grass but is covered by maya or cosmic illusion born of the mix of Satva-Rajas and Tamo Gunas. Only Maharshis and Great Seekers might perceive him as a subtle entity; the Paramatma is stated to reveal to none due to Yoga Maya or the Great Illusion as covered by Ignorance. Only through purified intellect as is available to Seekers, a hazy profile of Hiranyagarbha is perhaps seen by their mind's eye! The discerning person needs to merge into the 'Indriyas' or the organs into the intelligent Self and then infuse the latter into the 'Paramatma'. While so doing, the name-form-action of that particular Self is totally negated and there had to be a 'tadaatmya' or fusion of the two entities!

Conclusion: Self Conciousness or the Inner Self often referred to as Antaratma is the quintessence of Vedopa -shad Itihaasa Puraanas. Moola Prakriti is unknown. The Inner Self is surfiet with Mahad Buddhi, and is the total negation of Ahamkaara, Trigunas as the fall out of Pancha Maha Bhutaas, Tenfolded Jnaana- Karma Indriyas- Raaga Dveshas- Suhka Duhkhaas- all such typical characte -ristics which are submerged into the bodies of charaachara jagat. Further the Inner Self and its adhyatmika jnaana lakshanaas embrace certain positive features like durabhimaana raahitya-niraadambarata-ahimsa-nishkapatyata-guru seva- paarisudhya-chitta sthairya-mano nigras- vishaya sukha vairagya-nirahamkaarata- jeevita janana marana vyaadhi aadi dukkha kaarana darshanatva- putra bhaaryaa grihaadi mamakaara raahitya-priyaapriya praapta saamya sthitata- ekaagra ekaanta bhakti dhaarana- loukika jaana-vaahana ruchi raahitya and shadvarga kamakrodha moha mada matsarars too. This Antaratma is thus the reflection of Paramama who or what is unknown, everlasting-all pervasive- endless- unborn-and interminable!

Atma Jnana

Almighty Brahman enters each and every Being from Brahma to a piece of grass as the Antaratma or the Self- Conscience. The easiest yet the most difficult question ever is *Kah ayam atmaa* or which is that Self worship worthy! The reply would be the Antaratma or the Inner Consciousness: the expressions such as ‘Samjnaanam’ or the emotive sentience being the state of consciousness, ‘vigjnaanam’ or worldly awareness or knowledge, ‘pragjnaanam’ or instant mental responsiveness, ‘medha’ or brain power and retention capacity, ‘drishti’ or discernment and perception through senses, ‘mathih’ or capacity to think pros and cons, ‘manisha’ or mastertminded skill of planning, ‘juutih’ or capacity of forbearance, smriti or memory power, ‘sankalpa’ or ability to initiate and decide, ‘kratuh’ or tenacity and dedication, ‘asuh’ or calculated sustenance, ‘kaamah’ or craving obsession all ending up in ‘Vashah’ or forceful possession; all these are rolled into one word viz. **Conscience** or the super imposition of the totality of senses viz. speech, vision, touch, taste and generation. It is indeed that kind of ascent of self consciousness that submerges karta-karma-kriya into Brahman, once mortals attain at least of intervals of Immortality!

The Self and Supreme are mutual reflections; that identity of the two entities is despite the contexts of awaken and dream stages and the mortal’s life in the final stage be described as a caterpillar which once reaches the edge of a grass but would seek to hold another grass piece for support and jump over! The causative fullness and derivative causation or the Cause and Effect Analysis thus states: *OM/ Purnamadah Purnamidam Purnaat purnamudachyate, Purnasya Purnamaadaaya Purnamev a-avashishyate/* Para Brahma is full and total; so is this Antaratma or the Individual Self Consciousness if full and total too. From ‘Karyatmaka Purnatwa’ or this causative fullness is manifested into the fullness of ‘Karanaatmaka Purnatwa’ or the derivative fullness. In other words, the Individual Self shrouded by the screen of Ignorance or Unawareness due all over its bodily form and sensual form, gets identified and unified to Fullness. In other words, from infinite cause the infinite effect is evidenced or from Infinite Universe, Infinite Brahman is evidenced or *Asatomaasadgamaya* or From Non-Reality to Reality or From Darkness to Luminosity! Futher, Damayita-Daana-Daya or Control-Charity-Compassion are three seeds of virtue. Since Prajapati’s heart qaulifies the Beings likewise, he provides Jnaana or Knowledge to them and the resultant Sat-Yat or the Murtha or Gross and Amurta or Subtle Rupas of Brahman ie. the gross form by way of Pancha Bhutatmika Jagat leading to Arishad vargas and their remedies of ‘Saadhana’ and ‘Satkarma’! Indeed Brahman manifests as Water-Sun-and Bhur-Bhuva-Swah while Mind of an Individual is the key indicator of the Truth and Untruth or Reality and Falsity. The aspects of Brahman are in varied forms such as: Vidyut Brahman or Lightnings, Vaak Brahman or Speech signifying Veda and Scriptures, Vaishvaanara or Agni, Vaayu Brahman and so on. Now human beings are thus motivated to realise Him by austerities, detachment, Gayatri worship, meditation to Praana the Universal Energy by Ukta Gita, intense meditation to Surya, Agni, Vayu and so on as these all are the ramifications of the Unknown. The travel pattern of a Good Soul after death as per ‘karma phala’ enter the smoke zone of ether and travel to Pitru-Chandraadi Lokas and after enjoying the company of Devas and after stipulated time return back to earth through ether/ rain as destined as a plant, insect, bird, animal or a human again..

There is a succinct and subtle message of Atma Jnaana about the True identity of the Individual Self and the Supreme Soul .This Universe in totality is Brahman from whom it is born, exists and dissolves; hence one ought to meditate with tranquility and with sincerity; as he exists with conviction and faith, so does he depart; indeed he or she shapes one’s own destiny for sure! The Self comprises of mind, the vital force of the body and inner conciousness; his soul is like the Space; he is essentially of good nature, good intentions, good actions and without complaints and craving. The Self within the lotus of my heart is smaller than paddy, barley grain, mustard seed and so on but is indeed greater than earth, space, heaven and the totality of the Universe! This Self of mine as present in my heart is what all that is performed by way of actions, what all is desired, of excellent tastes-smells-speaks, etc with no margins of non-fulfillment! Such is the status of Brahman; on departure of the mortal world, this Self of mine would

leave the perishable body and be identified with Brahman. He who has this unshaken faith shall truly attain that status. Food is the product of five organs of Individual Self and five creations of Brahman viz. Pancha Bhutas but both the entities are the same. Vayu Deva the Deity of Dishas assumes the form of a bull and teaches about the magnificence of Brahman; He manifested just one 'Paada' or foot and Agni was a part of that single foot. Then Agni in the form of a Swan explained that beside him, Surya-Chandra-Vidyut too were manifested in that one foot; An aquatic bird confirmed what Agni stated and qualified further that Praana-Chakshu-Shrotra-Manas too were the objects of worship. Undoubted supremacy of Praana the vital force in the body of a Being vis-a-vis the organs and senses. The status of Post Life Soul upto the stage of transmigration was interpreted by five oblations to Ahavaneeya Agni and the final oblation by water. Any person of Satkarma would take to Deva Yaana or the Divine Path versus Saamaanya Yaana or the Common Route after death; cautions for do's and don't's while alive need however to be observed. Much unlike the blind man and the elephant, the Universal Self is comprehensive comprising Sky, Vayu / Praana, Space, Earth etc. The futility of Teachings lands in arrogance but not the realisation of Truth 'Adviteeya' or the singularity of existence manifesting surprising plurality all rolled out of the same Uniqueness as with Andaja, Jeevaja and Udbhuja or born out of eggs, reproduction or sprouts as also Sun, Moon, Lightnings, the three folded forms of Agni, Aapas and Prithvi, the three basic colours of red-white-black have been highlighted for merger into Oneness. Three folded forms of Food-Water-Heat are evidenced by and emerging from Manas or Mind-Breathing and Speech. Mind indeed is the dominant factor for the survival of food. Hence finally is the Truth: TAT TWAM ASI! Like bees collect honey from flowers, Truth or that Antaratma of all the Beings is similar too. Rivers flow in the same direction and so do various Beings remain as the same species as they are born, yet the common thread of Antaratma is retained always. The illustration of a live banyan tree since got dried up is dead but the Eternal Soul moves on further. Tiny and wasteful seed of a massive banyan tree is realisable only by the mind and faith as that explains its subtle essence of the Self in which indeed is the truth! More explicitly explained is the salt dissolved in water which is the Supreme Self as AHAM BRAHMA ASMI! That is the Subtle Essence of regaining the Self; indeed That is That! A dying person loses speech, mind, energy and body warmth ready for merger into the Subtle Essence. In the mortal world, justice is delayed but never denied; retribution and recompense are real and definite; indeed THOU ART THAT! THAT IS THE TRUTH AND THE SELF! To realise Brahman one might underline the Power of Speech and Mental Calibre, Strong Sankalpa, Sturdy Self and Will Power, Application of Mind, Vijaana / Knowledge, Physical Strength arising from Anna / Ideal Food, Water, Heat Energy, Mental Power to see, hear, and think, Hope, Trust and Firm Conviction, and above all Praana, Nishtha / Commitment, Karyacharana / Involved Activity and Service towards Fulfillment. Brahman who is incomprehensible is indeed the Individual Self within one Self itself!

Detachment and Deliberation are the rudiments of Reliasing the jnaan Supreme. Righteous action irrespective of fruits begets further longevity to keep pursuing the path of enlightenment; Involvement of evil actions caused by panchendriyas like vision, hearing, touch, breathing, generation accentuated by mind blinds the Essential Truth and the pace of recovery would be too slow even nil; Unity of Self and the Supreme is evident and harnessing body parts and senses is of paramountcy to reiterate that essential Truth; both the Inner Self and the Supreme are stable yet on the move, nearby yet distantly unrealised, right within but without calling for intense introspection; the Self has no hatred for others since the action-reaction syndrome does not affect it in the least and those Yogis when realise this Reality wonder where there is hatred and what is the love; As there is 'tadaadmya' or absolute Identity, the Self and Supreme ought to be the same, irrespective of the play of senses and thoughts that the body carries; the Supreme is all pervading, unborn, bodyless yet allots clear instructions to follow by all entities; Pursuit of the path of Vidya and Avidya ie Knowledge against blind Ignorance needs to be distinguished since the latter enter the portals like rites, rituals and Sacrifices or get stuck to karma kaanda alone but Vidya is the higher plane of Learning; Fruits of Vidya on the ascent path by wisdom, meditation and Karma or Work defined and duly blended; Knowledge and Ignorance both cross life and death but the former gets bliss while the latter gives rebirth; Prakriti or Maya and Purusha are manifest/ unmanifest but what is really

worthy of worship be distinguished clearly; maya creates, preserves, destroys and recreates but the Driving Force is the Supreme; worship to Maya and Hiranyagarbha differs -one by 'Karma' another by 'dharmaacharana' and detachment; Truth and Immortality are concealed under the thick blanket of ignorance, may Surya open the Solar Orbit and let the golden vessel unveil Brahman or in other words worship to Solar Orbit reveals a golden disc and a Face within as Brahman ; solar Orbit discloses the Truth that Brahman is Surya Himself as it represents vision, the signs of death as also Bhur-Bhuvah-Swaha; Eternal Truth as divulged by worshipers is the Golden Disc or the Solar Orb and that the Supreme is Vayu the Vital Force; Vidya or Avidya, Deed or Misdeed, but the Ultimate Reality is Death and Agni. Thus Karmacharana be utilised to conquer 'mrityu' and utilise atma jnaana to accomplish amritatva. 'Manas' or Mind is remote controlled by Almighty indeed. How does one realises this Almighty. The Teachings are invariably directed to two paths viz. Paraa Vidya and Aparaa Vidya. The former Knowledge is intended to achieve 'Sadyo Mukti' or of short term Liberation and Aparaa Vidya aims at superior learning to accomplish 'Krama Mukti'. The Paraa Vidya seeks to overcome desires by way of Mind from the pulls and pressures of material desires by way of Abstinenes, Sacrifices, Charities and such other acts of 'Karma Kanda' or 'Karma Yoga', while 'Aparaa Vidya' necessarily involves elevated levels of ' Atma Samskara' or of purification of mind and thought and focus on Inner Consciousness by way of demolishing the thick walls of Ignorance by way of 'Samyak Drishti' or Inward Vision as reflected in, and unification of the Self with the Supreme leading up the ladder of 'Krama Mukti'. Paraa Vidya is essentially highlights Sacrifices, Rites, and Meditations controlled by Manas and Praana or the Mind and Vital Energy as further controlling actions and their far reaching effects. It is stated that there are three Lokas attainable viz. the Manushya-Pitru- and of Devas. The world of Humans is attained through sons alone, that of Pitru Devas by way of Sacrifices and Deeds of Virtue, and of the Worlds of Devas by higher learning. While the Individual Self is unaffected by the deeds of virtue or vice, Brahmins seek to upgrade themselves by study of Vedas, yajnas, daanaas, sacrifices, penances, fastings, etc. Karma kaanda attains offspring, wealth, fulfillment of material ends, and finally turns persons as ascetics and terminates their lives; yet the Self is unattached and whatever the body and mind does has no bearing on the Karma Phala. Thus the return of the Self be it from Swarga or Pitru Loka, after rebirth occurs even after the exhaustion of temporary Liberation. But why not seek indeed the Aparaa Vidya or Superior Learning to earn 'krama mukti' and secure 'Tadaatmya' or Unification of Jeevatma and Paramatma by way of Self-Realisation! Kena Upanishad opens with the interrogation as to who indeed is the driving force of one's life and the reply is that one's mind is the cause supported by Praana the Vital Force but its Remote and Real Instructor is one's own Conscience. The infrastructural set up of the Mind comprises the 'Panchendriyas' or functionaries of the body and these five are divided into five each of jaanendriyas or sensory organs and a set of Karmendriyas or body parts enabling the execution of the acts as speech, vision, hearing, touching, and generation all as directed by mind and remote controlled by the Conscience of Self. But indeed the Cause and Effect pattern of the Conscience causing the Praana and mind further effecting the body organs and senses is irrelevant for the simple reason of the Antaratma which is the Supreme Brahman would be far beyond comprehension of humans and Devas alike. Inner consciousness is neither of the faculty of 'Vaak' alone, nor of Manas, nor of Chakshu nor of Manas or all the faculties put together. As to whether anybody knows about Brahman the significance of speech; vision, Mind, and so on recalling the story of a blind man seeking to highlight one part of the body or another and deduce that an elephant was a head-its trunk-its tail-feet-etc. Indeed, one does not consider that he does not realise that he does not know either! It is known yet It is unknown! The Supreme is not an object even of extraordinary knowledge but of immense introspection and Self Realisation; it is neither perception nor comprehension but only intuition. Thus, to know one does not know but desires to know yet It remains unknown is all what all one knows! Once on realizing the Supreme Truth, the Individual becomes aware that the Inner Consciousness or the Antaratma itself is within itself as the Paramatma. One wonders whether It is Maya ever preventing Jivas and Devas to discover the Truth. Devi Durga the Mother of the Universe would certainly descend to Earth to curb extreme pressures of the evil influences; Devi Durga is represented by Her divine wisdom as the spring of Brahma Vidya an awareness of Brahman both from the Cosmic and Individual Levels: In the Individual context, the Teaching is:

the Indwelling Self or the Antaratma is always embedded into and anchored on to mind and ; latter once sharpened even while encased in the physical frame, be buttressed with knowledge, faith., righteousness. As these are retained on the right side of the body, the truth on the left side and concentration of highest order in mind, Satya Brahman is then realised as the Truth! The phrase ‘Satyameva’ signifies the idioms ‘Sat’ or Tyat viz. Murtha-Gross and Amutra-subtle, the gros being Pancha bhutaatmika or of Five Elements as also Arishadvargaas of Kaama, Krodha, Moha, Mada, Matsaras; indeed ‘Brahman’ is Invincible, Birthless and All- Pervading. Concentration, faith, renouncement are the keys, while Vedas represent the limbs and Truthfulness! Now, the concepts of Deva Yaana and Pitru- Yaana and about the passage of Soul after death. As one leaves the world, all the Beings are stated to reach the gate way viz. the Chandra Loka first; if fortunate on the basis of the karma phala or the balance account of good or negative results of the previous births, the gates get opened to Swarga or higher Lokas to the extent of what the positive account decides; if not the return starts and on way back experiences negative results and then returns back to earth by way of rains and is reborn again on the basis of karma phala is reborn as a worm, insect, fish, bird, lion, or snake or as a human being. During the period of expectancy or the period in the garbha or the womb, the Praani or the Self would be in the form of Pure Consciousness and once delivered the thick cover of Ignorance or Maya envelopes and adopts the features and actions of the newly born. On the other hand if the departed Soul has an excellent track record and is destined to reach up to higher lokas right up to Brahma Loka due to Sacrifices, Tatwa jnaana, and so on then he or she attains the status of Brahma itself! How such blessed Soul is pampered with divine experiences are detailed in this Upanishad. ‘Paraa Vidya’ or the Highest Wisdom that Brahma was in the celestial forms as Surya, Chanda, Vidyut or Lightning, Thunder, Vayu, Agni and Aapsu Purusha or Water. But finally, Antaratma is indeed the reflection of Paramatma: *Ya eteshaam Purushaanaam karta yasya tat karma savaiveditavyah* ; thus Brahma Vidya was taught . Citing the analogy of two birds named Suparna and Saayujya sharing the same tree, one being busy eating sweet fruits of the tree and another refraining from eating; as one is immersed in enjoying material pleasures, the other resists the temptations of life. The self indeed is the source of Brahman attainable by Yoga, Karma, Tapasya and Truthfulness. As the Seeker of Reality finally confronts the vision of the golden hued ‘Over Lord’, he merges with the non duality of Purusha and the Self as the Source of Brahman. The Seeker attains equanimity and then the riddance of Tri Gunas and features, merits and non merits, ‘paapa punyaas’ as the final goal. Realising the significance of Praana as the key factor, the person concerned would rather target the Antaratma in the Self instead of getting involved with esoteric exercises and show off knowledge and delights in the quest of the Self by taking to the established routes. The Self is achievable through the understanding as to what is Truth and Untruth as also Tapasya or austerities with control of mind and senses as the latter includes ‘nitya Brahmacharya’ or continuous abstinence, straightforwardness and non pretentiousness, and clean inner conscience leading to Self Illumination; indeed that is the Path of Parama Nidhana which truly indeed is the Seat of the Golden Hued! Since the role of Maya is the Cause of Rebirth and the Ultimate Truth is of Accomplishment, the Mundaka Upanishad describes the nature, pattern and emancipation finally. At the Time of Mukti or Deliverance, the fifteen body constituents of Five Jnaanendriyas or sensory organs, Five Karmendriyas or the responsive body parts of Action, Five Basic Elements of Nature, besides Mind all of them being headed by Prana at the end would all become integrated and unified as the Self Consciousness as the latter is but the same as the Supreme. Thus takes the qualification of the Self as *tarati shokam tarati paapmaanam guhaa gandhibhyo vimuktomrito bhavati/* or overcomes grief of mind, blemishlessness, and then the ‘Sthitapragna’ achieves freed from the knots of the unknown cave hidden in the mortal heart as shrouded by ignorance of Maya and accomplish Immortality!

What would be the ‘Shodasha Kalas’ or the Sixteen Attributes of Purusha and the reply was that due to the cover of ignorance the sixteen body parts were misconstrued as shodasha kalaas, since they were stated to condition the movements of the Self Consciousness. Maha Purusha the Hirayagarbha created Praana, as from it Shraddha or Faith, Kham or Space, ‘Vaayurjyotiraapah’ or Air, Fire, Water, besides Prithveenidriyah Manah’ or Earth, Physical Organs and Mind as also Food, Vigour and Self Control. Also

were created Veda Mantras, Rites, Worlds, Names, Nomenclatures of Beings and Forms. The Maharshi also explained the 'Shodasha Kalaas' of or sixteen constituents of Human Beings counting from Praana would get merged into the Purusha with no trace of the merging traits and features. Death is thus but a gateway to another cycle of births and deaths. In each such existence, Consciousness activates mind but the latter executes actions by the organs and senses, while Antaratma remains as a spectator to the actions of body parts and senses which are all but mortal! Questions were about the Creation of the Universe and the methodology of Realisation; the prime supports of Life and Praana; Origin and destination of Mortal Life; Dreams during Life and the pattern of control and significance of towards Self Realisation; 'Om' the gate way to better life and beyond and Shodasha Kalas or Sixteen body organs and senses interplaying with the Antaratma! What is all about the Truth of the Truths, the delienation of the Truth and desperation to attain It while facing death. Then a profile of Virat Purusha the Unsurpassing Cosmic Being: *angushtha maatrah purushontaratmaa, sadaa jnaanaam hridaye sannivishthah*, as also *Sahasra sheershaa Purushah sahasraaksha sahasra paat, shabhumim vishwato vritwaa ati atishthad dashaangulam// Purusha evedam sarvam yad bhutam yaccha bhavyam utaamritatavasyeshanno yad annenaanirohati//* or the Individual Self is hardly of thumb-size always residing in one's heart the disributing hub of energy from praana, with one's mind as charioteer of body organs and senses; the Virat Purusha or the Cosmic Person is stated to have thousand -figuratively – but countless-heads, eyes and feet thus describing His reach and magnitude, yet in the context of 'Antaratma' He is hardly of the size of ten inches covering Sapta Lokas, Sapta Patalas, Sapta Dwipas, Sapta Samudras, and Sapta Parvatas. Interestingly, the Cosmic Person Maha Purusha, being the Antaratma is totally unaffected by the actions of Individual body organs and senses; the latter is of myriad forms yet the Singular Form of the Supreme. The Eternal Paradox of Existence of Beings is described in this connection by an analogy of two birds viz. Suparna and Sayuja both being companions clinging to the same tree, one eating sweet fruits and another refraining from eating at all, thus one enjoying the sweetness of life even becoming slaves of the evil influences with no regard of moralities of life but another exercising restraint despite temptations and calculating consequences. Sankhya Siddhanta of of Duality of the Supreme is discarded. Indeed the pull of Maya and Prakriti tends to blind the Beings to such an extent that the negativity of life invariably results in succumbing to the cycle of births and deaths and karma and dharma accounts are very rarely balanced let alone cancel off to attain Realisation of Rudra, the Pashupati natha subtly hidden in the Inner Self or Antaratma of all the Beings as **Tat-twam-asi** or Thou art Thou!

CONCLUSION: Paramatma the Unknown Brahman resolved to let Hiranyagarbha Brahma be self manifested. The latter created the principal ingredients of the primary Creation such as Pancha Bhutas, Surya Chandras and Antariksha as well as Prajapati Maha Purusha with a prototype Physique. The latter tore off his body to two parts viz. the Self and Prakriti Maya and together manifested as the Universe into Devas and Asuras to represent Virtue and Vice besides Praana the Vital Force and 'Charaachara Srishti' with human beings and othet types of creation. Representing Praana as an alternate form, the Maha Purusha stays Him Self as the Antaratma of all the Species. Human beings are blessed to possess body parts and senses as Panchendriyas, besides 'Manas' the Mind as the head to perform noble or ignoble acts. Prakriti Maya who cleverly hides Antaratma and creates endless material attractions of the worlds to deviate attention from the Reality with the aid of a mix of 'Gunas' dominates the colouring of the spotlessly white, pure and tranpsarent the Virat Swarupa. Thus human beings tend to be obsessed with Maya and become victimised trying to fight out the lures temporary pleasures invariably and confuse Non Realities for the Lasting Truth of the Antaratma, a mirror image of Brahman! Once Enlightenment dawns into the thoughts of a person due both to knowledge, introspection and 'Satkarma' of the cumulative fruits of births, that blessed Soul conquers fear by unveiling Reality within, despite the play of misleading signals sounded by Panchendriyas and the mind. The person bemoans that through out the perpetual cycle of births, he has always got victimised mind. It is none too late and search his inner conscience atleast now. This indeed is the most relevant secret of revelations of Upanishads, Vedas, and Knowledge.

Kalamana – The cycle of Time

Introduction:

‘Kalamana’ in the context of Bharata Varsha which metamorphosed like a kaleidoscope gradually adopted Videsha Samskriti; new culture, life-style and even new psyche. In the process, the Vedic Dharma witnessed some changes in the process of evolution. As the Rulers changed, so did the cultures yet the core remained intact. Buddha/ Ashoka created a new versions of Hinduism; Vikramaditya resisted the onslaught of Barbarians like Shakas, Mlecchhas, Yavanas, Tursharas, Parasikas (Persians), and Hunas. Shatavahanas controlled Shakas, Chinese, Bahmikas, Kamarupas, Rome and Ishaamashih (Jesus Christ). King Bhoja resisted the cult of Prophet Mahammad. But Pathans over-powered Prithviraja and thus the Bharata Varsha witnessed some dissipation of Hindu Dharma. The Varnashrama gradually became a virtual non-entity excepting in somewhat feeble and diluted forms. The glorious contribution made by renowned ‘Acharyas’ to revive and sustain Hindu Dharma is incredible; the illustrious Acharyas included Ramananda, Nimbadiya, Madhavaacharya, Jayadeva, Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Chaitanya Maha Prabhu, Shakteyas and so on. The role of Regional Kings like Shivaji and even Kings of alien Dharmas like Akbar-as Hindu influence in reverse-was evident on the large canvas of Hinduism. Sweeping changes were made by the British Rule in the entire life style of Indians and the considerable inevitable mix of races diluting the Dharma. Yet, *aakaashat patitam toyam yadhaa gacchati saagaram, Sarve deva namaskaarah Keshavam pratigacchati!* Indeed, there are innumerable paths in several directions to reach the mountain top to attain the Unique Paramatma. There have been divisions even of Hindu thought: Adi Shankara is the exponent of ‘Kevala Advaita’ or Fundamental Monism; Ramanujacharya is an ardent exponent of Visisthta Advaita or of Qualified Monism; Nimbakaacharya is the exponent of Bhedaabhedavaada or of differential-non differential discipline; Madavacharya is the exponent of Dualism of Paramatma and Jeevatma; Vallbhacharya is the exponent of Suddha Advaita or Pure Monism. Then came the Brahmo Samaj movement heralded by Raja Rama Mohan Roy which no doubt was essentially Hinduism be defied that Hindu Scriptures ought to be catholic and the Samaj pioneers read out publicly to Christians and Muslims too. After a long spell the movement got dissipated. Anti-Vigraha Aaradhana Movement, Athiesm, Nastikata are the weeds in some pockets yet. Meanwhile the core of Hinduism ; Vedic Culture survives, albeit incorporating and absorbing external and internal influences in the process of evolution, and continues in its quentessential form. But all these interpratations notwithstanding, the realism that death is the Truth, the thought that all the beings in srishti are but the birds in their respective cages and ‘praanas’ finally evaporate with their karmas of pluses and minuses are weighed for ‘punarjanmas’ in the Time Cycle till the jump off into eternal bliss which is but an illusion is possible.

The Time Cycle as described in Taittireeya Aranyaka

There are four fold aspects of proofs viz. Scriptures/ Shrutis -Perceptions or Smtitis-Historical Information and Inferences. Bhagavan Bhaskara’s kiranas take into account all these four aspects – both transparent and deducive; what is praana or the vital energy! How food is created! How the Beings in Srishti, especially those humans who are clearly expressive have pleasures and pains as also likes and dislikes. It is said that a river is noticed to flow always since several streams and water bodies are directed there into; that is how emerges the concept of ‘kaala maana’ or the cycle of Time. Several units of time like ‘anu’ or minute adds up to ‘Samvatsara’ as perfectly organised in the Time Machine an the analogy of river flows. The kaala maana could be broken into small or big units. But indeed, the Supreme Self or the ‘adhi sattva’ is neither divisible nor measurable!

There are three aspects of vision by the eyes: viz. the skin covering the eyes- the retina which denotes the watering mechanism of the eyes-and yellow / smoky colour of the vision or of the Varuna Deva's nature; this deity could view infinities like the distant oceans. Similarly the short distant vision is perceivable by ordinary Beings but the celestial vision of Varuna could see the 'ayanas' like of utara-dakshina or the bi-yearly time slots; the Rithus or six Seasons. In between these units, there are two phenomena viz. 'jalpita' or casually-even hazily- cognisable and another is 'dihyate' or perfectly understood. Thus the Samvatsara has two flaps of the eyes viz. the right and the left viz. shukla and dakshina ayanas. Pusha Deva! this is how, one form of your swarupa or form is of radiance and another form is of Agni- the master of Yagjnas. One view is of bliss or Satya or the Truth and another is Mayathe Make-Belief Illusion or Asatya -the Untruth! Pusha Deva, you are of Vishva Rupa or of Innumerable Forms! Yet of two basic visions viz. of 'Pathya' – of Pusha's wife the executive energy of Pushan- or of Truth or the Eternal Reality and the other the Illusion. In the former, there is no samvatsara- no worldly existence, no sustenance nor sustainer, no cows or Beings, no Adityas nor Devas. Also there are samvatsaras and time cycles; no yagjnas nor 'punya paapaas'; THAT is *avyatam shashvatan vishnum ananatam ajam avyayam!*)

About Shad Ritus or The Six Seasons

Basically, Bhagavan Bhaskara had six rays as Rishis-born of Paramatma together as twins but the seventh was secured later alone and as such the most decided one. The three twins are defined as of lower and upper levels, the lower being anna-praana- manas or matter-life-mind while the upper level denoting sat-chit-ananda or actual existence-consciousness-and bliss. Now the seventh one denotes 'swar' or 'mahat' viz. Satyam-Ritam-Brihat. Another explanation is that the three twins are 'saakanjas' or Rishis born of Gods to be positioned at the Yagjnas at defined positions at the Yajna vedika, the ekajam is the Master of the Yajna; yet alternatively the 'saakanjas' or ears-eyes- nostrils and the ekaja is the tongue). Indra's declaration was that only such mortal beings who out of evil pleasure become cruel be punished by way of retribution of justice. He who destroys another for the sake of knowledge or he who takes hasty action by mere hearsay has no access to the noble path of action, as Indra feels.

Shad Rithus as related to shukla paksha and krishna paksha or the waxing and waning Moons. The arrival of each season is heralded by distinct sounds, features and aspects. Shat Ritus: Ritus or Seasons approximately coincide with Chaitra-Vaishakha or end March to the last weeks of May when festivals like Ugadi, Shri Rama Navami, and Vaishakhi are celebrated. Greeshma Ritu or Summer during April-July during Jyeshtha-Ashadha when festivals like Ratha Yatra and Guru Purnima are observed and Dakshinayana or the Solar downtrend commences. Varsha Ritu or monsoon coincides with Shravana-Bhadrapadas or the last portions of July-September when Mangala Gauri and Vara Lakshmi Vratas, Raksha Bandhan, Krishna Ashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi and Onam are celebrated. Sharad Ritu or Autumn Season coinciding with Ashvin-Kartika months extending portions of September to November being mild weather the famed Sharannava Ratris and Depaavali are celebrated. Hemanta Ritu or pre-winter Season coinciding with Margaseersha and the last days of November-January, the festivals of Vasanta Panchami, Shiva Ratri and Holi are observed; and finally Shishira Ritu or winter coinciding with Maagha-Phalguna months during the last quarter of January to March is the time of Vasanta Panchami, Shiva Ratri and Holi. The Chandra maana procedure varies in the sense that the cycle of Seasons starts from the first day of Chaitra commencing from Ugadi.

[The following chart provides the details: Ritu/ Season- Lunar Month -Months – Weather

Vasanta Spring	Chaitra – Vaishakha	Feb 18- April 20	20-30 C
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Greeshma	Summer	Jyeshtha- Ashadha	April 21-June 21	30-50 C
Varsha	Monsoon	Shravana-Bhadrapada	June 22-Aug 23	hot-humid- rains
Sharat	Autumn	Ashvijuja-Kartika	Aug 24- Oct 23	Mild
Hemanta	Pre-winter	Margashira-Pushya	Oct 24- Dec 21	pleasant- cold
Shishira	winter	Maagha-Phalguna	Dec 22-Feb 17	Moderate Cold;10C+/-

Vasanta Season is dominated by Vasu Devatas instructed by Savitu as at the beginning of the Samvatsara and heralding colours, dresses, flowers and freshness all around and with plentiful water and Nature. The Spring season beckons relatives and friends to home with good food and gifts.

In Greeshma the summer season scorches earth with heat asking for light dresses in white as Rudra and his gana devats dominate and prepares earth for Parjanya

Rains usher diseases like cold, jaundice and so on. Yet, this is when crops are abundant and fruits in variety are aplenty. All the same, rains are the future of food supplies for the year hence calls for ploughing, planning and hard work.

Sharat provides clean eyes and good vision even as divine artisans with the grace of Ribhu Devatas initiate planning, innovations, creations and caliber, aspirations and contented living. Sharat season heralds good eating, wearing god dresses and enjoyments. Marut Devas then follow creating mixed blessings; on one hand they create harsh and mighty winds seeking destruction and damages and on the other hard realities of life with obstructions in efforts yet unusual and unexpected fruits of hard work alike work never performed. Variety is the spice of Life in the Sharat Season!

Hemant calls for vigilance, either initiating a struggle ahead or a caution and forewarning for preparedness and thus of introspection .

Shishra Ritu arrives with lightnings, rains, smugness of Nature around besides that of individuals too. The blessing of ample rains could also calls for uncertainties. As Agni Deva calls for plentiful waters to heighten living conditions of Beings, uncertainties too prevail as natural calamities thus creating a touch-and-go situation. The Mighty Marut Devas are worshipped for overcoming impediments and create opportuninies for happiness.

Paramatma! how indeed the clouds are hanging without support! What is the mechanism of a 'samvatsara' made of with the complexity of division of units! How does a night fall! How are the months and Seasons arranged! How indeed the 'kaala maana' arrived at as th account of units viz. 'triti', 'muhurta', 'nimisha', all made of a 'paksha'! Where do the water and its flows originate and go to! The replies are that the time scale reside in water while water resides in Surya and clouds carry water. Lightnings originate from Surya; Surya facilitates evaporation of water from the oceans and clouds obtain water. Earth being full of life is vast and charming. The question as to who supports earth and heaven besides the space in between as the antariksha! Maharshi Vatsa opines that Lord Vishnu should be the answer and He also ably divides these entities as separate units. [Taittireeya Aranyaka]

Rig Veda vide VII-99-3 explains: *Iravati Dhenumati hi bhutam suyavaasini manushe dashasyaa, vyavasthabhnaa rodasi Vishnavete daadhartha prithivimabhito mayuusvaih/* or Hey dyaavaa-prithivi! With the sole objective of according auspicious -ness provide cows and food to human beings! Hey Vishnu Deva! you have bestowed stability to both the lokas and thus placed huge mountains and blessed all the entities. Thus Heaven and Earth are turned into incessant flows of Truth, Knowledge and Love thereby facilitating Yagjnas by Humans by the medium of Vedic Mantras, while Bhagavan Vishnu keeps the identity of earth and heaven apart and supports Earth from all sides with Surya Kiranas and their effulgence! Some Vidvans question as to what is the ability of Vishnu to render the hold of the Lokas. The reply states that the holding power originated from 'Pranaayaama' or the clutch and clapse of Vayu and Agni. Then the Vidwan Rishis delve deeper further about the four kinds of life's termination viz. death: the 'para', 'avama' the lower type, madhyama or the middle / medium and the fourth; this is based on the analogy of the strength of sound waves viz. para-pashyanti-madhyama and vaikhari or the ordinary speech. The Vidvans also sought reply from the distinction of Paapa- Punyas too. Now the replies: Surya is the cause of the Supreme Death- the *Para*. The medium type of death is caused by Vayu Deva the 'Pavamana'. The lower type of death is by Agni called 'avama'. The fourth is caused by Chandra or Soma viz. 'amum' leading to 'narakas'. The sinners who neither perform positive acts nor enjoy meaningful happiness. The two medium levels- higher and lower – are controlled by Vaayu, failing which Agni and these deaths definitely result in quick rebirths either as humans or other species as per their accounts of paapa punyas. As regards the last classification, the eighth Surya gives birth to the Sapta Suryas kill the evil doers and imprison them in the inner regions of prithivi-swarga named 'antariksha' by the Gods of Vasus. The sinners acquire non- physical bodies as per the designated sins and hells; some have no hands while others have no legs or hairs as miniature creatures reproduced by sweat or bacterial parasites. Now about Kashyapa the Eighth Surya: the Vidwan who realises the Truth also conquers sudden and untimely death- *apaitam mrityum jayati- ya evem veda!* Sadbrahmanas experience the state of ascent by Sapta Suryas to that of Kashyapa the eighth Surya the special guest of Indra Deva and of Agni!

As Rig Veda explains vide 3-26-7 : Kashyapa asserts: *Agnirasmi janmanaa Jaataveda ghritam me chakshuramritam ma aasan, Arkastridhaat rajaso vimanojasno gharmo havirasmi naam/* or ' I am Agni-the Atma or Brahma- the sarvagjna by birth. My eyes and vision are of tejas; my face is of Amrita Rasa. I am of three types of Praana comprising : Jada or raw- Food based- and of Vital Life; I am also of celestial nature. I am always the essence of Surya, besides the eternal Havish and Havivaahaka Agni!' Kashyapa Muni is also famed as a Seer or a Rishi the 'pashyaka' bestowed with subtle knowledge and subtle vision. He is Agni the representation of the Eight Suryas too!

Being worthy of commendation, Kashyapa like Agni Deva himself should deserve what Rig Veda vide 9-151-1 states: *Agne naya supathaa raaye asmaanvishvaani Deva vayunaani vidvan, yuyodhyasmajjuhuraanameno bhuyishthaaam te namayuktim vidheya/* or Agni Deva with celestial features! you are replete with the knowledge of the 'yajna jnaana' and 'yajna phala'; do lead us to the path of virtue to fulfillment and avoid the clumsy and narrow lanes of evil as invariably get caught by patent sinners on the route to narakas!)

Maitreyi Upanishad

Sarvam chedam kshayishnu pashyaamo yatheme damshama shakaadayas trina vanaspatayodbhuta pradvamsnah, atha kim etair vaa parenye mahaa dhanur daraash chakravartinah kechit sudyumna bhur- dyumnendradyumna kivalashva vadhriya ashvapatih shashabindur harischandrombarisha naanaktu saryaati yayaayanaranoyokshasyenaadayah, atha marutta bharata prabhritayo raajaanah, mishato bandhu vargasya mahathateem shriyam thyatvaasmaal lokaad amum lokam prayaataa iti, atha kim etauor vaa parenye gandharvaasuraa yaksha bhutagana pishaachoraga grahaadeenaam nirodham pashyaamah iti, atha kim etair vaanyaanaam shshanam mahaarna vaanaam shikarinaam

*prapatanaam dhruvasya prachalanam vrashchanam vaatarajjuunaam nimajjanam prithivyaah sthaanaad apasharanam suraanaam ityetad vidhosmin samsaare kim kaamopabhogaih, yair evaashitasyaa sakrud ihaavartanam drishyataa iti uddhartum arhasi, andhodapaanasto bheka ivaaham asmin samsaare bhagavan twam no gatistwam na gatih/*It is common knowledge that any thing or any Being or person is destined to perish like mosquitoes or gnats, grass or trees! Renowned warriors or Emperors of historic reputation like Sudyumna, Bhuridyumna, Indradyumna, Kuvalaashva, Youvanaashva, Vadhraashva, Ashva -pati, Sashabindu, Harischandra, Ambarisha, Anankta, Saryaati, Yayaati, Anaranya, Ukshasena, and the like had to perish finally. Quite a few Kings like Marutta, Bharata, and others took to renounce-ment by discarding wealth and fame from the mortal world to the other worlds of lasting glory. Besides human beings, destruction of extra terrestrial and superior Beings is equally inevitable as for instance Gandharvas, Asuras, Yakshas, Rakshasaas, Bhutas, Ganas, Pishachasas, Maha Sarpas, Vampires and so on. With the passage of ‘Kaala maana’ or the eternal Time Cycle, oceans had dried up, mountain peaks got smashed, the positioning of Pole Stars got dislocated, terrestrial positionings got disturbed, and even Devas experienced ‘sthaana bhamsha’ or dislodgment from their locations! Bhagavan! In this kind of ever-changing existence, what is the utility of the materialistic value and worth in such a boon that is bereft of Reality or anything short of ‘Paramaartha’ the Realisation of the Absolute Truth!

Bhagavad Gita – Akshara Parabrahma Yoga (16-17)

Aabrahma bhuvanaallokaah punaraavartimorjuna! Maamupyeta tu Kounteya punar-janma na vidyate/ Sahasra yuga paryantam aharyad brahmano viduh, raatrim yuga sahasraantam te – ahoraatra vido janaah/ Kounteya! Right from Brahmaloaka the Brahmanda or the entirety of the Universe is most certainly subject to destruction ultimately. Parameshwara is beyond comprehension and is the ever permanent. Those ‘Saadhakas’ who take to karma Yoga or Bhakti Yoga or Jnaana Yoga or whatsoever path they might select could reach my destination and succeed merger into me are permanent without return lives. Be that as it may, Brahma the exclusive creator of the Universe is subject to final destruction after hundred Brahma Years. Thousand Maha Yugas are of Brahma’s day time. This day time comprises thousand Maha Yugas. This day time comprises 14 manvantaraas and is one Brahma Kalpa the single day time of Brahma’s hundred years. Brahma’s one night when there is no activity of creation. As the hundred years of Brahma there would be Tri Loka Maha Pralaya!

Manusmriti Achaara Khanda : 64-74

Nimeshaa dasha chaashtou cha kashthaa trishatu taah Kalaa, Trishat kalaa muhurtah syadahoraatram tu taavatah/ Ahoraatre vibhajane Suryo maanusha maanusha daivike, Raatri swatnaaya bhutaanaam cheshtaayai karmanaamahah/ Piiitre raatrahana maasah pravibhagastu pakshayoh, Karmacheshtaa swahah krishnah shuklah swapnaaya sharvari/ Daive raatryhani varsha pravibhagastayoh punah, ahastadrodagayanam raatrah syaaddakshinaayanam/ Braahmasya tu kshapaahasya yatpramaanam samaasatah, aikakasho yugaanaam tu kramashastannibodhata/ Chatvaaryahum sahasraani varshaanam tatkrutam yugam, Tasya taavacchati sandhyaa sandyashascha tayaavidhah/Itareshu sandhyeshu sa sandhyeshu cha trishu, ekapaayena vartante sahasraani shataanicha/ Yadetparisankhyatmaadaaveva chaturyugam, Etad dwaadasha sahastram Devaanaam yugamuchyate/ Daivikaanaam yugaanaan tu sahasram parisankhyayaa, Braahmamekamaharjneyam taavateem raatrimeva cha/ Tadvai yuga sahasraantam Braahmaam punyamahaviduh, Raatrimcha taavateemeva tehoraatra vido janaah/ Tasya so -ahanirshasyaante prasuptah pratimuchyate , pratibuddhascha srijati manah sadasaatmakam/ At the time of Srishti, the Time Schedule as reckoned was as follows: The concept of Kaalamaaa or the Time Cycle is calculated on the basis of **Padardha** (Matter) and **Parithi** (Space); the sum of Space occupied and the movement of Matter determined is the **Paramaanu Samaya** (atomic time). Thus the Matter, Space and Time are measurable.

The Time Units were arrived as per the mix of these Entities called Transerenus or celestial atoms and the duration of integrating these entities. The flap an eye- blink is known as a nimesha; 18 such blinks make a kaashtha, three such kashtas make one kala, thirty kalas make one muhurta, thirty muhurtas make a day- and -night. Now about the division of Surya-Manushya-Deva related Day/Night is explained: In respect of Human Beings, the nights are for sleep and daytime is for 'karmaacharana' or of activity. Whatever is stated for humans is a thirty day-night combines or a month. Pitru Devas consider one set of 15 human day-nights as Krishna Paksha -as per Moon's course from the day one of Moon's full illumination being Pournami ie when the Moon's waning starts as they are active during that period. Now during and Shukla Paksha, Moon gradually picks up its luster from the Moon- Fall on Amavasya till the night when the glory of Its dazzle reaches the peak on Purnima. This period is what humans consider as auspicious. Now, while what human beings reckon as a full one year is just a day-night for Devas. The period of auspiciousness is Uttarayan for six months a year for Devas and thus Human Beings too perform all auspicious deeds; Uttarayan is as for the course of Surya from South to North while Sun's course from North to South is Dakshinaayan. Chandra Loka's parikrama around Earth is for a month, and the Parikrama of Chandra around Pitru Loka for a fortnight is a night and another fortnight a day. Now, Brahma's one raatri-divas or night and day comprise of Four Yugas of Krita-Treta-Dwapara-Kali Yugas. Krita yuga is of four thousand years reckoned as 360 days for humans and one Deva day; its sandhya or the yuga's terminal period is for 400 years and Sandhyaamsha is an additional 400 years totalling 4800 divine years or 1728000 human years. On similar analysis, Tretaayuga is for 3600 divine years or 1287000 human years; Dwapara yuga is of 2400 divine years or 664000 human years and Kali Yuga divine 1200 years or 432000 human years. The total of Four Yugas is 12000 divine years or 42420000 human years. Deva's one thousand years are accounted for Brahma Deva's single day time and another thousand divine years are of Brahma's one night. Thus Brahma's 'ahoratra' or day and night comprises of 120,00,000 of divine years or 432,00,00,000 human years. Thus ,after one thousand yugas, Brahma rests for the day and night and then resumes 'punah srishti' or revival of creation process again.)

Markandeya Purana

The Life-span of Lord Brahma was determined at hundred Divine years and the calculation of each year was conceived as follows beginning from the minimum measure of Time upwards: three nimeshas or blinks make one 'Kshana'; fifteen 'nimeshas' make one 'kashtas'; thirty kashtas make one 'kala'; thirty kalas make one 'Muhurta'; thirty Muhurtas make one day-night; thirty day-nights make one 'Paksha'; two Pakshas make one 'maasa'; six maasas make one 'Ayana'; two Ayanas make one 'Varsha' or a Year. The Ayanas in a Year are 'Dakshina Aayana' and 'Uttara Ayana'. Each human Year comprising three sixty five day-nights (Ahorathras) accounts for a 'Divya Ahoratra' (Divine day-night) and on this count, each Uttarayan is a Divine Day and Dakshinayan is a Divine night. One Divya Day-night thus is a full day-night year for human beings. As per Divya calculations, the total count of Four Yugas is twelve thousand years, the Satya Yuga comprising four thousand years, Treta Yuga three thousand Divya Years, Dwapara Yuga two thousand years and Kaliyuga of one Divya thousand years; the rest of two thousand years of the twelve thousand Divine Years is accounted for additional four hundred of Divine years of 'Sandhya' and an equivalent period additionally for 'Sandhyamsha' for Satya Yuga; three hundred years each for these periods in respect of Treta Yuga; two hundred years each of Dwapar Yuga and one hundred years each of Kali Yuga. In Lord Brahma's life span of hundred Divya Years, each day comprises fourteen Manvantaras and each Manvantara consists of one thousand 'Kalpas'. At each change of Manvantara, there is a fresh stock of Indras, Devas, and Sapta Rishis etc. There are seventy one Cycles of Four Yugas in each Manvantar. Viewed from the view point of human years, one Manvantara has three crore sixty six lakh two thousand years; by Divine Years, one Manvantara has one lakh fifty two thousand years. If this Period is multiplied four times, it would then equate Brahma's one day, that is, one million nineteen lakh twenty seven thousand Divya years; or, four twenty nine crores forty lakh (429, 40, 00,000) human years! After each day-night of Brahma, there occurs a 'Naimittika' Pralaya.

Brahmanda Purana

About the Cycle of Time and Kalpas and Manvantaras: 'If Brahma's age is hundred years, a day and night of his is a Kalpa (stated to be 8.67 billion years) comprising 28 Manvantaras; each Manvantara has 71 Maha Yugas and each Maha Yuga has 4.3 million years.(Satya Yuga is stated to be of 40 percent of Maha Yuga, Treta Yuga 30 percent, Dwapara Yuga 20 percent and Kali Yuga is 10 percent) But between each Manvantara, there is stated to be a gap of four yugas called Yuga Sandhi, while the intermediate time between Kalpas is Prati Sandhi. Each Kalpa has two parts: Purvaartha and Parartha. We are now in Varaha Kalpa (there are stated to be of thirty such Kalpaas) and Vaivaswara Manvantara while Brahma's age is calculated as 51 years and the first night!As Brahma spent his thousand Yugas long first night, he found water all around and resurrected Earth again -and on the broad lines of what Varaha Swarupa indicated- materialised formally the Chatur Lokaas, Sapta Dwipas and Sapta Samudras. He revived the Srishti of Antariksha, Sun, Moon and other Planets, Pitras, Time, Yugas, Purusharthas of Dharma-Artha-Kaama-and Mokshas. From his first face of the 'Chaturmukha', he created Gayatri, Ruks, Yagni related Agni shtoma etc; Veda Vangmaya, Veda Chhandas, and various Agni-Karyas; from his Southern Face were generated Yajur Veda, Traishthub Chhandas; Panchadasa Stomas and Brihat Stoma; from his western face emerged Saama Suktaas, Jagati Chhandas, Papta dasa Stoma; Atiraatra of Jyotishthoma etc; from Brahma's fourth Face emerged Atharva Veda, Anushtub and Vairaja Chhanda etc. Through out the Yuga Periods, there were countless species of Creation were materialised of 'Charaachara' or mobile and Immobile nature, defying description.

Matsya Purana explains

Human years are: Names of the Years are 1.Prabhava 2. Vibhava 3. Shukla 4. Pramoda 5. Prajapati 6. Angeerasa 7. Shri Mukha 8. Bhaava 9. Yuva 10. Dhatri 11. Ishvara12. Bahudhanya 13. Pramathi 14. Vikrama 15. Vrisha 16. Chitrabhanu 17. Svabhanu 18. Tarana 19. Parthiva 20. Vyaya 21. Sarvajeeth 22. Sarvadhari 23. Virodhi 24. Vikriti 25. Khara 26. Nandana 27. Vijaya 28. Jaya 29. Manmatha 30. Durmukhi 31. Hevilambi 32. Vilambi 33. Vikari 34. Sharvari 35. Plava 36. Shubhakruti 37. Shobhakruti 38. Krodhi 39. Vishvavas 40. Parabhava 41. Plavanga 42. Kilaka 43. Saumya 44. Saadharana 45. Virodhikruthi 46. Paridhavi 47. Pramadicha 48. Ananda 49. Rakshasa 50. Anala 51. Pingala 52. Kalayukti 53. Siddharthi 54. Raudra 55. Durmathi 56. Dundubhi 57. Rudhirodgari 58. Raktakshi 59. Krodhana 60. Akshaya. Normally the span of human life is hundred years. A human year is a day to Devas; Satya Yuga is stated to have a span of 4800 Deva Years; Treta Yuga 3600 Divine years;Dwapara Yuga 2400 years; Kali Yuga 1200 years; 12000 divine years one Maha Yuga; 1000 Maha Yugas make one Kalpa or a day to Brahma and two Kalpas one day and night to Brahma; Brahma's life span is 100 Brahma Years or two Pararthas; one Maha Kalpa is half of Brahma's life span; Brahma's present age is now fifty years plus;that is how our daily prayer states: Dwiteeya Parthaey! One Maha Kalpa there are a mind-boggling 311040 crore of human years. We are now in the 28th Kaliyuga of the First Day of the First Year of Sweta Varaha Kalpa, second Parartha in the reign of the Seventh Manu Vaivaswata. Kali Yuga is calculated to have commenced on 17th February 3102 BC of Julion Calendar. Each Manu rules for 71 Maha yugas. Brahma is 51 year old having lived for 155 trillion years. We are now in the Third Kalpa (Varaha Kalpa)

The 30 Kalpas are: Sveta, Nilalohita, Vaamadeva, Ratnaankara, Raurava, Deva, Brihat, Kandarpa, Sadya, Ishana, Tamah, Sarasvata, Agneya, Soma, Maanava, Tatpuman, Vaikuntha, Lakshmi, Savitri, Aghora, **Varaah**, Vairaja, Gauri, Maheswara, and Pitru.

GAYATRI MAHATMYA

Preface:*Omityaaksharam Brahma* and that is the Embodiment of Gayatri- the representation of ‘Tri Lokas’ or Earth-Atmosphere- and Beyond; ‘Tri-Kaalaas’ or the Past-Present-Future; ‘Tri Sandhyas’ or Ushah kaala -Madhyaahna- Saayam kaala; ‘Tri Gunas’ or Satva-Rajas-Tamo gunas; ‘Tri-Mano Tatvas’ or States of Mind viz. Gross-Subtle- Causal or Fundamental; and ‘Tri- Avasthas’ or States of Consciousness of Jaagrat-Svapna-Sushupti or Awakenness-Dream and Inward Vision.The kinetic energy generated by the ever revolving movement of the Universe comprising Bhur/Earth, Bhuvah / Planets and Swaha the Galaxy and the remainder is calculated at $Mass \times Velocity \times 2$. Thus the symbol of OM occupies a pre eminent status as the unmistakable medium to extol and realise the Supreme, to prefix all holy names, rites, Veda pathana, prayers, worships, Vratas, Sacrifices, and all possible deeds of virtue including ‘daana dharmas’, ‘Tirtha Yatras’ and so on. Whosoever is able to control the limbs and senses, stabilise the mind by ‘Yoga dhaarana’, concentrate one’s thoughts, aim at Paramatma by reciting AUM and unite praana the life energy into ‘brahma randhra’ shall indeed accomplish HIM! Thus Omkaara is like an unfathomable ocean into which all kinds of meditations and worships of various forms of Paramatma merge into! Practice of Gayatri worship thus leads to inward happiness, better sensory perception, stress management, emotional balancing, and pointed mental focus. Being the alternate incarnation of Devi Saraswati, Devi Gayatri is the representation of Vaak- Vidya-Vigjnana and the bridge from the deep Oceans of Samsara which is characterised as Illusion-Falsity-Ignorance to Sadhana- Indriya Nigraha- Medhas and thereafter to Self Enlightenment. Gayatri is the Symbol of Inner Strength, Knowledge and Purity of Inner-Consciousness.Pancha Mukha Gayatri with Five Faces represent Pancha Maha Bhutas or the Fundamentals of the Universe viz. Prithivi-Aapas-Tejas- Vaayu and Aakasha or Earth- Water-Fire- Air-and Sky. Thus She is the Composite Form of the Universe and of Charaachara Jagat further supplemented by the ‘Awareness’ which implies knowledge-wisdom-regulation-and the driving energy. She is also the Cause of Universal Creation and the Fall Out Effect or the ‘Bhakshya’ and ‘Bhojya’ or the ‘Anna’ the Food and the Enjoyer or the Living Beings. Devi Gayatri’s dashta hastas or ten hands are adorned with five ‘ayudhas’ viz. shankha; chakra, kamala, varada, abhaya, kasha, ankusha, ujjwala utensil, rudrakshi mala. Being the Outstanding Universal Link of Pancha Maha Bhutas on one side, Her Physical Form is of the ‘Panchendriyas’ of the Beings. The Panchendriyas **comprise:** Pancha Jnanendriyas viz. Ghrana-Rasa- Chakshu-Shrotra-Twak or smell, taste, see, hear and touch and Pancha Karmendriyas viz. nose-tongue- eyes- ears- skin respectively. She is the representation of Pancha Koshas or five sheaths of human body viz. Annamaya- Praanamaya- Manomaya-Vigjnaanamaya-Anandamaya, viz. the very basis of existence is food or Annamaya (Physical Energy), Praanamaya (Vital Energy), Manomaya (Mental Faculty), Vigyanamaya (Buddhi or Sharpness of Discrimination) and Ananda maya (Bliss). Seekers worship Gayatri by Panchaagnis or Five Fires viz. Garhapatya, Aahavaneeya, Dakshinaagni, Sabhya and Aavasatya representing Heaven, Cloud, Earth, Man and Woman. Further Gayatri represents Pancha Pranas viz. Prana-Apaana-Udaana-Vyana -Samana.

Now the Gayatri Mantra: *Om bhur bhuvah svah tat Savitur varenyam Bhargo Devasya dheemih, dhiyoyonah prachodayat*/Recitation of this Supreme Mantra acquires the qualities of the perfectly balanced person in terms of the qualities of virtue as per the laws of material nature. The word-by-word meaning of Gayatri Mantra is: Om : Almighty God; Bhur (Embodiment of Vital Energy); Bhuvaha (Destroyer of Suffering); Svaha (Embodiment of Happiness); Tath (That Almighty); Savitur (Bright like

Sun); Varenayam (The Supreme); Bhargo (demolisher of Sins); Devasya (the Divine Force); Dhimahi (May receive); Yo (Who); Na (Our), Prachodayat (Let inspire in right direction). In other words : Oh Almighty, You are the Creator of Life, Slayer of Sorrow, Bestower of Happiness and Creator of the Universe. May we receive Your Supreme Energy to raze our sins and guide us in our intellect in the right direction.]

A scientific explanation was offered by modern experts about the Gayatri Mantra: According to Astro-Physicists and Astronomers, a Sound is produced due to the fast movement of Earth, Planets, and Galaxy or the Milky Way, called Akshya Ganga, with some 100,000 million Stars. The Galaxy, the Moon and the Earth-all revolving around the Sun-each moving on their own axis at a mind boggling velocity of 20,000 miles per second, produce the Sound and the Sages named the Super Sound as OM. The Sum of the Gayatri Mantra states: The Earth (*Bhur), the Planets (*Bhuvaha), and the Galaxy (* Swaha) are rotating on their own axis at a great velocity as the Sound OM, which is the Formless Entity. The total Kinetic Energy generated by these movements balance the over-all energy consumption of Cosmos and this is named the 'Pranava' or the Body Energy ie Mass of Galaxies multiplied by two: Mass x Velocity x 2. That Supreme Entity (God) who manifests in the Form of Utmost Radiance (The Sun or Savitur) is indeed worthy of surrender (Varenayam). One should meditate (Dheemahi) upon the Light (Bhargo) of that Entity (Devasya) and perform the chanting of OM. May He(Yo) guide in the right Direction (Prachodayat) our (nah) Intellect (dhiyo)!

'Sandhyopasana'-Procedure, Meaning and Interpretation

Sandhya is the intermission of 'Ahoratras' or day and night as signified by Sun Rise and Sun Set. *Poorvaa Sandhyaa tu Gayatri Savitri madhyaa smritaa, Yaa bhavet paschima sandhyaa saa Vigjneyaa Saraswati/* The pre-noon is dominated by Devi Gayatri, noon time by Devi Savitri and the Sun set by Devi Saraswati and hence the respective Goddesses need worship at these times. Gayatri is of blood red complexion, Savitri of pure white Varna and Saraswati of black colour and they represent Brahma-Rudra-Vishnu Swarupas of Paramatma. Meditation of these forms of Almighty is basically through the representation of Aditya: *Udyantamastam yantamaadityam/* (Taittiriya Brahmana Upanishad). *Uttama Taarakopetaa madhyamaa Lupta Taaraka, Adhamaa Surya sahita Praatah Sandhyaa Tridhaamata/ Uttamaa Surya sahita madhyamaa lupta Bhaskara, Adhamaa Taarakopetaa Sayam Sandhyaa Tridhaamataa/* (Prah-sandhya is best performed in the presence of Stars on the Sky; when Stars are invisible then the time of Sandhya is of medium type but when Suryodaya has taken place then the Sandhyopasana is of minimal value. Conversely, the Saayam Sandhya is best done while Surya is still present, after Sunset the Sandhya is of medium worth but when Stars appear on the Sky the Sandhya worship is of poor quality.) Maadhyahnika Sandhya is scheduled at half prahara of the Sayamkaala Samaya. While taking bath for purification before 'Sandhyopasana' a devotee may recite the following Mantra: *Gangecha Yamunechaiva Godavari Saraswathi, Narmadey Sindhu Kaveri Jalosmin sannidhim kuru/ Pushkaraadyaani Tirthaani Gangaadyaah Saritastatha, Aagacchhantu Mahaabhaagaah Snaana kaaley sadaa mama/ Ayodhya Mathuraa Maayaa Kaashi Kaanchihyavantika, Puri Dwaravati Jneyaah Saptaitaa Moksha -daayikaah/* (May the waters flowing in the Rivers of Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri be present in the waters that I am bathing in. May Pushkara and other Tirthas as well as the Sacred Rivers like Ganga be present here. May also the Seven Sacred Kshetras of Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya (Haridwar), Kashi, Kanchi, Avanti (Ujjain) and Dwaravati as renowned be also present.) After bath, 'Arghya' (Water) / Dhyana (meditation) are offered to Surya Deva;

the devotee would then wear clean, two white robes, settle down on a 'kushasana'(mat) facing 'Ishana'(North-East) direction, commence 'Achamana' with *Harih Om* and Pavitra Mantra viz. *Apavitrah pavitrova sarvaavasthaangatopivaa, yasmaret Pundareekaaksham sa Baahyaantarah suchih* (Let me remember the name of 'Pundarikaaksha' always-whether physically clean or otherwise-with cleanliness from within or without); while doing 'Achamana' or sipping spoonfuls of water thrice with Gayatri Mantra, utter the Mantras viz. *Om Rutamcha Satyam cha abheedaat tapasodhyajaayata, tato Ratrasya Jaayata tatassamudro Arnavah* (Even before meditation, the Self-illuminated Para Brahma created the authentic Truth and from that Truth generated darkness which created the waters of the Oceans); *Samudraarnavaat Adhi Samamvatsaro Ajaayata, Ahoraatraani vidadhat Vishvashya mishato vashee/* (Days/ nights as also Years and the concept of Time got materialized only after the waters of Oceans were generated and Paramatma held the Universe in His full control); *Suryaa Chandra masow Dhaata Yathaa purvam kalpayat, Divamcha Prithiveem chaaantariksha mathosvah/* (As in the past, Dhata (Paramatma) created Surya Chandras, Celestial Region including Heaven, besides the Sky and Earth).

Aachamana three times: *Om Keshavaaya svaaha, Om Narayana svaaha, Keshavaaya svaaha/* [Note: Brahmanas take in the sip so as to reach the navel, Kshatriyas upto the throat and Vaishyas upto the mouth corners. There after *Om Govindaaya namah, Vishnave namah-* wipe both the palms with water; *Om Madhusudanaaya namah, Om Trivikrayaaya namah:* wipe both the lips from left to right with right hand; *Om Vaamanaaya namah, Om Shridharaaya namah/* sprinkle drops of water on head with right hand; *Om Hrisheekshaaya namah, Om Padmanaabhaaya namah/* sprinkle drops of water on feet with left hand; *Om Damodaraaya namah/* sprinkle water drops on head; *Om Sankarshanaaya namah/* touch the chin with all the fingers; *Om Vaasudevaaya namah, Om Pradyumnaaya namah/* touch the right and left sides of the nose with right hand; *Om Aniruddhaaya namah, Om Purushottamaaya namah/* touch both the eyes; *Om Adhokshajaaya namah, Om Naarasimhaaya namah/* touch both the ears; *Om Achyutaaya namah/* touch the navel; *Om Janardanaaya namah/* Touch the heart with right hand; *Om Upendaraaya namah/* touch the head; *Om Haraye namah, Om Shri Krishnaye namah/* touch both the shoulders. *Tiraaachamet-dvih parimriya :* three aachamanas- wipe right foot thumb and both the lips from right to left sides. *Sakrudupasprushya:* Touch both the lips with right hand; *Savyam Paanim paanim paadou prokshati/* Sprinkle water with right hand around left hand on both the feet. *Shirah chakshshee naasike shrotre shirah/* Sprinkle water drops on head-eyes-nose-ears and head/ Then the devotee performing Sandhya Vandana sips water by way of 'Achamana' once again. Thereafter, the devotee is to spray water in all the directions as also on the self while performing 'bhutocchhaatana' with the mantra : *Uttintashtantu Bhuta Pishaachaah ete bhumi bhaarakaaah, eteshaamavirodhena Brahma Karma samaarabhe/* May 'bhuta pishaachaadi' evil spirits fly away as well as the Aishadvargaas like Kaama-krodha-lobha-moha-mada- matsaraas be cleared. Then, he readies himself to do 'Praanaayaam' and recites Pranava while proposing the seven 'Vyahritis'(relevant expressions of Gayatri) viz. *Om Bhuh, Om Bhuvah, Om Suvah, Om Mahah, Om Janah, Om Tapah, Om Satyam, Om tatsavatir varenyam bhargo devasya dheermahi dhiyo yonah prachodayaat, Om Apo Jyoti rasomritam Bharma Bhurbhuvatswarom/* simultaneously sprinkle drops of water on one's own head. Pranayama (Control of Prana) is performed by touching the nose by the thumb and second finger and air must be taken in slowly through the left nostril and sent out by the right nostril; inhalation is known as 'Puraka', retaining is 'Kumbhaka' and exhalation is Rechaka, the three tasks done by 1:3:2 ratio, completing one Pranayama.

The 'Viniyogas' or attributions of Gayatri / Shiro Mantras are as follows:

Gayatri Mantra -*Omkaarasya Brahma Rishih, Devi Gayatri Chhandah, Paramaatmaa Devataa, Sapta*

Vyahriteenaam Prajaapatirrishih Gayatri ushnik anushtup Brihati Pankti trishtup jagatyah chhandaamsya AgniVaayu Surya Brihaspati Varunendra Vishvadeva Devatah/ (Praanaayama Viniyogah)Shiro Mantra -Tatsavituriti Vishwamitra Rishih Gayatri chaandah Savitaa Devataa Apojyotiriti Sirasah Pajapatirishi yajuschhando BrahmagniVaayu Suryaa Devataah/ (Praanaayaamey Viniyoga. After the Pranayaama Viniyoga, the devotee has to perform Kara Nyasa and Anga Nyasa as follows: Kara Nyasa: Om Angushthaabhyaam Namah (Touch both the thumbs); Om Bhuh Tarjanibhyam namah (Touch both thumbs with both fore-fingers); Om Bhuvah Madhyamaabhyaam Namah (Touch both thumbs with both middle fingers); Om Swaha Anaamikaabhyaam Namah (Touch the thumbs with ring wearing finger); Om Bhur bhuvah kanishtikaabhyaam namah (Touch the thumbs with little fingers) and Om Bhur bhuvah swah karatala hastaabhyaam namah (Touch both the back sides of the palms) Anganyasa:: Om Hridayaa Namah (Touch the heart with right hand); Om Bhu Sirasey swaha (Touch the head); Om Bhuvah Shikhaya vashat (Touch the tuft); Om Swah kavachaaya hum (Touch shoulders with both the hands); Om Bhurbhuvaha netraa -bhyaam voushat (Touch the eyes with respective hand-fingers); Om Bhurbhuvah swaha Astraya phat (take the right hand behind the back and clap to rest it on left palm). After Pranayama as above, then Gayatri Avahana Sankalpa states: Mamopaattha Samasta duritakshaya dwara Shri Parameswara preetyartham Praatah Sandhyaamupaasishy/ or Maadhyaahnikaam Karishey/ or Saayam Sandhyaamupaasishey (May I begin to worship Goddess Sandhya in the morning/afternoon/evening by destroying all of my sins by the grace of Parameswara). In the morning Gayatri is in the form of ‘Tryaikshari’, Veda Maataa and Brahma Vaadini: Aaagachha varade Devi Tryaiksharey Brahma Vaadini, Gayatricchandasaam Maata Brahmayoney Namostutey; In the afternoon she arrives as Savitri by a vrishabha (bull) with white robes as Rudra Vaadini: Madhyaahney Vrishabha aruudhaam Savitreem Rudra yonim chaavaahayerudravaadineem; in the evening Gayatri appears mounted on Garuda as Sarasvati with crimson robes as VishnuVaadini : Saayamtu Garudhaarudhaam Peetaambharasamaavitaam, Sarasvatim Vishnuyonim maahvayed Vishnu Vaadineem/ After the Sankalpa follows Maarjanam by the Mantra : Aapohishta mayo bhuvah, tana oorje dadhaatana/ maheranaaya chakshase, yo vah Shiva tamo rasah/ tasya bhajayateha nah/Usiteeravah Matarah, Tasma arangamama vah, yasya kshayaya jinvath/ Apo janaa yahta cha nah/ Om bhurbhuva suvah/ (Aapohishta: The Goddesses of Water indeed; Mayo bhuvah: are the causes of granting happiness; tah nah: Such Goddesses; Mahe Ramaaya chakshasey : are Great and charming to view; oorje dadhaatana :provide nourishment ; sivatamo rasah: most propitious bliss; Usitih Matara iva: like loving mothers; Bhajayateha yasya kshayaaya: make us worthy of that bliss; Jinvatha tasmaa vah aram gamaamah :we go in for that bliss with great eagerness; Apo janaayata: may we be born in rebirth with pure knowledge.

Pratah Sandhya (Morning) Mantra Sandhya states: Suryascha ma manyuscha manyupatayascha manukriteebhyah/ Paapebhyo rakshantaam/ Yadraatriya paapamakaarsham/ manasaa vaachaa hastaabhyaam/ Padhmyamudarena sisna/ Raatristadavalumpatu/ yat kimcha duritam mayi idamaham mamaamritayanau/ Surye Jyotishi Juhomi swaha (Protect me from sins committed due to rage and temper as also by the Sun and the Deity of Fury apart from the wrongdoings by my mind, conversation, limbs, stomach and sex; once such sins are excused, may the Great Radiance of Sun God make me worthy of Salvation).By so saying, sip water from the hollow of right palm.

Madhyaahna Sandhya (Noon time) Mantra : Apah punantu Prithivim Prithivi puta punatumaam, Punatu Brahmanaspatih Brahma puta punatu maam, Yaduchhistam abhojam yadva duscharitam mama, Sarvam punatu maamaposatam chapratigrahagg swaha (Let the Deity of Water clean up the Earth, me and my

Guru who is a depository of Vedas and let Vedas sanctify me. May the wrong food that I consumed, the questionable deeds that I did or the dubious presents that I received from doubtful characters be all mollified, as I propose myself to get purified by the flames of the Swaha or Paramatma.) After this Mantra, the devotee should sip water signifying it as a vow.

Sayamkala Sandhya (Evening) Mantra states: *Agnischa ma manyuscha manyupatayascha manyu kritebhyah Paapebhyo rakshantaam yadanha paapamakaarsham, Manasa vaachaa hastaabhyam Padbyaam udarena sishnaa Ahastadalumpatu, yat kincha duritam mayi idamaham maamamritayonau satye jyothishi juhomi swaha/* (Let all the Deities of Fire, fury and ferocity safeguard me from their attack on me due to the unpardonable sins perpetrated by me by the day by my mind, stomach, sex organ; may I be purified me of despicable deeds and qualify me to proceed on the path of Moksha. *Achamana-Punarmarjana and Marjana* be followed with the Mantra viz. *Dadhikravinnno akaarisham jishnorasvasya vajinah, surabhi no mukha karat prana Aagumshi tarishat/* (May the Lord who is the Sustainer, Administrator and Evaluator in the form of Hayagriva the Victorious and the Seat of knowledge be worshipped to facilitate our Life without any obstacle). This Mantra may be followed by the aforementioned Mantra *Aapo hi satha* while sprinkling water on the head of the devotee and touching the feet and thereafter recite *Apo janayata cha nah* while water is thrown round the head.

Arghya pradaanam: Recite the Gayatri Mantra pour water thrice to the East in the morning, face north and pour water twice in standing position and face west in sitting posture as follows: *Om Bhurbhuvassavah, Tat Saviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi, dhiyo yo nah prachodayaat/* *Praanaayama* should be done there after.

Deva Tarpana: *Adityam Tapayami, Somam Tarpayami, Angarakam Tarpayami, Budham Tarpayami, Brihaspatim Tarpayami, Sukram Tarpayami, Shanaischaram Tarpayami, Rahum Tarpayami, Ketu Tarpayami// Keshavam Tarpayami, Narayanam Tarpayami, Govindam Tarpayami, Vishnum Tarpayami, Madhusudanam Tarpayami, Trivikramam Tarpayami, Vaamanam Tarpayami, Shridharam Tarpayami, Hrishikesham Tarpayami, Damodaram Tarpayami.*

Gayatri Avahaana: *Omityekaaksharam Brahma, Agnirdevata Bhrahma ityaarsham Gayatreem Chhandam Paramaatmam Swarupam, Sayujyam viniyogam/* (The unique word AUM is of Parabrahma form, Agni is Main Devata, Brahma is related to Rishi, Gayatri is related to Chhanda, Paramaatma is all-pervasive and the terminal point of Moksha); *Aayaatu varada Devi Aksharam Brahmasammitam, Gayarim chhandasaam Maatedam Brahma jushaswa me* (May I humbly request Gayatri to guide me about Brahma); *Yadannaatkurutey paapam tadhanaat pratimuchyatey, Yadraatrikurutey paapam tadraatriyat pratimuchyateyi* (let the sins committed during the day be destroyed in the day itself; let the sins done during the night be destroyed on the same night) *Sarva varney Mahadevi Sandhya vidyey Sarasvati, Ojosi Sahosi Balamasi Bhraajosi Devaanaam Dhaamanaamasi Vishvamasi Vishvaayuhu sarvamasi Sarvaaurabhibhuurom Gayatriimaavaayahayaami Savitreemaavaahayami Saraswateemaavaahayayami, Shriya maavaahayaami, Balamaavaayaha yaami* (Sarva Varna! Sandhya Vidya! Sarasvati! Maha Gayatri! You are the embodiment of Radiance, the Grip Holder and of the Strength; the Shakti of Devatas, the Life of the World, the Veritable Universe and the Totality! May I invoke You Omkara Swarupa Savitri! May I invoke Chhandasas, Rishis and Lakshmi!); *Gayatryah Gayaree Chhandah Vishwamitra Rishih, Savitaa Devataa, Agnirmukham, Brahma Shiro, Vishnur hridayam, Radrah Sikhaah, Prithivi Yonih, Praanaa paana vyaanodaana samaanaa sa praanaa*

swetavarnaa saamkhyayana sa gotra Gayatree Chaturvimsatyaksharaa Tripadaa Shatkukshih, Panchaseershohanayaney viniyogah (I invoke Gayatri, whose Chhanda is Gayatri, Rishi is Vishwamitra, Agni is Face, Brahma is head, Vishnu is heart, Rudra is the tuft, Prithi is the generator as also Gayatri with Five Praanaas viz. Praana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samaana; white coloured; with the Gotra of Rishi Samkhyayana; with twenty four Alphabet Letters; Three feet; six bellied; five heads and the main deity of ‘Upanayana’). *Gayatri Karanyaasah: Om tatsavituh Angushthabhyaam namah, Om varenyam tarjanee –bhyam namah, Om bhargo Devasya Madhyamaabhyam namah, Om Dheemahi Anamikabhyam namah, Om Dhiyoyonah kanishthikabhyaanamah, and Om Prachodayaat Karatalaprishthaabhyaam namah. Gaytri Anganyasah: Om tatsavituh hridayaayanamah; Om Varenyam Sirasey Swaaha; Om Bhargo Devasya Shikhaayavoushat; Om dheemahi kavachaayahum; Om dhiyoyonah netratrayaaya voushat; Om prachodayaat Astraaya phat; Om Bhurbhuvassurom iti dikbhandhayah.*

*Dhyaanam : Muktaa vidruma hema neela dhavala cchaayair mukhyai stryakshanair yuktaamindu nibaddha ratna makutaam tatvaartha varnaatmikaam, Gayatreem varadaa -bhayamkusa kasaa shrubhram kapaalam gadaam shankham chakra madaara vinda ugalaam hastairvaham teem bhajey/(I pray to Gayatri who has five faces with the colours of Pearl, coral, golden, blue and white; three Aksharas or Letters, Moon-ornamented headgear, tatwas and varnaas, seated on kusha grass mat denoting purity and also possessing Kapaalam or skull, Gada or mace, Shankham or conchshell, chakram or wheel and two lotuses). In the morning Gayatri is of Rigveda Swarupa as a baby Girl with Brahma Shakti possessing four faces, seated on a soft hamsa (swan) and with shining jewellery; in the afternoon she is called Savitri as a grown-up youth with Rudra Shakti, three eyes, tiger skin, having Mudras of khatvanga (cut-limbed), trishula, Aksha valaya and Abhaya/ Protective Mudras; as mounted on a bull. In the evening, Gayatri assumes the form of Saraswati with Vishnu Shakti wearing purple silk dress exuding black colour as an elderly woman seated on a ‘Garud’. Visioning Devi Gayatri according to the timings, the devotee would then commence the recitation of Gayatri Mantra saying *Mamopaattha samasta duritakshayadwara Sri Parameswara preetyartham : Pratah Sandhya Gayatri Maha Mantra japam karishye/ Madhyahnika Gayatri Maha Mantra Japam karishey/ Saayam Sandhya Maha Mantra japam karishey viz. OM BHUHRBHUVASSAHA TAT SAVITUR VARENYAM BHARGO DEVASYA DHEEMAHI DHIYO YONA PRACHODAYAAT/* Each time, Gayatri Japa is best performed one thousand and eight times which is reckoned as Uttama; one hundred and eight times as Madhyama or fifty four /twenty eight times as heena / minimum.*

Gayatri Upasthaanam: First perform Pranaayama and recite: *Uttamey Shikhare Devi Bhumyaam parvata murdhani, Brahmanebhohyanujnaanam gahha devi yathhaa sukham/* (Devi Gayatri, You have the clearance to stay on top of the Meru Mountain by Brahmanas); *Stuto maya varadaa Vedamataa prachodayanti pavaney dwijaataa, Ayuh Prithiviyam dravinam Brahma varchasammahyam datvaa prayaatum Brahmaloam* (Devi Gayatri! You are the bestower of our desires and the epitome of Purity, Veda Rupa and of two forms; kindly bless me on Earth to provide me long life, prosperity, Brahma Teja!) *Surya Upasthanam (Pratahkaala): Mitrasya charshani dhritah shravo devasya sanaasim/ Satyam chitrasravastamam Mitro janaan yaayaati prajaanan Mitrodaadhara Prithvee –mutadyaam/Mitra krishtee ranimishaabhichashte Satyaaya havyam ghrithavadvidhema// pra sa Mitra marto Astu Payaswaan yasta Aditya sikshati vratena/ Na hanyatey na jeeyatey twoto nainama gumho Asnotyantito na dooraat* (Surya is omni-scient and supports earth, heaven and all Beings vigilantly. May I offer my oblations of ghee to secure lasting blessings to that Supreme God as he is the Universal friend to sustain Dharma, to

insulate us against diseases, worldly difficulties and sins from far and near, as also to give us longevity and happiness.)

(*Madhyahne*): *Aasatyena rajasa vartamano nivesayannamritam martyam cha/ Hiranyayena Savita rathenaa devo yaati bhuvna vipasyan* (Surya travels all over the Universe by his golden chariot with a special eye at the World and witnesses by the light of the souls of Gods and mortals of each one of their activities); (*Mitrasya Varunasya Agneh Chakshuh Devaanaam chitram Aneekam Jagatastasthushascha Atma Suryah Daivaa Prithiveem Antarihsham Aa Purasthat sukram ucharat Devahitam chakshuh tat Saradassatam pasyama jeevama saradassatam Nandaamaa saradassatam modaamaa saradassatam Bhaavanaa Saradassatam Shrunavaama saradassatam Prabravaamaa saradassatam Ajeetah Saradassatam jyok cha Suryam drsey* (Let Surya who is the embodiment of Mitra, Varuna and Agnideva be empowered to dominate the soul of all moving and non moving Beings on Earth, Heaven and Atmosphere; May we vision and pray to him for hundred years and enjoy life for that time; May we be blessed with fame, hear pleasant things for hundred years, converse good words for hundred years, be victorious for hundred years and be with Sun God for hundred years.)

(*Sayam kaale*): *Imam me Varuna shrudhee havamadyaa cha mridaya, Tatvaamavasyuraachakey Tatva yaami Brahmanaa Vanda maanastadaasaastey Yajamaano havirbhiih Ahedamaano Varuneha Bodhyurusagumsa maa na Ayuh pramosheeh// Yacchiddhi te visho yataaa pradeva Varuna vratam/ mineemasi dyavidyavi/ Yat kinchedam Varuna daive janebhidroham manushaascharaamasi/ Acchitte yattava dharma yuyopima maa nastamaadenaso Deva Risheeh/ Kitavaaso yadriripurna deevi yadvaaghaa satyamuta yanna vidma/ Sarvaa taa vishya stitireva devataa te syaama Varun priyasaah /* (Varuna Deva! Kindly consider my request and provide me protection as I seek shelter with Veda Mantras; do not ignore my appeal to reduce my life span. I might have omitted my daily prayer knowingly or otherwise but do save me of the sin of negligence. Hereafter, I should be careful). After the 'Upasthana' of Surya / Varuna there ought to be Samishtyabhivandanam or collective salutation to Deities: *Sandhyayai namah Saavitrainamah Gayatrai namah Saraswatyai namah Sarvaabhyo devaatabhyo namo namah/ Kaamo kaarsheen manyurakaarsheen namo namah/* (My prostration to the Deities Sandhya, Savitri, Sarasvati and all others; do forgive my sins done under the influence of passion and fury).

Devata Vandanam: Praachai namah, Dakshinayai namah, Praachai namah, Urthvayai namah, Atharayai namah Antarikshayai namah, Bhumyai namah, Brahmaney namah, Vishnavey namah Mrityavenamah/ (Salutationns to the Deities of East, South, West and North as also to those in upper, lower and the Skies, to Earth, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra). *Aakaasaat Patitam toyam Yatha gachati Saagaram, Sarvadeva namaskarah Kesavam prati gacchati Om nanah iti//* (Just as waters from Sky descend to Oceans, all salutations reach Keshava); *Kayenavaachaa manaserviyairva buddhyaatmanaavaprakriteh swabhaavaat karomi yadat sakalamparasmai Naarayanayeti Samarpayami/* (I dedicate whatever has been done by body, speech, mind and senses to Narayana). *EtattParameshwaraarpanamastu/* (May this Sandhya Vandana Karma be dedicated to Parameshwara!

Highlight Sandhya Vandana Mantras -Maha Narayana Upanishad

Apah punantu Prithivim Prithivi puta punatumaam, Punatu Brahmanaspatih Brahma puta punatu maam/ Yaduchhistam abhojyam yadva duscharitam mama, Sarvam punantu maamaaposatam chapratigrahagg swaha (Let the Deity of Water clean up the Earth, me and my Guru who is a depository of Vedas and let

Vedas sanctify me. May the wrong food that I consumed, the questionable deeds that I did or the dubious presents that I received from doubtful characters be all mollified, as I propose myself to get purified by the flames of the Swaha or Paramatma.) *Agnischa ma manyuscha manyupatayascha manyu kritebhyah Paapebhyo rakshantaam yadanha paapamakaarsham, Manasa vaachaa hastaabhyam Padbyaam udarena sishnaa Ahastadalumpatu, yat kincha duritam mayi idamaham maamamritayonau satye jyothishi juhomi swaha/* (Let all the Deities of Fire, fury and ferocity safeguard me from their attack on me due to the unpardonable sins perpetrated by me by the day by my mind, stomach, sex organ; may I be purified me of despicable deeds and qualify me to proceed on the path of Moksha.) *Suryascha ma manyuscha manyupatayascha manukritebhyah/ Paapebhyo rakshantaam/ Yadraatriya paapamakaarsham/ manasaa vaachaa hastaabhyam/ Padhbyamudarena shishna/ Raatristadava -lumpatu/ yat kimcha duritam mayi idamaham mamaamritayanau/ Surye Jyotishi Juhomi swaha* (Protect me from sins committed due to rage and temper as also by the Sun and the Deity of Fury apart from the wrongdoings by my mind, conversation, limbs, stomach and sex; once such sins are excused, may the Great Radiance of Sun God make me worthy of Salvation).

Omityekaaksaram Brahma, Agnirdevata Bhrahma ityaarsham Gayatreem Chhandam Paramaatmam Swarupam, Sayujyam viniyogam/(The unique word AUM is of Parabrahma form, Agni is Main Devata, Brahma is related to Rishi, Gayatri is related to Chhanda, Paramaatma is all-pervasive and the terminal point of Moksha).

Aayaatu varada Devi Akhsharam Brahmasammitam, Gayarimchhandasaam Maatedam Brahma jushaswa me (May I humbly request Gayatri the mother of Chhandas and the boon showering Devi to guide me about the imperishable Brahman)

Yadahnaatkurutey paapam tadhanaat pratimuchyatey, Yadraatrikurutey paapam tadraatriyat pratimuchyate, Sarva varney Mahadevi Sandhya vidyey Sarasvati (Sandhya-Vidya Controller Devi Sarasvati! Let my sins committed during the day be destroyed in the day itself; let the sins done during the night be destroyed on the same night. Sarva Varna Swarupa! Sandhya Vidya! Devi Sarasvati the personification of Knowledge and Vidya) *Ojosi Sahosi Balamasi Bhraajosi Devaanaam Dhaamanaamasi Vishvamasi Vishvaayuhu sarvamasi Sarvaaurabhibhuurom, Gayatriimaavaayahayaami Savitreemaavaahayami Saraswateem aavaahayayami, Shriya maavaahayaami, Balamaavaayaha yaami/ Gayatryah Gayatree Chhandah Vishwamitra Rishih, Savitaa Devataa, Agnirmukham, Brahma Shiro, Vishnur hridayam, Rudrah Sikhaah, Prithivi Yonih, Praanaa paana vyaanodaana samaanaa sa praanaa swetavarnaa saamkhyayana sa gotra Gayatree Chaturvimsatyaksharaa Tripadaa Shatkukshih, Panchaseershohanayaney viniyogah*

(Sarva Varna! Sandhya Vidya! Sarasvati! Maha Gayatri! You are the embodiment of Radiance, the Grip Holder and of the Strength; the Shakti of Devatas, the Life of the World, the Veritable Universe and the Totality! May I invoke You Omkara Swarupa Savitri! May I invoke Chhandasas, Lakshmi and Shakti!) I invoke Gayatri, whose Chhanda is Gayatri, Rishi is Vishwamitra, Agni is Face, Brahma is head, Vishnu is heart, Rudra is the tuft, Prithi is the generator as also Gayatri with Five Praanaas viz. Praana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samaana; white coloured; with the Gotra of Rishi Samkhyayana; with twenty four Alphabet Letters; Three feet; six bellied; five heads and the main deity of 'Upanayana'). *Om bhuh, Om bhuvah, Ogum Suvah, Om mahah, Om janah, Om tapah, Ogum Satyam, Om tatsavitur varenyam bhargo Devasya dheemahi, dhiyoyonah prachodataat, Omaapo jyotee rasomrita Brhama bhuhbhuvah suvarom/*

Om: Paramatma! Om Bhumi, Om Aakasha, Om Swarga, Om Mahar loka, Om Janar loka, Om Tapoloka, Om Satya Loka; [Bhur Bhumi or the Embodiment of Vital Energy, Bhuvah or the destroyer of Evil and Suffering, Svaha (Symbol of Happiness)] Thath (that Almighty) may we meditate that Savitur the principal cause of luminosity the Godhead transcendent to the Lokas but sustaining them to exist ; Savitur (Bright like Sun); Varenyam (The Supreme); Bhargo (demolisher of Sins); Devasya (the Divine Force); Dhimahi (May receive); Yo (Who); Na (Our), Prachodayat (Let inspire in right direction). In other words : Oh Almighty, You are the Creator of Life, Slayer of Sorrow, Bestower of Happiness and Creator of the Univerese. May we receive Your Supreme Energy to raze our sins and guide us in our intellect in the right direction. *Uttamey Shikhare Devi Bhumyaam parvata murdhani, Brahmanebhohyanujnaanam gahha devi yathhaa sukham/* (Devi Gayatri, may you remain on the highest peak on Earth like the Meru Mountain as esteemed by Brahmanas as the form of Paramount Sanctity and Bliss); *Stuta maya varadaa Vedamataa prachodayanti paavaney dwijaataa, Ayuh Prithiviyam dravinam Brahma varchasammahyam datvaa prayaatum Brahmlokam* (As extolled by us Devi Gayatri! You are the bestower of our desires and the epitome of Purity, Veda Rupa and of two forms of Brahma Loka and Inside the orbit of Surya Deva; kindly bless me on Earth to provide me long life, prosperity, Brahma Teja!

Celestial Images of Devi Gayatri

(Maha Deva Gayatri) *Purushasya vidma sahasraakshasya Maha Devasya dheemahi, tanno Rudrah prachodayaat/* May we meditate that Maha Purusha and absorb the knowledge and might of that myriad eyed Maha Deva ! The most significant explanation of of Gayatri is vide Rigveda Mandala III.Sukta 62. Stanza 10 is : *Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dheemahi dhiyo yonah prachodayaat/* That ‘buddhi’ or the heart felt mentality which impacts ‘sanmarga’ the path of virtue is worthy of worshipping Savita Devata, demolishes blemishes and leads us to uphold the divine path! Chhandogya Upanishad III. xii.1) *Gayatri vaa idam sarvam bhutam yad idam kim cha, Vaag vai gaayatri, Vaag vaa idam sarvam bhutam Gaayati cha traayate cha/*(Gayatri is the manifestation of all the Beings in Creation. Speech is Gayatri. It is that Vaak Devi who sings for and provides protection for one all! In the days of yore there were three principal media to secure Soma juice viz. Gayatri, Trishtup and Jagati; but only Gayatri could reach the kingdom of Soma as the other two got fatigued and retreated. Besides excellence in singing viz. ‘gaana’, Gayatri does ‘traana’ or protection of the ‘Praanis’ too)

(Rudra Gayatri) *Tat Purushasya vidmahe Maha Devaaya dheemahe, tanno Rudrah prachodayaat/* May we be impelled to realise that Supreme Person Rudra Deva the embodiment of Jnaana, enlightenment and the secret of Supreme Realisation!

(Vighnesha Gayatri) *Tat purushaya vidmahe Vakratundaaya dheemahe, tanno Dantih prachodayaat/* May that Maha Purusha Ganeshwara the elephant faced with a powerful trunk and tusk bestowing auspiciousness and Vidya, whom Devas and humans are invoked before every action to ward off evil forces and all kinds of obstacles.

(Nandi Gayatri) *Tat Purushaaya vidmahe Chakratundaaya dheemahi, tanno Nandih prachodayaat/* May we invoke that form of divinity known as Chakratunda or Nandikeshwara the servant, seat and vehicle of Lord Shiva wielding chakra and discuss while Shiva was engaged in battles with demons gasping with the mouth.

(Shanmukha Gayatri) *Tatpurushaya vidmahe Mahasenaaya dheemahi, tannah Shanmukha prachodayaat/* May Bhagavan the Six Faced Kartikeya the embodiment of chivalry as the Commander-in Chief of Deva Sena and the enforcer of Dharma guide us and impel to seek enlightenment to realise the Essence of Truth.

(Garuda Gayatri) *Tatpurushaaya vidmahe Suvarnapakshaaya dheemahi, tanno Garudah prachodayaat/* We seek to worship Suvarnapaksha or with golden wings Garuda Deva the swallower of Snakes and the chariot of Maha Vishnu who is everready to carry the latter within a fraction of second to places where the latter's devotees urge Him to save at once.

(Brahma Gayatri) *Vedaatmanaaya vidmahe Hiranyagarbhaaya dheemamahi, tanno Brahma prachodayaat/* We beseech Hiranyagarbha Brahma Bhagavan the known manifestation of the Supreme Reality and the root of Chatur Vedas reciting them from his four faces to impact our consciousness towards the path of estimable action.

(Narayana Gayatri) *Naraayanaaya vidmahe Vaasudevaaya dheemahi, tanno Vishnah prachodayaat/* We prostrate before Narayana Vaasudeva to lead us to righteousness and reveal us the Reality and reach us to the arduous path of Bliss. The term Narayana as resting on deep waters preserving the Universe that He creates as His effective deliberation and cause. Vaasudeva is the Antaryaami as the ' ayaktam- shasvatam -Vishnum -anantam -ajam -avyayam'.

(Bhaskara Gayatri): *Bhaskaraaya vidmeheMahaadyutikaraaya dheemahi, tanno Adityah prachodayaat/* May we perform 'pradakshana namaskaaras' or circumambulatory greetings to Pratyaksha Bhaskara the original cause of radiance and illumination of Trilokas for uprooting darkness and bestow life and sustenance to all the Beings and demolish 'agjaana' or ignorance to lead us jyoti : 'tamasomaa jyotir gamaya -mrityormaa jyotirgamaya/

(Vaishwaanara Gayatri) : *Vaishvaanaraaya vidmahe leelaalaaya dheemahi, tanoo Agnih prachodayaat/* May Agni Deva the ready means of worship and cooking as the singular source of radiance and 'homa karyaas' by which all the devas are invoked and contented with 'mantra yukta ajyaas' by way of oblations through the singular means of ghee and food. Manduka Upanishad describes Vaishvaanara as ' Lolaayamaana': I.ii.4) *Kaali Karaali cha Manojavaa cha Sulohitaa yaa cha Sudhumravarnaa, Sphulingini Vishvarupi cha Devi Lolaayamaanaa iti Sapta Jihvaah/* (The Sapta- Jihvaas or the Seven Tongues of Fire Flames are Kaali (black), Karaali (ferocious), Manojava (Speed of Mind), Sulohita (extremely red hot), Sudhumra varna (coloured like thick smoke), Sphulingini (emitting cracky sparks) and Vishvaruchi (blazing all around); these are the 'lolaayamaana- agnis' or the ever moving flames of speed and spread!)

(Katyaayani Gayatri) *Katyaayanaaya vidmahe Kanyakumari dheemahi, tanno Durgih prachodayaat/* May Devi Katyaayani be realised and Devi Kanyakumari be worshipped. We seek the blessings of Durga Devi generously and lead us to Reality and Realisation.

Conclusion:Gayatri is a step by step effort eligible for Dwijas or the twice born Hindus. Purusha Sukta states: *Brahmanosya mukhamaaseet bahoo raajanyah kritah vooroo tadasya yad vaishyahi padabhyaagum shudro aajaayata/* From Prajapati's face emerged Brahmanas, kshatriyas from His hands, His thighs the Vaishyas and from His feet the Lower class. The first three being dvijas or twice born are

eligible for the worship of Gayatri. Keeping in view the contemporary social restraints, where there is a will, there is a way. There are two words in constant social usage viz. possibilities and impossibilities. Another phrase states: 'as far as possible'. The Text Book Procedures are understandably complex but this is no way of non-starters or total negation. Exceptions of observing Sandhya Vandana in terms of regularity, daily periodicity, timings, duration, and intensity are purely personal of the 'dvijas' and as per one's own Conscience. Indeed Antaratma is what an individual mind which is responsible for one's actions. *Shreyaan svadharmo nirgunah paradharmatvanishthitaat, svadharme nidhanam shreyah paradhar -mobhayaapahah/* Even one's own the 'dharma' or way of life might appear listless and that of other's looks more attractive, one ought to firmly believe in one's own as that of others is fearful and least respected. *Karmanyevaadhikaaraste maa phaleshu kadaachana, maa karma phala heturbhuuh maa te sangostvakarmani* You have the liberty *only* to perform the duties as prescribed and have no control over the fruits of the works and hence do not neglect the responsibilities since the fruits shall be reaped as per the Nature's Laws.

Gayatri Sahasramana (Thousand names of Devi Gayatri)

Achintya lakshana, Avyata, Arthamatri Mahesvari, Amritarnava madhayasta, Ajita, Aparajita, Animadi -- gunadhara, Arkamandalasamsthita, Ajara, Aja, Aparas, Adharma (She has no dharma or caste etc.), Akshasutradhara, Akaradyaksharanta (from the letter 'AA' to 'Ksha'), Arishadvargabhedini, Anjandri-pratiksha, Anjanadrinivasini, Aditi, Ajapa, Avidya, Aravinda nibhekshana, Antarvahisthita, Avidya - dhvamsini, Antaratmika, Aja, Ajamukhavasa, Aravindanibhanana, Ardhamatara (thus called Vyanjana – varnatmika), Arhadaananjana, Arimandalamardini, Asuraghi, Amavasya, Alaksighni, Antyajarchita, Adi Lakshmi, Adi Sakti, Akriti, Ayatana, Adityapadavichara, Adityaparisevita, Acharya, Avartana, Achara, Adi Murti Nivasini, Agniyi, Amari, Adya, Aradhya, Asanasthita, Adharanilaya, Adhara, Akasanta nivasini, Aham Tatva, Adyakshara Samayukta, Antarikshasarupini, Adityamanadalagata, Antaradhvanta nasini, Indira, Istada, Ishta Indiranivekshana, Iravati, Indrapada, Indrani, Indurupini, Ikshukodanda Samyukta, Isusandhanakarini, Indranilasamakara, Idapingalikarupini, Indrakshi, Isvari, Devi Ihatraya vivavarjita, Uma, Usha, Udunibha, Urvakaphalanana, Uduprabha, Udumati, Udupa, Udumadhyayaga, Urdha, Uddhakesi, Urdhadhogati bhedini, Urdhavahupriya, Urmimalavaggranthi- dayani, Rita, Rishi, Ritumati, Rishidevanamaskrita, Rigveda, Rinahatri, Rishimandala charini, Riddhida, Rijumargastha, Rijudharma, Rijuprada, Rigveda nilaya, Rijvi, Luptadharna pravartini, Lutadivara sambhuta, Luta divisa harini, Ekakshara, Ekamatra, Eka, Ekanishtha, Aindri, Iravatarudha, Aimushmika prada, Omkara, Oshadhi, Ota, Otaprotas nivasini, Aurbba, Aoushadha sampanna, Anda madhyasthita, Ahankara nirupini (Visargarupini), Katyayani, Kalaratri, Kamakshi, Kamasundari, Kamala, Kamini, Kanta, Kamada, Kalakantini, Kari kumbhastala bhara, Karavira Suvasini, Kalyani, Kundalavati, Kurukshetra nivasini, Kuruvinda dalakara, Kundali, Kumudalaya, Kalajibha, Kalarasya, Kalika, Kalarupini, Kamaniguna, Kanti, Kaladhara, Kumudvati, Kausiki, Kamalakara, Kamakara prabhanjani, Kaumari, Karunapangi, Kakubanta, Karipriya, Kesari, Kesavanuta, Kadamba kusuma priya, Kalindi, Kalika, Kanchi, Kalasodbhava Samstuta, Kamamata, Krakupati, Kamarupa, Kripavati, Kumari, Kunda- nilaya, Kirati, Kiravahana, Kaikeyi, Kokilalapa, Ketaki, Kusumapiya, Kamandaludhara, Kali, Karma nirmula karini, Kalahamsa gati, Kaksha, Krita, Kumatkamangala, Kasturi tilaka, Kamra, Karidragamana, Kuhu, Karpuralepana, Krishna, Kapila, Kuhurasraya, Kutastha, Kudhara, Kukusisthakhilavistapa, Khadgaketadhara, Kharbha, Khechari, Khagavahana, Khatangadharini, Khyata, Khagarajosparisthita, Khalagni, Khanditajara, Kadhakishnya pradayani, Khandendu tilaka, Ganga, Ganesha guha pujita, Gayatri, Gomati, Gita, Gandhari, Ganalolupa, Gautami, Gamini, Gadha, Gandharasara sevita, Govinda

charanakranta, Gunatraya vibhavita, Gandharvi, Gahvari, Gotra, Girisa, Gamana gami, Guhanavasa, Gunavati, Gurupapa pranasini, Gurbhi, Gunavati, Guhya, Gopatavya, Gunadayani, Girija, Guhya matangi, Garuda dhvajaVallabha, Garvapaharini, Goda, Gokulashta, Gadadhara, Gokarna nilayasakta, Guhyamandala vardhini, Gharmada, Ghanada, Ghanta, Ghora Danava Mardini, Ghrini Mantra Mayi, Ghosha, Ghana Sampada Dayini, Ghantaravapriya, Ghrana, Ghrini Santhushti Karini, Ghanari mandala, Ghurna, Gritachi, Ghanavegini, Gnana dhatu mayi, Charcha, Charchini, Charuhasini, Chatula, Chandika, Chitra, Chitramalyayi bhushita, Chaturbhuj, Charudanta, Chaturi, Charitaprada, Chulika, Chitra vastranta, Chandrama Karna kundala, Chandrahasa, Charudatri, Chakori, Chandrahasini, Chandra dhatri, Chakori, Chauri, Chora, Chandika, Chanchat vagyadini, Chandrachuda, Choravinasini, Charu chandana liptangi, Chanchachachamaravijita, Charumadhy, Charumati, Charugati, Chandila, Chandrarupini, Charu homapriya, Charva, Charita, Charubahuka, Chandramanadala madhyasta, Chandramandala darpana, Chakravakastani, Chesta, Chitra, Charuvilasini, Chitra svarupa, Chandravati, Chanrama, Chandanapriya, Chodayitri (impelling Jivas to action), Chirapragna, Chataka, Charuhetuki, Chhatrayata, Chhatradhara, Chhaya, Chhanda paricchhadha, Chhayadevi, Chhandra nakha, Chhannendriaya vishaparnini, Chhandonushtup parishtantha, Chhidropadrava bhedini, Chedha, Chhatrasvari, Chhinna, Chhurika, Chhelanpriya, Janani, Janmararahita, Jataveda, Jaganmayi, Jahnvi, Jatila, Jatri, Jaramarana varjita, Jambudvipa Vati, Jwala, Jayanti, Jalasalini, Jitendriya, Jitakrodha, Jitamitra, Jagatpriya, Jatarupamayi, Jihva, Janaki, Jagati, Jara, Janitri, Jahnutanaya, Jagatrayahitaisini, Jvalamuli, Japavati, Jvaraghi, Jitavistapha, Jitakrantamayi, Jvala, Jagtriti, Jvaradevata, Jvalanti, Jalada, Jyeshtha, Jayaghosha sphota dinmukhi, Jambhini, Jimbhana, Jrimbha, Jvalanmanikya kundala, Jinjikka, Jananirghosha, Jinjha Maruta vegini, Jhallakivadya Kusala, Nripa, Nibhuj, Tanka bhedini, Tankabana Samayukta, Tankini, Tankiganakritaghosha, Tanakiya moha rosha, Tankarakrani, Tha Tha Savdaninadini, Damari, Dakini, Dimbha, Dundamaraikanirjita, Damari-tantra margastha, Danda damuari nadini, Dandiravasaha, Dimbhalasat Krida parayana (dancing happy in battles), Dhundi Vighnesa Janani, Dakkha hasta, Dhilivraja, Nityajnana, Nirupama, Nirupama, Narmada, Triguna, Tripada, Tantri, Tulasi, Taruna, Tara, Trivikrama padakranta, Turiya pada gamini, Turiya dityasamkasa, Tamasi, Tuhina, Tura, Trikala Sampanna, Trivali, Trilochana, Tri Sakti, Tripura, Tunga, Turanga Vadana, Timangilagila, Tibra, Tristothra, Tamasanini, Tantra matra Viseshajna, Tarimadhy, Trivistapa, Trisandhya, Tristani, Tosha Samstha, Talapratakapini, Tantakini, Tisurabha, Tuhina chala vasini, Tujala Samyukta, Tahahara Valipriya, Tilahomapriya, Trilochana Priya, Titha, Tamala Kusumakriti, Taraka, Triyuta, Tanvi, Trisanku Parivari Priya, Talodari, Tirobhasha, Tatamka Priya vadani, Trijata, Tittree, Trishta, Tribhida, Tarunakriti, Taptakanchana Samkasa, Tapta Kanchana Bhushana, Triabaka, Trivarga, Trikalajnana dayani, Tarpana, Triptida, Tripta, Tamasi, Tumvarustuta, Tarksyatha, Trigunakara, Tribhagi, Tanuvallari, Tatkari, Tharava, Thanta, Dohini, Dinavatsala, Danantakari, Durga, Durgasura nibharhini, Devariti, Devaratri, Draupadi, Dhunda bherushna, Devyani, Duravasa, Daridya bhedini, Diva, Damodara priya, Dipta, Digvasa, Digvimohini, Dandakaranya nilaya, Dandini, Deva Pujita, Deva Vandita, Divisada, Dveshini, Danavakriti, Dinana thustha, Diksha, Daivasa- disvarupini, Dhatri, Dhanurdhara, Dhenur dharini, Dharmacharini, Dhurandhara, Dhanur Dharini, Dhanada, Dhanya dohini, Dharmasila, Dhanadhyaksha, Dhanurveda Visarada, Dhriti, Dhanya, Dhaitapada, Dharmarajya priya, Dhruva, Dhumavati, Dhumakesi, Dharma Sastra prakarshini, Nanda, Nandapriya, Nidra, Nirnuta, Nandanatmika, Narmada Nalini, Nila, Nilakanta Samasraya, Rudrani, Narayana Priya, Nitya, Nirmala, Nirguna, Nidhi, Niradhara, Nirupama, Nithyasuddha, Niranjana, Nadabimbu Kalatita, Nadabindu Kalatmika, Nrisimhini, Nagadhara, Nripanga Vibhushita, Naraka klesanasini, Narayana padodbhava,

Niravadya, Nirakara, Narada priyakarini, Nanajyoti, Nidhida, Nirmalatkika, Navasutradhara, Nidhi, Nirupadravakarini, Nandaja, Navaratnadhya, Naimisaranya Vasini, Navanita priya, Nari, Nila jeemuta nisvana, Nimeshini, Nadirupa, Nilagriva, Nisisvari, Navamali, Nisumbhagni, Nagaloka Nivasini, Nava jambunada prakhya, Nagalokadhi Devata, Nupura kranta charana, Narachitta pramodini, Nimagna Rakta Nayana, Nirghata-Sama-Nisvana, Nandanodya nilaya, Nirvyahopacharini, Parvati, Paramodara, Parabrahmatmika, Para, Panchakosa vinurmukta, Pancha pataka nasini, Para chitta vidhanajna, Panchika, Pancharupini, Purnima, Parama priti, Parateja Prakasini, Purani, Paurushi, Punya, Purandarikanubheksana, Patala tala Nimmagna, Prita, Priti vivardhani, Pavani, Pada sahita, Pesala, Papanasini, Prajapati, Parisranta, Parvata stana mandala, Padmapriya, Padmasamstha, Padmakshi, Padma sambhava, Padmapatra, Padmapada, Padmini, Priyabhashini, Pasupasa vinirmukta, Purandari, Puravasini, Pushkala, Purusha, Parbha, Parijata kusuma priya, Patirvata, Patirvatangi, Pushpahasa Parayana, Prajnavati suta, Pouthri, Putrapujya, Payasvini, Pattipasa dhara, Pankti, Pitriloka pradayani, Purani, Punyaseela, Pranatarti vinasini, Pradhyumna Janani, Pusta, Pitamaha parigraha, Pundaripuravasa, Pundari samanana, Pritujangha, Pritu bhujja, Pritu pada, Pritodari, Pravala sobha, Pingakshi, Pritavasa, Prachavala, Prasava, Pustida, Punya, Pratishtha, Pranava, Pati, Pancha arna, Panchavani, Panchika, Panjarasthitha, Paramaya, Parajyoti, Paraprithi, Paragati, Parakashtha, Pasupa hasa, Pritudara, Pitangi, Pitavasa, Pitasaya, Pisachini, Pita Kriya, Pisachaghi, Patakshi, Patukriya, Pancha bhaksha priyachara, Puthana prana ghatini, Punyagavana madhyasta, Punya-theertha nisevita, Panchagni, Parasakti, Paramadhada karini, Pushpa kandasthita, Pusa, Poshikakila visthapa, Panapriya, Pancha sikha, Pannagopari sayani, Pancha matratmika, Prithvi, Patika, Pitrudohini, Purana nyaya mimamsa, Patali, Pushpa gandhini, Punya priya, Paradatri, Paramargaika gochara, Pravala sobha, Purnasa, Pranava, Palhabodari, Phalini, Phalada, Phalgu, Phutkari, Phalakakriti, Phanindra bhoga sayana, Phani mandala mandita, Balabala, Bahumata, Bala tapani bhumsuka, Vandaya, Balabhadra priya, Badava, Buddhi Samsthit, Bandi Devi, Bilavati, Badisaghi, Balipriya, Bandhavi, Bodini, Buddhirbanduka kusuma priya, Balabhanu prabhakara, Brahmi, Brahmana Devata, Brihaspati- sthuta, Brinda, Brindavani Vihara, Balakini, Bilahara, Bilavasa bahudayaka, Bahunetra, Bahupada, Bahu karnavatamsika, Bahu bahu yuta, Bija rupini, Bahurupini, Bindunada kalatita, Bindu nadavsa rupini, Buddhagodhanguli trana, Badarasrama vasini, Brindaraka, Brihat Skanda, Brihati, Banapatrini, Brindadaksha, Bahunuta, Vanita, Bahu Vikrama, Baddha Padmasanasina, Bilva patra talasthita, Bodhi druma nija vasa, Badhista, Bindu darpana, Bala, Varasana vati, Badabanala vegini, Brahmanda bahirantashtha, Brahma kankana sutrini, Bhavani, Bhishanavati, Bhavini, Bahyacharini, Bhadra Kali, Bhujangakshi, Bharati, Bharatasaya, Bhairavi, Bhisha kankara, Bhutida, Bhuti malini, Bhagini, Bhoganirata, Bhadrada, Bhuri Vikrama, Bhutavasa, Bhrigulata, Bhargavi, Bhu surarchita, Bhagirathi, Bhogavati, Bhavastha, Bhishangvara, Bhamina, Bhogini, Bhasa, Bhavani, Bhuri dakshina, Bhargatmika, Bhamavati, Bhava bhandha Vimochani, Bhajaniya, Bhuta dhatri ranjita, Bhuvanesvari, Bhujangavalaya, Bhima, Bherunda, Bhaga dheyini, Mata, Maya, Madhumati, Madhu jihva, Manu Priya, Maha devi, Maha Bhagya, Maliri, Minalochana, Mayatita, Madhu manasa, Madhu drava, Manavi, Madhu sambhoota, Mithila pura vasini, Madhukaitava samharthi, Medini, Mega malini, Mandodara, Maha Maya, Maithili, Masrina priya, Maha Lakshmi, Maha Kali, Maha Kanya, Mahesvari, Mahendri, Merutanaya, Mandara kusumarchita, Manjumanjira charana, Mokshada, Manju bhashini, Madhudravini, Mudra, Malaya, Malayanvita, Medha, Marakastyama, Magadhi, Menakatmaja, Mahamari, Maha vira, Maha Syama, Manustuta, Matrika, Mahibhasha, Munudapada Vikrama, Muladharishtha, Mugha, Manipura nivasina, Mrigakshi, Mahisuradha, Mahishasura mardini, Yogasana, Yoga maya, Yoga, Youvanakasraya, Youvani, Yuddha madhyastha, Yamuna, Youga dharini, Yakshini, Yoga Yukta, Yaksha raja prasutini, Yatra, Yana

bindhanajna, Yadu vamsa Sambhava, Yakaranti hakaranta, Yajushi, Yajna rupini, Yamini, Yoga nirata, Yuta dhana bhayankari, Rukmini, Ramani, Rama, Revati, Renuka, Rati, Raudri, Raudrapriyakara, Rama Mata, Rati priya, Rohini, Rajyada, Reva, Rasa, Rajiva lochana, Rakesi, Rupa sampanna, Ratna simhasana stitha, Raktamalyambara dhari, Ratnagandha vilopana, Raja hamsa samaruddha, Rambha, Rakavali priya, Ramaniya Yugadhara, Rajitakhila bhutala, Ruru Charma Paridhara, Ratini, Ratnamalika, Rogesi, Rogasamhari, Ravini, Romaharshini, Ramachandra Pradakraanta, Ravana chcheda karana, Ratna Vastra Parischchinva, Rathastha, Rukma bhushana, Lajjadhivevata, Lola, Lalita, Ling dharini, Lakshmi, Lola, Luptavisa, Lokini, Lokavisruta, Lajja, Lambothari, Lalana, Loka Dharini, Varada, Vandita, Vidya, Vaishnavi, Vimalakriti, Varahi, Viraja, Varsha, Varalakshmi, Vilasini, Vinata, Vyoma madyastha, Varijasana Samstitha, Varuni, Venu Sambhuta, Viti gotra, Virupini, Vayu mandala madhyastha, Varijasana samstitha, Varuni, Venu sambhuta, Vitihotra, Virupini, Vayu mandala madhyasta, Vidhi Kriya, Vishnu Patni, Vishnu mati, Visalakshi, Vasundhara, Vama deva priya, Vela, Vajrini, Vasudohini, Vedyakshara Paritamgi, Vajapeya phalaprada, Vasavi, Vamajanai, Vkakunthalaya, Vara, Vyasa Priya, Varmadhara, Valmiki parisevita, Sakambhari, Siva, Santa, Sarada, Saranagati, Satodari, Subhachara, Sumbhasura mardini, Sobhavati, Sivakara, Sankarardha saririni, Sona, Subhasya, Subhra, Sirah Skanda karini, Saravati, Sarananda, Sarajjyotana, Subhanana, Sarabha, Sulini, Sabari, Suddha, Sukhavahana, Srimati, Sridharananda, Sravana nanda dayini, Sarvani, Sarbhari vandya, Sadbhasha, Sadritu priya, Sadadhara sthita Devi, Shanmukha priya karini, Sadanga rupa Sumati, Surasura namaskrita, Sarasvati, Sadadhara, Sarva mangala karini, Samaganapriya, Sukshama, Savitri, Samasambhava, Sarva vasa, Sadananda, Sustani, Sagarambara, Sarvaisyarya priya, Siddhi, Sadhu babndhu parakrama, Saptarshi mandala gata, Somamandala vasini, Sarvajna, Sandrakaruna, Samanadhika varjita, Sarvottunga Sangahina, Sadguna, Sakaleshtada, Saragha (Bee), Surya tanaya, Sukhesi, Somasamhati, Hiranya varna, Harini, Hrimkari, Hamsa vahini, Kshauma vastra paritangi, Kshirabdhi tanaya, Kshama, Gayatri, Savitri, Parvati, Sarasvati, Vedagarbha, Vedaroha, Sri Gayatri, and Paramvika.

[Reading, hearing or memorising the Great Names of Devi Gayatri with cleanliness of body and mind, devotion and sincerity as contained in Devi Bhagavata would indeed yield unimaginable fruits of destroying the gravest sins committed, ensuring prosperity and well being as also leading a disease free and contented life. Particularly significant are the eighth lunar days when the Gayatri Saharsanamas are rendered, after one's own daily Sandhya vandana, Dhyamam, Japam, Homam and absolute concentration and commitment, on a strictly 'Nishkama' basis or without anticipations of results. The Saharanamavali ought not to be made available indiscriminately to anybody for bravado or cheap publicity. A strict caution is being imposed that only those really deserving persons of 'Achara' and dedication should have access to these Mighty and Highly Powerful Mantras of Devi Gayatri.]

Shri Krishna Charitra

As the most dreaded Daitya Kalanemi ruled over the entire Martyaloka and harassed the entire Public day and night, Bhagavan Vishnu terminated him but he came back in his next birth as Kamsha the son of

Ugrasena; it was at that juncture there were a huge stock of Rakshasaas like Arishta, Dheniuka, Keshi, Pralamba, Naraka, Sunda, and Banasura the son of Bali Chakravarti and most of the Evil was spread over as Rulers of several Kingdoms. Devi Bhumi was unable to bear the brunt of such Evil Forces and made a reverential appeal to all the Devas and through them to Brahma Deva and the latter made a powerful appeal to Bhagvan Vishnu to save the Earth which was being crushed by extraordinary pressure on account of the Evil .

In response to the Stuti by Brahma, Bhagavan assured that two of his 'Keshas'-one Shewta or white one and another a Shyama or dark complexion would be pulled out to soon descend as his 'Amshas' or incarnations on Earth and lighten its weight by uprooting all the Evil Forces and advised the Devas also assume appropriate Rupas as human beings in the task of destroying the Rakshasas and humans in the form of Rakshasas. Bhagavan further instructed Yoga maya to perform a series of deeds including the birth of six sons to Devaki [they were Kalanemi's sons devoted to Vishnu and the father cursed the sons that they would be killed by them in his hands in the next birth as per 'Harivamsha']

As King Kamsa was obsessed with the warning of Sage Narada that the eighth child of Devaki would kill him, he imprisoned Devaki and his brother-in-law who agreed to deliver all his progeny as soon as they would be born, Kamsa spared killing them and merely imprisoned them. Now, the game plan that Vishnu explained to Yogamaya was as follows: She would transfer Devaki's seventh son who would be of Sesa's Amsha as an embryo into the Garbha of Vasudeva's second wife Rohini so that the Public would believe that out of fear Devaki's seventh child was a miscarriage but that Sesa-amsha would be known as Samkarshana as he would be implanted or attracted to Rohini's garbha; the Ashtami Putra would be Bhagavan himself born to Devaki but Yogamaya would be conceived to Yashoda; there would be a transfer of Bhagavan Krishna by Vasudeva to Yashoda and the girl child Yogamaya would be brought back to Mathura in the prison of Devaki; as in the past, the Yoga maya, the so called Eighth child thus transferred would fly away and warn Kamsa that the real Bhagavan was already born and soon kill Kamsa. Bhagavan blessed Yogamaya to undertake the deeds assigned and Indra would take her as his own sister; she would kill a number of Rakshasaas like Shumbha and Nishumbha; she would be known as Bhuti, Sannati, Kshaanti, Kaanti, Akasha, Prithwi, Dhruvi, Lajja, Pushti, Usha and various other Shaktis in the Universe.

As per the plan indicated by Bhagavan Vishnu, he was born to Devaki Devi and along with Vasudeva gave his appearance in his full glorious form with four hands armed with Shankha-Chakra-Saranga and Gada for a while before taking the form of a boy; the violent winds sweeping Mathura herebefore became cool and calm by the midnight hour; Gandharvas sang tuneful hymns; Devatas showered celestial flowers from the heavens; clouds made lightnings and mild thunders from the sky; Vasudeva transferred the child to Gokula into the house of Yashoda and Nanda wading across the River Yamuna making way during the rain while Sesa Naga provided cover; and Vasudeva brought the female child Yogamaya from the bed of Yashoda who was unconscious back to the prison in Mathura. Meanwhile, the Security personnel of the prison of Devaki-Vasudeva were lulled to deep sleep till the 'Operation of Child Transfers', i.e. Bhagavan Krishna to Yashoda's bed and of Yogamaya to that of Devaki's. Kamsa reached the prison and despite the wailing protests of his sister sought to toss the child against a stone as he did to seven other babies in the past, but the child flew from his hands and appeared on the sky as a Mayashakti with eight hands and shouted at Kamsa: Hey Kamsa! What is the use of your wasted breath in trying to toss me; your death would take place with certainty soon as the incarnation of Vishnu has already been

born and would kill you again as you were the Kalanemi Daitya in your previous birth; so better plan soon to save your skin! Having said, Devi Maha Maya disappeared. Kamsa then thought that there was no point in keeping Devaki and Vasudeva in prison and called for an urgent conference of his Daitya Allies like Keshini, Dhenuka, Putana, Arishta and others to chalk out an action plan to the Boy who was born and addressed them as follows: ‘Devas headed by Indra are seeking to kill me and us headed by Jarasandha; we had already witnessed the trials of Devatas in several of battles in the past, when they could never show their chests but only their backs! Had Indra forgotten the recent incident of his trial to stop rains in our Kingdoms and we forced the clouds to burst out and we had plentiful of rains and crops! I feel sorry for the desperation with which the Devas are once again trying to challenge us; it is highly amusing that they desire to kill me! In any case we have to be alert any way and double up our efforts!

In right earnest, the efforts of the Daityas to demolish Krishna even as a toddler were planned and executed; Kamsa first despatched Mayavi Putana in disguise as a pretty woman to breast-feed poisonous milk to Krishna but quite playfully Krishna bit her nipple as she was instantly killed; the entire Gokula was aghast as to how the Toddler had a miraculous escape and Nanda prayed to Bhagavan to save the child from all kinds of mishaps saying: May Bhagavan protect the child from all the directions of North-South-East and West; may Madhusudana save the child from the Vidashaas of North East-South East-SouthWest and North West; may Hrishikesha guard the child from the Sky and may Adi Sesha Deva shield the boy from Earth!

There have been a series of miracles that followed the Putana incident from time to time as the two brothers were growing in Yashoda-Nanda’s house. One day Madhusudana was kept under a Shakata (Cart) in the backyard of their house and the child apparently cried for milk and threw up his legs while lying down and the cart was pushed up and got broken into pieces; the children around witnessed that the child did throw up the cart with his feet! The parents wondered as to how a child could do it! They performed a Puja with flowers-fruits-curd and ‘Akshatas’ or rice grains to ward off any Evil eye! After a few days Gargaachaarya performed Namakarana; the younger one as Krishna and the elder as Balarama. In course of time, the boys were able to crawl and disappear amid the flock of cattle and apply cow dung on their bodies; both Yashoda and Rohini were fed up and tied to a heavy stone used for pounding grains which was kept in between two huge Yamalarjuna Trees in the backyard and got busy with their household chores. Suddenly, there were heavy sounds as the two huge trees fell down and the neighbours witnessed that two Celestial Beings emerged from the trees and flew away! Krishna was called Damodara as there was a scar around his waist due to the black mark of the rope with which Yashoda tied Krishna to the heavy stone.

As queer incidents like the killing of Putana, lifting of cart, sudden sand storm and uprooting of huge trees were happening, Nanda desired to shift to Brindavana from Gokula and made the entire population agree to the arrangement. All the ‘Vraja vaasis’ shifted to the new place and in course of time, the boys came of teen age, adopted distinct dress code, sported a golden headgear with peacock feathers and flute and excelled themselves as unique flutists especially as cowherds in the large company of Gopas and Gopikas exchanging practical pranks and mischief. One day, Krishna went with his friends without Balarama and while wandering came across a frightful water body known as the place in which Kaliya Serpent and its family stayed; the companions of Krishna suggested that the particular pond should be avoided as the water in it was highly poisonous as thirsty human beings, cattle and even birds would die instantly. But Krishna never heeded the warnings and from a tree top on the banks of the pond dived into

it even with full awareness that the tree was burnt due to the poisonous flames that emitted from the pond. Gopala Ganas raised a hue and cry and informed one and all in Brindavan and the entire public got collected around the lake. Nanda Kumar was lost in dismay while Yashoda and quite a few Gopikas were readying to leap into the water, but Balarama cooled down the agitated relatives and the public stating that Krishna was not an ordinary human being and that he was Bhagavan Vishnu himself; he conveyed to Krishna as follows: Deveshwara! Are you not aware that you are Ananta; and if so why are you displaying the Manava Bhaava or the characteristics of human beings! You are yourself the ultimate refuge of the Universe as its Creator-Presever-Terminator just as the axis of a wheel and its spokes! Indeed you are the embodiment of Three Lokaas and Three Vedas; Jagannaatha! You have assumed human form to demolish the Evil Forces and lighten the burden on Earth. Krishna! It is time that you discard this childishness and human features and quickly control the poisonous teeth of the cruel serpent once for all! There inside the poisonous pond the whole family of Kaliya surrounded Krishna and the enormous serpent sought to encircle his body; but Krishna smiled even as what Balarama said and fisted and pounded the most obnoxious creature in such a way that he held his tail with one hand and jumped up on its hoods and compressed them with mighty force; as Krishna brought the serpent in total control the latter obeyed Jagannatha and the unusual spectacle of floating and dancing Krishna atop the creature's hoods delighted the entire Vraja Praja! The poisonous water of the pond was full of Kaliya's red blood and his wives and children begged of Krishna not to kill it. The humiliated Kalia realised the magnificence of Krishna and extolled him stating: Even Brahma, Rudra, Chandra, Indra, Marudganaas, Ashvini Kumaaraas, Vasuganas and Adityas could not commend you adequately, how could I pay tributes to your excellence! Then Krishna instructed Kaliya and his large family to leave the pond at once and assured that his formidable enemy Garudmaan would recognise his footprints and let them pass to reach the Sea in which they could reside fearlessly for long time.

After the Kaliya incident, there were the exterminations of Dhenukasura who entered the group of cows which Krishna took out along with Balarama and other Gopas as also of Pralambasura who quietly joined the Gopas and participated in a game of carrying on his back the elder brother Balarama and flying him away but the latter suppressed the Asura by his ever increasing body weight and finally the Asura collapsed to death. There were quite a few other killings by Krishna of many Asuras in an exercise of lightening the evil forces on Earth; Vrishabasura was exterminated, Daitya Keshi was despatched to hell and scores of other Daityas were slaughtered. Then there was the anger of Indra who was not traditionally worshipped by Vraja vaasis on the arrival of Sharat Ritu but as per the advice of Krishna they did not; Indra's fury resulted in torrential rains and washed out Vraja Bhumi but Krishna lifted Govardhana Mountain by his little finger to protect the Gokula Praja and provided shield to them all and there by destroying the ego of Indra. But Indra's fury was only to popularise Krishna's magnificence by creating an opportunity that Krishna indeed was Supreme. During the times that followed, the Gopikas of Vraja displayed intense attachment and infatuation for Krishna that culminated in Raasa-leelas or ecstatic dances in groups in which there were as many Krishnas as Gopikas on one to one count besides a Unique Krishna belonging to one and all!

Devarshi Narada then felt that the time was ripe enough to provoke and destroy the major villain Kamsa and made a friendly call to the King. He conveyed to Kamsa the various deeds of Krishna and Balarama who now entered the teens and that it might be a good idea to invite them to Mathura to meet their parents and celebrate their trip to Mathura. The evil-minded Kamsa felt that as the Vraja Brothers might become more powerful and difficult to destroy by the day, he planned for a friendly trip to Mathura and asked

Akrura the Yadava Elder to personally visit Gokula- Brindavan and escort Krishna and Balarama, ostensibly to attend a Dhanush Yajna on the next Chaturdashi and also enjoy the celebrations like ‘Malla Yuddhas’ (wrestling matches) by the notorious Chanura and Mushtikaas. Kamsa day-dreamt that after killing Balarama Krishnas followed by those of Nanda and Vasudeva and his foolish and timid father Ugrasena now in prison, he would annexe Gokula-Brindavan easily and enjoy the property of cows and grains! Akrura left for Brindavana and invited Krishna-Balarama to Mathura to attend the Yagna and Celebrations; their parents were grieved; Vrajavaasis were saddened; Gopaas were upset; Gopikas were alarmed at the absence. As he approached Gokula, Akrura took bath in River Yamuna and happened to meet Krishna and Balarama in person as they too were whiling on the river banks along with their pals; he was in trance in visioning Krishna and broke out in a spontaneous ‘Stuti’: My hearty salutations to you the Sanmaatra Swarupa, Achintya Mahima, Paramatma, Sarwavyaapi, Aneka Rupaa due to Karanaas / Causes but basically of a Singular / Unique Form--- Namu Vaasudeva, Namu Sankarshana , Pradyumna and Aniruddha!.

As Bhagavan Krishna and Balarama entered Mathura, they asked Akrura to leave them alone as they preferred to walk up by the ‘Raja Maarga’ to enjoy their interaction with the Public; the passers by were seeing and conversing among themselves in small groups in low tones. Their first encounter was with a Rajaka or Washerman who happened to be from the Royal Palace of King Kamsa; as the brothers were attracted to the colourful dresses, they asked the Rajaka to give them a few nice dresses but the haughty washerman talked rudely and arrogantly which provoked Krishna to beat him and pulled him down on the ground and helped themselves a few dresses of their choice. A little ahead, another person kept on staring at the boys and asked them nicely as to where were they coming from; he said that he was a Maali or a flower seller and invited them to his home nearby and offered them nice flower garlands; Krishna was pleased at his pleasant conduct and gave him the boon that all along his life, the Maali would be happy, prosperous and well-contented! The next encounter was with a Kubja or a short and deformed girl and Krishna asked her as to where was she going and what was she carrying; as she said she was carrying Gandha or sandal wood paste, Krishna wished to provide the fragrant paste to him and in turn, he lifted up by her chin and straightened her up by pressing her feet and she was made straight and shapely at once! She invited the boys to visit her home nearby where she offered them nice scents and aromatic pastes; such were the memorable encounters that Krishna and Balarama had while proceeding to the ‘Yaga Shaala’ at the end of the Raja Marga. Inside the Yaga shaala there was a massive Deva Dhanush and Krishna broke it playfully as the thundering sound was heard all over; as he heard this huge sound, Kamsa realised that the boys had arrived and that they would have broken the Dhanush! He called Chanura and Mushtika and said that the next evening Krishna and Balarama would invite at the Yaaga Shaala to a friendly wrestling and that they should somehow kill them by giving an impression to the Public that the killing was accidental. Next evening the boys arrived at the Yaga Shaala to participate the Royal Celebrations and the Trainer of a huge rouge elephant called Kuvalkayapeeda readied the animal to lift up the boys at the Entrance Gate and trample them; Krishna-Balaramas on arrival understood the intention of the elephant and as it lifted them up they landed on its back and pounded it with their fists, twisted its tail and trunk and felled the animal down with a thud and it breathed its last. The entire audience especially the Yadavas cheered up the boys with resounding applause and the men and women in the Sports Arena loudly chattered about the escapades of the Boys ever since their arrival at Mathura including their encounters with the Rajaka, Maali, Kubja, Dhanush and the Rouge Elephant; they kept on discussing about his miracle acts of killing various Asuras, lifting Govardhana Mountain and the juicy tales of Raasa

Leelaas! Meanwhile Kamsa announced that the duo of Krishna and Balarama would participate in friendly wrestling matches with the fearful wrestlers like Chanura and Mushtika. There were mixed feelings in the audience that such 'Malla Yuddhas' between the untrained teens and expert wrestlers were not just good jokes but of evil intentions and a few others felt that such deeds were indeed meant for fun. The wrestling bouts looked funny and comical in the beginning but as Chanura and Mushtika looked serious, the atmosphere became tense and as the tiny boys were lifted by the mountain-like professionals, the instrumental music in the theatre stopped and every one in the audience were holding their breath. Balarama shouted to Govinda: Victory be with you Krishna! Kill Chanura at once! Krishna sat on the Danava's shoulders and gave a mighty blow on his head which was smashed and the tall and powerful Chanura lost his balance and crashed on the ground with a thud and died instantly! It was then the turn of Balarama to hit on Mushtika's head, stomach and knees and the latter too was shattered. Krishna then took full control of another Malla Raja called Toshkala and both the brothers surrounded him and simultaneously punched and whacked him and that colossal wrestler too went the same way to death; the pack of other wrestlers in the arena ran for their lives and there were such shouts and hoots from the audience cheering and acclaiming Krishna and Balarama with victory. As there was ruckus and uproar in the Hall, Yadavas went wild with ecstasy and other citizens of Mathura too were confident that the last hour of the tyrant King Kamsa had arrived. Kamsa shouted at the soldiers that let the 'Gwaala baalakaas' be chased and hounded; a smiling Vasudeva leapt up on the Platform where Kamsa sat with his Security Chiefs, dragged him down to the Wrestling Arena and overpowered him; thus the most heinous villain of the Era was exterminated once for all.

Then Krishna and Balarama prostrated before Vasudeva and Devaki who were also in the audience and the latter embraced the dear sons with affection on one hand and unlimited devotion on the other. Vasudeva addressed Krishna as follows: Prabho! Be kind to us; the benediction bestowed by you to Devataas that you would be born to us was amply fulfilled. You had recognised my worship and were born in our household to destroy evil forces on Earth and indeed my Vamsha had since been purified!-- We have been in this Maya or Illusion that you are our son and was thus rattled from the fear of Kamsa and took you to Gokula; since you had grown up there and thus we now do not have that extreme obsession for you; so far we have witnessed such impossible deeds by you which were not conceivable of Rudra, Marudganas, Ashvini Kumars or Indra; Now my Moha / passion for you as a son is not there as now I realise you are Bhagavan Himself to protect the World from the Evil.

After prostrating before the parents and receiving their blessings, Krishna and Balarama greeted Yadava elders; consoled Kamsa's wives; released Kamsa's father Ugrasena from shackles and appointed him as the King; made Sudharma as the Raja Guru; requested Sandipa Muni to perform the 'Upanayana Samskara' of themselves; and entered into the house of Guru Sandipa Muni for tutelage for Veda Parayana, Astramantras and Astra prayoga, besides the nuances of Dhanurvedya -all in just forty six days! Sandipa Muni realised that such impossible and para-human abilities were displayed by Krishna-Balaramaas as though Surya and Chandra were their pupils in his house!). After their studies, Krishna and Balarama offered Guru Dakshina and the Muni wailed for their son dead in the Ocean at Prabhasa as he was devoured by a Demon Panchajanya (who had the shape of a conch shell). The boys then entered the Ocean, killed the Demon and by blowing a conch shell made of the skeleton of the Demon entered 'Samyamani' the Abode of Yamadhararaja and brought the dead boy alive and gave the Guru Dakshina to the Muni and his wife!

There after they visited Uddhava, their childhood friend and nephew, requested him to visit the Vraja places and meet their parents and well wishers as also the Gopikas and narrate to them an account of their activities at Mathura. Uddhava on reaching the Places met them all, and narrated the happenings. He returned back, after an emotional and tearful send-off with return messages from all of them, especially Gopikas.

The two Queens of the deceased Kamsa, Asti and Prapthi, approached their father Jarasandha, the highly powerful Monarch of Magadha and asked for retribution for the 'misdeeds' of Balarama and Krishna. With a huge army under him, Jaraasandha attacked Mathura with some twenty three Akshouhinis of infantry, cavalry and elephantry and challenged Krishna and Balarama. But as Krishna was fighting the massive opponents even with a minor number of Army, he asked for his (Vishnu's) Shaaranga Dhanush with limitless arrows and his Gada /Mace called Kaumudi while Balarama recalled his Hala / plough and Musala; Jarasandha and his huge army was shattered into pieces, but Jarasandha was spared so that he could return back by regrouping his men and material. Indeed he returned back again and again, getting routed for seventeen times. When Jarasandha was expected to attack for the eighteenth time, - his allies viz. Yavanas, the Mleccha foreign forces- headed by Kalayavana attacked Mathura with thirty million barbarian soldiers of desperation and cruelty. Krishna and Balarama felt that while they would fight with Yavanas, Jarasandha's army might simultaneously harm Yadus. Thus they planned to build a new place, named Dwaraka (with twelve Gates) and asked Visvakarma, the Architect of Devas who created a beautiful and well structured fortress City touching the Western Sea. By means of His mystic Yoga Maya (Power of Illusion), the Citizens of Mathura got transferred, lock-stock and barrel-overnight to Dwaraka and found themselves in luxurious palaces.

Even as Balarama was defending Mathura, Krishna attracted the attention of Kalayavana, passing singly by foot, by the Main Gate of Mathura. Kalayavana followed Krishna closely but always unreachable with some distance apart and led the Mlechha into a mountain cave. Thinking that Krishna Himself assumed a new 'Rupa' (Body) as an old and haggardly person in the cave as Krishna was known for such powers, Kalayavana kicked the old man fast asleep. Indeed He was not Krishna but Muchukunda, the son of Mandhata of Ikshvaku dynasty. He was the defender of Demi-Gods from Daityas for long but since Lord Kartikeya became the Commander of Demi- Gods, the latter relieved Muchukunda of his duties and Kartikeya advised him of retirement and since then he was sleeping in the cave, unaware of hundreds of years passed by! By his very looks of fire, Muchukunda converted Kalayavana into ashes as per Indra's benediction that if anybody disturbed his slumber would be burnt to ashes! Muchukunda demanded Krishna to identify himself and the latter disclosed that he was the son of Vasudeva of Yadu Kula of Chandra Vamsha; Muchukunda then recalled Gargya Muni's statement that Krishna the son of Vasudeva and the Avatara of Vishnu would liberate him! He greeted Krishna and narrated Gargya Muni's statement and acclaimed him as follows: 'Bhagavan! Just as in the 'Devasura Maha Sangraam' when I helped Devas to demolish Daiytas, the Daityas were unable to tolerate my radiance; but now I am similarly unable to withstand your extreme illumination of your Physique now! You are indeed the last and total shield against humanity.

Subsequently Krishna granted a wish to Muchukunda to be reborn as a Sage from his Kshatriya's current birth. Muchukunda exited from the cave into a World transformed from what he knew and realised that Kali Yuga was on the anvil, as the size of humans, animals, birds and trees was reduced considerably. He proceeded to Gandhamadana mountain and reached Nara-Narayana Ashram and meditated for the rest his

life. Meanwhile, Krishna and Balarama found Mathura under the seige of Yavanas but with their Chief Kalayavana was found missing, they were shattered by a handful of Yadava soldiers and of course by Krishna and Balarama.

[Jarasandha imprisoned a number of Kings at Yudhishtar's Rajasuya Yaga since they agreed to Krishna becoming the Chief Guest; subsequently when Krishna, Bhima and Arjun visited Jarasandha's Palace in disguise as Bramanas to free the Kings, the three of them challenged him for a duel with any one of them and Bhima was chosen. Jarasandha was not getting killed for many days and Krishna hinted to tear the opponent's body by demonstrating the cutting of a branch of a tree and throwing up the pieces upside down in opposite directions; a Rishi blessed King Brihadhratha (father of Jarasandha) for a child but he gave only one fruit, where as the King had two wives; he cut the fruit into two half pieces and distributed to the two wives, but they delivered a child in two pieces; as the two pieces were discarded, a Demoneess called Jara collected them and arranged the body pieces upside down and a boy came up with life, who was called as Jara-sandha or the one united by Jara. Hence Krishna's advice to Bhima to tear the body and throw the two parts apart topsy-turvey. After Bhima killed Jarasandha, some 21,000 Kings, defeated in wars and imprisoned, were liberated.]

Rukmini's abduction by Krishna:

Maharshi Parashara narrated the story of Devi Rukmini's abduction by Krishna. Both of them were fond of each other and desired to wed together. But, Rukmi the brother of Rukmini hated Krishna and was keen on his sister wedding his friend Sisupala. He influenced his father King Bhishmak and even arranged their engagement much against the objection of Rukmini. At the Wedding Ceremony, the Guest List included Kings like Salva, Jarasandha, Dantavakra and such other opponents of Krishna; the King invited Balarama and Krishna too. Fearing that Krishna, who proposed earlier to wed Rukmini, might create trouble at the Function, Rukmi as well as Sisupala prepared for any eventuality alerting their Armies; Salva, Jarasandha, and other well wishers too readied their armies too. But so did Balarama. Precisely when the Bride entered the Wedding Platform, Krishna took away Rukmini like a surprise flash and both of them fled away in the Chariot of Krishna with the flag of Garuda atop. The armies of Sisupala and associates could hardly prevent the Glorious Abduction. Rukmi was unable to bear the insult and followed Krishna's chariot but was defeated and his moustache and beard were shorn by Krishna as a symbol of His victory. Subsequently, King Bhishmaka performed the wedding most appropriately.

Pradyumna was born to Rukmini and Krishna and the son looked exactly like Krishna. When he was hardly ten days old, Demon Sambara kidnapped the child not knowing that he was the son of Krishna threw him in the Sea as a huge fish ate him but the child was safe in its belly. A fisherman caught hold of the big fish and presented it to the King Sambara who in turn gave it to Mayavati the head cook of the King's kitchen who cut the fish to find an attractive baby inside. At that very juncture, Brahmarsi Narada appeared in the kitchen and revealed the Story to Mayavati of Lord Rudra turning 'Manmadha' (Cupid) into ashes when he and Rati (Cupid's wife) aimed Floral Arrows. Lord Rudra gave boons that in their next birth, Cupid would be born as Lord Krishna's son Pradyumna and Mayavati as Rati. As Pradyumna grew as a youngman, Mayavati desired to marry him despite wide difference of age. Pradyumna was popularly known as 'Vyuha' as the Lord of Intelligence, along with three of His other names viz Vasudeva (Lord of Consciousness); Sankarshana (Lord of Individuality) and Aniruddha (Lord

of Intelligence). Eventually Pradyumna killed Sambara, married Mayavati and stayed with Rukmini and Krishna at Dwaraka.

Narakasura (Bhaumika):

The end of notorious Bhaumika, the son of Bhumi (Demi-Goddess of Earth), is celebrated till date on the moon fall day preceding Kartika Month of every year as 'Deepavali' (The Festival of Lights). Krishna, accompanied by Satyabhama flew by Garuda to 'Pragiyotisha', Capital City of Bhaumasura [now in Assam], surrounded by mountains and ramparts defended by fire, water and unmanned automatic weapons as also protected by 'Mura Pasha' - thousand miles-long deadly and sturdy wires as designed by Demon Mura. Krishna shattered the defence fortresses and blew His Panchajanya (Conch shell) with deadening reverberation as Demon Mura's frontal fortification was destroyed. When provoked, the Demon tossed his powerful club which was slashed by Krishna's Sudarsana Chakra into pieces and devastated Mura. Seven deadly sons of Mura, who had the knowledge of weapons as fully as their father, pounced in a group but Krishna's Supreme powers were no match and they too were cracked. Bhaumasura shot at his 'Shataghni' - the powerful disc with hundred blades - and later on with his mighty spear with which he defeated Indra too both of which proved futile. Finally Krishna gave His nod to Sudarsana Chakra (Wheel) to pull down the Demon and exterminate him. Thus Bhaumasura was sent to 'Naraka' and hence his ignominious title as Narakasura. [Another version is that the Demon was arrowed down by Satyabhama herself, as he secured a blessing from Lord Brahma that only his mother Goddess of Earth (Bhumi) could kill him; Satyabhama was the reincarnation of Goddess Earth]. It was at Indra's distress call that received Krishna's attention was that the Asura appropriated Varuna Deva's Royalty Insignia which was an Umbrella; the Ear-Rings of Aditi - the Mother-Figure of Devas; and 'Mani Parvata' (Mandara Mountain) where Demi-Gods resided were among the abominable acts of the Demon. As a gesture of good-will, Satyabhama's desire to transfer the 'Parijata' Tree (which emerged in the churning process of Ocean) to her garden from the Heaven was obliged by Indra. Krishna on His part released sixteen thousand royal maidens of Kings defeated by Bhaumasura and consented to marry them, in addition to the eight principal wives. Goddess Prithvi sought her apology for her son's sins and reiterated her own devotion to Krishna. She said: 'I was blessed with a son (Bhaumika) and thus you gave me a son and now took him away too now! Please accept the Kundala and other possessions as he has died now but do kindly spare his progeny of any blames. Achyuta! You are the Creator-Protector and Terminator and the Unique Form of the Universe; how could I indeed acclaim and commend you; Do forgive your own son Narakasura for his misdeeds!

Parijata Apaharana:

As the victorious Krishna and Satyabhama fancifully reached Swarga dwaara after the battle with Narakasura, Krishna blew his conchshell and Aditi along with Indra and Devas welcomed the guests. Devi Aditi complemented Krishna while Indra and Devas performed puja to Krishna with various flowers but Shachi Devi disallowed puja by the flowers of Kalpa Vriksha as the Krishna couple were human beings. There after, the latter visited the Garden of Swarga and Satyabhama desired to take the Tree in her garden in Dwaraka. Shachi Devi flatly refused despite the persuasion of Krishna and Devi; surprisingly Indra too sided with Shachi Devi on the plea that Indra gifted it to his wife and he had no hold on it. Arguments between Indra and Krishna ensued and ended up with fights which worsened to fullfledged battles. Indra took up his Vajrayudha and all other Devas fell in line; Krishna blew up his Shankha while

Garutman pulled up Varuna Pasha; Yama threw his 'Danda' on Krishna and the latter's mace made smithierins of the hyamna danda; Agni's blistering arrows were instantly cooled with Krishna's Jala Banaas; Garuda and Iravata attached each other. As Indra confronted Krishna with his Vajra and Krishna took up his Sudarshana chakra; Indra was afraid of the consequences and tried to run back and Satyabhama heckled Indra saying that the latter was after all the Devendra and it was not proper to show his back as Shachi would offer him a Parajata garland! Having jeered Indra thus, Satyabhama said that since she was also a woman she talked to Indra in such a jocular tone but in fact she was never serious in demanding the Parijata tree; as Shachi Devi said that it was her property and hence she had no intention of stealing other's property so that this battle might better end up and as the guests to Swarga might as well return back to where they belonged. Indra was put to defensive by Satyabhama's conversation and replied: 'Why should I be ashamed of getting defeated by Vishwa Prabhu who is the Cause of the Existence, Preservation and Termination of the Universe! Who could indeed overcome if that Tinstet yet Grossest and Most Magnificent Form which creates the World and Vedas descends on Earth on his own volition to help and correct humanity by assuming human form? When Krishna replied to Indra jocularly that he was after all a human being and what Satyabhama sought was a celestial product, then Indra requested Krishna not to taunt him further and despatched the Parijata Tree to Dwaraka with the assurance that as long as Krishna would be there in human form, the Parijata tree too would be on Earth! On return to Earth Krishna accepted eight thousand wives released from Narakasura's prisons, besides eight Principal wives viz. Rukmini, Satyabhama, Jambavati, Nagnajiti, Mitravinda, Lakshmana, Kalindi and Madri.

Aniruddha's wedding with Usha:

Banasura, the grand son of the famed King Bali who gave the entire Universe in charity in lieu of three feet to Lord Vamana, was the father of daughter Usha who fell in love with Aniruddha, the son of Pradyumna and the grand son of Lord Krishna. Banasura was a dedicated devotee of Lord Siva, and the Lord awarded several invaluable benedictions to the Demon including powerful war weapons and thousand hands to relase the armaments simultaneously. Once Usha happened to see both Shiva and Parvati sitting together and being an Antaryami Devi Parvati joked with Usha that one day she would too land up in a situation like that. Usha asked Devi Parvati as to when would that day arrive! Parvati replied that she would dream of a youth on the night of Vaishakha Shukla Dwadashi. As the day arrived, Usha did get the dream and informed of the incidence to her friend Chitrlekha, the daughter of Banasura's Minister named Kushmanda. As Usha was unable to bear the feelings of love, Chitrlekha showed several drawings of eligible amd handsome bachelors and after a few days, Usha succeeded finally to identify the youth. Then it was learnt that the youth was the son of Krishna. In course of time, the couple met and their romance became intense by the day. Learning of the desire of his daughter with Aniruddha, the son of Pradyumana -the erstwhile Cupid who was burnt into ashes by Lord Siva's third eye- and the grand son of Krishna (Avatar of Lord Vamana), Banasura quashed the wedding proposal and reprimanded his daughter since Krishna was his foe. Banasura prevented his daughter meeting Aniruddha and when the latter fought with him, he imprisoned Aniruddha. Yadavas in Dwaraka wondered as to what happened to Aniruddha. On learning from Narada Muni, it was learnt that Aniruddha was imprisoned in Shonitapur, the Capital of Banasura and Krishna, Balarama and Pradyumna lest by Garuda to that Place. There, they confronted Pramathaganas of Shiva and fought with Jwara the three footed Chief of the 'Parshads' named Maheswara and defeated him. This led to a full-fledged battle between Krishna and others on one side and Banasura, Shankara and Kartikeya on the other. As furious Shashtra-Astraas were exchanged by both the

Parties, the whole world was affected with Pralayaagni. Balarama attacked Banasura and the fight got intensified with alarming consequences. Meanwhile Krishna recalled his Sudarshana Chakra and sliced off the mighty hands of Banasura and was about to cut off the Asura's head too. It was at that climatic moment, Shankara addressed Krishna to stop. "Hey Krishna! I am aware that you are the Purushottama – Parameswara- Paramatmaa and Adyanta-Rahita! Do get cooled down. I have provided shield to Banasura my devotee and assured that I would stand guarantee at the time of his peril; please do not falsify my faith in me. He has not done any thing wrong to you but is egoistic due to my backing and therefore pardon him. Krishna replied: 'Shankara! If you so wish as you had given him a benediction, Banaasura would continue to be alive. In order to respect your assurance to him, I am withdrawing Sudarshana Chakra; if you had given him protection, so do I; You should never feel that you are different from me; you should always consider me as yourself and together we are the Devas, Asuras, human beings and all the rest; all those who consider us as different from each other are shrouded in Maya or Illusion; indeed, I am pleased and am gone. Thre after, Krishna and all the rest headed to Aniruddha's prison, where the latter was released by 'Naga bandhana' or tight-tied by a serpent which ran away at the appearance of Garuda Deva while Banasura politely agreed for the Sacred wedding of Usha-Aniruddhaas.

Krishna kills Sishupala:

At the invitation of King Yudhishtara to attend the Rajasuya Yagnam (Horse Sacrifice) being performed by Pandavas especially after the devastation of Jarasandha, Lords Krishna and Balarama arrived at Indraprastha, the new beautiful Capital City, built by Maya. As a climax to the Celebrations, a function was held to select the best personality who graced the 'Yagna'. Nobody wished to comment but Sahadeva, the youngest of Pandavas, proposed the name of Krishna. There was all round approval of the proposal and Dharmaraja initiated the procedure by inviting Krishna.

Just at that time, King Sisupala, a great associate of Jarasandha since killed by Bhima, expressed displeasure at the selection of Krishna on the proposal of a boy, Sahadeva of Pandavas. He said that elders in age, experience, wisdom were available and there was no special qualification for Krishna who ran away from Jarasandha twenty three times in successive wars and his real capability in wars, duels, and dealings involving honesty and frankness were suspect. Sisupala criticised Krishna transgressing all limits of decency. Finally having counted the number of abuses hurled at Him, Krishna hurled His Sudarsana Wheel to slit Sisupala's neck. Sisupala was the son of King Dhamaghosha and Srutadevi, the latter being the sister of Vasudeva whose son was Lord Krishna. In other words Krishna and Sisupala were cousins. When Sisupala was born, he was dark and ugly with three eyes and four hands. His parents had almost decided to disown him, but a voice from Heaven suggested not to do so as an Illustrious Person would soon fondle the child and snip out his extra limbs and he himself would also kill him. Krishna's aunt Srutadevi requested Him to postpone the killing of the child as far as possible. Krishna promised that He would wait till his hundredth abuse. Incidentally, Sisupala and Dantavakra were stated to be the Demons of 'Dwapara Yuga' born after the curse of Sanaka Kumara brothers to the Vaikuntha Gate Keepers Jaya and Vijaya. As a sequel to Rajasuya Yagna, there were two major developments: Firstly, the unbearable jealousy of Kauravas against Pandavas who became extremely prosperous and popular among the various contemporary Kings and worse than that, the extremely hurt pride of Duryodhana especially when Draupadi the wife of Pandava sons laughed out loudly when he fell straight into a water pool when he thought that there was no water but ground and when he lifted up his robes as there was no ground but a water body. Secondly, the battles of Sisupala's great friends like Salva and Dantavakra were in the offing

against Yadavas . While seeds of jealousy were firmly sown in Duryodhana's mind leading to disastrous consequences for Pandavas thus leading to the Great Battle of Mahabharata, the destructive attempts by Sisupala's friends were almost instant. Salva secured earlier an everlasting airvehicle from Lord Siva because of deep devotion and landed at Dwaraka when Krishna and Balarama were away at Indraprastha and overpowered Pradyumna who fled from the battle, as Salva presented illusory heads of Krishna and Balaram to him. On return, the Lords shattered the airship and Salva too. Dantavakra and his sons Romaharshana and Viruddha met the same fate. Thus the chapter of Sisupala's death was closed.

Simultaneously, the run-up to Mahabharata Battle at Kurukshetra was picking up fast as the foul play of Dices between Shakuni on behalf of Kaurava sons and Dharmaraja on behalf of Pandavas. As the Battle was shaping as an inevitable consequence, Balarama being a neutral figure, especially since Duryodhana was his disciple while Krishna identified himself as Pandava's well-wisher, proceeded on a pilgrimage to Holy Places. His visits covered Prayaga, Ganga, Gaya, Godavari , Srisailam, Venkata Hills, Kanchi, Madurai, Srirangam, Rameswaram and Kanya Kumari. He reached Kurukshetra at the time when Bhima and Duryodhana were engaged in a duel with maces as almost terminating the Great Battle.

The role of Krishna as Arjuna's charioteer was memorable: The preamble of Maha Bharata Yuddha was remarkable. His role to bring about 'sandhi' was a known futility. As the battle preparations were in full swing, both Duryodhana and Arjuna reached Krishna to solicit his assistance. When Krishna declared his assistance as a mere charioteer, Duryodhana ignored but Arjuna grabbed the offer. Just before at the very beginning of the battle, Arjuna made 'astra sanyaasa' and the Lord delivered Bhagavad Gita which is immortal. When Bhishma was looking invincible, he asked Sikhandi the eunuch to face Bhishma and Arjuna's arrows brought Bhishma down. Drona was killed as Krishna asked Dharma raja to shout : 'Ashvatthaama hatah kunjarah' as Bhima killed an elephant!' Karna's chariot wheel was downed in a ditch as Krishna asked Arjuna to hit at an apt turn as Arjuna killed Karna. As Krishna noticed Duryodhana was about to reach the ever blindfolded Gandhari before the battle hours, he heckled at the villain as he was going there naked before her and thus made his thighs susceptible and made Bhima's task of Duryodhana's thighs breaking easy! At the end of the battle, the blind Dhritrashtra embraced Bhima to destruction but that was only a steel replica of Bhima thanks to Krishna's fore warning. Such were the countless battle hurdles smooth sailed as per the mere charioteer Krishna!

Shri Krishna Niryaana was the climax of the termination of Yadukula that got initiated by a few playful Yadu Kumaraas at Pindaraka Tirtha who dressed the son of Jambavati called Saambu as an expectant woman and asked a group of Rishis to ascertain whether the woman would deliver a boy or a baby! The Munis under reference included Kanwa-Narada and Viswamitra who from their Divya drishti realized the hoax of the fake garbhini and said in anger: that the woman would deliver neither a boy nor a girl but a 'Musala' or a lump of an iron instead and that would result in the destruction of Yadu Vamsha! The Yadava Boys were stunned at the reply and reported the matter to Ugrasena! Saambu did deliver a Musala from his stomach which was pounded as powder but the remainder bit was thrown into the Sea and it was devoured by a fish and a fisherman called Jara caught hold of the fish and as he cut it he found a sharp iron piece which he kept for subsequent use. Meanwhile, Indra and Devas despatched Vayu Deva who appeared before Krishna and prayed to him as follows: 'Devaadi Deva! Indra has asked us as well by Ashtaavasus, Marud Devatas, Rudras, Saadhyas and Adityas that at our instance you had very kindly

assumed an incarnation and lightened the enormous burden on Earth by demolishing innumerable Danavas and other Dushta Shaktis for a long hundred years and over and the Three crores of Devas are now at peace; we request you to know your mind as to how to proceed further'. Bhagavan replied: 'I am fully aware of my next move; I have already initiated the process of Yadava destruction as considerable annihilation of the enemy forces of the virtuous Pandavas including the killing of Jarasandha besides of Kauravas was concluded too. As I have still to complete the task of terminating Yadavas as I brought them to Dwaraka and that bit of task too once concluded, I shall be freed of my mortal responsibilities and return to Vaikuntha'. So saying, Krishna made arrangements by dispatching Uddhava to Badarikaashrama on Gandhamaadana Parvat to Naranarayana Maharshi Ashrama where he would secure Siddhi after the close of his life. Select Yadavas including himself, Baladeva and elders like Ugrasena, Vasudeva left for Prabhasa Kshetra along concerned Devis; remaining Yadavas most of got dead drunk killed each other including Pradyumna, Saamba, Kritavarma, Satyaki, Aniruddha, Pruthu and Akrura by using the high grown sea beach grass roots which sprouted from the powder of the Musala delivered from Saambu's garbha thus terminating Yadu Vamsha; the elders including Balarama etc who left for Prabhasa Kshetra took resort to Yogic ends and finally Krishna and the famed charioteer Daruka remained; Balarama sat under a Tree and from his face a Maha Sarpa emerged and moved towards the huge Ocean as worshipped by Sidhas and Nagaas while Samudra welcomed and worshipped and the Maha Sarpa entered the Ocean. Meanwhile Krishna assumed his full form with four hands armed while Shankha-Chakra- Gada-Sarangaas performed pradakshinas and he rested under a tree bush. Imagining that a deer was resting since Krishna's feet were moving behind a tree bush, Jara Vyaadha who recovered an iron left-over bit from the fish caught in the Sea, sharpened his arrow and shot at the Lord's moving feet and ashamed to do so but the ever merciful Krishna bestowed him Siddhi. Krishna then sent Daruka to convey the news of Krishna Nirvana to his dear disciple Arjuna to perform the obsequies of himself, of Balarama and the illustrious Yaduveeras; Rukmini and Krishna's wives performed Krishna Sahagamana or sacrificing themselves in the a same Fire with which the mortal human form of the Avatara succumbed. Maharshi Parashara commented thus: As He left, Bhagavan Krishna discarded his human form and recalled his Soul which is Avyaya- Achintya- Vaasudeva Swarupa-Amala-Ajanma- Amara- Aprameya- Akhilaatma-and Brahma Swarupa Vishnu! As Arjuna was totally drowned in uncontrollable grief and distress, Veda Vyasa assuaged his inner and core-emotions said: Bhagavan Krishna arrived as a human being along with us all as a Marga darshaka or a moral teacher to prescribe and guide us about the virtuous the innate values of life and to uproot the evils of the Society that Daityas and many in the form of Human beings came to adopt; now that the burden of Bhu Devi got lightened Paramatma took up the need and the deed ; since the noble reason and requirement were fulfilled, he put the World back on its heels and disappeared, since Jatasya Maranam Dhruvam! Veda Vyasa stated: Jaatasya niyato Mrityuh patanamcha tathonnatyeh, Vipra yogaanasaanaastu samyogah sanchaye kshayah/ Vijnaya na budhaasshokam na harsha – mupayaanti ye, Tessaameyveytarey cheshtaam sikshantassanti taadrushaah/ (Whatever is born is certain to die; which is grown well has to decrease; Samyoga or Togetherness has to terminate as Viyoga or loneliness; Sanchaya or Increased Collection has to end up as Kshaya or Decay; Intelligent persons do not get elated too much since exultation might end up in depression or even as damage; that is the reason why one ought to realise that great heights might lead to great falls too). Yaschetaccharitam tasya Krishnasya Shrunuyaatsadaa, Sarna Paapa vinirmukto Vishnu lokam sa gacchati/ (Those persons who listen to Krishna Charitra would surely get relief from sins and attain Vishnu Loka)!

Shri Krishna Tirthas

Vraja Mandala- Mathura and Brindavana:

Mathura: Puranas signify the Uniqueness of Mathura which is called with varying names like Madhupatra, Madhupuri, Mathura or Madhura as this was described in Itihasas was rid of the torments by Madhu Daitya by Shatrughna the younger brother of Lord Shri Rama of Ramayana and more so as the Sacred Place of Bhagavan Krishna. Varaha Purana describes: *Na vidyate cha Patale nantirikshe na maanushe, Samaanam Mathurayaahi priyam mama Vasundhare/ Saa ramyaa cha sushastaa cha janmabhunistathaa mama/* (There is no other more beloved Tirtha like Mathura for me even better than those in Patala, Antariksha or Bhuloka) *Maha maghyam Prayage tu yat phalam labhate Narah, Tat phalam labhate Devi Madhuraayaam dine dine/* (The same fruitful results that one could reap at Prayaga the Sangama Place of Three Holy Rivers of Ganga-Jamuna-Saraswati on Magha Month's Pournami is normally available each day at Mathura) *Purna Varha sahasram tu Varanasyaam hi yat phalam, Tat phala labhate Devi Madhraayaam kshanamna hi/* (Residing thousand years at Kasi is considered as fruitful as a 'Kshana' or a moment at Mathura). Similarly, the visit to Pushkara Tirtha and stay there on Kartika Pournami is indeed fruitful and that would bless a person to accomplish with Mathura Yatra. Vishnu Purana also describes that snana and darshana of Mathura Krishna on Janmashtami, Yama Dwiteeya, and Jyeshtha Shukla Dwadashi are considered to be of great consequence. Vajramandali has twelve Sacred 'Vanas' viz. Madhunvana, Kumudavana, Kamyakavana, Bahula vana, Bhadravana, Swadiravana, Shrivana, Mahavana, Lohajinghvana, Bilvavana, Bhandiravana, and the most popular Brindavana. While each of these Vanas have their own significance, indeed Brindavana is of utmost prominence. Padma Purana underlines the special status of Brindavana: *Guhyad guhyatamam ramyam madhyam Brindaavanam Bhuvi, Aksharam Paramanandam Govindasthaanamavyayam/* (Brindavana on Earth indeed is the body of Bhagavan Srikrishna itself and is seat full of joy and even the touch of the dust would pave the way for salvation. When asked about the way to attainukti, Bhagavan Krishna smilingly replied that let 'Vraja raja' or the dust from Vraja Bhumi may fall on your head! The old name of Madhura was Madhuvana where in the days of yore Swayambhu Manu's grandson Dhruva who sparks on the sky as a Star was directed by Narada Muni to perform severe Tapasya stating *Punyam Madhuvanam yatra saannidhyam nityadaa Hareyh!* and Bhagavan Vishnu blessed him to attain stardom! Madhura on its banks flows Yamuna River and as many as twenty four main 'ghats' are spread out like Vishrama Ghat, Prayaga ghat, Kankhala ghat, Bindu ghat, Bangali ghat, Surya ghat, Chintamani ghat, Dhruva ghat, Rishi ghat, Moksha ghat, Koti ghat, Brahma ghat, Ganesa ghat, Manasa ghat, Dashashwamedha ghat, Chakra tirtha ghat, Krishna ganga ghat, Soma tirtha ghat, Brahma loka ghat, Ghantaabharana ghat, Dharapatana ghat, Sangama Tirtha ghat, Nava Tirtha ghat, and Asikunda ghat Each of these Ghats has an episode to describe such as Vishrama ghat where Krishna and Balarama rested for a while King Kamsa was killed; Asikunda Ghat is renowned as Varaha Kshetra and so on. On all the four sides of Mathura are four Shiva Mandiras viz. Bhuteshwara in the Western side, Pippaleswar on the Eastern side, Rangeshwar on the Southern side and on the Northern side is Gokarneshara. *Dwarakaadheshwara* is the most well known Mandir. Besides the other Mandirs are Gatathama Narayana, Vaaraaha, Govinda Mandirs and so on. Mathura Pradakshina or Parikrama is applauded in Varaha Purana: *Mathuraam samanuprapya yastu kuryaat Pradakshinam, Pradakshini kruta tena Sapta Dwipa*

Vasundhara/ (Those who reach Mathura is perform a parikrama are stated to have performed the same around Sapta Dwipas from Vasundhara or Earth).

Brindavana: About 8 km from Mathura is Brindavan comfortably reachable by motor and on way one could see Gita Mandir. Many perform Parikrama to Brindavan daily too. Brahma Vaivarta Purana details the origin of Brindavan that in the Satya Yuga King Kedar's daughter Brinda performed intense Tapasya to attain Krishna Bhagavan [mortal Krishna was an Incarnation in Dwapara Yuga] and Bhagavan blessed Brinda with his darshan and Brinda Devi was the principal figure in the Rasa Leelas stated to have been performed with Brinda at Brindavana by Lord Krishna the Avatar in Dwapara Yuga. The significant places on the banks of the Sacred Yamuna River are Kaliya Hrada at Nandanavana where Bala Krishna punished Kaliya serpent; Yugala ghat where Yugala Kishora Mandir with Radha Krishna Idols are present; Radhavallabha Mandir with swaambhu Shalagrama shila, Shri Ranga Mandir, Govinda Deva Mandir, Shahji Mandir, Biharji Mandir of Thakur, Krishna Balarama Mandir (Iscon), Madan Mohan (Chaitanya Maha Prabhu) Mandir, Garud Govinda Mandir, Jaipur Mandir, Radha Damodar Mandir, Radha Ras Bihari Ashta Sakhi Mandir, Kesi Ghat where Krishna decimated Kesi demon etc. Not far from Brindavan are Gokula, Mahavana, Baladeva, Nandagaon and Govardhana some 10 km from Mathura. Vraja Desha Parikrama stated to be of 84 kms of distance with a duration of 16 days would witness among others Madhuvan, Talavan, Kumudvan, Danvaktra dhvamsa, Vallabhavana, Radhakund, Govardhana, Paraseeli which Vallabhachaya followers consider this Place as Brindavana, Kamavana, etc.

Dwaraka: Skanda Purana in its Prabhasa Khanda describes in detail Dwaraka Dhaam's Mahatmya. *Api keetapatangaadyaah Pashavoya sarisrupaah, Vimuktaah Paapinah sarvey Dwarakaayaah prabhavatah/ Kim punarmanavaa nityam Dwarakaayaam vasantite, Yaa gatih sarva jantunaam Dwarakaa pura vaasinaam saa gatirdurlabha nyunam Muninaamuttheretasam/ Dwarakaa vaasinam drushtvaa sprushtaa chaiva viseshatah, Mahaa paapa viniirmuktaah swartga loke vasantite/ Paamsavo Dwarakaaya vai vaayunaa samudiritaah, Paapinaam muktidaah proktaah kim punardwaaraabhuv/* (By the grace of Dwaraka, all kinds of sinners born as krimi keetakas or flies, pashu pakshis or serpents- all attain salvation; what else one has to say about those who visit or reside there and become surfeit with Bhagavan Shri Krishna's darshan and worship! Those residents of Dwaraka should attain such kind of salvation as even illustrious Maha Munis with extraordinary control of physical organs and senses might possess! Dwaraka vasi's darshana or sparshana or mere touch, would destroy human's gravest sins and bestow long stay in Swarga. Even the sand flown by the wind of Dwaraka would destroy all the sins; why talk of residence in Dwaraka itself!) Such is the narration by Markandeya Maharshi in this Purana! He further describes that those persons who spend time at Lord Krishna's idol at Dwaraka are blessed and fulfilled deserving to be saluted and prostrated to. Further those devotees of Shri Krishna have the opportunity of bathing his sacred head with milk should reap the fruits performing Ashwamedha Yagna. But those devotees who, with no return favour from the Lord, perform affectionate yet devotional bathing to him should be blessed with Moksha. After the snaana, those who dry and wipe his body with a clean cloth would have his or her past and present sins. Those after bathing and dressing up, decoration of him with a fresh fragrant flower garland while the sound of conch shell is rendered and recite his sahasra naama with faith and dedication, then each word of the 'namaavali' would fetch him the fruit of giving away the daana of a kapila cow per each stanza of it. Additionally the recital of Gita, Gajendra moksha, Bhishma stava, or any of the Stotras by Maharshis would have the same benefit: *Yoga Shastraani Vedantaan yoginah Krishna sannidhou, Pathanti Ravi bimbam tu mithwaayaanti layam Hareyh/ Gita Naama shasram tu stavaraajastavanu smritih, Gajendra mokshanam chaapi Krishnasyaa staviya*

durlabham/ (Those Yogis recite Yoga shastra and Vedanta in the presence of Krishna shall break the barriers of Surya mandala and enter right into Vishnu Dhaam. The Five Maha Stotras viz. Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Vishnu Sahasra naama, Bhishma Stava Raja, Anusmriti and Gajendra Moksha are indeed the dearest Stotras of Bhagavan Shri Krishna. As briefly narrated the Mahatmya of Dwaraka from Skanda Purana, the basic and immediate cause for Lord Krishna headed by Yadavas is explained in Maha Bhagavata Purana, Vishnu Purana, Maha Bharata etc. Maha Bhagavata describes as follows: Pursuant to the termination of Kamsa, the tyrant King of Mathura -who had the discredit of imprisoning his own father Ugrasena out of ill justified ambition as well as his own sister Devaki and brother in law Vasudeva out of fear that their son Krishna, yet unborn might kill him- the two Queens of Kamsa, named Asti and Prapti, approached their father Jarasandha the evil Monarch of Magadha. Jarasandha attacked Mathura with some twenty three 'akshouhinies' of infantry, cavalry and elephantry and challenged Krishna and Balarama. But as Krishna was to fight with massive opponents even with a minor number of Army basically with Kamsa's carry-forward loyalties, he called for his (Vishnu's) Saaranaga Dhanush with limitless arrows or his mace/ gada named Koumudi while Balarama's Hala or Plough and Musala. Thus Jarasandha despite his huge Army was no match and ran away from the battle. But he regrouped and strengthened his army again and again, each time getting routed. There were such attacks by some seventeen times. When Jarasandha was expected to attack for the eighteenth time, his allies viz, the alien mlechha forces called Yavanas headed by Kalayavana attacked Mathura with a massive thirty million barbarians of desperation and cruelty. Then Krishna and Balarama calculated that no doubt they could face the combined Army of Jarasandha and Kalayavana too but discretion being the better part of valour, especially since Yadava Army should not be hurt at all even in small number, they thought of a Master Stroke: one to eliminate Kalayavana by tricking him and another to shift their Capital of Yadavas from Mathura to Dwaraka. They planned to build a new Capital City named Dwaraka on the West Coast, a modern City with 12 gates and all amenities and asked Vishwakarma, the Architect-cum-Builder; the latter created a beautiful and well structured fortress touching the western Sea. By means of His mystic Yoga Maya or the power of Illusion, the citizens of Mathura got transferred lock-stock and barrel, over night to Dwaraka and found themselves in their own luxurious Palaces. Even as Balarama was defending Mathura, Lord Krishna attracted the attention of Kalayavana, passing singly by foot, by the main gate of Mathura; Kalayavana followed Krishna closely but always unreachable with some distance apart and led the Mleccha into a Mountain Cave. Thinking that Krishna known for his tricks had himself assumed a new form as an old and haggardly man inside the dark cave kicked him forcefully as the old man was fast asleep. Indeed, the old man was none other than Muchukunda, the son of Mandhata of Ishvaaku dynasty. He was the defender of Demi-Gods from Daityas for long in Treta Yuga and Lord Kartikeya the Commander-in-Chief appreciated Muchukunda's efforts and granted him rest and sleep till Lord Vishnu Himself as his Avatara named Krishna would bless him at a later date in Dwapara Yuga. As Kalayavana forcibly kicked Muchukunda, the former burnt off Kalayavana by his angry looks and realised Krishna as his Saviour when Krishna instructed Muchukunda to perform Tapasya. Thus Krishna got rid of Kalayavana even all the Mathura resident Yadavas got nicely transported to their new Capital Dwaraka! Incidentally, Jarasandha finally got killed by Bhimasena, thanks to Krishna's finger-sign advice to Bhima to tear Jarasandha's body into two and throw the two parts apart topse-turvey; after Bhima killed Jarasandha some thousands of Kings defeated in wars besides countless youthful girls kidnapped were liberated. Skanda Purana prescribes the method of Yatra to Dwaraka Dhaam; after satisfying with wholesome meals to good Vaishnava Bhaktas, the yatri need to sleep on the ground peacefully observing Celibacy and while travelling keep reciting Vishnu Sahasra naama, Purusha Sukta, Shrimad Bhagavatam

etc. Then having taken bath in Gomati Nadi, Chakra Tirtha etc. enter the Dham with extreme devotion and total faith. The then Dwaraka township got drowned in the Sea anyway as soon as Lord Krishna disappeared and assiduous researches over considerable time reveal- though contradictory- that the ancient Dwaraka is perhaps under Arabian Sea at Kathiawad. The newly constructed Dwaraka- some 450 km from Ahmedabad- is stated to be on the banks of Gomati River but one version is that this is not Gomati but an extended body of Sea water, and that is why some call Dwaraka as Gomati Mukha where nine ghats have been constructed viz. Sangama Ghat, Narayana Ghat, Vaasudeva Ghat, Go ghat, Parvati ghat, Pandava ghat, Brahma ghat, Suravana ghat and Sarkari ghat. The Main Mandir called Dwarakaadheesh (also called Ranchodrai Mandir but one of the devotees was stated to have transferred the earlier Shama Sundara Chaturbhuj Murti took it away to Dhakor and another similar Murti appeared in a Well at a Ladwa village and thus got replaced here); this Mandir is said to have been built in 6th or 7th century. As it stands now has a shikhar height of 170 ft. its entry gate named Swarga Dwar and exit gate as Moksha Dwaar. Besides other Mandirs around Dwarakaadheesha Main Mandir, near Moksha dwaar there is Kusheswar Shiva Mandir which is significant as the legend prescribes that in case the Yatris not obtaining the Darshan of Kusheswara Linga, half of the Dwaraka Yatra Phala is taken away by Daityas. Sharada Mandir is another highlight of Dwaraka as Adi Shankaracharya established one of the Main Peethas as at Puri, Badari, Shringeri and Kanchi.

Bet (Island) Dwaraka/ Shankho dwar: is some 15 km from Dwaraka which in the past was a full-fledged Port before the development of Ohka Port. On way from Dwaraka to the Bet is the famed Rukmini Devi Mandir some 2 km near the Main Temple stated to have been built in the 12th century. In the 'Bet' itself is the old Shamkho Narayan Mandir and the Idols of the Queens of the Lord viz. Lakshmi, Radha, Satyabhama and Jambavati. Shri Krishna Mahal also earlier called Pradyumna Mandir, besides Rancchod and Trivikrama Mandir are ther too on the Bet. In fact, there are Shivalayas, Vaishnava Temples, Hanuman and Devi Mandirs are scattered all over. The well known Gopi Talaab is nearby where Gopikas were stated to bathe often.

Porbandar/ Sudama Puri: Besides being the Janmabhumi or birth place of Mahatma Gandhi the Father of the Nation affectionately known as 'Bapu' in the memory of whom Porbandar is rightly proud of, the latter has the legendary fame for being the Sudama puri and a Mandir in the precincts of Porbandar in the Gardens of Rana Sahib is present with the Pratimas of Sudama and his wife were installed. Maha Bhagavata Purana describes the genuine marvel as to why, when and how the Supreme Power of Universe would reach out everywhere and anywhere to motivate actions of each particle to act or not to act. Suka Muni narrated a Story to King Parikshit when the latter got a curse from Muni's son that a flying snake would kill the King within a week's time, since the King felt humiliated as the Muni did not welcome him when he entered the Muni's Ashram; the King picked up a dead snake and 'garlanded' around the Muni's neck in deep Tapasya and as the Muni's son on return found this ugly sight, he gave the 'shaap'. King Parikshith had a genuine marvel as to why, when and how the Supreme Power of Universe reaches out everywhere and anywhere to motivate the actions of each particle of Creation critically and objectively. Hereagain, the motive force of the 'particle' to act or not to act is provided by the Supreme Force Itself! In reply, Suka Muni narrated a story to exemplify as to how, each action of an entity is conditioned by the Supreme Force and why the entity concerned receives its reward or punishment as the case might be. A boyhood friend of Krishna, named Sudama was a poverty stricken Brahmana with genuine vedic knoweldge and piety and his faithful wife had for years dinned into his ears that he should call on the famed Ruler of Bhojas, Vrishnis and Andhakas at Dwaraka, viz. Krishna who

was also popular for His actions of charity. When extreme poverty hurt him so much that it ignored false notions of shyness or shame, one day Sudama decided to visit Krishna finally. His wife borrowed a fistful of flat rice from neighbours that was hidden in a dirty cloth. In the City of Dwaraka, Sudama felt it was impossible to reach Krishna, but the latter found Sudama easily and took him home. Krishna and Rukmini- God and Goddess Lakshmi-provided a dreamlike treat of services to him, which by itself was tantamount to abundant Spiritual Bliss. Krishna took away forcefully the dirty cloth hidden with the handful of flat rice as a gift to the Lord who ate half but Rukmini prevented eating the second half, presumably concerned of exceeding the benediction contemplated. Barring the display of friendship and exchange of nostalgic memories, Sudama returned back with empty hands and on way back felt satisfied fully with the experience, although was apprehensive of his wife's possible reaction that he missed a golden opportunity! On reaching his home, Sudama was taken aback at the miracle that his wretched hut was transformed into a fulfilled Palace with heavenly luxuries! Muni Suka's explanation that the story of Sudama amply clarified the motivation of Super Force for every action. His extreme poverty would have been a result of his previous karma or action, his piety and high dedication to Almighty was his action, and the end result was a fruit of his action too; in all these cases the subtle motivation was received by Almighty and none else. In the vast expanse of the Sudama Mandir are the smaller Mandirs of Jagannatha, Bilweswar Mandir, Gayatri Mandir, Hingalaj Bhavani Mandir and Girdhari nath Mandir too. There is also Kedarnath Kund where yatri perform snaanas. Among the other Tirhas some distances away from Porbandar are Mula Dwaraka, Harshad Devi or Hara siddhi Mandir, Madhava Tirtha and Kamitela.

Dakor: Some 90 km off Ahmedabad the Capital City of Gujarat Dakor is a great attraction to Yatri, most essentially the Rancchodraya Mandir. As to how Rancchod Krishna was transferred from Dwaraka to this Place has already been explained in describing the Dwaraka refernece above. Dakor's extraordinary devotees named Vijaysingh Bodaana and his wife Gangu bhai always used to literally measure the miles of distance from Dakor to Dwaraka back twice a year to bring 'Tulasi Dala' to place at the feet of Dwarakaadheesh earlier called Rancchod Bhagavan twice a year for 82 years. As the couple became too old still persisting the yatras, Bhagavan had extreme compassion and told them that then onward there was no need to visit him but would himself come to Dakor. Then Bhagavan Rancchod travelled by a bullock cart and the royal couple installed the Pratima at Dakor itself to facilitate them to worship eversince till their final departure and absorbed them into Vaikuntha! This appears to have occurred in 1212 AD. and eversince then Kartika Purnima celebrations have never stopped there after. Meanwhile the Bodana Murti of Rancchod was stolen and was hidden locally. Once the Dwaraka Pujari visited once to Dakor and identified the Murti there but out of avarice agreed to exchange it against that much of gold in weight even as it actually weight to a Tulasi Leaf and the nose jewel of the wife of Bodana Chief's wife; simultaneously the Dwarakaadheesha appeared in the dreams of the Dwaraka Pujari and summoned him to return to Dwaraka forthwith and some six months later the Murti was recovered from a well in Dwaraka itself and that Murti was finally installed in Dwaraka Kshetra! Besides on all the Purnima days of the year, Sharad Purnima celebrations at Dakor are so significant and crowded that special buses and railways have to be organised especially from important cities, towns and villages of Gujarat, Rashastan and Maharashtra. Besides Rancchod Mandir, the other important Places to be visited are Gautami Sarovar, Maakhani Aaro where the Bodani Chief's wife used to tender with her own hands butter balls to Bhagavan and even now the processions from Dakor are halted at this place and naivedya is offered with

sweetened butter and distributed! The processions are also necessarily halted at Lakshmi Mandir on the banks of Gomati Talaab.

Shri Krishna Nirvana at Balka Tirtha resting under Pepal Tree in Prabhasa Kshetra / Somnath, Gujarat: the peepal tree was on the banks of Triveni Sangama of three sacred rivers of Hiranya-Kapila- and Saraswati. Krishna was with his left leg raised and resting on the right, mistaken by a hunter called Jhara as the arrow struck the left toe of left foot fatally. The hunter mistook the toes as the moving bright eyes of a deer from a distance and rushed and begged Krishna's pardon, but Krishna forgave and granted 'mukti'.

Pepal tree on the banks of holy Triveni, Sangam of three sacred rivers Hiranya, Kapila and Saraswati. With his left leg raised and resting on the right, Sri Krishna was hit by an arrow released from a distance by a hunter called Jhara. The arrow struck the toe of His left foot thereby Lord Sri Krishna got fatally injured. The Jhara poacher misread the radiance from Lord Sri Krishna's foot as that of an eye of a deer. Jhara poacher immediately rushed to Lord Sri Krishna and begged him pardon. Sri Krishna generously forgave him and blessed him with Mukthi.

The place where Lord Sri Krishna was sitting beneath the Pepal tree and got struck by an arrow is known as Bhalka Theerth. Bhalka is the name of a village which is 5 km away from Somnath temple on Prabhas - Veeraval highway. Bhalka in Sanskrit means an arrow. This divine place is immortalized by a temple of Lord Sri Krishna where the marble image of the Lord is depicted in the same posture when He got struck by an arrow, with Jhara poacher kneeling in front of him with folded hands. Here the Lord is depicted in Chaturbhuja form symbolizing that He is the Supreme Lord SriManNarayana. One can also find an ancient Pepal tree at the temple site said to be the same tree under which Lord Sri Krishna was resting when He got struck.

MAHA BHARATA SAARAAMSHA

Origin of Veda Vyasa:

In the times of yore, there was a pious King Uparichara Vasu of Chedi Kingdom whose wife Girik was of compelling charm. The King secured from Indra an air-borne Vimana and in the contemporary world gained fame and respect. Once on the day of 'Pitru Shraddha' to his father and forefathers, his wife desired union with him but the King declined due to the Ceremony and left for the forest nearby to bring an animal for sacrifice and other material required for the 'Shraddha'. On return he was overcome by his wife's desire and spilt out his virility on banana leaf and commanded a trained falcon to carry the leaf as a packet to his wife since he did not wish to waste it. He falcon encountered another falcon and forcibly took the packet away but the packet fell in the flow of water. In the meantime an Apsara found the dangling feet of a Muni who was in meditation on the banks of the water body and for fun dragged the feet into water. The Muni cursed the Apsara to turn into a fish and the fish swallowed the packet that fell in the

flow and got pregnant. A fisherman who netted the fish took it home and there were two babies in its stomach and the King realised by his mystic powers that the babies were his own. Of the two babies, one was a male child and another a girl. The King returned the girl child to the fisherman with plenty of money and gifts and retained the boy whom he made as the next King. The female child eventually grew as Satyavati.

Parashara Muni, the grandson of Maharshi Vasishtha the mind-born son of Brahma, during his various travels spent a night in a hamlet on the banks of Ganga in the house of the Village chief and asked his daughter Satyavati to ferry the Muni to the other side of the river. In the boat, he was sick of the strong smell of fish and teased her as Matsyagandhi. But noticing her body beauty desired to have a union with her then and there; he created by his mantra siddhi a misty cover in an island nearby and enjoyed her. He gave her the boon of conceiving an extraordinary son with universal reputation and called her as Yojanagandhi or a female who spread fragrance for a Yojana's width and breadth; the boon also assured her that her chastity would be intact and that she would be a queen.

Devi Satyavati gave birth to the illustrious Veda Vyasa who was also famed as Krishna Dwapayana or who was born in a Dwipa or an Island. Vyasa had the unique distinction of dividing the originally Single Veda into four parts as also six Vedangas and scripted Maha Puranas and also Maha Bharata. In an extremely rigorous penance that he performed, Vyasa attained the vision of Maha Deva and the latter blessed Vyasa to secure an eminent son. Excited about his vision of Shankara, Vyasa performed an Agni Homa by creating Agni by the process of 'Arani' or rubbing wooden pieces to light up. Just then an Apsara or a Celestial Nymph took the form of an attractive parrot crossed the Agni Kunda and as his concentration got disturbed she made a flashy appearance of her rare beauty and charm with her amorous looks. The Muni could not control his body and discharged his virility on the wooden sticks meant for 'Arani' and then emerged from the Arani fire a boy of extraordinary radiance with the features of his father but with a nose resembling that of a "Shuka" a parrot. The boy grew up with unique faculties of Spirituality as an Expert in Veda Vedangas and understandably Vyasa desired Shuka Muni to become a Grihasthi but the latter disagreed vehemently. Vyasa used all his means of persuasion and finally asked him to visit Janaka who through persuasion and arguments succeeded in convincing to become a Grihastha (House holder). But after a few years of house holding, Shuka Muni left for Mount Kailash to realise Paramatma and attained Salvation.

After the departure of his son, Veda Vyasa was a frustrated person and carried on with his disciples Asita, Devala, Vaisampayana, Jaimini, Sumanta and others and after their studies were over, he despatched them with the tasks of propagating Dharma all over. He left Meru Mountain to meet his mother Satyavati whom he left long ago on the banks of Ganges. He realised that his mother was married to the King of Hastinapur, Shantanu on the condition that another son of his, Bhishma born from his first wife Ganga, would neither marry nor beget a child since there should not be any progeny to claim the throne. Shantanu and Satyavati gave birth to Chitrangada and Vichitra-Virya. After Shantanu died, Chitrangada became the King but in a war with Gandharvas, Chitrangada died and Vichitravirya was made the King. Bhishma desired that Vichitravirya be married as he was eligible and when the King of Kasi announced a 'Swayamvara' (bride's choice among the Invited Kings), Bhishma forcibly took away three brides- Amba, Ambika and Ambalika to Hastinapura. On arrival, Amba requested that since she already selected the King of Salva at the Swayamvara, she might be please allowed to do so and Bhishma agreed. But the King of Salva did not agree and as she returned back insisting that as per Dharma Bhishma must marry

her. Since Bhishma did not agree that even earlier, Amba left for the forest and became an ascetic. King Vichitravirya married Ambika and Ambalika but was not able to extend the progeny and died of premature death.

Then came up a crisis of Kingship falling vacant without a heir. Satyawati called for Vedavyasa who was settled on the banks of River Sarasvati to help continue the lineage through Ambika and Ambalika. Ambika closed her eyes in bed with Veda Vyasa as she was not happy with the union and thus a blind boy, Dhritarashtra was delivered. Ambalika sent a Servant woman into the bed and a wise boy, Vidura was born. But when the mistake was realised and Ambalika had to go into the bed, she was too frightened into paleness afraid of the Maha Muni and thus was born Pandu. No doubt Pandu became the King before his elder brother who was born blind but since he died of early death due to illness, Dhritarashtra the blind had to be the King.

Chain reaction of Ganga-King Mahabhisha- Ashta Vasus- King Shantanu:

There was a virtuous King Mahabhisha of Ikshvaku Dynasty who pleased Indra with a series of ‘Asvametha’ and ‘Vajapeya’ Sacrifices and attained Indra Loka after his death. Once he had attended the Court of Lord Brahma and along with him was seated Devi Ganga. He was immensely attracted to her and she too reciprocated with her amorous glances. Brahma got disturbed and cursed both of them to take to human lives as husband and wife. Mahabhisha opted to be the son of King Pratipa of Puru Dynasty. At the same time Ashta-Vasus (Eight Vasus) of the Celestial Region headed by Vasu Prithi and their families visited Sage Vasishtha’s ‘Ashram’ and admired ‘Kama Dhenu’ the Sacred Cow whose milk bestowed disease-less longevity and sublime happiness. The wife of one of the Vasus, Dyau was impressed with the Cow and quietly stole it and its calf. Sage Vasishtha found in his ‘Diya Drishti’ (Celestial Vision) that Nandini the Sacred Cow was in the custody of Vasu Dyau and cursed all the Vasus to be turned as human beings. Being highly repentant, the Vasus beseeched Vasishtha to dilute the effect of the curse and out of compassion the Sage agreed to one year’s human life to seven Vasus as their involvement was indirect but Vasu Dyau should have a full life time. The Vasus, who knew about Brahma’s curse to Ganga Devi, approached her to give birth to Seven Vasus of one year’s human life each and one life time’s existence to the last born Vasu. But this was agreed to subject to the condition that her prospective husband should agree to freedom of her action without any reservation and if he did not, she would quit as the husband. Eventually, Ganga waited on the banks of River Ganges and awaited the arrival of King Pradipa of Kuru Dynasty for meditation. The King arrived to perform ‘Surya Namaskaras’ on the river bed and Ganga appeared as a charming woman and sat straightaway on his right lap, indicating thereby that the place was to seat a son / daughter. The damsel identified herself as Ganga Devi and replied that she would await his son’s arrival who was yet to be born. In course of time, King Pradipa got his son, Shantanu, and as he grew as a handsome youth advised him to meet Ganga Devi who would propose but cautioned that he should not ask her questions and agree to whatever she asked. Accordingly, Ganga Devi, the eternal beauty, agreed to wed Shantanu and agreed to her conditions unilaterally. She gave immense happiness to Shantanu, who became the King after his father’s abdication of the throne. After a year, they were blessed with a boy, but she took the baby and submerged him in the flow of Ganga! To his great surprise, Shantanu witnessed the horror of the child’s cruel drowning in the flow but dared not say one word to his wife. This happening was repeated again and again for seven times and as the eight child was born, Shantanu protested and Ganga as per their contract left, but requested that the boy be named as Gangeya.

Gangeya, the exemplary Bhishma of Maha Bharata:

For a long time since Ganga Devi left Shantanu, the latter had no interest in life and Gangeya, who was increasingly aware of his father's disenchantment in the duties of Kingship, virtually carried on the burden lightly. As a dutiful son, he did whatever was possible or even impossible, but for the replacement of the position of a mother. Once when he accompanied his father on a royal hunt on the banks of River Yamuna and found an extraordinarily stunning woman whose body flavour was heavenly and intoxicating. Her captivating physical features sent tremors in Shantanu's mind and asked his son Gangeya to enquire about her. The lady replied that she was a fisherwoman and any enquiry about herself be ascertained by her father only at their abode. The fisherman was not sure whether her daughter's future would be assured since a grown up King-in-Waiting was already in place. Gangeya gave an assurance that he would not put in a claim for Kingship. But this did not satisfy the fisherman as Gangeya's next kin would definitely make the claim to the throne. Then Gangeya declared that in view of the apprehensions expressed by the fisherman and subtly endorsed by his daughter, he would take a Sacred Vow before all witnesses concerned that he would never ever marry! Shantanu as well as the entire Kingdom were taken aback by the decision of Gangeya. Shantanu tried to wriggle out of the deal, but Gangeya did not allow any departure from his vow; he said that the sacrifice being performed was not comparable to that of Parasurama, who for the asking by his father Jamadagni, had cut his own mother's head on the flimsy reasoning of her imagined flicker of mind when she saw a Gandharva bathing; or to Lohitasya who allowed himself to be sold to a Brahmin as a servant boy, for working heinous household duties leading to death, to repay his father Harischandra's debt to Sage Visvamitra; or obeying the implicit instruction of his father Dasaratha conveyed by Queen Kaikayi to abandon the self and wife Sita to fourteen years of forest life as an ascetic couple ending by the kidnapping of his wife and undergoing untold misery and torture! Thus quoting such examples, Gangeya announced to the whole World that not only he would not marry but protect the entire progeny of the 'Vamsa' as long as he lived! Thus was given Gangeya the indelible name of Bhishma in the generations to follow! Pandavas and Kuaravas-

Quick proceedings of Maha Bharata:

Since the elder issue of Veda Vyasa from Ambika, Dhritrashtra was born blind, Ambalika's son Pandu was made the King with the approval of Bhishma, the driving force of the Kingdom, with Hastinapura as the Capital. The elder brother had two wives Gandhari and Sauvali, the former being the Prime Wife and the latter was a keep in the household. Gandhari, the daughter of Gandhara Desa and brother of Sakuni, gave birth to one hundred sons, the elder two being the notorious Duryodhana and Dussasana (actual names were Suyodhana and Susasana, standing for Good Warrior and Good Administrator). Gandhari preferred to close her eyes always, out of sentiment as her husband was blind. Sauvali's son was Yuyutsu. Pandu Raja, the earlier King, was married to Kunti, the daughter of King Surasena and the paternal aunt of Lord Krishna. The Raja also married Madri, the daughter of King Madra.

When Kunti was a very young girl, her father asked her to assist Sage Durvasa in a four month long Sacrifice / Yagna performed by him and after the end of the Function, he was pleased to teach a Mantra to her which could invoke any of the Demi Gods and Allied Devas including Indra, Surya, Yamadharmaraja and Vayu, as well as allied Demi-Gods like Aswini Kumars. Out of curiosity, Kunti experimented by invoking Sun God in her private chamber and to her great surprise and dismay she found Surya Himself standing before her and asked her as to whether she desired a son or a daughter. Being of a tender

age of preteens, she was flabbergasted at the odd statement of Surya's but since the latter understood the predicament of the girl, Surya gave her the boon that her virginity would not be disturbed, but she should however be conceived. Kunti took her personal maid into confidence and even informing her mother of the incident, she did not step out of her chamber. After nine months, she delivered a boy of exceeding radiance and attraction with inborn armoury and ear-rings. With the help of the maid, she arranged the child in a floating box and placed it on a nearby waterbody. A charioteer of the Court of the King, Atiradha and his wife found the floating casket and as they did not have an issue, considered the child as a great blessing and brought him up as 'Karna' since he had ear-rings inborn and as Radheya after the name of the step mother. Thereafter Kunti considered the incident as forgotten of her innocent childhood.

Subsequently Kunti married King Pandu in a 'Swayamvara' (as per the bride's own choice), but soon thereafter, King Pandu received a curse from a Brahmana who was targeted by the King's arrow mistaken for a deer in copulation and the curse was that if he slept with a woman, he would fall dead at once. The King knew that without begetting a son he would not be able to cross the River Vaitarani at the entry point of hell itself and the soul would get stuck there itself! Pandu suggested that Scriptures would allow a virtuous Brahmana to sleep with her and Kunti informed that she knew a Mantra as gifted by Durvasa Muni and by reciting that she could be blessed.

Thus, Kunti invoked Yama Dharma Raja, Vayu, and Indra from time to time and was blessed with three sons, viz. Dharmaraja, Bhima and Arjuna respectively. She also passed on the Mantra to Madri who begot Nakula and Sahadeva as twin brothers. Once when Pandu ventured a wrong move to invite Madri in bed, Pandu died because of the Brahmana's curse as expected, and Madri too died in self-immolation, leaving the two sons to Kunti's care. Hence they came to be popular as PanchaPandavas. As Pandu died, Dhritarashtra was sworn in as the King and there were quick changes in Hastinapura, because of a blind King doting on his children especially Duryodhana who was in evil league as 'Dushta Chatushtaya' or the Four Wicked Men along with his younger brother Dussasana, his maternal uncle Sakuni and Karna (who was declared as the Ruler of a Subsidiary Anga Desa, as he was barred otherwise from Royal responsibilities and rights since he did not have Kshatria origin as the son of a charioteer).

The Evil Four had constant quarrels with their Pandava cousins, due to jealousy, as the cousins were far more disciplined and stronger as also since Kuru Vamsa elders and others liked them more. The Evil Four pretended sympathy for Pandavas and wanted them to move into a new Palace but their intention was to kill them while sleeping as the Palace was made of lac and susceptible to quick fire. Thanks to Krishna's foresight and precautionary measures, Pandavas exited safe from the burning Palace through a secret passage, as the Evil Four misled the Public that Pandavas and Kunti were burnt. Meanwhile Pandavas masqueraded as Brahmanas and stayed in a poor family house on rent. When the turn of sparing a person from the landlord's house came up for Sacrifice to a Demon, named Bakasura, (as per a contract with the village heads and the Demon that instead of his killing the Villagers indiscriminately), Bhima the strong man opted to reach the Demon's abode away from the Village and brought relief to the Villagers by killing him in a severe duel.

From thereon, Pandavas still appearing as Brahmanas, moved on to King Drupada's Court for Druapadi's Swayamvara and succeeded in the test of destroying a fish on a quickly moving wheel kept above one's head by an arrow while viewing its reflection down in a water pool underneath. This feat was possible only to an ace archer. Karna and Kauvaras attended the Swayam Vara too. Only Arjuna could perform

the feat as Karna who too was a great archer had failed, again causing jealousy on learning that the Brahmanas were fake and actually they were Pandavas.

On hearing the good news that after all Pandavas were not dead, the Elders of Kuru Vamsa including Bhishma, Dronacharya, and Kripacharya were overjoyed but the Evil Four were shaken. They agreed that a portion of the Kingdom be given away to Pandavas as a peace making measure and the Elders like Bhishma appreciated the gesture. Pandavas thus moved to a new Capital at Indraprastha where a fantastic 'Maya Sabha' or a Palace of Illusions built by the Divine Architect-Designer by the name Maya. Recovering from their days of misfortune, Pandavas recouped and performed 'Rajasuya Yagna' and invited Kauravas including the Elders like Bhishma, Drona, Vidura and Kripacharya as well as the Evil Four.

Lord Krishna who had always been a staunch supporter of Pandavas was honoured as the Chief Guest and when King Sisupala the evil opponent of Krishna objected and insulted the latter, his Sudarsana Chakra (Wheel) snipped his head. The Evil Four, especially Duryodhana felt highly envious of Pandavas, invited them to Hastinapura only to trap Dharmaraja into an unjust chess game with Sakuni who was an expert in it and defeated Pandavas against stiff conditions of losing their Kingdom and even themselves including Draupadi, with whom an attempt was made for disrobing. The conditions were twelve years of forest life and one year of unidentifiable destination where they should not be recognised failing which, the terms could be doubled!

During the forest life of twelve years, Kauravas tormented Pandavas and during the year long 'Ajnanavas' or unrecognizable place, took refuge in changed status with Dharmaraja as Kanku Bhat or Brahmana Adviser to King Virat in his latter's court, Draupadi as 'Sairandhri' as the Maid in the Queen's Chamber, Bhima as the cook in the Royal kitchen, Arjuna as 'Brihannala' -the transgender dance teacher of the Princess Uttara; Nakula and Sahadeva as the keepers of horses and cows. During the course of their stay in the Virat kingdom, Pandavas underwent unknown torture and humiliation including the attempted molestation of Sairandhri by the King's powerful brother-in-law, named Keechaka who was quietly eliminated by Bhima in a night duel. At the end of their stay in cognito, Kauravas tried to capture the cows of King Virat but by that time Brihannala came into the form of Arjuna as the 'Agyata vasa' year was over and destroyed the Kaurava Army single handedly and having utilised the 'Sammohana Astra' or the 'Mantra' which lulled the War Stalwarts like Bhishma, Drona, Asvatthama and of course the Evil Four into long slumber and released the cows of King Virat back home.

There were talks of 'Sandhi' or Reconciliation held by Krishna on behalf of Pandavas but the puffed up Evil Four refused even to a pin-some space to Pandavas, let alone five villages to the five some and the Great War of Mahabharata was fought for eighteen days dragging even the Elders of Kuru Vamsa like Bhishma, Drona and quite a few pious persons by the Evil Four on one side and Pandavas on the other with Krishna as Charioteer cum unarmed Adviser of Pandavas. A major casualty from the Pandavas side was that of brave and young Abhimanyu, the son of Arjun and Subhadra, in a 'Chakra Vyuha' (a circular closed fight) among many- to-one unjust encounter. There was mass destruction on both sides and the tragedies of stalwarts including the entire generation of Illustrious Elders who took part in the Battle as also the Evil Four, with Duryodhana as the last to fall to Bhima, who killed Dussasana earlier.

Maha Bhagavati allows vision of the dead at Kurukshetra Battle:

Pursuant to the Great Battle, the respected ladies of both Kauravas and Pandavas who lost their husbands, sons, grand sons, grand fathers, fathers, in-laws and nephews collected on the banks of Ganges and prayed to Veda Vyasa to secure a glimpse of the departed, since the ladies could not go to the battle field. Among the ladies were Kunti, Gandhari, Draupadi, Subhadra and Uttara. Dhritarashtra and Pandava Heros were also invited to the expected miracle-spectacle. The Maharshi performed Pranayama and deep yoga- oriented meditation to the Unknown and Omniscient Devi Bhagavati. His intense and continued worship for quite sometime and as an indication of the positive response received from Maha Devi, there were indications on a huge sky-long celestial screen and there were quick glimpses of the oneto-one fights and the resultant deaths and reactive celebrations; the screen views of the Linga and Limbless Bodies of the departed souls which were recognised at once by the concerned eyes, but not the converse. Ashvattama punished and Parikshit born: Ashvathama could not reconcile to the death of his father Drona Acharya who was otherwise invincible but as per Krishna's advice, Bhima killed an elephant named Ashvathama and made Bhima shout that Ashvathama was killed and conveyed the news to Drona Acharya. Drona was horrified at the news, asked Dharmaraja for confirmation and the latter confirmed: 'Ashvathama died-the elephant ! But he said further in a very low tone saying ' Ashvthama hata: Kunjarah'. Thus Drona was cheated, hung his bow and arrows and sat still in meditation, when Arjuna showered arrows and killed Drona. Desirous of killing Arjuna in sleep, Ashvathama did not find him, but thus killed the full party of Arjuna's sons in sleep. In turn, Arjuna located Ashvathama and fought a fierce battle. Drona's son finally used to 'Brahmastra', the most potent Mantric arrow. Arjuna too retaliated by the use of the same Astra and controlled Ashvathama. Yudhistara and Krishna advised not to kill Ashvathama but cut the naturally born 'Shringa' Jewel (diamond horn), which itself was an ugly insult to him. The impact of Ashvathama's Brahmastra would have normally torn off Arjuna's pregnant daughter-inlaw Uttara, but for Lord Krishna's mystic intervention. The child thus born to Uttara was Parikshith who was then the last remnant of Pandavas.

As a King, Parikshith was highly spiritual and benevolent.

Once when he concluded a Royal hunt and got thirsty, he visited the Ashram (Hermitage) of Sage Samaika who was in deep meditation and thus did not respond to the King's visit. He was annoyed and picking up a dead snake fallen on the ground nearby picked it up and placed it around the Muni's head as a garland. On return to the hermitage, the sage's son Sringi saw the ugly sight and gave a curse that whoever did this insult to my father would be killed within a week's time. The King having known of the curse readied himself on the banks of River Ganges and requested Maha Muni Suka to enlighten him the Great Purana of Maha Bhagavata. On the seventh day, with all the security in a seven storeyed building on the river banks, Taksha made efforts to sneak in the building somehow and intercepted a Brahmana by name Kasyapa desirous of making wealth from relieving the King's problem as he knew the Mantra of anti snake bite; Daksha gave away plenty of money to the Brahmana and got rid of him; in fact he tested the Brahmana whether he could really administer the Mantra and revive an entire tree burnt by poisonous flames of serpent's bite; the Brahmana did convert the tree's ashes to its original position. Later in the evening Taksha asked disciples to disguise as Brahmanas to carry fruits to the King on the pretext of reciting Atharvana Veda and the fruit which the King ate contained a small insect which was Taksha himself assuming an enormous body and killed the King.

Janamejaya's 'Sarpa Yagna' stopped by Sage Asita and Veda Vyasa.:

When King Parikshith met his end, his son Janamejaya was hardly a lad of eleven years and was declared as the next King. Guru Kripacharya trained him in the Science of Archery, Administration and Dharmasastra. He was married to Vapustama the daughter of King of Kasi and carried on with pious activities. Meanwhile a Sage Uttanka approached Janamejaya and provoked him to take revenge on his father's killer Taksha and perform Sarpa Yagna (Sacrifice of Serpents) and command Taksha into the Fire Pit (Homa Kunda) and Sacrifice all the Serpents in the process. Sage Uttanka told the King that his father could not go to heaven because of snake bite. Convinced thus, the King ordered that the Yagna be arranged. Thousands of snakes were burnt off and Taksha was so afraid of his life that he sought refuge from Indra. But, so revengeful were Janamejaya and Sage Uttanka that they were prepared to command not only Taksha but even Indra to Sarpa Yajna and haul them into the Fire Pit! Taksha thus approached Sage Asita to call on the King and to refrain from proceeding further in the Sacrifice as thousands of innocent Snakes were burnt off, for the sake of Taksha. Veda Vyasa explained the Episode of Sage Asita and King Ruru to the King. In the olden days, there was a Sage Jaratkratu who was practising high devotion to Devi Bhagavati in a forest. He had a vision of his dead father and forefathers in a cave who asked him to marry and suggested an eligible woman named Jarat Karu, who was the sister of Vasuki. Meanwhile the co-wives of Sage Kasyapa, viz. Kadru and Vinita had an argument as to what was the colour of the horses of the Sun God's chariot. Vinita guessed the color as white but Kadru had a bet that the colour was black. It was agreed that whoever lost the bet would have to carry the other on her back always while going to places. Kadru asked her sons to colour the horses black to win the bet. While some of her sons obeyed her but others did not. Kadru cursed those who did not comply be burnt off in a Fire pit and Vinita virtually became Kadru's slave. Vinita's son 'Garuda' the Carrier of Maha Vishnu, asked for the cause of her sorrow and she narrated as to what happened. Out of his affection for his mother, Garuda approached Kadru to pardon his mother and Kadru agreed provided that Garuda could bring Amrit (nectar) from the custody of Vaikuntha. Garuda was bent on relieving his mother's curse and fetched a jug of Nector from Vaikuntha. Kadru was delighted and released Vinita. All the family members and friends of Kadru were invited and asked to clean up themselves before taking spoonfuls of Amrit. But Indra quietly stole away the jug of Amrit. The invitees of Kadru returned from their baths and found that the jug was missing. They were disappointed but tried their best to lick any drops from out of the jar that might have spilt on the grass (Kusa) and as they licked their tongues were cut and hence were known as 'dvi-jihvas' or two tongued ever since. Vasuki and others who were troubled by Kadru approached Lord Brahma and complained against Kadru, the mother of snakes. He blessed them and said that the younger sister of Vasuki, Jarat Karu, should be proposed to wed Sage Jaratkaru. But the Sage was highly short tempered and the bride should be very obedient and trustworthy and the couple would beget a child who would enlighten, control and discipline the whole community of snakes and lighten the burden of their over-haughtiness to the world. That was why, Sage Asita prevailed upon King Janamejaya to stop the unique Sarpa Yagna and Veda Vyasa too approved of Sage Asita's request. Maharshi Vyasa had suggested that instead of the revenge-oriented Sarpa Yagna, he should rather build a spacious Temple dedicated to Devi Bhagavati and also perform Devi Maha Yagna and such other Spiritual activities to release the soul of late King Parikshith and relieve the curse of the Brahmana boy.

Some doubts in connection with Maha Bharata

Sage Jaimini requested Markandeya Maharshi for clarifications on a few doubts on the proceedings of Maha Bharata and the Maharshi suggested that the Sage might approach Holy Birds in Vindhya-chala. Understandably, Jaimini asked Markandeya as to who the Holy Birds were and the latter related a Story

that involved Indra, Narada and Apsaras or the Celestial Damsels. Narada visited the Court of Indra once and the latter requested as to how the Brahmarshi could be entertained: either by Songs of Gandharvas or by the dances of Apsaras. Narada preferred the dance of Apsaras and named a specific Apsara called Vapu as she was preferred by Narada. The co-Apsaras challenged Narada's preference and a dance competition followed; Narada said that whosoever could attract the attention of Durvasa Muni would be declared the best. The dance extravaganza disturbed Durvasa Muni and cursed Apsara Vapu who resorted to loud singing to become a bird for sixteen years in a series of births and deaths, that she should not give birth to a baby-bird and that she should die by a sharp weapon before securing her original form. The related story was that there were two brothers in the lineage of Garuda the Avian King and the Carrier of Vishnu. The brothers were named Kank and Kandahar; Kank flew freely once and witnessed the scene of a Demon Vidyudrup and his union with his wife Madanika, an Apsara. The demon objected and killed Kank. The infuriated Kandahar killed the demon and Madanika desired to become the wife of Kandahar and changed her form as a bird. Madanika was Vapu in her previous birth and the former and Kandahar gave birth to Taarkshi who married a Brahmana boy. The bird became pregnant at the time of the Great of Maha Bharata and while flying, Arjuna's arrow hurt her and two eggs fell out of her abdomen and the elephant on whose back Arjuna's opponent was riding saved the eggs under a big bell. At the end of the battle, a Sage named Shami found a big bell and underneath the bell were four chicks. The Sage took the chicks to his Ashram and brought them up and as they grew, they learnt Vedas from the recitals taught to the Sage's students. One day the grown up birds spoke in human voice and sought the permission of the Sage before flying away since their studentship was over! The wonder-struck Sage asked how the birds possessed such amazing powers and the latter replied that they were actually the sons of a Muni named Vipulaswan and their names were Sukrish and Tambaru, that his father was engaged in a Yagna when Indra appeared as an old bird and asked for human flesh, that the sons refused to sacrifice themselves while the father did the Sacrifice, that Indra said he was testing them of their devotion and while dying the father blessed the sons to keep their knowledge of the Scriptures in tact as 'Jatismaras' or those born would retain the memory of their previous birth! Guru Shami was pleased at the happening and blessed the Holy Birds to migrate to Vindhya for propagating Dharma!

Having learnt about the competence of the Holy Birds, Sage Jaimini who visited the Vindhya and posed four relevant questions in connection with Maha Bharata:

Why did Paramatma the Primeval Force take to various Temporary Forms of existence!

The reply was simple: The Avyaktam Shasvatam Vishnum Anantam Ajamavyayam or the Imperciavable, Everlasting, All-Pervading, Endless, Unborn and Indestructible Supreme takes to different Forms as an ordinary Being as a Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Man-Lion, Midget, or a Full Human Being, depending on exigencies only to ensure Universal Equilibrium so that minimal Virtue was maintained and the permissible level of Evil was not crossed. The Holy Birds asserted: Yadaa yadaahi Dharmasya Glanirbhavati Jaiminey! Abhyudhaanamadharmasya tadaatmaanam srujatasyasou/ (As and when Dharma is distressed and Adharma is encouraged, Paramatma assumes an appropriate Form and corrects the imbalances in the Universe; some times as human being or other times as in any Form of Creation!)

Why did Draupadi consent to marry all the Pandava Brothers together!

Indra suspected danger to his position and killed Trishira the son of Sage Twashta. The Sage went into a rage and plucked a strand of hair from his head and offered it homa kunda and by his mantrik power

created the mighty Vritrasura with the specific mission to kill Indra. Indra already lost his sheen since he killed Trishira and requested Sapta Rishis to mediate for extending his life. But Indra killed Vritra too disregarding the pact between the Sapta Rishis and Twashta. These actions angered the Rakshasa community and Indra backed by Devas. Continuous warfare resulted in chaos and harassment of Devas, Maharshis, Brahmanas, men, women and children. Bhru Devi experienced enormous weight of sin and made an appeal to Indra and Devas. As a result, Yuhistara the eldest of Pandavas came to be born by Indra's virility to Devi Kunti, Bheema was born to Kunti as the radiance of Indra was passed through Vayu Deva; Indra gave away a part of his own Shakti to Kunti by means of which Arjuna was born; Indra's virility was transferred through the two Ashwini Kumars to Devi Maadri to result in the birth of Nakula and Sahadeva. Thus Indra's manliness was responsible to create the Pancha Pandavas by the 'Amsha' of Indra either directly or through his Alternate Forms! Moreover, Indra's wife Shachi Devi as the 'Yagneshani' was created from Agni and hence Draupadi was Indra's better half. Yogeshwara Purusha Indra could divide his own radiance into as many parts as he wished. Thus, it was amply justified that Draupadi was the common wife of all the Five Pandavas as asserted by the Holy Birds.

Why did Balarama atone for the sin of Brahma Hatya during his pilgrimage!

Balarama the elder brother of Shri Krishna remained neutral during the Great Battle of Maha Bharata between Pandavas and Kauravas, mainly since Duryodhana of Kauravas, the arch enemy of Pandavas, was his disciple in Gada-Yuddha or the battle of Maces in which Bheema of Pandavas was an expert too. Along with his wife Devi Revati Balarama proceeded on pilgrimage for twelve years. In course of his travels, he consumed 'toddy' an intoxicant drink and entered a garden of flowers and fruits and enjoyed the atmosphere along with his wife. He entered a hermitage in the forest where there was a congregation of Brahmanas being addressed by Suta Muni. The entire congregation stood up in reverence of Balarama excepting a Brahmana as the latter realised that Balarama was intoxicated. Balarama became furious and killed the Brahmana as the congregation left in disgust at the tragedy. On recovering his senses Balarama realised his great folly and decided to atone for his Brahma hatya Sin as also observed fast during his further pilgrimage and later on worshipped Puloma Saraswati to pay for further penance.

Why were the defenceless sons of Draupadi killed in sleep!

Once Sage Vishwamitra decided to harass King Harischandra, partly due to the long standing hatred of the King's Raja Guru Sage Vasishtha but mainly to test the King for his virtue and truthfulness. Vishwamitra approached the King once and requested him to perform one yagna and the latter readily agreed. The Sage said: 'Let us presume that the Yagna was already performed and the Dakshina was already due to the Sage'. The King smiled and said that he was ready to give away the expenses for the Yagna and also his Dakshina. The Sage said that the expenses would be on his terms viz. the entire kingdom excepting the Queen Shaibya and Prince Rohitasya. That would be in addition to the dakshina! As the King had suddenly become a pauper and was further indebted towards the payment of Dakshina, Vishwamitra harassed Harischandra as he was asked to leave his Kingdom which was all over excepting Varanasi the Place of Shiva. The Muni appeared again and again asking for the dues and the Five Lokapalakas sought to intervene as the persecution to Harischandra became uncontrolled. Vishwamitra cursed the Lokapalakas to be born as human beings. The Lokapalakas were frightened and begged for clemency from the Muni. The Sage softened the curse that they would not get entangled with the worldly affairs after their births and would be killed in sleep without much prolongation of life. It was due the

curse of Vishwamitra to the Lokapalakas that Draupadi gave birth to the sons who were killed in sleep by Aswatthama, the son of Dronacharya. Ashwatthama wanted to avenge the killing of the Acharya by Arjuna as Yudhishtara shouted a blatant lie to the Acharya about Ashwathaama being killed but whispered that an elephant called Ashwatthama was killed; following this Drona stopped the fight and let Arjuna kill the unarmed Drona too.

ALL ABOUT AN IDEAL WOMAN

Karyeshu dasi, Karaneshu manthri; Bhojeshu mata, Shayaneshu rambha; Kshamayeshu dharithri, Roopeshu lakshmi; Satkarma yukta, Kuladharmata patni/ An ideal wife should be like a loyal maid for service; an intelligent adviser; a mother like with affection while feeding food; a romantic- proactive and comforting woman like a damsel; a woman of beauty, charm and richness like Goddess Lakshmi Herself with dedication and humility; and above all be ever forgiving with compassion and ready understanding like Bhudevi Herself!

Chaturvidha Veda Mahilas / Vedic Seeker Strees of fame:

Ghosha, Lopamudra, Maitreyi, Gargi: **Ghosha** was the grand daughter of Dirgha Tama and Devi Pakshivat, both being the worshippers of Ashvini Devas or the Celestial Physicians; Ghosha who remained a spinster as he had leprosy too worshipped the twin Ashwinis and authored Hymns of Praise with the desire of curing her disease and bestowing conjugal happiness and excelled herself as a Great Seeker; **Lopamudra** was the wife of Agastya Muni who originally created her by his Mantra Siddhi and gave away as the daughter of the King of Vidarbha; she attained extraordinary knowledge of Rig Veda and entered into enquiries with the Muni and finally the latter was so impressed and accepted as his life partner with the distinction of scripting Hymns that defined the rights and duties of men and women as equal partners of family life; **Maitreyi** was the wife of Yagnyavalkya who also had another wife named Katyayani a pious woman but Maitreyi had the unique distinction of Rig Veda dedicating some ten stanzas accredited to her fund of knowledge and acquired the epithet of being a Brahma Vaadini which enhanced the husband's erudition; once when Yagnyavalkya decided to renounce his Ashram into Sanyasa, Katyayani opted for wealth but Maitreyi opted for wealth and Immortality and the latter secured the same; **Gargi** had the distinction of dominating a Vidvat Sabha at a Brahma Yagnya performed by Videha the Formless King Janaka the Rajarshi and embarrassed Yagnyavalkya Muni with confusing queries about Amda and Paramatma such as: *'where is the layer above the Sky and below the Earth stated in Scriptures as the symbol of the Past- Present and Future situated?'*

Sapta Pativratas:

Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara, Mandodari, Anasuya and Sumati: An explanation of a Pativrata refers to **Ahalya** though she slept with Indra but she had her husband Muni Gautama was genuinely on her mind and when turned into a stone due to Gautama's Shaap Rama purified her too for her dereliction due to her ignorance; **Draupadi** though she married Pancha Pandavas since all the Pandavas were of the Amsha of Indra whose virility was distributed to Devi Kunti through Yama Dharmaraja to beget Yudhishtara, Vayu Deva to beget Bhima, Arjuna from his (Indra's) own and Ashvini Kumars from Devi Maadri as Nakula and Sahadeva apart from the fact that Draupadi was Indra's better half viz Sachi Devi who was originally Yagneshani the daughter of Agni as clarified in Markandeya Purana ; Devi **Sita** despite Ravana's pressure tactics had only Rama always; Devi **Tara** the wife of Vaali but the Tradition of Kishkindha allowed Sugriva to marry after Vaali's death as approved by Rama himself and **Mandodari** of course was a fixation on Ravana despite his infatuation with Sita; **Anasuya** the wife of Atri and the illustrious Kardama Prajapati ; **Sumati** who was an outstanding Pativrata who adored her husband a Leper and even prostrated before a woman whom her husband desired to sleep with.

Sati Savitri an outstanding Pativrata who defied Yama Dharma Raja into conviction!

Matsya Purana describes yet another Pativrata! In the days of yore, there was a King named Ashwapati of Shaakala Vamsa in Madra Desha (the present Sialkot Territory) who did not secure a son. Being highly devoted to Devi Savitri (Gayatri), he intensified his worship to her and performed a daily 'havan' / oblation to Agni with white 'Tilas' (Sesame seeds) in the presence of thousand Brahmanas for ten months and finally Devi Savitri appeared to Ashwapati on a Chaturthi day and granted an illustrious daughter to him and queen Malati; the baby was named as Savitri since she was born by the grace of Devi Savitri. The daughter grew into a charming and highly virtuous girl; a chance visit of Brahmarshi Narada to the King and the daughter indicated that her husband would die on a specified day after her wedding. They both indeed were terribly worried about Narada's prophesy but she was married in due course to the son

of King Jhumnatsen called Satyavan who was a charismatic prince. But unfortunately the King lost his kingdom as also the eye sight of his and of the wife. Savitri emboldened herself and faced the situation with confidence and performed unreserved and steadfast service to the parents-in-law. At the sametime, she served her husband so much that Narada's prophesy was always ringing in her ears constantly and never allowed the husband even for a while. She also worshipped her Guru and followed each and every advice of his as a word of law. Thus she was worshipping her husband, her parents-in-law and her Guru as much as never in history had performed in the past. As the specific Chaturthi that Narada warned about her husband's death within a year, she took permission of her blind parents-in-law and her Guru and entered a jungle along with Satyavan and decided to keep her husband the happiest man and spent every moment with him by showing and sharing with him the most memorable beauties of Nature, the waterfalls, the cool waters, the fragrant and colourful flowers and so on. She described that couples of hares, crows, lions, monkeys, and deers were all in a state of maddening infatuation and such wonderful experiences tended to extend lives forever! Meanwhile, Satyavan felt like cutting wood from some dry trees but Savitri cautioned that he should not be away from her. In great fun, he said that he would never ever dare to be away from her. Suddenly, Satyavan felt excruciating pain in his head and fell flat. Even while realising as to what was happening, she sensed that some thumb-long figures tied to Satyavan's soul and were ready to draw it towards the Southern direction and visioned that Yama Dharma Raja himself was present there. She screamed with astonishment and closely following Yamaraja sobbed away and said: Sacred Scriptures assured that sincere devotion to mother provided this loka, devotion to father would secure Swarga and devotion to Guru would fetch Brahma loka but of what avail was her sincerity if Scriptures made false promises? Dharma Raja replied: Do not interfere with my duty; indeed the Scriptures were right, the dead soul was a virtuous person and that she too was a real Pativrata, but there was a fixed procedure of terminating a human being as per one's life span which was pre-determined and judgment was given as per norms. Savitri counter argued that for a woman, husband was a Deity and the provider of safety; a father, brother or a son were no doubt the safeguarders but the husband was above all and if he were to be forcibly taken away then she had no other alternative but to immolate her life. Dharma Raja was indeed taken back at her firmness and smilingly said that such an incidence as this was rare and that he would be pleased to bestow *any boon* excepting her husband's life. As Savitri took up the opportunity, she requested him to restore the eyesight as also the Kingdom to her in-laws and Dharma Raja readily granted these boons and asked her to go back so that he could perform his duty. He also asked her not to follow further and tire out herself without any aim or useful purpose. Devi Savitri replied that she would never feel tired following great celebrities of the stature of Dharma Raja, even if they were annoyed because only such emblems of Dharma could sift persons of genuineness or other-wise; it was stated in the Scriptures that one should never be afraid of even Agni, poison, and snakes compared to evil persons where as 'Satpurushas' had an inner conscience and even if they were apparently rude and hurtingly outspoken, their basic quality would be outstanding and subject to change of stance since such 'Mahatmas' test the authenticity of other persons being faced. Even normal and impartial Kings and Administrators would tend to examine the realities of those who make requests and a Deity par excellence like Dharma Raja would like to the make sure whether her supplications were pure and straight from the heart or not. That was the reason why Savitri felt untired of following Dharma Raja! Apparently, Dharma Raja was pleased with the logic of Savitri and replied that without insisting on the life of Satyavaan, she might ask for another boon. She grabbed the opportunity and requested that her parents were not blessed with a son; despite performing countless Sacred deeds and their daily homas in favour of Gayatri / Savitri they succeeded on giving birth to a daughter but not a 'Vamsodhaarak'. Dharma Raja conceded the

second boon too and firmly admonished Savitri to pester further but should return home at once to organise the obsequies of her departed husband. Having secured the second boon from Dharmaraja, Savitri still followed the former and stated that any human being would like to fulfil three essential steps of Dharma, Artha and Kama as the corner-stones of an ideal life. She affirmed: *Dharmaarjanam tathaa kaaryam purushena vijaanataa, Tallaabham Sarva laabhebhyo yadaa Daiva viseshatey/ Dharmascha arthascha kaamascha trivargo janmanah phalam, Dharma heenasya kaamaarthey vandhyaa sutasamou Prabho/ Dharmadarthastathaa kaamo Dharmallokadwayam tathaa, Dharma ekonuyaatyenam yatra kwachanagaaminam/ Shareerena samam naasham sarvamanya -ddhi gacchati, Ekohi jaayatey jantureka eva vipadyatey/* (Deva! Any Enlightened person seeks to earn Dharma since that secures the best of gains; the objective of life is to fulfil the means of Dharma viz. Artha and Kaama; conversely, wealth and fulfilment of desires alone without Dharma would be wasting one's life. Dharma would certainly fulfil the means to achieve it and could at the same time lead to Salvation too. In the final analysis, a dying person leaves every thing behind except Dharma and a person born does not bring any possessions nor takes anything at death). Dharma Raja was pleased with what Savitri said and asked her a *third boon* to that outstanding Pativrata who had been fighting for her husband's life. In turn, Savitri asked the boon: *Varayaami twayaa dattam putraanaam shatamourasam, Anapatyasya lokeshu gatih kila na vidyatey/* (Deva! I request you to give me the boon of securing hundred sons of my own, since without obtaining sons, there would be no 'Sadgati' to her and husband as parents). Yama Raja then granted this boon also and Savitri commended Dharma as follows: *Dharmaadharmavidhaanajna Sarva Dharma Pravartaka, Twameva Jagato naathaha Prajaa samyamaney Yamah/ Karmanaaman -rupena Yasmaad Yamayasey Prajaah, Tasmaad vai proachyasey Deva Yama ityeva naamatah/ Dharmaneymaah Prajaah Sarvaa yasmaad ranjayasey Prabho, Tasmaat tey Dharma raageti naama Sadbhirnigadyatey/ Sukrutam dushkrutam chobhey Purodhaaya yadaa janaah/ Tatsavakaasham mrutaa yaanti tasmaat twam Mrutyu ruchyatey/* (Dharamaadharma Vidhaataa! You are the highest Administrator of Dharma; since you are the Chief Regulator of Dharma, you are called *Yama*. As you ensure that human beings do not indulge in Adharma and make them follow the Path of Truth, you are known as *Dharma Raja*. Since when human beings die, you confront them with a full account of their good and bad deeds, and hence you are known as *Mrityu*. As the dead persons are approached by you with the details of each action of theirs by each Kshana/ second, and measure of Kaala or Time, you are called as *Kaala*. Since you are the designated Authority to terminate the life of each and every 'charaachara' or mobile and immobile being, you are titled *Antak*. As you are the eldest son of Surya Deva who has the name of Viwasvaan, you carry the name of *Vaiwasvata*. As and when the life of any being is over, you catch him suddenly and that is why you have another name viz. *Sara praanahara*. Devesha! Thanks to you the Ruk-Yajur- Sama Vedas continue to popularise the Principles of Virtue and Justice eternally; you are the upkeeper of nobility and discipline the world over and I have come to the shield of safety from you; kindly give back my husband at once as my in-laws too are frantic now for his life. As Savitri concluded her desperate prayers, Dharma Raja asserted that he was giving away Satyavan's life back, that he would secure her hundred sons who would all become famous Kings, that her parents too would be blessed with hundred sons of virtue and that her brother would be popular as Malava, the King of Malva. Thus concludes the Sacred Legend of Maha Saadhvi Savitri: *Tasmaad Saadhwyaha Striyah Pujyaah Satatam, Taasaamtu vakyam bhavateeha midhya na jaatu lokeshu charachareshu/ Tasmaat sadaa taah pari pujaneeyaah, Kaamaan Samagraanabhi kaamayaanaih/* (Hence women of High Virtue ought to be worshipped since the Three Lokas are preserved due to their grace. The voices of Pativratas should never be ignored as they are worthy of veneration and fulfill their desires).

Pancha Kanyas or maidens:

Mythologically stated there are Pancha Kanyas whose worship assures the washing of sins; these were Mandodari, Ahalya, Draupadi, Kunti and Tara; these illustrious women represented Pancha Bhutas; during Devi Durga Nava Raatri Pujas Kanya worship of girls before the state of puberty is still observed each day as representing Durga Devi herself ; Kumaris from the age of one year to Sixteen are known as Sandhya, Saraswati, Tridha, Kalika, Shubhaga, Uma, Malini, Kubjika, Kaala Sandarbha, Aparajita, Rudrani, Bhairavi, Maha Lakshmi, Peetha Nayaki, Kshetrajna and Ambika];

Classification of Strees:

Padmini, Chitrini, Shankhini and Hastini are four kinds of women. Padmini, or Lotus-woman has a pleasing face as the full moon; her body with soft flesh, head like mustard-flower; her skin is tender and fair as the yellow lotus, never dark-coloured, though resembling, in the effervescence and purple light of her youth, the cloud about to burst. Her eyes are bright and beautiful as the orbs of the fawn, well-cut, and with reddish corners. Her bosom is hard, full and high; her neck is goodly shaped as the conch-shell, so delicate that the saliva can be seen through it; her nose is straight and lovely, and three folds of wrinkles cross her middle, about the umbilical region. Her Yoni resembles the open lotus-bud, and her Love-seed (Kama-salila, the water of life) is perfumed like the lily which has newly burst. She walks with swanlike gait, and her voice is low and musical as the note of the Kokila-bird; she delights in white raiment, in fine jewels, and in rich dresses. She eats little, sleeps lightly and, being as respectable and religious, she is clever and courteous, she is ever anxious to worship the gods, and to enjoy the conversation of Brahmans. Such, then, is the Padmini, or Lotus-woman. Chitrini or Art-woman is of the middle size, neither short nor tall, with bee-black hair, thin, round, shell-like neck; tender body; waist lean-girthed as the lion's; hard, full breasts; well-turned thighs and heavily made hips. The hair is thin about the Yoni, being soft, raised and round. The Kama-salila (love seed) is hot, and has the perfume of honey, producing from its abundance a sound during the venereal rite. Her eyes roll, and her walk is coquettish, like the swing of an elephant, whilst her voice is that of the peacock. She is fond of pleasure and variety; she delights in singing and in every kind of accomplishment, especially the arts manual; her carnal desires, are not strong, and she loves her "pets", parrots, Mainas and other birds. Such is the Chitrini, or Art-woman. The Shankhini or Conch-woman, is of bilious temperment, her skin being always hot and tawny, or dark yellow-brown; her body is large, or waist thick, and her breasts small; her head, hands, and feet are thin and long, and she looks out of the corners of her eyes. Her Yoni is ever moist with Kama-salila, which is distinctly salt, and the cleft is covered with thick hair. Her voice is hoarse and harsh, of the bass or contralto type; her gait is precipitate; she eats with moderation and she delights in clothes, flowers and ornaments of red colour. She is subject to fits of amorous passion, which make her head hot and her brain confused, and at the moment of enjoyment, she thrusts her nails into her husband's flesh. She is of choleric constitution, hard-hearted, insolent and vicious; irascible, rude and ever addicted to finding fault. Such is the Shankhini, or Conch-woman. The Hastini is short of stature; she has a stout, coarse body, and her skin, if fair, is of a dead white; her hair is tawny, her lips are large; her voice is harsh, choked, and throaty and her neck is bent. Her gait is slow, and she walks in a slouching manner; often the toes of one foot are crooked. Her Kama-salila has the savour of the juice which flows in the spring from the elephant's temples. She is tardy in the Art of Love, and can be satisfied only by prolonged congress, in fact, the longer the better, but it will never suffice her. She is gluttonous, shameless, and irascible. Such is the Hastini, or elephant-woman.

Samudrika Shastra

This prescribes the grace of a woman's body as raised, smooth and soft as a lotus flower, without veins showing up and with no visible hair is the sign of a Queen. Veins showing up indicates that she will have to travel a lot. Hair on feet denotes servitude and if feet are lean, bony or without flesh, it is an indication that she is sexually undesirable. Even heels denote that she is good for companionship; Stout undesirable sexually; High loose in character and Long of misery. Legs (portion below knee) Even, smooth, without hair, without veins showing up, are signs of a girl destined to enjoy life fully. Knees Round, smooth, good looking knees are lucky indications. Loose knees indicate poverty. Bony knees without flesh connote loose character. Thighs: Fleshy, round, like an elephant's trunk or the trunk of a plantain tree, spacing between thighs being very little, without hair, denote that she is good enough to be married by a King. **Waist** Circumference not exceeding the width of 24 fingers (approx. 15 to 16") with well developed hips denote full happiness. Flat, long, without flesh, caved in or hairy waist forebodes widowhood and misery. Hips Raised fleshy hips (like water melon) and well spread indicate full happiness. Sexual Organ Hidden, pink coloured, curved like the back of tortoise or an elephant's trunk and smooth is highly auspicious. If shaped like the feet or deer or furnace, with hard hair, indicates evil. If the left side is raised, she will beget more girl children while a raised right side denotes more boys. If the organ is shaped like a conch, she will be barren. Bottom of Stomach (portion below navel) is Soft, spread out and slightly raised is highly auspicious. Hairy, veins showing up and full of lines (folds or wrinkles) indicate misery. Navel Deep, with right turn is auspicious. Raised with left turn is inauspicious. Sides of Stomach Well spread indicates many sons. If sides resemble that of a frog's, her son will become a King. Raised sides indicate childlessness. Fold/wrinkle denote slavish tendency. Long sides denote birth of a Sandow. Ribs Good luck will result if the portion covering ribs is smooth and fleshy' Chest even and without hair is lucky and auspicious. Breasts Of equal size, fleshy, round and firm but close together are lucky. Raised right breast indicates many sons; left breast, if raised, indicates more of girls. If the portion surrounding the partition is round and good looking, good luck. Pressed in or unusually small indicates bad luck. Shoulders: Even, well built and without the joints showing up are lucky signs. Armpits Soft, with small smooth hair is lucky; deep, full of perspiration and showing out veins in unlucky. Arms Fleshy, soft, round and with veins not showing is lucky. If thumbs take the shape of a lotus bud, she is fit to be married by a King. Bent or bony denotes bad luck. Palms Red, raised in the middle, fingers evenly spaced with few lines on palm is a very auspicious sign. Back of Hands Soft without hair, well-built is lucky.

Nava Rasaas of a woman: 'All the emotional states or Rasas are revealed through the eyes of a woman. The eyes reflect all the feelings and urges, as no emotion or feelings can be shown by ears. The lips quivering in a particular manner may show anger or sorrow. When you laugh there is a particular kind of lip and facial movement. When you draw breath noisily, it means you are sorrowful as you are sobbing. Love or desire, sorrow or anger, valour or disgust, envy or fear and shanta or tranquility are all reflected by the eyes as a mirror of mind. Similarly other Rasas too. When do they fill with shringara rasa, the sentiment of love or the erotic mood. close to you with your lucid and provocative eyes and shapely ears while Kaamadeva is utilising his famed 'pancha baanaas' to enhance the spell on Him. The flowers on his arrows are: Aravinda (White Lotus), Ashoka, Chuta (Mango Flower), Navamalika (Jasmine) and Nilotpala (Blue Lotus) representing the pancha vikaaras of 'Unmada, Tapana, Shoshana, Stambhana and Sammohana'! Quite opposite of shringara is 'bhibhatsa' or disgust as She sees impurities and undesirable qualities all around. 'Roudra' rasa is the result of anger when a woman finds another as 'sa kalatri' or another wife; indeed this is a typical feminine reaction of jealousy! 'Adbhuta Rasa' arises due to any

male or even a co female's bravery, fame, and destruction of evil energies in terms of cruelty and viciousness. Then comes 'bhayanaka rasa' or of fearfulness leading to terror. Then follows Veeraasa as the representation of valour while devastating enemy persons or situations. Herred colour itself creates valour, the Veera Rasa. Then the 'Haasya' or mirthfulness is apparent as she speaks to her companions and her speech / commentary is mingled with laughter and mischievous looks. So far seven Rasas have been covered viz. love- disgust-wrathfulness, wonder, terror valour and mirth. Then the 'shoka rasa' which emanates from ridiculing by others, helplessness, and at tragedies. This is a very powerful tool in a woman's armour. 'Karuna svabhava' arises out of sympathy / compassion. Finally the 'Shanta Rasa' or the Tranquility is admittedly which is a great experience; it is a quiet and serene state, a state of equanimity in which all emotions are submerged: the one who experiences it, the experience itself speaks of profundity!

Manu Smriti is quoted about 'Vivahas' or weddings:

It is highly commended that the wedlock be selected from the same 'Varnaas' of Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishyas or of the service class. One should never be lured into wedding merely out of considerations of property and wealth of cows, goats, horses and grains. The wedlocks should never be solemnised into families devoid of Jaatakarmaadi dharmas, dominated by women alone, with scant respect for Vedic Karyas, with thick body hairs, high pitch tone, hereditary and chronic diseases like leprosy, epilepsy, of reddish hair, with abnormalities of body parts or a weakling. The brides be avoided with names of nakshatras, trees, rivers, mountains, birds, serpents, and with fearful nature. *Avyangaangim saumyanamneem hansavaaranagaamineem, tanulomakeshadashanaam mridvaangimudvat striyam/* or the bride be of beautiful and attractive features, pleasing name and demeanor, slim, wellset teeth and conduct. A wise person should avoid a tie-up into an alliance with either no brother, or a father unknown due to reasons of caste difference or remarriage. In the even of a 'dattata' or adoption of a son, the tendency is to name the boy as a daughter and as such that type of weddings be better avoided: *Savarnaagre dvijaateenaam prashastaa daara karmani, kaamatastu pravrittaa naamimaah syuh kaamasho varaah/* or the dwijas are advised to go in for alliances of their own Varnas most certainly and avoid with other type of dwijas on account of desire and even mutual affection. It is always safe and preferable to avoid inter caste weddings; there were no doubt select instances in the yore when Kshatriyas did marry Brahmana Kanyas but no such examples were cited to *marry* a low caste kanya. [Exceptions like Paraashara Maharshi having slept with 'Matsyagandhi' once and begot Veda Vyasa was out of passion were mention-worthy but not as *a regular wife*]. In case the Brahmana-Kshatriya Viashyas marry into a lower class Kanyas for reasons of passion or otherwise, then the offspring acquire the births of that class only and slip down in the hierarchy; Shaunaka Maharshi asserted that even as the offspring by birth itself would automatically lose claim of the respective caste of the father; such offspring: *Saunakasya sutotpasthyaa tadapyatyaa Bhrigoh/* or Bhrigu Maharshi opined further that the following generations too lose their identity of 'dwijaas'. Manu asserts that once a dwija would enter the bed of a lower class woman as a wife, the subsequent generation would lose their identity and become eligibility to homa-shraaddha-atithi bhojanaadi qualifications and the food and other offerings ie 'anna pitru sangjnak-devataa sangjnak Purushas' decline straightaway and thus opportunities of 'Swarga Prapti' are denied too.

Now, listen to the eight types of weddings: these are: *Braahmo daivastathaivaarshah praaajaapatyas tathaaasurah, Gaandharvo raakshash chaiva paishaachashcha -shtamodhamah/* or Braahma-Daiva-Aarsha-Praajaapatya-Aasura-Gaandhava-Raakshasa and Paishachaka; the last mentioned would be the

most atrocious. In respect of Brhmanaas, the Braahma-Daiva-Aarsha-Praajaapatya categories are commended. To Kshatriyas, Aarsha-Paajaapatya-Aasura- Gandharvas are recommended, while to Vaishyas and to the others too Arsha-Praajapatya-Aasura-Gandharvas are good enough but the last two as mentioned viz. Raakshasa-Paishaachika are not worthy of mention even and are abominable. To Brahmanas Braahmi-Deva-Aarsha and Praajaapatya are recommended, while to Kshatriyas Raakshasa Vivaahas are the best, and to Vaishya as also the lower class Aasura Vivaha is recommended. Of these, the first five in the order are of Dhaarmic nature, the subsequent two are of 'Adharma' category, but indeed Paishacha and Aasura are the least qualified. Now the description of the five vivahas: the first to third type are commended totally but the rest of the two viz. Paishacha and Aasura are only passable as they smack of adharma. To Kshatriyas Gandharva and Raakshasa are as per their dharma. Kanyaa daana is normally named as the parents of a maiden invite a well educated and disciplined bachelor and offer their daughter well decorated with jewellery and precious gifts and this best possible wedding is called Braahma Vivaha. As those parents who are habitual in performing Jyotishtomaadi yagninas offering gifts to 'Ritvijas' conducting the Sacrifices and seeking to offer their daughters to equally competent vidyarthi is designated as Deva Vivaha. Arsha Vivaha is that which involves gifting a cow and an ox or a double of these to the bridegroom and his parents is termed Arsha Vivah. Praajapatya Vivaha denotes declaring the couple with blessings and mutual gifting to both sides as the Vivah is performed as per Vedic rites is the normally followed customary wedding. Asura Vivaha is defined as follows: *Jnaatibhyo dravinam dattvaa kanyaayai chaiva shaktitah, kanyaapraadaanam svachchandyaaadasuro dharmam uchyaate/* or the customary weddings involve that the parents of the bride offer her based on the dowry and gifts as per the bargaining capacity mutually. Gandhava Vivaha is essentially a mutual consent based on love and affection in which the interference of parents is almost nil. Rakshasa Vivaha invariably ends up with violence and the victorious kidnap the maidens in imprisonment, seduce them and force them to marry. But the worst of all among the afore described weddings is the 'paishaachika vivaha' as the bride in sleep or fright or intoxication, mental disorder, is sinned into submission and rape.

The tradition of 'kanyaa daan' or approval of weddings is best performed by libation of water among Braahmanas, while among Kshatriyas as well as to other castes, this is signified by the mutual consent even with the involvement of water; 'hey Brahmanas', states Manu by quoting Maharshis- especially Bhrigu Maharshi, 'the holy formality of weddings would certainly be consecrated in respect of Brahmanas most certainly by the libations of water. Braahma Vivaahas are so signified that the kanya's sons as expected to be of virtuous way of living would liberate from the sins of ten ancestors, besides ten more of the following descendent generations apart from themselves. Now, Daivikaa Vivahas of other Varnas too would help liberation of the previous and following seven generations in the link, while Rishi or Arsha Vivahas of the Kanyas would help result in the liberation of three of the previous and following ancestors and descendents. In respect of Prajapathya Vivahas, the Kanya Brides would beget such sons as would redeem from the sins of six generations of the erstwhile or pursuant six generations. Following the afore mentioned of the Braahma-Daivika-Rishi-Praajaapatya Vivaahas are most certainly yield sons of nobility and virtue with good features, well mannered, youthful, prosperous, joyful, well famed, truthful and righteousness with longevity of hundred long years of life of overall fulfillment. But the others born of flippant weddings would invariably lead to the progeny of cruelty and vice, shameless and untruthful pattern of living dishonour, dishonesty and destructive nature; such progeny would take to Adharma, Untruth and disgrace; they tend to detest principles of Dharma and its followers. It is recommended that weddings be normally performed in the same caste as a general regulation but in other dispensations, a

kshatriya bride should hold an arrow while going in for higher caste, a vaisya bride should carry a goad and a lower caste female her bridegroom's hem of the upper garment.

Normally, the husband should take the initiative and desire for their conjugal union on any night excepting on amavasya and such other avoidable timings and on the days of 'rithu kaala' of the females; sixteen nights excluding four days of the females of a month are considered by the virtuous as the natural season of women. Of these, the first fourth, eleventh and thirteenth nights be avoided for the union and the rest are all recommended as ideal. Again, *yugmaasu putraa jaayante striyoyugmaasu raatrishu, tasmaadyugaamaasu putraarthee samvishe -daartavey striyam/* or of these ten nights, congress on sixth, eighth and so on are stated as ideal for giving birth to male children and the odd nights of seventh, ninth and so on are favourable for females. In case, the male sperm is more dominant then sons are born, and the female sperm is more overriding then daughters are most likely to be born. In the uneven possibility of the both the intensities of the 'veerya' then the result might be either way or even of a 'napumsak' or a weakling. In the event of avoiding the congress on the six forbidden nights viz. the fourth night of the female's season, besides the eleventh, thirteenth as also the 'parva dinas', then the concerned couple would remain as 'brahmacharis' or of celibacy. *Na kanyaayaah pitaa Vidwaan grahaneeyaacchulkaaman vapi, griheecchulkam hi lobhenasyaannaropatyaavikriyayee/ Streedhanaani tu yemohaadupajeevanti baandhavaah, naareeyaanaani vastram vaa te paapaayaantyadhogatim/* or any father of even remote enlightenment if accepts the smallest perquisite or benefit out of the son's wedding would tantamount to selling off his son and the relatives of the father-in-law included who seek to enjoy the perquisites of the bride's wealth concerned would be sinking in sin and have no place even in hell. In Arsha Vivaahaas, one might justify the gift of cows and bulls to the father in law or the relatives, but that kind of an excuse is highly ill-justified and even if it is stated as a token of the love and courtesy for the bride.

Women in general ought to be respected and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husband and brothers-in-law in their own interest and welfare, since that specific clan in which the brides are respected are blessed with divinities; otherwise men of such clans even if engaged in sacred rites and any type of sacrifices would yield no returns at all.

Such families in which women are disrespected end up in disasters and destructions while those who worship and venerate women are progressive and prosperous in the long run. Any family which womanhood is harassed shall soon get collapsed, as a definite writing on a wall rather magically. Indeed in a family where husbands *seek* to always please their wives besides other womenfolk in the family units with holiday trips, gifts, food and such other niceties there would be lasting peace and fulfillment. In case the housewife is not attractive enough with bodily brightness and smartness, her indispensability in a family be proven many other ways and means too for sure and furtherance of progeny gets assured. In such weddings which are mismatched, the tendency to neglect to dharmic values especially in dissimilar backgrounds of families and varnas would usher in disequilibrium sooner or later, more so when the established regulations as in respect of a higher caste like of Brahmanas in which Veda Pathana, performance of sacred rites, vratas, fastings, and so on take a back seat.

In the mismatched weddings, the socio-economic practices gradually tend to change such as handicrafts, trading, farming, service to royalties, chariot manning and so on while the mastery of scriptures, acquisition of knowledge, Sacrifices and such other pursuits are eroded and ended for ever. *Mantratastu smruddhaani kulaanyalpa dhanaan -yapi, kula samkhyam cha gacchanti karshanti cha mahadyashah/* or

such families replete with Vedic Knowledge- even being a few and select and even with meagre earnings for livelihood- are blessed indeed with glory and most worthwhile).

Stree Dharmas:

Ashta varsha bhaved Gauri nava varshaa tu Rohini, Dashavarshaa bhavet Kanya atha urthvam Rajasvala/ Samvarta Muni defines: an eight year old girl is called Gauri or the Fair one, a ninth year old is known as Rohini or a Cherry, a ten year aged is a Kanya or a maiden and thereafter a Rajasvala)

Maata chaiva Pitaachaiva jyeshtho bhraataa tathaiva cha, trayaste narakam yaani drushtvaa kanyaa rajasvala/ (In case, the mother, father and elder brother of the girl has come of age and still remains unmarried the three are destined to visit hell)

Manu Smriti is quoted: *Pitaarakshati Kaumare Bhartaa rakshati yuvane, Putrastu sthaavire bhaave na stree swaatantrya marhati/ Sookshmebhyopi prasangebhyah striyo rakshyaa visheshatah, Dvayorhikulayoh shokamaavahed arakshitaah/ Imam hi sarva varnaanaam pashyanto dharmamuttamam/ Paanam durjana samsargah patyaacha virahotanam, Svapnonyageha vaasascha naaree sandushanaani shat/*(During the 'Kaumara dasha' before wedding, the father takes the responsibility, whereafter the husband and in old age the sons, thus a female is always protected though not independent! Even minute expressions might not offend a female and be safeguarded lest there might be unhappiness in either of the families of father and husband, and indeed a female plays a significant yet sensitive role of both the families and hence the need for her balancing act!

However, a female is normally repudiated for six shortcomings: viz. suspicion of weakness for alcohol, bad company, aloofness from a husband, wandering and touring, dreaming away from reality, and staying lonely and living independently in other's houses.)

Manu Smriti also explains further: *Naasti streenaam pridhagyanona vratam naapyuposhanam, Patim shushrushate yattutena sarge maheeyate/ Kamavrittevaa gunairvaa parivarnitah, Nastriyah parivarjyasyaat satatam daiva vatpatih/ Sadaa prahvaashtayaa bhavyam grihakaaryech dakshayaa, Susamskrutopaskarayaa vyayechaamuktahastayaa/* (As women have no yagnas, vratas and such other acts of virtue, they are happy to share such acts along with their husbands. Notwithstanding the shortcomings of their husbands the wives would do well to with faith to them and concentrate more on their domestic chores with expertise and run the family with wisdom and dedication and be the major force of maintaining peace and happiness home)

Vyasa Maharshi gave the instructions as follows: *Haridraamkumkumamchaiva sindhuram kajjalam tathaa, Kurpaanakam cha taambolam mangalaabharanam shubham/ Kesha samskaara kabari kara karnaad bhushanam, Bhartur aayushyami -chhanti dooshayenna Pativrataa/ Praatah kaaletu yaa naari dadyaadarghyam vivasvate, Sapta janmaani vaidhavyaam saa naari naiva pashyati/* Those women who are interested in the longevity of their husbands should not to ignore the high significance of turmeric powder, kumkuma, eyetex, vastra, jewellery like ear studs, bangles, necklaces etc. As at the early mornings, women offering Arghya or water for worshipping Surya Deva would avoid widow hood for seven births ahead!

Krutvaa mandalakam Braahme tooshneem evaakshataabhih pujayet satatam yaa tu tasyaastupyanti Devataah, Yadgriham raajate nityam mangalairanulepanaih, Tadgrihe vasate Lakshmeernityam

puṅkālānvitā// Pativrataa tu yaa naari bhartru shushrushanotsukaa, Natasya vidyate paapam ihaloke paratracha, Pativrataadharmarataa Rudraanyeva na samshayah, Tasyaah paraabhavam kartum shaknoti najanah kashchit/ (Devatas would be delighted to visit the houses where the home fronts are decorated with ‘manadalaakaara’ or auspicious designs of varied colours at the Braahmi Muhurta time of early mornings even without mantras! Such home fronts appear that Devi Lakshmi along with her companions has arrived in the house for good enlivening with auspiciousness and brightness! A pativrata who sincerely serves her husband shall qualify with attainment of her current and ensuing lives and eventually attain the status of a Rudrani or Devi Parvati.)

In defence of good wives at the hand of evil husbands, Daksha Prajapati states as follows: *Adushtaam vinataam bharyaam youvane yah parityaje, Sapta janma bhavestreetvam vaidhavyam cha punah punah/* (Husbands who discard wives of good character and discipline would be cursed with widowship and womanhood for the subsequent seven lives!)

Na mangalyam vadedvaakyam na cha haasyadikim chana, kuryaachhvashurayornityam pujaam mangala tatparaa tishthet prasanna vadanaa bhatru priya hite rataah/ (Strees should not utter inauspicious words even for fun; they must always worship father and mother in laws and be pleasant with husbands for ever!)

Smriti Ratna cautions *Sandhyaayaam nava bhoktavyam garbhinyaatu prayatnatah, nasnaatavyam na gantavym vriksha muleshu saevada/* (Gabhini Strees or women in confinement not to take food at Sandhya timings or the intervals of night-day nor day nights of any day, nor take bath or go near tree foundations)

Yagnyavalkya stresses : *Dao hridayasyaa pradaane nagarbhe doshamavaapnuyaat, Vairupyam maranamapi tasmaatkaaryampriyam striyaah/* (In case the wishes of a Garbhini woman then the garbha would suffer such blemishes that might deliver babies of physical problems or even abortion and that is why every wish of the woman in confinement be fully fulfilled!)

Paraashara Smriti elaborates a few more Stree Dharmas:

In the event of married women desirous of shortening their hair for reasons of religion and faith as example of ‘Veni Samhara’ at Sangama of Rivers, then the husband himself is required to perform the Vrata by scissoring the hair by two inches. Tirtha yatra, temple visits and religious places are congregations if unaccompanied by husbands are considered as a waste and fruitless. Similarly husbands performing any activity of religion without the presence of wives is considered purposeless.

Vyasa Maharshi explains of some features of widows:

Patyaomritepi yo yoshivaidhavyam paalayet kvachit, Saapunah praapya bhartaaram svarga bhogaan sameeshnute/ Vidhavaa kabari baddhah bhartru bandhaaya chaayate, Shirasovasanam tasmaat kaaryam vidhavaatathaa, Ekaaahaarah Sadaa kaaryah nadviteeyah kadaachana/ Gandhadra –vyasya sambhogonaiva kaaryastathaa kvachit, Tarpanam pratyaham kaaryam bhartuh kushatilodakaih/ Vishnostu pujanam kaaryam patibudhaana chaanyadhaa, Patimeva sadaa dhyaayedvishnu rupa dharam param, Evam dharma paraanityam vidhavaap shubhaamataa/ (As a husband passes away and the widow observes the regulations of widowhood, the woman concerned shall most certainly enjoys a high level of conjugal happiness in her ensuing life. Since a widow is distinguished as being one, it is preferred that her

head hair is removed forever, takes a single meal a day and refrain from a second meal that day! She should not use fragrances and not utilise flowers; every day she should perform tarpana with 'tilodakas' or black Tilas with water using 'darbhas'. Those women who are widowed should consider as the diseased husband as Vishnu himself and then her remaining life would be spent peacefully without problems and even though as of a woman of auspiciousness.

Also Parashara Smriti is quoted: Grihini Dharmas: In the event of married (or unmarried) women desirous of shortening their hair due to reasons of religion the head hair can be shortened by two inches; for example there is a dutiful binding called 'Veni Samhara' at tirtha pradeshas like Gaya, where a husband himself performs the vrata by scissoring the hair likewise.

Dharmas of Widows

But widows ought to shave the head as per ancient 'aachaara'. They are forbidden to sleep in the central place of their homes or alone in far off places. They are also restricted to neither accompany their husbands to agricultural fields, nor visit without husbands or unaccompanied with close relatives to cattle sheds, river beds, sea shores and forests. It is preferred that they perform Vratas in their own homes with their husbands. Tirtha yatra, temple visits or religious places or congregations unaccompanied with husbands are a mere waste. Similarly giving away danaas, performing any activity like homas, vratas etc. are futile. Yet, any activity related to Dharma with motives of vengeance, harmful to others or with show off and pride shall indeed recoil in course of time. At the same time, a prayer or vrata or of spiritual significance performed with physical and mental cleanliness would concentration, faith and dedication would indeed yield contentment and fulfillment. Even a Kamyā Vrata or Nishkama Karma performed with commitment shall indeed be reciprocated proportionately while of course kamyā vratas lead to desired results while nishkama vratas add to the accounts of Punya!

Ashtavidha Maithuna : Referring to the tendencies of contacts with men in general and those males other than husbands in particular, Paraashara Smriti lists out Ashta Vidha Maithuna viz.

Smaranam prekshanam chaiva, Guhyabhashana athyavasaya, kriya nivritti vaakprerepana udreka rahasya bhashanam; ubhaya prerepanam ashta vidha mithunaah, nivritti astha doshaah/ Smarana or thoughts, keertana or praising, keli or being playful, prekshana or passing looks with desire at the opposite party, Guhya bhashana or whispers, Sankalpa or a kind of resolve, Athyavasaaya or trials for contact from a distance, Kriya nirvritti or intense desire, Vaak prerepana or inciting with small conversation, Udreka or infatuation, steady vision, rahasya sambhashana or secret conversation, Ubhaya prerepana or mutual physical contact, Resolve or the decision to mate and finally the copulation. These misdemeanors too would qualify for atonements!

Conclusion about the Complementary Inevitability of Man and Woman

' Shiva is quiescent and motionless and Shakti that keeps everything pulsating, from planets and stars to the atom, are inseparably united. In terms of science, Shiva can be called matter and Shakti energy. Not only are Shiva and Shakti inseparably united are basically the same as confirmed by atomic science according to which matter becomes energy. Thus 'without being united with you, can Shiva even stir! The first vibration by which the Parabrahman becomes aware of Itself is caused by Amba. Thereafter it is vibration after vibration in 'aarahana and avarohana' manner being Praana the Life Energy! There is the

authority of Upanishads to show that the dualistic cosmos is caused by the 'spandana' or the inner vibration of the non dualistic Brahman. Kathopanishad says: all this universe is caused by the life force called praana and vibrates. For 'vibrates' the word used is 'ejati'; Ejanam means 'kampana' or vibration. Kampana or praana that causes vibration is not merely breath but Brahman itself! Shiva is indeed the Parabrahmam without any attributes and is still in His non dualistic state. And he can stir and make Trimurtis perform their dualistic cosmic functions only if She the Maha Shakti activates the sthaanu swarupa of His. Amba activated Shiva, the quiescent Reality, that does not stir otherwise. In other words, Shiva's self surrender to Amba is evident. When the very first stanza of Soundarya Lahari states : '*Shiva Shaaktaika yukto*': Shiva is for auspiciousness yet would not be able to stir even a second without Shakti- hence 'Shaaktaika yukto' as the divine pair. All the same, Dharma Shastras proclaim that wife must be loyal to her husband: ' If a woman is married to a stone, then she must respect that stone as her husband. Thus Shiva first and foremost and then Shakti; yet Vedas proclaim: *Maatru Devobhava- Pitru Devo bhava*/ Thus Shakti is joined to Shiva. Yet, Shiva becomes capable of performing his cosmic function only when He is united with Shakti, otherwise He would even stir a bit; 'spanditumapi' / 'na khalu' is it not so!!

ASHTAVAKRA GITA



Ashtavakra means He who is deformed in eight places, stated to be so due to a curse uttered by his father when Ashtavakra was still in the maatra garbha..Ashtavakra Gita, also known as the Ashtavakra Samhita, is a teaching between the fully realized 12-year old master Ashtavakra and the King of Mithila, the Janaka Maha Raja who approached to Ashtavakra to beg for his adyaatma jnana, after having recognized in him the presence provided wisdom and enlightenment and the Advaita Vedanta.

Section One on Self Realisation

King Janaka asked Ashtavakra as to how indeed the adhyatmika jnaana be acquired for mukti / liberation and how to achieve renunciation . That knowledge be as to how to realise the identity of the individual self and the Supreme Self by way of Renunciation of detachment of pleasures and pains derived from the impermanent life and even the kaalamaana. Then Ashtavakra replied:

Muktimicchasi chettaat vishayaan vishavatyaja,kshamaarjavadayaatoshasatyam peeyusha vadbhaja--
 Ahtaavakra replied: ‘ If you were to seek liberation, then the vishaya vaanchaas be rejected as the attachments be poisonous. Be sincere in your speech and mind. Virtue and truthfulness are the rudimentary possessions of any aspirant and cultivation of virtue implies self control and purification of senses besides the enhancement of the positivity of the manastava. Ashtaavakra continued addressing King janaka: you are neither prithivi nor aapas-tejas-vaayu-aakaasha. These five elements would constitute the body-mind and the prapancha while the Self as the witness be the eternally distinctive as the Consciousness which be a mute spectator merely.

Yadi deham pruthakrutya chiti vishramya tishthasi, adhuneva sukhee shaanto bandha mukto bhavishyasi/

If you could detach your self from the bodily impulses and rest in Consciousness, you should be able to identify the path of annanda and be freed from oppression of bodily limitations of bondage like birth,

vriddhapya, diseases and the consequential miseries life long.

Tadejati tannaijati taddoore tad vadantike, tad antarasya sarvasya tadyu sarvasyaisya baahyatah/

Both the Supreme and the Inner Self are stable yet on the move, near yet faroff, right within yet outside

(In reference to Self as the entity, it moves or does not move; it is quite near and yet very far off; it is : *Tat antah* or right inside the body, organs and senses or *Sarvasyah* or it is omnipresent and all pervading. Both the Realities are unified and the one too many, none denying the reality of the other as the one is eternal while others are manifestations, being figments of the mind which is different from the sense of the other's eternal background! Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (III.iv.1) explains: 'Eshaa ta aatmaa sarvantarah yah pranena praaniti sa atma sarvantarah, katamaah Yajnyavalkya, sarvantarah/ yah praanena praaniti, sa ta aatmaa sarvantarah, ya udaanena udaaneeti sa aatmaa sarvaantarah'/ or the Self is within all; that which *breathes* through praana or the life force is within all; that which moves downwards through the Apana is the Self that is within all; that which pervades through the 'vyaana' is the Self that is within all; that which goes out through the Udaana is the Self is within all; Samana is the balancer or equaliser of the Air is within the Self. Now, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also asserts vide: IV.iv.13: Yasyaanuvittaah pratibuddha aatmaasin samdehye gahane prathishthaah, Sa Vishvakrit, sa ha sarasya kartaa tasya bhavanti, athetare duhkham evaapiyanti/ or the one who has realised the Innermost Self that had entered the most dangerous and inaccessible maze of body, its organs and its impulses that Paramatma himself made and that Paramatma is none other than the Self present in the bodies of all the Beings in the Creation! In other words, there needs to be introspection about the Self which Paramatma is all about! Indeed that is the Truth!)]

Navatvam vipraadiko varno naashramee naakshagocharah asamgosi niraakaaro vishva saashee sukheebhava/

You or a braahmanaa or taditara varna or of chaturaashramaas be not perceived by their senses of the exterior body parts but be happy by realising one's own nature as of unattached and as a formless witness.

Dharmadharmou sukham duhkham maanasaani na te vibho, nakartaasi na bhoktaasi mukta evaasi sarvadaa/

Be it virtue or vice, pleasure or pain be of one's own mind , yet not you since you are neither the karta nor the kriya, since virtue or vice, pleasure or pain are of the mind, yet not you as of the mental states and you as the antaratma be neither the doer, nor enjoyer and much less of being the sufferer!

Eko drishtaasa sarvasya muktapraayosi sarvadaa, ayameva hi te bandho drishtaaram pashyaseetaram/ Aham karteyahamaanamahaakrishnaahimdadantih, naaham karteti vishvaashaammritam peetvaa sukheebhava/ Eko vishuddvabodhohamiti nishchaya vahninaa, pajjaalyaajnaanagahanam veetashokah sukheebhava/ Yatra vishvamidam bhaari kalpitam rajjusarpavat, anandaparamaanana sa bodhatvam sukham chara/ Muktaabhimaanee muktahi baddho baddhaabhimaananyapi, kim vadanteeha satyeeyam yaa matih saa gatihbhaveta/

Raja! do seek to burn off the forest of agjnaana or the ignorance with the agni jvaalaas of sincerity and conviction that ' Aham Brahmaasmi' - I am the Singular Self as of the Pure Consciousness and Self-

effulgent of Purity. Beware, that you be not bitten by the black poisonous serpent of egoism and self centeredness of 'aham karta' but yes with the nectar of resuscitation. This be so as You be the Consciousness over which the snake and rope analogy be applicable. Similarly the universe be of a 'midhya' and You King Janaka be the Reality. Consciousness which is the substratum of the universe as would be remaining externally pure and transparent. That person who could consider as free be certainly free and liberated while that person who be feeling as of bound be under bondage as thinking would make so.

Atmaa saakshee vibhuh purna eko muktaschdakriyah, asango nispruhah shaanto bhramaat samsaara vaaniva/ Kuutastham bodhamadvaitamaatmaanam paribhaavaya, aabhaasoham bhramam muktvaa bhaavam baahyamathaantaram/ Dehaabimaanena paashena chiram baddhosi putraka, bodhoham jnaanakhadgena tannikriya sukheebhava/ Nissannishkriyosi tvam swaprakaashoniranjanah, ayameva hi te bandhah samaadhmanutushthatsi/

The Self be the manassaakshi, all pervading and ideal devoid of attributes or qualifications of human existence subject to deaths-rebirths ever and ever again. Thus being rid of the extraneous, irrelevant superfluous differences, the Self be meditation worthy on the Paramaatman as of nondual Consciousness as of dwaita bhaava. Then Ashtaavakra addressed King Janaka thus further: One's own 'dehaabhimaana paasha' as of a noose around the neck be of one's own Self Consciousness be nipped off by the sword of knowledge as could be the dawn of vivekata, vichakshana and vigjnaana. Nissangatva or untachment, karma sanyaasa which could lead to freedom from the bondage.

Stanzas 16 onward: *Twayaa vyaptamidam vishvam tvayi protam ytaarthatah, shuddha buddha swarupatam maagamah kshudra chittataam/ Nirapeksho nirvikaaro narbharah sheetalaashayah, agaadha buddhirakshubdho bhava chinamaatra vaasanah/ Saakaaramanrutam vidhhi niraakaaram tu nishchlam, etatavopadeshena na punarbhav a sambhavah/Yathivaadarshamadhaste ruupentah paritastu saha, tathivaasmin shareerentah paratih Parameshvarah/ Ekam sarva gatam vyoma bahirantarharya - thaa ghate, nitaym nirantaram Brahma sarvabhuta gane tathaa/*

The Self being the Antaraatma be like the pure gold made of golden ornaments as the basick substance of the Universe as the Pure Consciousness like the clay in a pot and as such, Janaka, be not of the hallucination and of fantasy of the Prakriti the Maya as the Paramatma and as such your capability of comprehension would need to be expansive. You, Janaka! Ought to realise that You are unfathomable as being limitless, formless, super intelligent and totally unaffected by superfluous extraneous nor bodily aberrations like the arishad vargaas of kaama krodha lobha moha mada matsaraas. Be realised too that what you know be the mirage while what you not know be the Reality indeed. And by this 'goodha rahasya' you could disprove the oft quoted that the antaratma be jumping from one body to another. That which is born is destined to die and this truism is a law of nature; then why get concerned much about death! This Atma the Inner Soul is such as could be torn or broken nor burnt by fire, washed by water, dried by air, cut into pieces, but is replete with every thing, and is eternal. Antaraatma the Inner Soul is steady, age old, inconceivable by one's physical parts or mind; nor subject to the changes of time! One has therefore to realise the essence of 'atma tatva' and its everlastingness or eternity! Just as a mirror exists within and without the image reflected in it, so be the Paramatma be extraneous and integral too. Just as the space inside and outside a jar, the Avyaya-Shasvata- Ananta- Aja- Avyaya.

Section Two on the ecstasy of Self Realization

Janaka uvaacha:

*Aho nirajanah shaanto vibodhaham prakrite parah, evaavantamaham kaalam mohonaiva vidambitah/
Yathaa prakaashaamyako dehamevam tathaa jajata, ato mama jajatsarvamathavaa na chakinchana/ Sa
shareeramaho vishvam parityaajjya mayaadhunaa, kutaschit koushalaadeva paramamaa vilokyate/
Yathaana toyato bhinnaastarngaah phena budbudaah, aatmano na tthaa bhinna vishvamaatma
vinirgatam/ Tantumaatro bhava deva pato yadvichaaritah, aatma tanmaatramevedam tadvishvam
vichaaritam/ Yathaivekshurase valuptta tena vyaaptaiva sharkaraa, tathaa vishvam mayi kluptam mayaa
vyaaptan nirantaam/ Atmajnaanaajagatbhaati atma jnaanaat bhaasate, rajjvajnaanat bhaasate na hi/*

Oh! I am totally blemishless, equable, well composed, tranquil and of Pure Consciousness and beyond the Illusions. Am nodoubt with this body with all the imperfections physically and psychologically yet could reveal the universe and therebeyond. Having renounced the universe yet with the body, am able to vision the secret as to how the far reaching impact of the Maayashakti seeking to camouflauge and smokescreen the Truth that ‘Aham Brahmaasmi.’ As the waves, foam, and bubbles be not segregated to jala pravaahaas, so be the universe that emanates from my own Antaratma as a mirror’s reflection of the Paramatma. As a cloth once analysed be really nothing from a thread and so be the universe by the warp and weft methodology. Yet one be ever falsely imagining that the cloth be different from that what be woven from the dresses due to the impact of Maya the delusion. Just a sugar generated from the sugar cane juice so be the produced the Universe too yet Janaka asereded ‘Aham Brahmaasmi’ The Universe appears to the what it would seem be owing to the ignorance of the Self as a snake and a rope analogy as momentarily might be alike and so be the illusion super imposed hiding the Truth The Universe be produce by one’s own ignorance. Illusion be everlasting as long as Maya be superimposed. .Maha Maya obstructs the clear vision of Pure Consciousness due to ‘Shad Kanchukas’ or Six Layers / Coverings and ‘Malaas’ or defilements of ‘Aanava, Maayiya and Karma nature’, being the inner most, the interior and the outer parts of the husk that cover in three layers before obtaining the pure grain or antaratma with neither desirable nor the totally free from the stains of the pristine Self! Pancha Bhutas, Panchendriyas and Tri-Tatwas viz. Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkara total up to Prakriti. Prakriti is the totality of the products, each produced from the cause and effect cycle and together Prakriti and Purusha activate the entire universe compose of tatwas!

As my jeevan mukti had since be a Reality, affirmed King Janaka as per the pro active assistance of Bhagavan Ashtaavarka, that the splendourous celestial vision had since been accomplished and none other than that at all..How wondersome that I feel now! Aho! How the charaachara jagat be conceived as the Universe be as conceived through agjaana and utter ignorance just as of a snake in a rope, water flows in a mirage, jug dissolved into a clay, and so on as if the universe be dissolved unto me. How wonderful and thrilling and sensational do I feel now that ‘Brahmaadistambamba paryantam’ - be that as a clump of grass to the layaantara punahsrishti repetitively! Aho how fantastic and breath taking this be in this ‘sthita pragjnatva’ to have a human body which no doubt be as the sthoola and sushma or the gross and the subtle one too.

*Prakaasho na nijam rupam naatiritomyaham tatah, yadaa prakashate vishvam tadaambhaasa evahi/ Aho
vikalpitam vishvamagjnaanaanmayi bhaasate, ruupyam shaktou phanee rajjo vaari suryakare\yathaa/
Mattho vinirgatam vishvam mayyeva layameshyati mrudi kumbho jalo vocchih kanake katakam*

yathaa/Aho aham namo mahyam vinaasho yasya naastime , brahmaaditamba paryantam jagannaashopi tishthatah/

Luminosity and self radiance are in my nature and what ever be manifested be nothing but of the Self. Aho, this universe be my reflection as conceived through ignorance as of the analogy of a snake and rope due to a mirage. Just as an earthen pot would get dissolved be flows of water or a golden bracelet by fire into raw gold, so be the universe at repetitive pralayaas would be dissolved unto me yet ignorance named Maaya or Prakriti be dominant. Aho, how adorable that I am as being Aham Brahmaasmi indeed. Aho, how how blissful am I as I ought to be blissful as am even able to survive pralayaas of the Universe and surpass the kaala chakra.

Aho aham namo mahyamekoham dehavaanapi, kaschinna gantaa naagntaa vyaapya vishvam avasthitah/ Aho aham namo mahyame daksho naasteeha matsamah, asamsprushya shareerena yena vishvam chiam dhritam/ Ahoam namo mahyam yasyame naasti kinchana, athavaa yasya me sarvam yad vaangmanasagocharam/ Jnaanam jneyam tathaa jnaataa tritayam naasik vaastavam, agjnaanaanbhaati yatredam sohamasmi niranjanah/ Dwaitamoolamah duhkham naanya- ttasyaasti bheshajam drishyametanmrushaa sarvam ekoham cchidrasonmalah. Bodhamaatroh -magjaanaadupaadhih kalpatomayaa, evam vimushrato nityam nirvikalpe sthutamama/ Name bandhosti moksho vaa bhraantih shaantaa niraashrayaa, ahomayi sthitam vishvam vasruto na mayi sthiram/ Shareeramidam vishvam na kinchiditi nishchitam, shuddha chinmaatra aatmaa cha tatkasmin kalpanaadhunaa/ Shareeram swarga narakou bandha mokshou bhayam tathaa, kalpanaamaatrenavaaitat kim me kaaryam chidaatmanah/ ‘

Aho! How wonderful do I experience and adore myself this gross body with all the sukha dukkhaas and since having assumed the sukshma and subtle body as of *‘Deho devalaya prokto jivah prokto sanatanah.* One’s own body is a temple. The life enshrined in it is the eternal Paramatma. The temple called the body - it enshrines the power of mantras - must not be defiled by an impurity. There is a difference between the home and the temple. In the home it is not necessary to observe such strict rules of cleanliness as in the temple. Some corner, some place, in the house is meant for the evacuation of bodily impurities.

Aho! How adorable am I none be as capable as the Universe be super imposed on Myself as being with of the Supreme Self as axis of Brahmada ‘Purusha’, the Primeval Force of Creation possesses countless heads, eyes and feet pervading the entire Universe, far beyond the miniscule level of human comprehension as the Omni-present, omniscient and omni-potent as being immortal, intangible, and inexpressible.

Aho! How wonderful am I as the gorgeous and delectable Self am I as of nothing elseness except the self, because all else is the substratum or a layer of something lying under another layer, as of the Maya Prakriti. Then the husk and bran of the grain of the my erstwhile form has no further regermination and no further ‘aanava- maayiya and karma’ tarnishings and defilements and thus attain a state of pure consciousness. Once the gems of Supreme Vision are collected in the treasure house of my own mystic heart, which indeed is akin to that of Paramatma, then in that state of ecstasy, the Self would tend to announce that : ‘I am all and everything’! Liberation from the revelation of Maha Shakti that is basically embedded on one’s own true Self is Moksha which severs the knots of ignorance. Agjnana or fantasy of ‘moha’ or the perfect knot. This is what needs to be untied and then discover ‘atma swaatantra lakshama’ or the true feature of freedom of the Self.

‘Jnanam jneyam and Jnaata’ the threesome of the Knowledge, the Knowable, and the Knower are basically non-existent really as for the Inner Self are just the same. Knowledge is anchored to what depends on the subject-object awareness and the Supreme Knowledge surpasses one’s consciousness. Indeed one when enters the screen of darkness or ‘Avidya’ and perform rites without the purport or objective of what are the rites intended for, then that act is of no value, especially without faith. That kind of Avidya begets further Avidya and might even be retrograde! In other words, Vidya and Karma are to worshipped being hand in hand; that kind of darkness is characterised as blindness while those in knowledge are normally prone to karma accompanied by worship and meditation; complementarity is certain in respect of Vidya and Karma! those who practise Avidya or ignorance enter into the dark portals of rites, rituals and sacrifices, or those who blindly get involved in ‘karma kaanda’ or performing rituals without basic understanding and enlightenment of the Supreme tend to distance from the Reality and near the zone of Falsity !Oh, the the root of one’s own misery be the sense of dwaita bhaava or of duality as Mine and Thine and there could be no solution thereof except the realisation of the objects of experiences are unreal When one talks of worshipping two entities of Purusha and Prakriti, the former is unmanifest and the worshipper is ushered into blindness and darkness, while worshipping the Pakriti the manifested is equally misleading since both these are the constituents and as such the worship needs to be unified and combined!

‘Thus Janaka asserts to Ashtavakra that He was Pure Consciousness and Blissful.

‘I am Pure Consciousness and through ignorance I had imposed limitations like egoism, mind and of physical nature as of self imposed and once that duality feeling of physique be vanished then I could abide by the Absolute. This Self that dwells inside each and every Being is indeed the Supreme Itself and therefore should be guarded against by evil forces and material allurements arising therefrom. Utmost vigilance is therefore called for by extreme detachment and renunciation by stoic endurance and steadfast adherence to scrupulously hold fast to the norms of Virtue and Justice and never yield to the pulls and pressures of the transcendent and meaningless possessions of wealth and physical joys!

I as the Antaratma be of any kind of bondage since the impact of Maya the Illusion be ceased of pulls and pressures. One would invariably feel the sense of liberation as basically am ever liberated yet be unaware of that indeed. How do the worlds of Devils get involved by blinding human beings in deep darkness! Indeed this is due to the ignorance caused by the severe play of body adjuncts of Pancha Karmendriyas of eyes, ears, skin, nose, and reproductive organs and the Pancha Jnaanendriyas viz. vision, hearing, touch, breathing and generation acts- all guided by the ‘Manas’ or Mind! These demonic and wicked influences tend to hide the Reality of the Self and till such time the Panchendriyas are present in the body or till its termination! The nature of the Self is such that its consciousness is literally imprisoned from the sway of the Maya or hallucination or false sense of perception of the True Reality. Death and the pursuant transmigration of the Self provide another opportunity for the enlightenment but alas, the influence of the Panchendriyas might in all probability would continue in the subsequent birth too! This being so, one would like to define what all this Self about any way! The experience of this ‘Antaratma’ or the Self and its self-declared superiority asserts that it is free from decay, disease and death!)

Shareeram under the bondage of swarga narakaas, bondage and freedom as of mere imagination. As long as the ignorance be lasting the nature of the Pure consciousness be ever evasive. In these words, so long as ignorance would prevail, one would consider that the shareera, swarga, narakaas be the reality and well

keeping that feeling be lasting the nature of the Self as being the Pure Consciousness be hidden of the Reality.

*Aho jana sammoohepi na dwaitam pashyato mama, aranyamiva samvittam kka ratim karavaanyaham/
Naaham deho name deho jeevo naahamaham hi chit, ayameva hi me bandha aaseed yaa jeevito spruhaa/
Aho bhuvanakallolaivichitraitraivichittrairdaak samusthitam, mayyananta mahaanbhodou chittavate
samudyate/ Madhyaannanataamahaambodhou chittavaate prahaamyapi, abhaagyaajjeevavanijo
jagatpoto vinasvarah/ Madhyaanantamahaavaashchaya jeeva veechayah, udyanti ghnaati khelanti
pravishanti swabhaavatah/*

Aho! Am now purged and liberated from the sense of duality of kaarya kaarana, kartrutva and karmaacharana, attachments and detachments, wilderness and openness, but now there be nothing of Reality beside me. As there is 'tadaadmya' or absolute Identity, the Self and the Supreme ought to be the same, irrespective of the play of senses and thoughts that the body carries! In the vision of that person whose realisation that all the Beings are of the very Self, then where is the sorrow and where is the fantasy or flight of imagination! Once there is 'tadaatmya' or the Unity of the Self and the Supreme, then such an enlightened person attains the same position as Paramatma even if he moves about in his current existence, since I have no barriers of movement nor of features!

Then Janaka reassures that he be not in his deha, nor have the body, but the Jeevatma, the Pure Consciousness, as having been liberated as of Pure Consciousness with no bondages of hunger and thirst. Body be explained as the of the Matter. As there is 'tadaadmya' or absolute Identity, the Self and the Supreme ought to be the same, irrespective of the play of senses and thoughts that the body carries! In the vision of that person whose realisation that all the Beings are the very Self, then where is the sorrow and where is the fantasy or flight of imagination! Once there is 'tadaatmya' or the Unity of the Self and the Supreme, then such an enlightened person attains the same position as Paramatma even if he moves about in his current existence, since that person has no barriers of movement nor of features. Body as the Matter while the Self as jeeva be of the Pure Consciousness yet of the finite self while bondage refers to the cessation of a Being!

Aho! In this Reality in me be the limitless oceans on the risings of the mind and there be diverse waves of the worlds. In Reality, there be nothing else but the Self. It is only be the name and form as superimposed on the Self that would give the Reality to the world yet that appearance would vanish by the atma jnaana .

With the speed and fervor of the winds and of the mind too in the infinite ocean of myself be intensified, as the ark of the universe of myself as the jeevatma could vanish. How amazing that in me, the shoreless ocean of samsara the waves of individual selves, as per their karmaacharana of the jeevaas be finally collapsed. Hence the Bhagavad Gita asserts vide Karma Yoga: Stanza 13: *Dehosmin yathaa dehe koumaaram youvanam jaraa, tathaa dehantara poraaptih dheeras -tatra na muhyati/* As the body witnesses childhood-youth- old age, to do the changes accordingly and gets terminated. So does the body changing from one life to another again and again. These changes are merely 'Deha Dharmas' but not 'Atma Dharmas' or as related to the body but not to the Soul. Thus births-growths- and deaths attract neither elations nor heart rending disappointments. Jnaanias thus get neutral and the depth of that awareness impacts them within themselves of inner consciousness.

Section Three on the Agjnaanata of Manushyaas and Test of Self Realization

*Avinaashanaatmaanmekam vigjnaaya tatvatah,tavaatmagjnasya dhorasya kathamarthaarjane ratih/
Atmaagjnaanaa dahi preetirvishayabhrama gochare,shuktyeragjnaanato lobho yathaa rajata
vibhrame/Vishvam sphurati yatredam taranjaa eva saagare, sohamasmeeti vigjnaaya kim deena iva
dhaavasi/ Shrutvaapi shuddha chaitanyamaatmaanmadhigacchhati/ Sarvabhuteshu chaatmaanam sarv
bhiutaan chaatman, munerjaanat aashrayam mamatvamanuvartate/Aasthitha paramaadwaitam
mokshaarthepe vyavasthitah, aascharyam kaamavashago vikalah kelishiksahyaa/ Udbhutamjnaanadur -
mitramavadhaaryaatidurbalah, aashcharyam kaamam aakaagkshe kaalamantamanushritah/ Ihaamunna
viraktasya nityaanityavivekinah, Aascharyam moksha kaamasya mokshaadeva vibheeshikaa/ Dheerastu
bhojyamaanopi peedyamaanopi sarvataa, atmaanam kevalam pashyan na tushyati na kushyati/ Cheshta
maanam shareeram swam pashyatyanya shareeravat, samstave chaapi nindaayaam katham kshubhyet
mahaashayah/Maayaamaatraamidam vishvaam pashyan vigatakoutkah, api sannihite mrtyo katham
trasyati dheeradheeh/ Niuspruham maanasam asya nairaashyepi mahaatmanah, tasyaatmajnaana
triptasya tulanaa kena jaayate/ Swabhaavaadev a jaanaano drishyamenna kinchan, idam graahyamidam
tyaajyam sakm pashyati dheeradheeh/Antassaktakashaayasya nirdandvisya niraashishah, ydrkcchhagato
bhogo na dhukhaaya na tushtye/*

Guru Ashtaavakra queried Janaka that the latter having realized the Truly Indestructible Self of Tranquility, how would he be feeling detached without wealth, kingship and the varna -aashrama dharmas. The precise status of Self Realization be of little conditionality of the Universe besides the awareness of body, mind and the arishad vargaas of kama krodhaadis since superimposed. The person under reference viz. Janaka as being sufficed with the Atma Jnaana or the Self Knowledge be the Jeevan mukta with self consciousness, mobility and as of normal self. The Universe be indeed nothing but be superimposed unto Him while the acts of mind and senses being normal yet in a supreme state. He could be in a body and what ever be doing as a normality and the difference between ignorance and enlightenment be distinctive. In the case of a person of Atma Jnaana, the difference of consciousness be not easily perceivable by the mundane beings.

Aho, as the avariciousness from the illusion of silver of by ignorance of the mother of pearl, even so arises attachment to the objects of illusory sensitivity from lack of knowledge of the Self. Thus reacted Ashavarka who sought to test Janaka that his attachment to the worldly attractions as of ignorance of their true nature of illusive senses such as Tapatriayas or t of three kinds of difficulties that all human beings are subjected to as also the means of realising the Paramartha Swarupa. The Tapatriayas originate due to Adhyatmika, Adhi Daavika and Adhi Bhoutika reasons. Adhyatmika are either due to 'Shaaririka' (physical) ailments or 'Manasika' (psychological) imbalances. Shaaririka Tapaas include diseases related to head, digestive, heart, breathing, vision, limbs, skin, fevers and so on; related are the various physiological problems of blood-urinary-pelvic nature. Manasika Tapaas are related to Kama, Krodha, Bhaya, Dwesha, lobha, Moha, Vishada, Shoka, Asuya, Apamana, Irshya, Matsara etc. Adhi Bhoutika Tapaas are due to the difficulties attributed to animals, birds, Pishachaas, Serpents, Rakshasaas and poisonous related creatures like scorpions. The troubles on account of Adhidaivika nature are due to cold, heat, air, rains, drought, water, earthquakes, cyclones and so on. Additionally, the troubles are related to birth, childhood, youth, old age, ignorance, Avidya, loneliness, smell, lack of resources, poverty, immaturity, inexperience, lack of opportunity, fear of death, death itself and multiple kinds of experiences of Naraka. Further there are problems of excessive of opulence, excellent health, excessive youth, and such other excesses and some times ignorance is bliss. More so there could be Tapaas due to discriminations of sex, age, social status, experience, opportunity, family background; origin of birth viz. religion, Varnashrama and age. Disappoint -ments in life, more specifically relating to money and fame,

including their earnings, preservation and its destruction happen to be yet source of Tapatriya. Besides there be **Ishana Traya** as of 'Praaneshana'-the bond of Life, 'Dareshana' or the bond of wife, 'Putreshana' or the bond of progeny, 'Dhaneshana' or the bond of wealth, 'Sukheshana' or the love of happiness and contentment and 'Dharmeshana' or the quest of Virtue; but the first three bonds of life above are the strongest ie the Ishanatrayas. But, Ashtaavakra wanted to ensure that Janaka be devoid of such human weaknesses. Indeed, when the Self be truly realised then the weaknesses and sense objects would cease, as of the greed for silver could cease when the Mother of Pearl be realised.

Vishvam sphurati yatredam tarangaa iva saagare, sohaasmeeti vigjnaaya kim deenaiva dhaavasi/ Ashtaavarka continued to interview King Janaka to be upgraded then stated : 'That in which the Universe would appear like the waves of an ocean, then why all be of apprehensions as of the waves of an Ocean be and why would the humans crave and be crazy about at all! Be this realised that one's fears, miseries, helplessness be proceeded from their very conception, so the universe be nothing except self consciousness and attainment of such knowledge be prevalent in the Universe.

After realizing that Pure Consciousness be of Parmaananda and be of Soundarya, how could one be foolish and be crazy for any thing of base and mean level sensual objects stooping down under! But once the maximisation the Supreme awareness and knowledge, the Self would become tranquil, fearless and self contained. Deep and concentrated inward vision ought to terminate that all the Beings in the Universe - be they the 'charaachara praanis' inclusive of human beings of all the varnas, ages, and stages- possess similar features and instincts- are possessive of the similar inner consciousness individually and that Self indeed is the Supreme Unknown and be of the same. The Self knowledge and lust for sensual objects be never coexistent and the lust covering the body be clouding spiritual awareness.

Sarvabhuteshu chaatmaanam sarv bhiutaan chaatman, munerajaanat aashrayam mamatvamanuvartate/ Would this not be strange that the sense of duality be coexistent as one be of the body of senses and of the inner awareness too! Anyone who looks within has seen Him as he is one's mirror image! He is free of movement, speech, thought, vision, hearing and touch. The concept of duality is totally misplaced. This is so but for the interaction of the Jnanendriyas and karmendriyas or the body parts and the sensory organs. Mortality is for the body and never ever for the Soul and indeed that is the Eternal Truth .

Aasthitha paramaadwaitam mokshaarthevi vyavasthitah, aascharyam kaamavashago vikalah kelishiksahyaa/

Be this not strange that one standing for the Supreme non duality and the sense of emancipation be subject to hunger for covetousness be possible. Being aware that lust and avarice be the enemies for Atma Jnaana, how a person could readily be eager to sensual enjoyment! Struggle to surmount all kinds of impediments is fraught with innumerable means of material desires and practices on one hand and sharpen the edge of spiritual bent of mind with tenacity, dedication and extraordinary faith on one's own ability on the other hand. This is some thing that calls for a revolutionary transformation in one's daily routine and psyche. It demands sufferance, self-negation, and total abstinence to the point of break down by way of extreme self denial. Control of mind and detachment by the severe possible hold and command of organs and senses of chakshu-shravana-naasika-manasika-twak media. One's own 'Antaratma' or the Innermost Consciousness needs to be churned out by persistent practice as detailed in the above stanza, by way of struggle, friction and persistence just as oil is extracted from sesamum seeds, butter from cream of milk, water by digging deep from dried earth, and as Agni by friction of 'aarani' or wood sticks! In the constant and even tiring

efforts of truthfulness and extreme austerities, the Individual of total commitment might thus be able to discover the Final Truth finally; Constant churning of a clean and transparent mind is the quintessence of the exploration, just as of ghee in milk which again is obtained after constant churning!

Ihaamunna viraktasya nityaanityavivekinah, Aascharyam moksha kaamasya mokshaadeva vibheeshikaa/

In this world it would be strange that one be unattached to the worldly desires in this and next births to the objects repetitively and who be honestly discriminate the eternal and the transient and indeed who would care for emancipation till the dissolution of the body. This be all of the lip sympathy and false bravado as the pull and pressure be far far overwhelming as the saying asserts that one knows indeed there be a deep trench ahead- oh there be a ditch too close, but the blind be falling and all the rest of blind persons follow too like wise. Realisation of the Self results in triple effect impact: to sever the chains of Samsara, secondly of riddance of joys and sorrows being the typical bodily experiences and finally the destruction of the inevitability of the ever revolving cycle of births and deaths. Yet, intense meditation the Self yields yet another triple effect the final dissolution of human body and the adjoining pleasures and pains and 'Kaivalya', the final bliss being the merger into the Truth!

Dheerastu bhojyamaanopi peedyamaanopi sarvataa, atmaanam kevalam pashyan na tushyati na kushyati/ Cheshta maanam shareeram swam pashyatyanya shareeravat, samstave chaapi nindaayaam katham kshubhyet mahaashayah/

Dheera Manushyas whose mental equilibrium be stable with neither agitation nor anxiety owing to their grip of self control be able to vision the Absolute Self. That kind of serenity be possible by dhridha sankalpa or determined 'Will' to be fine-tuned in a an effort to seek Brahman!Sturdy Self Belief, Will Power, Application of Mind to situations demanding dynamism of thought and action should make realisation possible. Having made the Sankalpa or a firm decision, then the perseverance and staying power of what has been resolved would be the sustenance that needs to be followed up; the chitta or the intelligence to hold despite obstacles is thus superior to the will. As one deserves and desires, he wills, decides and ascertains as how to give a practical shape to the realisation of the goal; in the process he resorts to think, propel the organ of speech to utter mantras and perform the rites. It is possible that there might be shortcomings and the application of intelligence would need to be supplemented from other sources; in other words, one needs to meditate on the thought process and wherever felt necessary make amendments as rigidities should be softened. Indeed, all possible omissions and commissions in the approach be incorporated and the modus operandi be revised as felt needed on a dynamic graph. The proverb states that most of the sections of the Society never even launch a project as they are basically diffident and know of their limitations; some handful of these do launch the project but as several hindrances crop up somewhere on way give up as tension overtakes their strong- enough will; but those very very few in millions face all the obstacles and finally reach the goal dropping many on the sideways! All these actions of perseverance emerge from thought and practical application of intelligence! Thus he who may be literally solitary to seek Brahman ought to contemplate and reflect deeply on intelligence in the form of Will Power to attain the absolute and unqualified world of Brahman as far as Will Power prevails!Meditation and Contemplation are superior to Will Power that is dhyanam. 'Dhyaanam' or meditation is more effective than the consideration of Will Power since after all the Self Determination has to pave way for Meditation. The process of meditation to Brahman is not a simple task! Primarily, one has to conquer the material world centering the Earth. Then the contemplation needs to surmount 'Dyah' or the Intermediate Space. It is not an easy task to overcome the pulls and pressures of the Swarga

by 'dhyana'. Then meditation of the glory of water and the high mountains needs to be prevailed upon. Then comes yet another intensity of humanity and divinity which has such a strong pull that is simply unimaginable and that complexity of that tough intensity is a near impossibility! Those among human beings who had already scaled the dizzy elevations and summits of glory in the pursuit of Brahman are not only few and far between but even of the stature of Maharshis slip down the valleys of failures out of jealousies and pettinesses. Such situations abound when meditation becomes warranted against pinnacles of meditation! It is stated that he who meditates on Meditation, he who is identified with what Meditation is all about, he attains freedom of movement of thought, action and deed; and he who is identified with meditation is indeed the Reality of Meditation itself! The follows Vijnanam or Enlightenment as facilitated by the fund of knowledge takes a further step forward to realise Brahman. Indeed, dhyanam or contemplation is possible on the strength of knowledge and enlightenment! Knowledge is amassing huge funds of empirical information and facts, while Vijnanam is the capacity for assimilation and understanding which is the bottom of Critical Analysis! Now, he who meditates on such deep and close assessment of Brahman, might be able to understand the range and depth of Brahman! He who meditates Brahman might have a hope on the understanding of what kind of Truth that he is!

Maayaamaatraamidam vishvaam pashyan vigatakoutkah, api sannihite mrtyo katham trasyati dheeradheeh/ Nispruham maanasam asya nairaashyepi mahaatmanah, tasyaatmajnaana triptasya tulanaa kena jaayate/ Swabhaavaadev a jaanaano drishyamenna kinchan, idam graahyamidam tyaaajyam sakm pashyati dheeradheeh/Antassaktakashaayasya nirdandvisya niraashishah, ydrkcchhagato bhogo na dhukhaaya na tushtye/

By realizing that this Prapancha be an illusion, one would not be interested in inquisitiveness as of to know that one does not know but desire to know the Maya Shakti seeking even Deva samuhas, let alone manushyas could shroud the nature and implications of Brahma Vidya and the awareness of the Unkown at the cosmic and Individual Levels much less the scope of Accomplishment. Then how indeed could one be of steady mindedness and the fear of death of the Self being rid of the awareness of janma-punarjanma swabhava! Nispruha Maanasa be never free from the cycle of hope against hope yet be never able to cross the barriers of samsaara With whom could one be able to compare that Bliss of Self Knowledge and would yearn and crave for liberation, and desirelessness. Why and how one's own Swabhaava siddha drishya maana prapancha- agjaana due to Maha Maya obstructing the clear vision of Pure Consciousness due to 'Shad Kanchukas' or Six Layers / Coverings and 'Malaas' or defilements of Aanava, Maayiya and Karma nature, being the inner most, the interior and the outer parts of the husk that cover in three layers before obtaining the pure grain or antaratma with neither desirable nor the totally free from the stains of the pristine Self! He who could discard the worldly attachments from his mindset, could weigh the pros and cons the pluses and minuses by the reason of existence and the purpose of Life by detachment and self control while deeply contemplating the amorphous and unknown substance of Brahman like be the dhanya maanava indeed.

Section Four on Atma Jnaana Sthithi

Hantaatmajnaasasya dheerasya khelato bhoga keelayaa, nahi samsaaravaaheekairmoodhaih saha samaanataa/

Janaka stated that it might be possible that those normal manushyaas as of beasts of burden be deluded on to the game of life within the vicious circle of passing joys and sorrows the yet those with playful games, be unaffected and be detached.

Yatpadam protsavo deenaah Shakraadyaah sarva devataah, aho tatra asthito yogee na harshamupagacchati/

Tatva Jnaani Yogis be of the manas tatva of their being in their natural state even Indra and Devas might perhaps not be even as that of their existence, knowledge and blissfulness as indeed be that might really be or not to so. They be not elated and get excited as abided in the state of sthita pragjnasya.

Tajjagnasya punya paapaabhyam sparsho hyaantarna jaayate, na hyaakaashaasya dhuumena drishyamaanaapi sangatih/

Certainly one's own heart and mental awareness be untouched and felt by the Self Consciousness as a mute spectator on the analogy of a chariot driven by the mind with the five horses of panchendriyaas and their tanmaatras that be aware of the deeds of virtue and vice, just as the sky be untouched by the smoke!

Atmaivedam jagatsarvam jnaatam yena mahaatmanaa yadyacchayaa vartamaanam tam nished kshamet kah/

Who indeed could prevent the Supreme Realization as being beyond the Scriptural command. That Unknown be above such formulations for ignorant mindsets not however being moral disorder. That person be surely not victimised as of moral turpitude and all the same stoop to evil misdeeds. Indeed an expert dancer be never take to wrong bhangaas and steps.

Abrahmastamba paryante bhutagraame chaturvidhe, vigjnasyaiva hisaamyartham icchhaanichhavivarjane/

Of the four types of 'jaraayuja' or born of wombs'- 'andaja' or born of eggs-'swedaja' or generated by the sweat and 'udbhujja' or sprouted up the earth, the entire srishti kaarya would comprise of Devas and other subtle beings. As long as a human being ignorant of one's own nature and of prakriti would be hence having likes and dislikes. But once there be the awareness of the Supreme then only the happenings be human life and its possibility of the Unknown be at all possible. Then be the lingering hope and attachments and detachments be possible despite plays of Prakriti.

Atmaanamadvyam kaschinnaatmaanaaati jagadeeshvaram, yadvaiti tat sa kurute va bhayam tasya krucchit/

Rare being that human being who could realize that the Self on the body be the Supreme of the Universe. That person of Self Awareness be fearless from any quarter under the momentum of actions either of the sanchita or praarabdha nature. As that person be free and the actions too be spontaneous. This Absolute Power is seen by none as it is not a sense object and as such, it is its own evidence since it is the ability of vision by itself; similarly it is never heard as it is not an object of hearing by itself; it is never the thought as it is not the object of thinking, but is the Unique Thinker and personification of thought. Thus, finally it is this existence that is the subtle essence and all that merges into That or The Self! And that indeed is the Self: Tatwam Asi or This be Truly The Truth that the Self and Thou Art Thou.

Section Five on 'drishya maana jagat's asatayata' and 'chaturvidha margaas' to dissolve the 'asatayata'

Ashtaavakra uvaacha:

Na te sangosti keenaapi kim shuddhasyaktumicchhasi, sanghaatvilayam kurvenneva layam vraja/

Ashraavakra addressed King Janaka: You by now be devoid of any 'bandhanaas' or constraints whatsoever and hence be pure as you are and what do you seek to renounce! Now, you may destroy th body complex as of

the comprehensive and aggregate of the body-complex, mind, egoism and senses. The Inner Self is indeed unattached and ignorance be extinguishable as identification would prevent the ultimate step of Self Realization. The moment the body be destroyed the identification, then be consequential and the meger be total in entirety. This be so since shaareerika tapatrayaas, ishana rayaas, trigunaas, trividha kaankshaas, chaturvidha purushaardhaas, chaturvsha deha paashaas, and panchendriyas be all vanished by one stroke of the deha thyaaga.

Udeti bhavato vishvam vaaridheriva budbudah, iti jnatyaikamaatmameva lalam traja/

The Universe rises like the bubbles and the foam of the maha saagara as of the drishya maana midhya jagat and as the body once collapsed and the Self or Antaratma a reflection of Paramatma be the substance behind the Universe as the mere superimposition and that be the singular manner of Atma Mahatmya vigjnaana and thus you, Janaka! be finally accomplish Mukti.

Pratyakshamapya vastutvaadvishyam naastyamalestwayi, rajju sarpa iva vyaktameva layam vraja/

Manifestation of the Universe be as of that of the hallucination of futility or Unreality against the Reality. To get rid of this delusion one do not need more actions, but only to make anenquiry, directly facing the ‘snake’ (the world of experience). Then it vanishes altogether. Rajju and Sarpa Bhraanti be aware only by the practice of satkaraacharana indeed!

Final stanza of the section Five

Sama dhuhka sukhah purn akaashaanairaashyayoh samah, sama jeevitamrityuh sannevameva layam vraja/

The Self be of unique equanimity, composure and ‘sama drishti’ either in misery or happiness as of a poorna swarupa, and of a jeevan mrityu. The moment there be the situation of total dissolution of the body then there be Atmakyata unto the Paramatma the -avyaya-shaashvata-ananta-aja Niraakaara.

Section Six on Supreme Knowledge and Tadaadaatmya

Janaka uvaacha:

Akaashavadanantam ghatavat praakritam jagat, iti jnaanam tathitasya na thyaago na graho layah/

King Janaka stated that the boundless aakaasha and the Universe be like a ‘ghata’ are a jar and that wisdom or sufficient atma jnaana be neither approved nor disapproved. As of such ghataakaasha be as of the infinite space be far beyond and yet like the Daharaakaasha. The Supreme Paramatma bestows Self Representation as the Antaratma or the Inner Consciousness of each and every being of sthaavara jangama - moving or non moving beings.. Now, that Self Representation is anchored to ‘Daharaakaasha’ which is surrounded by ‘hita’ the ‘naadis’ of one’s body; the latter passes through three essential stages of Awakenness-Dream Stage of ‘Nidra’ the sleep- and Sushupti the self enlightenment. To that Supreme Paramatma who reflectes His own duplicate titled Antaatma links up diligently the soul and body, the Sadhakas prostrate for His excellence in Srishti of the Maya or the Make Believe and indulges his Eternal Play ! He hower allows His own play instruments to follow the path of jaagruti, swapna-sushupti and the Ultimate of His own Supreme **Self**. Despite the non-dual

Reality of the Self and the Supreme as exists in the Lotus Heart of ‘Daharaakaasha’ or the Small Space, one’s own body parts are responsible for deeds and the Self is but a mute spectator !

Next stanza two

Mahodadhirivaaham sa prapancho vochisannibhah, iti jnaanam tathitasya na thyaago na graho layah/

The Self as the Antarama be like a maha saagara and the universe is ‘like’ just a wave. This be as of the Parabrahma Jnaana rahasya. The Self as being the Antaratma as ever be purged of aakaara-vikaara-vyavahaaraas and acceptance or rejections, yet be present as the silent spectator of the happenings as of the universe and hence the charaachara jagat. When the expression of ‘like’ be used the understanding ‘might’ be perceptible to ‘jnaanis’ since water or Naara-and Ayana as of the restful be possibly perceivable. Similarly, the Self be the substance while the name and form of the universe be illusory as the Maya be shrouding the Truth, the Absolute Truth, as of Satyam-Shivam and Sundaram . Hence ‘Aham Brahmaasmi’ .

Antaratma or the Inner Consciousness inside the heart of a physique covered by mind and panchendriyas is the secret yet the sacredmost place is pure yet unrealisable. Indeed that is located at the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of a body full of flesh, blood and fat. This resembles a substance of durability amid vulnerability, like a wall painting of a castle in air yet being the pith of a plantain tree, or even as a drop of a water bubble. Indeed, that outstanding nucleus of Antaratma is pure, incomprehensible, lustrous, detached, form less, isolated, spotless, disembodied, isolated and blissful.

Further Stanzas of Section Six continued

Aham sa shukti sankaaasho rupyavadvishva kalpanaa, iti jnaanam tathaitasya na tyaago na graho layah/Aham vaa sarva bhuteshu sarva bhutaanyatho mahi, iti jnaanam tathaisya na tyaago na graho layah/

I am indeed like the Mother of the Purity of a Pearl floating and perched on the Vishva kalpana or the Illusion of the Maha Sagara the Universe as of the glitter of silver. This Maha Atma Jnaana of Paramatma be neither renounced nor destructible. This Eternal Truth be likewise well behind the Universe and the Self there behind.

Aham vaa sarvabhuteshu sarva bhutaanyatho mayi; iti jnaanam tathaitasya na tyaago na graho laayah/

Paramatma then asserts that the Almighty be the Sarva Bhutaatmana then, now and ever as the avyakata and shaasvata. And being the Outstanding Tapasvis be absorbed unto Me as of Taadaadamyaa. Paramatma is an essence of Purity and Spotlessness as a singular identity of integration with no parts of division as there is ‘Advaitam’ or of Duality or Multiplicity; That Truth is actionless since other energies which too are self-generated managing the affairs of Existence of the Beings such as Brahma-Prajapati or Maha Purusha with the active assistance or Maya the Illusory Powers to run the system of as Life as assisted by the Sub Powers of Devas as materialised by the mutual inter-action of Maha Purusha and Maha Maya! Figuratively speaking, if only Akaasha or the Interminable Sky is like a piece of leather and capable of being rolled out then the Form and Feature of the Supreme is possible of Realisation and the search of Almighty and of Bliss is what one could ever aspire! From times immemorial Maha Jnaanis and Maha Yogis have made all out efforts by the intense-most endeavors of high austerities and extraordinary dedication and faith backed of course by the proactive blessings of Brahman Himself but the search has been age-old and elusive but for flashes of lightnings but once the Truth is realised by thrusting into the Unknown Realms of Eternity then the Highest Mystery in the Vedanta and no Teacher or Guide could

ever lead him to but only have to 'Swaanubhava' or Self Experience! Indeed Paramatma is the nucleus in the heart as kindled fire, yet with all apparatus like praana-heart-mind-and panchendriyas or sensory organs. Only Food is the sole machine to kick start the cycle. This is the formation of body by the Atma-within or without. The nucleus weaves 'pranis' and is totally devoid of the 'vikaaraas' or the negativities like evil, age, death, sorrow, uncertainty of Life and death, entangles, age, sorrow, temporary contentment and reliefs. He is the creator of Beings subject to the ups-and downs of all the Beings whose past and present is according one's 'karma' both in the erstwhile and ongoing chain of births and deaths. Paramatma who strictly enforces their conduct and tick marks the dos and donts and that is called the fate of each and every Being. Thus Paramatma is free from all aberrations that are due to Beings and is free from evil, age, sorrow, hard luck or luck, disease, death and rebirth. He is kaarya-kaarana-nirmukta or free from the cause and effect cycle.- and mukti pradaayika as per the scale of pluses and minuses. Indeed He is the Singular Bridge who could let cross from the ocean of Samsaara to the Land of Eternity. Hence He is essentially kind and helpful to the deserved. He is Narayana the all pervader as the creator and absorber of pancha bhutas the Five Elements and the Universe and Beings hidden beyond Surya and the Solar orbit. Brahman is the Supreme doubtless. He is the In-dweller as the Antarama, the fundamental foundation of the Universe. He is subtler than the subtle as the super and invisible over shadow of the body of Universe and its fall out of Life activated by praana and the Pancha Bhutas further impacting the panchendriyas of individual bodies. Once awareness of this mystery is revealed by analysis, introspection and practice of reflective inward looking then the Truth in essence is revealed that 'Aham Brahmaasmi'!

Section Seven on Nature of Self Realization and of 'Midhya Jagat'

Manyananta mahaambhodhou vishvapota itastathah, bhramati swaatanvaatena na mamaastya sahisnutaah/

King Janaka then stated that unto him the boundless samsaara saagara, the ark of the universe be moving and hither and thither propelling and pushing by the winds of its own nature and even so am not becoming impatient and eager to act. As the buffeting and harsh winds of the samudra be however nodoubt impulsive yet am able to withstand the pressures as the Self be strong and sturdy.

Manyanta mahaambhodhou jagadvichih swambhaavatah, udetu vaastamaayaatu na me vrurdhan cha kshatih/

In the state that am in as of selfconsciousness, the agaadha samsaara samudra, none of the gushing and ever roaring and howling waves, am now quite tranquil and formless all due to my 'sthita pragjnata' and 'buddhi paripakvata'

Naatmaa bhaaveshu no bhaavastraante niranjane, ityaktosruhah shaanta etadevaahmaasthitah/

The Self as being all pervasive and infinite and hence therefore be not contained and accessible by the fixed and restricted objects by one's body senses and mental aptitudes. Even so in spite of the comprehensibility the self be not reachable any way owing to the unchallengeable 'damana shakti'. Maya as Prakriti is the material cause which is derived from Consciousness and follows the behest as a limiting adjunct of the Supreme Brahman; put in another way Prakriti the Maya is the tool of the Almighty to conceal His Reality and the Great Truth! The Mother of the Universe in totality creates the real and unreal nature of it, protects it from the interplay of, and balancing between, the Tri Gunas of Satvika-Raajasa and Taamasika features and withdraws it periodically as perkaala maana decided by the Over Lord, even without ever affecting Him! In other words, Devi Bhagavata Purana (I.ii.5) declares: „Srishtvaakhilam jagadidam sadasad swarupam, Shaktyaa svayaa trigunyaa paripaati Vishvam, Samhartya kalpa samaye

ramate tathaikaa, Taam Sarva Vishva jananeem manasaa smaraami/ (This Universe of Truth and Untruth Forms is controlled by the wielding power of Maya; she indeed is the plenipotentiary as it were of Brahman the Supreme conferring all powers to act independently as originated by Him the Paramatma.

Aho chinmaatramevaahamindrajaalopam jagat,ato mama katham kutrahehopaadeya kalpanaa/

Aho! What an ‘ascharya janita vishaya’ that I am of the alternate form of Consciousness itself my self! This universe is like a juggler’s show of magic and how and where be there any possibility of my becoming a form of tranquility. An enlightened human like me be able to comfortably lay the bridge the samsaara saagara. Indeed, Indrajala was used instead of maya. Since Indra represents Para Brahma srishti of this universe be considered a magical act, this whole world is Indrajala (a net of Indra), an illusion. In a similar fashion, the human magician applies the magic called Indrajala in imitation of his divine forerunners, and thus spreads his net of maya over those he chooses as the object of his manipulations. He creates something before the eyes of the spectators that does not really exist, or only exist in the spectators’ minds as a result of his skill. If one confines Indrajala to its stricter sense of illusory appearances created for the public, it is understandable that this activity was apt to become an image for the great illusion to hold ignorant mankind in its grasp. Indeed there is no difference between avidya (ignorance) and moha or delusion as factors that lead to human bondage

Section Eight on Bandhana Moksha kaaranas as of one’s Chitta Shuddhi by purging off Aasakti- Anaasaktis

Tadaa bandho yadaa chittam kinchhidvaanchati shochiti, kinchinmucchti grihnaati kinchimuchhati grihnaati na hrashyati na krishyati/

Ashtaavakra stated that when one’s mind were to any desire then its unavailability is bound to emanate grief and likewise the hold or loss be too. And that be known as a bandhana as of the resultant losses and gains. All the karmaacharana be the baic ingredient of human existence. Yet never abstain from the performance surely expected of you. ‘Karma Phala’ is as per the decision of the Almighty. What ever is decided as per destiny shall doubtless be awarded to you. Never hesitate to accept by way of self desire or by the misleading advice of the public. The very feeling of disappointment creates suspicion and self repudiation. This tends to lead to frustration which is the anti-thesis of contentment and thus further leads to a string of inabilities for further successes! That situation is tantamount to ‘ jadatva’ or total lack of initiative!

Tadaa muktiryadaa chittam na vaanchati na shochati, na muncchati na grihnaati na harshyati na kupyati/

As and when one’s chitta be assuming the forms of desire be fulfilled then there be acceptance as otherwise be the contrary. Thus chitta’s vaanchas, shokaas, tyaagaas, harshaas, roshaas and such ‘maanasika spandanaas’ be dissolved then only be the foremost step up the mukti. In other words, liberation. In other words desiring, grieving as such are the modifications of chitta and chitta chanchalya be like the ripples of jala pravaahaas. The depth of a lake be as of one’s own True Self. Glimpses of the water flows be however illusive and that depends on the freedom from ignorance and bondage.

Tadaa bandho yadaachittam saktam kaasvapidrishtishu, tadaa moksho tadaa chittamaaktam sarvashtishu/

Having thus explained bondage and freedom as the identification with and dissassociation from the internal and external , mental modifications now the external objectivity. Drishti would mean the sense experience.

Yadaa naaham tadaa moksho yadaaham bandhanam tatdaa, manveti helayaa kinchit maa grihaana vimuccha maa/

When there be 'I' the 'ahamkaara' then the bondage be withered. Egoism is the bondage constituting as it does the identification of the body, mind, buddhi and dushkarmaacharana ; egolessness be the cornerstone well splmented with Control, Charity and Daya/ Compassion! Now, the cause and effect manifestation is discussed since the gigantic peepul tree with its root emerging of Brahman the immortal and the worlds emerging therefrom. The sprawling tree is replete with innumerable extensions of features ranging from Pancha Bhutas of the Five Elements, Devas, Dishas, and Virtues on one side even along with defending energies of the Universe as relieving points and on the other hand a huge multitude of evils, births and deaths, old age, sorrows , diseases, struggles, besides material attractions all over! Yet Brahman puts the lid on the totality of situations, alike on the pluses and minuses, yet with the defined boundaries and the ground regulations well in place! Thus, being well possessive of the Parabrahma jnaana, the self becomes tranquil and be freed from desires or repugnance!

Section Nine on detachment as of sukha dukkha dwandva kaarana

Kritaakrite cha dwandwaani kadaa shaantaani kasya vaa, evam jnaatyeha nirvedaadbhava thyaanano parivartati/

Maharshi Ashaavarka addressed Janaka that as one's vidhi nirnayaas if lapsed off or otherwise; then where could be the cause and effect system be at all in operation. Being aware of one's life pattern, one then be desireless and the sense of abandonment through total indifference to the worldly matters be arisen. One's own life balance is stated as a conglomeration of joys and sorrows, and one could be choosing the tasks to be executed or avoided and hence the preference of duties or otherwise. As long as one's vision of the jagat be an illusion then be the 'nivritti maarhaanveshana' as of inward vision. In other words as the worldly matters impact individual bodies their respective physical sensory organs receive the signals and result in joys or sorrows but such sensations are momentary and need not disturb the body equilibrium. As such one need not be worried, much less about till the terminal point which too follows yet another birth. Meanwhile in the ongoing life, 'prakriti niyamas' or natural laws prevail such as the seasons of summer- winter-rains and so on which are inevitable and need to be experienced without exceptions. Therefore, may your 'sahana shakti' or the energy of endurance has to be checked on balance. Meanwhile therefore one ought to be balance of Fortitude.

Kasyaapi taat dhanyasya lokacheshtaavalokanaat, jeeviteccha bubhukshaa cha bhuhutsyopashamam gataa/

My child Janaka Raja! How indeed a person's life's timings of seasonal variations of greeshma varshaadis or baala- youvanaadi avasthasas - sukha dukkha dwandvaas be able to be overcoming the kaama krodhaadi upashamana be possible. Yet, a select and ditinguished deha dhaaris be observing the hollowness of the world what with self experiences and others by the experiences of others. That is to state that be objective observation one could realise that eternal happiness be not possible except by detachment.

Anityam sarvame vedam taapatrayadooshitam, asaaram ninditam heyamiti nishichatya shaamyati/

This sampurna jagat be replete with maanasika -daivika- bhoutika- taapa dushita-anitya, and hence the inward looking jnaanis be seeking ways and means to divert their concentration elsewhere to be of lasting contentment. Tapatraya: Adhi Bhoudika or Ailments of Physical Nature; Adhyatmika or of Mental-Psychological Nature; and Adhi Daivika or of Natural Calamities like Earth quakes, floods, lightnings etc. beyond human control. Tapatriayas or the Three Kinds of Difficulties that all human beings are subjected to as also the means of realising the Paramartha Swarupa. The Tapatriayas originate due to Adhyatmika, Aadhi Daavika and Adhi Bhoutika reasons. Adhyatmika based Tapaas are either due to 'Shaaririka'(physical) ailments or 'Manasika' (psychological) imbalances. Shaaririka Tapaas include diseases related to head, digestive, heart, breathing, vision, limbs, skin, fevers and so on; related are the various physiological problems of blood-urinary-pelvic nature. Manasika Tapaas are related to Kama, Krodha, Bhaya, Dwesha, lobha, Moha, Vishada, Shoka, Asuya, Apamana, Irshya, Matsara etc. Adhi Bhoutika Tapaas are due to the difficulties attributed to animals, birds, Pishachaas, Serpents, Rakshasaas and poisonous related creatures like scorpions. The troubles on account of Adhidaivika nature are due to cold, heat, air, rains, drought, water, earthquakes, cyclones and so on. Additionally, the troubles are related to birth, childhood, youth, old age, ignorance, Avidya, loneliness, smell, lack of resources, poverty, immaturity, inexperience, lack of opportunity, fear of death, death itself and multiple kinds of experiences of Naraka. Maharshi Parashara emphasized that there are problems of excessive of opulence, excellent health, excessive youth, and such other excesses and some times ignorance is bliss. More so there could be Tapaas due to discriminations of sex, age, social status, experience, opportunity, family background; origin of birth viz. religion, Varnashrama and age. Disappoint -ments in life, more specifically relating to money and fame, including their earnings, perservation and its vinasha or destruction happen to be yet source of Tapatriya.

*Kousou kaalo vayah kim vaa yatra dwdvaani no nrinaam,naanyupeashya yathaa praaptavartee
siddhimavaanyuyaat/*

Indeed, then what could be the suitable time -opportune stage of one's existence - as of baalya-youvanavardhakyas or of veeta-raaga-bhaya-krodhaas. The answer be that as and when one could surpass the inhibitions then that paramaatmaanveshana be possibke. For any human , one's age-stage of existence be of no relevance at all but there be the will- determination and pratical fortitude or Parama Purusha siddhi. *Naanaa matam mahasheenaam saadhunam yoginam tathaa, drishtvaa nirvedamaapannah ko na shaapyati maanavah/*

Who that parama vichaara sheela maanava be, be a Maharshi, Saadhu or Yogi being beyond Mataantara - Varnaantara- stree purusha lingaantara shanti swarupaas be of diversity of opinions seeking quietude ; such mahanubhaavaas be only worthy of Self Realization as surely endowed with the rare mental caliber and quality of mind.

Futher stanzas of Section Nine as followed:

Kritvaamurti parigjnaana chaitanyasya na kim guruh, nivaida samataauktyaa yastaarayati samsrute/

He who be not the the friend- truthseeker and guide replete with the nature of pure consciousness by total indifference to the samsaara saagara by equanimity, and by reasoning be able to save from the circular form of the vicious circular of births-deaths and rebirths!

Pashya bhutavikaarastvam bhutamaatraan yatharthatah, takshanaadbandha nirmuktah swarupastho bhavishasi/

Do seek to how the pancha bhutaas of prithivi- aapas-tejas-vaayu and aakaashaas could impact the pancha dehendriyaas of and their tanmaatra vikaaraas viz. Sound (Shabda), Touch (Sparsha), Vision (Roopa), Taste (Rasa), Smell (Gandha) as related to each sense organ be freed from the body bondage and abide in your True Self of ‘ Aham Brahmaasmii’ or I am Parabrahma myself!

Vaasana eva samsaara iti sarvaa vimuscha taah tatvayogo vaasanaathaagaan sthitaradhya yathaa tathaa/

The root cause of the desire which forces the ‘arishadvargaas of kaama-krodha- lobha-moha-mada-matsaryaas’ which bind the world and make one to wonder to introspect as what indeed be the Truth and Reality and thus speed up the Awakenness.

Section Ten on Trishna be the Bandhana and Quietude thereafter

Marga darshi Ashtaavakra to Janaka explained

Vihaaya vairinam kaamamartham chaanatha sankalpam dharmamapyetayor hetum sarvatraanaadaram kuru/

One’s own shatru be the ‘kaama bhoga-anardha sankula artha and together be the dharm thyaga and sarvatra upeksha bhavanotpatti’. In other words, do seek to nurture indifference to the worldly affairs by giving up the six enemies of kaama-krodha-lobha-mada-matsaryas and dharmartha kaamaas as they indeed be the enemies of existence of the praanis especially the human beings. Yet in order to attain moksha, one ought to renounce the dharmartha kaamaas. The Absolute Self as of Moksha be never able to reach as long as there be even a crumb of these threesome, especially the craving of desire.

Swapnenenenrajaalavtptyashya deenaani treeni panchavaa, mitrakshetradhanaagaaraadaadaayaadi sammpadah/

Mitrata-bhusampada-wealth- buildings- women-adhikaara or the power - authority and societal clout be all of dreams and indrajaala samaana temporary and passing phases

Yatra yatra bhavet trishnaa samsaaram viddhi tatra vai, proudha vairaagyamaashritya veeta trishnah sukhee bhava/

As and when and there be the Trishna swabhaava that indeed there be the samsaara and proudha vairaagya be aptly defined as the discarding that miragelike trishna and be the curving trend to aim at the nishchita aananda prapti. In other words, be that realised that whenever there be the pull and push of the prapancha , the trishna and the attitude of enjoyment there be reversal of paramaartha saara.

*Trishnaamaatraatmako bandhastannaasho moksha uchyate, bhavaasamsaktmaatrena,
praaptitushurmuhu/*

Kevala trishna be the the root cause of ‘bandhana’ and its vanaasha naama be the moksha. In the samsaara, the ‘anaaskta bhaavana’ be named as krita krithyata and ananda upalabधि. Thus bondage comprises the destruction of desire and that be the liberation.

*Twamekashchetanah shuddho jadam vishvamasatthathaa, avidyaapi na kinchitsaa kaa bubhutsaa
tathaapi te/*

Be this well realised that ‘ You’ Janaka, asserted Guru Ashtaavakra, are of the shuddha chetanatva or of Pure Intelligence and this whole Universe be the ‘Midhya Jagat’. Ignorance has no real entity and what else that you expect of me to clarify in somany expressions! One should realise that what be visualised be unreal and that you ought to know be real. The conscious principle in nature is the reflection of the Self while all consciousness be known as the the consciousness of the Self. To know what to know is a myth and what be known and ought to be known be blissful.

Raajyam sutaah kalatraani shareeraani sukhaanicha, samsaktasyaapi nashtaani tava janmani janmani/

Kingdoms, santaana, stree, shareera and sukha dukkhaas, are the repetitive janma-punarjanmas are of commonsense causes and causations yet how to get over the course to renunciation be the essence of paramaatha saaraamsha. Indeed such be the transitory nature of worldly attractions even being aware of this, but alas one still succumbs to it, oh gets acquiesced to the windmill!

*Alamathena kaamena sukrutaanaapi karmana, ayakyam samsaara kaantaana visraantamabhuun
manah/Kritam na kati janmaani kaayena manasaa giraa, dukkhamaayaasadam karma
tadatyaptuparamya taam/*

Ashtaavakra had again reemphasied the worthlessness of dhana-bhoga- punya-paapa-karmaachaana be enough to enough, yet one’s mind did not repose in in the principles of dharma-artha-kaamas but be formed up ultimate resort to Moksha alone. Indeed how many births had been experienced as of punarapi jananam and pumarapi maranam in this drama of one’s existence! One’s own past actions entailing much labour and sufferings had never yielded lasting happiness and contentment anyway to spring up from ignorance and keeping on drawn to the whirlpool ever and ever again.

Section Eleven on awareness of ‘Shaanti Praapti Upaayaas’

*Bhaavaa bhaava vikaaraashcha swabhaavaaditi nishchayee, nirvikaaro gata kleshah sukhenavopa --
shaamyati/*

One’s own transformation be generated from bhaava and abhaava and from bhaava rupa swabhaava as of the vikaaraas and of ‘maanasika klesha nirmulana’ which could pave the path of manasshanti praapti. In other words, as Ashtaavakra explained that a person on realizing the transformation of existence could easily relax from the pluses and minuses of life.. Such change be useful means of the feeling that nothing be permanent in one’s life. If one could realize the transitory nature of attachments then be the tranquility.

Ishvarah sarna nirmaata nehaanya iti nishchayee, antargalita sarvaashah shantah vaakvapi na sajjate/

Ishvara be the ‘sarva nirmaata’ and none else. Once that Realisation be firmed up then all the ‘aashaa-niraashaa bhavanaas be evaporated and that would result in desirelessness. The awareness that Parmeshvara be the srishti-sthiti-laya kaarana then the feelings of attachments and detachments be vanished.

Further stanzas of the Eleven Section of Ashtaavakra Gita

Aapadah sapadah kaale daivaadeveti nishchayee, tripah swasvenindriyo nitham na vaanchati na shochati/ Sukha dukkhe janma mrityu daivaadeveti nishchayi, saadhyaa darshee niraayaasah kurvannaapi na lipyate/ Chintayaa jaayate dukkham naanyateheti nishchayee,tayaa heenah sukhee shantah savatra galitaspruhah/

As per the kaalamaana, aapaati or sampatti would be recurring as of ones own praarabdha and indeed that be predetermined. Once that reaization be recurring as per adversity and prosperity then the senses be controlled and aapatti-vipatthi visissitudes be owing to past actions be explainable. Sukha dukkhaas-janma mrityus be of daivaadheena. If there be no ‘parishrama’ there would follow ‘karma liptata’ as of the cause and effect.He who knows for certainty that happiness and misery, births and deaths are due to past actions. He who realizes be rid of ‘samsaara chinta’ and chinta heena saadhakaas be of sukha shanti.

Naaham deho na me deho bodhohamiti nishchayee, kaivayamiva sampraato na smarathyakritam kritam/ Aabrahma stambaparyantamahameveti nishchayee,nirvikalpah shucchiha shaantah praaptaapraapta vinrvatah/ Naanaasshcharyamidam vishvam na kinchiditi nishchayee, nirvaananah sphurtimatr na kinchidviti nishchayee, nivaaanah shurti maatrona kinchdvita shaamyati/

I am neither the body nor my body mine. I am the Consciousness myself.That person who could realise this is be neither body nor mind. Because Self realization, once attained would continue even after the destruction of the body. the ‘antaratma’ or the Inner Consciousness named Conscience was distinct from the Physique , its senses and mind and the connecting link of Praana or the composition of all these components ! In other words: Is the total composition of all these units what ‘Antaratma’ all about! Self is that who dispels ‘tamas’ or darkness or ignorance when respiration moves, does not stop up and down yet at the verge of breakdown as of that animated suspension of ‘praana’. At that very moment when the body verges into the climactic turn of the acme of pleasure and illumination which is called the Conscience or the Self or Bliss the Brahman which is Everlasting. Now the Self is what exists in the heart and clean knowledge which leads to virtue as a stepping stone for the heavenly world. When a person is peaceful and composed, then only he could rise up from his body and dwell in his true nature of virtue. Indeed that is the Self in purity with neither fear nor falsehood. That truly is the Truth with is everlasting and an equivalent expression of Self or Brahman. The Truth comprises three words:’ Sa’ for Immortal-‘ti’ for mortal and falsehood and ‘yam’the controller. Truly enough, one who meditates Truth and Heart in unmitigated form are stated to be in the precincts of the Unknown!

Section Twelve Atmaswaswarupa Sthiti and abiding in the Self

Kaaya krityaasahah purvam tatho vaagvivistaraasah, atha chintaasahastasmaadevamevaahamaa sthitah/ Preetyabhaavena shabdaaderadishyatvena chaatmanah,vikshepaikaagra hridaya evamevaahmaa -sthitah/

Janaka then explained to Maharshi Ashtaavakra that initially he became intolerant of physical actions, then of his tone of speech, then the thinking capability. In other words, his intolerant attitude was owing to detachment and his mind, thoughts and deeds having been turned off from any kind of kaaryaacharana. Physically, the control was thus of the gross and subtle obstructions as of action alike of physical, vocal and mental.

Having no attachments for sound and such sense objects the Self's perception be of duality of mine and mine and thine or the Aham and Brahman and hence the human self be seeing, hearing, speaking, thinking and knowing. But when the knower of Brahman be turning as everything would become the Self, then what should be smelling, seeing, hearing, speaking and thinking as the Self be turned as the Supreme Self, having been freed from attachments, sense objects and so on.

Further stanzas of Section Twelve as followed

*Samyaadhyasadi viksheptau vyavahaarah samaadhaye, evam vilokya niyammevaahamaa- sthitah/
Heyopaadayavirahaadevam harsha vishaadayoh, abhaavaadadya he Brahmaanevamevaahamaa -sthitah/
Aashramaanaashrayam dhyaanam chitta sveekritavarjanam, vikalpam mama veekshyatai reva -
mevaahmaasthitah/ Karmaanushthaanamagjnaanaadyathaivi paramastathaa, buhddhva samyaagidam
tatvamevamevaahmaasthitah/ Achintyam chintyamaanopi chitaa rupan bhajantyasou, twaktvaa
tadbhaavanam tasmaadvamevaahamaasthitah/ Evameva kritam yena sa kritarthou bhavedasou,
evameva swabhaavo yah sakritarthou bhavedasou/*

Samyak adhyasa kaarana then the adhaayi seeking taadatmya of the Self with the Supreme would then be intensifying the concentration owing to the still persisting ignorance. The thought process of body, mind, egoism and so on be superimposed on the individual self. The prescription of concentration be applicable to the person amicable to further and further heightenings.

Having nothing to accept or reject, and having neither joy nor mental fatigue and sorrow be possible only when self identification be able to anchor thyself to the Supreme Self as of neither misery nor pleasure of equanimity and composure.

The expected traditional stages of life Brahmacharya of student life- Garhastya or of a householder- Vaanaprastha as of a hermitage- and Sanyaasa of total renouncement of worldly attachments having been surpassed then indeed be able to seek the Truth, but neither the stages of life nor sex be of any concern towards Self Realization.

As in the manner of excessive karmaanishthaana due to agjnaana and so be the karmaanushthaana tyaaga by agjnaana and hence the 'manastatva be of yadārtha atmasthirata' be the key to opening the strong temple of Atma Tatva. Hence abstention from action is as much as the cause of ignorance as the performance of excessive action. And hence the Self is totally bereft of Pravritthi-Nivritti concepts of action and inaction. The totality of Vaidika Karma leads to fulfillment of 'pravrittha' or the exhaustion of all the karmas of the ongoing life and 'nivritta' is to assure 'janma raahitya' or the everlasting break from the cycle of kaala maana of deaths-rebirths and births again. In other words pravritta is the highest reward of the of the ongoing life as equivalent to what Devas had accomplished already but nivritta is the cessation of mortal existence and absorption of bliss the immortality even beyond the reach of pancha praanas and of 'pancha bhutas' or the Five Elements. Thus whosoever could view all the Jeevas in the Self

and also at the same time enable all the jeevas in him is termed as He who is a 'Atma Saashaaktaara' or the Self Radiant / Inward looking Visionary the performer of Atma Yagjna! Hence Parabrahma is far beyond these Maanava Prayatnaas.

The thinking of the Unthinkable Unique be beyond the thoughts be not an object thoughts any way and hence Realization and Comprehension are the limitations of human minds. Blessed be the human who through saadhana be able to realize the Self as of the Supreme Self. This Purusha is hidden in all beings from Brahma to bunch of grass but is covered by maya or cosmic illusion born of the mix of Satva-Rajas and Tamo Gunas. Only Maharshis and Great Seekers might perceive him as a subtle entity; the Paramatma is stated to reveal to none due to Yoga Maya or the Great Illusion as covered by Ignorance. Only through purified intellect as is available to Seekers, a hazy profile of Hiranyagarbha is perhaps seen by their mind's eye! The discerning person needs to merge into the 'Indriyas' or the organs into the intelligent Self and then infuse the latter into the 'Paramatma'. While so doing, the name-form-action of that particular Self is totally negated and there had to be a 'tadaatmya' or fusion of the two entities!

Section Thirteen on Swaswrupa Anaanda Sthiti

'Janaka uvaacha' '

Akinchana bhavam swaastyam koupeenatvepi durlabham, thyaaga daane vihaayaasmaadahamaase yathaasukham/

The 'swaasthya chitta' or the stage of tranquility as generated by one's own self consciousness be indeed a rarity as of a high state of spiritual realization even for those sporting a loin cloth. Renunciation be not of the acceptance of egoism and attachments surely as ignorance be the anitithesis of blissfulness. Hence true happiness comprises of transcending the two.

Kritraapi khedah kaayasya jihna kutraapi khidyate, manah kritraapi tatvaktvaa purushaarthehi sthitah sukham/

Whenever there be any body trouble in my practice of penances as of tougue in while chanting the study of scriptures and in the concentrated applicaion of mind in meditation for self realizaton then there had been several occasions of frequent periods of struggle. Total resistances for detachment and will - power had to be self monitored and enforced towards Self Realization. Being well established in the perfection of mindset then only the Seekers could be distinctive of actions alike of physical, vocal and mental, in the process of detachment.

Kritam kimapi naiva syaaditi saanchitnya tatvatah, yadaa yakartumaayati tatkritvaase yathaasukham

For the Realization of 'That ' despite nothing had be done by the body, mind and senses as also added by the ego or the self image thus far, the process of knowing Thou Art Thou be intensified utmost. In other words despite one's own shareera, antahkarana and so on be kept aloof and decidedly one's own kartvya be performed then be in paramaananda.

Karmanaishkarma nirbandhava dehastta yoginah, samyogaayogavirahaadahamaase yathaa sukham/

Karma sankalpa as buttressed and reinforced with parityaaga of durabhimaana be the resultant to sukha paripurnata. Thus the maga yogis even having been attached to the body and its auxiliaries of senses, mind

and buddhi be still carry of the karya nirvahana. Karma is two folded: Sakaama karma or performance of a deed with a positive desire while 'Vikarma' is an avoidable evil oriented doing. The third category is of the superior quality viz. Nishkaama karma which is stated to be neither of 'kartrutva' - or 'bhokrutva' nature or in other words of as a vidhi karma or as dutybound deed or alternatively a desire- intended deed. The kartrutava karma is a positive duty but the bhokrutva is negative ended. Now only a person who is aware of kartrutva- sakaama, vikaama karmas is known as a 'Buddhimaan' of above average intellect who knows to observe equanimity in a society of mixed mentalities and is distinguished as a yogi who indeed is aware of and keeps a distance from those of bodily materialism rather than of moralistic (much less of spiritualistic) nature. Whosoever performs desireless tasks then that is stated by Panditas that those are subjected to the flames of jnaana or awakeness. Any karma has two kinds of reaches, one is of 'baahya and antaranga' or external and internal impacts. Both these influences are temporary like consumption of food is temporary yet repetitive appetites. And hence the repetitive births and deaths. Such awareness is taught by the jnaana of the need for restraint of the quickening of internal urges till the very end. Once a human being is able to be self contented without resorting to external influences and performs the daily duties sincerely without aspiring 'karma phala' as by a self less person with restraint is stated as having immunity from 'punya paapaas' then the balance of mind as that of a 'sthitha pragjna' in one's step forward! Be it due to 'Daivaanugraha' or of the blessings of Almighty or due to 'Praarabdha karma' or the fruit of stored and erstwhile deeds, if only a person is equanimous to heat and cold and carries further with selfless 'karmaacharana' dutifully then that person is taken care of by the Supreme only. Non interference with extraneous negativity with egoistic leanings but with a balanced 'kartavya drishti' or of duty mindedness only with self sacrifice nature, the imperfections of one's actions if any are melted away like of ice blocks burnt off by the severity of Agni jwaalaas.

Athanirdhou na me sthityaa gatyaa na shayanena vaa, tishthanchhanvaparamtasmaadahameese yathaasukham/

Neither one's own sthiti-gati-shayanaas be rid of prayojana-nishprayojanaas and hence in any kind of jaagrata or of swapnaavavastha let alone the superior phases of sushupti and even therebeyond be ever happy as neither there be the accrual of build up of jaagrat and swapnaadi stages of the maha yogis.

Swapato naasti me haanishiddhiryatnavato na vaa, naashollaasou vihaayaasmaadahamaase yaythaa sukhakham/ Sukhaadirupaaniyamam bhaaveshaalokya bhurishah, shubhaashubhe vcihaayasmaad - ahamaase yathaasukham/

Neither while be awaken nor asleep the self be carrying on the normal duties as one's own buddhi be unreactive of laabha nashtaas of pluses and minuses and be ever contented. Irrespective of shubhaashibhaas, am of buddhi parityaaga and be ever joyous and blissful. In other words, the self be never lost by being awaken or sleeping or there beyond for striving and thus be restless nor elated but be ever happy.

Section Fourteen on Tranquility the stage of Atma Jnaana

Prakrityaa shunya chitto yah pramaadaandwa bhananah, nidrito bodhita iva ksheena samsarano hi sah/

Janaka states that a person by nature and by chitta swabhaava shunyata be empty minded and by inadvertence verging on carelessness be feeling asleep verging on semi-awakeness might thereby

implying that the sense objects be hazy and lazy to recall the causes and effects the karmaacharana and the recollections thereof implying the bondage of the selfmade of the prarabhka karmas. This is on the analogy of as a huge fish swims alternately on the eastern and western banks of a river, the Self has no difference in either of the states of existence viz. that of wakefulness or dream as it is not overpowered by the organs and senses resulting in motivations, desires and actions as by nature free to act on its own fully independent, free to act on its own, enlightened and Pure. Similarly as a hawk flying free and roams in all directions as it pleases and desirous of taking rest and relaxation reaches its nest and falls asleep. The Self too so connected with the results of its contact with body parts and actions as covered by the veil of ignorance in the waking state desires rest into deep sleep.

Kva dhanaani kva mitraani kva me vishayadsvahah, ka shaastram kvacha vigjnaanam yadaa me galitaa spruhaah/

As one's desires for the objects of enjoyments be melted away there be neither dhanaalochana of gains and losses, nor of friendships and enmities and hostilities, desires and hatreds, shastras and vigjnaana

Vigjnaate saakshi purushe paramaatmani cheshvare, nairaasye bandha mokshe cha nachitaa muktaye mama/

Shakshi Purusha Ishvara Parmatma as of abhinna, bandha vimochana, and mukti maarga pradarshaka be then be of the the unique ashraya pradaata. The Singular Parama Shiva is the Originator of Existence of the Beings of the Universe as also of its dissolution and creates it again and again and that Supreme Energy viz. *Ishaanam varadam* or the only and unfailing source to bestow blessings to all in the Creation; truly indeed, those who understand His excellence would be destined to secure Peace. He is the origin of Devatva or of Devas and the distributor of their celestial powers; it was Rudra who visioned Hiranyagarbha Brahma who is the Supreme Architect and had enabled the mechanism of the Cycle of Births, Deaths and Births again! Rudra Deva is also the Over-Lord of Devas besides the two legged and four legged 'Pashus' thus having attained the title of Pashupati -naadha'! Rudra Deva is the 'Sukshmaati sukshmam', 'vishvasya srashtaaram aneka rupam' or the subtlest of the subtle, the Unique Creator of all the Beings of myriad forms is also the great enveloper of what all one could visualize; realisation of his splendour brings peace for ever. He is the unchallenged protector and the ultimate refuge point of all and the illustrious Sages are able to access Brahman the Final Abode of Bliss even severing the chords of death forever. Just as a thin film conceals the top layer of butter in milk, the embodiment of 'Shivatva' or auspiciousness of Shiva is concealed in one's own inner cave of the body; the 'Vishvaikam pariveshtitam' or that Unique Energy sustaining and filling up the Universe in Totality once recognised and realized is certain to break open the fetters of 'Samsara'! It is that very 'Paramatma' that is right within the concealed as one's own 'Antaratma' as seated in the heart, once visualised in the mind, brings to the frontiers of Immortality! That be how the struggle to surmount all kinds of impediments fraught with innumerable means of material desires and practices on one hand and sharpen the edge of spiritual bent of mind with tenacity, dedication and extraordinary faith on one's own ability on the other hand. This is some thing that calls for a revolutionary transformation in one's daily routine and psyche. It demands sufferance, self-negation, and total abstinence to the point of break down by way of extreme self denial. Control of mind and detachment by the severe possible hold and command of organs and senses of chakshu-shravana-naasika-manasika-twak media as also the yoga practice without desired ends and the corresponding controls but even without pursuing and terminating the further strife to merely attain 'siddhis' like Anima and Garimaadi powers but of the Ultimate Siddhi of uniting the Self with the Supreme with no interference and curiosity of materialism and its ends but bring out to one's fold from one's own heart! One's own 'Antaratma' or the Innermost Consciousness needs to be churned out by

persistent practice as detailed in the above stanza, by way of struggle, friction and persistence just as oil is extracted from sesamum seeds, butter from cream of milk, water by digging deep from dried earth, and as Agni by friction of ‘aarani’ or wood sticks! In the constant and even tiring efforts of truthfulness and extreme austerities, the Individual of total commitment might thus be able to discover the Final Truth finally ‘Constant churning of a clean and transparent mind is the quintessence of the exploration, just as of ghee in milk which again is obtained after constant churning!

Antarvikalpashunyasya bahih swacchandachaarinah, bhraantasyeva dashaastaataadrishaa eva jaanate/

What all be of the inside view of antaratma as of vikalpa shunya be quite of an antithesis of bhraanti rupa mayaa samaana as those vigjnaana purushas be fully aware of. Paramatma is an essence of Purity and Spotlessness as a singular identity of integration with no parts of division as there is ‘Advaitam’ or of Duality or Multiplicity; That Truth is actionless since other energies which too are self-generated managing the affairs of Existence of the Beings such as Brahma-Prajapati or Maha Purusha with the active assistance or Maya the Illusory Powers to run the system of as Life as assisted by the Sub Powers of Devas as materialised by the mutual inter-action of Maha Purusha and Maha Maya. As one acts and performs dynamic service firmly embedded in total dedication, then that bestows ‘sukham’ or enjoyment; indeed there cannot be such happiness without dedicated service backed up by ‘nishtha’ and ‘shraddha’. This happiness is certainly not in reference to material context, which is tantamount to endless craving and flimsily fleeting! The joy that is under reference is most hard-earned as a result of a long chain of variables strating from speech enabled by strong knowledge of appropriate nature, clean mind, strong will, thought, meditation, understanding, physical energy based up by good food and water of suitable heat and relief space, good memory, aspiration, vital energy, truthfulness, thinking capacity and mental sharpness, faith, determination, nishkama karma! Indeed it was that kind of Happiness that a Sadhaka ought to aspire for!

Section Fifteen on the Knowledge of the Self and Moksha Rahasya as of Advaita Nirupana

Yathaathopadeshna kritarthah satvabuddhimaan, aajeevamapi jajnaasuhuparastatra vimuhyati/

Astaavakra Maharshi then explained about what the ‘saatvika buddhi sampanna jigjnaanis’ could have explained be somewhat intelligible with ‘kritarthata’ but what the heena purushaas be never clear and confusing, Thus a person of pure Self knowledge could realize even casual manner the instruction would suffice for a qualified disciple. Recalling the very initial query of the King Janaka to Maharshi Ashtaavakra, that ‘ If you were to seek liberation, then the vishaya vaanchaas be rejected as the attachments be poisonous. Be sincere in your speech and mind. Virtue and truthfulness are the rudimentary possessions of any aspirant and cultivation of virtue implies self control and purification of senses besides the enhancement of the positivity of the manastava’ the enquirer Janaka underlined that casual explanations be like wise ‘wishy waashi’ but the secret yet goodhaatrha vishayopadeshaas be indeed bewildering!

Moksho vishayavaurayam bandhovaishayiko rasaha etaavadeva vigjnaanam yathec c hasi tathaa kuru/

‘Vishaya vaanchha nirmulana jnaana’ be the very intial step forward to the moksha rahasya, since ‘vishaya rasa bandhana’ be the essence of tatva jnaana’ and hence the aspirants of the tatva jnaana be alerted. A person of pure intellect thus should be able to practise non attachment for sense objects to start

-with as the lust for sense objects being innumerable, bandha vimochana thereof by itself be the liberation and of bondage. In this context Ashtaavakra had succinctly described the essential nature of liberation and of bondage and that be the duty of the aspirant,

Vaagmipraagjnamahodyogam janam mooka jadaalasam, karoti tatva bodhoamatasyakto bubhikshubhih/

Tatva bodha could easily transform even the mooka vyaktis too transform mooka-jada-aalasa prajaas or of mute-inert and inactive even as of eloquent, wise, and jnaanis too. And hence shunned by other prajas who reap the fruits of the sensual enjoyments of the world. The inner meaning would mean that despite the conversational ability, knowledge and right communication style the aspirant might be deluded as of an silent, inert and inactive as of the accomplishment of Self Realization.

*Natwam deho na te deho bhoktaa kartaa na vaa bhavaan, chidruposi sadaa saakshee nirapekshah
sukham charah/*

Neither the shareera belongs to you nor vice versa, neither you are the Karta-Karma-Kriya but the Inner Consciousness as of the Paramatma the Supreme Bhokta the eka rasa chetana saakshi and hence be of the 'nirapeksha sukha vichara'. In other words, you are neither the doer and enjoyer or sufferer

within this body but the mute spectator only of the body as the witness.

*Raagadweshou manodharmou na manate kadaachana, nirvikalposi bodhaatmaa nirvikaarah sukham
chara/*

Raaga dweshaas are the manasikaka dharmas but not YOU as the Antaratma and hence are be purged them off as YOU are immune from vikalpaas and vikaaraas as of bodhaswarupa and as such of be of 'sukha shaanti'. Attachments and abominations are merely the attributes of mind and indeed the mind is certainly never of YOURS as YOU are of the Pure Intelligence and of Bliss. Thus YOU as the aspirant should neither be infatuated nor depressed as doing so the the body but not YOU. Such narrow interpretation be contrary and elusive towards Self Realization .

Sarvabhuteshu chaatmam sarva bhutani chaatmani, vignaaya nirahankaaro nirmamatvam sukheebhava/

Bhagavan Ashtaavarka then addressed Janaka: Vatsa! Be thus having realized that samasta praanis and padaardhas too and be crossed over various impediments and having purged off ahamkaara and mamatas, then be blissful ever. On realizing the true SELF as the substratum or bedrock be freed from the sense of mine and thine , do ever seek the sense of ME only as of Aham Brahma and of THOU ART THOU- YOU ARE MYSELF.

Vishvam sphurati yatredam tarangaa iva saagere, tatvamevaa nasandehashchan murte vijjvaro bhava/

You are indeed That in which the universe manifests itself like the tarangaas of the samsaara samudra but when one realizes that the Self is only the abstract substance pervading all over the universe yet the universe be distinct from YOU. Chitta swarupa, that 'adhishtaana chaitanya' be ever flashing all across the ever rising waves of the samsaara saagara and as such do seek to visualize on the metal screen the ever Truthful Picture.

*Shraddasva tat shraddhasva naatra moham kurushva bhovh, jnaana swarupo bhagavaantmaa twam
prakrith parah/*

My dear child Janaka Raja! Do repose faith in me and never get confused much less be flaggerblasted. Be this be realised by now that YOU are the Knowledge, YOU are the Universe which indeed be an Illusion. The Self be as the Seers describe is YOURSELF. Hence have faith and seize THE FACT beyond this Maha Maya obstructing the clear vision of Pure Consciousness due to Coverings or of the inner most interior and the outer parts of the husk that covering the pure grain of antaratma , the pristine Self!

*Gunaih samveshtitodehasisthatyaayaati yaaticha, Atmaa na gantaa naagantaa kimenashochasi/
Dehastishthatu kalpaantam ganacchhadaiva va punah kva buddddhihi kvacha vaahaanistva hinnaatra
rupinah/*

Human body is composed of the ingredients of Nature viz. the saatvika- raajasika-taamasika gunas as of nobility-passion and darkness ie. of splendour-blunder and shudder but the Self be distinct from he body. Indeed the bodies be altered repeatedly as of ‘punarapi janmam punarahi deham’ yer the Self named Antaratma be ever lasting. Simply stated: the body changes but Self does not. Let the body last the cycle of kalpaas after kalpaas or be vanished even this day but where be the conditionality the the Unique Self? A human being is stated as a machine which a ‘jada padaartha’ or insentient and insensible being gets driven by mind, its thinking capacity. This motivation is lent by the self consciousness and its innumerable corollaries. Such awareness is a direct fall out of ‘Jeevatma’ or the direct reflection of the Supreme Consciousness aptly called Paramatma! Thus the human body, or for that matter of any Being of ‘Charaachara Jagat’ or the whole lot of moveable or immobile ‘praanis’, is activated by that Unknown- Unseen- yet ever Alive-Ever Lasting- Ever Knowing and ever Controlling Power. Thus no person or thing with a body and sense with life is denied of the ability to act- react- or inact. Thus the Jeevatma is ever present as a mute spectator of the living body inside the chariot which is driven by the mind as the charioteer with panchendriyas of five each of jnaanendriyas cum karmendriyas represented by ‘Pancha Bhutas’ or Five Basic Elements of Earth- Water-Fire- Air and Sky. In turn, these get motivated by Tri Gunas of Satva- Rajas- Tamas or the attributes of creativity- preservance-and destruction.

*Tvayayaannanta mhaambhdho vushvaveechihi swabhaavatah, udetuvaastamaayaatu ne te vridhirna vaa
kshatih/*

Unto You be the ‘maha samsaara samudra’ and let the waves might rise and fall as per their nature and volision as per the gais and losses- The Universe as per their seasons of summer-rainy-and winters and also be fast moving through births-deaths and rebirths and passage of yugas-kalpaas-and palayaas. Yet that be least affected by the Self beyond time and as per the cause and effect syndrome. The Self is and surely be ever lasting.

Taat chinmaatrarupesi na te bhinnamidham jagat, atah kasya kathamkutra hedopaayena kalpanaa/

My child Janaka!, do by now realize that You are Pure Intelligence and the happenings and mishappenings of the Univees should have little impact on You. As one would seek the Real Self vviz. The Pure Intelligence, then the pluses and minuses of the universe be in effeective

Ekasminnavaye shant chidaakaashemale tvayi kuto janma kutah karma kritehankaara eva cha/

From where would there be one born, the actions, the selfishness , egoism and finally the termination be distictive for the Self. As for births and deaths, the actions there of be beyond the Pure Intelligence. The Purity would imply the Space of Intelligence, that is of Chit Akasha which is all pervasive. Ever indeed

the Mahaakaasha be denoted as of the perception of the ordinary aakaasha that might be perceivable of external objects..Even the secondary type of the Chid aakaasha be percieveable by imaginal and of swapna shupna samaadhis even but Pure Conciousness be that kind of Chitaakaasha of Actual Taadaamya indeed.

Devis Lakshmi -Sarasvati-Durga- and Gayatri

Excerpts on Lakshmi Devi from Scriptures



Hreescha te Lakhmisha ahoraatre paarshve Nakshatraani rupam Ashvanou vyaaktam, Ishtam manishaana, amuym manishaana sarvam manishaana/

Devi Lakshmi and Lord Hari are the illustrious and Sacred Couples; they are forms of the glittering Stars on the Skies and Ashvini Devatas are their mouth; this being so, may they bless us with the fulfillment of all our materialistic wishes and spiritual aspirations! – Vaajasaneeya Samhita , Shukla Yajurveda.

Hindu Scriptures - Lakshmi Devi Playful swings of Devi Lakshmi the Goddess of Fortune are as per the heart beats of Lord Vishnu the Preserver of Life. Indeed, as one sows so does one reaps is the quintessence of Existence! This is what pleases Bhaagya-Bhogya-Yogya Lakshmi! This certainly pleases the endless Forms of the Unknown viz. Tri Murtis, Tri Shaktis, and so on which are but the reflections of Antaratma or One's Conscience namely Paramatma! This is the fulfillment of 'varchas-aayush-aarogyam-avidyaacchadanam-dhaanyam -dhanam -pashum- bahuputra laabham-shata samvatsaram-deerghamaayu'! May the Ashta Lakshmi swarupa of 'Adi-Lakshmi-Dhanya Lakshmi-Dhairya Lakshmi-Gaja Lakshmi-Santaana Lakshmi- Vijaya Lakshmi- Vidya Lakshmi-Dhana Lakshmi' bestow fulfillment of 'iham' or the worldly aspirations and 'param' or there after of 'karma yoga' to ascend the higher plane to the 'jnaana yoga' and far further to Moksha Yoga'. Indeed, Lord Vishnu is the Owner and Preserver of One's Life Boat being ever present in the journey and stays put firmly as the Antaratma the Inner Conscience, but the Navigator of Life is the Self the 'Jeeva' as per the instruments and the engine of the boat in the form of Panchendriyas and the Mind of the Driver. The role of Devi Lakshmi is the Enforcer of the Swing of Fortune sitting pretty on the swing! My reverential salutations to you the Mother of Universe! Maha Lakshmi! You were materialised from the Ocean, with magnificent eyes that are resplendent and are like opened up Lotus flowers occupying the chest of Vishnu; You are the hall-mark of Purity and the personification of propitiousness. You are the Siddhi, Swaha, Swadha, Sudha, Sandhya, Ratri, Prabha, Bhuti, Medha, Shraddha and Sarasvati. You are the Yagna Vidya, Maha Vidya, Guhya Vidya, and the Provider of Atma Vidya. You are the 'Anveekshani' or the Darshana Shastra, Trayi or the Form of Three Vedas viz. Ruk-Yajur and Sama; the 'Vaarta' or the three most significant professions of human beings viz. Krishi / Agriculture, Goraksha or the security of Cows, Vanijya or business and Danda Niti or the Art of Defence and Attack. You are the Form of 'Saumyata' or of poise and composure; since You are ever-present; You are also the most charming and esteemed. Are you not the singular woman sporting a mace called Kaumudi to defend the virtuous and punish the Evil! You are the Yagnamayi whom Yogis and Maharshis pray to and cogitate about. It is by your grace and magnanimity that the whole World got revived after its erstwhile destruction and is looking full and on-going. With your kindness that all the human beings and their families are fine and the womanfolk, children, households, and existence in general is contented and smooth enough with 'Dhana-Dhaanyas'. Once your merciful looks are available, persons are healthy, wealthy, contented without enemies and hindrances. You are indeed the mother of all and Vishnu is the father, controlling and preserving the 'charaachara Jagat' comprising the moveable and immovable Benigs. You are our self-esteem, our Treasure-Hold, Anna Bhaandaar or Food-reservoir, the entire house-hold, our well being and families; do keep us safe and satisfied Devi! Those whom you leave away, their truthfulness, stability, virtuosity are all deserted instantly. Your benevolence would turn a miserable being surfeit with riches, a vicious entity into an ideal being worthy of reputation, courage, and perfection. A remote glance of yours would bring about a mind-blowing transformation of a human being. Even Brahma would fail in estimating your qualities and how else marginal beings could possibly do! Mother, my earnest prayer to you is to bless me and never ever leave me even by mistake!

Indra's prayer to Lakshmi Devi as He regained His Indratwa:

‘My reverential salutations to you the Mother of Universe! Maha Lakshmi! You were materialised from the Ocean, with magnificent eyes that are resplendent and are like opened up Lotus flowers occupying the chest of Vishnu; You are the hall-mark of Purity and the personification of propitiousness. You are the Siddhi, Swaha, Swadha, Sudha, Sandhya, Ratri, Prabha, Bhuti, Medha, Shraddha and Sarasvati. You are the Yagna Vidya, Maha Vidya, Guhya Vidya, and the Provider of Atma Vidya. You are the ‘Anveekshani’ or the Darshana Shastra, Trayi or the Form of Three Vedas viz. Ruk-Yajur and Sama; the ‘Vaarta’ or the three most significant professions of human beings viz. Krishi / Agriculture, Goraksha or the security of Cows, Vanijya or business and Danda Niti or the Art of Defence and Attack. You are the Form of ‘Saumyata’ or of poise and composure; since You are ever-present; You are also the most charming and esteemed. Are you not the singular woman sporting a mace called Kaumudi to defend the virtuous and punish the Evil! You are the Yagnamayi whom Yogis and Maharshis pray to and cogitate about. It is by your grace and magnanimity that the whole World got revived after its erstwhile destruction and is looking full and on-going. With your kindness that all the human beings and their families are fine and the womanfolk, children, households, and existence in general is contented and smooth enough with ‘Dhana-Dhaanyas’. Once your merciful looks are available, persons are healthy, wealthy, contented without enemies and hindrances. You are indeed the mother of all and Vishnu is the father, controlling and preserving the ‘charaachara Jagat’ comprising the moveable and immoveable Benigs. You are our self-esteem, our Treasure-Hold, Anna Bhaandaar or Food-reservoir, the entire household, our well being and families; do keep us safe and satisfied Devi! Those whom you leave away, their truthfulness, stability, virtuosity are all deserted instantly. Your benevolence would turn a miserable being surfeit with riches, a vicious entity into an ideal being worthy of reputation, courage, and perfection. A remote glance of yours would bring about a mind-blowing transformation of a human being. Even Brahma would fail in estimating your qualities and how else marginal beings could possibly do! Mother, my earnest prayer to you is to bless me and never ever leave me even by mistake!

Shri Suktam

Harih Om/ Hiranyavarnaam harinim suvarnarajatasrujaam, Chandraa hiranyamaheem Lakshmiim jatavdo ma aa vaha/ Taam ma aa vaha jaatavedo Lakshmeemanapagaamaneem, yasyaa hiranmayam vindeyam gaamashvam purushaanaham/ Ashvapurvaam rathamadhyaam hastinaadhaa praboddhineem, Shriyam Devimupahvaye Shrimaa Devirjushataam/ Kaam sosmitaam hiranya praakaaraam – aardhraam jvalantim truptaam tarpayantim Padma-sthitaam padma- varnaam taami-hop-havye Sriyam chandraam prabhaasaam yash-saa jvalantim Sriyam loke dev-jushtaa- mudaaraam Taam padmini-mim sharanam-aham prapadhye a-Lakshmir-me nashyan-taam tvaam vrune Aaditya-varane tapaso-adhi-jato vanas-pati-stava-vruksho-atha bilvaha Tasya phalaani tapasaa-nudantu maayaa-anta- raayaa-scha baahyaa a-Lakshmi-hi upeiy-tu maam Dev-sakha-ha kirti-scha maninaa saha Praadur-bhuto su-raashtre-asmin kirtim-vrudhim dadaatu me Kshutpi-paasaa-malaam jyeshtaam -a-Lakshmiim naash-yaamyaa-ham Abhutim-a-samrudhim cha sarvaa -nirnud me gruhaat/ Gandha-dvaaraam duraa-dharshaam nitya-pushtaam karishi-nim Ishvariim

sarva-bhutaanaam taami-hop-havye Sriyam/ Manasaha kaam-maa-kutim vaacha-ha satya-mashi-mahi Pashu-naam rup-manyasya mayi Srihi srayataam yasha-ha /Kardamen prajaa bhutaa mayi sambhava kardam Sriyam vaasaya me kule Maataram padma-maali-nim /Aapaha srajantu snig-dhaani chiklit vasa me gruhe ni cha Devim Maataram Sriyam vaasaya me kule/ Aardhraam push-karinim pushtim pinglaam padma maali-nim Chandraam hiranya-mayim Lakshmiim jaat-vedo ma aavah /Aardhraam yah-kari-nim yashtim suvarna-aam hem-maali-nim Suryaam hiranya-mayim Lakshmiim jaat-vedo ma aavaha/Taam ma aavaha jaat-vedo Lakshmi-man-pagaa-nim, Yasyaam hiranyam pra-bhutam gaavo-daasyo-asvaan vindeyam purushaan-ham/ Yaha shuchi-hi preyato bhut-vaa juhu-daayaa-jya-manva-ham Suktam panch-dashar-cham cha Sri-kaam-ha satatam japed/ Sarsij-nilaye saroj-haste dhaval-taraam-shuk gandh-maalya-shobhe Bhagavati-Hari-vallabhe-mano-gne tri-bhuvan-bhuti-kari prasid mahyam/ Asva-daaye gow-daaye dhan-daaye mahaa-dhane Dhanam me jush-taam Devi sarva kaamaa-scha dehi me/ Putra poutra-dhanam dhaanyam hastya-asvaadig-veratham Prajaanaam bhavasi Maataa aayush-mantam karotu me/ Dhanam-agnir dhanam-vaayur dhanam-Suryo dhanam-vasuha Dhanam-Indro Brihaspatir-Varunam dhanam-ishvarou/ Vainate Somam piba Somam pibatu vrutra-haaSomam dhana-asya Somino mahyam dadaatu Sominaha/Na krodho na cha maatsarya na lobho na-ashubhaa mati-hi Bhavanti krun-punyaa-naam bhaktaa-naam Sri-suktam japed/ Padmaanane padma karu padma sambha-ve,Tanme bhajasi Padma-aakshi yen soukhyam labhaa-mya-ham/Vishnu patnim ksha-maam Devim Maadhavim Maadhava priyaam Vishnu priya sakhim Devim namaam-yam nyut Vallabhaam/ Mahaa Lakshmiim cha vidmahe Vishnu patnim cha dhi-mahi Tanno Lakshmi-hi prachodayaat/ Padmaa-nane padmini padma-patre padma-priye padma-dalaa-yataaxi Vishva-priye vishva-manonu-kule tvat-paad-padma-mayi san-nidhat-sva/ Aanand kardama-ha Sri-daha chiklit iti vi-srutaa-haa Rushaya-ha Sri-va-putraas-cha mayii Sri-Devi devtaa, runa-rogaadi daaridhra-yam paapam cha ap-mrutyaa-va-ha Bhaya-shouk-manas-taapaa nash-yantu mama sarva-daa/Sri-varcha-strayam-aayuyshyam-aarogyaa maavidhaat-pav-maanam mahi-yate Dhanam-dhaanyam pashum bahu putra-laabham shat samvat-saram dirgham- aayu-hu Aum Sri Mahaa-Kaali Mahaa-Lakshmi Mahaa-Saraswati Trigunaatmikaa Chandikaaye namah/

Agni Deva! we invoke you for Devi Maha Lakshmi who is resplendent with golden jewellery of glittering yellow and silver glows as Chandra the personification of wealth. Agni Deva, through your grace, may Devi Lakshmi provide as prosperity, excellent progeny, cattle and auspiciousness. (3-4) May Shri Lakshmi who has a line of horses in her front, a series of chariots in the middle, and with trumpets of elephants, as the insignia of celestial glory. May that unique grace bless us. She is the embodiment of absolute bliss with natural and perpetual smile on her face and though of molten gold with her residence (just from the milky ocean) who is blazing with splendour, and is the embodiment of the fulfillment of being the ocean of milk! She is indeed seated on lotus and is as attractive like a lotus. (5-6) Maha Lakshmi! You possess 'Chandra Prabhasa' or the tranquility of Moon and the radiance of a far reaching repute in the worlds as the Seat of Prosperity, as a Padmini; we all surrender as being the antithesis of Alakshmi and being the Singular High Seat of Opulence! Being of Aditya Varna or of the Splendour of Aditya Deva, your 'Tapomahima' is so surfeit that like the leaves of Vanaspati Vriksha tend to spread even remote signs of 'Alakshmi' or misery and misfortune. May such bael fruits destroy even the signs poverty and replace with affluence. Besides, may the evils of hunger and thirst be driven away at once! (7-8) 'Upaitumaam Devasakhah keertischa!' I am indeed born in a 'karma bhumi' of glory as a citizen of a Blessed Background or heritage being intimate as a 'Deva Sakha'. May my worthy and close Devas like Kubera, the Lord of wealth and fame extinguish 'kshutpipaasa' hunger and thirst, depression and

desolation. May Devi Lakshmi eradicate Alakshmi by roots-tree-and sour fruits from each house hold. (9-10)Gandhadwaaraam duraadharshaam nityapushtaam karishineem/ Devi Lakshmi! You are the gateway to 'sugandha' of plentiful sandalwood trees akin to the perception of one's desires and ambitions as reflected with the abundance of cow's wealth and plentiful cattle as the symbol of contentment and ideal human existence which truly verges into divinity! Thus may Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth and Virtue lead us to the frontiers of 'sugandha', 'nitya pushti' and 'Ishvaratva'! (11-12) Devi Lakshmi! Your next generation as the progeny Maharshi Kardama and the further lineage is certainly the residing seat of Wealth as Yourself in the ancestral link. May we therefore possess the privilege of garlanding You with a fragrant string of lotuses at our ancestral home! Chiklita Maharshi! may we entreat you too to grace such an abundantly auspicious moment when our incredible function arrives.! (13-14) Our invocation to Maha Lakshmi via Agni Deva! She is of the tranquility of Chandra, luster of gold, brilliance of Bhaskara, the symbol of fragrance! She weilds a powerful staff of sovereignty and Control of Supremacy,ever resplendent of wealth and glory! You are the lotus resident, saluted by celestial elephant hordes, with garlands of lotuses lifted up for decoration. Maha Lakshmi! You are the karuna swarupa, hema maalni, of golden hues like of Surya!(15-17) Jaataveda! We invoke you to seek Lakshmi again and again as She is the embodiment of abundance of grace, plentifulness, prospetity, cattle, horses, servants, followers, residences, and longevity and glory! Mother Lakshmi, your 'bahyanatara shuchi' is unparalleled; your 'Sixteen Shri Suktas' are such as their constant recitals reap enormous benefits of far reaching impact! Padmaasane, Padmoru, Padmaakshi, Padma sambhave! Devi! You are of Padmaasana or Seated straight with folded legs as the Parama Yogini! You are Padmaakshi or of Lotus Eyes of glittering Purity! Pamdmasambhave! or the Lotus Manifestation of Outstanding Clarity and Transparency! We are literally swimming in the constant flows of Abundance and Contentment! 18-19) 'Ashwadaayi, Godaayi, Dhana Daayi, Maha Dhane!' Devi! You are Supreme Provider of numberless horses, cows,and prosperity as you are the True Embodiment of Prosperity Yourself! You are Aishwarya the Seat of Opulence as the Acme of Material Fulfilment! Indeed you certainly are the Sarva Kaama Pradaaayani or the Unique Bestower of of Aspirations! 20-21) 'Putrapouitra dhanam dhaanyam hastaashvaadigave ratham': the meaning is self explanatory since Maha Lakshmi is the unique giver of excellent sin and grand sons, liquid cash, plentiful crops, elephants-horses-cattle and most significantly the blessing of longevity to enjoy the desires. 'Dhanamagnirdhanam Vaayur dhanam Suryo Danam Vasuh, Dhanamindro Brihaspatir Varunaam Dhanamastute! Dhanam or Devi Lashmi assumes all the Forms of Devas like Agni-Vaayu-Surya-Vasu Devatas-Indra Deva-Brihaspati and Varuna! 22-23: With Maha Vishnu in the heart of any human, Garuda Deva the illustrious son of Vinata Devi and the renowned carrier of Vishnu, would be pleased to facilitate the celestial Soma Juice that bestows Eternity within the Inner-Consciousness; indeed this celestial Soma would instantly destroy the inner enemies of kaama-krodha-moha-mada-lobha-matsaryas! Mother Lakshmi, it is only you the bestower of such unparalleled Soma! The only manner that the 'shadvargas' or the six human weaknesses and shortcomings could be nullified is therefore to earnestly recite and absorb the Shri Sukta the fabulous! Devi! You are the Vibhavari or the radiance of Lightnings emerging of pouring rains; this is the offshoot of what copious crops are generated and thus the emergence of Life and existence of all Beings! 24-25: 'Sarasija nilaye sarojahaste dhavala taraamshuka gandha maalya shobhe!'Devi! You are of resident of glittering Lotus; Lotus Handed; the essence of purity and white cleanliness of magnificent fragrance.Bhagavati! Hari Vallabha! Tribhuvana Sundari! Our earnest salutations to you Maha Devi! Vishnu Patni! Kshama Devi who is the symbol of Patience and Forgiveness! Madhavi -Madhava Priya! Maha Lakshmi!Standing on a lotus flower with grace with wide hips and lotuslike eyes, deep navel indicative of supreme conduct and character, with full blossomed

bosom indicative of abundance and compassion, you are slightly bent forward to bless the prostrating crowds of devotees even as she is receiving them. 26-27: Devi Maha Lakshmi! While celestial elephant kings are performing 'abhisheka' of amrita the divine nectar from either side, do kindly grace our rest house and accept our prostrations. Mother Lakshmi! As being surfiest with your benign flashes of your side line glances of your graceful eyes, Lord Brahma, Indra Deva and Gangaadhara Parama Shiva too got mesmerised and got enriched by themselves! Devi Lakshmi! As You smile softly, three bhuvanas get mesmerised with joy and enrichment of their inner selves. May we be blessed with richness and abundance of inner contentment as we are never tired of praising your benevolence and generosity as we praise you as 'Siddha Lakshmi- Moksha Lakshmi-Jaya Lakshmi-Saraswati-Shri Lakshmi-Vara Lakshmi'! [Ashta Lakshmis are Adi Lakshmi-Dhanya Lakshmi-Dhairya Lakshmi-Gaja Lakshmi-Santaana Lakshmi-Vijaya Lakshmi-Vidya Lakshmi-Dhana Lakshmi] 28-31: Maha Lakshmi! Betsow us very generously ' Shri Varchas-Aayush-Aarogyam-Avidyacchdanam-Dhaanyam-Dhanam-Pashum-Bahuputra laabham-Shata samvatsaram- and even beyond as deerghamaatush! Our sincere commendations are countless as 'Padmapriye, Padmini- Padmahaste-Padmaalaye-Padmadalaayataakshi- Vishvapriye-Vishnu manonukuule! May your sacred and soft feet be drawn to our hands closely and to our hearts's contentment! Devi! You are the Household Goddess in Trilokas of Bhur-Bhuva-Swah! Mukunda Priya! Grant us abundant benevolence- auspiciousness in all formats and chaturvidha purushardhas of Dharma-Artha- Kaama- Moksha.32-31) As ever commended and worshipped by MaharshisAnanda Kardamaadis, may Devi Lakshmi bless us to extinguish '

runa-rogaadi daaridhra-yam paapam cha ap-mrutya-va-ha Bhaya-shouk-manas-taapaa nash-yantu mama sarva-daa/Sri-varcha-strayam-aayuyshyam-aarogyaa maavidhaat-pav-maanam mahi-yate Dhanam-dhaanyam pashum bahu putra-laabham shat samvat-saram dirgham- aayu-hu Aum Sri Mahaa-Kaali Mahaa-Lakshmi Mahaa-Saraswati Trigunaatmikaa Chandikaaye namah/'

Excerpts on Devi Sarasvati from Scriptures



Manikya veenaam upalaalayanteem madaalasaam manjula vaagvilaasaam, mahendra neela dyuti
komalaangim Maatanga Kanyaam manasaa smaraami/ Chaturbhuje chandrakalaa vatamse, kuchonnate
kumkuma raaga sone, pundrekshu paashaankusha pushpa baanahaste namaste jagadaika maataa/ Maataa
marakata shyaama Maatangi mada shalini, kuryaat kataaksham kalyaani kadamba vana vaasini/ Jaya
Maatanga tanaye,jaya neelotpala dyuthe jaya sangeeta rasike, jaya leela shuka priye!

Devi Saraswati the illustrious gift to Sage Matanga excelling in one of the Maha Vidyas! you are the icon
of everplayful musical Veena stunningly studded with lustrous gems! You are the symbol of femininity of
exhuberant grace and extraordinary beauty! You are the personification of auspiciousness while spreading
four arms, moon shine smile, firm and high chested physical charm, carrying mesmerising flowers of
intoxicating smell, juicy sugarcane, defensive rope to instantly arrest the evil, an arrow to terminate the
malevolent, a mighty goad to suppress immorality and a pundarika or conchshell to warn the wicked!
Bless me Mother with your sweet and merciful looks from the benign eye corners even being seated
cosily in the unique forest of fragrant and ripe fruits of sweet lusciousness! Victory to you the Universal
Mother Matangi even as you resemble the singular blue lotus, ever blissful with celestial musical notes
of Veena and carrying a green parrot for mere play and pastime! [Matangi is the Tantrik Maha Vidya-the
Goddess of music, arts and knowledge.

Hindu Scriptures - Saraswati DeviSaraswati in essence is Vaak- Vidya-Vigjnana being the bridge from
the Deep Oceans of Samsara- Illusion-Falsity-Ignorance to Sadhana- Nigraha-Medhas-Awareness and
thereafter the Initial Illumination- the Path of Divinity or the 'Deva Yana'-passage to Urthwa Lokas-and
finally the Bliss of Realisation of the Equation with or the Reflection of Anraratma as
Paramatma!Saraswati has no barriers of age-sex-materialism-and the pulls and pushes of 'Samsaara'; but
only the Path of Dharma. Dharmaacharana- Dharma Prachaara- Dharma Paripaalana are the watch words
of Saraswati. The tools utilised by Saraswati are Vaak- Vidya-Vigjnaana. The Dharmic Apparatus is to
lead from Worldly Darkness to Celestial Radiance to Everlasting Joy; albeit in several stages: the Power
of Speech-Mental Caliber-Sankalpa or Determination-Chitta or sturdy Self Belief or Will Power-
Meditation or deep contemplation-Dhaayana- Vgjnaana or Enlightenment/ critical self appraisal-balam or
physical strength supported by food further propped up by Pancha Bhutas – Smara or Memory power-
aasha or aspiration-Praana or Conscious Self or Praginatwa- 'manute' or deep perception with faith-
nishtha or commitment coupled with karyaacharana. Once any person believes and gets convinced that
he – or any Individual Self for that matter -happens to be the spring boat of the Praana, hope, memory,
space, water, form and look, strength, food, reasoning and intelligence, mental power, speech,
knowledge, rites and all such abilities, then indeed that Self himself or each and every Self like himself, is
certainly, nay undoubtedly, the Supreme Self himself with all the accomplishments. He is a symbol of
Purity, purity of food, nature, memory, heart, thought, and action. Then the spiritual freedom to escape
from darkness, impurities of ignorance, attachment to desire and to speed up the bandwagon of
knowledge, mind, thought, resolve, meditation and introspection to discover Truth finally as Himself!
Once that stage is reached, then he becomes 'Bhagavan' or God like and He knows the source and cause
of Existence, its termination, the entries and exits, as also the knowledge and ignorance of Reality.

Vidya Tatwa : Indeed knowledge is limitless and as much one acquires, so much more remains. Maha Maya obstructing the clear vision of Pure Consciousness due to 'Shad Kanchukas' or Six Layers / Coverings and 'Malaas' or defilements of Aaanava, Maayiya and Karma nature, being the inner most, the interior and the outer parts of the husk that cover in three layers before obtaining the pure grain or antaratma with neither desirable nor the totally free from the stains of the pristine Self! Pancha Bhutas, Panchendriyas and Tri-Tatwas viz. Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkara total up to Prakriti. Prakriti is the totality of the 23 products, each produced from the cause and effect cycle and together Prakriti and Purusha activate the entire universe composed of 36 tatwas! From Prakriti up to Earth, creation encases 'Chaitanyam' or the Pure Consciousness by 'dehabhava' as concealed, just as chaff covering the food grain. This Chaitanyam is covered by Maya aided by indriyas or the sense organs or 'kalaas' to specific gross physical elements. Thus the process of Creation is composed by seven steps beginning from Shiva-Shakti-Sadashiva-Ishwara-shudda vidya-maya and kala the creativity. Vigjnaana is a flow of Self Awareness and is conceptual only. Kashmiri Shaivism feels that Supreme Consciousness is possible by 'sambhavopaaya' or 'icchopaaya' or as coincidental or as being desirable. It may be like the myth of a rope as a snake. But surely Maha Maya has no role in this illusion. Finally one concludes that the Self Consciousness and Supreme Consciousness are true mirror images since the former has no role in the pluses and minuses of the mortal bodies as per their panchendriyas, mind, buddhi sustained by vital force prana and the Individual Consciousness is a mute spectator only and surely the photo image of Paramatma!

Excerpts on Durga Devi from Scriptures



Durga Sukta:

Jaatavedase sunavaama Somam-araateyato ni dahaati Vedah, sa nah parshadati Durgaani Vishvaa
naaveva sindhum duritaatiratygneh/

To that sarvajna Agnideva called Jaataveda the origin of Vedas who is contented by the fire of vedic knowledge alone, besides sacrifices within and without the mortal self and liberate from all the sins of life, discontentments and the bondage of the world. [Rig Veda I.99 as also Maha Narayanopanishad II.

1. Taam-Agni-Varnnaam Tapasaa Jvalanteem Vairocaneem Karma-Phaleshu Jushttaam, Durgaam
Deveegum Sharannyamaham Prapadye su-tarasi tarase namah/

To that Duraga Devi! I seek refuge as you are fiery and the seat of might and glory yet by your very name Durga you are inaccessible and insurmountable!; ‘Sharanam aham’ - by sincere prostration and earnest fall at your golden feet to mercifully ferry my boat of existence across this Ocean of perils.

2. Agne tvam paarayaa navyo asmaan svastibhirati durgani Vishvaa, puushcha Prithvee bahulaa na urvee
bhavaa tokaaya tanayaaya sham yoh/

Agni Deva the facet of Durga! you who are always worthy of praises for carrying one across this Samsara; Please do mercifully navigate us too by carrying us the mortal selves and cross these existences of ours across the samsara with merciful consideration towards happiness and contentment. [Rigveda I.189.2 as also Taittireeya Samhita I.i.14.12; Taittireeya Brahmana II.viii.2 & Naaraayana Upanishad II.

Hindu Scriptures - Durga Devi³. Vishvaani no Durgahaa Jaatavedah sindhum na naavaa duritaatipatipashi,
agne atrivanmanasaa grunaano-smaakam bodhyavitaam tanuunaam/

Jaatavedaa the originator of Vedas! Do mercifully demolish our grave sins and tribulations to safety and fulfillment and guard our destinies and tribulations safely and successfully across the samsaara.

Rig Veda V.iv.9 and Taittireeya Brahmana vide II.iv.1 – Pritanaajitanguma sahamaanamugram Agni
huvema paramaatsadhastyaat, saa nah parshadati durgaanni vishvaa Kshsaamad-devo ati duritaaatyagnih/

May we invoke from the high assemblies of Agni Swarupas viz. Panchaagis of Garhapatya-Aahavaneeya-Dakshina-Sabhya and Aavasya apart from Naachiketa. We offer our oblations to the Agni of Durga Devi most significantly to cross over this very difficult ocean of worldly existence! May that Fire of Durga carry us all through this mortal life subject to karma phala accounts and once for all burn off our internal enemies to ashes by kindling the Divine Fire!

Pratnoshi kameedyo adhvaresshu sanaaccha Hotaa navyashca sattsu, svaam chaaagne tanuvam
piprayasvaamasbhyam cha Saubhagamaayajasva/

In your own Inner Self, Agni Deva in the form of Durga Devi! You are the Sacred most, unique source of happiness and joy for us as the source of sacrifice and fulfillment.

[Rigveda VIII.xi.10 too] Gobhirjushtaamayujo nishiktam tavendra Vishnnoranusamcharema, naakasya
prshthamabhi samvasaano Vaishnnaveem loka iha maadayantaam /

Devadeva! You are indeed detached from Sense Organs, Mind and Heart as also the Universe and absorbed with your own introspection. May we too be saturated inwardly with Your all pervading Bliss!

Kaatyayanaaya vidmahe Kanyaakumaari dheemahi, tanno Durgih prachodayaat/ Om Shantih Shantih
Shantih/

May our mind and thoughts be ever anchored and absorbed on the Supreme Devi Kaatyayani with intense concentration and unswerving devotion as our Singular Liberator. May there be Peace, Peace Always and Peace Alone Forever!

Durga Sapta Shloki

Om Jnaaninaamapi chetaamsi Devi Bhagavati hi sa, baladaakrishaya Maha Maya prayacchati/

Bhagavati Maha Maya! You pull the minds of even 'Gyaanis' with force towards obsession!

Om Durgey smritaa harasi bheeti masesha jantoh, Swasthaih smritaa mati mateeva shubhaam dadaasi/

Devi Durga! A mere thought of Yours demolishes fright among 'Praanis' or Beings, while You provide auspiciousness in response to the meditation by sensible humans

Daaridra dukkha bhaya haarini ka twadanya, Sarvopakaara karanaaya sadaardra Chitta/

Who else is there but You that is readily prepared with extreme benevolence to ward off our sorrows, fears and adversities?

Om Sarva Mangala Maangalyey Shivey sarvaartha saadhakey, Sharanyey Thraibikey Devi! Narayani Namostuthey/

Devi! Narayani! You are the embodiment and Provider of Auspiciousness to one and all; You are Shiva Swarupa or the Form of Propitiousness fulfilling all our wishes; You are Traimbika or the composite personification of Lakshmi, Saraswati and Parvati; We seek shelter from You, as we bend down and greet!

Om Sharanaagata deenaarta paritraana parayaney, Sarvasyaarti harey Devi! Narayani Namostutey/

Our greetings to You Narayani! Devi! We seek refuge and safety from You as we are helpless and harassed.

Om Sarva Swarupey Sarvesey Sarva Shakti samanvitey, Bhayebhyastraahino Devi! Durga Devi Namostutey/

Devi! You are the all-comprehensive Form, the Supreme Sovereign, and the all- Powerful; kindly shield us from diverse types of fears and apprehensions; our earnest salutations to You, Devi!

Om rogaanaseshaa napahamsi Tushtaa, Rushtaa tu kaamaan sakasaa nabhishtaan/

As You assume compassion, all our diseases disappear; but if indignant, all our wishes get to nought

Twam ashritaanaam na vipannaraanaam, Twam ashrita hyashrayataam prayaanti /

Those who have already taken asylum from You would never face difficulties any way; on the other hand, such persons saved by You could as well provide protection to others too in their turn!

Om Sarva baadhaa prashamanam Thrailokya syaakhileswari, Evameva tvaarya kaarya masadvairi
vinaashanam/

Sarveswari! Do continue to alleviate the tribulations of one and all among the Three Lokas and destroy the enemy elements everywhere.

Ya yetatsaramam guhyam Sarva Rakshaa vishaaradam, Devya sambhaashitam Stotram sadaa Saamraajya
daayakam/

This Sapta Shloki is at once striking yet classified but bestowing protection; this is a Sacred Hymn related to the Supreme Mother yielding immense benefits including 'Samraajya' or Empires!

Shrunuyaadwaa pathedyaapi paathayeydwaapi yatnatah, Parivaara yutho Bhuutwaa Trailokya
Vijayeebhavet!

Hearing, reading or narrating the Sapta Shloki with sincere efforts along with family and friends would secure accomplishments in all the Three Lokas!

Durga Stotra vide Virat Parva of Maha Bharata

King Yudhishtar at the time of Pandavas entering 'Virat Sabha' had within his own heart prayed to Tribhuvaneshwari Durga Devi and further to Vaasudeva Shri Krishna the Avataara Purusha or the Singular Deity of Dwapara Yuga! Durga Devi's 'amsha' was also born to Nanda gopaala even as the

babies were interchanged as Maya flew away to high skies warning Kamsa for having imprisoned his own sister and brother in law viz. Vasudeva and Devaki and that Lord Krishna would eventually terminate the devilish Kamsa) Dharma Raja further prayed to Durga Devi:

Bhaaraava tarane punye ye smaranti Sadaashivam, Taan vai taarayase paapaat panke kaamiva durbalam/

Devi! You are the One who had descended down to Earth to bless all those born and pray to you earnestly are surely uplifted from their difficulties, just as those drawn deep into the slush of worldly attractions and the consequences are pulled out and provided salvation. He continued the Prayers as follows:

Yashoda garbha sambhutaam Naaraayana varapriyaam, Nanda gopaala kule jaataam mangalyaam kulavardhineem/ Kamsavidraavana kareemasuranaam kshayamkareem, shilaatavinikshaptam aakaasham prati gaamineem/ Vaasudevasya bhagineem divyamaalya vibhushitaam, Divyaambara dharaam Deveem khadgakheta dhaarineem/Bhaaraavatarane Punye ye smaranti Sadaa Shivaam, taan vai taarayase paapaat panke gaamiva durlabham/Stotum prachakrame bhuyo vividhah stotra sambhavaih, Aamantrya darshanaakaanghream Raja Devim sahaanujah/Namastestu varade Krishne Kumaari Brahmacharini, baalaarka sadrushaakaare purnachandraa nibhaanane/ Chaturbhujе Chaturvaktre peenashroni payodhare, Mayurapicchavalaye keyuraangada dhaarini, Bhaasi Devi yathaa Padmaa Naaraayana parigrahah/ Swarupam brahmacharyancha vishadam Gaganeshwari, Krishnaacchavi samaa Krishnaa Sankarshana samaanaa/ Vibhrati vipulau baahu Shakra dhvaja samucchruyoau, Paatreecha pankajee ghantee, streevishuddhaa cha yaa bhuvi/ Paashaam Dhanurmahaa chakram vividhaanyaayudhaani cha, Kundalaabhyaam supurnabhyaam karnaabhyaancha vibhushitaa/ Chandra vispadwinaa Devi mukhena twam viraajase, Mukutena vichitrena kesha baandhena shobhinaa/ Bhujangaabhogavaasena shroni sutrena raajataa, Vibhraajase chaa vadvena bhogeneveha mandaraha/ Dhvajena shikhi pinchaanaammucchritena viraajase, Kaumaaram vratamaasyaaya tridivam pavitram twayaa/ Tena twam stuyase Devi tradashouh pujyasepicha, Trilokya rakshanaarthaaya Mahishaasura naashani/ Prasannaame Surashreshthe dayaam kuru shivaa bhava/ Jayaa twam vijayaachaiva sangraamecha jayapadaa, Mammaapi vijayam dehi varadaa twam cha saampratam/ Vindhyaechaiva naga shreshthe tava sthaanam hi shaswatam, Kaali Kaali Mahaa Kaali khadga khatvaanga dhaarini/Kritaanu yaatraa bhutaistwam varadaa kaama charini, Bhaaraavataare ye cha twaam samshma –rishyanti maanavaah/ Pranaanti cha ye twaam hi prabhaate tu naraa bhuvi, nateshaam durlabham kinchit putrato dhanatopivaa/ Durgaat taarayase Durge tat twam Durgaa smritaa jhanaih, Kaataareshvavasatraanaam magnaanaam cha mahaarnave/ Dasyur bhirvaa niruvaanaam twam gatih paramaa nrinaam, Jalpratarane chaiva kaantareshvataveeshu cham/Ye smaranti Maha Devi na cha seedanti te naraah, Twam keertim shridhritih siddhi hreem vidyaa santatirmatih/ Sandhyaa raatrim Prabhaa nidraajyotisnaa kanih kshamaa dayaa/ Nrinaamcha bandhanam moham putra naasham dhanakshyam/Vyaadhi mrityum bhayam chaiva pujitaa naashayishyai, Soham raajyaat paribhrashtah sharanam twaam prapannavaan/ Pranatascjha yataa murthaan tava Devi Sureshwari, Traahi maam Padmapatraakshi satye satyaa bhavasva nah/Sharanam bava me Durgey sharanye bhaktavatsale, eshaam stutaahi saa Devi darashanaamaasa Pandavam, Upagamya tu raajaanmidam vachanamabraveet/

May I pray and cogitate Durga Devi who was born from the womb of Yashoda Devi, whom Lord Narayana is fond of his brotherly affection, who descended into the family background of Nandagopa, who provides and promotes auspiciousness all around, yet creates horror to the villainous Kamsa and destroys Asuras, who flew away to the Skies even as the wicked Kamsa tried to hit a stone, whose divinely physique is scented with splendid aromas and also ornamented with brilliant jewellery with magnificent clothing, carrying sharp sword and defensive sheath and finally the celestial sister of Vaasudeva Shri Krishna. Punyamayi Durga Devi! You have descended to Earth to lighten its sinful weight and usher in auspiciousness all over. Mother! You have the reputation of lifting from the depths of hurdles and difficulties to whosoever prays and meditates with earnestness and of blessing such persons with fruits of material and spiritual nature. On these lines, as Yudhishtar prayed with utmost sincerity the original Form of Durga Devi and prostratingly commended her to as follows:

Durga Devi! Once pleased with prayers, you are indeed the symbol of compassion! Our prostrations to you, Sacchidaanandamayi Krishne! You are indeed Kumari, Brahmacharini! Your brightness surpasses morning Surya's red illumination and your visage overcomes that of Chandra's coolness. Your four arms are like those of Vishnu and Four Faces remind us as of Brahma's; your chest swells of milk of kindness; your bangles are of peacock feather like softness and 'keyuras' are of outstanding brightness and coolness; your artistic looks overtake those of Lakshmi Devi and is resplendent with glow of celibacy; you are named as Shyama Sundari like that of the brilliance of Lord Krishna Himself. Your 'abhaya mudra' of raised palms of both of two hands with shoulders too of elevation provides security and of protection, while the third hand carries a vessel to provide boons of fulfillment, the fourth symbolizing a lotus, the fifth hand a bell to warn the malevolent, the sixth a paasha or noose, the seventh a dhanush and the eighth a unique chakra to terminate evil forces. Indeed, you are the symbol of Purity and manifestation of most ideal womanhood on earth with scintillating earrings doubling the splendor of your visage like serpents circling the Mandara mountains! The 'dhwaja' or flagship with the signage of peacock feathers waves sky high doubling your magnificence and being symbolic of Brahmacharya or celibacy of high order purifies the three lokas. Devi! No wonder all the Devas raise you in high esteem, shower praises and worship you in admiration and with extreme devotion. It is to save and safeguard the Three Worlds from Mahishasura the symbol of Evil and Cruelty that we all anchor our faiths unto you the high icon of mercy and auspiciousness! Indeed, you are the pictogram of victory and triumph, bestowing success in all our mortal endeavors; do at this very moment be gracious for boon granting to us all. Your traditional place of stay and rest happens to be Vindhyaachala! Kaali, Kaali, Maha Kaali, may your weaponry of sword and long studded trident protect us always! To all those beings who worship you with heart and soul reap ready gains and fruits of life. Your movements are impromptu, instant and as per your sweet will in innumerable forms and permutations to save each and every devotee praying with sincerity. No hurdle is inaccessible and no depths or heights are reachable to those who are needy or at your very sincere thought! To those regular devotees who early in the mornings worship you should indeed have no needs of life unfulfilled be it prosperity, progeny, fame and total contentment. Durga Devi! You are renowned to lead the helpless to cross over the mountains of hurdles, be one is lost in thick jungles, or drowning fast and deep in huge oceans, or suddenly surrounded by the mighty wicked and immorals. Indeed you are the ultimate refuge! You are the manifestation of Keerti or Fame, Shri or Wealth, Dhriti or

of Patience to let humans follow the path of virtue, Siddhi or of Fulfillment, Lajja or Modesty, Vidya of Knowledge, Santati or Progeny, Mati or Broad Mindedness, besides the materialisation of Sandhya-Raatri-Prabha-Nidra-Jyotsna-Kaanti-Kshama! Total surrender to Durga Devi would certainly assure bondage, poverty, disease, fear psychosis and untimely and painful death!) As Dhara Raja begged desperately and surrendered ultimately with tears in his eyes stating Sharanam bhavame Durge sharanye Bhaktavatsale, Durga Devi granted her vision and assured: Yudhishtara! Not very late since now, you will surely regain your Empire in a battle and clean sweep your enemies. Meanwhile, my blessings to you and Pandavas to overcome all types of problems and hardships as you all should be exemplary to the posterity owing to your patience, tact and endurance)

Then Devi responded to Yudhishtara as follows:

Shrunu Rajan Maha Baaho madeevam vachanam Prabho, Bhavishyatyachiraa deva sangrame vijayatstava/Mama prasaadaan vijayasya hatvaa Kouravavaahineem/ Raajyam nishkashtakam kritvaa bhokshyase medineem punah, Bhataatrubhinsahito Rajan preetim praapyasi pushkalaam/

Durga Devi was pleased to bless Yuddhishtara! Be assured that soon enough you will be surely victorious in the battle and resume the kingship with redoubled vigour and fame along with your brothers and families)

Matprasaadaacha te soukhamaarogyam cha bhavisyati, ye cha sankeeriyishyanti loke vigatakalmashaah/ Tessaam tushthaa pradaasyaami raajyamaayurvapuh sutam, Pravase nagare chaapi sangraame shatru sankate/ Atavyaam durga kaantaare saagare gahane girou, ye saaradyanti maam Rajan yatthaham bhavataa smrutaa/ Na tessaam durlabham kinchid asminmalloke bhavishyati, idam storta varam bhaktyaa shrunuyaad vaa pathet vaa/ Tasya sarvaani kaaryaani siddhim yasyanti Pandavah, matprasaadaaccha vah sarvaan Virata nagare sthitaan/ Na pragnyaasyant Kuravo naraa vaa tannivaasinah, Ityuktvaa varadaa Devi Yudhishtiramiradam, Rakshaam kritvaa cha Paanunaam tatrai- vaanataradheeyat/

Devi replied: ‘ It shall be due to my blessings that you will all be safe and healthy. As and when any body meditates and pleases me with veneration, I shall certainly lessen the burden of their blemishes and depending on the intensity of their faith they could be granted longevity, prosperity, health, and even Kingship. Raja Yudhishtar, rest assured that as and when you remember me, I would be with you , be it in another kingdom, battles, enemies, forests, mountains, and seas. Pandavas! As and when you pray to me with conviction, even now as you are about to enter Virat Nagar, do go with confidence as you would face problem of any dimension!

Excerpts on Devi Gayatri from Scriptures



Being the alternate incarnation of Devi Saraswati, Devi Gayatri is the representation of Vaak- Vidya- Vijnana and the bridge from the deep Oceans of Samsara which is characterised as Illusion-Falsity-

Ignorance to Sadhana- Indriya Nigraha-Medhas and thereafter to Self Enlightenment. Gayatri is the Symbol of Inner Strength, Knowledge and Purity of Inner-Consciousness.

Hindu Scriptures - Gayatri Devi Excellence of Panchamukha Gayatri , or Her Five Faces represent Pancha Maha Bhutas or the Fundamentals of the Universe viz. Prithivi-Aapas-Tejas- Vaayu and Aakasha or Earth- Water-Fire-Air-and Sky. Thus She is the Composite Form of the Universe and of Charaachara Jagat further supplemented by the 'Awareness' which implies knowledge-wisdom-regulation-and the driving energy. She is also the Cause of Universal Creation and the Fall Out Effect or the 'Bhakshya' and 'Bhojya' or the 'Anna' the Food and the Enjoyer or the Living Beings. Devi Gayatri's dasa hastas or ten hands are adorned with five 'ayudhas' viz. shankha; chakra, kamala, varada, abhaya, kasha, ankusha, ujjwala utensil, rudrakshi mala.

Being the Outstanding Universal Link of Pancha Maha Bhutas on one side, Her Physical Form is of the 'Panchendriyas' of the Beings. The Panchendriyas comprise: Pancha Jnanendriyas viz. Ghrana-Rasa-Chakshu-Shrotra-Twak or smell, taste, see, hear and touch and Pancha Karmendriyas viz. nose-tongue-eyes- ears- skin respectively. She is the representation of Pancha Koshas or five sheaths of human body viz. Annamaya- Praanamaya- Manomaya-Vigjnaanamaya-Anandamaya, viz. the very basis of existence is food or Annamaya (Physical Energy), Praanamaya (Vital Energy), Manomaya (Mental Faculty), Vigyanamaya (Buddhi or Sharpness of Discrimination) and Ananda maya (Bliss). Seekers worship Gayatri by Panchaagnis or Five Fires viz. Garhapatya, Aahavaneeya, Dakshinaagni, Sabhya and Aavasatya representing Heaven, Cloud, Earth, Man and Woman. Further Gayatri represents Pancha Pranas viz. Prana-Apaana-Udaana-Vyana -Samana. [In this context, prana vayu is not overall prana but a sub-prana or prana vayu which is located in the chest between the larynx and the diaphragm, and governs the respiratory system and functioning of the heart. Prana vayu, literally "forward moving air", moves inwards and regulates all the ways in which we take in energy – from the inhalation of air, eating of food, and drinking of water, to the reception of sensory impressions and mental experiences. It provides the basic energy that drives us in life. Imbalance in prana vayu is associated with heart and lung conditions. Diminished prana vayu leads to depression and lethargy. Apana vayu is centered in the pelvic region below the navel and experienced as a downward flowing movement on exhalation. It controls the functioning of the kidneys, bladder, colon, rectum, and reproductive organs. Literally "air that moves away", apana vayu moves downwards and outwards, and is responsible for the elimination of feces, urination, menstruation, orgasm, birthing a baby, as well as the elimination of carbon dioxide through the breath. On a deeper level it governs the elimination of negative sensory, mental and emotional experiences. Blockage of this wind can result in constipation, sexual dysfunction, menstrual problems, hemorrhoids, as well as inability to let go and move on. Samana vayu, literally "balancing air", is situated between the navel and ribcage, and acts as the stabilizer between the two opposing forces of prana and apana. It moves from the periphery to the center and rules all the metabolic activities involved in digestion. It digests and assimilates incoming energy, supplying the internal heat to "cook" the food we eat and to absorb sense impressions, emotional experiences and thoughts. Imbalance can affect the function of any digestive organs as well as mental ability of assimilation. Udana vayu is a manifestation of prana which pervades the head and throat. It literally means "upward moving air", and its upward

movement governs the growth of the body, the ability to stand, the nervous system, thought, speech, communication, effort and will. Udana vayu is the energy that can be used for self-transformation and spiritual growth. Imbalance can result in problems of cognition and communication. At the time of death, udana draws the individual consciousness up and out of the body. Vyana vayu, literally “outward moving air”, moves prana shakti from the center to the periphery. Being distributed from the core of the body out to the extremities this manifestation of prana pervades the whole body and acts as reserve energy for other prana vayus that require an extra boost. Associated with the peripheral nervous system and circulation, it induces the movement of food, water and oxygen as well as blood, lymph and nervous impulses throughout the body. Vyana governs relaxation and contraction of all muscles, the movements of the joints, as well as circulation of emotions and thoughts in the mind. Imbalance can cause poor peripheral circulation or numbness on a physical, emotional or mental level. All prana vayus are intimately linked to one another. One enjoys health and well-being only if prana vayus are balanced and work in harmony. Generally, Prana and Udana work opposite to Apana as the energy of collection and assimilation versus the force of elimination. Samana represents the energy of contraction while Vyana is expansion. Along with the five major pranas, there are five minor or upa pranas. Naga is responsible for belching and hiccupping. Koorma opens the eyes. Devadatta governs yawning. Krikara induces hunger and thirst. Dhananjaya is in charge of decomposition of the body after death. In reference to Eleven Forms of Vayu, Prabhaajamaana, Vyavadaatah, Vaasukivaidyuta, Rajataah, Parushaah, Shyaamaah, Kapilaa, Atilohitaah, Urdhvaah, Avapatantaah and Vaidyuta. Indeed any person who knows the names of the eleven Vayus would never be harmed by the lightning shocks and other Fire hazards.

The Essence of Gayatri is a step by step effort eligible for Dwijas or the twice born Hindus. Purusha Sukta states:

Brahmanosya mukhamaaset bahoo raajanyah kritah vooroo tadasya yad vaishyahi padabhyaagum shudro aajaayata/

From Prajapati’s face emerged Brahmanas, kshatriyas from His hands, His thighs the Vaishyas and from His feet the Lower class. The first three being dvijas or twice born are eligible for the worship of Gayatri. Indeed this opportunity bestowed to them if wasted, human life is a waste, let alone a lapse verging on sinfulness. As already described in the Preface earlier, Gayatri- is the representation of ‘Tri Lokas’ or Earth-Atmosphere- and Beyond; ‘Tri-Kaalaas’ or the Past-Present-Future; ‘Tri Sandhyas’ or Ushah kaala -Madhyaahna- Saayam kaala; ‘Tri Gunas’ or Satva-Rajas-Tamo gunas; ‘Tri-Mano Tatvas’ or States of Mind viz. Gross-Subtle- Causal or Fundamental; and ‘Tri- Avasthas’ or States of Consciousness of Jaagrat-Svapna-Sushupti or Awakeness-Dream and Inward Vision. ‘AUM’ is the true reflection of Srishi the Universe. Once Pranava recital is taken up then the ‘dehendriya praana mano buddhi’ or the body parts, life’s energy, the mind and its variations get stirred up and rejuvenated. Pranava is the very Life’s force, and in reverse sense Praana is Pranava itself literally! There could be no worship nor puja nor any ‘mantra’ without AUM! Omkaara comprises A kaara-U kaara-Ma kaara. Aum iti aksharam Brahma! Brahma is ‘Aum’: the Letter ‘A’ is pronounced by one’s throat emerging from deep within right from

the navel- 'U' across the tongue- and 'M' terminating with both the lips. Then the three words by way of vyahritis or Bhur- Bhuvar- Svah or Earth- Horizon- Sky as also the Time Measurement of the Present- Past- Future. Then the rest of the Gayatri Mantra: Tat or that Paramatma the Blissful Truth- Savitur or the very original Celestial Surya as distinct from what one visions- varenyam or be worshipped- bhargo devasya or the eternal celestial splendour- dheemasya or worthy of meditation- dhiyo yo nah : may that unique awareness – prachodayaat or be keenly enlightened!

Now the Gayatri Mantra: Om bhur bhuvah svah tat Savitur varenyam Bhargo Devasya dheemihī,
dhiyoyonah prachodayat/

Recitation of this Supreme Mantra acquires the qualities of the perfectly balanced person in terms of the qualities of virtue as per the laws of material nature.

‘Sandhyopasana’-Procedure, Meaning and Interpretation

Sandhya is the intermission of ‘Ahoratras’ or day and night as signified by Sun Rise and Sun Set. Poorvaa Sandhyaa tu Gayatri Savitri madhyaa smritaa, Yaa bhavet paschimaa sandhyaa saa Vigjneyaa Saraswati/ The pre-noon is dominated by Devi Gayatri, noon time by Devi Savitri and the Sun set by Devi Saraswati and hence the respective Goddesses need worship at these times. Gayatri is of blood red complexion, Savitri of pure white Varna and Saraswati of black colour and they represent Brahma-Rudra-Vishnu Swarupas of Paramatma. Meditation of these forms of Almighty is basically through the representation of Aditya:

Udyantamastam yantamaadityam/ (Taittiriya Brahmana Upanishad). Uttama Taarakopetaa madhyamaa Lupta Taaraka, Adhamaa Surya sahita Praatah Sandhyaa Tridhaamata/ Uttamaa Surya sahita madhyamaa lupta Bhaskaraa, Adhamaa Taarakopetaa Sayam Sandhyaa Tridhaamataa/

Praah-sandhya is best performed in the presence of Stars on the Sky; when Stars are invisible then the time of Sandhya is of medium type but when Suryodaya has taken place then the Sandhyopasna is of minimal value. Conversely, the Saayam Sandhya is best done while Surya is still present, after Sunset the Sandhya is of medium worth but when Stars appear on the Sky the Sandhya worship is of poor quality. Maadhyahnika Sandhya is scheduled at half prahara of the Sayamkaala Samaya.

While taking bath for purification before ‘Sandhyopasana’ a devotee may recite the following Mantra:

Gangecha Yamunechaiva Godavari Saraswathi, Narmadey Sindhu Kaveri Jalosmin sannidhim kuru/
Pushkaraadyaani Tirthaani Gangaadyaah Saritastatha, Aagacchantu Mahaabhaagaah Snaana kaaley
sadaa mama/ Ayodhya Mathuraa Maayaa Kaashi Kaanchihyavantika, Puri Dwaravati Jneyaah Saptaitaa
Moksha –daayikaah/

May the waters flowing in the Rivers of Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri be present in the waters that I am bathing in. May Pushkara and other Tirthas as well as the Sacred Rivers like Ganga be present here. May also the Seven Sacred Kshetras of Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya (Haridwar), Kashi, Kanchi, Avanti (Ujjain) and Dwaravati as renowned be also present.) After bath, 'Arghya' (Water) / Dhyana (meditation) are offered to Surya Deva; the devotee would then wear clean, two white robes, settle down on a 'kushasana'(mat) facing 'Ishana'(North-East) direction, commence 'Achamana' with Harih Om and Pavitra Mantra viz.

Apavitrah pavitrova sarvaavasthaangatopivaa, yasmaret Pundareekaaksham sa Baahyaantarah suchih

Let me remember the name of 'Pundarikaaksha' always-whether physically clean or otherwise-with cleanliness from within or without); while doing 'Achamana'or sipping spoonfuls of water thrice with Gayatri Mantra, utter the Mantras viz.

Om Rutamcha Satyam cha abheedaat tapasodhyajaayata, tato Ratrasya Jaayata tatassamudro Arnavah

Even before meditation, the Self-illuminated Para Brahma created the authentic Truth and from that Truth generated darkness which created the waters of the Oceans;

Samudraarnavaat Adhi Samamvatsaro Ajaayata, Ahoraatraani vidadhat Vishvashya mishato vashee/

Days/ nights as also Years and the concept of Time got materialized only after the waters of Oceans were generated and Paramatma held the Universe in His full control;

Suryaa Chandra masow Dhaata Yathaa purvam kalpayat, Divamcha Prithiveem chaaantariksha mathosvah/

As in the past, Dhata (Paramatma) created Surya Chandras, Celestial Region including Heaven, besides the Sky and Earth.

Aachamana three times: Om Keshavaaya svaaha, Om Narayana svaaha, Keshavaaya svaaha/

Note: Brahmanas take in the sip so as to reach the navel, Kshatriyas upto the throat and Vaishyas upto the mouth corners. There after Om Govindaaya namah, Vishnave namah– wipe both the palms with water; Om Madhusudanaaya namah, Om Trivikrayaaya namah: wipe both the lips from left to right with right hand; Om Vaamanaaya namah, Om Shridharaaya namah/ sprinkle drops of water on head with right hand; Om Hrisheekshaaya namah, Om Padmanaabhaaya namah/ sprinkle drops of water on feet with left hand; Om Damodaraaya namah/ sprinkle water drops on head; Om Sankarshanaaya namah/ touch the chin with all the fingers; Om Vaasudevaaya namah, Om Pradyumnaaya namah/ touch the right and left sides of the nose with right hand; Om Aniruddhaaya namah, Om Purushottamaaya namah/ touch both the eyes; Om Adhokshajaaya namah, Om Naarasimhaaya namah/ touch both the ears; Om Achyutaaya namah/ touch the navel; Om Janardanaaya namah/ Touch the heart with right hand; Om Upendaraaya namah/ touch the head; Om Haraye namah, Om Shri Krishnaye namah/ touch both the shoulders. Triraachamet-dvih parimrija : three aachamanas- wipe right foot thumb and both the lips from right to left sides. Sakrudupasprushya: Touch both the lips with right hand; Savyam Paanim paanim paadou prokshati/ Sprinkle water with right hand around left hand on both the feet. Shirah chakshshee naasike shrotre shirah/ Sprinkle water drops on head-eyes-nose-ears and head/

Then the devotee performing Sandhya Vandana sips water by way of ‘Aachamana’ once again. Thereafter, the devotee is to spray water in all the directions as also on the self while performing ‘bhutocchhaatana’ with the mantra :

Uttintashtantu Bhuta Pishaachaah ete bhumi bhaarakaaah, eteshaamavirodhena Brahma Karma samaarabhe/

May ‘bhuta pishaachaadi’ evil spirits fly away as well as the Aishadvargaas like Kaama-krodha-lobha-moha-mada- matsaraas be cleared.

Then, he readies himself to do ‘Praanaayaam’ and recites Pranava while proposing the seven ‘Vyahritis’(relevant expressions of Gayatri) viz. Om Bhuh, Om Bhuvah, Om Suvah, Om Mahah, Om Janah, Om Tapah, Om Satyam, Om tatsavatir varenyam bhargo devasya dheermahi dhiyo yonah

prachodayaat, Om Apo Jyoti rasomritam Bharmha Bhurbhuvatswarom/ simultaneously sprinkle drops of water on one's own head. Pranayama (Control of Prana) is performed by touching the nose by the thumb and second finger and air must be taken in slowly through the left nostril and sent out by the right nostril; inhalation is known as 'Puraka', retaining is 'Kumbhaka' and exhalation is Rechaka, the three tasks done by 1:3:2 ratio, completing one Pranayama.

The 'Viniyogas' or attributions of Gayatri / Shiro Mantras are as follows:

Gayatri Mantra –Omkaarasya Brahma Rishih, Devi Gayatri Chhandah, Paramaatmaa Devataa, Sapta Vyahriteenaam Prajaapatirrishih Gayatri ushnik anushtup Brihati Pankti trishtup jagatyah chhandaamsya AgnirVaayu Surya Brihaspati Varunendra Vishvadeva Devatah/

Praanaayama Viniyogah) Shiro Mantra –Tatsavituriti Vishwamitra Rishih Gayatri chaandah Savitaa Devataa Apojyotiriti Sirasah Pajapatirishi yajuschhando BrahmagniVaayu Suryaa Devataah/

Praanaayaamey Viniyoga. After the Pranayaama Viniyoga, the devotee has to perform Kara Nyasa and Anga Nyasa as follows: Kara Nyasa: Om Angushthaabhyaam Namah (Touch both the thumbs); Om Bhuh Tarjanibhyam namah (Touch both thumbs with both fore-fingers); Om Bhuvah Madhyamaabhyaam Namah (Touch both thumbs with both middle fingers); Om Swaha Anaamikaabhyaam Namah (Touch the thumbs with ring wearing finger); Om Bhur bhuvah kanishtikaabhyaam namah (Touch the thumbs with little fingers) and Om Bhur bhuvah swah karatala hastaabhyaam namah (Touch both the back sides of the palms) Anganyasa:: Om Hridayaa Namah (Touch the heart with right hand); Om Bhu Sirasey swaha (Touch the head); Om Bhuvah Shikhaya vashat (Touch the tuft); Om Swah kavachaaya hum (Touch shoulders with both the hands); Om Bhurbhuvaha netraa -bhyaam voushat (Touch the eyes with respective hand-fingers); Om Bhurbhuvah swaha Astraya phat (take the right hand behind the back and clap to rest it on left palm). After Pranayama as above, then Gayatri Avahana Sankalpa states: Mamopaattha Samasta duritakshaya dwara Shri Parameswara preetyartham Praatah Sandhyaamupaasishy/ or Maadhyaahnikaam Karishey/ or Saayam Sandhyaamupaasishy (May I begin to worship Goddess Sandhya in the morning/afternoon/evening by destroying all of my sins by the grace of Parameswara).

In the morning Gayatri is in the form of 'Tryaikshari', Veda Maataa and Brahma Vaadini: Aagachha varade Devi Tryaiksharey Brahma Vaadini, Gayatricchandasaa Maata Brahmayoney Namostutey; In the afternoon she arrives as Savitri by a vrishabha (bull) with white robes as Rudra Vaadini: Madhyaahney Vrishabha aruudhaam Savitreem Rudra yonim chaavaahayerudravaadineem; in the evening Gayatri appears mounted on Garuda as Sarasvati with crimson robes as VishnuVaadini : Saayamtu Garudhaarudhaam Peetaambharasamaavitaam, Sarasvatim Vishnuyoni maahvayed Vishnu Vaadineem/

After the Sankalpa follows Maarjanam by the Mantra : Aapohishta mayo bhuvah, tana oorje dadhaatana/ maheranaaya chakshase, yo vah Shiva tamo rasah/ tasya bhajayateha nah/Usiteeravah Matarah, Tasma arangamama vah, yasya kshayaaya jinvath/ Apo janaa yahta cha nah/ Om bhurbhuva suvah/

Aapohishtha: The Goddesses of Water indeed; Mayo bhuvah: are the causes of granting happiness; tah nah: Such Goddesses; Mahe Ramaaya chakshasey : are Great and charming to view; oorje dadhaatana :provide nourishment ; sivatamo rasah: most propitious bliss; Usitih Matara iva: like loving mothers; Bhajayateha yasya kshayaaya: make us worthy of that bliss; Jinvatha tasmaa vah aram gamaamah :we go in for that bliss with great eagerness; Apo janaayata: may we be born in rebirth with pure knowledge.

Scientific Explanation of Gaytri Mantra

A scientific explanation was offered by modern experts about the Gayatri Mantra: According to Astro-Physicists and Astronomers, a Sound is produced due to the fast movement of Earth, Planets, and Galaxy or the Milky Way, called Akshya Ganga, with some 100,000 million Stars. The Galaxy, the Moon and the Earth-all revolving around the Sun-each moving on their own axis at a mind boggling velocity of 20,000 miles per second, produce the Sound and the Sages named the Super Sound as OM. The Sum of the Gayatri Mantra states: The Earth (*Bhur), the Planets (*Bhuvaha), and the Galaxy (* Swaha) are rotating on their own axis at a great velocity as the Sound OM, which is the Formless Entity. The total Kinetic Energy generated by these movements balance the over-all energy consumption of Cosmos and this is named the 'Pranava' or the Body Energy ie Mass of Galaxies multiplied by two: Mass x Velocity x 2. That Supreme Entity (God) who manifests in the Form of Utmost Radiance (The San or Savitur) is indeed worthy of surrender (Varenyam). One should meditate (Dheemahi) upon the Light (Bhargo) of that Entity (Devasya) and perform the chanting of OM. May He(Yo) guide in the right Direction (Prachodayat) our (nah) Intellect (dhiyo)

Maha Narayanopaishad-Gayatri in Celestial Images

Following are 12 passages called Gayatris addressed to various Deities:

1: (Maha Deva Gayatri) Purushasya vidma sahasraakshasya Maha Devasya dheemahi, tanno Rudrah prachodayaat/ May we meditate that Maha Purusha and absorb the knowledge and might of that myriad eyed Maha Deva ! The most significant explanation of of Gayatri is vide Rigveda Mandala III.Sukta 62. Stanza 10 is : Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dheemahi dhiyo yonah prachodayaat/ That 'buddhi'

or the heart felt mentality which impacts 'sanmarga' the path of virtue is worthy of worshipping Savita Devata, demolishes blemishes and leads us to uphold the divine path! Chhandogya Upanishad III. xii.1) Gayatri vaa idam sarvam bhutam yad idam kim cha, Vaag vai gaayatri, Vaag vaa idam sarvam bhutam Gaayati cha traayate cha/(Gayatri is the manifestation of all the Beings in Creation. Speech is Gayatri. It is that Vaak Devi who sings for and provides protection for one all! In the days of yore there were three principal media to secure Soma juice viz. Gayatri, Trishtup and Jagati; but only Gayatri could reach the kingdom of Soma as the other two got fatigued and retreated. Besides excellence in singing viz. 'gaana', Gayatri does 'traana' or protection of the 'Praanis' too)

2: (Rudra Gayatri) Tat Purushasya vidmahe Maha Devaaya dheemahe, tanno Rudrah prachodayaat/ May we be impelled to realise that Supreme Person Rudra Deva the embodiment of Jnaana, enlightenment and the secret of Supreme Realisation!

3: (Vighnesha Gayatri) Tat purushaya vidmahe Vakratundaaya dheemahe, tanno Dantih prachodayaat/ May that Maha Purusha Ganeshwara the elephant faced with a powerful trunk and tusk bestowing auspiciousness and Vidya, whom Devas and humans are invoked before every action to ward off evil forces and all kinds of obstacles.

4: (Nandi Gayatri) Tat Purushaaya vidmahe Chakratundaaya dheemahi, tanno Nandih prachodayaat/ May we invoke that form of divinity known as Chakratunda or Nandikeshwara the servant, seat and vehicle of Lord Shiva wielding chakra and discuss while Shiva was engaged in battles with demons gasping with the mouth.

5: (Shanmukha Gayatri) Tatpurushaya vidmahe Mahasenaaya dheemahi, tannah Shanmukha prachodayaat/ May Bhagavan the Six Faced Kartikeya the embodiment of chivalry as the Commander-in-Chief of Deva Sena and the enforcer of Dharma guide us and impel to seek enlightenment to realise the Essence of Truth.

6.: (Garuda Gayatri) Tatpurushaaya vidmahe Suvarnapakshaaya dheemahi, tanno Garudah prachodayaat/ We seek to worship Suvarnapaksha or with golden wings Garuda Deva the swallower of Snakes and the chariot of Maha Vishnu who is everready to carry the latter within a fraction of second to places where the latter's devotees urge Him to save at once.

7: (Brahma Gayatri) Vedaatmanaaya vidmahe Hiranyagarbhaaya dheemamahi, tanno Brahma prachodayaat/ We beseech Hiranyagarbha Brahma Bhagavan the known manifestation of the Supreme

Reality and the root of Chatur Vedas reciting them from his four faces to impact our consciousness towards the path of estimable action.

8.Narayana Gayatri) Naraayanaaya vidmahe Vaasudevaaya dheemahi, tanno Vishnah prachodayaat/ We prostrate before Narayana Vaasudeva to lead us to righteousness and reveal us the Reality and reach us to the arduous path of Bliss. The term Narayana as resting on deep waters preserving the Universe that He creates as His effective deliberation and cause. Vaasudeva is the Antaryaami as the ‘ ayaktam- shasvatam -Vishnum -anantam -ajam -avyayam’.

9: (Bhaskara Gayatri): Bhaskaraaya vidmeheMahaadyutikaraaya dheemahi, tanno Adityah prachodayaat/ May we perform ‘pradakshana namaskaaras’ or circumambulatory greetings to Pratyaksha Bhaskara the original cause of radiance and illumination of Trilokas for uprooting darkness and bestow life and sustenance to all the Beings and demolish ‘agjaana’ or ignorance to lead us jyoti : ‘tamasomaa jyotir gamaya -mrityormaa jyotirgamaya’!

10: (Vaishwaanara Gayatri) : Vaishvaanaraaya vidmahe leelaalaaya dheemahi, tanoo Agnih prachodayaat/ May Agni Deva the ready means of worship and cooking as the singular source of radiance and ‘homa karyaas’ by which all the devas are invoked and contented with ‘mantra yukta ayaas’ by way of oblations through the singular means of ghee and food. Manduka Upanishad describes Vaishvaanara as ‘ Lolaayamaana’: I.ii.4) Kaali Karaali cha Manojavaa cha Sulohitaa yaa cha Sudhumravarnaa, Sphulingini Vishvarupi cha Devi Lolaayamaanaa iti Sapta Jihvaah/ (The Sapta- Jihvaas or the Seven Tongues of Fire Flames are Kaali (black), Karaali (ferocious), Manojava (Speed of Mind), Sulohita (extremely red hot), Sudhumra varna (coloured like thick smoke), Sphulingini (emitting cracky sparks) and Vishvaruchi (blazing all around); these are the ‘lolaayamaana- agnis’ or the ever moving flames of speed and spread!)

11:(Katyaayani Gayatri) Katyaayanaaya vidmahe Kanyakumari dheemahi, tanno Durgih prachodayaat/ May Devi Katyaayani be realised and Devi Kanyakumari be worshipped. We seek the blessings of Durga Devi generously and lead us to Reality and Realisation.

The Gayatri Mantra is the form of eternal truth. It is the heart of all beings and the eternal Ved Mantra. Gayatri destroys the sins of the world. All the four Vedas have originated from this mantra:

In addition Rishis have created 24 other Gayatri mantras – Sakaama Gayatri – ”with desire” Gayatri. The 24 words of the Gayatri appear in the form of the 24 Divine Shaktis.

Ganesh Gayatri: The repetition of this mantra is done for the destruction of obstacles and to succeed in difficult tasks.

Om Eka Dandhaya Vidmahe Vakratundaya Dhimahi Tanno tantihi Prachodayat

Vishnu Gayatri: To develop sustaining power, this mantra is used.

Om Narayanaya Vidmahe Vasudevaya Dhimahi Tanno Vishunha Prachodayat

Shiv Gayatri: To invoke auspiciousness, That is to have pure thoughts and high spiritual feelings, this mantra is used.

Om Panchavaktraya Vidmahe Mahadevaya Dhimahi Tanno Rudraha Prachodayat

Brahma Gayatri: To increase productiveness, that is to increase the power of creative shakti, this mantra is used.

Om Chaturmukhaya Vidmahe Hansa Rudraaya Dhimahi Tanno Brahma Prachodayat

Rama Gayatri: This mantra is used to establish proper conduct and ethical behavior.

Om Daasharthaya Vidmahe Sita Vallabhaya Dhimahi Tanno Ramahi Prachodayat

Krishna Gayatri: To bring dynamic energy into one's life in order to be able to do anything, intense sadhana is done for this Divine power with this mantra.

Om Devaki Nandanaya Vidmahe Vasudevaya Dhimahi Tanno Krishna Prachodayat

Indra Gayatri: To ward off any form of attack, intense sadhana is done for this Divine shakti.

Om Sahasranetraya Vidmahe Vajrahastaya Dhimahi Tanno Indra Prachodayat

Hanuman Gayatri: When there is a lack of fulfilling one's duty within oneself, then this mantra is used.

Om Anjanisutaya Vidmahe Vayuputraya Dhimahi Tanno Marutih Prachodayat

Surya Gayatri: Worship with this mantra is very beneficial for curing grievous diseases.

Om Bhaskaraya Vidmahe Divakaraya Dhimahi Tanno Suryah Prachodayat

Chandra Gayatri: For the removal of suffering and to get peace from dejection and worries, this mantra has been used for the worship of this Divine Shakti.

Om Shirputraya Vidmahe Amrit Tatvaya Dhimahi Tanno Chandrah Prachodayat

Yum Gayatri: This is universal prayer to gain fearlessness from death.

Om Putryaya Vidmahe Mahakalaya Dhimahi, Tanno Yumahah Prachodayat

Varun Gayatri: To develop sweetness and melodiousness at all levels, in speech, action, dealing with others, etc., this mantra is used.

Om Jalbimbaya Vidmahe Neel Purshaya Dhimahi Tanno Varunah Prachodayat

Narayana Gayatri: In order to establish discipline and make people listen to orders, one concentrates on this mantra.

Om Narayanaya Vidmahe Visudevaya Dhimahi Tanno Narayanah Prachodayat

Nrishinga Gayatri: This mantra is used in order to acquire this Divine Shakti, which has shown itself to be successful in increasing our efforts and in acquiring bravery.

Om Ugranrishinghaye Vidmahe Vajrankhaya Dhimahi Tanno Nrishinghaha Prachodayat

Durga Gayatri: This mantra is used to acquire this Divine Shakti, which is used to gain victory over enemies, attackers and obstacles.

Om Girijayei Vidmahe, Shiva Priyayei Dhimahi Tanno Durga Prachodayat

Laxmi Gayatri: This is the one Shakti believed to help in acquiring wealth, status, greatness, and fame; therefore, this mantra is used to invoke this Shakti.

Om Maha Laxmayei Vidmahe, Vishnupriyayei Dhimahi Tanno Laxmi Prachodayat

Radha Gayatri: This is a unique Shakti to fill the activities with the feelings of Divine Love; therefore, this mantra is used to invoke this Shakti.

Om Vrishbhaanujayei Vidmahe Krihsnpriyayei Dhimahi Tanno Radha Prachodayat

Sita Gayatri: To develop the Shakti of penance, it is very necessary to do worship with this mantra.

Om Janak Nandiniyeyi Vidmahe Bhumiayei Dhimahi Tanno Sita Prachodayat

Saraswati Gayatri: Learned scholars have said that the use of this mantra can help to increase the Shakti of the intellect and mental sharpness.

Om Saraswateyeyi Vidmahe Brahmaputriye Dhimahi Tanno Devi Prachodayat

Agni Gayatri: This is a famous mantra used to bring effulgence into the life/force of the body and in every activity of love.

Om Mahajwalyeyi Vidmahe Agnidevaya Dhimahi Tanno Agnih Prachodayat

Prithvi Gayatri: This mantra is considered useful in strengthening one's Shakti to remove wavering of resolve and in bringing steadfastness.

Om Prithvi Devayeyi Vidmahe Sahasramurtayeyi Dhimahi Tanno Prithvi Prachodayat

Tulsi Gayatri: To remove selfishness, increase selflessness, and make doing selfless service the goal of one's life, this mantra is very helpful.

Om Tulsaye Vidmahe Vishnu Priyaye Dhimahi Tanno Vrinda Prachodayat

Hansa Gayatri: To awaken discrimination, this is a very powerful mantra.

Om Param Hansaye Vidmahe Mahahansaye Dhimahi Tanno Hansah Prachodayat

Hayagriva Gayatri: When one is surrounded by fear on all four sides and is in need of courage, then this mantra is used.

Om Vanishavaraye Vidmahe Hayagrivaye Dhimahi Tanno Hayagrivah Prachodayat/

Hara Shankara Shambho Shankara

Composed and edited by V.D.N.Rao

1. Origin of Shiva Linga 2. Dwadasha Jyotir Lingas -3. Prasiddha Shiva Lingas - Upa Lingas and Ashtottara Shiva Kshetraas 4. Shiva as Agni Stambha 5. Observance of Maha Shiva Ratri and its significance 6. Shata Rudreeyam 4. Rudra Deva hidden in one's own's own Self vide Shvetaashvatara Upanishad

1. Shiva Lingodbhava:

Maha Munis then narrated the origin of Shiva Linga and its Universe :

In the days of yore on Himalayas, there was Daruvana famed for rigorous Tapasya by Maharshis along with their wives; the Maharshis were performing several Sacred deeds like Yagnas, Vratas, Agni Karyas, Swadyaayana of Vedas and Scriptures and fastings: their life's motto was Nitya Karma, penance and strict adherence of whatever Scriptures prescribed. The women folk of the Munis too followed the prescribed discipline, food restrictions and living regimen of austerity and devotion.

Into this Society of Self Restraint, unfailing virtue and orderliness arrived a semi-lunatic, nude and weird stranger who had compelling and magnetic personality of strong and attractive physical limbs. His body was full of Bhasma (Ash); his hair was dishevelled; his teeth were crooked and his eyes were blood red. Some times, he laughs boisterously; some time he shouts; some times he cries loudly; suddenly he brays like a donkey; and some other times he breaks into dances amourosly. He makes sheepish advances to women irrespective of their age. The Maharshis in Daruvana suffered the Stranger for enough of time and finally confronted him in a group.

Among the Rishis, somebody said that after all Rishis would not get angry normally but when they did, no force on Earth could be withstood! Thus arguing among themselves the Rishis told the Stranger that it was highly improper for householders to behave irresponsibly as him and that he should atleast wear a piece of cloth when he could be respected; otherwise the alternative would be to drop his Linga (Male Organ). Maha Deva then replied that even Brahma would not be able to drop his Linga by force, let alone

Maharshis; yet, he himself would drop it on his own; having said so Maheshwara disappeared and assumed the Linga Swarupa. As this incident took place, there was all round havoc in the Universe: *Trailokye Sarvabhutaanaam praadurbhaavo na jaayatey, Vyaakulam cha tadaa Sarvam na prakaashet kinshana/ Tapatey chaiva Naadityo nishprabhavah Paavakastathaa, Nakshatraani Grahashaiva Vipareetaa vijanjirey/* (In all the Tri Lokas, the process of Srishti got badly affected; there was Universal agitation and nothing was shining; Sun became pale, Agni lost its heat and the Stars ceased to twinkle; and the Planets lost their moorings). The Maharshis immediately realised that the dropping of the Linga brought in terrible consequences and ran up to Brahma and conveyed the entire incident but Brahma too was agitated as to what happened and confirmed that the so called Stranger was none else but Maha Deva himself; that it would take ages to realise him; that he was the Supreme Lord of Devas, Rishis and Pitru Devas; that after thousand Yugas he would assume the Form of Kaala Deva at the time of Pralaya; that he was the unique creator with his own radiance; that he was Vishnu with Lakshmi as his consort and Srivatsa as his invaluable ornament; that he was called as Maha Yogi during Krita Yuga; that he was the ‘Kratu Rupa’ or Yagna Swarupa in Treta Yuga; that in Dwapara Yuga, he was ‘Kaalaagni’ and in Kali Yuga he is Dharma ketu or the Insignia of Virtue; that Panditas ought to realise all these Forms; that he was the combined Shakti of Agni’s amoguna, Brahma’s Rajo Rupa and Vishnu’s Satvika Rupa; that he was ‘Digvasana’ and was named Shiva; and that hence the Maharshis should worship Shiva with singular earnestness as he was Ishana, Avyaya and that Maha Linga who would surely dispel the fund of ignorance which they never had as he desired to counsel you but you made in the incorrigible mistake of your life time!

As Brahma chided the Maharshis thus, the latter bent to him on their knees and commenced worship to Maha Deva in his Linga Swarupa and after a year’s puja, the latter re-entered Daru Vana once again and all the Munis made a collective Prayer to him as follows: Maha Deva! As we were completely ignorant of our mistakes that were committed by our speech, thought and deed, do kindly pardon us. Shankara! Your actions are indeed strange, secretive and incomprehensible not only to us but to Devas and to Brahma too. We welcome you back to Daruvana as we are unable to find our ways and means as to how and what to do in the context of our unpardonable acts. Vishweshwara! We do not know as to who are you! Mahatma, Maheshwara, Bhava, Bhavya (the marvellous one), Bhavana (The Purifier), Udbhava (The Originator), Ananta Bala Virya or the Symbol of Eternal Strength and Virility; Our salutations to you the Creator and the Destroyer; Bhuta Naatha; Samhaara; Kapishanga Rupa or of the ochre complexioned body; Avyaya; Gangaadhara; Savaadhaara; Gunaatma; Traiyambika; Trinetra; Trishula dhaara; Sundara Vighraha; Vrishankana or Bull-bannered; Pramthagana Pati; Paasha Hasta or the Carrier of Paasha in hands; Kaala Swarupa; Veda Mantra Pradhana; Sahasra Jihva or Thousand Tongued; the Knower of the Past, Present and Future; Sthavara Jangama Deva or the Lord of Immobile and Moving Beings; your body creates the Universe in totality! Do save us Shambhu, Bhadra, Bhagavan! Kindly be pleased to human indiscretions like what we did under the cover of Yoga Maya of Parameshwara; may you be restored in the Linga as earlier!

As the famed Munis including Gautami, Atri, Angirasa, Bhrigu, Vasishtha, Vishwamitra, Sukesh, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Marichi, Kashyapa and Samvarta sought Maha Deva’s un-qualified pardon and prostrated before him, Bhagavan was extremely pleased. Then the Munis requested Parama Shiva himself to provide clarifications on certain issues that remained unanswered to them so far: *Bhasma snaanam cha nagnatwam Vaamatwam pratilomataa, Sevyaa sevyatvam tu Vibho etadicchaama veditum/* (The

clarifications required are Bhasma Snaana or the bath of ash, nakedness, left-handed rituals, contrary actions, and the distinction of worthiness of Service to Deities or its unworthiness).

Bhagavan gave the clarifications: Maha Deva agreed to give a detailed reply to the Maharshis on the specific queries: ‘ I am Agni; Soma depends on me for every thing. All the Lokas and their Beings are dependent on Agni. The Universe consisting of ‘Sthavara Jangamas’ or the Moving and Immobile Beings was burnt by Agni on countless occasions. The resultant Bhasma was sacred and acts like a perfect Purifier; for one thing Bhasma is the by-Product of anything burnt in Prakriti and thus the cleanser and the steriliser but far more significantly since it was mixed with my own potency. All the hallowed deeds related to Agni thus enjoy the double benefit of Agni’s purification and my own virility. In fact Bhasma empowers as a ‘Trausha’ too or the trebler of the span of life of whosoever applies it on his body. Bhasma’s accurate meaning is that it destroys sins. It provides radiance and fragrance of body and is a symbol of Auspiciousness. Pitras call it ‘Ushmava’ or the provider of coolness. Devas enjoy longevity due their constant drinking of Soma Rasa; indeed Soma and Agni are myself. If I am Agni, my Ambika is Soma; I am the Purusha and she is Prakriti. And that indeed is the reason why Bhasma is my virility. That is why, Bhasma is used on occasions of inauspiciousness also, or to ward off Evil Spirits and at the Places of baby-births. Once a person has a ‘Bhasma-Snaana’ or ash-bath he gets his soul purified and overcomes anger and thus named Jitendriya or the One who controls his limbs. Bhasma is a constituent of Pashupata Yoga and Vrata and the impact of the Vrata is far-reaching as a sincere practitioner of the Vrata ceases to have a rebirth!

Again about the aspect of ‘Nagnatwa’; indeed none entered into the world with clothes; Devas and Maha Yogis are without clothes. Those who conquer their Physique have least significance or relevance for ‘Vastra’ and those who could not do so are as bad as having the show of Vastras. Vastra is indeed not a protection for character or a sense of shame; on the other hand, it is more shameful to perform disapproved deeds even while covering the body with expensive clothes! Thus Vastra’s significance should be replaced by Kshama or Patience, Dhriti or Courage and determination, Ahimsa or Non-Violence, Equanimity, Non-Interference, Resistance to Material Attraction and Vairagya or an Outlook of Other-Worldi –ness. A person who applies bhasma constantly would gradually develop noble traits till purification of his conscience is attained. Invariably such an ash-prone person seldom does wrong; if by mischance he does indiscretions then his latent virtue burns off the impact of such wrong-doings. Thus one must make it a point to apply the auspicious Bhasma regularly. Those who practise Yoga could attain Siddhis like Anima (Infinitesimal), Laghima (weightlessness), Mahima (Enormity), Prapti (Attainment), Garima (Heaviness), Prakryama (Independence of Thought), Isatwa (Superiority), Vasisitwa (Capacity to control), and Amaratwa (Immortality). Indra and Devas had attained Siddhis through the means of Kamaya Vratas; like wise Humans too could have access to the Mysique World. [Brahmanda Purana]

2. Dwaadasha Jyotir Lingas

Nandiswara in Shiva Purana described the Most Celebrated Twelve Jyotirlingas of Maha Deva as follows:

Kedarnath in Himalayas, Bhima Sankar in Dakinya, Viswesvara in Varanasi, Triambaka on the banks of River Gautami, Somnatha in Saurashtra, Mallikarjuna in Sri Sailam, Maha Kala in Ujjain, Amareswara at Omkara, Vaidyanatha in Chitha Bhumi, Nageshwara at Daruka, Rameswara at Setu Bandhana, and Ghrishneswara.

[Kedarnath in Uttaranchal, Bhima Shankar near Pune in Maharashtra, Visveswara in Varanasi, Somnath in Gujarat, Srisailam in Andhra Pradesh, Maha Kala in Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh, Omkara also in Madhya Pradesh, Vaidhyanath at Deogarh (Bihar), Nageshawara near Dwaraka in Gujarat, Rameswara in Tamilnadu, and Ghrishneswar near Ellora Caves in Aurangabad in Maharashtra]

There are some claims and counter claims of the geographical situation of some of the Jyotirlingas and one might possibly visit these Places too possibly!

Kedareshwara:

Flanked by breath taking views of snow-clad peaks of Himalayas at a height of 3585 m from Sea level on the banks of River Mandakini, Kedareshwar is the highest point where Maha Deva's presence is indeed felt in the manifestation of a famed Kedareshwara Jyotir Linga as spread out as a fairly large expanse of black stone with an inclined elevation in the middle portion. Being inaccessible excepting by a difficult 14km trek by foot, or horse back or 'dolis' (palanquins) carried by two or four humans from Gaurikund, the Temple is open only during end April through November since residents, let alone pilgrims, have little access to the Mountain Top Temple during heavy snowfall in the intervening period. [A helicopter service is available now from Agastya Muni to Phata to reach Kedarnath]. The incarnations of Lord Vishnu in the form of two Sages Nara and Narayana meditated to Bhagavan Siva for several years and as the latter appeared and said that the incarnations of Vishnu Himself executed the penance without any basic reason excepting the welfare of humanity and thus agreed to manifest Himself as a Jyotir Linga at that hallowed place. Nara and Narayana are believed to have assumed their forms as hallowed mountains nearby. According to Puranas, Pandavas performed penance at the Temple and even in the opening Hall of the Temple at the entrance of the Sanctum, there are idols of Pandavas, Lord Krishna, Nandi and Veerabhadra. The belief is that Pandavas were chasing a Bull- Lord Siva Himself- and Bhima continued the chase to subdue the animal by holding its tail and the Pandavas attained Salvation finally from the Temple surroundings. It is also believed that Adi Shankara attained His Salvation from this Place and there is a 'Samadhi' of His behind the Temple. A distinct feature at the entrance gate of the Temple is the head of a man carved in a triangular stone as facade and a similar triangular facade is displayed in another Temple where Siva-Parvati wedding was fabled to have taken place. 'Udakmand' is mentioned in Siva Purana as a union of Seven Seas and its water is everfresh. In fact the Homa Kund of the Wedding is also visioned alive. On way to Kedar a number of Pilgrimage Centers dot the route including Agastyamuni, Ukhimath, Phali-Pasalat Devi, Kalimath, and Triguni Narayan not far from Sonprayag. Vamana Purana explained the Origin of Kedara Kshetra vividly: Maha Deva performed deep and extensive tapasya on the top of Himalayas to refresh himself as also for Loka Kalyan or to ensure propitiousness to the entire Universe. During the Tapasya, there were fiery sparks from his 'jatajutas' or the thick layers of his hair and fell as huge and heavy boulders on Earth. From the boulders that fell, Kedara Tirtha got materialised and Rishis commenced to reside there and by the grace of Mahadeva a Shiva Linga got materialised. Yattris visited the Kshetra atleast for six months a year since it was difficult and unworthy of stay due to heavy snow and cold. Mahadeva blessed and granted fulfillment of devotees who observed fastings, snana, daana, homa, japa and pitru shraddhas and worship and their acts resulted in multiplier returns. In fact Devas came to worship the Shiva Linga after taking holy dips in Kalindi River (Yamuna) the daughter of Surya Deva. There after Maha Deva disappeared deep inside the depths of the River for a very long time and various Lokas and Samudras got disturbed and even Nakshatras dropped down from the Sky. Devas approached Maha Vishnu in Yoga Nidra on Ksheera Sagara. Meanwhile a Danava named

Mura, who was the son of Kashyapa Muni and Danu the daughter of Daksha Prajapati, performed such unusual Tapasya to Brahma and secured a peculiar boon that whosoever would touch would die. Deva and all other Celestial Beings like Gandharva, Yakshaadis got rattled and Mura challenged Yama Dharma Raja who in turn directed him to challenge Jagannadha Chatur Murti resting on the Ocean of Milk. Danava Mura reached Jagannadha who asked Mura to enter into a duel. Mura never expected this defiant reply and got confused with Vishnu Maya and muttered: 'how, where and who'. Swiftly enough, Sudarshana Chakra sliced off the neck of Mura thus earning the encomium of Murari. It was at that juncture that Devas arrived at Ksheera Sagara stating that Maha Deva's whereabouts were unknown. Vishnu along Devas enquired of Devi Parvati, Ganesha, Kumara, Nandi and so on. Then he instructed Devas to observe Tapta Kruccha Vrata for three days each by consuming hot water, hot milk, hot ghee and on the last three days only Vayu bhakshana followed each day by Abhishakas to Maha Linga at KedaraTirtha with sixty five pitchers of curd, thirtytwo pitchers of ghee, sixteen full of pitchers of Pancha gavya, eight ghadas of honey, two hundred pitchers of Kalindi's sacred water, one hundred eight pitchers of Gorochana, Kumkuma, chandana, butter as also puja of Mandara, Harashringara, Agaru, dhupa, naivedyas with the recitation of Rigvedantargata pada krama of Shata Rudreeya. At the end of such severe penances, Indra and Devas visioned a Unified Shiva-Vishnu Swarupa!! Having realised their folly that Shiva and Vishnu were one and the same, Devas and even Brahma moved back to Kurukshetra and discovered Parama Shiva inside the water and hailed the Sthaanu Maha Deva and prostrated before him to withdraw from the Tapasya and bless them all and the Lokas!

Most of the Yatris do not invariably halt over at the intermediate places like Gangotri, Yamunotri, Deva Prayag, etc. and after Haridwar and Rishikesh proceed to Badari/Kedar. This is particularly so since there is a motorable road from Jyoshimutt. It is in respect of those Yatris intending to visit Badrinath that halt at Jyoshimutt while those going to Kedar first prefer halting at Rudra Prayag and trek up to Kedar generally. Of course the context differs in respect of trekking from Rishikesh to either of the destinations first. From Deva Prayag to Srinagar-different from Srinagar of Kashmir-there is a Kamaleshwar Maha Deva Mandir and the legend states that Devi Durga terminated a cruel Kolasura with her 'Dhanush'(Bow and arrow) and there still is a bow shaped Dhanush Tirtha; Lord Rama worshipped Devi Durga here with Sahasra Kamalas or thousand lotuses but Shankara hid the thousandth lotus but Rama replaced it with his right eye in the worship unhesitatingly! From Srinagar to Rudra Prayag just away by a mile is the famed and picturesque Sangam of Alaknanda and Mandakini Rivers.It is at this point, that the ways to Badari and Kedar depart from each other where Sage Narada is stated to have eulogised Parama Shiva with his prowess in 'Sangeeta' where a Shiva Mandir is in place. From Rudra Prayag to Kedarnath the path along Mandakini are the places named Chatouli / Suryaprayag or Surya Deva's meditation point- Agastya Muni Mandir-Chhota Narayana mandir with Rudraksha trees- Chandrapuri with Chandrashekhara-Durga Mandir-Bhiri with Bhim Mandir-Gupta Kashi where King Banasura the son of Bali Chakravarti of Vamanavatara fame and Banasura's daughter Usha signified by Ushimutt nearby and Usha's husband was Aniruddha the son of Lord Krishna and Devi Rukmini. Gupta Kashi is also the abode of Ardha-Nareshwara Shiva seated on Nandi Deva and there is a flow of Kunda or pond nearby stated to be a mix of Ganga and Yamuna. In Nala, Lalitha Devi Mandir is popular and this Devi was worshipped by King Nala. Narayana koti just away by a mile from Nala on the banks of Saraswai River are Narayana Mandir and Kalimutt the latter as worshipped by Kalidas the Scriptor of Abhijnana Shakuntala, Kumara Sambhava, Megha sandesa and such immortal classics in Sanskrit. Maikhanda which is two miles from Narayana koti is known for Mahishasura Mardini Mandir. Rampur is the next halt three miles away to the

trekkers good for night rest with woollen blankets etc even to carry and return basis to Kedarnath. Up the mountain top at Rampur by a four mile difficult terrain is situated the Mandir of Triyugi Narayana with his two consorts Bhu Devi and Lakshmi Devi; this is right along with River Saraswati with its four Maha Kundas called Brahma Kund, Rudra Kund, Vishnu Kund and Saraswati kund. It is stated that Achamana, Snaana, Marjana, Tarpana be performed at the respective Kundas. At the Triyugi Narayana there is an Akhanda Dhuni or Uninterrupted Fire Place where Homa Prakriyas are continuously performed and twigs are fed in the Agni Kunda. Despite the high significance of this Triguni Narayana Mandir which is very tiring to reach, yattris of normal stamina excuse themselves and avoid the peak height, and proceed further to Soma Prayag and reach *Gouri Kund*. The major halt before the eight and odd mile ascent up to Kedarnath is Gauri Kunda where there is a natural hot water Kund to refresh the yattris.

Kedarnath is one of the *Dwadasha Shiva Maha Linga* Abodes as these are as follows: *Kedaro Himavat prushthe Dakinyaam Bhimashankarah, Vaaranaasyaamcha Vishwesraambako Gautami tatey/ Saurashtre Somanathaswa Shrishaila Mallikarjunah, Ujjainaam Maha kaalaa Omkarecha Amareshwarah/ Vaidyanadhascha Bhumo Nagesho Daarukaananey, Setubandhe cha Ramesho Ghrushneshwara Shiva Lingovtara Dwadashashakametcchambo Paramatmana/* (Nandishwara described in Shiva Purana the Most Celebrated Twelve Jyotirlingas of Maha Deva as follows: Kadarnath in Himalayas (Uttaranchal), Bhima Shankar in Dakinya (Near Pune in Maharashtra), Vishwaswara in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Triambika on the banks of River Gautami (Maharashtra), Somanath (Saurashtra / Gujarat), Mallikarjuna in Srishaila, (Andhra Pradesh), Mahakala, Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh), Amareshwara at Omkara (Madhya Pradesh), Vaidyanatha at Deogarah (Bihar)/ Parli (Maharashtra); Nagesha near Dwaraka (Gujarat) or Naganadh (Aoudhya, Maharashtra)/ Jageshwara near Almora, (Uttaraakhanda); Rameshwara (Tamilnadu) and Ghrishneshwara, Aurangabad, Maharashtra).

Kedar Linga is known from times immemorial: In Krita or Satya Yuga, Maharshi Upamanyu is stated to have worshipped Kedara Linga and attained salvation; in Dwapara Yuga Pandavas are stated to have performed Tapasya. Bhagavan MahaDeva assumed the form of Mahisha or a Buffalo and confused Pancha Pandavas at the same time as they were engrossed in Tapasya at different locations of Kedar now reputed as Pancha Kedar by displaying different body parts of the Mahisha viz. at Tunganath displaying hands, Rudranath the face of Mahisha, Mada Maheshwara displaying naabhi or middle portion, and Kalpeshwar his 'jataajuta' or the coarse head hair; the Prishtha bhaga or the hind body part is stated to have displayed at Kedar nadha proper. One legendary account states that Bhima of Pandavas in the course of his Tapasya got disturbed by the appearance of the hind part of the Buffalo, chased it and tried to forcibly hold its tail but the ever potent Maha Deva eluded him and succumbed with severe injuries. Pashupati Nath Temple in Khatmandu in Nepal is stated to have displayed the Maha Mahisha's head portion. In Kedar there is no built up Murti swarupa as such but a raised and reclining dome basically a trikona mountain black stone is worshipped with 'Abhishekas' or oblations with Milk, flowers, fruits, honey, agarbattis or perfumed sticks and so on. Kedar Mandir appears very oriental and typically mountainous with imposing locale surrounded by places like Bhrigupantha (Maghna ganga), Ksheera ganga called Chora thadi thaal, Vasuki thaal, Gugukund, Bhairava Shila. The Mandir displays Pancha Pandava Murtis, Bhima cave and Bhimashila. The half broken exit gate is fabled as the Sacred Gate from which Adi Shankara baled out and flew up to Kailasa. Beautiful white stone life size idols of Shankaraacharya addressing his disciples in the rear portion hall of the Kedar Mandir is in place. Apart from the Murtis of Pandavas, those of Usha and Aniruddha, Lord Krishna, Shiva Parvati and so on too.

Around the Mandir in a Parikrama are noticed Amrita Kund, Ishana Kund, Hamsa kund, Retasa Kund, and such other Tirthas.

Most unfortunate havoc of torrential rains, floods, mountain quakes caused thousands of Pilgrims to perish from all over Bharata Desha recently. Indian Air Force deserves kudos for their endless helicopter sorties and saved countless Yattris and so did yeoman service by various Defence Forces and their Wings to have extended the trekkers. Happily the entire Bharat stood up as one to help the survivors as per one's own resources and sincere assistance. May Bhagavan Shankara who assumed a spurt of momentary fury for whatever was his own reason but essentially of the nature of interminable mercifulness, take the victims in his own fold and bless them as Kailasa Vaasis!

Right on the expanse of Himalayas are *Nanda Devi and Maha Mrityunjaya* in the Gadhwal region. Mountain Nanda Devi's top is the world's highest Mount Everest named Gouri Shankar. Yatras are conducted to Gaurishankar every twelve years and enterprising men and woman do join the yatra coinciding Bhadrapada Sukla Saptami. On way are Nandakesari, Purna, Triveni Deval, Nandaapeeth etc. The Legend states that Bhagavati Nanda Devi uprooted several Asuras and purified herself by bathing in Rupkunda. Maha Mrityunjaya of Gadwal region again which is of some fifteen miles hike from Karna – ganga suffered a massive earth quake in the remote past at the time Adi Shankaraacharya in mid 18th century and a Shivaratri Festival has been celebrated there ever-since.

Bhima Shankar:

Located some 110 km from Pune in Maharashtra State in the Ghat region of Sahyadri Hills near the head of Bhima River which merges with Krishna River too, the fifth Jyotirlinga Bhima Shankar is the appearance Maha Siva who exterminated Demon Bhima, son of Kumbhakarna (Ravan's brother). Demon Bhima on knowing from his mother Kartaki wanted to avenge the death of his father by Lord Rama, who was Maha Vishnu's incarnation and performed penance to Lord Brahma to receive boons to conquer even mighty opponents. He defeated Indra and Devas and what provoked Lord Siva most was the tormenting of a great Siva Bhakta King Kamarupeshwara insisting that the latter should pray to himself rather than Siva Linga. As the Demon was about to destroy the Sivalinga by his sword, Lord Siva appeared and destroyed the Demon and His mighty anger caused sweat which flowed as River Bhima. The Jyotirlinga thus manifested is a powerful representation of 'Ardhanariswara' in the Temple provides proof of instant fulfillment of all desires thus attracting thousands of devotees, especially on all Mondays and definitely on Sivaratri festivals. As in certain other cases like at Ujjain, the Swayambhu Jyotirlinga is set at a level lower than the normal Ground; also there is a speciality here that there is a constant flow of water from the Linga! The Bhima Shankar Temple is also associated with the killing of Demon brothers Tripurasuras along with Devi Parvati in Her manifestation as Kamalaja whose temple is also nearby the main Temple. Devi Kamalaja was worshipped by Brahma and hence She was called so. Sakini and Dakini were among those whose contribution was significant in the battle against Tripurasuras and their worship too is performed at the Temple. 'Mokshakund Tirtha', the Holy Waterbody adjacent the Bhimashankar Temple is associated with Sage Kausika. [Maratha Rulers especially Nana Phadnavis who built the Temple 'Sikhara' and Sivaji who made donations to its maintenance were intensely associated with the progress of this illustrious Temple].

While the above version of the location of Bhimashankar is convincing, Siva Purana which is relevant in the context of the current source states in Rudra Samhita: 'Dakininam Bhimashankara' while outlining

the broad references of the Dwadasa Jyotirlingas; more clearly the Koti Rudra Samhita states: *Bhimashankara sanjnaastu Shashtha Shambho Maha Prabho/ Avataro Maha leeloBhimasuravinashanah/ Sudakshinabhida Bhaktam Kamarupeshwaram vrisham / yogaraaksha sadbhutam hatvasaram tha bhakta duhkhadam/Bhimashankara naamaa sa daakinyam samsthitaha swayam/ Jyotirlinga Siva rupena prarthesena Sankarah/* The sixth incarnation of Shambu and His 'Leela' (miracle) was the killing of Bhimasura and saving of King Sudakshina of Kamarup whose grateful prayers resulted in the manifestation of Siva at Dakini. The belief is the Bhimashankar Temple at Bhimapur Hill near **Guwahati** in Assam is the one where the King Sudakshina was saved and the Jyotirlinga was consecrated. Sivaratris are celebrated with pomp and Show in this Temple. Yet another version relates that the Temple of Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga at Kashipur near **Nainital** which was noted as a Dakini Country in the past is the one where the Jyotirlinga appeared. The legend in the Region was that Bhima of Pandava brothers married a Dakini woman named Hidimba and that Lord Siva appeared in that Place as a Swayambhu Jyotirlinga in that Temple area. In this Temple too, there are Idols of Bhairavanath and Devi Bhagavati as also a Temple Tank, called Sivaganga. Siva Ratri Jagarans and Worship are observed with religious fervour and devotion in this Temple too.

Varanasi: Famed as the Place of Devas that was founded by Bhagavan Siva Himself, some five thousand years ago, Kasi has a hoary legend with age-old reputation worldwide. Varun and Ganga and also Ganga and Assi, flowing in different directions, confluence in 'Varana-Assi' or Varanasi. Euologised in several Scriptures like Rig Veda, Puranas and Epics, Varanasi was the Capital of Kasi King three thousand years ago and was reputed even by then as the capital of Religion, Education and Arts. The City covers some five kilometers of the Holy and Everflowing Ganges on its banks attracting lakhs of Pilgrims every year as the Ultimate Destination of Salvation for Hindus of all faiths and several other religions especially Buddhists and Jains. This is the Sacred Spot that Bhagavan Visveswara manifested as Avimukta Jyoti Linga in the renowned Golden Visveswara Temple. It is stated that Lord Brahma executed such severe Tapasya (meditation) here so much that Maha Vishnu moved His head across fast in disbelief and the latter's ear ring fell at a place on the bank of the River and was since then named 'Manikarnika'. When Brahma was once chanting Vedas in praise of Siva in the form of the Jyoti Linga with the former's 'Panchamukhas' or Five Heads, some pronunciation slips rolled by and becoming furious of the chanting mistakes which changed the sense of the words, Lord Siva opened the third eye and burnt one of Brahma's heads which fell and found a permanent place in the Temple. Viswanath Temple is also considered as a 'Shakti Peetha' and it is believed that Devi Sati's ear-rings fell at the spot where Devi Visalakshi's shrine stands. Durga Temple, nick-named as Monkey Temple owing to large presence of monkeys, is considered as a shrine built originally by Durga Herself and during 'Navarathras' of Dussera festival comes fully alive and heavily crowded by devotees. Sankata Vimochana Hanuman Temple is frequently visited, especially on Tuesdays and Saturdays. The Shrine of Annapoorni is stated as the place where Devi Annapurna Herself distributed 'Anna' (Rice and so on) to devotees when there was a famine and Lord Siva Himself asked for 'Anna' in the disguise of a Beggar! There is a Neelakantha Temple with Deities of Vishnu, Avikuntha Vinayaka, Virupakshi Gauri, Saniswara and clusters of Five-some Lingas. A separate shrine dedicated to Kala Bhairava is present too in the courtyard. On the five km long banks of Ganga are situated hundreds of 'Ghats' or areas specified for many purposes like Sacrifices or Yagnas and Homams, some for bathing, or some even owned privately. For eg. 'Dasasvamedha' Ghat where Brahma performed Yagnas and even now Brahmanas perform Agni Sthomas, Homams to please Devas and so on; 'Manikarnika Ghat' where Brahma executing penance and Vishnu's earrings were lost at the

disbelief of the former's strength to do it so seriously and shook His earrings fast and lost these while Devi Parvati pretended that Her earrings were lost so that Siva would stay back to search the lost earrings forever and thus tie Him up to Kasi and such other beliefs. Besides the Manikarnika Ghat, where dead bodies are brought for the favour of cremation to attain mukti (salvation), there is the Harischandra Ghat where the Illustrious King Harischandra was posted as a slave and cremated dead bodies with the same belief of attaining salvation. It is common knowledge that the King stood for truthfulness and endured the most severe tests of life of selling off his family and Son, became a life-long slave and finally attained Salvation.

There are many other Ghats like 'Man Mandir Ghat' near Someswara Linga Temple, Lalitha Ghat near by Pasupatinath Temple, Tulasi Ghat where Tulsidas scripted Ramayana and so on. Ranging from Kings and Queens, Foreign Plunderers, Great Saints like Adi Shankara, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda, Dayananda, Tulasidas and GuruNanak; Educationists, Artistes, Disbelievers, Non Hindu Followers, and even modern Pandas-anybody be named and be found- are all attracted to this Memorable City for their reasons of Salvation, Religion, worldly fulfilments, mischief or mere curiosity: but Maha Deva Blesses them all whatever may be the motive!

Tryambakeshwara: Located thirty kilometers away from Nasik in Maharashtra, the renowned Jyotirlinga of Lord Siva's materialization called Tryambakeswar attracts thousands of Pilgrims round the year providing boons of material and spiritual nature. The 'Punyakshetra' or the Hallowed Land is the source point of the Holy River Godavari basically owing to the Bhagiradh-like efforts of Sage Gautama and his highly pious wife Ahalya. By virtue of the Sage's penance and prayers, Lord Varuna was pleased to supply water and food grains in abundance but this boon turned out as a basis of jealousy of co-Sages and their spouses who created a cow to plunder the grains. Sage Gautama destroyed the cow, but as a result of a sin in killing the cow, the Sage-couple was banished to a hermitage on the mountain of Brahmagiri. Gautama Muni made relentless 'Tapasya' to Bhagavan Siva who endowed Gautama with the double desires of bringing River Ganga near his hermitage and also stay on its banks along with Bhagavati in the form of a Jyotirlinga. Lord Siva granted both the wishes that Ganga was brought near Gautama's hermitage as River Godavari and His manifestation as Tryambakeswara Jyotirlinga in the vicinity of the River Godavari / Gautami. In parallel to this, another legend related to the formation of a Jyotirlinga at Brahmagiri was the interface of Lords Brahma and Vishnu vis-à-vis an appearance of a Fire Column whose height and depth could not be ascertained by both of them; Brahma's cover-up story was that he found out the height of the Column and cited a Ketaki flower as a witness. Bhagavan Siva gave a curse to Brahma that there would not be worship of the former and Brahma gave a return curse that Lord Siva would be pushed underground. Hence the manifestation of Tryambakeswara under the Brahmagiri. The Jyotirlinga is of a small size in a depression on the floor with water oozing out constantly from the top. The force of waves of the River appears to be as per the intensity of the prayers of Sage Gautama according to the conviction of devotees in the Temple! Major Tirthas (Tanks) in the Temple are named Gangadwara representing the source of Ganga (Godavari), Varaha Tirtha where Lord Vishnu had a bath in the River in Varaha Rupa (appearance as Boar) and Kushvartha Tirtha considered as the most significant as Sage Gauthama spread across Kusha or Darbha Grass while securing the waters of Ganga. There are also other Tirthas like Gangasagara, Bilva Tirtha, Indra Tirtha, Vishwanath Tirtha, Mukund Tirtha, Prayag Tirtha, Rama Kund, Lakshmana Kund and so on. Among the Shrines are Kedarnath, Rameshwar, Gauthameshwar, Kasi Viswanatha, Jareswar, Kanchaneswar, Tribhuneswar, Venkateshwar, and Hanuman. There are daily worships at the Main Temple thrice and the nightly 'arthies' are special.

On Mondays there are special 'abhishekas' and 'arthies' as also 'Parikramas'. Kartika month worships are important, especially Kartika Purnima. Gangavatarana is celebrated in the month of Magha. Simhastha Parvati is held once in twelve years.

Somnath: Prajapati Daksha married away twenty seven of his daughters to Chandra Deva (Moon) but Chandra had great infatuation for Rohini to the neglect of other wives. Daksha warned Chandra about this but to avail. Finally Daksha cursed Chandra who appealed to Lord Brahma, and in turn asked to perform Tapasya to Bhagavan Siva. Chandra observed penance at Prabhasa on the banks of River Sarasvati. On His appearance Lord Siva sorted out the problem with a compromise that the first bright fortnight of a month (Sukla Paksha) Moon would wax and the 'Krishna Paksha' Moon would wane. He also blessed Moon to be near Him and Parvati always. Being a 'Sparsha' (Touch) Jyotirlinga-Somachandra- stated to be the first in the series, it would remove away all physical ailments particularly tuberculosis and leprosy and bathing in the Water body 'Chandra kund' washes off all the sins committed by human beings. Known as Prabhat Kshetra [near Veraval in Kathiawad District of Saurashtra in Gujarat], Lord Krishna is believed to have performed his Leelas (Miracle Acts). [An ever burning light in a cave of the Temple is witnessed till date].

Srishailam: Stated to be the Second in the Series of Jyotirlingas on the Sri Parvat (in Andhra Pradesh, some 230 Km. from Hyderabad) on the banks of River Krishna, Lord Siva's manifestation as Mallikarjuna along His Spouse Devi Bhramaramba is famed mythologically as the place of penance when Kartikeya was unhappy and felt cheated as Ganesha was wedded earlier despite the Agreement that whoever arrived first after full 'Bhu Pradakshina' (circumambulation of the World) would win, but Ganesha took advantage of a Provision of the Scriptures and performed a 'Pradakshina' of his parents and attained the advantage of the Pradakshina. Siva and Parvati visited the Krouncha Mountain to pacify Kartikeya but to no avail and thus moved over to the Mountain from Kailasa. As Vrishabha Deva -Siva Parvati's Carrier-did Tapasya to the Maha Devas, they appeared as Mallikarjuna and Bhramaramba at this Holy Spot. Lord Rama is said to have installed a Sahasralinga and Pandavas set up Pancha Pandava Lingas in the Temple surroundings. In a tiny hole inside the temple of Devi Bhramaramba, one could still hear the buzz of bees as the Devi assumed the form of bees all over Her Body and killed Mahishasura. Adi Shankara is reputed to have scripted his well known Work named 'Sivananda Lahari' at this Temple.

Ujjain: The only 'Svayambhu' (Self-born) Jyotirlinga of Lord Siva in the form of Mahakal originating 'Mantra Shakti' (Power of Mantras) from within is indeed a unique specimen among all the Jyotir- Lingas on the banks of River Kshipra. This is the only Temple of various Jyotirlingas maintained on Tantrik Principles. While Mahakaleswar faces south as a Dakshina murthi, the Idols of Ganesh, Parvati, Kartikeya and Nandi are installed on West, North, East and South respectively. Shree Yantra is perched upside down at the Ceiling of Garbha Griha where the Main Linga is situated. The Temple has five levels including an underground and on the third level is installed the idol of Nagchandreswar open for public view only on Nag Panchami days. Experience at the time of very early morning 'Bhasmabhishekas' or the spread of ash along with the loud chanting of Mantras of the Deity and with the thrilling and reverberating sounds of various percussion and bronze gong instruments takes one to devotional ecstasy. [It is stated that the Bhasmabhishekas are performed by using the ashes of the first dead bodies of the previous day, sanctified by Mantras from the holy waters of River Kshipra. Ladies are not allowed to enter the Sanctum at the time of the Bhasmabhishekas although they could witness the proceedings on Close Circuit TVs.] The mythological background of the Temple was that there was a pious Brahmana

well versed in Vedas and Scriptures had four learned sons named Devapriya, Priyamedha, Survita and Suvrata. A demon named Dushana lived nearby on a hill Ratnamala who could not tolerate the very concept of Vedas and its applications and particularly hated the Brahmana brothers. One day the Demon decided to destroy the brothers who were unfazed and continued their worship of Maha Siva. As the Demon and his cruel followers were about to kill the brothers there was such a 'Hunkar' or roaring sound of Mahakal which itself took away the breath of the entire band of Danavas headed by Dushan instantly. The Brahmana brothers prayed to the Lord who appeared on the spot and implored His manifestation of 'Mahakala' to stay put for the greatest benefit of posterity and conducted daily worship from generation to generation. [Ujjain, the erstwhile Capital of Avanti, had considerable importance in India's ancient history ruled in the past by Mauryas and Guptas. Memories of King Vikramaditya still linger in the City till date. His Nine Gems of Poets especially Kalidasa who scripted famed Works like Megha Sandesam, Abhijnana Shakuntalam and so on, the other Gems being Dhanvantari, Kshapanaka, Amarasimha, Sankhu, Vetala Bhatta, Ghatakopara, Varahamihira and Vara Ruchi. Bhartruhari the step brother of King Vikramaditya became an ascetic and the Caves of Bhartruhari are on the tourist map of the City as many believe that a person entering the maze of the Caves seldom returns! Kalbhara Temple too is an interesting feature; as much of liquor poured as Naivedya (offerings) in the Deity's throat (in the form of a Dog), half of it is returned as 'Prasad'! Ujjain is one of the Seven 'Mukti Sthalas' (Salvation Places) of India, besides Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Benares, Kanchipuram and Dwaraka.]

Omkareswar: Situated in the banks of River Narmada on the Mandhata (Shivapuri) Island formed in the shape of OM in Sanskrit, Omkareswar is one of the Jyotirlingas besides another Amareswar Linga. The Legend was that Sage Narada visited Vindhya Raja and the latter bragged that Vindhya was the highest and most powerful Mountain in the entire World. Narada replied that perhaps Meru was the greatest in terms of height and might. Vindhya Raja felt jealous and executed severe 'Tapasya' and pleased Maha Siva and requested that He should always be present in the Vindhyas and establish a Linga of Bhagavan on the banks of Narmada near to Vindhya. Hence the Omkara Jyotirlinga there. Puffed by Siva's presence there, Vindhya Raja grew taller and taller to compete with Sumeru. This obstructed Sun God's routine circumambulation of the Universe and He had to return half way turning half of the Universe dark. Bhagavati asked Sage Agastya from Kasi to visit Vindhya Raja who out of veneration bent down to touch the feet of Agastya who asked Vindhya to be in that position till he returned and he never came again from the South!

Vaidyanath (AtDeogarh / Parli?) The legendary background of Vaidyanath Jyotirlinga is related to Ravana the Epic Villain of Ramayana. The King of Lanka carried out a relentless meditation to Bhagavan Siva at Kailash Mountain for mighty supremacy and indomitability in the Three Worlds. But as Siva was still not responsive, he moved out from Kailasa to Vrikshakandhaka towards south of Kailasa. He dug up a pit and worshipped a Sivalinga even by sacrificing his ten heads, one by one and at the end Lord Siva became visible and gave away boons of supremacy as also to let a Sivalinga to carry to his Kingdom on the condition that he should reach Lanka directly without even a single halt, lest the Linga if kept down would never be pulled out! Devas became afraid that once Ravana turned unquestionable, there would be chaos in the Three Lokas and Dharma would be wiped out. Thus Devas prayed to Devi Parvati and Ganesha to somehow avert the risk of the Sivalinga to reach Lanka. Parvati appeared on way to Ravana in disguise and in collaboration with Varuna, tempted pure waters of major holy Rivers to quench Ravana's thirst. The King's stomach got bloated and he wished to stop over urgently for a relief and luckily for him, there was a lad whose assistance was sought to hold the Linga for a few moments

without placing it on the Ground. By the time Ravana returned, the lad- Lord Ganesha-disappeared and the Linga was stuck to the Ground and no force applied by Ravana was a match to Bhagavan's decision. That was the Jyotirlinga of Vaidyanath who was a 'Vaidya' (Physician) and he helped to piece together the slashed heads of Ravana at the time of his sacrificing them one by one.

'Baidyanathdham' (Baba dham) at Deogarh(Jharkhand) is some seven km from the Jasidhi Junction on Howrah-Delhi main line. It is 220 km away from Patna. The Baidyanath Shrine attracts lakhs of pilgrims from all over a year normally, but they were in millions during the entire 'Shravan' month (July-August). Several of them carry Ganges water from Sultanganj to Deogarh- a distance of about hundred km-to perform 'Abhishekams' to the Jyotirlinga, and many saffron clad Sadhus carry the Ganges water by walk barefooted covering this distance! Pilgrimage to 'Babadham' is considered incomplete without visiting Basukinath Siva Temple some distance away. A well maintained Nandi Temple edging the Nandan Pahad (hill) faces a beautiful lake on one side and the Siva Temple on the other. Sivaganga is a pond very near the Main Temple, where Ravana desired to wash but since there was no water nearby, he used his fist and hit the Earth and a pond appeared. Other places of interest at Deogarh include Naulakha Mandir, Satsang Ashram of Radha Swami, Tapovan with many caves where Valmiki is said to have stayed for penance, Rikhia Ashram of Yoga, Hamira Jori where Ravana handed over the Holy Linga to Ganesh before his ablutions and Trikut Parvat with a Maha Deva Temple. Inside the huge complex of Babadham itself are situated some 22 Temples viz. Neelkantha and Parvati before Babadham and on either side a cluster of Shrines devoted to Sri Ram, Ananda Bhairavi, Ganga, Gauri Shankar, Tara, Maha Kali, Annapurna, Lakshmi Narayana, Surya Narayan, Bhavani, Sandhya, and so on.

There is a controversy about the location of Vaidyanatha Jyotirlinga at Parli in Maharashtra called Kantipur (Madhyarekha Vijayanti or Vijayanti), which is some 26 km from Ambejoga in the Beed District. One legend of this Temple often heard in the vicinity was that Amba Yogeshwari of Ambejoga wedded Maha Deva Vaidyanadha and the marriage party arrived late after the 'Muhurtha' (the precise time) for the wedding and Devi was waiting for long; She cursed the members of the Party to turn into stone statues. Another Story was that after the churning of Ocean for Amrit (nectar), fourteen gems emerged among which were Dhanvantari and Amrit which were hidden inside the Shivalinga, but as Demons tried to take them forcibly, huge flames came out and they had to retreat. Till date, devotees have strong faith that Amrit and Dhanvantari or disease killing medicinal flows emerge from the Abhisheka waters. Thus Lord Lingamurthi is called as Amritamurthi and Dhanvantari. In fact, all the devotees- irrespective of caste or creed-are allowed touching the Linga and performing Abhishekas by themselves. Daily Rudra Parayana Mantras are reverbrated in the entire Complex. This Sacred Temple is also believed to be the Place where Lord Vishnu as Mohini distributed Amrit to Devas, and hence is called Vijayanti. The other legend associated with the Temple is that of Ravana's carrying the Linga as described above. Incidentally, the surrounding mountains, forests and rivers are stated to abound medicinal sources. Over the last hundred years or so, considerable construction was made around the Swayambhu Linga by way of strong walls, Enclosures, 'Mahadwara' (the Main Gate) and several other Gates, a number of windows (one of which allows morning Sunrays inside one Enclosure by means of which Sun God is worshipped), minarets, lighting and various facilities to lakhs of Visitors. This Temple is a hallowed place particularly to Vira Shaiva Lingayats and devotees of Lord Harihara. There is a Harihara Teertha in the vicinity. Many festivals connected with Siva, Krishna and Bhagavati are celebrated with fervour; Mondays, Fridays, Ekadasis, Chaitra Padava, Dussehras, Tripura Pournami, the entire Kartika month, Sivaratri, Sravana month and so on are observed with reverence. A Pond in the Area is associated with

Markandeya's extraordinary devotion to embrace the Linga firmly defying Yamaraja's order of death and Bhagavan's subsequent appearance giving His blessing of immortality to the devotee. A Vateswara Temple reminds the devotees of a 'Vata' or Banyan Tree around which was the Story of Satyavan and Savitri over Yama's sanction of long- life to the couple.

Nageshwara (Dwaraka/ Naganath/ Almora) Nageswaraavataarasthu dasamahaparikerthitah /Aavirbhutah swabhaktartha dushtaanam danda sada / Hatva Daruka namaanam Rakshsah Dharmaghatakum / Swabhkata Vaishwanaam cha prarakshat Supriyabhidam /

Bhagavan's tenth manifestation (of Jyotirlinga) is popular in save His devotees; a Demon named Daruka who obstructed virtue was destroyed to save His devotee Vaishaya Supriya. While this was the Statement of Siva Purana's 'Koti Rudra Samhita' establishing that Nageswara Jyotirlinga was no doubt evident but there are atleast three claimants of Its Location viz. Nageswara Temple at Dwaraka, Gujarat; Naganath Temple at Aoudhya, Maharashta; and Jagasewara Temple at Almora, Uttarakhand. Happily, all are winners! The legend was that there a demon couple named Daruka and Daruki and the latter secured a grant from Devi Parvathi that wherever the Demoness went, the entire forest would accompany her. The Demons were spoiling Yagnas and all Spiritual tasks, there were protests from the harassed Brahmanas to Sage Ourva and the Sage cursed the demons and followers that they would all be destroyed on earth; the Demons had thus no alternative excepting to move into the Sea. Daruki's boon from Parvati became ineffective since the forests were all submerged in the Sea. The Demons thus restricted only in the Sea and resorted to pirating the Ships moving in the Seas and one of extremely devoted Bhakta of Lord Siva named Supriya-a Vaiasya- was thrown into a prison on the ship. Bhakta Supriya who was a staunch devotee of Lord Shiva made sincere prayers and Bhagavan appeared, killed all the Demons and released the prisoners especially Supriya. Commemorating this joyous moment, the Lord blessed that a Swayambhu Nageswara Jyotirlinga be manifested on the Sea Coast as the memorable Nageswara Jyotirlinga.

Dwaraka (Gujarat) :Some 18 km from Dwaraka, the Temple is situated in a large scrub landscape with a huge Siva idol beckoning outside the Holy Shrine with high Sikhara. The Sacred Linga of raw yellow stone is quite small of size (40cm high and 30cm dia) set underground of 3-4 steps in a spacious Hall of pillars; the Linga which could be touched by all Hindus. The Sivalinga is facing South and a Gomukham (Face of a Cow) is facing East. Sant Namdeva desired to sing a Bhajan while simultaneously Rudra Parayana (Recital of Rudra Hymns) was being performed and thus the Namdeo party was asked to go to the back of the Temple and when they did so, the Lingam turned towards where the Sant was singing and as this miracle happened the Brahmanas begged the Sant for forgiveness. It is said that as the Temple closes, live snakes hover with their hoods open around the Sivalinga as though they were guarding the premises. Naganatha linga is believed to possess supreme Spiritual Powers; a Naga (serpent) is indicative of the nerves of human body. The 'Sushumna Nadi' or 'Naganatha' indicates the energy channel under the spine. The power of Kundalini which normally lies inactive in Mula Dhara Chakra or the Root Chakra at the bottom of the Vertebral Column is also known as 'Naganatha'. The snake-like Kundalini Shakti is akin to the brilliance of Soul (Lord Siva) Himself. Thus the Jyotirlinga is the symbol of Spiritual Radiance. Also the Temple of Dwarakadhish dedicated to Lord Krishna is quite popular in Dwaraka; it is some five hundreds old, remodelled and renovated from time to time. It is granite-built beautiful structure of seven stories of 51 m. height and is a tall land mark in the Township. Krishna and His entire clan shifted to Dwaraka from Mathura although the vestiges were submerged in the Arabian Sea.

Naganath (Maharashtra): Situated at Audha in Prabhasa Kshetra [Prabhasa Railway Station on Manmad-Nanded Line] Naganath Jyotirlinga was referred to as follows by Adi Shankaracharya: *Yame (South) Sadanga (old name of Audh) Vibhushitangam vividhaischa bhoga bhogai/ Satbhakti muktipradameesa mekam /Sri Naganatham saranam prapadye* /The legend of Aunda Naganatha Temple is that during ‘Aranya Vasa’ (Forest life of twelve years) by Pandavas pursuant to their defeat in a Game of Dice with Kauravas lived in a hermitage and their cows taking water from a river nearby were automatically giving milk back into the same river and finding this miracle act, Bhima found that the middle part of the River was hot compared to the rest of water. Bhima with his mace broke the middle portion of the River seeking to find out as to how had this happened; there was blood gushing out and when dug up to the great surprise Pandavas discovered a Jyotirlinga full of radiance. The Story of Demons Daruka and Daruki as also of Supriya the great Devotee of Bhagavan was also ascribed to Nageswara Temple at Dwaraka in Gujarat was referred to Naganath Temple at Audh in Maharashtra also. The architectural beauty of the Audha Temple of Prabhasa is distinctive, as was built by Pandavas originally with heavy stones and spacious corridors and halls. The Court Hall is oval shaped supported by strong pillars and the Jyotirlinga of Naganatha Deva is in a Garbhagriha which is in a small internal area. While there is no Idol of Nandi before the Main Deity, there is a separate Shrine for him behind the Main Temple. On all the four sides of the Main Temple are separate shrines dedicated to Twelve Jyotirlingas, besides Vedavyasa linga, Bhadreswara, Nilakantheswara, Ganapati, Dattatreya, Murali Manohar, and Dasavataras- totalling 108 Shiva Temples and 68 Shrines, interestingly including Mothers in law and Daughters in law! Also interestingly, there is a picturisation of a Scene depicting a sulking Devi Parvati and a pacifying Lord Siva! It is said that Aurangzeb ordered to plunder the Temple and swarms of bees drove away the soldiers.

Jagdeswar (Almora): Till date, devotees pray to Bhagavan Siva as Bal Jagdeswar as connected to a legend of the Area. In Daruka Vana, there were ‘Balakhilyas’ a group of Sages of dwarf size performing severe penance for years. Bhagavan Siva sought to test the depth of the Dwarf Sages and appeared as a tall, hefty and handsome personality, a ‘Digambara’ or completely naked, covering His body with snakes. The house wives of the Area were so attracted to the Stranger that they were not only inquisitive but got hypnotised neglecting their house chores. The Sages got frustrated and approached Devas to save the confusion. When Devas meditated Lord Siva in desperation, He manifested as a Bal Jagdeswar, who has no Physique, Gunas (Characteristics), Tatvas, Sex, Age, Time, Distance, yet, He has all of these too! Thus materialized as a ‘Swayambhu’ (Self-born) Linga ever since! The Main Temple in the Complex is dedicated to Tarun Jagdeswar and the Dwarpalakas are Nandi and Skandi. The Sanctum is of two parts, the larger area being of Jagdeswara Jyotirlinga and the smaller area being of Devi Parvati. There is an ‘Akhandya Jyoti’ or Everlasting Lamp. The biggest Shrine in the Main Temple is dedicated to Mritunjaya or the Saviour of Death. The distinction of this Linga is that it has an opening of an Eye. Recitation of Mritunjaya Mantra would yield immediate reliefs of troubles, health problems, mental disturbance and Spiritual solace. The Mantra is from Sukla Yajur Veda: *Aum Trayambakam Yajamahe / Sugandhim Pushti Vardhanam / Urvarukamiva Bandhanaan /Mrityor Mokshiye Maamritaat* -We pray to Lord Siva whose eyes are the Sun, Moon and Fire. May He protect us from disease, poverty, and fear and bless us with prosperity, longevity and good health. Another important Shrine in the Complex is of Pushti Bhagavati. Outside the Complex are Vinayak Kshetra, Jhanker Saim Mahadev (who was meditated and instructed His Ganas to destroy the Demons who were disturbing His Tapasya), and Briddha Jagadeswar (in the Form of Old Jagadeswar).

Rameshwaram: The Temple town of Bhagavan Siva's emergence of the penultimate Jyotirlinga of Ramalingesa happens to be celebration point of Lord Rama's glorious victory over Ravana paying Rama's dutiful homage to Bhagavan. Having crossed 'Setu Bandhan' across the Sea on the triumphant return journey from Lanka en route Ayodhya, Lord Rama despatched Hanuman to visit Varanasi to pray Viswesvara and bring a replica of the Linga from Kasi for consecrating it on the Sea coast but since Hanuman could not return by the appointed auspicious time, Sita Devi improvised a Sand Linga and installed it formally amid Vedic Mantras. Hanuman was upset and wished that the Linga blessed at Kasi Viswanadha be substituted instead and tried hard to pull it out but the so called temporary Sand Linga was ever lasting, blessing millions of devotees ever since. The Kasilinga or Hanumanlinga too was installed nearby which too is worshipped by devotees. It would be appropriate therefore that worship to Rameswara or Rathnaswami be performed after the homage to the Kasilinga or Hanumanlinga. Spread over some 15 acres of land, the Temple could boast of rich architectural heritage of high Raja- Gopurams on the East (126 feet high) and the West side, massive walls, a huge Nandi (18 feet tall and 22 feet long) and a 4000 feet long Corridor with 4000 carved granite pillars on raised platforms on either side- perhaps the longest in the World. [It is gathered that in the initial stages, the Rameswara Jyotirlinga was kept in a thatched abode till the 12th Century but royal patronage of passing centuries of the Kings of Travancore, Ramanadha -puram, Nagercoil and Pudukkottai helped improve the Temple Complex.] There are some thirty six Teerthas (Water Springs) with considerable medicinal and mineral properties - twenty of them being in the Temple Complex itself- most of the devotees bathing bucketfuls in all the twenty two Wells dotted all over the surroundings and walking along into the Sanctum drenched and then only perform the worship to the Jyotirlinga in queues! Festivals at the Rameswara Temple are celebrated in 'Ani' Masa (June 15- July 15) signifying Lord Rama's victory worship to Bhagavan Siva and two 'Brahmotsavas' or Annual Principal Celebrations are observed in 'Adi' and 'Masi' months as per local customs. Six workshops commence from 5 am each day and Special workshops are on Fridays. [Among the experiences include a memorable journey approaching or leaving Rameswaram across the Ocean preferably by train or by a road journey over a high bridge and a commanding view of Area atop the Gandhamadan Hill where a Shrine and Rama's revered foot- prints are witnessed as also a Place in the vicinity of the Temple a heavy mineral-laden stone floating on water, apparently due to its high phosphatic content; the stone was a sample with which Setu bridge was constructed by Vanara Sena or Monkey Brigade!]

Ghrishneshwar: On a mountain called Devagiri, there were a pious Brahmana named Sudharma and his wife Sudeha but she was barren and had no child. Sudeha proposed that her younger sister, Ghushma or Kusuma who was a staunch devotee of Parameswara be wedded to Sudharma. Sudharma agreed and in course of time, they had a male child due to Lord Siva's blessings. Ghushma was in the habit of daily worship by creating Sivalingas of clay and immerse them after Puja and Abhisheka in a pond nearby. Sudeha got jealous of her younger sister as she was blessed with a son. One night Sudeha killed the child out of jealousy and threw away the child in the same pond where the Sivalingas were immersed by her. The latter no doubt wept over the tragedy but continued her daily worship of Siva none-the-less. The dead body of the child floated in the pond where Ghushma used to immerse the lingas and there was commotion in the family and indeed in the village. Ghushma still continued her prayers to Lord Shankara who finally stood before her and desired to kill Sudharma, but she requested not to do so out of her extreme kindness. Lord Siva brought back the child from death and also asked Ghushma for any boon and she requested Him to stay in pond and the Lord agreed to do so and hence the formation of Ghrishneshwara as a Jyotirlinga. Alternative names of the Place are Ghushmeswar or Kusumeswar. This Temple is

situated in the Village of Verul or Yelur where River Yala flows and is some 30 km from Aurangabad. [From Aurangabad, Ellora is 30 km, Ajanta is 106 km and Shirdi is 130 km.]

The Temple Complex is quite spacious (240 X 185 feet) enclosed by strong outer walls and the Garbha griha (Sanctum) admeasuring 17 feet X 17 feet are the Jyotirlinga of Lord Ghrishnaswara and Idol of Goddess Ghrishneswari; a Nandikeswara is facing the Deities in the Court Hall of the Sanctum. It is believed that long ago, the Patel of the Village discovered a treasure in a snake pit and the amount was spent on the basic construction of the original Temple and the Holkar Royal family renovated with Dasavataras and various other carvings in red stone were added besides a lake named Sikharashingarapur. [Ellora and Ajanta caves which are World Heritage Sites are firmed up on the Tourist map of India].

Prasiddha Shiva Lingas

Following Twenty Four Shiva Lingas are reckoned as significant: 1) Pashupati Nath-Nepal 2) Sundare - shwar at Madurai 3) Kumbheshwar at Kumbhakonam 4) Brihadeeshwar at Tanjore 5) Pakshi Teertha at Chengalput 6) Maha Baleshwar near Pune 7) Amarnath Ice Linga at Jammu & Kashmir 8) Vaidhya nath at Kangra 9) Tarakeshwar at West Bengal; 10) Bhuvaneshwara at Odisha 11) Kangra Shiva at Kajuraho, 12) Eka Linga at Udaipur 13) Gourishankar at Jabbalpur 14) Harishwar near Manasarovara 15) Vyaasheswar near Varanasi 16) Madhameshwar at Kashi 17) Hatakeshwar at Vadnagaru 18) Mukta Parameshwar at Arunachala 19) Pratigjneshwar at Krouncha Mountain* 20) Kapaleshwar at Krouncha Mountain 21) Kumareshwar at Krouncha Mountain 22) Sarveshwara Linga near the 'Jaya stambha' or the Victory Pillar at Chittod of Rajasthan 23) Stambheshwar also near the Jaya Stambha and finally 24) Ajaya Amareshwara Shiva Linga on Mahendra Parvata in the Eastern Ghats of Odisha.

Upa Lingas

While describing The Upalingas at the beginning of *Koti Rudra Samhita*, Suta Muni explained the Upalinga which emerged from Someswara linga is Antakesh where Earth and Ocean converge. The Upalinga of Srisailam's Mallikarjuna is Rudreshwar and that of Ujjain's Mahakal is Dugdheswar. Kardameswar is the Upalinga of Omkareswar while Bhuteswar is that of Kedareswar. Upalingas of Bheemashankar, Nageshwar, Rameshwar and Bhumeswar respectively. There are other significant Sivalingas like Kirtikaveshwar, Tilmandeswar, Bhukteswar, Pureswar, Siddha Nateswar, Shringeswar, Gopeswar, Rangeswar, Rameswar, Ganeswar, Sukreswar, Chandrasekhara, Kumtinatha and Andhakeswar. A few other Upalingas are mentioned herebelow:

Atrishwar Linga: Sage Atri and Sati Anasuya performed atonement of rigorous nature in a forest named Kamda at Chitrakuta moutain when they decided to save people from the grip of a prolonged drought for some fifty years. They did not take a morsel of food during the period of penance. Once Atri felt almost fainted because of thirst and Anasuya went in search of water; Devi Ganga appeared and offered water from a spring dug up by Anasuya into a pit which was taken by Anasuya in a 'kamandalu' for storing water and rushed it to quench Atri's thirst. It was this pit from where water sprang up and became the origin of River Mandakini. But Devi Ganga demanded the full 'Punya' (Virtue) of Anasuya in return and the latter sacrificed gladly to save the suffering people. Lord Siva was impressed as Atri conducted a Maha Yaga and appeared in the form of Atriswar Linga recognising the sacrifices of the Atri-Anasuya Couple. *Mahabaleshwara Linga:* The Holy Place Gokarna (Ear of the Cow) in Karnataka State is believed

to have been formed as Earth's ear was squeezed soon after her Creation by Maha Deva Siva. Ganesa tricked Ravana to place down on Earth the 'Atmalinga' of Mahadeva which was secured by the latter after severe penance to the Lord. Once fixed on the Earth, it became impossible for Ravana to pull it out and in the process of pulling it forcefully by breaking it, three parts fell down and got scattered *mainly* at Gokarna and also Murudeswar, Dhareswar and Gunavanthe where too the Temples are venerated. Mahabal Linga's presence of a devotee at Gokarna, especially on the eighth or fourteenth day of 'Arudra Nakshatra' falling on a Monday destroys all sins and opens Gates of Kailasa after one's demise. It is believed that worship of Mahabal Siva on 'Magha Krishna Chaturdasi' is highly fruitful and devotees in large crowds are attracted to the Temple on this particular day. Obeisance by Puja and 'Abhisheka' by milk and Bilwa leaves at the Temple on that day is said to be a sure step towards Salvation. *Batukanath Linga*: A Brahmana named Dadhichi was a relentless worshipper of Lord Siva everyday unfailingly but had to entrust the worship to one of his sons Sudarshan for some time. Sudarshan too was performing the 'Pujas' dutifully. On a 'Sivarathri' which is the most sacred night for Bhagavan too, along with his entire family kept fast and performed the Pujas. But he did the sinful union with his wife that night and even without observing physical cleanliness continued the worship on that most Sacred night. Lord Siva was furious and there were frequent hurdles in the Pujas all through the Sivaratri. Sudarshan's father realised this most unfortunate happening. Sudarshan performed the most rigorous penance possible for years and Devi Parvathi asked the Lord to pardon, absolve the sin and liberate Sudarshan. Pleased by his sincere self-punishment, the Lord manifested Himself in Batu linga and directed the devotee to worship it. [It is no doubt unconfirmed but came to light that Batuknath Temple and linga of 1.2 meters height was worshipped at Tahab Village, district Pulwama some 32 km of Srinagar, Kashmir, nearby a 40 feet square spring called Vatuksar Nag, along with a Jagannath Bhirav Temple nearby-now under Muslim domination]. Unfortunately, it was gathered that the high linga which was worshipped in the years of yore, was pulled out and used by Muslim women of the villages around to pound grains to split from the husk! *Haatakeshwara Linga*: This Linga is a manifestation of Purusha-Prakriti combine. A group of Sages were observing worship to a Sivalinga very religiously at a Siva Temple in Daruka forest and a few of them including their wives visited the forest interior to locate firewood, darbha, flowers, fruits and such other Puja material when they encountered a hefty person who was completely naked. When they questioned about his whereabouts, he did not reply. The Sages cursed the person that his phallus would fall on the ground. There was an earth quake and rumbling storm broken with loud thunders and lightning as this incident happened and such oppressive heat was produced like an inferno. The Sages ran to Lord Brahma out of fright and guilt and the latter confirmed that the Personality who gave the curse was Bhagavan Himself and no power in the Three Worlds could save them as also the very existence of the Universe was threatened. The only possible way out could be to meditate Devi Parvati and for sure she might ease the situation. The Sages prayed to Devi Parvati who manifested as a female part on the spot and the Haatkeswar Linga as well. Ever since then worship of Phallus as a manifestation of Bhagavan Siva came into vogue. At Naimisharanya (Uttar Pradesh) near Lucknow, there is a *Rishishwar Linga*, which is worshipped by Rishis; those who were alleged murderers or who actually committed murder but regretted having committed would be free from their troubles. At Mishra Tirtha, there is a *Dadhikeshwara Linga* which was worshipped by Sage Dadhichi. At Devaprayaga on way to Kedareswar, *Laliteshwara Linga* is worshipped by devotees in the transit on either way up or down. In Nayapalpur [Khatmandu, Nepal] the very famous *Pashupatinath Linga* attracts lakhs of devotees which has the distinction of being called a 'Linga Sirsha' and the Temple doors are four-sided thus enabling four separate queues of devotees simultaneously manned by four priests. Not far from Pasupatinath Temple is *Mukti Linga* which is

worshipped for mental peace and happiness. The formation of *Harishwar Linga* was a consequence of Lord Vishnu's worship to Bhagavan Siva by thousand lotus flowers each of these by chanting the 'Siva Sahasranamas' or Thousand Names of Siva. During the Worship Siva was desirous of Vishnu's concentration and stole one of the lotus flowers and there was a shortage of one flower in the count. Unnerved by the lapse, Lord Vishnu gave away one of His eyes in sacrifice and completed the worship. Bhagavan Siva was thrilled and fully satisfied; He asked Vishnu for a boon and as desired, Lord Siva gifted a very powerful *Sudarshana chakra* which is put to great use often as a last resort to annihilate powerful Demons. Besides the Chakra, Bhagavan Siva was pleased to materialize Himself as Harishwar Linga for the benefit of generations to come.

Ashtottara Shata Shiva Kshetras

Following are hundred and eight Shaiva Kshetras and names of the respective names of Shiva Murtis:

1) Kaivalya Shaila: Shri Kantha; 2) Himalaya Parvata:Kedareshwara 3) Kashipura : Vishwanadha 4) Shrishaila: Mallikarjuna; 5) Prayaga: Nilakantheshwara; 6) Gaya: Rudra; 7) Kaalanjar: Nilakantheshwara; 8) Draaksharama: Bhimeshwara; 9) Maayura/Mayavaram : Ambikeshwara; 10) Brahmavarta: Deva Linga; 11) Prabhasa: Shashi Bhushan; 12) Shwetahastipura: Vrishadhvaja; 13) Gokarna: Gokarneshwara; 14) Soma- nadha:Someshwara; 15) Shrirupa: Thyagaraja; 16) Veda: Vedapurishwara; 17) Bhimarama: Bhimeshwara 18) Manthana: Kaalikeswara; 19) Madhura; Chokkanatha; 20) Manasa: Madhaveswara; 21) Shri Vaanchaka: Champakeswara 22) Panchavati: Vateshwara; 23) Gajaaranya: Vaidhya natha; 24) Tirthaa chala: Tirthakeswara 25) Kumbhakona: Kumbheshwara; 26) Lepakshi: Paapanaashana: 27) Kanvapuri : Kanweshwara; 28) Madhya: Madhyaarjuna; 29) Hariharapura: Shankara Narayaneshwara; 30) Virinchipura: Margesha; 31) Panchanada: Girishwara; 32) Pampapuri: Virupaksha; 33) Somagiri: Mallikarjuna; 34) Tri- makuta: Agasteshwara; 35) Subrahmanya: Ahipeshwara; 36) Mahabala Parvata: Mahabaleshwara; 37) Dakshinaavarta: Ankeshwara as worshipped by Surya Deva directly 38) Vedaranya : Vedaranyeshwara; 39) Somapuri: Someshwara; 40) Ujjain: Rama Lingeshwara; 41) Kashmira: Vijayeshwara; 42) Maha Nandipura: Maha Nandeshwara; 43) Koti Tirtha: Koteswara; 44) Vriddha Kshetra: Vriddhaachaleshwara; 45) Kukkud Parvata: Gangaadhareshwara; 46) Chamaraja nagara: Chamarajeshwara; 47) Nandi Parvata:Nandeshwara; 48) Badhirachala: Chandeshwara; 49) Gurapura: Nanjundeshwara; 50) Shata -shringa Parvata: Adhipeshwara; 51) Ghanaanada Parvata: Someshwara; 52) Nallur; Nimaleshwara' 53) Needa naatha pura: Needa natheshwara; 54) Ekanta: Rama Lingeshwara; 55) Shri Naaga: Kunadale -shwara; 56) Sri Kanya : Tri Bhungeshwara; 57) Utsanga: Raghaveswara; 58) Matsya Tirtha: Tirthesh -wara 59) Trikuta Parvat: Tandaveswara; 60) Prasanna puri : Marga Sahaayeshwar; 61) Gandaki: Shiva naabha; 62) Shripati : Shripateswara; 63) Dhamapuri: Dharma Linga; 64) Kanya kubja: Kalaadhara; 65) Vaanigrama: Virinjeshwar; 66) Nepala: Nakuleswar' 67) Jagannaadha puri: Markandeshwar; 68) Narmada Tat: Swayambhu; 69) Dhamasthala : Manjunatha; 70) Tri Rupa: Vyaseshwara; 71) Swanavati: Kalingeswar; 72) Nirmal: Pannageswar: 73) Pundarika: Jaiminishwar; 74) Ayodhya: Madhureswar; 75) Siddhavati: Siddheshwar: 76) Shri Kurmaachala: Tripurantaka; 77) Manikundala: Manimuktaa -nadeshwara; 78) Vataatavi: Kritthivaashewara; 79) Triveni Tata: Sangameshwara; 80) Stanita Tirtha: Malleswara; 81) Indrakeela Parvata: Arjuneshwara; 82) Sheshachala Parvata: Kapileschwara; 83) Pushpagiri: Pushpagirishwara; 84) Chitrakuta: Bhuvaneschwara; 85) Ujjain : Maha Kaaleshwara; 86) Jwala- mukhi: Shula tanka; 87) Mangali: Sangameshwara; 88) Tanjapuri: Brihadishwara; 89) Pushkar : Rameshwar; 90) Sri Lanka: Matseshwar; 91) Gandhamaadana: Kurmeshwar; 92) Vindhya Parvat: Varaaheshwar; 93) Ahobila: Nrisimha swarupa; 94) Kurukshetra

:Vaamaneshwara; 95) Kapila Tirtha: Parashu Rama Tirtha; 96) Kurukshetra: Vaamaneshwar; 97) KapilaTirtha : Parashurameshwara; 98) Setu bandhana: Rameshwar; 99) Saketa: Balarameshwar; 100) 101) Vaaranaavata: Bouddheshwara 102) Tatwa Kshetra: Kalkeshwara; 103) Mahendrachala: Krishneshwar; 104) Mandapalli : Shaneshwara; 105) Nepal : Pashupati natha; 106) Tenkashi: Kashinatha; 107) Hampi- Virupaksha and 108) Vemulavaada: Nilalohita

Shiva as a Column of Fire:

When King Bali conquered Swarga by defeating Indra and Devas, Vishnu assumed the Incarnation of Vamana Deva and subdued Bali and freed TriLokas from the rule of Daitya-Danavas. The ever grateful Devas were re-instated and approached Bhagawan Vishnu lying the Milk of Ocean; they accompanied Siddha-Brahmarshi- Yaksha- Gandharva-Apsara- Naga-and others to convey their gratitude to Narayana as Dharma was revived and injustice was abolished. Vishnu then replied that he was redeemed by a higher Deity who created the Universe in totality and that he was made to conceive from his belly a lotus on which was materialised another magnificent Being with Four Heads seated on a deer skin and carrying Kamandalu or the Vessel of Sacred Water called Brahma. Even as Vishnu mentioned this, Brahma arrived and asked Vishnu as to who was he! Brahma stated that he was a Swayambhu or Self-Born and Vishnu claimed that he was not only the Creator but the preserver too. While this dialogue was going on, there appeared a huge ‘Agni Stambha’ or a Column of Fire. Both Brahma and Vishnu visioned the Column which was unusually resplendent and hot and as they went nearer it looked like a Linga an image of cosmic manhood and a Phallic symbol. It was made neither of Gold nor Silver nor even of a metal nor stone. It was seen or disappeared in flashes and looked as high as Sky and far underneath the Ground. The vision of this fiery column was frightening even to Vishnu and Brahma, let alone Devas and others who approached Vishnu for thanks-giving. Both Brahma and Vishnu realised that their own egoistic seniority inter-se was meaningless as there indeed was another far Superior Entity was visible before them. Brahma suggested that he would like to see the height of the Fiery Linga and requested Vishnu to assess its depth and gave themselves an outer limit of thousand years to accomplish the discovery failing which they could return to the same Place. As both of them failed in their missions they returned and prayed to the Linga as follows:

Namostu tey Lokasuresha Deva Namostutey Bhutatpatey Mahaatman, Namostutey Shasvata Siddha Yoginey Namostutey Sarva Jagat pratishthita/ Parameshti Param Brahma twaksharam Paramam padam, Jyesthastwam Vamadevascha Rudrah Skandah Shivah Prabhu/ Twam Yagnastwam Vashatkaarastwam omkaarah Paratapah, Swaahaakaaro Namaskaarah Samskaarah Sarvakarmanaam/ Swadhaakaarascha Yagnascha vrataani niyamaastathaa, Veda lokaascha Devaascha Bhagavaaneva Sarvashah/ Aakaashasya cha Shabdastwam bhutaanaam Prabhavaapyayah, Bhumou Gandho Rasaschaapsu tejorupam Maheshwarah/ Vaayoh sparshascha Devesha Vapushchandra -masastathaa/ Buddhou Jnaanam cha Devesha Prakruterbeeja mevacha/ Samhartaa Sarvalokaanaam Kaalo Mrityumayomtakah, Twam dhaarayasi lokaamstreem stwameva srujasi Prabho/ Purvena Vadanena twamindratwam prakaroshi vai, Dakshinena tu vaktrena lokaansamkshipasye punah/ Paschimena vaktrena Varunastho na samshayah, Uttaarena tu vaktrena Somastwam Devasattamah/ Ekadhaa Bahudhaa Deva Lokaanaam Prabhavaa- pyayah, Adityaa Vasavo Rudraa Marutascha Sahaashvinah/ Saadhya Vidyaadharaa Naagaaschaaranascha Tapodhanaah/ Vaalakhilyaa Mahaatmaanastapah Siddhascha Suvrataah/ Tatwatah Prasutaa Devesha yechaanye niyatavrataah, Umaa Sitaa Sinivaali Kuhurgayatrya evacha/ Lakshmih Kirtirdhrutirmedhaa Lajja Kantirvapuh Swadhaa, Tushti Pushtih Kriyaachaiva Vaachaam

*Devi Saraswati, Twattah Prasutaa Devesha Sandhyaa Raatristathaiva cha/ Suryaayutaanaamayuta-
prabhaava Namostutey Chandra Sahasragoura, Namostutey Vajra Pinaakidhaariney Namostutey
Saayaka chaapa paanaye/ Namostutey Bhasma vibhushitaanga Namostutey Kaama Sharira naashana,
Namostutey Deva Hiranya garbha Namostutey Deva Hiranyavaasasey/ Namostutey Deva Hiranya yoney
Namostutey Hiranyanaabha / Namostutey Deva Hiranya retasey Namostusey Netrasahasrachitra/
Namostutey Deva Hiranyavarna Namostutey Deva Hiranyakesha, Namostutey Deva Hiranya Vira
Namostutey Deva Hiranya daayiney/ Namostutey Deva Hiranya Naatha Namostutey Deva Hiranya
Naada, Namostutey Deva Pinaakapaaney Namostutey Shankara Nilakantha/*

(Salutations to You the Lord of Lokas, Devas and Sarva Bhutas, Mahatma! You are the One with everlasting yogic powers and the One who established in all over the Lokas; You are the Parameshthi or the Supreme Deity, Param Brahma or the Ultimate Brahma, the Final Destination; You are the Jyeshtha or Senior Most, Vamadeva, Rudra, Skanda, Shiva and Prabhu; You are the Yagna Swarupa; Vashatkara or the All- Pervasive Supreme Controller and the Personification of Sacrifices; Omkara Swarupa; Swahakara or the Embodiment of all Yagna karmas; Samskaara or the Great Reformer; Sarva Karmanaam or He who directs all the Sacred Deeds; Swadhaakara or the Emblem of all the deeds in connection with worship to Pitru Devatas; the decider of the Regulations in the performance of Yagnas and Vratas; You are the Highest Authority on Vedas, to the Lokas, of Devas and for everything. You are the Akaasha (Sky) and its Shabda (Sound); You are the Origin and Termination of all the Beings; You are the Bhumi and its Gandha or smell; you are the Physique of Chandra; the Feelings of the Heart and the Knowledge of the Mind; You are the Basic Seed to Prakriti or Nature; You are the Samharta or Mrityu or Kaala; you are the Preserver and Sustainer of all the Lokas; the Supreme Creator; you keep Indra on your Eastern side; retain all the Lokas on your Southern side; keep Varuna on your west; keep Soma on your Northern side; Devadi Deva you are the creator and destroyer of the Lokas not once but again and again repeatedly. Maha Deva! You are the manifestation of Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, Maruts, Aswinis, Sadhyas, Vidyadharas, Naagas, Charanas, Valakhilyas the Tapaswis; Siddhaas; and all the Mahatmas. Parama Shiva! you are the Srashta of Uma, Sita, Sinivali, Kuhu, Gayatri, Lakshmi, Kirti, Dhriti, Medha, Lajja, Kanti, Vasus, Swadha, Tushti, Pushti, Kriya, Sarasvati, Sandhya, and Raatri. You have the brilliance of Ten Thousand Suryas and thousand Chandras; Vajra Pinaka Dhari or the Wearer of Pinaka or Bow and Arrows of Diamond-like radiance, rigor and resistance! Both Brahma and Vishnu continued to extol Parameshwara further: Bhasma Vibhushita, Mammadha marana kaaraka; Hiranya Garbha, Hiranya Vaktra, Hiranya Yoni, Hiranya Naabha, Hiranya Retasa, Sahasra netra yukta; Hiranya Varna, Hiranya Kesha, Hiranya Veera, Hiranyaprada, Hiranya Natha, Hiranya dhvani kaaraka; Shankara; and Nilakantha!) As Nilakantha was glorified by Brahma and Vishnu as above, he replied with the thunderous voice of clouds and a reverberating voice that filled up the Universe stating that he was indeed pleased with their commendation and asked them to visualise his Maha Yoga Shakti as they could not ascertain his beginning or end of his Linga Swarupa. He confirmed that both of them were born to him and were of his own 'Amsha' or his Alternate Shakti. Brahma was born of Maha Deva's right hand and Vishnu from his left hand and was invincible in any Loka! He blessed both of them and directed them to discharge their duties viz. Brahma to create and Vishnu to Preserve Dharma (Virtue) and Nyaaya (Justice).

4. Observance of Shiva Ratri Jagarana

Austerities by way of day/night fasts and dedicated devotion on Maha Shivaratri falling on Krishna Paksha or dark fortnight of Phalguna month every year are considered as the sure steps to 'Iham and

Param' viz. Happiness in the current phase of Life and Attainment of Salvation thereafter! In the early morning of Shivarathi day, a devotee should take a vow to observe day/night austerities. In the night or Sivarathri, there must be Archana, Abhisheka, Japa and full fledged worship either at a Temple or at home depending on convenience; actually the worship by way of continuous 'Maha Nyasayutha Abhisheka' with Archana along with 'Shodasopacharas' or the sixteen types of Services and Arti, but for the sake of convenience, the Puja may be repeated every three hours during the night along with Laghu Nyasa Abhisheka, Archana, Arti etc. The night long austerity must be followed by 'Punah Puja' next morning and Bhojan (meals) along Brahmanas, who should also be satisfied with 'Dakshinas'. After observing 'Shivarathris' for fourteen consecutive years, one could perform 'Udyapan' or successful completion of the Shivarathri Vratha.

'Maha Shivarathri jaagarana' even by mistake could yield fruits, let alone proper and systematic worship; this was illustrated by an incident said Sutha Muni at the congregation of Sages at Naimisaranya. There was a poor hunter named Gurudruha who became extremely hungry along with his family members on a whole day and that night happened to be a Shivarathri. He entered a forest on the eve of Sivarathri and waited for any animal to kill and satisfy the hunger; he waited near a waterbody over a bel tree nearby under which there was a Shiva Linga as a coincidence. Having waited for the first 'Prahara' (three hours) of the night, he was lucky to have sighted a female deer along its kids approaching the water body to quench its thirst. He pulled out his bow and an arrow ready to aim at the mother deer and by a twist of fate the branch of the bel tree on which he sat moved, some bel leaves fell on the Siva Linga and some water in a vessel carried by the hunter got spilt down on the Linga, thus performing the first Phahara puja. The deer which was very sensitive even to small sounds of leaves and water falling from the tree noticed that the hunter was ready to kill it. The animal made a sincere and convincing request to the hunter that if allowed it desired to leave the deer kids to their father and definitely return back to be killed by him. Very reluctantly, the hunter agreed and let the animals leave. The second Prahara was closing but there was no trace of the mother deer. But the sister of the earlier deer approached the pond along her kids and the happenings of the earlier Prahara repeated viz. the hunter pulled out his bow and arrow, the bel tree leaves as also the water drops from the hunter's vessel fell on the Siva Linga, the sister deer made a similar request and the hunter let the animal leave as he did to the earlier one, thus accomplishing the worship of the third Prahara. As the third Prahara was closing, the husband of the original deer came in search of the female deer and the kids and the earlier happenings repeated once again and the earlier Prahara puja too was executed successfully. It was a great sight of all the deers of both the families approached during the final Prahara and the hunter was delighted that he could have a feast any time but the earlier happenings repeated and the fourth Prahara worship too was implemented. But, after the fourth worship, Gurudruha's psychology was transformed; he repented for his evil thoughts and took a vow to eschew his erstwhile acts of violence. Bhagavan Siva revealed Himself before Gurudruha as a transformed person and blessed him that in his next birth, he would be Nishad during Rama's incarnation and the latter would give him the boon of attaining Vaikuntha. (Shiva Purana)

Shiva Ratri in the months of Magha / Phalgun Krishna Paksha Chaturdasis are considered extremely crucial, especially the 'Upavasas' (day-night fasts) and Jaagarans (night-long awakenings). The 'Punya' of worshipping Shiva Linga especially with Bilwa Tree Leaves along with 'Abhishekas' is stated to be as good as ten thousand Ganga Snaanans. Shiva Ratri 'Upavasas' are said to equate performing hundred Yagnas. These facts were illustrated by the experience of a noble King called Mitrasaha who visited forests for hunting. He killed a Rakshasa and the latter's younger brother desired to teach a lesson to the

King, took the form of a human being and wangled a job in the Royal Kitchen as a cook. Sage Vasishtha visited the King who invited the Sage for a meal. The cunning Rakshasa brother who was a cook in the Royal Kitchen served 'Nara Maamsa' or human flesh to Vasishtha. The Sage who found human flesh in the food became extremely angry and cursed the King to become a Raakshasa. The King being innocent of the charge appealed to the Sage to withdraw the false charge but no avail. The King grew angry and was about to give a return Curse to the Sage but the Queen named Madayanthi begged of the King not to do so but since the Manrtik waters of the King were already drawn out; he had to sprinkle the waters on his own feet and hence was known as 'Kalmashapaad.' But in view of the curse of Vasishtha, the King had to roam in the forest as a Raakshasa for twelve years. As the curse-period was almost over, the King-turned-Raakshasa found a young Brahmana couple roaming in the forest for fun and caught hold of the Brahmana boy; his wife who had the awareness of the Rakshasa's background made an appeal to him and conveyed that the Rakshasa was actually a King but was converted due to Vasishtha's curse. But the Rakshasa killed the boy and out of fury and sorrow the woman jumped into death pyre for Sati Sahagamana while cursing the Rakshasa that if even after his return as a King would ever meet his wife in union, he would die at once. Queen Madayanti was aware of the curse to the King by the Brahmana woman and conveyed the same to the King too. Thus the Royal Couple desisted themselves their desires and became ascetic-like. The King had the feeling that a Piscachi was always after him due to the 'Brahmahatya Pathaka' of the Brahmana Couple. That was the time when Sage Gautham called on the King and the Queen who conveyed their entire story of misfortune. The Sage suggested that King Mitrasaha and Queen Madayanti must visit a highly Sacred Kshetra called Gokarna where the utterance of Bhagavan Shiva's name itself would instantly dissolve the worst possible Maha Patakas. This Kshetra was as potent and Sacred as Kailasa and Mandarachal on whose Sikharas (Peaks) stayed Maha Deva. Demon Ravanaasura did severe Tapasya and secured a Shiva Linga, but on way when Raavana asked Ganesha disguised as a care-free lad the latter tricked the Asura and established the Parama Linga at Gokarna instead of being taken to Lanka since Ravana would have become invincible otherwise. This most sanctified Kshetra is the residing Place of Vishnu, Brahma, Kartikeya and Ganesha and had no parallel in destroying even the toughest Sins. Situated on the west coast of Bharata Desha, this most sancrosanct Temple Complex is the most sought after Center known for disbanding Brahmaghaati, Bhuta drohi, Bhratrudrohi as also hardcore and toughest crimes. On certain specified days, Darshan and Puja yield double the benefit, such as Sunday, Monday and Wednesday coinciding preferably with 'Amavaasyas'. Sacred bathing in the Ocean, followed by Daan, Pitru Tarpan, Siva Puja, Japa, Homa, Vratacharya and Brahmana Satkaar (Gifts to Braahmanaas) as also Bilwa Puja and Abhisheka with milk, ash and Gandham (Sandal Paste) would keep a mortal on a high pedestal indeed. On the sacred Krishna Chaturdasi of Maagha (Phalguna) month, Shiva Puja with Bilwa leaves, followed by Upavaas, Jaaganan and stay in the Temple Premises would set up steps to Shivaloka. Thus Sage Gautama advised the Royal Couple, who had almost lost hope in their lives! He narrated a strange incident to reinforce faith in the Gokarna Kshetra; he saw a Sarovar in the consecrated surroundings where an old, diseased and tattered Chandali woman who was almost dying. He also saw an aeroplane in the shy carrying a handful of passengers dressed like Lord Siva Himself! As they got down from the skies, they approached the old woman whom none would not even like to touch. The Sage noted that they were Sivadutas and prevented them from going nearby as he could see from his 'Divya Drishti' (Celsetial Vision) that the wretched woman had a frightfully sinful background in her earlier life; she was an immoral, lusty and despicable prostitute who never even took the name of Bhagavan Shiva and steeped in sins of all kinds. Yet, Sivadutas arrived by a special 'Vimana' (aeroplane) to fetch the woman to Shivaloka! The secret of the

woman was that she used to take the name of Siva inadvertently, more as a byword; she had the fortune of residing in Gokarna Kshetra; she spent nights without food and was awake all through on Shiva Ratri days; she had kept bilva leaves on a Siva Linga a few times again accidentally and not out of veneration. It was in this context that Sivadutas took her soul to Shivaloka having given to her a beautiful physical get-up, dressed in silks and ornaments, decorated with flowers, with fragrances spread out all around!

Shiva Puja : Shivo Guruh Shivo Devah Shivo bandhuh Sharirinam, Shiva Atma Shivo Jeevah Shivaadannayna kinchana/ Bhagavan Shiva is Guru, Shiva is Devata, Shiva is the relative of Human Beings, Shiva is Atma, and Shiva is Life; without Shiva none else exists. With Shiva as the receiver, the returns are immense of whatever Daan, Japa and homa are performed. It is the tongue which praises Shiva that is worth possessing; the mind which meditates Shiva is worth having; the ears that listen to Shiva's holy acts are worth keeping; the eyes which look down with veneration of Shiva are worthy of acquiring; the feet which roam freely in Shiva Kshetras are valuable; and the limbs of one's body are worth retaining if only they are utilised in the honour of Shiva. Be it a human being as a chandala, man, woman or eunuch, a Shiva Bhakta is always eligible for attaining Mukti. This was illustrated by Suta Muni to the congregation of Rishis at Naimisa Forest by the experience of Raja Chandrasena of Ujjain and a Cow-boy called Srikar. Chandrasena was an extraordinary Shiva Bhakta and Manibhadra the Chief of Shiva Parishad gifted a Chintamani to the King. The Kings of surrounding Kingdoms grew jealous of Chitrasena and attacked his Kingdom, but he was unnerved since he had immense faith in Bhagavan Shiva and continued his prayers in the Mahakaal Temple. At the same time, a Cow-woman accompanied by her son too witnessed the King's Puja. On return to his home, the boy who fully understood the Puja procedure practised the Puja secretly without the knowledge of his mother; he improvised a stone as a Shivalinga and performed various imaginary services to Bhagavan like Snaana, Pushpa, Chandana, Akshata, Dhup, Deepa and Naivedya. As the boy was deeply immersed in the worship, his mother called him for food but as there was no response she searched for him and he was engrossed in the Puja. The mother chided him and even threw away the so-called Puja material that was improvised; in fact when the boy was in a trance of devotion and she dragged him away; he begged of the 'Shiva Linga' or the Stone that was improvised not to punish his mother as she was an ignorant woman. Within minutes, the Place where the boy worshipped turned out to be a huge Shivalaya with golden domes and beautifully laid walls, doors and floors and an installed Linga on a platform made of blue sapphire and other precious stones. The appearance of Shivalaya surprised the boy, his mother, entire Ujjain, Chitrasena, his enemies who surrounded Ujjain and the whole Region. The enemy Kings sought the pardon of King Chitrasena; the King extolled the devotion of the Gopa boy; the mother of the boy was overwhelmed with repentance of her indiscretion on the one hand and of supreme joy and pride for her son on the other, and the unimaginable happening became a talk of the Region. At this very time, Lord Hanuman appeared and addressed the gathering of devotees and stated that the formation of the Linga happened at the Pradosha Time on a Saturday just on the strength of the sincerity and unadulterated faith of the boy who would be known further as Srikar, that in the eighth generation after the boy there would be an Avatara of Vishnu popularly called Sri Krishna and meanwhile that He would teach the Rituals in the Temple to the Gopabala Srikar to carry on the daily tasks from then onward.

On every Trayodasi evening, Pradosha time is observed as Mahadeva performs 'Shiva Thanadava' (dance) on the Silveren Mountain of Kailasha as all Devas would be present and eulogise Nataraja and His Supremacy. The Bhaktas, desirous of attaining the 'Four Purusharthas' viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, observe the Pradosha Time with Siva Puja, Homams, Stutis (Praises) and charities. Those

devotees who are involved in such activities secure immediate relief from poverty, disease, indebtedness and discontentment. Pradosha Vrata is observed by fasting, ‘Snaan’ at three ‘ghadis’ before evening, ‘Sandhyavandana’ and Siva Puja. The Puja is initiated by way of Atma Suddhi, Bhuta Suddhi, three Pranaayamas, Matrukaa Nyasa, Devata Dhyana, Parama Siva’s Dhyana, greeting to Guru on the left side of one’s back, bowing of head on the right side, touching both the shoulders and thighs by way of Nyasa of Dharma, Jnaana, Vairagya and Iswarya; Nyasa of Naabhi and both the sides of the body to avoid Adharma, Agyaan, Avairagya and Anaiswarya; Nyasa on Hridaya (heart) with Ananta, Achyuta etc.; perform Nyasa from Adhaara Shaki to Jnaanatmaka Shakti imagining heart as a lotus of various petals; Bhagavan with Three Eyes, Chandra on His Head, ‘Jatajut’ (Twisted Hairs on the Head); ‘Neela kantha’ indicating enormous mercy; Sarpa Haara or a Chain of Snakes; Tiger Skin and so on. Thereafter the Puja is performed by way of Avahana (Welcome), Rudra Sukta Recital, ‘Panchamrita Abhishek’, Vastra, Arghya, Paadya, Achamana, Yagnopaveeta (Sacred Thread), Aabhuushana (Ornaments), Chandana, and worship with Bilva, Mandara, Red Lotus, Dhatura, Kanera, Chameli, Kusha, Tulasi, Apamarga, Champa, Karaveera and other flowers and ‘Dalaas’(leaves); Dhupa, Deepa, ‘Naivedya’, Neerajana; Mantra Pushpa viz. Yopaam Pushpam Veda to Chandra, Agni, Vayu, Nakshatra, Parjanya, etc; followed by ‘Atma Pradakshina’, Chhatram, Chaamaram, Nrityam, Geetam, Aaandolika, and various other Services. The Grand Finale of the Pradosha Vrata ought to be ‘Shiva Stuti’ as follows: *Jaya Deva Jagannadha Jaya Shankara Shaswata, Jaya Sarva Suraadhyaksha Jaya Sarva Suraarchita, Jaya Sarva Gunaathita Jaya Srava Varaprada, Jaya Nitya Niraadhara Jaya Vishvambharaavyaya, Jaya Vishvaikavedyasha Jaya Naagendra Bhushana, Jaya Gauripathey Shambho Jaya Chandra Sekhara, Jaya Kotyarka samkaasha Jayaanantha Gunaashraya, Jaya Rudra Viruupaksha Jayaachinthya Niranjana, Jaya Naatha Kripaasindho Jaya Bhaktartibhanjana, Jaya DustaraSamsaara Saagarottharana Prabho, Praseeda me Mahadeva Samsaarartasya Khidyatah, Sarva Paapabhayam hrutva Rakshamaam Parameswara, Mahadaaridya –magnascha Mahapaap hatasyacha, Mahashoka Vinishtascha Mahaarogaathurasya cha, Runabhaara pareethyasya Dahyamaanasya Karmabhih, Graheh Prapeedyamaanasya Praseeda mama Shankara.*

Shiva Kavacha: Realising that Bhagavan Shiva was the Origin of ‘Srishti’ (Creation) which was far beyond human comprehension; Sage Sharabha scripted the famed Shiva Kavacha or the Body Safeguard to humanity: ‘May Sarvadevamaya Mahadeva save me from this deep Samsaara Kupa; may His Sacred name relieve me from the totality of sins from my heart. May Bhagavan Shiva save me whose Body Form is His Universe and whose resplendent and happy embodiment of ‘Chidaatma’ or Ever Happy Soul is Eternal. May Eswara, whose presence is all pervading from even the small to the smallest existence is replete in the Universe, save me from the massive stock of sins from my life! May ‘Ashtamurthi’ Girisha who had taken the Form of Earth save me from my daily tribulations. May Parama Siva who assumed the appearance of Water which is life-giving provide me security of life. May Maha Siva who ends up the Universe with fearful flames and performs Rudra Tandava (dance) while enjoying the destruction of Life bestow relief to me from heat and fury. May the Three Eyed and Five Faced Siva, the ‘Satpurusha’ grant me Vidya (Knowledge), Abhay (shelter) and ‘Vara’(boon) at all times out of His endless mercy from the Eastern side. May Shiva, who wears Kuthara, Ankusha Pasha, Shula Nagaada and Rudrakshamaala and is also known as Neelaruchi, Trinetra, and ‘Aghora’, keep me safe in the Dakshina (Southern) side. May Omni Potent ‘Sadyojata’ who sports Chandama, Shankha and Sphatikamala on His Body look after me on the Western front. May ‘Vamadeva’ Bhagavan save me from the Northern Front. May ‘Ishana’ save me from the above or the sky! May Bhagavan Chandramouli save my head, Phalaanetra my forehead,

Bhaganetrahaari my eyes, Viswanaatha my nose, Shrutageetakirti my ears, Panchamukha my face, Vedajihva my tongue, Girisha my neck, Neelaantha my two hands, Dharmabaahu my shoulders, DakshaYagna Vidhvmavsi my Vakshasthal Girindradhanva my stomach, Kamadevanaashak my Mahyadesh, Ganesha Pita my navel, Dhurjati my 'Kati', Kubera Mitra my Pindaliyas, Jagadeeswar my Ghutnas, Pungavakethu (two janghas or thighs), and Suravandyacharan (both the feet worshipped by Devas). May Maheswara save me during the first Prahara Time; Vaamadeva the second Prahara, Triayambak the third Prahara and Vrishabhadwaja the final Prahara; Sisireswar at the beginning of the night; Gangadhar save me midnight; Gauripati at the end of night; and may Mrityunjaya save me always. Shankar should protect me from the Internal Physique; Sthhaanu from the Bahya Stithi or Extrenal Being, Pashupati saves me from the intermediate Stage of consciousness and Sadashiva may protect everybody always. Let Bhuvanaikanath save me while standing, Pranath in motion; Vedantavedya while my standing, Avinaashi Shiva during my sleep; Neelakantha during our tavel; Tripuraari while passing rocky places; Mrigavyaaghra passing through forests; and Mrigavyaghya in Maha Pravaasa or deep and dense jungles. I seek the refuge of Veerabhadra whose high blast and frightening presence shakes up the whole Universe. May Bhagavan Mrida who could devastate crore-strong of armies in split seconds and has the unimaginable might and speed to do so, and Tripurantaka whose 'Pralayakaal' Trisula could submerge the entire Creation into an endless sheet of water, save me from my bad dreams, awful omens, dreadful feelings of mind, durbhiksha (extreme poverty), Durvyasanas (terrible habits), diseases, fear of poisonous species, and victimisation of evil 'grahas', natural mishaps like cyclones, earthquakes and floods and all such unfortunate experiences. I greet Sadashiva who is the embodiment of all Tatvas and their interpretation, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of all the Worlds, the unique witness of existence, the Donor, Sin Remover, the epitome of Propitiousness, the Nirguna, the Unparalleled, Nirakar, Niraabhas, Niramaya, Nishprapancha, Nishkalanka, Nidvandhya, Nissanga, Nirmala, Gati Sunya, Nithya Rupa, Nithya Vaibhava Sampanna, Anupama Iswarya, Adhara Sunya, Nithya, Shuddha Buddha, Paripurna, Sachhidanandaghana, Adviteeya, Parama Shanta, Prakashamaya, and Teja Swarupa. Hey! Rudra, Maha Roudra, Bhadraavataar, Duhkhadavagni vidarana, Maha Bhairava, Kaala Bharava, Kalpanta Bhairava, and Kapaala Maalaadhari. Hey, Wearer of Khatvanga, Khatga, Dhala, Paasha, Ankusha, Damaru, Shula, Dhanush, Baana, Gada, Shakti, Bhidipaala, Thomar, Mushal, Mudgar, Pattisha, Parashu, Parigha, Bhushundi, Shataghni, Chakra such other frightful weapons! Hey, Mukhadamshtra karaala, Vikata Attahaasya visphaarita Brahmaandala mandala, Nagendra kundala, Nagendralaya, Nagendracharmadhara, Mritunjaya, Triambaka, Tripurantaka, Viruupaksha, Vishweswara, Vishwarupa, Vrishavaahana, Vidyubhushana and Vishvatomukha. You guard me, burn off fear of my death, demolish my Apamrityu and my fear of external and internal diseases, shield me from 'Arishatvargas' or the Six Enemies of Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsara ; tear down my terror of Raakshasas, Bhutaas, Kushmandas, Betalas, Brahma Raakshasas and such other Kshudra Shaktis. Oh Lord, equip me against Naraka Bhaya (Terror of Hell), Kshudha Trishna (hunger and thirst), and apprehensions. Victory to You Bhagavan! Do strengthen my physique, mind and Soul and insulate me from all possible risks of life with this Parama Shakti Maha Shiva Kavacha. (Skanda Purana)

5. Shata Rudreeyam

Vyasa uvaacha: Prajaapateenaam Prathamam Tejasaam Purusham Prabhum, Bhuvanam Bhurbhuvam Devam Sarva lokeshvaram prabhum/ Ishaanam Varadam Paartha drishnavaanasi Shankaram, tam gaccha sharanam Devam Varadam Bhuvaneshwaram/ Mahaadevam Mahaatmaanam Ishaanaam Jatilam Shivam, Tryaksham Mahaa bhujam Rudram Shikhinam Cheera vaasanam/ Maha Devam Haram

*Sthaanum Varadam Bhuvaneshwaram, Jagatpradhaanamadhikam Jagatpreetamadheeshvaram/
 Jagadyonim Jagadveepam Jayanam Jagato gatim, Vishvaatmaanam Vishvasrujam Vishvamurtim Yasha-
 svinam/ Vishveshvaram Vishvavaram Karmanaameeshvaram Prabhum, Shambhum Svayambhum
 Bhutesham Bhutabhavya bhavodbhavam/ Yogam Yogeshvaram Sharvam Sarvalokeshvareshvaram,
 Sarva-shrasthanam Jagatcchreshtham Varishtham Parameshthinam/ Lokatraya vidhaataaramekam Loka-
 trayaashrayam, Sudurjayam Jaganaatham Janma mrityu jaraatigam/ Jnaanaatmaanam Jnaana gamyam
 Jnaana shreshtham Sudurvidam, Daataaram chaiva Bhaktaanaam Prasaadavihitaan Varaan/ Tasya
 paarishadaa Divyaarupairnaanaavidhairvibhoh, Vaamanaa Jatilaa Munda Hrasvagreeva Maho -
 daraah/ (10) Mahaa kaayaa Mahotsaahaa Mahakarnaasthathaa Pare, Aananairvikritaih Paadaih,
 Paartha Veshaischa Vaikritaih, Eedrisyaissa Mahadevah Pujyamaano Maheshvarah, sa Shivastaata
 Tejasvi prasaadaadyaatitegratah/ Tasmin ghore sadaa Paartha Sangraame rohamarshane, Drounikarna
 kripairguptaam Maheshvaasaih prahaaribhih/ Kastaam Senaam tadaa Paartha manasaapi pradhar -
 shayet, Rite Devaanmeheshvaasaad bahurupaan Maheshvaraah/ Sthaatumutsahate kaschinnatasminn -
 agratah Sthite, nahi bhutam samam tea trishu lokeshu vidyate/ Gandhenaapi sangraame tasya
 krudhdasya shatravah, Visangnaa hata bhuyishthaa vepanti cha patatimcha/ T asmai namastu kurvanto
 Devaattishthanti Vaidivi, ye chaanyee maanavaa lokeyecha swargajito naraah/ Ye bhaktaa varadam
 Devam Shivam Rudram Umaapatim, iha loka sukham praapyate yaanti paramaam gatim/ Namaskuru -
 shva kounteya tasmai shaantaaya va sadaa, Rudraaya Shitikanthaaya Kanishthaaya Suvarchase/
 Kapardine Karaalaaya Harayaksha Varadaaya cha, Yaamyaaaraaktakeshaaya Sadvritte Shankaraa -
 yacha/ (20) Kaamyaaaraaktakeshaaya Mundaaya Kanishthaaya Suvarchase, Bhaskaraaya Suteer -
 thaaya Devadevaayaramhase/ Ushneeshane Suvaktraaya Sahasaakshaaya meedhushe, Girishaaya
 Sushaantaayapataye Cheeravaasase/ Hiranya baahave Raajannugraaya pataye dishaam, Parjanya
 patayechaiva bhutaanaam pataye namah/ Vrikshaanaampataye chaiva Gavaam pataye tathaa, vrikshair-
 aavritakaayaaya sevanye madhyamaayacha/ Sruvahastaaya Devaaya Dhanvine Bhargavaayacha,
 Bahurupaaya Vushvasyapataye Munjavaasase/ Sahasra shirase chaiva Sahasranayanaayacha, Sahasra
 baahavechiva Sahasra charanaayacha/ Sharanam gaccha Kounteya Varadam Bhuvaneshvaram,
 Umaapatim Viruupaaksham Dakshamyagjna nibarhanam/ Prajaanaamvatimavyagram Bhutaanaam -
 patam Avyayam/ Kapardinam Vrishaavartam Vrishanaabham Vrishadhvajam/ Vrishadarpam
 Vrishapatim Vrishashringam Vrisharshabham, Vrishaankam Vrishabhodaaram Vrishabham
 Vrishabhekshanam/ (30) Vrishaayudham Vrishasharam Vrisha bhutam Mahashwaram, Mahodaram
 Mahakaayam Dveepicharmanivaasinam/ Lokesham Varadam Mundam Brahmanyam Braahmanapriyam,
 Trishula paanim Varadam Khadgacharmadharam Shubham/ Pinaakinam Khadgadhararam Lokaanaam
 Patimeeshvaram, prapadye sharanam Devam sharyam Cheeravaasanam/ Namastasmai Sureshaaya
 yasyavaishavanassakhaa , Suvaasase namo nityam Suprataaya Sudhanvine/ Dhanurdharaaya Devaaya
 Priyadhanvaaya Dhanvine, Dhanvantaraaya Dhanushe Dhanvaachaaryaaya te namah/ Ugraayudhaaya
 Devaaya namassuravaraaya cha, Namostu Bahurupaaya namaste Bahudhanvine/ Namostu Sthaanave
 Nityam namastasmai Sudhanvine, Namostu Tripuraghnaaya Bhavaghnaaya cha vainamah/
 Vanaspateenaam Pataye Naraanaam pataye namah, Maatruunaam patayechaiva Ganaanaam
 patayenamah/ Gavaamcha pataye nityam Devaanaam pataye namah/ Puushno danta vinaashaaya
 TryakshaayaVaradaayacha, Haraaya Neelakanthaaya Svarnakshaayavai namah/*

Maharshi Vyasa underscored that Maha Deva Ishana the superior to Prajapati Maha Purusha and asserted that Ishana- Ishaanam sarvavidyaanaam Ishvarassarva bhutaanaam Brahmaadhipatir brahmanodhipati brahmaa Shivomeastussadaashimom/-was indeed the Over Lord of Trilokas and was the inexplicable

phenomenon of Three Letters of Bhur- Bhuva- Svah. Parama Shiva is notable as of Maha Bhuj- Rudra-Shikhi being of long jataajuta- and Cheeravaasa of skinclad figure. Indeed He is Maha Deva-Hara the sin destroyer-Sthaanu or stable, inactive, immobile and insensitive- yet the Supreme. Shiva is quiescent and motionless. He is Varada the boon granter and Tribhuvaneshvara. Indeed He is Jagat Pradhaanamadhika or far greater to Prajapati the head of charaachara jagat. He is thus ‘Jagat- pradhaanamadhikam’ or of superiority to the head of the ‘Prajapati’. He as Jagadyoni or seed of Jagat as the Root Cause, Jagad Dweepa or the Singulat Source of Radiance, and again the unique insignia of victory, Vishvaatma or the Universal Soul, Visvasruja or the Architect of the Universe, Jagadprateeramadhikam or of dominance beyond the Head of the Universe, Visvasrujam-Vishva Murtim-and Yashasvinam or of the highest universal acclaim. He is Vishvesvara-Vishva vara or the Greatest Boon to the Universe, Karunaameeshvaram or the symbol of kindness, Prabhuh, Shambhuh, Svayambhuh or of Appearance all by Himself Self, Bhutabhavya - bhavadbhavam or the Omniscient of the Past-Present-Future of all the Beings, He is a Yogi- Yogeswara-Sharva with no reference of region-religion- caste- Raashi- Nakshatra- etc.-Sarva Lokeshwara-Sarva shreshtha- Jagat shreshtha- Varashtha, Parameshthi-Lokatraya vidhaata -Asmekam or the Unique most-Lokatrayaashramam-Sudurjayam or Beyond Accomplishment- Janannaatham- Janmamrutyu jaraatigam or beyond the reach of birth-death-age; jnaanatmikam-‘jnaanam gamyam jnaanam shreshtham’ or the the targettable-approachable much less achievable to the supreme most knowledge-sudurvidam or inexplicable-daaraaram or the highest giver-bhaktaanaam prasaada vihitaan varaan or the sole distributor boons to the well deserved devotees; such highest celestial vaanmna-jatila-munda- hrasvagreeva-madodara or of unstatured- crude - shaven- short necked- and big bellied - huge figured - high spirited-giant eared- deformed bodied Mahadeva Maheshwara. He is of ‘Aananairvikritaih’ or of deform faced; Paarthiva or of Giantlike bodied, or Vikrita of obnoxious form yet ever merciful; Mahadeva-Pujyamaana- Maheshwara- ‘Sashivastaata tejasvi prasaadaadyaatitegratah’ or of the most auspicious radiance far excellence far superior to that of Aditya. ‘Tasmin ghore sadaa paartha sangraame romaharshane’ - He is yet the terrible most in the battle front as his devotees are awe stricken at his deeds with their hairs stand erect- and eardrums get shrilled with their thrilled minds. His army gets enraptured in body and mind. As the followers get mesmerised his opposition stalwarts soaked in arrogance get subjected to smitherens. ‘Tasmai namastu kurvanto devaastishthanti vaidivi,’ from the high skies the ‘deva samuhas’ shower rains of flowers while human beings on earth prostrate with reverence and gratitudinal devotion. Tripuraasura samhara was a case in point. At the sametime, Ishvara as Kounteya in Maha Bhatata was aware Parama Shiva was described as the incarnation of ‘shaanta’ the most tranquil. He prayed to Him well before facing the uphill taske of Maha Bharata Battle facing stalwart battle heros like Bheeshma- Drona adis and addressing Parama Shiva and his magnificence as follows: ‘ Rudraaya Shiti kanthaaya Kanishthaaya Suvarchase, Kapardine Karaalaaya Haryaksha varada’ : Rudra Deva with poisoned throat, Kapardi as altruistic, concerned, kind, responsive.,, and coofident; Karaala or very horrifying to opponents; Haryaksha varada or the boons bestowed with tranquil eyes; Yamyaya or timeless; Rakta keshaya or of blood red hairs, Sadvritte or of Noble Caused, Shankara, Kaamyaya or desire fulfiller, Haranetra or of auspicious looks, Sthaana or stable, Purusha or the outstanding and peerless male, Harakeshaya or mangalakara green hairs, Mundaaya or clean head shaven, Kanishthaaya or the youngest yet the Jyeshtha or the senior most, Svarchase or of sparkling physique. Parama Shiva is Bhsakara the emblem of radiance, Suteerthaaya or the the Resident of the hallowed punya kshertas, bahu rupaaya of of countless forms, Sharva the Omni Present, Priyaaya- Priyavaasaaya the hallmark of Love and the seat of Affection, Ushneeshine or of Figure of Heat and Light, Suvaktraaya or of noble faced, Sahasraakshaaya or of thousnads of eye visions, Meedhushe or ever bountiful, Gurishaaya- Sushantaaya-

Pataye - cheeravaasine ‘ / skin dressed, Hiranya baahave or of golden hands of strength and shine; Raajannugraata or the King of Kings, Pataye dishaam or the overlord of dashadishas [viz. Kubera North - Yama South- Indra - Varuna West- Ishana North East- Agni South East- Nirruti North West- Brahmai Horizon and Vishnu Sapta Patalas] -Parjanya pataye or the Over Lord of Rains, Bhutanaam Pataye or the Overlord of Pancha Bhutas, Vrikshaa naam pataye, Gavaamcha pataye of the Head of cows and all other animals, Vrikshairaavritaaya or the entire trees and plants as surrounded ny Maha Deva, Senaanye Madhyamaaya or the Central Figure of Soldiery and of Armies, Sruva hastaaya since Shiva is known as the chief holder of ladles in all the homa kaaryas; Dhanvine the bow which carries ‘paashupataastra’ in his battle escapades, Bhaargava or the symbol of extreme radiance and heat, He is of bahu rupa-vishvasya pati-Munjavaasa or the skin dressed, Sahasra shirase, sahatra nayane, sahasra baahave, sahasra charane! This is how and why Arjuna before the maha bharatha battle sought refuge from Uma pati-Virupaaksha-Daksha Yagjna destroyer! Maha Deva is known as ‘ bhuta pati- avyaya- kapadina-vrishaavarta or he as surroundef by bulls, his flagship too being Vrishabha dhvaja. Indeed He is Vrishapati-Vrisa shringa or horns, vrishanka, vrishabhodaara as of the patience typical of bulls, vrisha shara or as potent of bull like arrows sure to deatroy the roots of enemies! Maheshwara is also Mahodara-Maha Kaaya and is clad with glittering skin. He is Lokesha-Varada-Munda or shaven-Brahmanya and Brahmana Priya. He carries Tishula- Varada-Khadga charma dhara-Pinaakina or the bow carrier popular as pinaaki, khadga dhara-Lokapati! Our earnest prostrations to Suresha-Shravana Sakhaa extremely fond of Lord Subrahmanya-Dhanvantaraaya and Priya dhanvaaya, Dhanvatara Acharya Swarupa! ‘Namostu bahurupaaya namaste bahudhanvine, namotu Sthhanave Nityam namastasmai sudhanvine, namostu Tripuraasuraantakaaya, Bhava samsaara saagara paaraaya!’ Parama Shiva is also acclaimed as Maatrana- Ganaamna- Gavaamna-Yagjnaana-Apaamna- Trakshaaya of Trinetra-Triguna- Trishula- Trikaala of past, present, and future-Trikarana of mano vaachaa shravana- Tryayaavasthaa hara of baalya, youvana vaarthakya -Taapatraya hara or of Adhibhoutika, Adhi Daivika and Adhaatmika- Tri Margas for Moksha prada of Jnaana, Karma and Upasana; Trividha Kankshas or three Natural Aspirations of Kanta, Kanaka and Keerti or Physical - Material-Fame and Tryagnis or Three fires of Kama/Lust, Krodha or Angerand Kshudha or Hunger.

Note: Sankalpa of Shata Rudreeya Paaraayana- and pujaa naivedya and pradaksina is recommended.

1)Brahma dedicated a golden Linga to Bhagavan Siva named *Jagat Pradhana* and prays it at His feet 2) Sri Krishna set up a black coloured Linga called *Urjit* and prays to Siva’s head 3) Sanaka and other Manasa Putras of Lord Brahma pray to Siva Hridaya (Heart) Linga as *Jagadrati* 4) Sapta Rishis pray to ‘Dharbhaankura maya’ (Dharbha made) Linga called *Visva Yoni* 5) Devarshi Narada conceived Siva Linga as an all pervasive ‘Aakash’ (Sky) and prayed to *Jagatvija* 6) Devaraj Indra prays to a Diamond Linga called *Vishvatma* 7) Surya Deva prays to a copper Linga called *Vishwasruga* 8) Chandra performs Puja to a Pearl Linga known as *Jagatpathi* 9) Agni Deva prays to an Indra Nila Mani Linga named *Viswesvara*10) Brihaspathi prays to a Pushparajamani with the name *Visva Yoni* 11) Sukracharya pays penance to a Padmaragamani Linga called *Viswakarma* 12) A golden Linga is worshipped by Kubera called *Iswara* 13) Visva Deva Ganas perform puja to a Silver Linga called *Jagatgati* 14) Yama Dharma raja pays his obeisance to a peethal (brass) Linga named *Shambhu*15) ‘Ashtavasus’ execute ‘Aradhana’ to a Glass made Linga called *Shambhu* 16) Maruganas do puja to a Triloha Linga(three kinds of metals) called *Umesh / Bhupesh* 17) Raakshasas pay penance to an iron Linga and named Siva as *Bhuta Bhavya Bhavodbhava* 18) Guhyaka Ganas perform puja to a mirror-made Siva Linga named *Yoga* 19) Muni Jaigeeshva does Upasana to Brahmarandhra maya Linga named *Jaigeeswara Yogeeshwar* 20) King Nimi considers the Ugal Netra or the Two Eyes as Parameswara Linga called *Sharva* 21) Dhanvanthari

worships Gomaya Linga (cow dung) in the name of *Sarva Lokewswareswara* 22) Gandharvas perform Puja to wood based Siva Linga named *Sarva Sreshtha* 23) Lord Rama did intense 'Japa' to 'Vidyunmani' Linga in the name of *Jyeshtha* 24) Banasura paid homage to Marakathamani Linga named *Varishtha* 25) Varuna Deva offers reverence to a Sphatikamani Linga named *Parameswara* 26) *Lokatrayankara* is the name given to a Linga made of Munga (Black Pearl) by Nagagana 27) Devi Saraswathi pays reverence to Suddha mukta maya Linga named *Lokatrayashrita* 28) Sani Deva performs 'Japa' on Saturday Amavasya midnight at Maha Sagara Sangama the Bhavari (Honey Bee) Swarupa Linga named *Jagannadha* 29) Ravana implored to a Linga made of Chameli flower and named it *Sudurjaya* 30) Siddhaganas paid respects to Manasa Linga called *Kama Mrityu Jaraatiga* 31) Raja Bali worshipped Yashamaya (Famed) Linga named *Jnanatma* 32) Marichi and other Maharshis pray to Pushpamaya (flowerful) Linga with the name *Jnana gamya* 33) Devathas who performed noble deeds made approbation to Shubhamaya Linga (Propitiousness) named *Jnaanajneya* 34) Maharshi Phenaj (foam) who drank Phenaj did Upasana to Phenaj Linga called *Sarvavid* 35) Sage Kapila performed Japa to Balukamaya Linga named *Varada*. 36) Saarasvat, the son of Devi Saraswathi did Upasana to Vanimaya Linga named *Vaageeswara*. 37) Sivaganas made a Linga of Bhagavan Siva and provided penance to *Rudra*. 38) Devathas made a Jambu River golden Linga to pray to *Sitikantha*. 39) Budha prays to Shankhamaya (conchshell) Linga by the name of *Kanishtha*. 40) The Two Ashvini Kumars pray to Muktikmaya Parthiva Linga named *Suvedha*. 41) Ganesha made a Siva Linga made of Wheat Flour worships it by the name of *Kapardi* 42) Mangala Graha (The Planet of Mars) made a Buttermade Linga called *Karaala* to pray. 43) Garuda prays to an Odanamaya Linga named *Haryaksha*. 44) Kamadeva Manmadha prays to a jaggery made Linga called *Rathida*. 45) Sachi Devi, the Consort of King Indra paid reverence to a Salt-made Linga *Buddhakesha*. 46) Visvakarma prayed to a Prasaadamaya (or of the shape of a Mahal / Building) Linga called *Yamya*. 47) Vibhishana made a dustful of Linga called *Suhrutam* to pray. 48) Raja Sagar who brought Ganga from Siva's Head made a 'Vamsakura' Linga called *Sangat*. 49) Rahu made a Hing (asafoetida) made Linga named *Gamya* to worship. 50) Devi Lakshmi made a Lehya Linga named *Harinetra* and worshipped it. 51) Yogi Purush prays to Sarvabhuthatha Linga called *Sthaanu*. 52) Human beings prepare a wide variety of Lingas and worship them by the name of *Purusha*. 53) Nakshatras (Stars) pray to Tejomaya (full of Radiance) Linga called *Bhaga / Bhaskara*. 54) Kinnaras make a Dhaatumaya Linga by the name of *Sudeepth* for Japas. 55) Brahma Raakshasa Ganas pray to Asthimaya (Bones) Linga named *Deva Deva*. 56) Charanas worship dantamaya (full of Teeth) Linga called *Ramhas*. 57) Sadhya ganas pray to Saptaloka maya Linga titled *Bahurupa*. 58) Ritus worship Doorvaankura maya Linga named *Sarva*. 59) Celestial Damsel Urvasi prays to Sindhura Linga named *Priya Vasan*. 60) Apsaras perform Archana to Kumkuma Linga called *Abhushana*. 61) Guru Deva performs puja to Brahmachari Linga named *Ushnivi*. 62) Yoginis offer their obsequiousness to Alakthak Linga by name *Suvabhruk*. 63) Siddha Yoginis worship Srikhanda Linga named *Sahasraaksha*. 64) Dakinis perform puja to Lingas made of Mamsa or Meat and call Siva by the name of *Sumidhsha*. 65) Manna Ganas worship Annamaya Linga called *Girisha*. 66) Agasthya Muni worships Vreehimaya Linga to Siva named *Sushanth*. 67) Muni Devala made Yavamaya Linga and called Siva with the name of *Pathi*. 68) Valmiki Muni made a Linga of Valmikas and prayed to *Cheera Vasa*. 69) Pratardan prays to Baana Linga named *Hiranyabhuj*. 70) Daityagana made Rayi made Siva Linga and prayed to *Ugra*. 71) Daanavas worship a Nishpaavaj Linga known as *Dikpathi*. 72) Baadal (Clouds) pray to Neeramaya (waterful) Lingas called *Parjanya*. 73) Yaksharaj made Maashamaya Linga and performed puja to *Bhutapathi*. 74) Pitruganas made Tilamaya (Sesame seeds) Linga and worshipped Siva as *Vrishapathi*. 75) Gouthama Muni worships Godhulimaya Linga named *Gopathi*. 76) Vanaprastha ganas display veneration to a phalamaya (full of fruits) Linga

named *Vrikshavrita* 77) Karthikeya is highly devoted to Siva in the form of a stone Linga called *Senanya* 78) Ashtavatar Nag worshipped Dhanya linga called *Madhyama*. 79) Yagna Kartha prayed to Purusha Linga named *Sthruva hasta*. 80) Yama worships 'Kalaaya samaya' Linga called *Dhanvi*. 81) Parasurama prays to Yavaankura Linga named *Bhargava*. 82) Pururava prays to Ghritamaya (Gheeful) Linga by name *Bahurupa*. 83) Mandhata paid admiration to a Sugary Linga by name *Bahuyug*. 84) The clan of Cows utilises a Dugdhamaya Linga (full of Milk) for paying their respects and sincere devotion to *Nethra sahasrak*. 85) Pathivrata Sthrees (Women devoted to their husbands) worship to Bhatrumaya Linga called *Viswapati*. 86) Nara and Narayana worship Siva in the form of Mounji Linga named *Sahasra Sirsha*. 87) Pruthu worships Thaaaksharya Linga known as *Sahasra Charan*. 88) Birds pay their homage to Vyoma Linga in the name of *Sarvatmaka*. 89) Prithivi prays to Gandhamaya Linga named as *Dvithanu*. 90) The entire Animal Kingdom prays to Bhasmamaya Linga known by the name of *Maheswara*. 91) Rishiganas perform Upasana to Jnanamaya Linga called *Chirasthan*. 92) Brahmanas do penance to Brahma Linga in the name of Siva as *Jyeshtha*. 93) Sessa Nag worships to 'Gorochanamaya' Linga named *Pashupathi*. 94) Vasuki Nag prays to Visha (poison) Linga with the name of *Shankara*. 95) Takshaka Nag prays to Kaalakutamaya Linga called *Bahurup*. 96) Karkotaka Nag pays esteem to Halahalamaya Linga named *Pingaksha*. 97) Shringi prays to Vishamaya Linga by the name of *Dhurjati*. 98) Puthras (Sons) perform in the name of Pitrumaya Linga (Fathers) called *Vishwarupa*. 99) Siva Devi worships Parama maya Linga named *Vyambak*. 100) Matsya and such other Jeevas pray to Shastramaya Linga named *Vrishakapi*.

Phalashruti : Whoever recites Siva Sata Rudreeyam in the morning, the sins committed by the mind, tongue and action get vanished; diseases and fatigue get dissolved; fear and apprehension evaporate; and worries and anxiety disappear. Those who utter the hundred names of Parama Siva and make Salutations to Him as many times would instantly secure mental peace and contentment.

Rudra subtly hidden on one's own Inner Self vide - Shvetashaashvatara Upanishad

IV.viii-x) *Rikchekshare param vyoman yamin deva adhi vishve nisheduh yastam na veda kimrichaa karishyati ya it vidusta ime samaasate// Chandaamsi yajnaah katavo vrataani, bhutam bhavyam yaccha Vedaa vadanti, asmaan mayi shrijate vishvam etat tasminshanyo mayaayaa samniruddhaha// Maayaam tu prakritim viddhi, mayinam tu mahesvaram, tasyaavayava bhutaistu vyaaptam sarvam idam jagat//*

(Of what avail is the study of Rig Veda or for that matter of the knowledge even all the Scriptures since after all such studies are rendered as futile if internal discipline is a discount and awareness of the Supreme is a casuality. Veda knowledge, performance of Rituals and Sacrifices and knowledge of the Supreme are indeed the ingredients of Faith in and constant strife for attainment; and the rest is all the play of Maya. Let it be realised for ever however that the whole Universe is Prakriti and Maya and even the play of Maya is again the play of the Almighty itself! Indeed Ishvara and Shakti are like the parents of the Universe. One should realise that Pakriti creates the worlds of the Real-Unreal Nature, protects them by her own energy of the three gunas and terminates the Universe by her own powers again at the instance of Ishvara and revives too again by her own energies! Thus goes the cycle of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhaara!)

IV.xi-xiii: *Yo yonim adhishtih eko yasmin idam sam cha vichaiti sarvam, tam Ishaanam varadam devam eedyam nichaayyemaam shaanti atyantameti// yo devaanaam prahavashchodbhyascha vishvaadhipo rudro maharsh ih, Hiranyagarbham pashyata jaayamaanam, sa no buddhyaa shubhayaa samyunaktu// Yo devaanaam adhipo yasmin lokaa adhishtiyaah, ya Ishesya dvipaadaschatus padah, kasmai devaayaa*

havishaa vidhema// (The Singular Parama Shiva is the Originator of Existence of the Beings of the Universe as also of its dissolution and creates it again and again and that Supreme Energy viz. *Ishaanam varadam* or the only and unfailing source to bestow blessings to all in the Creation; truly indeed, those who understand His excellence would be destined to secure Peace. He is the origin of Devatva or of Devas and the distributor of their celestial powers; it was Rudra who visioned Hiranyagarbha Brahma who is the Supreme Architect and had enabled the mechanism of the Cycle of Births, Deaths and Births again! Rudra Deva is also the Over-Lord of Devas besides the two legged and four legged ‘Pashus’ thus having attained the title of Pashupati -naadha’!

IV.xiv-xvii: *Sukshmati-sukshmam kalilasya madhye, vishvasya srashtaaram aneka rupam, vishvasya - ikam pariveshtiraaram jnaatvaa shivam shantim atyantameti// Sa eva kaale bhuvanashya goptaa, vishwa -adhipah sarva bhueshu goodhah, yasmin yuktaa Brahmarshayo Devaascha tam evam jnaatvaa mrityu paashamschinatti// Ghritaata parammanam ivaatisukshmam jatva Shivam sarva bhuteshu guudham vishvasyakam pariveshtitaaram jnaatvaa devam muchyate sarva paashaih// Esha Devo Vishvakarma mahatmaa, sadaa janaanaam hridaye sannivishataah, Hridaa manishaabhi kipto, yad etad vidur amritaaste bhavanti/*

/(Rudra Deva is the ‘Sukshmaati sukshmam’, ‘vishvasya srashtaaram aneka rupam’ or the subtlest of the subtle, the Unique Creator of all the Beings of myriad forms is also the great enveloper of what all one could visualize; realisation of his splendour brings peace for ever. He is the unchallenged protector and the ultimate refuge point of all and the illustrious Sages are able to access Brahman the Final Abode of Bliss even severing the chords of death forever. Just as a thin film conceals the top layer of butter in milk, the embodiment of ‘Shivatva’ or auspiciousness of Shiva is concealed in one’s own inner cave of the body; the ‘ Vishvaikam pariveshtitam’ or that Unique Energy sustaining and filling up the Universe in Totality once recognised and realized is certain to break open the fetters of ‘Samsara’! It is that very ‘Paramatma’ that is right within the concealed as one’s own ‘Antaratma’ as seated in the heart, once visualised in the mind, brings to the frontiers of Immortality! The awareness of the Inner Self as framed in the heart and mind in the measure of a thumb!)

IV.xviii-xxii: *Yadaa tamastan na divaa na raatrir na sanna chaasacchiva eva kevalah, tadaksharaam tatsavitur varenyam, prajnaa cha tasmaat prashrataa puraani// Naiknam urthvam na chiryanacham ma madhye na pariagrabhat na tasya pratimaa asti yasya naama mahad yashah// Na samdrishe tishthati rapamasya, na chakshusaa pashyati kashchanainam, hridaa hridishtham manasaa ya enam, evam vidur amritaaste bhavanti// Ajaata iti evam yevam kashchid bheeruh praadyate: Rudra yat te dakshinam mukham tena maam paahi nityam// Maa nas toke tanaye maana aayushi maa no goshu maa no ashvesu reerishah, veeraan maa no Rudra bahmitovadheer havishmantah sada ittva havamahe//*

(The Supreme is symbolized with absolute identity of the Self as the ‘svitur varenyam’ or of neither darkness nor light but as flood of the highest level of splendour and as typically characterised as neither as a Being or a Non Being but as an entity that is imperishable; this is what the age old belief of Sages and Seekers of the Almighty! ‘Nainam urthvam na tiryancham’ The Inner Self again has no dimensions nor directions; neither above the level nor across, not in the middle nor in accord and simply perplexing and inexplicable. Essentially there is nothing comparable to it and is truly awesome and glorious! Paramesh – wara can never be visible by eyes or mind of commonality but with vision ultimate excepting through heart and mind of purity ‘par excellence’ and of the nature of divinity!! Indeed those who are successful

in binding the Highest to one's heart and mind are blessed and become immortal! Once the concept high order of devotion and dedication is observed, the hardest barriers of Bhagavan's gate ways get melted away and dissolved!

Thus the prayers of utmost intensity stating most sincere commendations like : 'Rudra Deva! You are unborn, the most worthy of the worthiest, and the one who is eternal and so on then Parameshwara becomes surely susceptible to yield the fruits of His grace for sure! Sankara is indeed 'bhakti vashankara' or is susceptible to devotion and faith and tends to melt away to mortal cries of obsessed prostrations like ' maam pahimaam!' 'Maa nas toke tanaye maana aayushi' or RudraDeva! Do never hurt us not in my child or grand child, penalize not my life; nor my cattle, horses and so on out of your anger'! Indeed, we seek to please you with our oblations through Agni Homas. Paramatma!, be merciful and do protect us for our deeds of omissions and lapses!'

Rudra, the 'Pashupati naadha', subtly hidden in the Inner Self of all Beings

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IV.xi-xiii: *Yo yonim adhishtih eko yasmin idam sam cha vichaiti sarvam, tam Ishaanam varadam devam eedyam nichaayyemaam shaanti atyantameti// yo devaanaam prahavashchodbhyascha vishvaadhipo rudro maharsh ih, Hiranyagarbham pashyata jaayamaanam, sa no buddhyaa shubhayaa samyunaktu// Yo devaanaam adhipo yasmin lokaa adhishtiyaah, ya Ishesya dvipaadaschatus padah, kasmai devaayaa havishaa vidhema//*

(The Singular Parama Shiva is the Originator of Existence of the Beings of the Universe as also of its dissolution and creates it again and again and that Supreme Energy viz. *Ishaanam varadam* or the only and unfailling source to bestow blessings to all in the Creation; truly indeed, those who understand His excellence would be destined to secure Peace. He is the origin of Devatva or of Devas and the distributor of their celestial powers; it was Rudra who visioned Hiranyagarbha Brahma who is the Supreme Architect and had enabled the mechanism of the Cycle of Births, Deaths and Births again! Rudra Deva is also the Over-Lord of Devas besides the two legged and four legged 'Pashus' thus having attained the title of Pashupati -naadha'!

IV.xiv-xvii: *Sukshmati-sukshmam kalilasya madhye, vishvasya srashtaaram aneka rupam, vishvasya - ikam pariveshtiraaram jnaatvaa shivam shantim atyantameti// Sa eva kaale bhuvanashya goptaa, vishwa -adhipah sarva bhueshu goodhah, yasmin yuktaa Brahmarshayo Devaascha tam evam jnaatvaa mrityu paashamschinatti// Ghritaam parammanam ivaatisukshmam jatva Shivam sarva bhuteshu guudham vishvasyakam pariveshtitaaram jnaatvaa devam muchyate sarva paashaih// Esha Devo Vishvakarmaa mahatmaa, sadaa janaanaam hridaye sannivishthaah, Hridaa manishaabhi klipto, yad etad vidur amritaaste bhavanti//*

(Rudra Deva is the ‘Sukshmaati sukshmam’, ‘vishvasya srashtaaram aneka rupam’ or the subtlest of the subtle, the Unique Creator of all the Beings of myriad forms is also the great enveloper of what all one could visualize; realisation of his splendour brings peace for ever. He is the unchallenged protector and the ultimate refuge point of all and the illustrious Sages are able to access Brahman the Final Abode of Bliss even severing the chords of death forever. Just as a thin film conceals the top layer of butter in milk, the embodiment of ‘Shivatva’ or auspiciousness of Shiva is concealed in one’s own inner cave of the body; the ‘ Vishvaikam pariveshtitam’ or that Unique Energy sustaining and filling up the Universe in Totality once recognised and realized is certain to break open the fetters of ‘Samsara’! It is that very ‘Paramatma’ that is right within the concealed as one’s own ‘Antaratma’ as seated in the heart, once visualised in the mind, brings to the frontiers of Immortality! The awareness of the Inner Self as already explained vide III.iii is framed in the heart and mind in the measure of a thumb!)

IV.xviii-xxii: *Yadaa tamastan na divaa na raatrir na sanna chaasacchiva eva kevalah, tadaksharaam tatsavitur varenyam, prajnaa cha tasmaat prashrataa puraani// Naiknam urthvam na chiryaanaacham ma madhye na parijagrabhat na tasya pratimaa asti yasya naama mahad yashah// Na samdrishe tishthati rapamasya, na chakshusaa pashyati kashchanainam, hridaa hridishtham manasaa ya enam, evam vidur amritaaste bhavanti// Ajaata iti evam yevam kashchid bheeruh praadyate: Rudra yat te dakshinam mukham tena maam paahi nityam// Maa nas toke tanaye maana aayushi maa no goshu maa no ashvesu reerishah, veeraan maa no Rudra bahmitovadheer havishmantah sada ittvaa havamahe//*

(The Supreme is symbolized with absolute identity of the Self as the ‘svitur varenyam’ or of neither darkness nor light but as flood of the highest level of splendour and as typically characterised as neither as a Being or a Non Being but as an entity that is imperishable; this is what the age old belief of Sages and Seekers of the Almighty! ‘Nainam urthvam na tiryancham’ The Inner Self again has no dimensions nor directions; neither above the level nor across, not in the middle nor in accord and simply perplexing and inexplicable. Essentially there is nothing comparable to it and is truly awesome and glorious! Paramesh –wara can never be visible by eyes or mind of commonality but with vision ultimate excepting through heart and mind of purity ‘par excellence’ and of the nature of divinity!! Indeed those who are successful in binding the Highest to one’s heart and mind are blessed and become immortal! Once the concept high order of devotion and dedication is observed, the hardest barriers of Bhagavan’s gate ways get melted away and dissolved! Thus the prayers of utmost intensity stating most sincere commendations like : ‘Rudra Deva! You are unborn, the most worthy of the worthiest, and the one who is eternal and so on then Parameshwara becomes surely susceptible to yield the fruits of His grace for sure! Sankara is indeed ‘bhakti vashamkara’ or is susceptible to devotion and faith and tends to melt away to mortal cries of obsessed prostrations like ‘ maam pahimaam!’ ‘Maa nas toke tanaye maana aayushi’ or RudraDeva! Do never hurt us not in my child or grand child, penalize not my life; nor my cattle, horses and so on out of

your anger'! Indeed, we seek to please you with our oblations through Agni Homas. Paramatma!, be merciful and do protect us for our deeds of omissions and lapses!

Ravana stuti to Maheswara

Jatatavigalajjala pravahapavitasthale, Galeavalambya lambitam bhujangatungamalikam/Damad damad damaddama ninadavadamarvayam, Chakara chandtandavam tanotu nah shivah shivam/

Parama Shiva! Your jatajutaas are ever wet, neck is garlanded with serpents, and hands with damaru with resonances of 'damat damat damat damat, damat damat, damat damat, damat damat damat' always.

*Jata kata hasambhrama bhramanilimpanirjhari, vilolavichivalarai virajamanamurdhani/
Dhagadhagadhagajjva lalalata pattapavake, Kishora chandrashekhare ratih pratikshanam mama*

Parama Shiva! I am ever lost in my prayers for you as your jatajutas are saturated with waves of Ganga and falling on your fiery 'trinetras' as your mastaka is adorned with pournami chandra!

*Dharadharendrana ndinivilasabandhubandhura, Sphuradigantasantati pramodamanamanase/
Krupakatakshadhorani nirudhadurdharapadi, Kvachidigambare manovinodametuvastuni/*

Parama Shiva! May my mind set be ever replete with 'Shiva Consciousness', which is omni present and is always with the companionship of Devi Parvati, the Parama Shakti, adorned with radiant crown.

*Jata bhujan gapingala sphuratphanamaniprabha, Kadambakunkuma dravapralipta digvadhummukhe/
Madandha sindhu rasphuratvagutariyamedure, Mano vinodamadbhutam bibhartu bhutabhartari/*

Parama Shiva! May I rejoice in my thoughts on you as the seed of my existence always recalling your swarupa as neelagriva with serpent garlands, jatajutas covering 'dashadishas', robed in 'gajacharma'.

*Sahasra lochana prabhritya sheshalekhashekhara, Prasuna dhulidhorani vidhusaranghripithabhuh/
Bhujangaraja malaya nibaddhajatajutaka, Shriyai chiraya jayatam chakora bandhushekharah/*

Parama Shiva! Grant me prosperity, longevity and popularity, as you are Chandra embellished crown, jatajutas with snake garlands and footrest replete with flowers fallen from heads of Indra, Vishnu, devas.

*Lalata chatvarajvaladhanajnjayasphulingabha, nipitapajnachasayakam namannilimpanayakam
Sudha mayukha lekhaya virajamanashekharam, Maha kapali sampade shirojatalamastunah/*

Parama Shiva! We we be bestowed with Siddhis of anima-mahima-laghima-garima-prapti-parakamya-vashitwa, ishitva, parakaya pravesha-doora darshana/shravana, manojavam, swacchanda maranam, deva sahakreeda yathaa sankalpa siddhi from your jataajutas, the halaahala agni as dvoured by you and from the artha chandra mastaka.

*Karaala phaala pattika dhagad dhagad dhagajjvaladghanijaahutikruta prachandapajnachasayake,
Dharadharendra nandini kuchagrachitrapatraka, Prakalpanaikaashilpini trilochane ratirmama/*

Parama Shiva! My intense interest in you if for your Trinetras, the third eye having burnt off Manmadha the God of Love and Passion, besides your damaruka shabda of ‘dhagad dhagad’ and your naughty glances on the Himapurti’s enduring enchantment for ever.

*navina megha mandali niruddhadurdharasphurat,kuhu nishithinitamah prabandhabaddhakandharah/
nilimpanirjhari dharastanotu krutti sindhurah, Kalanidhanabandhurah shriyam jagaddhurandharah/*

Parama Shiva! Do kindly bestow us ‘aishvarya’ as you bear the brunt of the universe, since we pray with commitment and belief in you as with crescent Moon on your fore head, the celestial Ganges on your jataajutaas, as your dark throat retains dark ‘kaala vishaagni’ and chandra kalas get prominent despite th layers of clouds all round. !

*Praphulla nila pankaja prapajinchakalimchatha,Vdambi kanthakandali raruchi prabaddhakandharam/
Smarachchidam purachchhidam bhavachchidam makhachchidam,Gajachchidandhakachidam
tamamtakachchidam bhaje/*

Parama Shiva! I am totally immersed in prayers for you ever as you the sheen of Devalayas, the glory of Lotus ponds, and as Nilagriva spreading the darkness of the Universe . You subjected Kaama Deva with ‘agni jyaalaas as ‘nirupa’ the formless- destroyed Tripurasuras as of negation of Yagjnas, principles, bonds of contented living, and of harassment- shattered Andhaka- overwhelmed Yama as Mrityunjaya!

*Akharvagarvasarvamangala kalakadambamajnjari,Rasapravaha madhuri vijrumbhana madhuvratam/
Smarantakam purantakam bhavantakam makhantakam,Gajantakandhakantakam tamantakantakam
bhaje/*

Parama Shiva!

I pray to Lord Siva, who has bees flying all around because of the sweet Scent of honey coming from the beautiful bouquet of auspicious Kadamba flowers,Who is the slayer of Manmatha, who destroyed the Tripura,Who destroyed the bonds of worldly life, who destroyed the sacrifice,Who destroyed the demon Andhaka, who is the destroyer of the elephants,And who has overwhelmed the God of death, Yama.

*Jayatvadabhravibhrama bhramadbhujangamasafur,Dhigdhidhi nirgamatkarala bhaal havyavat/
Dhimidhimidhimidhva nanmrudangatungamangala,Dhvanikramapravartita prachanda tandavah
shivah/*

Shiva, whose dance of Tandava is in tune with the series of loud,sounds of drum making the sound “Dhimid Dhimid”,Who has fire on his great forehead, the fire that is spreading out because of the breath of the snake, wandering in whirling motions in the glorious sky.

*Drushadvichitratapayor bhujanga mauktikasrajor,Garishtharatnaloshthayoh suhrudvipakshapakshayoh/
Trushnaravindachakshushoh prajamahimahendrayoh,Sama pravartayanmanah kada sadashivam bhaje/*

When will I be able to worship Lord Sadashiva, the eternally auspicious God,With equanimous vision towards people or emperors,Towards a blade of grass and a lotus, towards friends and enemies, Towards the most precious gem and a lump of dirt,Toward a snake or a garland and towards the varied forms of the world?

*Kada nilimpanirjhari nikujnjakotare vasanh,Vimuktadurmatih sada shirah sthamajñjalim vahanh/
Vimuktalolalochano lalamabhalalagnakah,Shiveti mantramuchcharan sada sukhi bhavamyaham*

When I can be happy, living in a cave near the celestial river Ganga,Bringing my hands clasped on my head all the time,With my impure thoughts washed away, uttering the mantra of Shiva,Devoted to the God with a glorious forehead and with vibrant eyes?

*Imam hi nityameva muktamuttamottamam stavam, Pathansmaran bruvannaro vishuddhimeti santatam/
Hare gurau subhaktimashu yati nanyatha gatim,Vimohanam hi dehinam sushankarasya chintanam/*

Anyone who reads, remembers and recites this stotra as stated here,Is purified forever and obtains devotion in the great Guru Shiva. For this devotion, there is no other way or refuge. Just the mere thought of Shiva removes the delusion.

KUBERA THE DIKPALAKA IN THE NORTH

Composed and edited by V.D.N. Rao

The King of Yakshas, the unparalleled Possesor of Gems and Jewellery along with his two Shaktis Viriddhi and Riddhi and his Generals Manibhadra, Purnabhadra, Maniman, Manikandhara, Manisvargi, Manibhushana and Manikar Muktheadhari.

Kubera is described as the grandson of Pulastya and the son of Vishrava and Devi Ilavida or Devavarnini, daughter of the Maharshi Bharadwaaja.Both the Puranas and Ramayana feature Ravana's brothers as the half-blood siblings of Kubera. Vishrava, Kubera's father, also married the Rakshasa princess Kaikeshi who mothered the foursome viz. Ravana, Kumbhakarna, Vibhishana and Surpanakha. Maha Bharata regards Vishrava as the brother of Kubera, so Kubera is described as the uncle of Ravana and his siblings. When Kubera approached Brahma for the favour of superseding his father Pulastya, Brahma created Vishrava. To seek the favour of Vishrava, Kubera sent three women to him, by whom Vishrava begot his demon children. Ravana, after acquiring a boon of Brahma, drove Kubera away from Lanka and seized his Pushpaka Vimana, which was returned to Kubera after Ravana's death. Kubera then settled on Gandhamandana mountain, near Mount Kailas, the abode of Parama Shiva.. Kubera's abode is stated as Alaka-puri.

As Ravana's brothers had returned from their ten thousand years long tapasya after attaining Brahma darshana and the respective boons, Sumali Rakshasa desired to leave Rasatala and along with him Maaricha-Prahasta-Virupaksha and Mahodaras being Sumali's mantris. They had so decided to leave back to Rasatala since the possibility of the pressure of Vishnu's attack had since ceased too. While

leaving for Rasaatala, Sumali embraced Ravana and brothers and explained: Originally this Lankapuri was actually ours only where your cousin brother Kubera had been staying; we could no doubt use the saama-daana-balaprayogaas but did not wish to use them on Kubera. But now, Ravana! do become the king here and also resuscitate Rasatala as we both could thus enjoy our partnership for ever'. Then Ravana had politely replied to his maternal grand father Sumali: ' Dhanaadhyaksa Kubera is after all my elder brother and you should not advise me in this manner.' As Ravana said likewise, Sumali no doubt kept silent for a while, but Rakshasa Prahasta of Sumali's mantri mandali intervened to say: Maha bahu Dashagriva! We have all to respect what your maternal grand father had just explained and should indeed be respected; it might not be always befitting for Veera dheera personalities like you! Let me explain a little more about your own ancestry and lineage: 'Aditi and Diti were both co wives of Pajapati Kashyapa Muni. Aditi gave birth to Devaas the present tribhuvana swaamis while Devi Diti gave birth to Daityas. Veera Ravana! In the past, all the mountains, aranyas, samudras and in fact the entire earth was under the exclusive control of Daityas. But Vishnu had in a series of battles devastated daityas and bestowed the same to deva ganaas. In that manner the same situation prevails now too between devaas and asuraas; therefore you may like to either follow the advice of your maternal grand father or not is your own choice.

On hearing what all Prahasta explained, Ravana was glad to hear his manner of convincing and felt that he should act accordingly. Then Ravana and his trustworthy nishaacharaas entered the nearby surrounding gardens and further to trikuta parvata and asked Prahasta to approach Kubera. He said: 'Prahasta! Now you may approach Kubera in your characteristic manner and explain to him of the proposal coolly. You may explain that rakshasas had all along been residing here and it may not proper to be here any further. Dheneshwara, as such you may like to leave Lankapuri now as you are fully aware of the rudiments of 'dharma and nyaaya'. Your brother Dashagriva had asked me therefore to vacate this Lankapuri as soon as possible.' Then Kubera replied: 'Nishachara! This Lankapuri was totally free as there were no rakshasas were living here as they had long ago left for Rasatala and hence as per my father's directive I had let in families versatile with 'daana-maanaadi guna sampanna prajas'. You are now welcome to utilise you too since my 'rajya and dhana vastuus' have not been partitioned after all!' So saying Kubera had left to meet his father Vishrava Muni. He explained that Dashagriva had sent his messenger and asserted that in the past Lankapuri had been under rakshasaas and as such be returned back to them. Now you should kindly advise me as to what to do. Then Brahmarsi stood up with folded hands and said: 'listen to me son carefully. Ravana had made the demand even as he had hardly entered here. He made this kind of demand to me also, and he was apparently enraged he shouted at me too in a manner that then we would all be ruined. Therefore, son! Listen to me in earnestness. Ravana's durbuddhi is ever risky as his psyche is cruel and vengeful. Hence it would be advisable to leave Lanka and shift to Kailasa parvata with your followers. There the most sancrosant of the rivers named Mandakini would be everflourishing with 'vriksha pushpa sugandhas'. Vishrava Muni further convinced Kubera that on the Kailasa Parvata, deva, gandharva, apsara, naaga, kinnara like celestial beings would be fond of touring the parvata and it should be better not to conflict with these rakshasaas, especially keeping in view the Brahma's varaprapti now.' As the Muni advised, Kubera shifted off to Kailasa Parvata with stree-putra-mantri-vahanas too for good. Then Prahasta was delighted that Kubera had already left with family and followers and reached Ravana of the news with happiness, and that he might take over the sovereignty of Lanka samrajya. Then Dashagriva along with his family members, followers, and rakshasa sena entered the Lankapuri. Then the nishaacharaas had duly celebrated Ravana's rajyabhisheka and in no time rakshasas from all over got

gradually yet most contentedly settled at Lanka samrajya. Meanwhile, as per his respected father's instructions, Kubera settled down at the Kailasa prarvata atop and created Alkapuri on the lined of Indra's Amaravati.

Meanwhile Ravana performed the weddings of sister Shurpanakha with Danava Maya's son Mayaavi, Maya's daughter Mandodari, Vajrajjala Danava's daughter with Kumbhakarna and Shailusha gandharva's daughter Sarama with Vibhishana . After Ravana's rajyabhisheka of Lankapuri, he was concerned of his only sister Shurpanakha. While taking a joy ride in one 'udyanavana' in the outskirts of Lankapuri where only pashu- manushayas move about, Ravana had casually seen Diti Putra Maya Danava and asked him about his background. 'In the distant past, there was an aprsara kanya of swarga loka Hema who was married to me and for some thousand years comfortably having built a Swarna Nagari by 'maaya' but she went away suddenly on some duty of Indra Karya and was yet to return leaving me alone for the last 14 years now leaving me with a daughter and two sons named Mayavi and Dundubhi'. Then Ravana introduced the danava putra about himeself as the Lankapui's King Ravana as the Pulastya poutra Vishrava's putra Ravana now proposing his sister Shurpanakha to Danava putra Maayavi. That was how Lankeshvara Ravana performed hid sister's wedding. Further, Danava Maya proposed his daughter Mandodari to Ravana by holding her hands and said: 'Raja! This is my daughter Mandodari, do kindly accept her as your queen'. Thus the 'panigrahana' was duly performed as agni saakshi.' Then Agastya Muni annotated to Shri Rama that nodoubt Maya Danava was fully aware of Ravana's 'krura pravritti' yet being the descendent of Pulastya and Brahma had taken the risk. Then having successfully executed his sister's and his own weddings returned back to Lankapuri and performed the weddings of his brothers Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana; Virochanakumara Bali Chakravarti's douhitri or grand daughter named 'Vajrajjvaala' to Kumbhakarna and Gandharva Raja Shailusha's daughter 'Sarama' the 'dharma tatwa jnaani' to Vibhishana. Devi Sarama was born on the banks of the famed Manasarovara as her mother cried out : 'Saro maa vardhasya' ; in the confusion of prasava kaala, the mother's expression was Sarah maa! And thus the name of Sarama! In due course Devi Mandodari was blessed with a son Megha naada since Lankapuri was resounded my megha garjanaas and hence Ravana himself named the son as 'Meghanaada' who eventually turned be as Indrajit or who defeated Indra himself.

As Kubera came to learn of Dashagriva's unbridled behavior of cruelty and the resultant misdeeds, he sent an emissary to Ravana and explain of his brother's affection and to kindly abstain from his instant rage on his gandharvas. Initially the emissary called on Vibhishana who welcomed him and asked him as to why he wished to visit Lankapuri and he replied to call on King Ravana with a message. Then he saw Ravana who sent the this message from Kubera: Maha Raja! Your brother Kubera had sent this message for you thus as his parents both belong to 'sadaachaara' background. As in your case,. 'Dashagriva! So far you have not done me justice and request you to tread the path of justice at least now. You had destroyed 'nandana vana' as I had seen myself. You had brutally killed Rishi Maharshis as I had come to learn. You had also started harassing some select Devatas. Rakshasa Raja! Do please recall that had been constantly insulting and harassing me also frequently. Yet I have been taking these affronts as childish immaturity of mind. I would now like to make an appeal to you to reorient your misled psyche. I have now been performing Roudra Vrata with self restraint having reached the himalaya shikhiras. There I have had Bhagavan Maha Deva's divya darshana. I tried to then look around and as my good fotune would have it I saw Devi Parvati Mother too as Rudrani was standing with an unparalleled swarupa. Owing merely to Her kindness my left eye rolled out tears even as my right eyesight was full of sand as of

pingala varna or of red colour as Rudra Deva was Nilohita or of blue colour. Thereafter I mounted another peak of Kailasa and performed rigorous tapasya for eight hundred years with silent concentration and self control. As I was doing so, Bhagavan Maheshwara made His 'saakshaatkaara' and said: Dharmagjna Dhanshwara! I am pleased with your performance of this unique Roudra Vrata as you have the glory of performing this vrata next only to me. Devi Parvati's celestial vision made you to roll tears from your left eye and your right eye with sand with pingala varna. Hence your name and fame should now onward be titled as 'Ekaakshipalingi'! Thence forward I have had established firm rapport and empathy with Bhagavan Shankra. Ravana! therefore you try to erase your 'kula kalanka' as supreme celestials and rishi maharshis had already been keenly engaged in your deep disaster too soon! As Kubera's messenger repeated Kubera's message, Ravanaasura with his red eyes and passionate ferocity pounded his teeth and replied to the messenger: I have indeed understood the substance of the message and neither your master nor even you would be left free with life. Why this emphasis on Kubera's great goodwill of Maha Deva vis a vis that of mine! I am indeed unable to contain myself! So far I have had retained my patience presuming that Kubera happened to be my cousin brother till now, but he had transgressed the outside limits. Now I have arrived at this conclusion that I should conquer trilokas with the strength of my hands and willpower. Right at this very moment I should despatch all the 'chatur disha lokapalakas' to Yama loka. So saying Ravana drew out his sword and killed the messenger to pieces and asked the rakshasaas around to enjoy the flesh. Then Ravanaasura along with six mantris and their senaas too attacked Yaksha sena and having succeeded forced entry Kubera Bhavana Dwaara.

Having killed Kubera's messenger, the highly infuriated Ravana then got readied to attack Kubera, along with his six ministers named Mahodara-Prahasta-Maaricha- Shuka- Saarana- and Dhumraaksha. The Ravana sena crossed cities, villages, rivers, mountains, forests and so on and reached Kailasa Parvata on which Kubera and the yakshas. As the Yaksha sena and the Rakshasa sena got confronted each other, the Ravana mantri sena even of six each of them confronted each of thousand strong yaksha sena. Both the sides of yaksha-rakshasa veera sainikaas exchanged gada-musala-shakthi- tomaras in a manner that the surroundings of the parvata as though Kailasa itself was trembling with vibration. Ravana sena attacked Yakshaas as though agni jwalaas reinforced with 'maha vaayu pravaahaas' blazed forth berserk. As the wild winds shatter off even thick black clouds, Mahodara-Shukaaadi maha mantri senaas had systematically destroyed the ever defensive yaksha left overs. How many of Yakshaas indeed had been survived with their parts destroyed or while their faces crumbled down with their teeth srill intact! Some having been frieghtened and fallen to earth were mutually pacifying each other. Some were dazed as having fallen down like the speedy river water flows seeking to reach the banks. Some of the Yaksha soldiers had swiftly reached veera swarga, some gazing the proceedings of the battle along with deva rishi samuhaas while still in queues waiting for their turn for entry. At that juncture of the battle Kubera despatched 'Samyodhakantaka Veera Yaksha Veera', who attacked Rakshasa Maaricha like Vishnu would hurl his maha chakraayudha and the rakshasa fell deep down the kailasa parvata on earth. Having thus tossed down the Parvata, Maaricha took some rest returned and started confronting 'Samyodhakanataka' once again as the latter ran away and stood frightened. Meanwhile Dashagriva sought entry in the Kubera dwaara and was resisted by the dwaarapalala Suryabhaanu and punched the Mahasura Ravana by forcefully lifting the gates of the gate and smashed Ravana as the latter's blood flowed out nodoubt yet in tune with Brahma vara to Ravana was the least affected smacked back the dwaarapalaka as he was frightened and ran away. Thus, being totally unable to resist Ravana, yaksha sena found that they were neither able to resist nor defeat Rakshasaas nor save themselves.

Ravanaasura along with mantris and rakshasa sena attacks Yaksha sena and Dikpati -Dhanapati Kubera and after a remarkable victory seizes pushpaka vimana for ever and returned to Lankapuri

As thousands of Yaksha Veeraas fled away, leaving behind countless yakshas were smashed to death, one Maha Yaksha named Manibhadra encountered Ravana and having led four thousand Yaksha Veeras as per Kubera's instruction. They were fully readied with gada-musala-praasa-shakti-tomara-mudgaraas and assaulted as they encouraged each other asserting that they should never leave a single rakshasa from death or while exchanging their ayudhas from each other. In fact while witnessing the killing sprees of rakshaaas, even Brahmavaad Rishis too were taken aback with surprise. But alas! Rakshasa Prahasta killed one thousand yakshas, Maareecha made two thousand yakshas downed to dust. Indeed! This easy way of fighting at ease irritated Dhumraksha and having got into vehement cruelty assaulted with his 'maayaa maya' methodology and threw his 'musala' at the chest of Manibhadra. In turn, Manibhadra lifted his mace and having revolved it a few times battered at the head of Dhumraksha who fell down while 'rakta pravaahaas' were resulted. Dashaaana on seeing this got enraged and hit three shakti ayudhaas simultaneously at the headgear of Manibhadra who was also reputed as Paarshvamoulika fled away by Ravana's prahaara, realising that the latter was invincible any way. It was at that time that Kubera himself was visible from a distance along with two of his mantris named Shukra and Prousthapada. A little while later, Kubera addressed his first cousin Ravana as follows: Durbuddhi Dashagriva! Even after my sending across my considered advice, you have shamelessly attacked your co-brother and as you should finally had dropped in the hell, then only you would learn of that advice. Could those evil minded personalities like you having been puffed up with poisonous avarice ever absorb the purport of karma phala jnaana! Even after attaining success by such ways and means, if were not abided by dharma which devas abhor about, such success is merely sporadic and truly transient. But most unfortunately right now this everlasting truism being the nature of incomprehensibility and a mystery. *yo hi maātṛḥ pitṛṇ bhrātṛṇ ācaryāṃś cāvamanyate, sa paśyati phalaṃ tasya pretarājavaśaṃ gataḥ/ adhruve hi śarīre yo na karoti tapo 'rjanam, sa paścāt tapyate mūḍho mṛto dṛṣṭvātmano gatim/ kasya cin na hi durbudheś chandato jāyate matiḥ, yādṛśaṃ kurute karma tādṛśaṃ phalam aśnute/ buddhiṃ rūpaṃ balaṃ vittaṃ putrān mātṛāmyam eva ca, prapnuvanti narāḥ sarvaṃ svakṛtaiḥ pūrvakarmabhiḥ/* He who betrays mothers and fathers, brahmanas and gurus of maturity and wisdom would be the natural preys of 'paapa bhogata' and thus of dishonoured victims of Yama dharma raja. This body of ours is truly transient and once being ignorantly or well knowingly commit duraacharaas post death then there could be no retrievability ever possible. Paapaphala is merely the root of 'duhkha maha vriksha' and is certainly not transferable. Mudhatva and Papatva are the such two branches of a Vriksha as would poison hastening its destruction. Karma and phala lead each other as being the nature of existence, since as one sows so is reaped. All the Beings on earth get bestowed with 'samriddhi- sundara rupa-bala-vaibhava-veerata-yukta santaana trupti only by 'punya karma anushthaana'. As Kubera concluded his explanation thus, he hit his gada ayudha on Ravana's head and thus led to mutual 'ayudha prahaaraas'. Kubera released his 'agneyastra' which was equalised with Ravana's 'vaarunastra'. Then Ravana revealed his numerous forms of tigers, wild boars, clouds, mountains, seas, maha vrikshas, daityas and so on. Then Ravana upheld his mighty 'gada' and thumped on Kubera's head as the latter like a maha ashoka vriksha fell down on to earth. Thus Ravanaasura was puffed up with triumph against Yaksha Raja Kubera the Dhanaadhyaksha- Dikpati- Dhrama dhwaja and seized the Pushpaka Vimana right under his unique control. That Pushpaka is decorated its interiors with golden pillars with vaidurya mani toranas and pearl laced net works of magnificence while its exteriors with rich vriksha sampada which would yield

sweetest fruits and of a plethora of fragrant flowers all the seasons, be it summer or winter or rains. Thus Ravana with all his followers flew down the Kailasha shikharas on to Lankapuri with sensational victory.

[Sourced from Valmiki Uttara Ramayana]

Ganesha Purana :

1. Ganesha supresses Kubera's arrogance:

By His very name, Vinayaka is a Jnaana Swarupa or the Symbol of Wisdom and Knowledge. Yet, any third party seeking to exhibit their own supremacy - especially by Devas, He could hardly stomach the false superiority. Lord Kubera the King of Yakshas once hosted a lavish feast and among other dignitaries called on Shiva and Parvati; the noblest couple responded that due to their preoccupations, they might have to regret but would ably deputise Lord Ganesha. At the scheduled time and day, all the Devas arrived and Ganesha too. Kubera was so happy as streams of Deva ganas were arriving at Alkapuri and felt proud of himself. Ganesha too arrived and showed off condescendingly remarking to other dignitaries nearby that Parvati Parameshvaras were busy and deputed Vinayaka instead. Then the dinner commenced with great pomp, while the invitees had thoroughly enjoyed the nine course dinner. Meanwhile however Ganesha whose appetite was unending made thousands of servers kept their beelines gasping and tottering the supply lines. As the three crore strong Deva Ganas were bemused witnessing the failure of lakhs of servers and cooks alike, Kubera was put to shame and ran to Parameshvara couple to Kailasha with a fistful of cooked rice by way of his offering to the illustrious Universal Parents of Maha Deva and Maha Devi. Ganesha with dissatisfied appetite too was already present there with His parents. The benign parents found a gasping Kubera running from Alkapuri to Kailasa cowed down and demoralised while prostrating Shiva- Parvati- and above all to Ganesha too.

Once Maha Muni Koundinya further informed Indra about Loka sanchaari Narada's visit to Lord Ganesha Himself. The latter was delighted and after the preliminary formalities asked Narada about the latter's latest visit earlier to Bhuloka. Narada referred to Mithila and its King Janaka. The King was a renowned dharmatma, daana karta, vigjnaana vetta, and Maha Jnaani. Narada further exclaimed whether the glory and popularity was essentially to Ganesha Puja. Then Ganesha desired to test the King and approached him as a Kushthi (leper) and very old brahmana with unbearable body odour spitting blood all over and with halted body movement. Even urchins avoided the leper and crowds of the public ran away. He reached the rajadwara and declared to the guards in shouting and highly agitated tone that he wished to dine along with the King. Informed by the secret agents of the arrival of the old leper brahmana, King Janaka wondered that Lord Parameshwara Himself might have arrived at the gate and wondered that his glory on earth might be recorded in human history! As the decrepit old kushthu brahmana strutted in tremblingly, the King instructed for food be served at once and disregard of all types of manners ate away the varied specialties of royal food delicacies without break. Then he remarked that the host King no doubt spread away delicacies no doubt and he thought that the hapless hungry leper would eat it like a raksha, but had the Majesty realised that the citizens of the Kingdom had felt that the 'dhaanya' was looted by the King through his middle men landlords; this was why the King needed to be alerted ! The King put down his head in shame as the beggar leper left in disgust and he went around the city and did the prachaara among the houses of the Kingdom that the King ignored the Public interest! The public kept quiet without reaction as after all they could not afford to do so. '

Then Ganesha he entered the home of poverty stricken 'dwija dampatis'/ brahmana couples named Trishira and Dampati. The poor brahmana couple who merely squatted on earth in half nakedness as

mosquitoes and worms were spread out. They were however immersed in Ganesha Puja with pushpas and patras. At the end of the puja, they offered the left over puja dravyas viz. the pushpa patras to eat even by self denial. Ganesha smiled and remarked that he had just returned from the dining table of the King but the panchabhakshya bhojana offered there could not give him as much of contentment as their offering with bhakti even to a miserable leper like him. He stated: *Mithilaadhipateh keertim shrutvaaham khshudeto bhrusham, tripikaamaha samaayaato nasa triptim mamaakarot/ Karmanaa daabhikenaiva satvam parirakshate, mama truptikaram kinchidgrihe chedasti deeyataam/* Could the show of 'dambha'-self pride-in the 'mahaa daanaas', dharma karmnas like yagnas and charities of a King be weighed against genuine devotion! Therefore do offer me the left over patras after the puja. The Brahmana couple exclaimed as to how the ocean like royalty and his unimaginable food saturated with niceties be comparable with a drop of water! Then Ganesha appeared before them and said that nishkama karmas with truthful devotion ought to be commended most certainly and should secure moksha to the brahmana couple. Meanwhile, King Janaka who was put to shame by the leper brahmana, visited every household of the poor and resorted to 'annadaana' and gradually improved his name as an 'annadaata maha raaja'. He also visited the abode of the brahmana couple and equipped it with all facilities. After performing the acid like testing of King Janaka, Ganesha returned to Indra and asked him to donate him that much gold as equivalent to 21 durva yugmas. Indra asked his wife Shachi Devi who sent a messenger to Kubera. The latter exclaimed that Shachi had apparently fallen a prey to the vyaamoha for Indra and that was why she asked for a meagre weight of 21 durva yugmas but why not much and far more! Any way Kubera called for 21 durva yugmas and placed a small quantity of gold but the weighing balance did not even move. More gold was placed but to no movement; further gold was weighed too but no movement again and again; the entire gold stock of Kubera's treasury which was of mountain heaps too failed the balance. He ordered in desperation that the entire gold from all over Alkaapuri be placed on a huge balance against the paltry durva yugmas of 21 then again there a was no sucess. Meanwhile Indra arrived on his Iraanata Elephant and brought all the gold in swarga loka yet again to no avail! Shiva, Vishnu, Kubera, Varuna, Indra, Agni, Marutaadi Devas along with Deva, Devarshi; Siddha, Vidyaadharas arrived at the Ashram of Maha Muni Koundaya.

Shiva Purana

Bhagavan Shiva decided to reside at Kailash nearby Kubera's abode

Narada Devarshi sought explanations from Brahma as why did Bhagavan Siva decide to reside in Kailasa? Brahma explained thus: A Brahmana named Yogadutta, an expert in performing Soma Yajna, had a son Gunanidhi a Scholar but got attracted to evil ways like gambling. Yogadutta became angry and abandoned Gunanidhi and even his wife. Having become highly remorseful, Gunanidhi left his home and on one night reached a temple where Siva's devotees were observing the 'Shivaratri' fast and heard the Stories of Shiva's greatness and hymns. But being hungry he sought to steal some fruits and light up a lamp which was almost dim by tearing his cloth and re-lighting it. But the devotees caught him, mistook him as a thief, thrashed him up and he died. The 'Yamabhatas' or the followers of Lord Yama arrived and planned to take away the soul of Gunanidhi; but Shivaganas were happy with Gunanidhi and took him to Sivaloka instead since he spent 'Shivaratri' fasting in a Shiva temple, observed the whole night hearing Siva's stories and hymns and even lit up a lamp with his own cloth piece as a vick. In the next birth, Gunanidhi became a King of Kalinga as Dama and a staunch devotee of Shiva, ordered his subjects to observe Shiva Pujas and Shivaratri fasts compulsory and thus got endeared by Bhagavan. In the subsequent birth Gunanidhi/ Dama became **Kubera** as the King of Alkapuri. During the next Kalpa named 'Meghavahan', the same Gunanidhi of the previous births, became the King of Alkapuri as Vishravan, (the grandson of Sage Pulastya-Brahma's manasa putra) and as an unparalleled Devotee of

Bhagavan Siva did penance for lakhs of years; Shiva and Bhagavati Uma were pleased and appeared before Gunanidhi / Kubera / Vishravan but the radiance of their appearance blinded him and when he regained the yogic sight the devotee became instantly so possessive of Bhagavan that even Uma should not be so near to Bhagavan! Immensely pleased, Bhagavan decided to shift His residence to KailashMountain which was nearby Alkapuri and ordered Visvakarma to build His permanent residence there!

Lakshmi Puja Vidhi on Dhanteras Day of Deepavali

Kubera the treasurer of the Universe is worshipped along with Bhoga Bhagya Lahshmi as follow:

1. Kubera Dhyana:

Manuj–Brahma–Viman–Sthitam, Garuda–Ratna–Nibham Nidhi–Naykam, Shiva–Sakham Mukutadi–Vibhushitam, Var–Gade Dadhatam Bhaje Tundilam/

May we pray the magnanimous Kubera, who mounts on human-form chariot, who is the master of all the Nidhis or treasures like Garuda Deva the who is friend of Shiva, as adorned with crown and other Jewelleries and with one hand in Vara-Mudra and carry a mace / gada in the other hand.

2. Aavaahana:

After Dhyanam of Kubera, invoke Him with following Aavahana Mantra with folded hands

Aavahayami Dev! Tvamihayahi Kripam Kuru, Kosham Vardhdaya Nityam, Tvam Pari–Raksha Sureshwara/

Deva Kubera! May I appeal to you to be with me for ever and to oblige me. Please protect and enrich my treasure and its riches.

3.Pushpanjali with Sukhaasana

Nana–Ratna–Samayuktam Kartya–Swar–Vibhushitam, Aasanam Dev–Devesh! Preetyartham Prati–Grihyataam/ Kuber–Devay Aasanarthe Pancha–Pushpani Samarpayami/

Deva Kubera! Please accept the golden seat decorated with different types of jewels for my pleasure. Hence, I offer five flowers for the seat to you Kubera Deva/.

4. Upachaara Puja

After this be performed then the Kuber Puja with Chandan, Akshata, Pushpa, Dhupa, Deep and Naivedya while chanting following Mantras.

Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Padyom Padhyam Samarpayami /

Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Shirsi Arghyam Samarpayami /

Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Gandhakshatam Samarpayami /

Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Pushpam Samarpayami /

Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Dhoopam Ghrapayami /

Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Deepam Darshayami /
Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Naivedyam Samarpayami /
Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Achamaniam Samarpayami /
Om Shri Kuberaya Namha Tamboolam Samarpayami /

Shri Kubera Nava Upchara PujanaMantra

5. Puja Sammarpana:

After doing Pujan as described above, take Gandha, Akshata and Pushpa in left hand and leave them over or near the chest with right hand while chanting following Mantra.

Om Shri Kuberaya Namha/Anen Pujanen Shri Dhanadhyaksha-Shri Kuber Preeyatam /
Namo Namah /Shri Kubera Puja Samarpan Mantra thus/ Aneka aneka naaskaaraas to you Kubera Deva!

LORD VENKATESHWARA AND DEVI PADMAVATI

Venkatachala at Tirupati-Tirumala

(Om namo Venkateshaaya Sriniasaaya Mangalam)*Venataadri samam sthaanam brahmande naasti kinchana, Ventatesha samo Devo na bhuti na bhavishyati/* (There indeed is no God like Lord Venateshwara on Earth and none else like the self- manifested singular Deity worthy of faith and total dedication for now and for ever)

Crossing the Seven Hills of Vrishabhadri named after Nandi the Shiva Vahana, Anjanaadri of Lord Hanuman, Neeladri named after Shakti Neela Devi, Garudadri the Vishnu Vahana, Seshadri named after Lord Shesha the abode of Vishnu, Narayanadri named after Lord Narayana and finally the ‘Venkatadri’, is the popular Tirupati-Tirumala ‘Deva Sthaana’ in the State of Andhra Pradesh of India. This is one of the world’s wealthiest and most visited Hill-Shrines of Pilgrimage at a height of 3200 ft or 976 m approx. reachable on foot, road, rail and Air, beckoning the glittering Temple of ‘Suvarna Shikara’ or Golden Top *par excellence*. Around the Temple, the most significant places of interest included are Akaasha Ganga, Srivaari Sacred Feet, Paapavinashana, Sri Ramanuja Shrine, Swami Pushkarini, Varaha Swami Temple and so on.

Venkataachala Mahatmya:

Being the Outstanding and World famed Tirupati-Tirumala Divya Kshetra, the most sprawling Temple Town of Balaji literally elevates the yatris to heights of Sacrifice and Faith on the bedrock of Dharma. Magnetising devotees from far and wide, the torrential flood of yatris is perennial here. Indeed Lord Venkateshwara is the wealthiest God of the World, crossing the hopes of the Pope in the Vatican City!
Shrinivasapuraa Vedaah Shri Nivasaparaa makhaah, Shrinivasa paraah sarvey tasmaadanyatra

vidyate/ Sarva Yagna Tapodaana tirtha snaane tu yat phalam, Tat plalam koti gunitam Srinivaasasya sevayaa/ Venkataadri nivasam tam chintayan ghatikaadwayam, Kulaikavimshatim dhutwaa Vishnu loka maheeyate! (All the Vedas do merely propose Bhagavan Shrinivasa only exclusively. All the yagna karyas do target Shrinivasa only. Indeed, all kinds of Bhakti or devotion merge into and identify with Shrinivasa alone. The totality of Yagjna, Tapa, Daana, Anushthaana and Tirtha Snaanas falls far short of Shrinivasa seva! Those residents of Venkatachala engrossed in the true service of Venkateshwara shall liberate the souls of the previous twenty one generations and qualify themselves too to Vishnu Loka). The yatris invariably halt over at Tirupati down the Tirumala's Seven Hills where Govinda Raja Temple set up by Ramanujacharya with the Shesha saayi Narayana is the Main Attraction with some 15 smaller Deva Mandiras in and around the Sanctum. One of the Ashta Peethas of Ramajucharya is also significance here. Tirupati is also the Abode of Kodandra Rama, Devi Sita, Lakshmana and Huanuman. Once up the Seven Hills, the prime destination no doubt is that of Lord's Divya darshana, yet the primaries are the 'Kalyana Ghattaa' for the Hair Sacrifice, Swami Pushkarini followed by Varaha Swami darshana and then to the Q complex to Vaikuntha for the climactic experience of bliss.

Most significant Tirthas up the Hills are Akasha Ganga, Paapa nashana Tirtha, Vaikuntha Guha dhara, Pandava Tirtha, and Jaabali Tirtha. In the 'Vaishnava Khanda' of Skanda (Kartika) Purana, Varaha Deva gave 'Upadesha' (instruction) of the Sacred Mantra *Om Namah Shri Varahaya Dharanyu Uddharanaya Swaha* to Bhudevi and its significance; the Mantra fulfills all desires and leads to liberation. A Manu called Dharma recited the Mantra persistently and attained Moksha; Indra chanted it and regained his throne that was occupied by demons therebefore and Anantha the Chief of Serpents secured such extraordinary strength as to hold the weight of Prithvi (Earth) on his hoods. Bhudevi expressed her gratitude to Varaha Deva to have saved from the grip of Demon Hiranyakasipu as also taught the Great Mantra. She admired Varaha Deva for providing the power and perseverance to hold the weight of huge mountains and desired Him to describe to her the names of some of the illustrious Mountains the weight of which was borne by her. These include Sumeru, Himachal, Vindhya, Mandarachal, Gandha - madhan, Chitrakoot, Malyavaan, Pariyatrik, Mahendra, Malay, Sahya, Simhachal, Raivat and Anjana; in the South of Bharat the most significant are Arunachal, Hasthiparvat, Grudhrachal, Ghatikachal and most importantly the Narayana Giri or Venkatachala which possesses the Seven Tirthas in the Mountain Range viz. Chakra Tirth, Daiva Tirth, Akasha Ganga, Kumaradhari Kartikeya, Papanashani, Pandava Tirha, and Swami Pushkarini. Varaha Deva affirmed that in Krita Yuga, the most important Mountain Range was that of Anjanagiri; in Treta Yuga it was Narayana Giri; in Dwapar Yuga was Simhachal and in Kali Yuga again the most sacred mountain range is Venkatachala. In Magha month when Surya Deva is in Kumbha Rasi on Purnima day coinciding with the Makha Star, Skanda worships Venkateswara on the banks of Swami Pushkarini Tirtha at the noon time and devotees performing 'Snaan' and Puja as also 'Annadaan' are blessed by the Lord. Similarly, Snaans, worships and charities at Venkatachala are highly beneficial on the auspicious timings when Surya is in Meena Rasi on Purnima with Uttaraphalguni in Thumbha Tirtha; when Surya is in Mesha Rasi on Purnima with Chitra Star in Akasha Ganga at early mornings; when Surya is in Vrishabha Rasi in Visakha Shukla / Krishna fortnights on Dwadasi Sunday / Tuesday at Pandava Tirtha on evenings; on Sundays of Shukla / Krishna fortnights, coinciding Saptami at Papanashana Tirtha; on Brihaspati / Vyakteeta Yogya, Star Pushya / Sravana Mondays etc;

In Skanda Purana, Varaha Deva described to Bhudevi that Emperor Akash decided to perform a Grand Yagna on the banks of Arani and while tilling, he found a girl child and as he was issueless, brought her up as their own, named as Padmavati. Once Sage Narad met Padmavati as she was grown up as an

eligible bride and predicted that she would be the wife of Lord Srinisasa of Venkatachal. Almost immediately she met a Stranger in the Royal Garden and introduced himself as Anant or Veerapati from Venkatachal Mountain and that he was hunting a wolf. Padmavati's companions rebuffed Ananta Deva that hunting was prohibited in their garden. Anantha returned but desired intensely that Padmavati should become His life partner and sent Vakulamala to the court of Emperor Aakash to negotiate their wedding. The Emperor had no bounds of joy and the holy wedding of Lord Venkateswara and Padmavati took place in style and grandeur when Devi Lakshmi was present to make Padmavati happy and comfortable, whereafter they all resided in Tirumala bestowing boons to lakhs of Devotees till date.

Varaha Deva narrated the background of Padmavati's earlier birth as Vedavati Bhuvati. Vedavati was a companion of Devi Lakshmi and when the latter became Rama's spouse as Sita, she left for forests to perform Tapasya, but demon Ravana misbehaved with her and she ended her life by jumping into fire and cursed Ravana that his entire clan would be wiped out because of a woman. Sita was abducted by Ravana by creating such circumstances that Maricha was converted as a Golden Deer; Sita took fancy for it and prevailed Sri Rama to chase the animal which deceitfully wailed as though Rama was in trouble and Lakshmana had to leave Sita alone even by drawing a Lakshman Rekha that none could cross. The vile Ravana dressed as a Tapsvi revealed his real form as soon as she was prevailed to cross the fiery Lakshman Rekha and forcibly took her to Lanka. After Rama killed Ravana, there was 'Agni-Pariksha' (Proof of Purity / by Fire), Sita came out unscathed. But the real fact was that Agni Deva hid real Sita in Patala and Agni's wife Swaha assumed the role of Maya Sita; in fact Vedavati's earlier birth was of Swaha Devi! Thus, Vedavati / Swaha turned to Maya Sita was Padmavati.

Devi Prithvi enquired of Bhagavan Varaha as to where and how to secure the 'Darshan' (Vision) of Lord Venkateswara and the former replied that He would mention of those future happenings as recorded in the past. There was a Nishad (Hunter) in Shyamak Jungle named Vasu and his wife Chitravati and Son Vira. Nishad was the Chief of his clan living honestly and peacefully by eating cooked rice and honey. Both his wife and he decided one day to a nearby forest to search for additional stock of honey and entrusted the responsibility of looking after his followers and daily chores to Vira, their son. The daily practice was that the family cooked rice and mixed with honey, offered the same as Naivedya to Venkatachalapati and ate the Prashad. But, Vira in their absence for the day offered some portion of the honeyed rice into Agni, some to tree bushes and the rest was consumed. On return from the other forest, Vasu became furious to learn that no offer of the honeyed rice was made to Venkatachalapati but gave it away as described above. Vasu felt agitated and remorsefully guilty and even tried to kill his son for what was considered as Sacrilege. Lord Venkatachal appeared before Nishad in full glory with His four hands, fully ornamented and armed and stopped Vasu from harming his son; he was completely taken aback. The Lord said that the acts of his son Vira were in fact worth emulation and not condemnation for he did a homam (Offering to Agni); homage to Nature and only the remainder was consumed with dedication as 'prashad'. Nishad was so happy that he heard this from Bhagavan Himself!

Varaha Deva also narrated an incident related to King Tondaman and Nishad. As an ideal Prince, he imbibed all the qualities required of a King, viz. of nobility, intellect, valour and devotion to Almighty. Once he took King's permission for hunting in Venkatachal forests, chased an elephant, crossed the River Swarnamukhi and reached the Ashram of Brahmarshi Suka and an Idol of Goddess Renuka nearby. As he proceeded further, he found a 'Pancharangi' (Five Coloured) Parrot screeching the name of 'Srinivasa, Srinivasa' and followed the bird till the mountain top. There he met Nishad who informed that the parrot

was very dear to Suka Muni as also to Bhagavan Srihari and hovered around the Pushkarini Tirtha; by so saying the Nishad desired to have a Darshan of the Lord and the Prince too accompanied him. Thondaman was indeed thrilled with the Darshan and witnessed the 'Naivedya' of Cooked rice and honey performed by Vasu Nishad. He was overpowered by the magnificent experience of the Lord and thereafter met Suka Muni and secured his blessings that soon he would become a King after his father's retirement and serve Srinivasa for long time to come. A few days after Thondaman's return to his Capital, he was made the King and started settling in his throne.

Suddenly after a few months, Vasu the Nishad approached the Palace in an agitated manner and told the King that he dreamt chasing a 'Varaha' which entered a thick bush, that he started digging up and swooned, that his son was also near him, that the Varaha entered his mind and body and made him say the following: 'Nishada! You must reach King Todarman and ask him to perform 'Abhishek' with lots of milk to a 'Shila' (Stone) underneath this thick bush, pull it out and ask a 'Shilpi' (Sculptor) to prepare an Idol of my features with Bhu Devi on my left lap, set up plants of Tamarind and Champa as are loved by Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively and invite learned Sages and Brahmanas to attend a grand function to be hosted by Tondaman and wait for my further instructions.

The King followed the instructions as conveyed by Nishad and called Sages and Brahmanas to a Grand Puja of Varaha Deva and Bhu Devi through an underground passage and continued the daily practice of taking bath, worshipping the Murthis of Varaha and Bhu Devi and arranging 'Prashad' or the left-behinds of Naivedya to Brahmanas and visitors. As this practice got routinised and the interest of Bhaktas snow-balled gradually, a Brahmana stranger approached the King that he was on way to Kasi, Prayaga and a few prominent Tirthas but his wife was unable to travel as she was in the family way; he requested the King to provide accommodation and food to his wife and generally supervise her welfare. The Brahmana returned very late after several months but unfortunately the wife had a miscarriage and died just a couple of days before the return of the Brahmana after visiting several Pilgrimage Centers and Tirthas. The King got frightened at the tragedy as he gave a surety to the Brahmana's wife and approached Srinivasa, who instructed that the Queens as well as the body of the Brahman's wife should be made to take bath in the Asthi Sarovar Tirtha and as the queens took dips in the holy water and came out, the Brahmana's wife too would emerge. The Brahmana was thrilled at the miracle witnessed by co-devotees!

Raja Todarman followed the practice of worshipping Srinivasa with golden lotuses daily. He found one day some Tulasi leaves pulled out from muddy plants and wondered how this indiscretion happened. As the King was wondering about this, there emerged a voice saying: "There is a pot maker (Kumhara) who also did daily Puja to me with the muddy Tulasi leaves from his house and that I have accepted his worship too!" The King reached Kurmapuri in search of the Kumhara, who replied to the King that he never ever did any puja to Srinivasa! But when the King said that there was a voice which said these words, the Kumhara and his wife recalled the voice of Srinivasa in their earlier births that as and when a King would knock their hut, and then a Pushpa Viman would arrive to pick them to Vishnuloka! Indeed that had just happened! The King returned to Venkateswara Temple to perform worship again after this unusual happening and Srinivasa appeared before Tondaman and bestowed him the blessing of a lasting Abode of bliss.

Parikshit, son of Abhimanyu of Pandavas, was no doubt a noble and virtuous King, but unfortunately did the unpardonable sin of hanging a dead serpent around the neck of Samika Muni who was in deep

Tapasya and his son Shringi cursed Parikshit that he would be dead within a week as a result of a snake bite. Takshak was assigned the task of killing Parikshit but Brahmana Kashyap who could indeed have prevented the tragedy and even demonstrated his ability to do so, was won over by dubious means by Takshak and Kashyap who did the sin was sought to be washed off by a bath in Swami Pushkarini and worship to Srinivasa, as advised by Shakalya Muni. Indeed the sin of Kashyap was eradicated by the Grace of Lord Venkateswara.

Another illustration of the Sanctity of Snaan in Swami Pushkarini was given by Sutha Maha Muni to Rishis at a Congregation at Naimisharanya (The forest of Naimisha). A King of Chandravamsa called Dharmagupta was a rare example of nobility and virtue. He went hunting and by the evening desired to perform the Puja of Gayatri and was delayed to late hours and had to stay back on a tree. A lion came running after a wolf and ascended the same tree; it asked the King not to worry and would not hurt him in any way. It asked the King to come to an understanding that it would sleep off half night and he might sleep off the other half. The lion tempted the wolf to drop the King down and share a good portion of the King. The wolf rejected the proposal outright as ingratitude was a far heinous sin than the 'Panchapatakas' or the Five known major sins. During the other half of the night when the King was to guard the wolf, the lion gave a similar proposal to him; he accepted and tried to drop the sleeping wolf. But luckily, the wolf was saved and preached the King against ingratitude and gave a curse to the King to become a mad man. It said that he was a Sage, named Dhyanakashtha, who could take any form and told the lion that in his earlier birth he was a Minister in the Court of Kubera and was cursed by Gautama Muni to become a lion as he was standing naked in the Sage's garden with his woman. As regards Dharmagupta's curse for ingratitude, Sage Jaimini suggested a bath in the Sacred 'Swami Pushkarini' on Venkatadri on the banks of River Suvarnamukhi, followed by worship of Lord Venkateswara.

Suta Maha Muni described that those who purify themselves in the Pushkarini would surely avoid hells named Tamisra, Andhamisra, Rourav, Maha Rourav, Kumbhipak, Kaalsutra, Asipatravan and such others. On the other hand, the devotees attain the 'Punya' of performing Aswamedha Yagna and achieve Buddhi (Intellect), Lakshmi (Wealth), Kirti (Fame), Sampatthi (Prosperity), Gyan (wisdom), Dharma (Virtue), Manoshuddhi (Purity of mind) and Vairagya (Other Worldliness). Krishna Tirtha is a Tirtha named after a deeply devoted Brahmana whose Tapasya was so severe and extensive that his body developed mole-hills (Valmikas) and Indra rained forcefully to wash off the mud. Lord Srinivasa was impressed by the relentless and highly dedicated devotion and blessed him with His Darshan, created a Tirtha after his name, declared that those who have the fortune of bathing in it would become as learned and focussed and bestowed Salvation to him.

Paapanaasha Tirtha is such a powerful place that even merely uttering its name, sins of the past and present get vanished. There was a Brahmana named Bhadrmati who had enormous knowledge of Vedas and Scriptures but was acutely impoverished having six wives and several children. His each day was a harrowing experience of poverty with several mouths to feed. One of his wives named Kamini told him one day that her father met Sage Narada who described Tirtha called Papanashana lying on the Venkateswar Mountain cluster was a big draw and a bath, preferably after giving away a small token 'bhudaan' to a deserving Brahmana followed by a darshan of the Lord would abolish poverty, and fulfil all human desires. This emboldened Bhadrmati to travel along with his family to the Srinivasa Mountain. He was fortunate to obtain on way a token of five feet of land. The entire family took bath in the Papanashana Tirtha and gave away charity of the five feet of land to a deserving Brahmana. Bhagavan

Vishnu had instantly appeared before Bhadramati; the latter was extremely thrilled at the darshan and eulogised Him as follows:

*'Namo Namasthekhila karanaaya, Namo namesthekhila paalakaya/ Namo Namestheyemara nayakaya
Namo Namo Daithya vimardanaya/ Namo Namo Bhakthajanapriyaya, Namo Namah Paapavidaaranaya/
Namo Namo Durjananashakaya, Namasthesthu Tasmai Jagadeeshvaraya/ Namo namah
Karanavamayaya, Naraayanaathivikramaya/ Shri Shankha chakraasi gadaadharaaya, Namasthesthu
tasmai Purushottamaya/ Namah payoraasi nivaasakaaya, Namasthesthu Lakshmi pathavyayaya/
Namasthesthu Suryadyamitha-prabhaaya, Namo Namah Punyagathaagathaaya/ Namo
Namokyenduvilochanaya, Namasessthudey Yagna phalapradaaya/ Namastesthu Yagnaangavilochanaya,
Namasthesthu thye Sajjanavallabhaaya/Namo namah Kaarana Kaaranaaya, Namesthesthu Shabdaadi
vivarjitaaya/ Namasthesthuthybhheshta sukhahpradaaya, Namo Namo Bhakta -manoramaaya/ Namo
namasthedbhuta karanaaya, Namasthesthuthy Manda radhaarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy
Yagnavarrahanaagney, Namo Hiranyakshavidaarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy Vaamana rupabhaaje,
Namasthesthuthy Kshatrakulaanthakaaya/ Namasthesthuthy Ravana mardanaaya, Namasthesthuthy
Nanda sutaagrajaaya, Namasthey kamalaakaantha Namasthey Sukha daayiney, Ashritartha nashiney
tubhyam bhuyo bhuyo Namo namah?'*

As Bhadramati praised Lord Srinivasa, He blessed him to enjoy full-swing prosperity to him and family and attain Moksha to him thereafter. 'Akasha ganga Tirtha' was well known for bestowing boons to the highly erudite and dedicated Brahmana called Ramanuja. He did Tapasya of rigorous nature on the banks of Akashganga by standing with 'Panchagni' (Five flames) around him during the hot summer mid-days and under the sky in heavy rains fully exposed chanting the Ashtakshari Mantra 'Om Namo Narayanaya'; he ate dry leaves fallen from trees for years together, for some years by drinking water and many other years by consuming air only. Finally, Bhagavan appeared and Ramanuja who was almost dying with the severity of his Tapasya became fully normal and healthy instantly. He received the boons that the Place of Akasha Ganga where Ramanuja had the fortune of discovering Vishnu in person would be an Eternal water-spring and those who performed 'Snaan' would change his entire life style and become an ideal Bhakta and at the end they would have no other birth and would get salvation.

In another context, Akash Ganga was immortalised as the Tirtha where Devi Anjana executed penance, since she and her husband Vayu Deva were not blessed with a son. Vishnu Bhakta Sage Matangi directed Anjana Devi to reach River Suvarnamukhi, far south of Vindhya Mountain, reach Vrishabhachal on whose top was situated the famous Swami Pushkarini, worship Varaha Deva and Venkateswara, proceed to north, find Akashaganga and perform Snaan in a formal manner along with Vayu Deva. The Sage confirmed that if the couple did so, a Son of unparalleled prowess and 'Swami Bhakti' (Loyalty to the Master) would be born, to be called Hanuman who was invincible by Devas, Raakshasas, Sages, Brahmanas, Celestial and human beings. As Anjana Devi followed the instructions to the last letter and spirit, Bhagavan Venkateswara appeared before her and blessed that such a Son would be born that his parents would indeed be proud of and play a pivotal role in Treta Yuga as the most powerful personality of 'Siva Amsa'.

Besides the above, Venakatachal has quite a few other Tirthas like Chakra Tirtha where a Maha Muni Padmanabha prayed to Srinivasa to chase away the dread of Rakshasas and Bhagavan stationed His Sudarshan Chakra known for dispelling the fear of Evil Spirits; Varaha Tirtha, Pandu Tirtha, Tumba

Tirtha, Kapila Tirtha, Kumara Tirtha, Jaraharaadi Tirtha Traya, Phalguni Tirtha, Deva Tirtha, Jabaali Tirtha, Sanaka Sanandana Tirtha, Asthi Sarovara Tirtha, Kataha Tirtha and Manvadyashtottara Tirtha. Thus the outstanding significance of Tirupati-Tirumala Deva's unparalleled magnificence of Lord Venkateswara!

As regards Tirumala Giri Pradakshinas, several popular 'Kavyas' or well known local scripts describe as to how Maharshis like Gautama, Jaabaali, Kashyapa, Atri, Angirasa and their followers had performed holy baths at Pushkarini and having had the 'darshan' of Varaha Swami and that of Lord Venkateshwara the Principal Deity resort to Giri Pradakshina, especially on the most auspicious days like 'Vaikuntha Ekadashi'.

On descending down the Hills, the 'Parikrama' route recommended as at present may cover the following spots from Alipiri at the foot hills after bathing in Kapila Tirtha viz. Charlapalli, Srinivasa Mangapum, Arangampet, Kalyani dam, Bhakarapet, Yerravaripalem, Bodevandlapalli, Kotakadapalli, Prasad nagar, Jillelamma, Basannagaripalli, Arogyapuram, Bucchivaaripalli, Sundupalli cross, Sanipaya, Rajampeta, Koduru, Karambadi, and Leelamah Junction. The significance of performing the Giri Pradakshina on the Vaikuntha Ekadashi popular as 'Mukkoti Ekadashi' is that Three Crores of Devas, the Great Souls of Maharshis of the yore and of Devotees descend down from their celestial abodes.

DEVI PADMAVATI

Maharshi Bhrigu: stated as one of Brahma Manasa Putras like Narada, Vashishtha, Atri, Gautama etc. as also one of Prajapatis. What is more, Devi Lakshmi or Bhaargavi was Bhrigu's daughter and the wife of Vishnu. Shukracharya the Rakshasa Guru of Nava Grahas fame was Bhrigu's son too. Maharshi Bhrigu had accomplished many Yagnas and had helped others to accomplish them. With his powers, he fulfilled the wishes of people for begetting sons. During the two months of Shravana and Bhadrpada, he made the chariot of the Sun God as his abode. **Bhrigu tests the Trinity and declares Vishnu as the Best**: When a huge Yagna was planned and the question of deciding as to who among the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva should be considered the best as the Chief Guest, all the Maharshis requested Bhrigu to decide. He agreed and went first to Satya Loka, the abode of Brahma who was engrossed with His work of creation and did not receive the Sage properly. From Satya Loka, Bhrigu went to Kailash where Shiva and Parvati were busy with their cosmic dance. Then he reached Vaikuntha as Vishnu was relaxing with His consort and ignored the Maharshi's presence and Bhrigu got angry and kicked Vishnu on His chest. But, Devi Lakshmi was Her abode the 'vakshasthala'! Pretending that as though unaware of Bhrigu's presence on arrival, Vishnu readily prostrated to Bhrigu and apologised that Bhrigu's feet might not have been hurt and started pressing the feet of Bhrigu, as Vishnu's chest was like of hard like Vajra with several ornaments. Bhrigu was pleased with the Satvika nature of Vishnu and came back to the Rishis and proclaimed Vishnu as the best.!

Devi Lakshmi was no doubt hurt and got perturbed with her own father's rude behavior at her husband but she could not curse the father especially as Vishnu himself apologised of his indifference of Bhrigu's presence and moreso she was the mother of the Universe herself being the form of benevolence. She was also moved at Vishnu's graceful regretfulness and realised his action. Hence Devi Lakshmi was rather frustrated and shifted to another abode of her at Kolhapuri.

[Described as Kollamma in Kollapura in Devi Gita of Devi Bhagavata Purana, Maha Lakshmi is settled at

the Karavira Kshetra and is famed as the instant provider of prosperity of all types that Ashta Lakshmis would provide viz. Adi Lakshmi or Primeval Shakti, Dhana Lakshmi (wealth), Dhanya Lakshmi (Food), Gaja Lakshmi (Manifestation of Elephants or of Huge Magnitude), Santana Lakshmi (Excellent Progeny), Veera Lakshmi (Courage and Intrepidity), Vijaya Lakshmi (Victory), Vidya Lakshmi (Knowledge), Aishwarya (Opulence and Luxury), Rajya Lakshmi (Royalty) and Vara Lakshmi or the Provider of all kinds of boons). Skanda Maha Purana states: *Yojanam Dasha he putra Kaaraashtro Desha durdharah, Tanmadhye Pancha koshaascha Kashyaadhikam Bhuvi/ Kshetram vai Mahat Punyam darshanaat paapa naashanam/ Tatkshetre Rushayah sarve Brahmana Vedapaaragah, Teshaam darshana maatrena sarva paapa kshayo bhavet/* (Karashatra Desha's length and breadth is ten yojanas and is difficult to achieve it without faith and devotion. In this Karavira Kshetra the singular Tirtha which is the destroyer of all kinds of blemishes even by its visit and vision; Veda Brahmanas and Rishi ganas assure that by its mere look itself the sins are dissolved). This memorable Kolha puri Kshetra is the permanent abode of Maha Lakshmi and is also believed to be one among the many Shakti Peethas where Devi Sati's three netras fell down. The principal attraction at Kolhapuri of course is the Maha Lakshmi Mandir, nearby which are Pancha Ganga, Padma Sarovar, Kaashi Tirtha and Jagannatha Mandir. The Sanctum is readily approachable for worship by all males with dedication but females are forbidden to cross the threshold of the Shrine. Amba bai or Maha Lakshmi of one of the famed four *Shakti Peethas* in Maharashtra viz. Ambabai whose both sensitive organs viz. eyes of Sati Devi fell here, besides as Hingula or Tulja Devi, Renuka at Mahur, and Jwala Mukhi at Saptashringi Maatrupattana. Thus Devi Lakshmi to Kolhapura for long Tapasya having learnt that Vishnu assumed the Swarupa of Venkateshwara took the form of Padmavati, Lakshmi's alternate form. It was only far later that there was the combined effort of Devas and Danavas to secure Amrit and in the process Lakshmi got re-incarnated and finally Lakshmi-Vishnu union became possible! The Statue of Maha Lakshmi at the Kolhapuri Kshetra is stated to be of 5th century AD, as adorned by precious stones of great antiquity; She has four arms, the right lower holds a Matulunga fruit of the specie of a large lemon, her right upper hand holds a shield; the lower left hand a mace, and the lower right hand a bowl to provide boons. She wears a cobra hooded crown and a Shiva linga, while behind her is a lion. The window of the western wall of her sanctum is kept open through which morning Sunrays fall on the Idol. The Temple celebrates Kiran Utsavas on January 31 and November 9 when the Sunrays fall on the feet of the Idol, on February 1 and November 10 the rays fall at the feet of Maha Lakshmi and on Feb 2 and Nov. 11 the rays fall on the entire body of Lakshmi. Ratha Saptami festival for three days in January is celebrated with awe and piety.]

Indeed this incident proved to be a boon by the Almighty and the Maharshi Bhrigu was prompted to do so for Loka Kalyana especially since Devi Lakshmi too was childless till she subsequently became Devi Rukmini in Dwaapara Yuga! Meanwhile She took to deep penance, even as her father witnessed her as a child in a lotus flower with thousand petals. Maha Vishnu blessed her to take the births as Devi Vegavati and Devi Sita in Tretayuga, Devi Rukmini in Dwaapara Yuga and as Devi Padmavati in Kali Yuga as the consort of Lord Venkateshwara! The latter searched for Lakshmi!

Tiruchanur: the Sacred Temple of Devi Padmavati down the Seven Hills of Lord Venkateshwara popularly named as Alavelu Mangapuram is less than two km from the outstanding 'Kali Yuga Vaikuntham'! Even as ever Maha Devi Lakshmi is the Premier Partner of Maha Vishnu through Yugas and Kalpas, he commenced residing along with her at Tirumala. Meanwhile, Devi Padmavati assumed the form of an Avatar of Lakshmi as the daughter of King Akashraja who found her on a Lotus Flower in a Sarovara and brought her up as his daughter. The King subsequently dedicated her as the Life Partner of

Lord Venkateshrara Balaji eversince. Till the other day, the stream of visitors has been large enough and manageable but of late, especially the Brahmotsavas, the constant stream has assumed alarming proportions, more so the flood of yatris up and down the Seven Hills has become formidable!.

(Om Namo Venkateshaaya Shrinivaasaaya Mangalam)

Magnificence of Indra Deva

Select Suktas -Rig Veda on Indra Deva

Sukta 1:

1-4,5/ Parehivignamasmrita Indram prucchhaa vipaschitam, yaste sagvibhya aa varam/ Ut brubuntu no nido niranyattaschidaarat, dadhaana Indra ihuvah/ Utanah subhagaah aravorcheyurdasma krushtayah smaademindrasya shramani/ Hey Jnaanavaan! Vishsta buddhivaan, let as all go to the Aparaaajeya Bhagavan Indra for His bestowing dhanaaishvaryaas. May Indra upaasana keep us away from all kinds of 'nindaaropanaas. Indra Deva ! May we be blessed with samast vhibhava praapti and shatru mitra's alike feel as to how we are 'soubhajya shalis'

1.51/ Abhi twam mesham Puruuhuutamrigyamindram gorbhirmadataa vasvo arnavam, yasya dyaavo navicharanti maanushaa bhujje maamhishthamaabhi vipramarchat/ Abheemivantyatvasvabhi shtha - mritayontariksham tavisheebhiraavritam, Indram dakshaas ruubhavo madachytam Shatakratum javanee suunrutaruuhat/ Twam gotramagiroyovrinorapotaatraye Shatadureshu gaatuvit, sasena chidvimadayaavaho vasvaavindram vaavasaanasya nartayan/ -----

Hey Yaajako! Shatru paraajita nipuno! You are such as of aneka prashamshataas- Vaidika Rucha stuti jnaana yogavaan! Let as all pray together the dhana saagara Mahendra! He indeed be the Maha Jnaanavaan ever readily responsive for sukha praapti. He is the embodiment of 'sahaaya praapti, shatru mada churana kaarana, Shatakarma kaaraka prasiddha, abhishtha pradaardha praadayaka, antariksha bhara tejasya kaarana, and atyanta balavaan'. He ought to be worthy of nirantara stuti and as such let us satisfy Him with His utsaaha abhivridhi. 'Hey Indra Deva! You had the reputation of providing the maha

gosamuha of Angeera Maharshi having come down from swarga loka to bhuloka! For Atri Maharshi you came down and found a way out a shata dwaara gufaa maarga and provided timely rescue. For Vimada Rishi you provided anna yukta dhana praapti and with the help of your vajiyaayudha you had destroyed countless raaksasaas by smothering off Ahirupa Meghaas and hence Surya Deva had got back His original splendor. Indra Deva! Do kindly free the thick black clouds with heavy rains from the high skies for 'sasya shyamala bhutala shobha'. Indra Deva! As rakshasaas be normally and forcefully seek to devour the havishaanna with 'panchagavya praashana vrata' and hide themselves and kill the ritviks, you had the reputation as being the savior of Rishishva Maharshi likewise. Indra Deva! In your battles you do normally you do always tend to 'shushna' naashana and 'krutsa raksha'; likewise Atithigva rishi was saved by you in the context of 'Shambaasura' paraajaya. Similarly you had demolished maha bala shaali Arbuba had smothered under your feet. Indeed, your 'jamma saarthakata' was in the series of the 'asura naashanaas'. Indra Deva! you would appear as of 'chirakaala asura naashana chaakachakyata.' Indra Deva! It would appear that the 'sampurna bala aavishtata' be with you with which you be equipped with the absorptive capability of shatru shakti . Indra Deva! You could certainly sift and separate the awareness of 'Aryaas 'and 'Anaaryaas' or Vrata vasheebhutaas and Vrata heenas; you could distinguish the vrata heena yajna karma and easily give the retributive results. Samarthavaan Indra Deva! we with that your protection and invigoration that 'yajna yajamaanis and the Ritviks' be ever alerted. The latter could destroy the asurasamuhaas who be on the prowl for dyuloka kshati always. Hence the 'Varma Rishi' was ever extolling you in 'Indragopa' and so did Ushana Rishi as of the teekshmata of mid day Surya. As Ushana Rishi extolled you He had descended from dyuloka and as a consequence the megha sahaaya jala pravaaha and Shushnaasura 'Dhridha nagara dhvamsa karaya kaarana.'

*Indro aashrayi suddhyo nireke pajreshu stho duryo na yuupah, ashvayurgavyumo ratha
rathayurvasuuyurindra Indrayah kshayati prayantaa/ Idam namo Vrishabhaaya swaraaje satya
shushmaaya tavasevaachi, asminnindra vrijane sarva veeraah smatsuribhistava sharmanyasyaayam/*

To all 'niraashritaas' or of helpless creatures on earth Indra Deva be the singular source of help and reliever, like of the 'dwaara stambha sthirata'. To ashvaas, cows, chariots, dhana shashakaas are all in the grip and protection and hence the 'prajaa abheeshta aishvarya pradaata' the none else but Indra. The Vrata dhaari, balashaali, swaprakaashita, satya rupa samartha Indra Deva be ever worthy of stuti sahita shaashtaanga namaskrityaas for ever. In this jeevana sangraama, the singular 'ashraya' of this rudderless 'jeenana nouka'.

Sukta Fifty Seven

*Pra mamhishtaaya bruhate bruhadraye satya shushmaaya tavasi matim bhare, apaamiva pravane yasya
durdhatam raadho vishvaayu shavse apaavritam/ Adta te Vishvamanu haasadishtaya aapo nimneeva
savanaa havishyatah, yatparvate na sama harya Indrasya vajrah shnathutaa hiranyah/ Asmai bheemaaya
namasaa samadhvara usho na shubhna aa bharaa paneeyase, yasya dhaama shravase naamendriyam
jyotirkaari harito naayase/ Ime ta Indrate vayam puuushthat ye twaarabhya charaamasi prabhuvaso,
naahi twadany girvano giraho saghatshoneeriva pratino harya tadvachah/ Bhuuri ta Indra veeryamtava
smasyasya stoturmaghavankaamamaa pruna, anute dyourbruhatee veeryam mama yiyam cha te
prithiveeneema yojase/ Tvam tamindra parvatam mahaamrum vajrenavajranparvashaschakartitha,
avaasrujo nivritaam sartavaa apah satraa vishvam dadhishe kevalam saha/*

May we offer our buddhi poorvaka stutis to that atyanta daani-mahaishvaraya shaali, satya swapupa, maha paraakrami Indra Deva. None indeed could ever resist the ‘vega poorna jala pravaahas’ as flooding down from the mountains nor Indra Deva’s ‘bala praapya mahaishvarya’ to manushyaas. Indra Deva! As you keep busy in smashing off the thick clouds on the deeptimaan vajraayudha, the sarva jagat was engaged in yajna karmaas to facilitate jala pravaahaas for enabling ‘sasya shaamalas’ back to earth. Hey, deeptimaan Ushahprakaasha! That maha prashmshaneeya yourself too seek to provide a helping hand to Indradeva for facilitating yajnaas for loka kalyaana by vrishti samriddhi ! This is so because Indra Deva be already riding up and down for annaadi dhanya daanaas to the agricultural fields as the culmination of the yajana kaaranas. Sampattivaan, bahu prashamshaneeya Indra Deva! We are beholden to the very many deva samuhaas for your raksha with nishthaapurvaka stutis and do kindly accept our sincere gratitude to them also. Aishvaryaashaali Indra Deva! Kindly bestow to us very many saadhanaas for our conveying stotra paathaas to us even as that all sadhanaas be there with us too be made best avail of for now. That maha dyuloka too be totally hinged on your might and magnificence and so does this prithvi and all of us as your earnest devitees. Vajradhari Indra Deva! Only you alone could burst off and demolish the strong and wide spread meghas with your vajraayudha as of ‘khanda khandaas’ and let the jala pravaahaas in the form of rains for the sasya shamalaabhivridhi on the earth. Kevala Indra alone could possess that distinctive and inimitable sangharshaka shati dhaarana and that indeed be the Unique Truth.

Indra Deva vide select Upanishads: Chhandogya- Taittireeya Aarankya-Ayaitareya -Kousheetaki - Maha Narayanopanishad

Chhandogya Upanishad

Both Indra from Devas and Virochana from Demons after long penance approached Prajapati to show them Brahman and the latter showed them of their own faces in water and mirror!

VIII.vii.1-4) *Ya aatmaa apahata paapmaa vijaro vishoko vijighatso pipaasah satya kaamah satya samkalpah sonveshtavyayah, so vijijnaasitavyayah sa sarvaamscha lokaan aapnoti sarvaamscha kaamaan; yas tam aatmaanam anuvidya vijaanaati: iti ha prajapatir uvaacha// Tadd hobhaye Devaasura anuyubudhire: te hochuh; cha lokaan aapnoti sarvaamshcha kaamaan iti;Indro haiva devaanaam abhipravavraaja, virochanosuraanaam; tau haa samvidanaaveva samitpaani Prajaapati sakaasham aajagatuh//Tau ha dwaatrimshatam varshaani brahmacharyam ushatuh: tauha prajapatir uvaacha, kim icchantaav avaastam iti; tau hochatuh ya aatmaapahata paapmaa vijaro vimrityur vishoko vijighasto pipaasah satya kaamah satyasamkalpah sonveshtavyayah- sa vijijnaasitaravyayah, sa sarvaamscha lokaan aapnoti sarvaamscha kaamaan yastam aatmaanaam anuvidyaa vijaanati it bhavato vacho vedayante;tam icchhantaav avaastam iti// Tau ha prajapatir uvaacha ya eshokshini purusho drushyata esha aatmeti hovaacha, etad amritam abhayam etad brahmeti; atha yoyam, bhagavah, apsu parikhyayate yashchaayam aadarshe katama esha iti esha u evaishu sarveshvanteshu parikhyayate iti hovaacha//* (As one recalls that the Self rises to a state of tranquillity and composure vide VII.iii.4, Prajapati too desired to know the practical reasoning of attaining such a state when the Self would have no sin, no dishonesty no death, no displeasure, no hunger and thirst and no uncertain will! Then his desire came to be known from ear to ear and both Devas and Demons sought to ascertain the methodology of attaining such a status. Devas approached Indra to search the Self by realising as to which one would attain the status of freedom of movement all over the worlds and by which procedure this state could be achieved.

The Demons too followed suit and commissioned Virochana among them to find out. Without the knowledge of each other both of the representatives performed Sacrifices to satiate Prajapati and observed celibacy for thirty two years. As they were finally visioned Prajapati and entreated him to teach various ways and means of accomplishing the state of such tranquility and bliss. Indeed both Indra and Virochana assumed of their deep knowledge, application of mind and practical abilities! Prajapati smiled instead of losing composure as otherwise neither of them should have been discontented. Thus he replied: *Yah esha akshini purushaha drishtyaa esha aatmeti!* That is: The person that is seen in the eye is this Self; this is Immortal, Fearless and that is Brahman indeed! He further quipped: This one is clearly seen in water and this one is in the mirror; whom do you think looks clearer! Then he declared in all seriousness: This one is **seen very clearly in all these!** Truly indeed the Individual Self and the Supreme Self are just the same!

On visioning their own reflections, Indra and Virochana left Prajapati as Self and the Supreme were same:

VIII.viii.1-5) *Uda sharaava aatmaanam avekshya yad aatmano na vijaanithah, tanme prabrutam iti tau hoda sharaave vekshaamchakraate; tau ha parjaapatiruvaacha: kim pashyatha iti; tau hochatuh, sarvam evedam aavaam, Bhagavah, aatmaanam pashyaava, aalomabhya aa nakhebhya pratirupam iti// Tau ha prajaapatir uvaacha, saadhvalankrutau suvasanau parishkrutau bhutvoda shaaraave vekshaam charaate tau ha prajaapatir uvaacha: kim pashyatha iti// Tau hochatuh, yathaivedam aavaam, Bhagavah, saadhvaalankratau suvasanau parishkrtau svah, evam evemau, Bhagavah saadhvalankritau suvaasanau parishkritaaviti; eshaatmeti hovaaha, etad amritam, abhayam etad Brahmeti, tau ha shaanta- hridayau pravavrajaatuh// Tau haanveekshya prajaapatir uvaacha, anupalabhyaatmaanam ananuvidyavrajatah; yatara etad upanishado bhavishyanti deva vaa asura vaa, te paraabhavishyanteeti; sa ha shaanta hridaya eva Virochanosuraan jagaama; tebhyo haitaam upanishidam provaacha, aatmaiveha mahayyaah aatmaa paricharyah, aatmaanam evaiha mahaayann aatmaanam paricharann ubhau lokaav aapnotee - maam chaamum cheti// Tasmaad api adyaihaadadaaam ashreddhaadhaanam ayaajaamaanam-aahuh, aasuro bateti; asuraanaam hi eshopanishat pretasya shareeram bhikshayaa vasanenaalankaare- neti samskuravanti, etenahiamum lokam jeshyanto manyante//* (On seeing their own reflections, both Indra and Virochana said that indeed these were their own reflections from top to bottom; both were well presented, well dressed and truly their own reflections, but how could the reflections of their own! Either Prajapati was being humorous or there might be a catch. As they both looked unconvinced, then Prajapati explained the reality that the Self was not to be confused with the body adjuncts including the mind even as one Deva or another ruled over various Indriyas but the Antaratma being a reflection of Paramatma was totally one and the same and what Indra or Virochana witnessed was not, repeat not the mortal body and the Self and the Supreme were identical! Both Indra and Virochana were then convinced and desired to leave. But Prajapati stated that were leaving away but without attaining the Self and realising the Truth in practice! Then Prajapati advised them of the mystic teaching: The Self is as worship worthy as Brahman and instead of searching elsewhere for him, one needed to look inward itself as the Self was right within oneself ! It is unfortunate that little realising this Truth, one ignores Brahmacharya in the full sense - as explained in the very fifth section of this Chapter- as also practice of Charity, meditation, introspection, and practice of what virtue is all about! This would truly lead to freedom of movement and bliss!)

Indra returned to Prajapati not fully convinced yet as the latter extended Indra's life for further enlightenment

VIII.ix.1-3) *Atha hendropraapyaiva Devaan etad bhayam dadarsha, yathaiva khalvayam asmin shareere saadhvalankrite bhavati, suvasane suvasanah, parishkrute parishkritah, evam evaayam asminn andhendho bhavati, sraame sraamak, parivrikne parivriknah; asaiva sharirasya naasham anvesha nasyati, naaham atra bhogyam pashyaamiti// Sa samit, paanah punar eyaaya, tam ha prajaapatir uvaacha, Maghavan, yacchaanta hridayah praavraajih, saardham virochanena, kim icchan punar aagama iti; Sa hovaacha yathaiva khalvayam, Bhagavah: asmin shareere saadhvalankrite saadhvalankrito bhavati, suvasane suvasanah, parishkrute parishkrutah evam evaayam asminn andhendho bhavati, sraame sraamah, parivrikno parivriknah, asyaiva sharrasya naasham anvesha nashyati naaham atrabhogyam pashyaamiti// Evam evaisha, Maghavan. Itihovaacha, etam tveva, te bhuyonuvyaakhyaasyaami; vasaaparaani dvaatrimshatam varshaaneeti; sa haaparaani dvaatrimshatam varshaani uvaasa, tasmai hovaacha//* Having left Prajapati, Indra on way back to Devas who actually deputed Maghavan (Indra) to ascertain the ways and means of discovering the Self was partly satisfied with Prajapati's demonstration of the Self and the Supreme were identical, was however not fully convinced. No doubt the mirror / water reflection of himself was not too clear: if the body of the original was well dressed then the image reflection would be nice too but if the original was blind or lame, or crippled, the reflection too would be similar. This was not convincing that the Supreme and the Self could be the same, after all! So he returned to Prajapati once again reaching him back after Sacrifices and severe meditation. Prajapati replied that having been already convinced, as Virochana too did, why did you return again! When Indra expressed his doubt again, Prajapati explained : Since obviously the object of comprehension had some defect obstructing the understanding, his life would be extended by thirty two years!

Prajapati gave the analogy of a dream when the Self was unaffected as organs were withdrawn excepting mind so as to convince Indra that the Self was identical to Brahman

VIII.x&xi.1-4) *Ya esha sapne mahiyamaanash charati esha aatmaa, iti hovaacha; etad amritam abhayam etad Brahmeti; sa hashaanta hridayah pravavraja; sa haapraapyaiva devaan etad bhayam dadarsha; tad yadi apeedam shareerm andham bhavati, anandhahsa bhavati, yadi sraamam asraamah naivaishosya doshena dushyati// Na vahenaasya hanyate, naasya sraamyena sraamah, ghnanti tvainam, vicchhadayan-teeva apriyavetteva bhavati, api roditeeva, naaham atra bhogyam pashyaamiti// Sasamit paanah punar eyaava, tam ha Prajaapatir uvaacha: Maghavan, yacchaanta hridayah praavraajeem, kim icchan punar aagame iti; sa hovaacha tad yadi apeedam, Bhagavah, shariram andham bhavati, anandhah sa bhavati, yadi sraamam asraamah naivaishosya doshena dushyati// Navadhenaasya hanyate, naasya sraamyena sraamah, ghnaanti tvevainam vicchaadayaanteeva apriyaavettaiva bhavati api roditeeva, naaham atrabhogyam pashyamiti, evam evaisha, Maghavan iti hovaacha etam tveva te bhuyo nuvyaakhyaa -syaami; vasaaparaani dvaatrimshatam varshaneeti; sa haaparaani dvaatrimshatam varshaani uvaasa, tasmai hovaacha//* (Prajapati then explained the Self in two situations viz. one as the Self in a dream stage and another the Self as a Spirit; in these two situations an Individual Self would experience both external and internal objects while in the latter case the Self exists without such experiences. To the experience of Self in dream stage first and as the Absolute Self in the ensuing section. In the dream stage, the Self is free from his own body defects like being blind, deaf, lame, unintelligent, timid, disabled, stupid and so on and that he is handsome, strong, intelligent, confident, well appreciated and so on. In that dream stage again, he is not killed despite the feeling of actual death and once he regains consciousness he is alive after all! Indra felt that the dream situation not being real, he is not convinced of the Self being free from fear, does not face death in reality and so on. The Self is sinful, afraid, timid and unstable of mind. Therefore the dream situation is unconvincing about the significance

of the Self! Then Prajapati argued that he cited the dream state example only to prove that just as in the dream stage, the Self remains unaffected even as the body would eventually perish and that was the simple message which wanted Indra to learn. But as Indra still remained unconvinced especially since organs, senses, and vital energies were intact in the dream state, the Prajapati accorded further extension of five more years of life to practise sacrifices, secure intense knowledge and perform further introspection, as they say normally Indra lived for hundred and one years; this is so because the dream state explanation did not impress and click! Prajapati once again asserted that there was nothing more than the Self!)

Immortal Self called the Supreme is like the horse drawing a cart as a spectator to the deeds by the body!
All the deeds of the Self are squarely responsible by the body/sensory organs that are mortal!

VIII.xii.1) *Maghavan, martyam vaa idam shariram aattam mrutyunaa, tad asya amritasyaaashareerasya aatmaanodhishtaanaam, aatto vai sashareerah, priyaapriyaabhyaam, na vai sashareerayya satah priyaapriyaayor apahar asti, ashareeram vaa va santamna priyaapriye sprushtah/* (Do understand this Maghavan, said Prajapati: this body is mortal and is shrouded by death; that is also the place of the Self which is immortal but bodiless! Whatever is embodied as the body is subject to death as that encases the Immortal Self. This outer covering or the body is subject to pleasures and pains or desirable or nondesirable influences . But surely the unembodied Self is totally unaffected by the pluses and minuses or joys and sufferings. Thus the basic inner light has nothing to do the darkness or some occasional flashes of light as joys as retained in the encased body.) VIII.xii.2) *Asareero Vaayuh, bhram, Vidyut, Stanayitur ashareeraani etaani; tad yathaitaani amushmaad aakaashat samutthaaya param jyotir upasampadya svena svena rupenaabhi nishpadyante/* (Now, Air, clouds, lightnings, or thunders have no body and are established in their own forms or bodies. These have all the off shoots of the Sky having their own positions and forms yet reach to the Sun even being in their own positions) VIII.xii.3) *Evam evaisha samprasaadosmaat sareeraat samutthay param jyotir upasampadya svena rupena abhinishpa - dyate, sautamah purushah, sa tatra paryeti, jakshat kreedam ramamanaah sribhir vaa yaanair vaa jnaatibhir vaa nopajanam smarannidam shariram: sa yathaa prayogya aacharane yuktah, evam evaayam asmin shareere praano yuktah/* (In the same way as air, clouds, thunders with no body of their own reach up to Surya, so does the Self enjoys the pleasures and pains of the body parts as a mere inward spectator only and does not identify with the activities like the mouth that speaks, the ears that hear, the eyes that see, the skin that touches, the mind that thinks and so on. This serene and relaxing Self being established and identified its own image called the Supreme is a witness of the activities of the ‘jnanendriyas’ and ‘karmendriyas’: there the Self moves about laughing, sporting, enjoying women, riding vehicles, and so on in the same manner that a horse is harnessed to a cart; this is indeed the illustration of the Self and the Body! This truly sums up as: ‘Dehaadi vilakshanam Atmano rupam’ or the deeds and experiences of a body are the Witness Form of the Self!!) VIII.xii.4) *Atha yatraitad aakaasham anu vishannam chakshuh, sa chaakshusha purushah darshanaaya chakshu; atha yo veda: idam jighraaneeti, saaama gandhaaya ghraanam, atha yo veda: idam abhivyaaharaaniti sa atmaa, abhivyaahaaraaya vaak, atha yo veda; idam shrunavaaneeti, sa aatmaa, shravanaaya, shrotram/* (The one who is the Unique Observer is the Self and the Sense Organs are the instruments of perception. For instance vision by eyes integrated with space is for seeing. Likewise, the Self Consciousness smells with the nose, speaks with mouth, touches with skin and hears with ears) VIII.xii.5) *Atha yo veda; idam manvaaneetui sa aatmaa, manosya daivam chakshuh, sa va esha etena daivena chakshusaa manasaitaan kaamaan pashyan ramate/* (Now, the conscious-ness activates mind the divine eye as the agent of the Self ; the Self by itself does not initiate any action as all

the actions are wrongly attributed to it; indeed all the actions are the handiwork of those organs which are associated with the Self. That body actions are initiated and executed by the Self is a gross misrepresentation of facts!) VIII.xii.6) *Ya ete Brahma loka tam vaa etam Devaa atmaanam upaasate, tasmaat tesham sarve cha loka aatthaah sarvecha kaamaah, sa sarvaamscha lokaa aapnoti sarvaamscha kaamaan yastam atmaanam anuvidya ijaanaat, iti ha Prajaapatir uvacha, Prajapatir uvaacha/* (Undeniably indeed, the entire Universe inclusive of all Divinities do esteem and worship the Self by the might of knowledge, resolve, introspection backed by Sacrifices, Deeds of Virtue and unified meditation. He who visions within secres the worlds: this was what Prajapati asserted and again to Indra! This magnificent Brahma Vidya about the splendour of the Self is so easy to know but unattainable to digest!)

Taittireeya Aranyaka

3.11.1 to 34 : Cosmic Form and Powers of Indra - Domination Surya-and role of Hotas in Antar Yajna

Suvarnam ghame pariveda venam Indrasyaatmaanam, dashadhaa charantam, antah Samudre manasaa charantam, Brahmaanvavindan dasha hotaaramarne, antah pravishtah Shaastaa janaanaam, ekah sanvahudhaa vicharah, shatam shukraani yatraikam bhavanti sarve vedaa yatrekam bhavanti, ta maanaseena atmaa janaanaam, antah pravishtah Shaastaa janaanaam sarvatma, sarvaah prajaa yatrekam bhavanti, chaturhotaaroyatra sampadam gacchanti Devaih, sa maanasena aatmaa janaanaam/ Indeed one is aware of golden and radiant form of Indra which is totally devoid of grief and is personal. Lord Indra moves around the secret of hotas who could be many and might even be ten; his mental calibre could stir up the inner-consciousness like ocean of any Being as also even of the ocean of Brahman as described by the ten hotas. The several kinds of descriptions rendered by the mantras by all the ten 'Hotas' as merged into the subtle bodies of the Creation are the Outstanding 'Shaasta' the Supreme 'Antaryaamin' Himself!! Innumerable facets of vichara or knowledge submerge into Him. The entirety of the Universal Powers like Sun, Moon, Stars get unified into that 'Paramatma'. All the Vedas- Dharmas- and the hotas quoting the Scriptures get unified. He is the Conscience of all the 'Selves' with ready access to one and all! He is the Universal Self as the Unique Controller of one and all in His endless creation too.

3.11.2-10. *Brahma Indramagnim jajatah pratishtham, diva atmaanam Savitaaram Brihaspatim, chatur hotaaram pradishonukluptam, vaacho veeryam tapasaanvanditat// Antah pravishtam kartaarametam, Tvashtaaram rupaani vikurvantam vipaschitam, amritasya praanam yagjnametam chaturhotrunaatmaa - nam kavayo nichikyuh// Antah pravishttham kartaarametam, Devaanaam bandhu nihitam guhaasu, amritenakluptam kluptam yagjnametam, chaturhotraanaamaatmaanam kavayo nichikyuh// Shatam niyuktah pariveda vishvaa vishvavaarah, vishvamidam vrinaati, Indrasyaatmaa nihitah pancha hotaa, amritam Devaanaamaazyu prajanaanam// Indram raajanam savitaarametam, Vaayoraatmaanam kavayo nichikyuh, rashmiam rashmeenaam madhye tapantam, ritasya pade kavayo nipaanti// Ya anda kosho bhuvanam vibharti anirbhinnah san, atha lokaanvichashte, yasyaanda kosham shushmamaahuh praanamulbam, tena vasudhaarneem viraajam, amritasya purnam taamu, kalaam vichakshate paadam shad hoturna kilaam vivitse// Yenartvah pancha dhota kluptaah, uta vaa shadhadhaa manasota kluptaah, tam shaddhotaaramritubhih kalpamaanam, rutasya pade kavayo nipaanti// Antah pravishtam kartaara - metam antah chandramasi manasaa charantam, sahaiva santam na vijaananti devaah, Indrasyaatmaa - nam shatadhaa charantam//*

Brahma Deva by way of deep introspection and the pursuant creative energy realised the power of speech- *Vaak deva vishvaa bhuvanaani janane/* and took up the task of creation and established Indra

and Agni, besides Savita, Brihaspati, and the four major directions of east-west-north and south pervading by the four hotas. Then the Creator Brahma creates Tvashta who created all forms as also the power of understanding and the ability of retaining secrets and subtleties. Then He entered the inner spaces or the cavities of the heart - nihitam guhaayu- and the possibility of ‘antar yajna’ being presently discussed. This is how the hundred fold inner powers called ‘shatam niyuta’ or permeates hundred fold and pervades and is extolled by the entire Universe. Maharshis declared that ‘praana vaayu’ the life energy is the Antaratma the Inner Consciousness. With Indra as the King and Savitar is the King of Kings; the Supreme creates ‘tapantam’ or the Highest Intensity of Heat which Maharshis termed the rays all over as the High Seat of Truth the Paramatma who is the resident of Brahmanda the cosmic egg being the ‘sarva vyapta praana’ in the universe in totality as the All Mighty -All Pervading- and All - Knowing. This Brahmanda is ever active and dynamic with ‘rajasa’ or action: *Suvarnam kosham rajasaa parivritam/* Normal beings would not visualise this Brahmanda nor the Supreme Deity served by six hotas viz. Indra-Agni-Savita- Brihaspati- Chatur Dashas- and Vayu the ‘Praana’ or the very Life Force. The Kaala maana the Time Cycle is arranged five fold of Seasons- since hemanta and shishira are regarded as one- and as motivated by Mind. All the Divinities too are unaware of the Supreme the ‘antaryamin’, even though they stay together in the heart; the ‘Antaryamin’ moves about the middle of the realm of Moon on his own ‘sankalpa’ or volition; in fact He moves in a hundred ways and as the Soul of Indra and other Devas as well.

3.11.11-18: *Indro raajaa jagato ya Isho, saptahotaa saptadhaa vikluptah// Parena tantu parishichyamaanam antaraaditye manasaa charantam, Devaanaam hridayam brahmaanvivindat//Brahmotad brahmana ujjabhara, Arkamschotantam sarirasya madhye// Aa yasmimsapta peravah mehanti bahulaam shriyam, achyutaam bahulaam shriyam, sa harirvasuvittamah peruh, Indraaya pinvate// Bahvasvaamindra gomateem, acyutaam bahulaam shriyam mahyamindro niyacchatu// Shatam shataa asya yuktaa harinaam, arvaangaayatu vasubhee rashmirindrah, pramamhamaano bahulaam shriyam, rashmirindrah Savitaa me niyacchatu// Ghritam tejo madhumadindriyam mapyayamagnirdhaatu//*

Indra, the bright King of Devas, is indeed the regulator of all activities of the Beings in the worlds and envisions sapta hotas in seven ways as adhvaryus and so on.

Having visualised the hidden Supreme Brahman in the hearts of Devas, Brahma Deva performed yajna and sprinkled the fruits of the Sacrifice in the form of rains and made a ‘sankalpa’ or a mere thought and picked up the essence of Sapta Hotas by entering the clouds of the Sky and by the help of ‘Arka’ and poured down the rain; the deity of Sapta hotas are the Seven Rays of the Sun which sustain the world as yielded by plant wealth. Indra the King of Devas is the first of the seven hotas nurturing the ‘saddhaka’ with plentiful riches, life energy as in the form of horses, knowledge in the form of cows. May Indra and Savitaa bestow the blessings as mentioned afore. May Indra in the form of Agni establish in the saadhaka the ‘tejas-ghritam-madhumat’ or brightness- clarity of thought- and sweetness of sense organs.

3.11.19-28: *Harih patanga pataree suparnah, divikshayo nabhasaa ya etim, sa na Indrah kaamavaram dadaatu// Panchaaram chakram parivartate Prudhu, hiranyajjotih sarirasya madhye, ajasram jyotir-nibhasaa sampadati, sa na Indrah kaamavaram dadaatu/ Sapta yujjanti rathamekachakram, eko ashve vahati saptanaamaa, trinaabhi chakramajaramanarvam, enema vishvaa bhuvanaani tashyuh/ Bhadram pashyant upaseduragne tapo deekshaam, rishyahsuvarvidah, tatah khatram balamojascha jaatam, tadasmai devaa abhi sam namantu/ Svetam rashmim bobhujyamaanam, apaam netaaram bhuvanasya*

gopam, Indram nikichyuh parame vyoman/ Rohineeh pingalaa eka rupoah, ksharanteeh pingalaa ekarupaah, shatam sahasraani naavyaanaam/ Ayam yah shveto rashmih, pari sarvamidam jagat, prajaam pashuundhanaani asmaakam dadaatu/ Shveto rashmih pari sarvam babhuva, suvamahyam pashuun vishvarupaam/ Patangam aktamasurasya maayayaa, hridaa pashyanti manasaa maneeshinah, samudre antah kavayo vichakshate, mareechinaam padamicchanti vedhasah/ Patango vaacham manasaa vibharti, taam gandharvovadabhraih antah, taam dyotamaanaam sarvaye maneeshaam, ritasya pade kavayo nipaanti/ The brightest and luminous Surya is like a huge kite with mighty wings; His abode is the heaven and arrives up on earth on the heavenly path. Stanzas 20 and 21 are from Rig Veda 1.164.13 and 1.164.2 respectively mean that Surya Deva circumambulates around the Earth by His chariot with a single wheel with five spokes; His indescribable golden radiance shines in the middle of oceans moving fast on the heights of the skies. May He as well as Indra bestow on us with our respective desires. Stanza 21 imports that Surya yokes his rays to the one wheeled chariot with one horse with seven names viz. Arogya, Bhraaja, Patara, Patanga, Swarnara, Jyotishman, and Vibhasa providing illumination to heaven and earth and yielding vigor and might; this chariot of three axles is totally stationary and all the worlds stand supported to it. Stanzas 22-26 explain that Sages practising intense ‘tapas’ and ‘deeksha’ are bestowed with celestial vision which tie up the unity of Devas as one; such vision declares Indra abiding in the ‘parama vyoma’ or the supreme abode; it is with His rays of brightness that rains are pressed into service yielding land fertility and food for the Beings; it is again by the might of Surya that the ‘pingala’-red- colour clouds result in rains. Thus may Bhaskara Deva with His thousands of rays bestow *prajapashu-dhanaani* or to humans-animals- and wealth. May His white and bright rays surround us all and bestow several boons to all. Stanzas 27-28 above are repeats of Rig Veda 10.177.1-2 meaning that ‘medhaavis’ or high intellectuals observe that Jeevatma Surya like a high flying kite king Surya exists to clear away darkness; ‘Drashta vidvans’ who are outstanding visionaries seek to see the ‘maya pravaha’ or dark flows of ignorance at the center of the skies and seek the refuge of Surya, the Paramatma in His Globe Center. The sky high flying Kite being the divine Surya is saturated as ‘jnaana’ like even in the case of Gandharvas in the ‘garbha’ before birth itself the seeds of enlightenment are implanted within as the source of brightness and power of understanding.

3.11-29-34: *Ye graamyaaah pashavo vishvarupaah, virupaah santo bahudhikarupaah, agnistaam agne pramumoktu Devah, Prajapatih prajayaa samvidaanah/ Veetam stuke stuke yuvamasmaasu niyacchatam pra pra yagnapatim tira/ Ye graamyaaah pashavo vishvarupaah, virupaah santo bahudhaika rupaah, vaayustataam agni pramuyoktu Devah, prajaapatih prajayaa samvidaanah/teshaam saptaanaamiha rantirastu, raayasposhaaya suprajastvaaya suveeryaaya/Ya aaranyaah pashavo Vishvarupaah santo bahudhaika rupaah, vaayustaam agne pramuyoktu Devah, prajapatih prajayaa samvidaanah/ Idaayai sruptam ghritavat, charaacharam Devaa anvavindanguhaahitam/ Ya aaranyaah pashavo vishvarupaah virupaah santo bahudhaika rupaah, tesham saptaanaamiharantirastu, raayasyoshaaya suprajaa - stvaaya suveeryam/* Although village cattle might not be exactly the same, their form would be similar. In fact, seven types of animals such as cows, horses, goat, sheep, monkey, donkey or camel in village backyards are of same species yet their behavioural pattern, body shapes and features would differ. As against domestic animals, the forest animals of similar kind might vary in their instincts but retain their group forms. May Vayu Deva as the head of animals release them from their physical deformities and may Prajapati establish unity among them all. Indeed, inner awareness of the moving and stationary entities is the same as the inner awareness or consciousness rests in the abode of Infinity, the Supreme

Bhagavan then decides to enter as Consciousness through the cleavage entrance of ‘Kapaala’ or the mid-portion of human head and enjoys three abodes of each Human Being viz. awakenness-dream stage and deep sleep of ‘Sushupti’!

I.iii.12) *Sa etam eva seemaanam vidaryata dwaaraa prapadyata, saishaa virdrutirnaama dwaah tadetan naandayanam, Tasya traya aavasayastraayaha swaapnaah, ayam aavasatoyam aavasata iti/* (After opening that very end, Bhagavan enters through the opening known as ‘vidriti’ or the gap or the crevice which indeed is very delightful; that cleft at the parting portion of hair on the ‘crown’ area would indeed be appropriate as eyes-ears-nose are the abodes of Staff Members. Further, He has ‘trayah swapnah’ or three kinds of Abodes viz waking, dream and deep sleep! It is stated that the right eye signifies the waking state or of full consciousness, the mind represents the dream state and the space within the human heart functions as deep sleep stage.

Bhagavan thus enters the human body as the ‘Antaratma’ or the Individual Soul!

I.iii.13) *Sah jaatobhutaani abhivyaiktyaat kim ihaanyam vaavadishad iti, sa etam eva Purusham Brahma tataamamapashyat idamadarsham iti/* (As soon as a Being is born, Bhagavan enters the body of all but the awareness as the individual Soul or ‘Antaratma’ is perceived mostly in human Beings. He or she identifies with the Self and realises of being a man or woman, the state of mind of being happy or otherwise, body defects or abilities and so on. In other words, the Self owns the pluses and minuses of existence. As Almighty enters the body, the Purusha inside realises this awareness indeed; the Antaratma or the Individual Self recognises too but as camouflaged by organs and senses does conveniently perform indiscretions !)

Designated as Idindra or Indra is indeed the ‘Antaratma’ which is ‘Paramatma’ alone!

I.iii.14) *Tasmaad Idandro naamedendro ha vai naama tam idindram santam Indra ityaachakshate parokshena, Parokshapriyaa ivahi Devaah, Parokshapriyaa ivavi Devaah/* (Thus His name is Idindra; indeed He is truly known as Indra as Devas call him as Indra for short; these Devas are fond of such indirect names as Indra for Idindra but basically this Antaratma is indeed that Paramatma Himself! The Truth and Reality as Paramatma the playful Creator-Preserver-Destroyer enters the Bodies of Beings as the Individual Self.)

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Kausheetaki

Grandeur, valour and glory of Indra the epitome of Vital Energy the Praana, the very Existence!

III.1: *Pratardano ha vai daivo daasih Indrasya priyam dhaamo prajagaama yuddhena cha paurushena cha ta hendra uvaacha pratardana, varam vrinisveti, sa hovaacha pratardana tvam eva me vrineeshva yam tvam manushyaaya hitatamam manyasa iti, tam hendra uvaaha, na vai varo varasmai vrineete, tvam eva vrineesveti avaro vai kila meti, hovaaca pratardana, atho khalv indrah satyaad eva neyaaya satyam heendrah, tam hendra uvaacha, maam ev vijaaneeyam trisheershanam tvaastram ahanam, arunmukhaan yateen salaavrikebhyah praayaccham, bahveeh sandhaa atikramya divi prahlaadeeyaan arunam aham antarikshe paulomaan, prithvyaam kalakanjan, tasya me tatra na loma chanaameeyate; sa yo maam veda na ha vai tasya kena chana karnaanaa loko meeyate, na brunahatyayaa na maatar vadhena, na pitru vadhena aasya paapam chakraso mukhaan neelam veteeti/*

(Pratardana the son of Divodaasa made enormous efforts of virtue and sacrifice by way of fortitude and struggle finally succeeded in accomplishing Indra Loka. On arrival, Indra the Chief of Devas was pleased and offered to bestow a boon. Pratardana asked Indra to grant him such a boon that would benefit humanity. Indra said that those who have secured superiority in life would normally ask boons for further heights of achievement but surprisingly enough there is somebody like Pratardana who asks for fulfillment of the desires of mankind instead! Indra appreciated the offer as Pratardana replied : *satyaad eva neyaaya satyam* where by Indra replied that indeed it was so! Indra further endorsed appreciatively: ‘That is what I deem most beneficial for mankind; I destroyed the three headed son of Tvashtri viz. Vritra with Vajra the thunderbolt ; I delivered the ascetics called Arunmukhas to the wolves; I killed the followers of Prahlada on the sky such as Namuchi, Vala and several Daitya warriors; I killed sixty thousand danavas named Paulomas born to Puloma and Kaalkaanjas born to Kalaka the wives of Kashyapa Muni on Antariksha and Bhumi respectively! All these battles indeed fought by me only to destroy evil and revive Dharma, all this without losing a single hair on head or injuries to my followers, not by stealing nor bhruna hatya or killing of embriyos, nor matricide, patricide and such heinous acts but

purely to vindicate dharma and nyaya or virtue and justice which are the cardinal principles of universal welfare! Indeed of one commits a sin, the darkness of not only the mind but even the darkness of face prevails!)

III.2: *Sab hovaacha, praanosmi, prajnaatma tam maam aayur amritam iti upaasva, aayuh praanah, praano vaa aayuh, yaavad hi asmin sharire praan vasati taavad aayuh, praanena hu evaasmin lokemritatvam aapnoti, prajnaayaa satyam sankalpam, sa yo maam aayur amritam iti upaaste sarvam aayur asmin loke ety aapnoti amritatvam akshitam svarge loke ; taddhaika aahur ekabhuyam vai praanaa gacchhanteeti, na hi kaschaana shaknuyaat sakrid vaacha naama prajnaapayitum chakshusaa rupam, shotrena shabdham, manasaa dhyanam ekabhyuyam vai praana bhutvaikaikam etaani sarvaani prajnaapayantiti, vaacham vadanteem sarva praanaa anuvadanti, chakshuh pashyat sarve praanaa anupashyanti shrotram shrunvat sarve praanaa anushranvanti, mano dhyaat sarve praanaa anudhyaayanti, praanam praanantam sarve praana anupraananti, evam u haitad iti hendra uvaachaasti tv eva praanaanaam nishreyasam iti/*

(Indra Deva then declared : *Praanosmi!* or : ‘I am the Praana, the Vital Energy to one and all! He exhorted that he must be worshipped for fulfillment and to discover the Path of Immortality, since Life is breath and breath is the Life, for existence is literally hinged on to Praana’. He further declares that it is due to the vital force alone that one retains his oneness and identity or individuality or else he would get lost in the vast wilderness of the universe; then only one is distinguished by his name, face, form by the eyes, sound by the ears, thoughts by the mind, complexion by skin, and so on. Indeed it is the vital force that marks the individual, his or her position by the speech that speaks, eyes that see, ears that hear and above all the mind that thinks, imagines, sings, smells, acts and reacts, so on. While speech speaks, vital energy speaks after it; as ears hear vital breath hears along and when the breath breathes all the vital breaths breath too there after. Indra is thus the Praana, the Life and the very Existence. He is the prajnatma- the Self with intelligence; he indeed is the buddhi, vritti, svabhava and ‘sarva praanaanan jeevana kaaramam’!)

III.3: *Jeevati vaag apeto muukaan hi pashyaamah, jeevati chakshur apetondhaan hi pashyaamah, jeevati shrotraapeto badhiraan hi pashyaamaah, jeevati manopeto balaan hi pashyaamah, jeevati baahucchinno jeevati uru chinna iti evam hi pashyamah iti, atha khalu praana eva prajnaat medam shariram parisrahyotthaapayati, tasmaad etad evoktham upaaseeteti, saishaa praane yo vai praanah saa prajnaa, yaa vaa prajnaasa praanah, tasyaishaiva drishtir etad vijnaanam, yatraitat purushah suptah svapnam na kaanchana pashyaty athaasmin praana evaikadhaa bhavati tad enam vak sarvaih naamabhih sahaapyeti, chakshuh savaih rupaih sahaapyeti, shrotram sarvaih shabdaih sahaapyeti, manah sarvaih dhyaanaih sahaapyeti, sa yadaa pratibudhyate yathaagner jvalatah sarvaa disho visphulinga vipratishtherann evam evaitasmaad aatmanah praanaa yathaayatanam vipratishstante praanebhyo devah, devebhyo lokaah, tasmaad etad evoktham upaaseeteti, saishaa prane sarvaaptih, yo vai praanah saa prajnaa yaa vaa prajnaa sa praanah, tasyaishaivasiddhir etad vijnaanam, yatraitat purusha aarto marishyanaabalyam etya sammoham eti, tam aahur udakraameet chittam, na shrunoti, na pashyati, na vaachaa vadati, na dhyaatyati, athaasmin praana evaikadhaa bhavati, tad enam vaak sarvaih naamabhihsahaapyeti, chakshuh sarvainrupaih sahaapyeti, shrotram sarvai shabdaih sahaapyeti, mana sarvaih dhyaanaih sahaapyeti, sa yadasmaacchhariiraad utkraamati sahaivaitaih utkraamati/*

(Indeed an intelligent person should meditate on 'ukta' to the breathing energy which controls and sustains all the organs and senses since as one normally finds a possible defect in any specific organ it is the problem of adequate supply of the vital energy; one finds across a dumb person as he is deprived of the ability of speech; a blind person suffers from the absence of eyes resulting in the lack of vision; a deaf person is disabled to hear as his ears are non-functional; a mad person suffers from the defect of mind and thus behaves oddly; similarly the shortcoming of arms or legs disables body movements. In all these cases, adequate resource of vital energy and the breathing spirit falls short. Again, when a person is so asleep that he sees no dreams then he becomes one with that breathing spirit alone. Then speech with all sounds gets absorbed and so do the eyes and ears while mind with all the thoughts is shrunk into itself. As soon as the individual wakes up, the vital energy sparks off like blazing fire to reactivate all the organs and senses as usual and invoke the respective deities like Surya the source of vision, Vayu the individual breathing process quite apart from the Universal Energy anyway, Chandra the mind, Antariksha the ears and the sense of hearing and of reaction to sounds and so on. Thus the internal breathing energy alerts the individual to revitalise and wake off from the sleep. To prove this point of sleep stage, a sick person nearing death falls into the state of unconsciousness when the physical senses slow down although the fundamental vital energy too slows down the flow of Universal Energy into the branch of the individual energy even as the abilities of vision, speech, hearing, touch, smell and body movement get affected and as finally the control of mind and brain power slows down and the link of the internal flow of vital energy gets terminated from the Universal Energy that what Indra Deva is!

Supremacy of Vital Energy reinforced to enable body functions and fulfilment of Human Life

III.4: *Vaag evaasmin sarvaani naamaani abhivishryajyaante; vaachaa sarvaani naamaani aapnoti; praana evaasmin sarve gandha abhivishryajyante; praanena sarvaan gandhaan aapnoti, chakshur evaasmin sarvaani rupaani abhivishryajyante; chakshusaa sarvaani rupaani aapnoti; shrotram evaasmin sarve shabdaa abhivishryajyante, shrotrena sarvaan shabdaan aapnoti; manaa evasmin sarvaani dhyanaani abhivishryajyante manasaa sarvaani dhyanaani aapnoti; saha hy evaasmin shareere vasatah sahotkraamatah, atha yathaasyai prajnaayai sarvaani bhutaani ekam bhavanti, tad vyaakhyaasyaamah/*

(Recalling Pratardana's assurance of the greatest gift to the Universe viz. the vital energy, Indra Deva further describes the far reaching uniqueness of the all pervasive Praana and its special primacy accorded to the power of 'Vaak' as speech being the prime signal of the impending termination of life as death gets drawn nearby. Then the vital energy takes its toll by odours or the capability of smell. Then the praana gradually obliterates the ability to see and the vision of eyes. The next casualty would be the power of hearing sounds by the ears. The mind is affected and gives up thinking as the thought process sinks in by the gradual disability to think and imagine. Thus the vital and physical qualities being with drawn too then the exit point is stated as being the nearest flash out!)

III.5: *Vaag evaasya ekam angam udulham, tasyai naama prashastat parivihitaa bhuta maatra, praana evaasya angam udulham, tasya gandha, parastat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa, chakshur evaasya ekam angam udulham, tasya rupam parastat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa, shrotram evaasya ekam angam udulham, tasya shabdaa parastat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa, jihavaivaasya ekam angam udulham tasya anna rasah purastat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa, hastaav evasya ekam angam udulham, tayoh karma parastat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa, shareeram evaasya ekam angam udulham, tasya sukha*

dukkhe parastaat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa, upastha evasyaa ekam angam uduulham tasyaanando ratih prajaatih parastat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa, paadaav evaasya ekam angam uduulham, tayor ityaah parastaat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa mana evaasya ekam angam udulham, tasya dheeh kaamaah parastaat prativihitaa bhuta maatraa/

(Indeed all the faculties of the body of a human being are thus externally supported and correlated. Take speech for example which is externally originated as its function emerges from intelligence- as *Prajnaa vibhaagam*. Breathing is linked with an external element. Eyes are again originated from the faculty of vision connected to Forms. Ears are again connected externally connected with sound. Taste is food linked to tongue. The two hands and legs are connected to movement and works. Pleasure and pain are externally oriented too to mind while generative organs yield happiness and procreation and mind ends up in thoughts and desires. Thus the objects of existence and individual functions of body parts and hence the cause-effect analysis.)

III.6: *Prajnaayaa vaacham samaaruhyaa vaachaa sarvaani naamaani aapnoti prajnaayaa praanam samaaruhyaa praanena sarvaan gandhaan apnoti prajnaaya chakshuh amaaruhyaa chakshushaa sarvaani rupaani apnoti prajnaaya shrotram samaaruhyaa shrotrna sarvaan shabdaan aapnoti, prajnaaya jihvaam samaaruhyaa jihvaaya sarvaan anna rasaan aapnoti prajnaaya hastau samaaruhyaa hastaabhyaam sarvaani karmaani aapnoti, prajnaaya shariram samaaruhyaa shareerena shkha dukkhey aapnoti, prajnaayopasthaam samaaruhyopasthenaanandam ratim prajaatim apnoti, prajnaayaa paadau samaaruhyaa paadaabhyaamsarvaa ityaa aapnoti, prajnaayaa manah samaaruhyaa manasaa sarvaani dhyaanaani apnoti/*

(Once the faculty of speech is controlled by intelligence then it attains its perfection. Having harnessed the breathing process by intelligence then breath regains odours. Then similarly as eyes and vision are enabled fully then the capability of vision regain its forms. Likewise control of ears regains all kinds of sounds. Organising of tongue would then result in full revival of tastes while intelligent handling of hands and legs would not only facilitate free movement of the limbs but lead the way to the experience of pleasure and pain. Control of the generative organs and senses satisfy the urges of the body but also that of the aspirations of procreation. Likewise, control of hands and feet enables free movement and the best control of one's mind enables thoughts of virtue and justice!)

III.7: *Na hi prajnaapetaa vaan naama kinchana prajnaapayet, anyatra memano bhuiditya aaha naaham etan naama prajnaasisham iti, na hi prajnaapetah praan gandham kanchanaapajnaapayet, anyatra me manobhuud iti aaha naaham etam gandham prajnaashisham iti, na hiprajnaapetaam chaskhuurupam kinchana prajnaapate, anyatra me mano bhuid iti aaha naaham etad rupamprajnaasisham iti, na hi prajnaapetaam shrotram shabdham kaanchan prajnaapatet anyatra me manobhud iti aaha naaham etam shabdham prajnaasisham iti; na hi prajnaapetajihvanna rasam kanchana prajnaapayet anyatra me manobhuu iti aaha naaham etam anna rasam prajnaasisham iti, na hi prajnaapetaam shareeram sukhamna dukkham kinchana prajnaapayet anyatra me manobhuud iti aaha naaham etat sukham na dukkham prajnaasisham iti, na hi prajnaapeta upastha aanandam na ratim na prajaatim kaanchana prajnaapaayet anyatra me mano bhuid iti aaha naaham etam aanandam na ratim na prajaatim prajnaasisham iti, na hi prajnaapetau paadaav ityaa kanchana prajnaapayetaam anyatra me manobhud ity aaha naaham etaam ityam orajnaasisham iti na hi prajnaapeta dheeh kaachana sidhyen na prajnaatavyam prajnaayeta/*

(The priority of Intelligence enabling individual cognition of body parts and senses is essential. Individual reactions and vibrations of speech are necessary inputs to the mind that one's name and what abouts are known or forgotten or not known at all. Similarly odours to smell, forms to see, sounds to hear, tongue to taste, hands and legs to move, act and react; experience joys or sorrows; enjoy the act of procreation and understand the issues of the progeny etc. are all the influences of mind, its dullness or sharpness. It is the Mind which is the Chief Coordinator that receives and transmits the signals to and from of the sensory organs and that indeed is that is the Intelligence all about.)

III.8: *Na vaacham vijijnaaseeta vaktaaram vidyaat, na gandham vijijnaaseeta ghraataaram vidyat, na rupam vijaaseeta drashtaaram vidyaat, na shabdambijijnaaseeta shrotaaram vidyaat, naanna rasam vijijnaaseetaannarasasya vijnataaram vidyaa, na karma vijijnaaseeta kartaaram vidyaat, na sukhaduhkhe vijijnaaseeta sukha duhkhyor vijnataraam vidyaat, naanandam na ratim na prajaatim vijijnaaseeta aanandasya rateh prajaater vijnataaram vidyaat netyaam vijijnaaseetataitaaram vidyaat, na mano vijijnaaseeta mantaaram vidyaat, tavaaeta daashaiva bhuta maatraa adhiprajnaam dasha prajnaamaatraah syur, yad vaa prajnaa maatra na syur na bhuta maatraasyuh, na hyanyatarato rupam hinchena sidhyen no etan naanaa tad yathaa rathasyareshu nemir arpio naabhaav araa arpita evam evaitaa bhuta maatraah prajnaamaaraasva arpitaah na saaduna karmanaa bhuyaana bhavati n o evaa sadhuunaa karmanaa bhuyaana bhavati no evaasaadhunaa kaniyaan, esha hi eva saadhu karma kaarayati tam yam ebhyo lokebhya unneeneeshata esha u evaasaadhu karma kaarayati tam yam adho nineeshate, esha lokapaala esha lokaadhipatih, esha lokeshah sa ma atmeti vidyaat sa ma aatmeti vidyaati/*

(There needs to be a perfect coordination of the faculty of knowledge or perception 'per se' and the Jnanendriyas and Karmendriyas or the Agents of Knowing and those of Action to carry out in respect of any Individual Self; Mind is the medium of the transmission and regulation of action. In other words the three entities of the organ of sense, the appropriate object and the sense of recognition need to be in a single and unified operation of mind! The examples are given in the Stanza: Speech is not only a faculty but also what one is desired by the speaker. Similarly smell is what the person concerned is able to smell. Taste of the food is such as the one who likes or does not like and the extent to which the person so experiences. Sound has to be such as to attract the attention of the hearer. Any particular action should be such as to take the approval of whosoever desires to perform. Pleasure or pain cannot by themselves act but what the Individual concerned is desired or ignored / experienced. Mind is only a mere body- device to act but cannot act on its own and cannot be forced by the thinker unless he desires to think. Also, in turn, the ten agencies of Jnaana and Karma viz. the knowledge and action tools need to be activated by the mind, again at the express direction of the thinker. Would there be no elements be Intelligence, there would not be elements of existence either. Just as a chariot of the felly is fixed on the spokes and the spokes are fixed on the hub, so do the elements of existence are fixed in the faculties of intelligence and the latter are fixed on the breathing spirit; further the breathing energy is everlasting universally. And that again is the Self or the Antaratma the reflection of Paramatma. Indeed He is the Supreme and the Supreme Again!

Maha Narayanopanishad

Swasti and Invocations to Devas- Indra

Stanzas 39-43: *Swasti na Indro vriddha shravaah swasti na Pushaa vishwavedaah, swasti na Nastaakshyor arishtanemih swastino Brihaspati dadhaatu/ Aapaantamanyuh tripala prabharmaa dhunih*

sharumaan rijeesho Somo vishvaani antasaavanaani naarvaagindra pratmaanaani debhuh/ Brahma jnaanam prathamam purastat seematah Vena aavah, sa buddhniyaa upamaa asyay vishtaaah satascha yonimsatscha vivah/ Syonana Prithivi bhavaa nraksharaa niveshaanee, yacchaa nah sharma suprabhaah/

Indra Deva to whom we seek to please and is highly praised by all through Sacred Hymns be pleased to bestow auspiciousness to all of us. Many Pusha Deva is prayed to bless us likewise. May Garuda Deva the son of Tryaksha be commended heartily to grant us well being.. Deva Guru Brihaspati the personification of Vigjnaana be too worshipped to bless us with enlightenment and mental sharpness.

Stanzas 44-46: Aapantanamanyustrutapalaprabharmaa dhunih sheemeevancharumaam rijeeshee, Somo vishvaanyatasaa vanaani naarvaagindrah pratimaanaani debhuh/ Brahmajajnaanam prathamam purastad vi seematah surucho Vena aavah sa brudhnyaa upamaa asya vishtaaah satascha yonimasatscha vi vah/ Syonaa prithivi bhavaam nraksharaa niveshaanee, yacchaa nah sharma saprathaah/

The first stanza is a repeat of Rig Veda X.89.5 likens Indra to Soma as with anger and speed strikes and shakes up his rivals wielding potent weapons while delighting himself with soma juice in store and literally flooding thick jungles with dried up trees and bushes with torrential rains thus creating havoc and fright and none of the opposition could possibly match the horror.

The next stanza is a repeat of Atharva Veda IV.I. 1 and of V. VI.1 signifying Brahma jnaana or His foremost creation of Vena the mid noon Bhaskara as the Supreme Reality spreading and enveloping the total expanse of the three lokas with sky as the boundary; the sky thus clearly manifests the radiance while the visible and invisible realities are vividly exposed.

The third stanza is a repeat of Rig Veda II.22-15 addressing Prithivi Devi commending her as the most liberal and highly accommodative place of settlement residence of each and every Being - be they on earth or water and thereunder as per their conveniences. Bhudevi! Our forbearance, mercy and self restraint are amazing and unparalleled.

3.11.1 to 34 : Cosmic Form and Powers of Indra - Domination Surya-and role of Hotas in Antar Yajna

Suvarnam ghame pariveda venam Indrasyaatmaanam, dashadhaa charantam, antah Samudre manasaa charantam, Brahmaanvavindan dasha hotaaramarne, antah pravishtah Shaastaa janaanaam, ekah sanvahudhaa vicharah, shatam shukraani yatraikam bhavanti sarve vedaa yatrekam bhavanti, ta maanaseena atmaa janaanaam, antah pravishthah Shaastaa janaanaam sarvatma, sarvaah prajaa yatrekam bhavanti, chaturhotaarayatra sampadam gacchanti Devaih, sa maanasena aatmaa janaanaam/

Indeed one is aware of golden and radiant form of Indra which is totally devoid of grief and is personal. Lord Indra moves around the secret of hotas who could be many and might even be ten; his mental calibre could stir up the inner-consciousness like ocean of any Being as also even of the ocean of Brahman as described by the ten hotas. The several kinds of descriptions rendered by the mantras by all the ten 'Hotas' as merged into the subtle bodies of the Creation are the Outstanding 'Shaasta' the Supreme 'Antaryaamin' Himself!! Innumerable facets of vichara or knowledge submerge into Him. The entirety of the Universal Powers like Sun, Moon, Stars get unified into that 'Paramatma'. All the Vedas- Dharmas-

and the hotas quoting the Scriptures get unified. He is the Conscience of all the ‘Selves’ with ready access to one and all! He is the Universal Self as the Unique Controller of one and all in His endless creation too.

3.11.2-10. *Brahma Indramagnim jajatah pratishtham, diva atmaanam Savitaaram Brihaspatim, chatur hotaaram pradishonukluptam, vaacho veeryam tapasaanvanditat// Antah pravishtham kartaarametam, Tvashataaram rupaani vikurvantam vipaschitam, amritasya praanam yagjnametam chaturhotrunaatmaa - nam kavayo nichikyuh// Antah pravishtham kartaarametam, Devaanaam bandhu nihitam guhaasu, amritenakluptam kluptam yagjnametam, chaturhotraanaamaatmaanam kavayo nichikyuh// Shatam niyuktah pariveda vishvaa vishvavaarah, vishvamidam vrinaati, Indrasyaatmaa nihitah pancha hotaa, amritam Devaanaamaazyu prajaanaam// Indram raajanam savitaarametam, Vaayoraatmaanam kavayo nichikyuh, rashmiam rashmeenaam madhye tapantam, ritasya pade kavayo nipaanti// Ya aanda kosho bhuvanam vibharti anirbhinnah san, atha lokaanvichashte, yasyaanda kosham shushmamaahuh praanamulbam, tena vasudhaarneem viraajam, amritasya purnam taamu, kalaam vichakshate paadam shad hoturna kilaam vivitse// Yenartvah pancha dhota kluptaah, uta vaa shadhadhaa manasota kluptaah, tam shaddhotaaramritubhih kalpamaanam, rutasya pade kavayo nipaanti// Antah pravishtham kartaarametam antah chandramasi manasaa charantam, sahaiva santam na vijaananti devaah, Indrasyaatmaanam shatadhaa charantam//*

Brahma Deva by way of deep introspection and the pursuant creative energy realised the power of speech- Vaak deva vishvaa bhuvanaani janane/ and took up the task of creation and established Indra and Agni, besides Savita, Brihaspati, and the four major directions of east-west-north and south pervading by the four hotas. Then the Creator Brahma creates Tvashata who created all forms as also the power of understanding and the ability of retaining secrets and subtleties. Then He entered the inner spaces or the cavities of the heart - nihitam guhaayu- and the possibility of ‘antar yajna’ being presently discussed. This is how the hundred fold inner powers called ‘shatam niyuta’ or permeates hundred fold and pervades and is extolled by the entire Universe. Maharshis declared that ‘praana vaayu’ the life energy is the Antaratma the Inner Consciousness. With Indra as the King and Savitar is the King of Kings; the Supreme creates ‘tapantam’ or the Highest Intensity of Heat which Maharshis termed the rays all over as the High Seat of Truth the Paramatma who is the resident of Brahmanda the cosmic egg being the ‘sarva vyapta praana’ in the universe in totality as the All Mighty -All Pervading- and All - Knowing. This Brahmanda is ever active and dynamic with ‘rajasa’ or action: Suvarnam kosham rajasaa parivritam/ Normal beings would not visualise this Brahmanda nor the Supreme Deity served by six hotas viz. Indra-Agni-Savita- Brihaspati- Chatur Dashas- and Vayu the ‘Praana’ or the very Life Force. The Kaala maana the Time Cycle is arranged five fold of Seasons- since hemanta and shishira are regarded as one- and as motivated by Mind. All the Divinities too are unaware of the Supreme the ‘antaryamin’, even though they stay together in the heart; the ‘Antaryamin’ moves about the middle of the realm of Moon on his own ‘sankalpa’ or volition; in fact He moves in a hundred ways and as the Soul of Indra and other Devas as well.

3.11.11-18: *Indro raajaa jagato ya Isho, saptahotaa saptadhaa vikluptah// Parena tantu parishichyamaanam antaraaditye manasaa charantam, Devaanaam hridayam brahmaanvivindat// Brahmotad brahmana ujjabhaara, Arkamschotantam sarirasya madhye// Aa yasminsapta peravah mehanti bahulaam shriyam, achyutaam bahulaam shriyam, sa harirvasuvittamah peruh, Indraaya pinvate// Bahvasvaamindra gomateem, acyutaam bahulaam shriyam mahyamindro niyacchatu// Shatam shataa*

asya yuktaa harinaam, arvaangaayatu vasubhee rashmirindrah, pramamhamaano bahulaam shriyam, rashmirindrah Savitaa me niyacchatu// Ghritam tejo madhumadindriyam mapyayamagnirdhaatu//

Indra, the bright King of Devas, is indeed the regulator of all activities of the Beings in the worlds and envisions sapta hotas in seven ways as adhvaryus and so on.

Having visualised the hidden Supreme Brahman in the hearts of Devas, Brahma Deva performed yajna and sprinkled the fruits of the Sacrifice in the form of rains and made a 'sankalpa' or a mere thought and picked up the essence of Sapta Hotas by entering the clouds of the Sky and by the help of 'Arka' and poured down the rain; the deity of Sapta hotas are the Seven Rays of the Sun which sustain the world as yielded by plant wealth. Indra the King of Devas is the first of the seven hotas nurturing the 'saddhaka' with plentiful riches, life energy as in the form of horses, knowledge in the form of cows. May Indra and Savitaa bestow the blessings as mentioned afore. May Indra in the form of Agni establish in the saadhaka the 'tejas-ghritam-madhumat' or brightness- clarity of thought- and sweetness of sense organs.

Indra as per Purana- Itihaasas

Dwadasha Adityas and Ashta Loka Palakaas with Indra as the foremost

Dwadasha Adityas: Surya / Aditya Deva assumes twelve other Murti / Forms viz. Indra, Dhata, Parjanya, Pusha, Twashta, Aryama, Bhaga, Vivishwan, Amshu, Vishnu, Varuna and Mitra. Among these twelve Murthis, Indra was Chief of Devas ruling Amaravati and destroying Daityas and Danavas from time to time. Dhata being in the Status of Prajapati took up the task of Creation; Parjanya in the Form of Sun rays rained all over the Universe; Pusha is in the form of Mantras engaged for Prajaaposhana; Twashta is present in the form of 'Vanaspati' and 'Aushadhi' (Vegetable Oils and Herbal Medicines); Aryama who provides protection and relief to humanity; Bhaga is in the form of Earth and Mountains; Vivishwan in the form of Agni / Fire and is the cooking facilitator of food as also of the destroying power; the ninth name of Surya Deva is Amshu or of the form of Chandra Deva who provides coolness and pleasure of existence; Vishnu is the tenth name of Surya who constantly checks the evil forces in the World and slays Danavaas and establishes virtue from time to time by assuming Incarnations; Varuna is the eleventh appearance present in water as the source of life and fertility staying in Oceans, Rivers and various water profiles; and finally, Mitra or form of propitiousness and help to humanity. In whatever form he might be, Surya Deva is indeed the 'Karanam, Kaaranam and Karta' or the Act, Action and the Supreme Actor in the drama of Life! Bhakti (Devotion), Shraddha (fortitude) and Puja (Worship) sum up the meanings of human life! The corresponding Twelve Names of Aditya are stated to identify with the *Twelve Months of a Year* viz. Chaitra with Vishnu, Vaishakha with Aryama, Jyeshtha with Vivishwan, Ashadha with Amshuman, Shravana with Parjanya, Badrapada with Varuna, Ashwin with Indra, Kartika with Dhata, Margasirsha with Mitra, Pausha with Pusha, Magha with Bhaga and Twashta in Phalguna. Surya Deva has thousands of *Kiranas (Rays)* of which four hundred rays, known as Chandana generate Vrishti or rains; three hundred kiranas of yellow colour provide coolness entitled Chandra; three hundred more rays coloured white bestowing Aushadhis, Swadha, and Amrit by which human beings, Pitras and Devas are all happy. The names of the twenty most important rays are stated to be Heti, Kiran, Gow, Rashmi, Gabhasti, Abheeshu, Ghan, Usnu, Marichi, Naadi, Deedhiti, Saandhya, Mayukha, Amshu, Saptarchi, Suparna, Kara and Paada. (Source :Bhavishya Purana) Dhata, Parjanya, Mitra, Aryama, Pusha, Shakra, Varuna, Bhaga, Twashta, Anshumaan and Vishnu as per Brahma Purana.

Indra and Devi Ahalya vide 1. Valmiki Baala Ramayana and 2. Ganesha Purana

1. In the city of Mithila, there was an ‘ashram’ about which Maharshi Vishvamitra explained to Rama Lakshmanas; the ashram was of Maharshi Gautama and his wife Devi Ahalya a famed Parivrata in the days of yore. It was at this Ashram that Gautama cursed Indra as the latter masqueraded as Gautama; the Maya Gautama in the absence of real Gautama stated to Ahalya Devi: *Ritukālam pratīkṣante nārthinaḥ susamāhite, saṅgamaṁ tv aham icchāmi tvayā saha sumadhyame/* ‘Normally, males approach their wives to bed till their menses period is over, but today, I would like you to lie with me’. But Ahalya sensed the presence of Indra in the form of Gautama but still yielded and asked Indra to disappear at once. Maharshi Vishvamitra continued to Rama Lakshmanas: Having sensed what had just happened between Maya Gautama and Ahalya, Gautama appeared at the ashram by his mystic powers and intercepted Indra at once at the ashram with ‘samidhaas and tirtha’ viz. wooden chips and water for igniting fire and sprinkling water readied for announcing a ‘shaapa’. Deva Raja Indra got shaken up with fright at the anger of the Maharshi as the latter announced: *Mama rūpaṁ samāsthāya kṛtavān asi durmate, akartavyam idaṁ yasmād viphalas tvam bhaviṣyasi/ gautamenaivam uktasya saroṣeṇa mahātmanā, petatur vṛṣaṇau bhūmau sahasrākṣasya tatkṣaṇāt/* Durmati! You have had the audacity of assuming my form and lured my wife to bed; therefore you would be as being ‘sahasraaksha’ with thousand eyes and as many of frightful forms as also being devoid of ‘anda kosha’ or the sheath of fertility; instantly that body part fell on earth and he appeared frightful with thousand wavering forms. Then Gautama cursed Arundhati: *Iha varṣasahasrāṇi bahūni tvam nivatsyasi/ vāyubhākṣā nirāhārā tapyantī bhasmasāyini, adṛṣyā sarvabhūtānām āśrame ’smin nivatsyasi/ yadā caitad vanaṁ ghoram rāmo daśarathātmajaḥ, āgamiṣyati durdharṣas tadā pūtā bhaviṣyasi/ tasyātithyena durvṛtte lobhamohavivarjitā, matsakāśe mudā yuktā svam vapur dhārayiṣyasi/* ‘Duraachaarini! May you become in this very ashram as a boulder / heavy stone with neither senses nor life with air as food and rain as drink, till such time after centuries, that Shri Rama would arrive at this ashram and with his sacerd ‘paada sparshana’ or the touch of His feet that you would be liberated to normalcy!’ Having cursed both Indra and Devi Ahalya thus, Maharshi Gautama retired to mountain tops for tapasya again.

2. Ganesha Purana, Chapters 30-34: Brahmaarshi Narada states: He visited Lord Indra at Amaravati as the former complimented Narada as a Triloka Sanchari; Narada replied that his latest was ‘mrityuloka’ and chanced to meet Rishi Gautama in his ashram along with his wife Devi Ahalya; he also said that Ahalya was supremely pretty and her exquisiteness and grace was ‘par excellence’ in the Three Lokas that he ever visited as the Apsaras and all the Swarga based feminine beauty and charm was truly negligible. After Narada’s social call was over, Indra visited Gautama’s ashram; the Maharshi was busy with his morning duties and left the ashram. Meanwhile Indra assumed the Rishi’s form and entered their bedroom. Devi Ahalya was stunned to see Maya Gautama in her bed room and exclaimed whether the Muni had not left for the duties but lying in the bed. Indra in the maya rupa said that he short circuited the puja and desired to go into bed with her as he was attacked by ‘kaama baana’, fondled her red and luscious and body parts and slept with her as she replied that there would be no other stree dharma as she ought to be a Pativrata and chirruped : *Karyeshu Dasi, Karaneshu Manthri; Bhojeshu Mata, Shayaneshu Rambha, Roopeshu lakshmi, Kshamayeshu Dharitri, Shat dharmayukta, Kuladharmata Patni/* and fell into the bed of Maayavi Gautama! Then Indra showed his own form and Arundhati was astonished and shocked as a stone. Even in the bed she felt a doubt that the body which she fondled was of different odour. As Indra disappeared, she was lost in thoughts. As the husband returned, she fell straight at his feet as the Maharshi out of his ‘divya drishti’/ celestial vision as what all had happened. He stated that : In

respect of mantra-ayush-grihacchidra especially related to griha parivaara, rati karma-aoushadhi seva-maana sammaan as also avamaan and daama, a wise person should be discreet in adverting in public. Thus the Maharshi gave a 'shaap' to Devi Ahalya to turn into a stone since Ahalya was unable to distinguish the form- nature-and actions in comparison to a Para purusha and got mixed up with the his body parts and semen- albeit Indra was the Lord of Swarga. Then he gave a shaap to his dharma patni to instantly become a stone till such time Lord Shri Rama, in the course of vana vaasa would receive his 'paada sparsha'. On learning about the Maharshi's shaap, Indra got shivers like a sand storm got shattered by a mountain and instantly assumed the form of a cat and ran away from the scene. Realising that Indra fled away, the Maharshi cursed Indra to assume a swarupa as broken into thousand parts. As Indra who killed Vritraasura a Brahmana was carrying the ill- reputation of brahmana hatya, one of the Pancha Maha Paatakas of Stree hatya, Bhruna / Shishu hathya, Brahmana hatya, Go hatya and Guru hatya / Guru Bharya Gamana, realised that the shaap of Maharshi Gautama and rued deeply as to how could show up his face in Deva Sabha as he was expected to preach the principles of dharma while unable to observe and follow himself, let alone enforce it! Indra decided : *Praanibhir bhujyate karma shubham vaashubham, tiryag yonim samaadaadya khapishyeghamaatmanah, nalinee kundmale tishthehen idragopagaruupadhruk*/All the 'jeeva rasis' in srishti- from Indra to an insect-ought to reap the fruits of their past acts and as such I ought to assume tiryak yoni or the form of a 'pashu pakshi keetaka' and thus decide to become a worm as an Indragopa keetaka.' As Indra hid himself as a Indragopa Keetaka, Deva Guru Brihaspati and Devas approached Maharshi Gautama with the sincere prostrations and requested him to withdraw the shaap or atleast mitigate it. The Maharshi initially reacted stating that a person of Indra's stature as he was a kapati-shatha-dushta-aviveki-and pashchaattaapa rahita paapi and his paschaattapa would be futile. Yet, as you are all urging sincerely then Indra even in the keetaka form be taught with the Shadakshara Ganesha Mantra as Ganesha was always a 'sarva karta-sarva harta-sarvapaata-kripaanidhi-Brahmavishnu Shivaatmika and Mahasiddhi pradaayaka'. The vidhivatra Shadakshara Ganesha Mantra pleased Indra and the Gautama shaapa to Indra got diluted and hence forward Indra would hence forward would assume a divya deha become a sahasra netra instead of 'shasra shareera chheda'. Indra while assuming his normal swarupa- albeit with mitigated curse by Gautama, had foremost reached the Maharshi's feet and thanked him profusely. There after, Indra seated under a kadamba tree, practised Ganesh's shadakshara mantra for thousand years and Ganesha gave his benign darshan and blessed him as that the place, came to be famed as Kadambara Chintaa Mani pura and eversince that the Chintamani Sarovara had become reputed as a place as the abode of Abheeshta Siddhi Chintaamani Vinayaka where Indra Himself constructed a huge temple with a sphatika murti with golden frame.

Indra kills Trisira and Vritra and his penance vide Devi Bhagavata Puraana:

Prajapati Visvakarma, the famed Architect of Devas, had a son named Trisira or the three headed Brahmana boy who used to practise ascetism with one head, drink wine with another and look around in all directions with the third. Being an ardent student of Vedas, he was always engaged in severe Tapasya, especially 'Panchagni Sadhana' hanging upside down a tree branch exposed to Summer Sun, winter cold and heavy rainy season without food conquering worldly desires. Being highly suspicious of the intentions of Trisira who might pose problem his own throne, Indra despatched Apsarasas to disturb Trisira's rigorous meditation but to no avail. Indra thus killed him even when he was in meditation, even as he knew that killing a pious Brahmana in meditation was the highest possible sin. Furious with Indra's dreadful deed, Visvakarma performed an inexorable Sacrifice by 'Abhichara' process (taking revenge)

reciting Atharva Veda Mantras, created a mountain like and ferocious boy with the sole objective of killing Indra. The huge boy was named **Vritra** or who could save his father as Vrinjina. Visvakarma equipped him with all kinds of war tactics and divine armoury including a swift and sturdy Chariot, a 'Sudarshan' like Disc, and a 'Trisula' like spear. As Vritra grew, Indra was getting nervous and approached Deva Guru to prevent any risk from the Demon. Brihaspati warned Indra that he should better be prepared for a Big Battle as the forebodings were not conducive, as after all Indra had committed a heinous crime of killing a Brahmana out of pride and fear. Meanwhile Vritra formulated his plans of attack and grouped a vengeful and desperate army of Danavas as his support. As the dooms day arrived, Indra and Devas were attacked and a furious Danava clan fought for hundred years and Indra leapt for life from Elephant 'Airavata' and ran by foot and Varuna, Vayu, Agni and all other Planetary heads and Devatas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras and so on fled too incognito. At one stage Vritra caught hold of Indra and literally devoured him. All the Deva Chiefs prayed to Deva Guru to some how save Indra and Brihaspati managed Vritra to yawn with his mouth wide open and somehow helped Indra to manage to bale out from his mountain-cave like mouth of Vritra! As Indra and Devas fled and hid themselves from Vritra, the latter ruled Heavens for thousand years and Devas continued sporadic efforts to defeat Vritra and Danavas but to no avail. Indra and Devas approached Maha Deva for help and together along with Maha Vishnu prayed to Maha Devi and got Her blessings. Some senior Sages went in a delegation to Vritra requesting for truce with Indra and Devas. Vritra agreed that the truce be agreed provided that his death should take place neither during day or night, with a dry or liquid substance or by wood, stone, thunderbolt and similar substance. The Sages agreed to the conditions. But Vritra's father Visvakarma cautioned the son that past history was a witness to Indra's vicious acts and that he would certainly strike Vritra at an opportune time; he said that Indra was such a crook that he killed the foetus of his own mother's sister Diti by entering into her womb by Anima and other Siddhis and killing it into pieces; by taking the form of Sage Gautam and cheated the Sage's wife Ahalya into bed, and recently killed Trisira on the suspicion that he might usurp his throne and so on. In course of the function like 'Suthika Sauchak' i.e. one month after birth till 'Samavartan' or boy returning from 'Gurukula' after studies. Meanwhile Rahul came to realise that Varun had been demanding the Naramedha and ran away. After some time when he came to know that his father was extremely ill with dropsy as a result of Varuna's curse, Rahul wanted to return home but Lord Indra advised him against it. Sage Vasishtha the well wisher Guru of Harischandra suggested that an alternate way of performing Naramedha as approved by Scriptures was neither day nor night but the twilight time. It was wrongly deduced that it was Indra who killed Vritra, but the actual position was that Maha Bhagavati entered and energised the Sea foam and terminated Vritra. That was why Maha Bhagavati was known as 'Vritranihantri'. [Srimad Maha Bhagavatha Purana stated that Maha Vishnu advised Devas to implore Sage Dadhichi to spare his backbone which was converted into a thunderbolt by Visvakarma the Architect of Devas with which was killed Vritra by Indra.] Badly hurt by the sense of guilt that he killed a Brahmana the result of which would be that of a Great Sin of 'Brahma paataka' as this would be a second sin of killing Trisura, who was also a Brahmana, Indra felt miserable and hid himself in the stalk of a lotus in Manasarovar lake. As Indra was absconding for a long time, another Indra King Nahusha was installed, and puffed up by the new position Nahusha asked for Sachi Devi to serve him, as he was the King then. Sachi asked for some time Indra befriended Vritra and when the latter was roaming on the Sea beach he took advantage of the situation and sent his thunderbolt to dip itself in the froth of the Sea waves and killed Vritra as the time time to make sure that her husband was really hiding or dead. She prayed to Devi Maha Bhagavati and explained her predicament to Her. Maha Devi asked Sachi to accompany a female messenger named

Visvakama; they went by an air-borne vehicle to Manasarovar where she met Indra who was frightened with the sense of guilt hiding inside the stalk of a lotus. On narrating the happenings of the new Indra, his desire to own Sachi as his wife, her asking him for time, praying to Maha Devi and the messenger Visvakama helped locating Indra, the latter advised Sachi to allure Nahusha into a forest by a Vehicle meant for Sages. She returned to Nahusha who borrowed the 'Vimana' (air plane) of Sages who understood the deceit of Nahusha and allowed both of them to board the vehicle saying : SARPA SARPA, which had the double meaning of ' Get In and go' and also 'Serpent, Serpent'!The Great Muni was whipped by Nahusha to let the Vehicle go fast. The Vehicle dropped Nahusha in the thick of a forest who took the shape of a huge serpent and picked up the real Indra and Sachi Devi back to Heavens safe, when all the Devas were happy that original Indra returned! Nahusha secured his liberation only after the Maha Bharata was over and the Five Pandavas passed through the forest and King Dharmaraja answered the questions correctly from his serpent formation and liberated him too. By the Grace of Devi Bhagavati, Indra was reinstated and the curse of his 'Brahma Hatya Pathaka' (killing a Brahmana) was already dissolved by way of atonement and sufferance in hiding at 'Manasarovara'. Such was the Supreme Justice that Devi Maya did to every being without favour or prejudice. The powerful 'Karma' or Fate works equitably to Tri Murthis downward to a grass blade, but the norms change with the passage of Yugas from Satya to Treta to Dvapara and Kali Yuga when the percentage of Gunas would witness radical change by way of reduction to Satvik, medium to Rajas and maximum to Tamas and when the peak reaches to Tamas, it then would be time for Universal Dissolution!

Indra's dethronment, Lakshmi's exit from Swarga, Prayaschityas and Atonement vide Brahmaanda Purana

Hayagriva narrated that Maha Deva decided to teach a lesson to the arrogant Indra and briefed Durvasa Muni to follow a plan as provided by him; accordingly Durvasa intercepted a Vidyadhari who after long Tapasya secured a flower garland from Paraambika and demanded that garland for himself. Then he gifted the garland to Indra rather casually and Indra placed it on the head of Iravata elephant which trampled the garland. The furious Durvasa cursed Indra to get unseated from Swarga and Lakshmi Devi left from there to Vishnu's Vakshasthala (Chest). Indra had to leave his Chair and enquired Deva Guru Brihaspati as to what was the Prayaschitta or atonement of sins; *Killings, Stealing, Violence, Intoxication and Unauthorised Sex* were the prominent sins. The Zone-range of killing was defined: Human beings, four legged animals, Egg-born beings, water-born beings; Tiryak-beings (moving breadth-wise) and bone-less beings ; if the intensity of atonement is of ten thousand units as in the case of human beings, it should be thousand-hundred-ten-five-three or one in the subsequent categories afore-mentioned. In regard to the killings of human beings of different Varnas of Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishya-and others , the top category of 'Himsa' or Violence is the killing of Father, Mother, Guru, Husband / wife, progeny etc. In the case of the rarest of rare offences like the killings of Brahmanas, Gurus and Parents, and those who take refuge, there would not be Prayaschittas possible. But in other cases, there might be atonements of extreme intensity but Jeeva Himsa 'per se' was considered as the worst crime attracting maximum atonement. Referring to Stealing, there would not be any Prayaschittas possible in regard to the belongings of Brahma Jnanis, Daridras, Bahu Putra Samsaris and of those who totally depend and believe in; there might however be possibilities of Prayaschitta to other sins subject however to the range and intensity of the offences. In the cases of 'Asteya' or stealing, where ever one's own inner conscience would prick, the atonement might be Tirtha Snaana, Niraahara except one meal of of Kanda Mulas a day and Ambika Shiva worship besides daily recitation of Shata Rudram for one thousand and eight times. As regards,

‘Madya Sevana’ or consuming intoxicants, the lesser degree intoxicants made of sugar cane, Tada Phala or Palm fruits or Madhuka flower or jaggery might be least sinful; harder drinks are totally avoidable and sinful; a Brahmana who drinks intoxicants would have to atone by performing ‘Kruccha Chandraaya Vrata’, reciting ten thousand Gayatri Mantra, Jataveda Mantra, and Ambikaa Hridaya Mantra to get purified. Those Brahmanas who practise the worship of Bhairava, Bhadra Kali and such Uccha Saktis might have to consume intoxicants but their range would be restricted as mentioned above. In any case, they should not consume without worship and other wise they are destined to Rourava Naraka. But drinking either other intoxicants or those which would be of exceptions as mentioned above especially be better damned either by jumping into fire or jump from mountains and there would not be any possible atonements. The next and the worst sin relates to ‘Para Sree Sangama’; there is no prayaschitta in the case of mother, sister, aunt, niece and ‘Guru Bharya’. As regards Deva Dasi, Brahma Dasi, Swatantra and Low-Class women, unions are certain to experience in Narakas depending on considerations of mutual consent or persuasion of force were all classified in great detail along with the resultant retributions either in one’s own on-going life and as carry forward to next births or in Narakas. Deva Guru also suggested to Indra that besides observing the specified Prayasticchhas there could be relief obtained from reciting various Mantra Rajaas that might blunt the sharpness of sins concerned. To start with the sinner who realise the indiscretions or even wanton sins should at the foremost feel wholly responsible for the shortcomings. A Brahmana who confesses and regrets his misdoings should get into the frame of atonement, perform hundred paranayaamaas, and keep reciting *Idam Vishnurvichakramey; Traimbakam Yajaa mahey, Paavamaanika Mantra; Anna Sukta; Om Bhrugurvai vaarini and Brahmarpana Mantra* and observe fasting overnight and treat Brahmanas to Bhojana, recite again *Idam Vishnur vichakramey and Traimabakam Yajamahey and Pancha Dashaakshari* before taking food. In fact, if anybody observes the above routine, there would never be any scope for doing wrongs, but overcome the Pancha Paapaas which might not affect even marginally the eqaunimity of life in Peace and provide shield against distress, desire and disease. Indra having heard about the generic narration of sins and atonements desired to know from Deva Guru about the instant happening of Indra being unseated from Swarga and Lakshmi disappearing from Swarga! Brihaspati reminded Indra that Kashyapa Muni gave a curse to Indra that soon enough the latter would lose Swarga and Devi Lakshmi since Indra killed Vishwarupa the former Purohita of Amaravati as he suspected that he was protecting the cause of Danavas; Vishwarupa an ardent devotee of Narayana was the grand son of Kashyapa Muni and Diti.

Devi Diti’s revenge on Indra-her kathora ‘Pumsavana’ Vrata to kill Indra but Indra entered her womb and tried her garbha chhedana vide Maha Bhagavata Purana

Diti felt that Indra was responsible for several killings of her progeny including Hirayaksha and Hiranuyakasipu and thus her anger for Indra became intense. She thus requested her husband Kasyapa to bless her with a son who could kill Indra. Sage Kasyapa felt extremely sad that his wife was following a wicked route to bear her a son to kill Indra. He somehow desired that such an eventuality should never arise and planned to atleast prolong time for a year and asked Diti to follow very strict regime of personal sacrifice named ‘Pumsavana’. During the year, Diti should not think ill of others, nor speak lies, nor hurt anybody, nor eat flesh or fish, nor wear robes unwashed by herself, but worship Brahmanas, cows, and women with husbands and sons alive, in short follow a life of a hermit. Any discrepancy or deviation from the prescribed do’s and don’ts would not only kill Indra but would become a friend and associate. The nephew Indra knew the intention of Diti, but pretended to help her in the Daily Worships by fetching flowers and fruits to Diti and such other services. At the time of Diti’s delivery after a year, Indra who

had yoga sidhis, like ‘anima’ and ‘laghima’ entered Diti’s womb and with the help of his ‘Vjara’(the Thunderbolt) cut the embryo into seven pieces and cut each piece to another seven pieces. Each of the forty-nine pieces thus born became as many ‘Maruts’ who became demigods and thus Diti was purified of her envy and animosity of Lord Indra. *Pumsavana* had thus become an important ‘Vrata’(a sacred ritualistic practice of worship) by chaste women for one year with the help and active association of their husbands. During the bright half of month of ‘Kartika’ (falling during November-December), there should be an intense worship by both the husband and wife. On the last day of Moon-rise (Purnamasi or Pournami), the climactic worship (pujas) should take place with friends and relatives participating in the event, under the guidance of Brahmanas, performing twelve oblations to Fire God with ‘Ghee’ in a ritualistic manner by chanting the Mantra: ‘*Om Bhagavatey Mahapurushaya Maha Vibhutaya Swaha*’. During the entire preceding year too, the couple could -or atleast either of them- observe the prescribed daily worships to Goddess Lakshmi and God Narayana., by chanting the Mantra. Sincere worship on these lines ought to bless the couple and their family good health, prosperity, name alround and happiness. The Vrat can be done by unmarried women to secure good husbands; those who have no husbands/ sons could perform for spiritual solace.

Shaanti Moksha Bharata - Part 1 on Indra- Devi Lakshmi Samvada-Her discarding Bali Charavarti and re-instating Indra

Indra then enquired of Lakshmi Devi: ‘Dussah the Intolerable! For a long long time you had been residing in the body of King Bali. How this be now making an exit now! Lakshmi replied sternly: Neither dhaata nor vidhaata could commission me to exit King Bali’s body, but the instruction of Kaala Devata would have to be necessarily obeyed; Indra! Don’t you ever disregard the clear instruction of Kaala Devata. Then Shakra asked Devi Lakshmi: ‘why indeed have you sought to exit from Bali’s body! She replied: I do ever wish to reside where there be Satya- Daana-Vrata-Tapasya-Paraakrama-and Dharma. But Raja Bali had since been disregarding these valued principles. In the past tense, Bali was of Brahman hitoushi, satya vaadi and jitendriya too. But, eventually he had become brahmana dveshi. In the earlier times, he was ever keenly engaged in yajna karmaas, but having become a kaala peedita and of moha chitta had instructed his followers to keep worshipping him only! Vaasava! In this kind of durbuddhi kaarana, I had since been dejected as indeed one should be always of nirantara taapsya - dharmokta paraakrama. Do you not realize the golden saying viz. ‘Dharmo rakshati rakshitah!’

Indra reacted stating: ‘Devi Lakshmi! could devatas-manushyas-and even any Being in the universe ever resist you.’ She replied: ‘indeed deva-gandharva-asura rakshasaas too would have to yield to me.’ Indra then made a request to Devi Lakshmi: Which indeed be to the means of my ability to retain you! She replied: ‘the best way to retain me be to what vedaas had taught us of ‘chatur bhaagaas’. Indra replied that he would no doubt put in all out efforts as of ‘shaareerika bala and maanasika shakti ’ but she should not ever leave him. Indeed Mother Prithvi who be bearing the brunt of sampurna bhutaas be one such ingredient and hopefully Devi Lakshmi could do so. Then Lakshmi asked Indra to name another bhaaga of the Veda. Indra then stated: ‘Lakshmi! in the manushya loka, jala pravaahaas be constituting another primacy as per Vedas and may I suggest the second essential ingredient.’ Then the Devi consented the second Veda Paada.

Then Shakra continued stating that Agni be the third essential vedic constituent being of indispensable entity for ‘Veda-Yajna-and sampurna devataapratishtha’. Then Devi Lakshmi had conceded the third

paada too. Shakra then emphasized that Brahmana bhaktaas are ever noted as satyavaadi shreshtha purushaas and could the fourth 'veda paada' approved. Then Lakshmi stated: Indra! Now the fourth 'paada' too be approved as in the form of satpurusha pratishthita. Then Indra annotated: Devi! Since what had thus been set up as 'chatuspaada sthapana' as the pre-requisite for your reappearance in the lokas under by supervision, then as per your consent be a successful Reality. Then as Lakshmi had made the parityaga of Daitya Raja Bali the latter remarked: So far, Surya Deva was glittering with his tejas and heat in the purva disha but now in the dakshina-pashchima-and utara dishaas too. When Surya was only at the madhyaahna kaala, and not at the 'astaachala pradesha', then surely there would be devaasura sangraama and most confidently I should be able to overcome Devataas. Maha Lakshmi further asserted: Shatakratee! As Surya Deva be reaching the Brahma Loka, that be the madhyahnakaala and I should be then at sampurna loka taapa kaala and then would be coinciding with Devaasura Sangrama and of Amrita saadhana when I should be victorious any way [as of Mohini Swarupa]. Then Shakra reminded Devi Lakshmi that Brahma wished that Bali be spared and not to be killed and hence be spared from vijraayudha. He had further suggested to Bali to depart as per his volition as Suryadeva too would not attack him too as dakshanaayana be commencing for now.'

Pranava

By V.D.N. Rao

A-U-M symbolises one's own consciousness of truthfulness and reliability signifying the kaleidoscopic variations of mind in endless forms, yet therefore anything that changes constantly!

A-U-M signifies one's own mind as conditioned of Pancha Bhutas of Earth- Water- Fire- Air and Skies besides the Panchendriyas of Karmendriyas viz. nose-tongue- eyes- ears- skin respectively and of Jnanendriyas viz. Ghrana-Rasa- Chakshu-Shrotra-Twak or smell, taste, see, hear and touch. as also of the Pancha Tanmatras of Light, sound, taste, smell and consciousness.

A-U-M as of now being attached to the Charioteer called the Intellect as of discretion or otherwise, and as of the Wise / Vicious horses that get carried away with right or of wrong deeds. But once Intellect in tune with the bridle of mind is endowed with care and discretion then the organs too like the good horses tend to run on the roads of safety and well being. Contrarily, the master of the chariot looks bewildered as mute spectator to the unapproved deeds of the Charioteer, the bridle and the horses thus for sure getting deeply engaged in the cycle of births and deaths with all the risks of existence again and again either as humans or animals or worms depending on the deeds of the body concerned! However if the charioteer as associated with the bridle and quality horses would certainly take to smooth roads without pitfalls and seek to escape the dreaded cycle of births and deaths!

A-U-M is Brahman. Om consists of one syllable is the Antah-Pranava or one's own conscience. It is divided into eight (matras) - the vowel 'a', the vowel 'u', the consonant 'm', the half-syllable (ardha-matra) the nada, the bindu, the kala and the shakti. Hence it is not of four - as its chief matras as has been said to be. The vowel 'a' consists of ten thousand parts, the vowel 'u' is of a thousand parts, the letter 'm' of a hundred parts and the Ardhamatra-Pranava consists of an endless number of parts.

A-U-M has been highlighted from the complexity of quotes from the writings on the website of kamakoti.org vide Articles/ Books . Now, Veda- Puraana-Upanishad- Dharma -Itihaasa-Shastras had

already been reflected for some time now as highlighted on Tri Murtis, Tri Devis, Pancha Bhutaas, Agni Karyas, Nava Grahas, Contemporary Subject Writings and so on.

A-U-M, thus what all of a little of comprehensible and the huge chasm of what is not far beyond comprehension are like the Agjnaana- Vigjnaana- and Paraajjnaana categories;

A-U-M is now being thus sought to be explained as the Essence of Pranava!!

Pranava Shabda 'AUM'

This be the essence of Life as explained in Chaturvedaas, Shat Vedangas, Dharma Shastras, Puraana, Upanishad, Smriti, Tarka Meemaamsaas. The ever singular Pranava Shabda AUM is what the representation of the Universe all about. The Unrerealizable Paramatma manifested 'Eka Nemi' or the Eternal Single Hub of wheel Kaalaaa Chakra with three tiers or three folds of three Gunas of Satva-Rajas-Tamas; sixteen terminals or of five elements of 'Prithivyaapastejovaayuraakaashas', five organs of Perception viz. Jnanendriyas and five organs of Action or Karmendriyas and the mind as the Leader; 'Shataardhaaram' or fifty spokes representing viz. 'viparyas' viz. misleading conclusions, 'tamas' or ignorance, 'moha' or self-love, 'maha moha' or extreme infatuation, 'taamishra' or abhorrence and and 'andhataamishra' or terror; 'Vimshati pratyaraabhih' or twenty four counter spokes or the Five Basic Elements of Nature with five each of organs and senses and mind; 'Ashtaika shabdih' or six sets of eights viz. 'Prakriti' or Nature, with eight causes of five elements with, 'Manas' or Mind, Buddhi' or Intelligence and 'Ahamkaara' or Ego. Also in the Universal Creation a strong rope tied to each and every being named 'Karma' or the plus and minus account' as of the dominant difference of three ingredients of Life viz. 'Dharmaadharma vichakshanaa jnaanam' or the innate capability of Righteousness and its Contrariness; and 'dvini mittaika moham' or the double edged obsession of good and evil orientation both being the definite causes of rebirth! This is how the delineation of the Single focal point or the hub of the wheel of Life- OM !

Now the Recitation of Pranava as proposed by seven 'Vyahritis'(applicable expressions of Gayatri) viz. *Om Bhuh, Om Bhuvah, Om Suvah, Om Mahah, Om Janah, Om Tapah, and further Om Satyam, Om tatsavatir varenyam bhargo devasya dheermahi dhiyo yonah prachodayaat, Om Apo Jyoti rasomritam Brahma Bhurbhuvatswarom/* as followed by Pranaayaama or the Control of Prana Vayu is performed by touching the nose by the thumb and second finger and air must be taken in slowly through the left nostril and sent out by the right nostril; inhalation is known as 'Puraka', retaining is 'Kumbhaka' and exhalation is Rechaka, the three tasks done by 1:3:2 ratio, completing one Pranayaama. The person of enlightenment who is able to sit erect with the three upper limbs of the body viz. the chest, neck and head, directing his vital energies of the senses and thoughts of mind into the heart should be swiftly navigate one's Self on the turbulent currents of Samsara towards the shores of Brahman with neither fear nor imbalances!

On AUM vide Select Upanishads

Chhandogya Upanishad

I.i.1- is devoted to Om the First ever sound of Anirvachaneeya Vedas expressed in Udgita explaining Universal Creation, Scriptures, Meditation, Rites and so on extolling the Reality signifying the Supreme Paramatma as reflected in Antaratma the Self! It says: *Omityedat aksharam Udgitam upaaseeta, Om iti*

hrid gaayati tasyop vyaakhyaanam/ or even as ‘Udgita’ or the chant of the Supreme signifies OM emphasising that very word as the essence of Reality or the Truth, Upanishads underline the proximity and the symbolic expression of Patamatma. The following verses describe that of the several entities of Creation, Earth is of importance, from Earth water is of fundamental nature; herbs and plants yielding food is imperative, human body is the basis, the organ of speech is of vital, from the vocal origin are the Rig-Saama /Udgita mantras and thus the expression of OM is of quintessence. Udgita, being the foremost of the Lord’s Creation, is stated as the core of the essentials. As the organ of Speech is Rigveda, Praana is Saama Veda, and Om is Udgita, the synthesis of Vaak and Praana or of Speech and the Vital Force. The pair of Vaak and Praana as also of Rik and Saama do fulfill each other’s wishes thus the word Om fulfills the desires of male-female couples. This syllable of OM itself provides content of material and spiritual fulfillment and hence ‘Pranava’ or the expression of Om is the great aspirations of ‘iham’ and ‘param’ or the best of both the worlds. All the Vedic Rites are initiated by the utterance of OM; even as the Adharyu or the Initiator initiates the chants of the hymns in favour of targeting at Devas, while the Udgita sings in commendation of the Rites as instructed for worship of OM itself signified by Vedas. Even if the Rites are performed without fully absorbing the significance of the word OM, yet with faith and meditation the result would not be any less, but however, if coupled with the knowledge and import of what OM is all about, naturally the effect would be fuller; the Rites performed with Vidya or knowledge, coupled with ‘Shraddha’ or Conviction and Upanishada’ or Deep Meditation would lead to instant fruits’.

Prashnopanishad

V.6-7 stanzas are quoted: V.3-5) *Sa yadi eka mantram abhidhaayeeta, sa tenaiva samveditastura jagatyaam abhisampadyate; tam Richo manushyaolak upanayante, sa tatra tapasaa bhahmacharyena shraddhayaa sampanno mahimaanam anubhavati// Atha yadi dvimaatrena manasi sampadyate sontariksham yajurbhir unneeyate soma lokam, sa somaloke vibhutim anubhuuya punaraavarte// yah punaretam trimaatrena Om iti ethenaiva- aksharena param purusham abhidhya -yeeta, sa tejasi Surye sampannah; adhaa paadodaras-tvachaa vinirmuktah sa saamabhir unneeyate brahma lokam, sa etasmaaj jeevaghanaatparaatparam purishayam purusham eekshate: tad eatou shokam bhavet//* (Even if one does not fully realise the true import of the Single word OM nor comprehend the constitution and basis of it, by one’s thought and partial meditation of it should enlighten the person concerned and ensure the attainment of birth next on earth. Rik Veda Mantras ensure human birth, and that gives ample possibilities of ‘tapasaa brahmacharyena shraddhayaa’ or meditation, self control and faith leading to application of mind to the Basic Truth and Reality. More intensive meditation on the OM mantra- comprising three Letters viz. A-U-M, if coupled with another letter viz. ‘U’ signifying the mind as also the relevant Yajur Veda would elevate a virtuous person to Soma Loka or the world of the Moon and turns around to human birth again. Further meditation by the third syllable ‘M’ of the word OM to ‘Param Purusham’ or Hiranyagarbha Brahma then, one would get unified with and identified by Surya Deva in the Solar Orbit resplendent with extraordinary luminosity. Then just as a serpent gets rid of its skin, then the enlightened person concerned deep in meditation gets rid of his sins on account negative deeds and once led by the Saama Veda Chants is purified and qualified from the pursuit of the Supreme) . Further: Omkaara contains ‘chatush paada’ or four feet, ‘tri sthaana’ or three places, and ‘pancha devata’ or five Gods; indeed if one is not aware of the meaning and status is not worthy of being a ‘dwija’ especially a brahmana! Omkara comprises ‘ashtaangaas’ or eight limbs viz: Vishva, Taijasa, Paagjna, Pratyagaatma relevant to Ishvara Bhagavan; and further ‘Chatur Maha Swarupas’ Virat Swarupa- Hiranyagarbha; then Avyaakrita or Maya; and ultimately Paramatma! Omkaara os also ‘Chatush Paada’ or four feet viz.

Akaara-Ukaara-Makaara- ‘Ardha Maatra’! AUM also comprises ‘Tri sthaanas’ viz. Jagrata avastha-Swapnaavastha-Sushuptyavastha split again into Hridaya the heart-Kantha the neck-and Bhru Madhya or the Center of the forehead. Indeed the paramouncy of OMKARA is described by Smriti- Shrutis severally.

Taittiriya Upanishad

I.v.1-5 and I.vii.1 is quoted respectively: The purport of the Celestial Symbols of ‘Bhurbhuvatsvah mahah’: I.v.1-2) *Bhurbhuvah suvareeti vaa etaas tisro vyaahrutayah, taasaamu ha smaitaam chaturteertham mahaachamasyah pravedayate maha hati, tad Brahmaa sa Atmaa angaanyanya Devataah, Bhuriti vaa ayam lokah, Bhuva ityantariksham, Suvariti asou lokah/ Maha iti aadityam, Adityenavaa va sarve lokaa maheeyante/ Mahaityaadityah Adityena vaava sarve lokaa maheeyante, Bhurati vaa Agnih Bhuva iti Vaayuh, Suvarityaadityah, Maha iti Chandramah Chandramasaa vaava sarvaani jyotimshi maheeyante/* (As the ‘Vyahritis’ or qualifying features of ‘Maha’ or Brahma are: ‘Bhu’ or the Earth, ‘Bhuva’ or the Intermediate Space, and ‘Svaha’ is the extra terrestrial world yonder or the higher worlds. Now, if Bhu is Agni, Bhuva is Vayu, Svah is Surya then Maha is Chandra and the last is what the luminaries sparkle and glorify! Indeed if Vyahriti is called the trunk of the body of Hiranyagarbha Brahman, then the limbs are : bhu or the legs, bhuvah or the hands and svaha is the head!) I.v.3-5) *Bhuriti vaa Ruchah Bhuva iti Samaani Suvariti yajumsi, Maha iti Brahma, Braahmana vaava sarve vedaa ma maheeyante/ Bhurita vai Pranah, Bhuva ityapaanah suvariti vyaanah maha ityannam annena vaava sarve praanaa maheeyante/ Taa vaa etatas chaturdhaah chaturasro vyahritayah, taa yo veda saeda Brahma, Saveshmai Deva balim aavahanti/* (The word ‘Bhu’ connotes Rig Veda, ‘Bhuvah’ Saama Veda, and ‘Svaha’ for Yajur Veda while Maha is ‘Om’ or Brahman. Also ‘Bhu’ is the ‘Praana’, ‘Bhuvah’ is ‘Apaana’, ‘Suvah’ is ‘Vyana’, and ‘Mahah’ is ‘Anna’ or food. Thus the ‘vyahritis’ of Brahman are expressed in four significant viz. Brahman as Tri Lokas of ‘Bhurbhavassvah’; as three Devas of Agni, Surya and Chandra; three Vedas of Rik-Saama-Yaju and three Pranas viz. Apana-Vyana-Savana. Indeed he who absorbs these details attains supremacy of Brahman to himself as Devas offer a variety of gifts to him.) I.viii. 1: OM is truly symbolic of Paramatma I.viii.1) *Omiti Brahma Omiti Sarvam Omityetad anukritirha sma vaa aapyo shraavatyetraa shraavayanti/ Omiti Saamaani gaayanti, Omshomiti shastraani shamshanti, Omityaradharyuh pratigaram pratigruh -nati/ Omiti Brahma prasouti Omityagnihotram anujaaneeti, Omiti Brahmanah pratyakshan aaha Brahmopaapna vaaneeti Brahmaivopaapnoti/* (Om is the most distinguishing expression summing up and signifying the Reality yet unknown! It is the Sum of anything and everything even as it is the beginning and the end of Creation, occurring again and again. By the mere sound, the word Pranava is empirical but supplemented with the Supreme, it envelopes the Universe plus more! Hence Om is Brahman. When Priests offer oblations to Agni along with the chanting of relevant mantras to specified Devatas, all the formule and established procedures are practised accordingly: Rig Veda mantras set to tune are the Saamas ie. those that are not so set are the Shastras. The recitation of ‘Saamas’ with Om as in the case of ‘Om Shom’. The priest Adharvu for eg. in charge of Rik mantras seeks permission with the request ‘may we pray!’ and the reply would be : Om, this would please us! In other words: ‘Omitya -dharyuvuh pratigara pratigruhaati’ Thus the permission to perform the Sacrifice is secured with the word OM. When the prayer is thus offered with veneration to attain Brahman then indeed the Karta would attain Brahman for sure! Tittiriya Upanishad vide II.ix amplifies the Parama Rahasyam or the Secret Instruction of Upanishads: *Yato vaacho nivartante apraapya manasaa saha, anaanandam brahmano vidvaan, na bibheti kutaschaneti/ Etam vaa vaava na tapati kimaham saadhu naakakaravam kimaham paapoamakaravamiti, sa ya evam vidvaanete aatmanam*

sprunute ubhed hi evaisha aatmaanam sprunute, ya evam veda, ityupanishad/ Once Enlightenment dawns in the mind and thoughts of a person due both to knowledge, constant introspection and ‘Satkarma’ or the cumulative fruits of births and deaths, that blessed Soul conquers fear by unveiling the Reality that despite the play of misleading signals sounded by Panchendriyas and the mind too, the Great Bliss is within the Self! The person bemoans that through out the perpetual cycle of births-deaths-and births again, as to why wisdom did not dawn so far and why was the past tense prevailed with more of misdeeds than acts of virtue and justice! So far, he has been misdirected to wag the tongue and speech, to perform and witness evil acts, to taste wrong foods, to smell foul, to refrain against evil hearing, to walk wrong lanes to handle evil acts wantonly, to entertain unjust feelings and thoughts in mind and misuse the organs of generation. It is none too late however to search for the Inner Conscience as the reflection of the Supreme at least now that the object of search is neither on the Skies nor clouds, in the wind, fire, water, Sun or Moon or elsewhere but indeed the nearest, ay, that Itself as That or This! That indeed is the most secret of revelations of Upanishads, Vedas and the Totality of Knowledge rededesignated as the consummation of Bliss! Pranava signifies both the facets of Brahman viz. the ‘Para’ and ‘Apara’ as loosely described as the Inferior and Superior Brahman. OM is thus both the Cause and Effect; yet, it is ‘Aparvah’ or no cause precedes it since It has no origin. It is also ‘anantarah’ and ‘abaahyayah’ It is dimensionless being nothing within and nothing without. Moreover, It is ‘aparam’ and ‘anaparam’ or free from the Inside-Outside features yet like the analogy of lump of salt in water since it is truly homogeneous and consistent.)

Mandukyopanishad:

Omityeyed aksharam idam sarvam tasyopavyaakhyaanam bhutam bhavad bhavishyad iti sarvam omkaara eva yac chaanyat trikaalaateetam tadapi omkaara eva// Sarvam hyetad Brahma, ayam aatmaa Brahma, soyam aatmaa chathushpaat/

(The most Sacred Word is the exposition of the Universe in totality and the ‘Kaala maana’ or the Past-Present-Future . *Tasya upavyaakhyaanam* or that - Om- is indeed the visual exhibition and elucidation of the yesterday-today -and tomorrow! *Sarvam etad Brahma* or this Om is all about Brahman; *Ayam aatmaa Brahma* or the Self is Brahman too. Obviously thus OM and Brahman and Self are all the same. And this equation has *chathushpaad* or four feet or quarters described as Vishva-Taijasa-Prajna and Turiya, all merging in successive stages) namely!

Maandukyas VIII- XI: *Soyam aatmaadhyaksharam aumkaarodhimaatram paadaa maatraa maatraashchapaadaa akaara ukaara makaara iti/*

(*Omityedaksharam idam Sarvam!* The Singular Word AUM signifying the entirety of Universe and Beyond! The Self is described as the four quarters of Vishvanara, Taijasa, Prajna, and the Atman or the Pure Consciousness; as identified with Bliss. This Word A-U-M is *Aatma-Adhyaksharam-Adhimaatram* or symbolic of Atma-the Akshara or the Eternal Syllable of Omkaara-and the Adhimaatram or the Quintessence of Vedas and the Letters identified with the Vijnana or Knowledge *par excellence* namely!

Maandukya XII-the Ultimate: *Amastrascha turyo avyavahaaryah prapanchopashamah shivodvaita evam Aumkaara aatmaiva samvishati aatmanaatmaanam ya evam veda ya evam veda/ Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih//*

(‘Amaatrascha turyo’ or the totally integrated and unified Pranava Mantra A-U-M is thus the Grand Finale or the Ultimate Truth comprising all the quarters of the Atman the Self Consciousness viz. Vishvanara-Taijasa-Praajna viz. the Highest and the Fourth State of Turiya; the Absolute Self is Avyavahaaryah or beyond experiential or empirical situations, prapanchopashamah or the Finality of Universal Existence or the Limit of Ignorance and Non Reality, Shivah or the Beginnings of Total Auspiciousness, Advaitam or the Realisation of ‘Taadaatmya’ or Non Duality being the merger point of the Vaishvanara being the Totality of All the Units or Reflections of Individual Selves or the Universal Self and the Supreme ie. Atmanaatmaanam eva and the Climactic Merger and Unification! Indeed, OM the Self finally enters that very Self! He who becomes aware of this Self Realisation becomes the Almighty Himself!)

Gaudapada Kaarikas on Maandukya XII -G.K.24-26:

Omkaaram paadashah Vidyaat paadaa maatraa na shamshayah, Omkaaram paadashah jnaatvaa na kinchadapi chintayet// Yunjeeta pranavo chetah pranavo Brahma nirbhayam, Pranavo nityayuktasya na bhayam vidhyate kvachit// Pranavo hyaaparam Brahma praavascha Parah smritah, Apurvonantaro baahyah aparah Pranavovyayah//

(As ‘Omkaara’ is to be realised quarter by quarter or by the designations of Vishva-Taijasa- Praajnya-Turiya as indeed they are all ramifications of the composite Self, there indeed is no other knowledge or its pursuit needed as all the desires and material aspirations are met totally besides the spiritual requirements are fulfilled too. One needs however to concentrate or ‘yunijeeta cheta pranave brahma nirbhayam’ or fix one’s mind in stability on Omkaara the embodiment of Brahman. Then pranavo nityayuktasya na bhayam vidyate kvachit: or Pranava shields and safeguards fear or disasters any where and always.

G.K. 27-29) Sarvasya Pranavo hyaadirmadhyayantarasthaiva cha, Eva hi Pranavam jnaatvaa vyashnute tadanantaram// Pranavam hyeshvaram vidyaat sarvasya hridi samshitam, Sarva vyaapi namoshankaram matvaa dheero na shochati// Amaatronantamaatrascha dvtasyopashamah Shivah, Omkaaro vidito yena sa munirnetaro janah//

(OM is ‘sarvasya’ or ‘Adi-Madhya-Anta’ of the synthesis of the Beginning-Sustenance-Dissolution of the the Universe but yet again is also the antithesis of Life and Death syndrome as ‘Vyaktaavyakta’ phenomenon of Revelation and Non Existence like magic or hallucination. Pranavam Ishvaram vidyat/ or be it known that Pranava is another manifestation of Paramatma Ishvara; He is right within one’s own heart or in the hearts of all the Beings in Srishti as the hearts are the high seats of peceptions, memories, and action-reaction controllers. Indeed that is the place worthy of prayers, supplications, and worship as that Reality is in the Self Itself! Omkaaram sarva vyapinam or is Omni Present; Dheero na shochati! He who realises perfectly being the Truly Enlightened One is never subject to any grief and is ever joyful

AUM is the true reflection of Srishi the Universe. Atharvana Upanishad states: *Sarvaan praanaan paramatmani pranaamayateeti pranavah/* Once Pranava recital is taken up then the ‘dehendriya praana mano buddhi’ or the body parts, life’s energy, the mind and its variationd get srirred up and rejuvenated. *Sarveshaameva mantraanaam Pranavah praanamuchyate/* or Pranava is the very Life’s force, and in reverse sense praana is pranava uitself literally! Pranavaadaparam japtvaa kadaa mukto bhavishyati/ or there could be no worship nor puja nor any ‘mantra’ without AUM! Omkaara comprises A kaara-U kaara-Ma kaara.

Maha Narayana Upanishad

Yashchandasamrishabho vishvarupah cchandobhyah chhandaamsya aavivesha sataamshikyah provaachopanishadindro jyeshtha indriyaaya rishebhyo namo Devabhyah swadhaa pitrubhyo bhurbhuvashchandanva om/ The supreme Indra is the representation of the excellent essence of Vedas embodying the entire Universe emerged from the 'chandas' or prosody being the collection of mantras in Gayatri and other meters. The link of the Vedic utterances as learnt by Sages and Vedic Experts, who reemphasised by them in Upanishads was basically the subject matter of Indra Himself. This empowered the higher knowledge of the Unknown Reality. Indeed we greet Devas who facilitated the realisation of the Path of the Splendorous Ultimate. The awareness of trilokas representing Bhu-Bhuvah-Suvah and the totality of the higher knowledge is summed up in the single and singular OM. The opening stanza of Chhandogya Upanishad states: *Omityedat aksharam Udgitam upaaseeta, Om iti hridgaayati tasyopa vyaakhyaanam/* (Even as 'Udgita' or the chant of the Supreme signifies as OM emphasising that very word as the essence of Reality and Truth, Upanishads underline the proximity and the symbolic expression of Paramatma!) Om is the very first sound and word of all Vedas and Scriptures expressed in Udgita or the chant of the Supreme; the chant of Udgita explains Universal Creation, Vedas, Meditation, Rites vis-à-vis the Reality. Om is the very first sound and word of all Vedas and Scriptures expressed in Udgita or the chant of the Supreme; the chant of Udgita explains Universal Creation, Vedas, Meditation, Rites vis-à-vis the Reality.

[A scientific explanation was offered by modern experts about OM: According to Astro-Physicists and Astronomers, a Sound is produced due to the fast movement of Earth, Planets, and Galaxy or the Milky Way, called Akshya Ganga, with some 100,000 million Stars. The Galaxy, the Moon and the Earth-all revolving around the Sun-each moving on their own axis at a mind boggling velocity of 20,000 miles per second, produce the Sound and the Sages named the Super Sound as OM. The Sum of the Gayatri Mantra states: The Earth (*Bhur), the Planets (*Bhuvaha), and the Galaxy (* Swaha) are rotating on their own axis at a great velocity as the Sound OM, which is the Formless Entity. The total Kinetic Energy generated by these movements balance the over-all energy consumption of Cosmos and this is named the 'Pranava' or the Body Energy ie Mass of Galaxies multiplied by two: Mass x Velocity x 2. That Supreme Entity (God) who manifests in the Form of Utmost Radiance (The Sun or Savitur) is indeed worthy of surrender (Varenyam). One should meditate (Dheemahi) upon the Light (Bhargo) of that Entity (Devasya) and perform the chanting of OM. May He(Yo) guide in the right Direction (Prachodayat) our (nah) Intellect (dhiyo)!]

Sandhya Vandana Mantras :

Apah punantu Prithivim Prithivi puta punatumaam, Punatu Brahmanaspatih Brahma puta punatu maam/ Yaduchhistam abhojyam yadva duscharitam mama, Sarvam punantu maamaaposatam chapratigrahagg swaha (Let the Deity of Water clean up the Earth, me and my Guru who is a depository of Vedas and let Vedas sanctify me. May the wrong food that I consumed, the questionable deeds that I did or the dubious presents that I received from doubtful characters be all mollified, as I propose myself to get purified by the flames of the Swaha or Paramatma.)

Agnischa ma manyuscha manyupatayascha manyu kritebhyah Paapebhyo rakshantaam yadanha paapamakaarsham, Manasa vaachaa hastaabhyam Padbyaam udarena sishnaa Ahastadalumpatu, yat kinch durtam mayi idamaham maamamritayonau satye jyothishi juhomi swaha/ (Let all the Deities of

Fire, fury and ferocity safeguard me from their attack on me due to the unpardonable sins perpetrated by me by the day by my mind, stomach, sex organ; may I be purified me of despicable deeds and qualify me to proceed on the path of Moksha.)

Suryascha ma manyuscha manyupatayascha manukriteebhyah/ Paapebhyo rakshantaam/ Yadraatriya paapamakaarsham/ manasaa vaachaa hastaabhyaam/ Padhbyamudarena shishna/ Raatristadava - lumpatu/ yat kimcha duritam mayi idamaham mamaamritayanau/ Surye Jyotishi Juhomi swaha (Protect me from sins committed due to rage and temper as also by the Sun and the Deity of Fury apart from the wrongdoings by my mind, conversation, limbs, stomach and sex; once such sins are excused, may the Great Radiance of Sun God make me worthy of Salvation).

Omityekaaksaram Brahma, Agnirdevata Bhrahma ityaarsham Gayatreem Chhandam Paramaatmam Swarupam, Sayujyam viniyogam/(The unique word AUM is of Parabrahma form, Agni is Main Devata, Brahma is related to Rishi, Gayatri is related to Chhanda, Paramaatma is all-pervasive and the terminal point of Moksha).

Aayaatu varada Devi Aksharam Brahmasammitam, Gayarimchhandasaam Maatedam Brahma jushaswa me (May I humbly request Gayatri the mother of Chhandas and the boon showering Devi to guide me about the imperishable Brahman)

Yadahnaatkurutey paapam tadhanaat pratimuchyatey, Yadraatrikurutey paapam tadraatriyat pratimuchyate, Sarva varney Mahadevi Sandhya vidyey Sarasvati (Sandyha-Vidya Controller Devi Sarasvati! Let my sins committed during the day be destroyed in the day itself; let the sins done during the night be destroyed on the same night. Sarva Varna Swarupa! Sandhya Vidya! Devi Sarasvati the personification of Knowledge and Vidya)

Ojosi Sahosi Balamasi Bhraajosi Devaanaam Dhaamanaamasi Vishvamasi Vishvaayuhu sarvamasi Sarvaaurabhibhurom ,Gayatriimaavaayahayaami Savitreemaavaahayami Saraswateem aavaahayami,Shriya maavaahayaami, Balamaavaayaha yaami/ Gayatryah Gayatree Chhandah Vishwamitra Rishih, Savitaa Devataa, Agnirmukham, Brahma Shiro,Vishnur hridayam, Rudrah Sikhaah, Prithivi Yonih, Praanaa paana vyaanodaana samaanaa sa praanaa swetavarnaa saamkhyayana sa gotra Gayatree Chaturvimsatyaksharaa Tripadaa Shatukshih, Panchaseershopenayaney viniyogah

(Sarva Varna! Sandhya Vidya! Sarasvati! Maha Gayatri! You are the embodiment of Radiance, the Grip Holder and of the Strength; the Shakti of Devas, the Life of the World, the Veritable Universe and the Totality! May I invoke You Omkara Swarupa Savitri! May I invoke Chhandasas, Lakshmi and Shakti!) I invoke Gayatri, whose Chhanda is Gayatri, Rishi is Vishwamitra, Agni is Face, Brahma is head,Vishnu is heart, Rudra is the tuft, Prithi is the generator as also Gayatri with Five Praanaas viz. Praana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samaana; white coloured; with the Gotra of Rishi Samkhyayana; with twenty four Alphabet Letters; Three feet; six bellied; five heads and the main deity of ‘Upanayana’).

Om bhuh,Om bhuvah, Ogum Suvah, Om mahah, Om janah, Om tapah, Ogum Satyam, Om tatsavitur varenyam bhargo Devasya dheemahi, dhiyoyonah prachodataat, Omaapo jyotee rasomrita Brhama bhubhuvah suvarom/ Om: Paramatma! Om Bhumi, Om Aakasha, Om Swarga, Om Mahar loka, Om Janar loka, Om Tapoloka, Om Satya Loka; [Bhur Bhumi or the Embodiment of Vital Energy, Bhuvah or the destroyer of Evil and Suffering, Svaha (Symbol of Happiness)] Thath (that Almighty) may we

meditate that Savitur the principal cause of luminosity the Godhead transcendent to the Lokas but sustaining them to exist ; Savitur (Bright like Sun); Varenyam (The Supreme); Bhargo (demolisher of Sins); Devasya (the Divine Force); Dhimahi (May receive); Yo (Who); Na (Our), Prachodayat (Let inspire in right direction). In other words : Oh Almighty, You are the Creator of Life, Slayer of Sorrow, Bestower of Happiness and Creator of the Universe. May we receive Your Supreme Energy to raze our sins and guide us in our intellect in the right direction.

Uttamey Shikhare Devi Bhumyaam parvata murdhani, Brahmanebhoyhyanujnaanam gahha devi yathhaa sukham/ (Devi Gayatri, may you remain on the highest peak on Earth like the Meru Mountain as esteemed by Brahmanas as the form of Paramount Sanctity and Bliss); Stuta maya varadaa Vedamataa prachodayanti paavaney dwijaataa, Ayuh Prithivyam dravinam Brahma varchasammahyam datvaa prayaatum Brahmaloakam (As extolled by us Devi Gayatri! You are the bestower of our desires and the epitome of Purity, Veda Rupa and of two forms of Brahma Loka and Inside the orbit of Surya Deva; kindly bless me on Earth to provide me long life, prosperity, Brahma Teja!

Omkaara Swarupas as Devatva-Trimurtitva-Paramatva

1-2) *Om tad Brahma, Om tadvaayuh, Om tadaatma, Om tatsatyam, Om tatsarvam, Om tadpurornamah/ Om Antahscharati bhuteshu guhaayaam vishvamurtishu, twam yagnastvam vashthkaarastvamindrasvah Rudrastvam Vishnustvam Brahmastvam Prajaapatih, tvam tadaapa jyotee rasomritam Brahma Bhurbhuvassuvarom/ Om that is Brahmataatvam; Om that is Vayu the sarvatra sutraatma; Om that is Jeevatma the Antaratma; Om that is Paramaatha Satyam; Om that is the totality of ‘Charaachara atmakam’ or of the Living Beings whether mobile or immobile ; Om that Purornama or the entirety of Creation featuring Trilokas of Bhu-Bhuva-Suva! That Invisible Paramatma is ever present and is hidden inside one’s consciousness assuming myriad forms as ever active and pulsating. He is the Yajna Swarupa; He is the emblem of sacrifice; He is Vashakaara or the Supreme Controller and Regulator; He assumes the Forms of Indra the Head Leader of Devas, He is Rudra the Exterminator and Revivor of Srishti again and again; He is Vishnu the Sustainer of the Universe; Brahma the Supreme Srishti Karta; Prajapati the Grand Ruler and Administrator! He is the Jala Deva as present in waterflows , rivers, oceans! He is the Surya Deva the Radiance; the Rasa the Essence of Fruits; the Amrita or Ambrosia; He is Brahma the Seat of Knowledge and the Veda Swarupa; the Manifestation of Trilokas of Bhu-Bhuva-Suva all absorbed in the Pranava the Supreme A-U-M representing the Truth of Srishti- Sthithi-Samhaara or Creation-Preservation- Destruction or the Cause-Causation-Collapse!*

Chaandogya Upanishad

Om is the very first sound and word of all Vedas and Scriptures expressed in Udgita or the chant of the Supreme; the chant of Udgita explains Universal Creation, Vedas, Meditation, Rites vis-à-vis the Reality

I.i.1) *Omityedat aksharam Udgitam upaaseeta, Om iti hridgaayati tasyopa vyaakhyaanam/ (Even as ‘Udgita’ or the chant of the Supreme signifies as OM emphasising that very word as the essence of Reality and Truth, Upanishads underline the proximity and the symbolic expression of Paramatma!)*

I.i.2) *Eshaam bhutaanaam Prithivi rasah prithivyaa aapo rasah, Aapaamoshadhayo rasa Aoushadhinaam purusho rasah purushasya vaak rasah, vaacha Rig rasaah, Richaa Saama rasaah, Saamnaa Udgito rasah/ (Of these several entities, earth is of the essence, from earth water is of essence,*

herbs and plants are of importance, human body is of essence, the organ of Speech is of significance, from the vocal origin are the Rigveda Mantras, Saamaveda Mantras and Udgita which indeed is Om being of primacy too) I.i.3) *Sa esha rasaanaam rasatamah paramah paraardhyostamo yad Udgitah/* (Indeed Udgita, being the foremost of the Lord's creation is stated to be of the core of the essentials) I.i.4) *Katamaa katamaa Ruk, katamat katamaat Saama,katamaah katama Udgita iti vimrishtam bhavati/* (Again, Udgita is considered as Rig Veda, which is Saama Veda, which again is Udgita!) I.i.5) *Vaageva Ruk Praanah saamomiti etad aksharam Udgitah, Tadeva etan mithunam yadvaak cha praanascha Rukcha Saamacha/* (As the organ of speech is Rigveda, Praana is Saama Veda and Om is Udgita, the synthesis of Vaak and Praana or of Speech and Vital Force are like that of Rik and Saama Vedas!) I.i.6) *Tadetan mithunam Omiti etasmin akshare samsrujate yadaa vai mithuinam samaagacchata aapayato vai taananyonyasya kaamam/* (The pair of Vaak and Praana as also of Rik and Saama Vedas do fulfil each other's wishes thus the word of Om fulfills the desires of the concerned male-female couples!) I.i.7) *Aapayita ha vai kaamanaam bhavati ya etadevam Vidwaanksharam udgitam upaaste/* (Logically, a person who appreciates the above and meditates on Udgita as Om would indeed be eligible for fulfillment of wishes!) I.i.8) *Tadvaah etad anugjnaaksharam, yaddhih kim chaanujaanaati omiti deva taddhhaah; eshaa eva samruddhyiradanu- gjnaa, samarthayitaa ha vai kaamaanaam bhavati yetadevam vidwaan akshara udgitam upaasate/* (This syllable of OM itself provides consent of material and spiritual fulfillment and hence 'Pranava' or the expression of Om is the great fulfiller of 'Iham' and 'Param' or the best of both the worlds of existence!) I.i.9) *Teneyam trayi Vidyaa vartata, Om iti ashraavayati, Om iti shamsati, Om iti Udgaayati, etasyaivaa aksharasyaapachityai mahimnaa rasena/* (All the Vedic Rites are thus initiated by the utterance of OM ; even as Adharyu chants the hymns in favour of-or targetting at-Devas, Udgata sings in the commenda -tion of the Rites as to be instructed for the worship of Om itself signified by the Vedas) I.i.10) *Tenebhau kuruto yaschaitad evam Veda yascha na veda, naanaa tu Vidyaa chaavidyaa cha; yadeva vidyaayaa karoti shraddhaayopanishadaa tadeva veeryavattatam bhavateeti, khalya etasyaiva aksharasyopa vyaakhyaanaam bhavati/ Iti prathama khandah/* (Even if Rites are performed without fully absorbing the significance of the word OM, yet with faith and meditation, the result would not be much less, but however, if coupled with the knowledge of what OM is, naturally the effect would be fuller; the Rites performed with 'Vidya' or Knowledge, besides 'Shraddha' or conviction and 'Upanishada' or meditation would certainly yield far reaching results!)

'Devas resorted to Udgita to suppress Demons and meditated on the Pure Form of the Vital Force and conquered Asuras; humans too at the personal level, took to the meditation with no contamination of the body parts and senses as addressed to the letter of OM and Praana conquerer Asura- like evil forces like Maharshis proved in Udgita

I.ii.1) *Devaasuraa ha vai yatrasamyetira ubhaye praajaapatyaah tadaaha Devaaudgitam aajahruh anenainaan abhi bhavishyaama iti/* (As Devas and Asuras were the descendants of Prajapati, yet representing virtue and vice respectively, Devas resorted to Udgita with the strong conviction of overcoming Asuras) I.ii.2) *Te ha naasikyam praanam udgitam upaasaam chakrire, tamhaasuraah paapmanaa vividhuh; tasmaat tenobhayam jighrati surabhi cha durgandhicha, paapmaanaa hyesha viddhhah/* (Devas then meditated on 'Praana' as that being proximate to Pure Consciousness by way of Udgita through their noses, but the smell was either fragrant or putrid but never neutral without being tainted by the smell of viciousness and Devas had to discard the nose and smell!) I.ii.3) *Atha ha Vaachamudgitam upaasaamchakrire, tam ha suraah paapmaanaa vivudhuh; tasmaat tenobhayam jaghrati surabhicha durgandhi cha, paapmaanaa hyesha viddhhaa/* (Devas by the medium of Udgita

made oblations to Vaak or Speech, but found that the quality of speech changed radically from niceties to nastiness, Truth and Untruth and fair to foul language; Devas then discarded Speech too) I.ii.4) *Atha ha chakshur Udgitam upaasaamchakrire, taddhaasuraah paapmaanaa vividhuh; tasmaat tenobhayam pashyati darshaneeyam charadarshaneeyam cha paapmaanaa hyetad viddham/* (Again taking resort to Udgita, Devatas picked up the option of eyes and vision and soon realised that one could as Asuras would most certainly do select visions of evil and vicious nature thus discarding this medium of vision too by Udgita) I.ii.5) *Atha ha shrotram udgitam upaasaamchakrire, taddhaasuraah paapmaanaa vivudhuh; tasmaat tenobhayam shrunoti shravaniyam chaashravaniyam cha, paapmaanaa hyetad viddham/* (Then they selected ears and the resultant feature of hearing, but were affected badly by the extremes of praise and foulness of hearing and felt that the organ of ears and their sense of hearing was of foul nature or sometimes of niceties and as such could not select Udgita to worship Praana in its pure form.) I.ii.6) *Atha ha mana udgitam upaasaamachakrire, taddhaasuraah paapmaanaa vividhuhu, tasmaat tenobhayam sankalpayate sankalpaneeyamcha sankalpaneeyam cha, paapmaanaa hy etad viddham/* (Devas thereafter selected mind as a possible medium of Udgita but they became aware that mind too as vicious since thoughts and imaginations are prone to virtue and vice; thus all of the body parts are prone to pluses and minuses and hence the applicability of Udgita to mind is unacceptable) I.ii.7) *Atha ha ya yevaayam mukhyah praanah tam Udgitam upaasaamchakrite, tam haasuraa ritwaa vidaadhvamsur, yathaas maa - nam aakhanam ritwaa vidhwamseta/* (Devas finally deliberated on the Udgita as the very vital force in the mouth and the demons were destroyed as a piece of earth approached as a huge rock; indeed the praana or the vital force could not do any harm by the demons; in other words, Praana in its pure form is such as to resist the Asuras!) I.ii.8) *Evam yathaasmaanam aakhanam ritwaa vidhvamsate evam haiva sa vidhvamsate ya evamidi paapam kaamayate, yashchainam abhidaasati: sa eshosmaakhanah/* (Hence, a person whose knowledge is deep and does never entertain evil thoughts is of Devatwa, comparable to a massive rock and as such evil influences of ‘Asuratwa’ can not destroy the virtuous on the analogy of small stone getting crushed by a huge boulder!) I.ii.9) *Naivaitena surabhi na durgadhi vijaanaati apahata paapmaa hy eva, tena yad ashnati yay pibati tenetaraan praanaan avati, etam u evaantatovit votkraamati, vyaadadaati evaantata iti/* (As long as the Vital Force in the mouth is not upset or bothered by evil influences, variations of fragrance or bad odour do not really matter or influence the person with virtue; similarly good eating or healthy drink through vital force nourishes. Thus the interaction of Praana in a body of a person who is essentially virtuous is of good end use and speech, hearing, vision, mind and other body parts of wickedness and immorality are least affected by his psyche. After all, such a person when faces death he does surely open his mouth, any way!) I.ii.10) *Tam haangiraa udgitam upaasaam chakre, etam u evaangirasam manyantenagnaanam yad rasah/* (In the days of distant past, Maharshi Angirasa meditated on Praana as Udgita and till date lasting memories recall that Angirasa happened to be of the essence of body and sensory organs or ‘Angas’/ limbs especially of the mouth! I.ii.11) *Tena tam ha Brihaspatir udgitam upaasaam chakra, etam u evaa Brihaspatim manyante, vaaggih brihati tasyaa esha patih/* (Even Deva Guru Brihaspati contemplated on this Udgita and the world knows about his greatness because his speech was unique as he was the master of Vital Force too!) I.ii.12) *Tena tam haayasya udgitam upaasaamchakra, etam u evaayasyammaanyanta aasyaad yat ayate/* (Sage Ayaasya too identified himself with Udgita and he proceeded with the mouth and Vital Force) I.ii.13) *Tenatam ha Bako Dalbhyo vidaamchakaara, sa ha naimishiyaanam udgataa babhuva, sa ha smaibhyaah kaamaan aagaayati/* (Baka Dalbhya, the Udgita Priest of Naimishaaranya also chanted to fulfill the desires of Illustrious Kings like Dhritarashtra of Maha Bharata fame) I.ii.14) *Aaghataa ha vai kaam, anaam bhavati ya etad evam Vidwaan aksharam Udgitam upaasta iti adhyaatmam/* (Thus based on such illustrations,

whosoever with sound knowledge about Praana meditates on the single syllable of OM which is Udgita by itself would indeed vindicate himself as the Fulfiller of Wishes by chanting the Udgita and meditate on one's own personal level; such meditation on Divine Level shall follow in the ensuing section-

On the Divine level too Udgita addressed to syllable OM and 'Praana' would overcome enemies and enhance intrinsic features besides enriching the Self; but the methodology of the Udgita must be impeccable!

I.iii.1) *Athaadhi daivatam ya evaasau tatati tamudgitam upaasitodyan vaa esha prajaabhya Udgaayati udyamstamo bhayamamahanti, apahantaa ha vai bhayasya tamaso bhavati ya evam veda/* (On the divine plane, one should meditate on Him who excels in effulgence like Surya Deva by Udgita. As that Deity like Surya rises up the Udgita should be in favour of all Beings in Srishti; as that Deva rises up, the Geeta disperses darkness, sorrow and fright. Indeed, he who possesses this knowledge shall surmount darkness, ignorance and fear!) I. iii.2) *Samaana u evaayam chaasau, cha oshnosou, swar iteemum aacakshate swara iti pratyaswara iti amum tasmaadvaa etam imam amum chodgitam upaaseeta/* (Indeed, this one is similar to that one; in other words, the Vital Energy /Praana in the mouth and Surya Deva on the sky are equally hot and mobile. One speaks of moving on always and another moves and returns; Surya is ever mobile and Praana returns too invariably! Praana is designated as sound and another is known as reflected sound! Both the entities viz. Surya and Praana should be praised and worshipped by the medium of Udgita, due to their inherent non-difference or impartiality yet of Loka Kalyana !) I.iii.3) *Atha khalu vyaanam evogitam upaaseeta; yadvai praaniti sa praano, yad apaaniti sopaaah; atha yah praanaapaanayoh sandhih sa vyaano, yo vyaanah sa vaak; tasmad apraanana anapaanan vacham abhivyaharati/* (One should deliberate and meditate on 'Vyaana' of the Pancha Vayus of Praana-Apaana-Vyaana-Udana-Samanas by Udgita. While Praana is inhaling and Apaana is exhaling, Vyaana is the convergence of both and as the latter calls for requiring effort, it causes speech or utterances as it is the midway to exhalation and inhalation, discounting the functions of praana and apaana as Vyaana is midway with maximum energy! I.iii.4) *Ya Vaak saa Ruk, tasmaad apraanana anapaananam abhivyaharati; ya ruk tat saama tasmad apraanana anapaanan Saama gaayati yatsaama sa Udgitasthah tasmad apraanana anapaanan udgayati/* (One achieves Rig Veda from that speech and as such the Rik Mantras are without the exhalation or inhalation of praana vaayu being a special form of the speech / utterance; now Saama Veda is a chant in Vyaana, which too is without inhalation or in breathing and exhalation or out breathing- that is being mid way! In other words, Ruk mantras are of special form of speech as originated by praana and apaana and Saama mantras are through Vyana.) I.iii.5) *Ato yaanyaayani veetyavanti karmaani, yathaagner manthanam, aajeh saranam dhrudhasya dhanusha aayamanam, apraanana apapaanamstaaani karoti; etasya hetor vyaanam evodgitham upaaseeta/* (Where ever tasks involving strength and push are thus required to be executed by Udgita to Vyaana Vayu, for example in the case of 'aarani' or lighting up Agni or creating fire by rubbing two pieces of wood, or running fast to a targetted goal, bending the two ends of a strong bow and so on.) I.iii.6) *Atha Khalu udgita aksharaani upaasitodgitha iti praana evotpraanena hi uttishthati; vaagveervaacho ha gira ity aachakshatejanna tham anne heedam sarvaan sthitam/* (As one should meditate on Udgita, there should be awareness of what that term actually means: 'Ut' stands for Praana or breathing, as a person can operate deeds with the rise or strength of it; 'gi' signifies speech and 'tha' is based on food as food is the base) I.iii.7) *Dyour evot, antatriksham geeh prithvi tham; aditya evot Vaayur gir, agnistham; Saama Veda evot, yajurvedo gir, Rigvedastham; dugdhesmai vaak doham, yo vaacho dohonnaavaan annaado bhavaan, ya etaani evam vidwaan udgitaaraaksharaani upaasta, udgita iti/* (Also, the expression 'Ut'

stands for heaven, ‘gi’ is for Space or Atmosphere and ‘tha’ is earth. Saama Veda is ‘Ut’, Yajur Veda is ‘gi’, and ‘tha’ the Rig Veda. Further, speech yields milk and vice versa; a person who realises the intrinsic value of these viz. speech and milk possesses food and is an eater of ‘anna’ thus possessive of digestive power and most certainly realises the power of Ud-Gi-Tha; in other words, he is that person who is fully aware of all the inner meanings of the expressions concerned) I.iii.8) *Atha khalvaashih samruddhih upaseeta yena saamna stoshyan syaat tat saamopadhaavet/* (Thus, this is the way to attain fulfillment of desires; one should fully resort to meditation to pursue Saama chanting and appreciate its origin, prosody, ruling deities) I.iii.9) *Yasyaam ruchi tam rucham, yad aarsheuyam tam rishim, yam Devatam abhishtoshyan syaat tam Devatam upadhaavet/* (Hence one should reflect on the Ruk mantras that Saama Veda is established as also the corresponding Deities and Rishis before getting absorbed with the chant) I.iii.10) *Yena chhandasaa stoshyan syaat takl chaanda upadhaavet, yena stomena stoshyaamaanaah syaat tam stomam upadhaavet/* (Besides understanding the details of Deities and Rishis, the chanter must also understand the awareness of the ‘Chhandas’, meter details, method of chanting, the group of relevant stanzas of the hymns, the details of affixes and suffixes and most importantly the meaning of the text of the hymn and the intonation.) I.iii.11) *Yaam disham abhishtoshyan syaat taam disham upadhaavet/*(The Chanter must also know the direction facing which the chant would need to be performed) I.iii.12) *Atmaam antata upashryatya stuveeta; kaamam dhyaayan apramatto abhyaasho ha yad asmai sa kaamaah samrudhyeta, yat kaamah stuveeteti, yat kaamah stuveeteti/* (Finally, one should concentrate on the chant to be unflinching, crystal clear and convincing so much as he should literally enter one’s own conscience and the Self; most importantly the chanter must be doubly sure and clear of which desire he would seek to realise and totally identify into one’s Vaak, Manas and Atma or speech, heart and Soul!)

Unmistakable excellence of the Singular Syllable of OM topped with Veda Knowledge and consistent Practice of Virtue is a sure gateway to ‘Devatwa’ and ‘Amaratwa’

I.iv.1) *Oमित्येदकश्रम उदगिताम उपसेतोमिति ह्युदगायति तस्योपव्याख्यानाम/* (The Single Word OM needs to be loudly and clearly recited at the very commencement of ‘Udgita’ for excellent results of fulfillment; a scientific explanation was offered by modern astrophysicists and astronomers that a Sound was produced due to the rapid movement of Earth, Planets and Galaxy the Milky Way with some lakh plus million Stars. The Galaxy, Moon and the Earth-all revolving around the Sun,each of which revolving on their own axes at a mind boggling velocity of 20,000 miles per second create a Super Sound Om as ancient Maharshis proclaimed it as OM. The Sum of the Gayatri Mantra is stated as the following; the kinetic energy generated by the said movement of the Universe comprising Bhur/Earth, Bhuvah / Planets and Swaha the Galaxy and the remainder was calculated at Mass x Velocity x 2. Thus the symbol of OM occupies a pre eminent status as the unmistakable medium to extol and realise the Supreme, to prefix all holy names, rites, Veda pathana, prayers, worships, Vratas, Sacrifices, and all possible deeds of virtue including ‘daana dharma’, ‘Tirtha Yatra’ and so on) I.iv.2) *Devaa vai mrityor bibhyatah trayeem vidyaam pravishamaste chhandobhir acchaadayan, yad ebhir acchaadayams chhandasaam chhandas-twam/* (Devas being afraid of death practised Vedic Rites by way of oblations with appropriate ‘mantras’ which are covered by meters and chhandas as Devas covered themselves for protection against death; indeed the word ‘chhandas’ or prosody emerges from ‘chhand’ or ‘to cover’) I.iv.3) *tanu tatra mrityur yathaa matsyamudake paripashet; evam paryaapashyed ruchi saamni yajushi, te nu vividitvordhvaa Ruchah Saamno Yajushaah, svameva pravishan/* (Death noticed Devas in Rig-Saama-Yajur Vedas too just as one might see a fish in waters, but having been purified by the Vedic Rites and possessing clean minds and practising detachment took to the final resort to the Om Shabda and its meditation only) I.iv.4)

Yadaa vaa Rucham aapnoti Om iti evaatiswarati evam Saamaivam Yajur eshau swaro yadetad aksharam etad amritam abhayam tat pravishya Devaamrita abhaya abhavan/ (As and when one obtains Ruk mantras by way of hard industriousness and study, one needs indeed to prefix the utterance of the mantra with Om; so is the case of Saama mantras or Yajur mantras which ought to be prefixed with the expression of Om. Indeed this combination of the Vowel Om with the Mantras would most certainly pave the path for immortality; this is the key to the Mantras to the Vowel that assures of fearlessness from death! This ‘ekaaksharam’ OM assures of ‘Amritam’ and ‘Abhayam!’ I.iv.5) *Sa ya etga devam vidvan aksharam pranouti etad evaaksharam swaram amritam abhayam pravishati, tat pravishya yhad amritaa dreaah tad amruto bhavati/* (Thus he who extols the single and singular letter OM, enters into that very Letter or gets absorbed into that vowel and attains intrepidity and eternity. Having entered into it he accomplishes Devatwa and Amaratwa!)

Udgita recognised as OM is Surya Deva and Pravaha Vayu and the desires of the Karta’s Udgita would be certainly fulfilled, despite shortcomings in oblations

I.v.1) *Atha kalu udgitah sa pranavo yah pranavah sa udgita iti asau vaa udgita, esha pranava, Om iti hyesha swaraaneti/* (Pranava and Udgita are just the same. These are also the Forms of Surya Deva for brightness and Praana the Vital Energy for bestowing Life; Sun is ‘considered’ to be ever on the move, yet constant and the syllable Om too is all pervasive and this is Udgita is all about!) I.v.2) *Etamu evaaham abhayagaa –sisham tasmaan mama twam ekoseeti ha Kaushitakih putram uvaacha, rasmistwam paryaavartayaad bahavo vai te bhavishyantiti adhidaivatam/* (Maharshi Kaushitaki asked his son to ponder over the innumerable Sun Rays sincerely so that he would be blessed with several bright and virtuous sons; this is in the context of Divinities) I.v.3) *Athaadhyaatmam ya evaayam mukhyah praanastam udgitam upaaseetomiti hesha swaranneti/* (Referring to meditation and introspection on the individual plane in reference to the body, this should indeed be on the ‘praana’ in the mouth organ, which would need be recited in ‘udgita’ and significantly enough addressed to the Pranava Mantra OM; the similarity on the divine plane too as in respect of Surya Deva as applicable to the Vital Force) I.v.4) *Etamu evaaham abhyaagaasisham, tasmaan mamatwam ekoseetii ha Kausheetakih putram uvacha, praanaastwam bhumaanam abhigaayataad bahavo vaim bhavishyanteeti/* (Kausheetaki told his son that he should always worship ‘Praana’ the Vital Energy in his physique as present in various forms so that the son would beget several sons, since the Maharshi was blessed only with a single son! Indeed, the Vital Force in the mouth is as important as Surya Deva was and hence would bestow several sons as his many rays) I.v.5) *Atha khalu ya Udgitah sa Pranavah, yah Pranavah sa Udgita iti hotrshadanaad haivaapi durudgeetam anusaamaaharateeti anusmaaharatiti/* (Maharshi Kaushitaki asserted that Udgita was Pranava and vice versa and even if the Hota poured the oblations defectively and wrongly out of tune with the Udgita, it would matter no harm and the resultant cure of the bodily ailment would surely be accomplished and the desires of the Karta of the Udgita should be fulfilled!)

Pranava and the hidden meanings of Scriptures like Upanishads anaysing Brahman the Reality bestow nectar leading to material fulfillment and spiritual enlightenment

III.v.1) *Atha yeshyordhva rashmayas taa evasyordhva madhunaadyo guhyaa evaadeshaa madhukruto, brahanaiva pushpa, taa amritaa aapah/* (Brahman signifying the Unique syllable OM constitutes the upward rays of Surya representing the upper honey cells. In this context, the secret injunctions of Upanishads and Scriptures are indeed the bees and the flower is of OM while the waters or juices are the

nectars) III.v.2) *Te vaa ete guhyaa aadeshaa etad Brahmaabhyatapah tgasyaabhitaptasya Yashas, teja, indriyam, veeryam, annadyam, rasojaayata/* (The mystical instructions issued by Upanishads are motivated by the flower of Pranava and thus originate juices in the form of fame, luster, vitality and strength provided by food) III.v.3) *Tad vyaksharat, tad aadityam abhitoshrayat, tad vaa etad yad etad adityasya madhye kshobata iva/* (The juices flowed in abundance and settled on the side of Surya Bimba which is what activates all across the Great Entity) III.v.4) *Te vaa ete rasaanaam rasah, Veda hi rasaah, tesaam ete rasaah, taani vaa etaani amritaanaam amritaani, Veda hi amritaah, tesaam etaani amritaani/*(Thus these flows of juices are indeed the essence of essences, as Vedas or Scriptures are all the true nectars! What all are the Sacrifices, Rites, Meditations, Dharmaacharanas, Guhya Mantras, splendours of Pranava and so on are the quintessence of what Brahman and Reality is all about!)

The multi splendoured eminence of Gayatri is the heart and Soul of Earth and of the Beings vis-a vis the Unknown!

: Utmost Significance of OM as the gateway to virtuous human birth and beyond

V.1-2) *Atha hainam Shaibhah Satya kaamah prapachha, sa yo havaitad, Bhagavan, manushyeshu praanaaantam Omkaaraam abhidhyaeeeta, katamam vaa va sa tena lokam jayateeti// Tasmai sa hovaacha etad vai, Satyakaama, param chaaparam cha brahma yad omkaarah, tasmaad vidvaan etenaivaayatane- naikataram anveti//*

(What precisely is the significance that is most discussed about the singular word of OM asked Maharshi Pippalaada by Satyakaama the son of Sibi: ‘what indeed the life- long meditation of which one accomplishes from’! The ‘abhidyaana’ or the intense contemplation would call for Self-Identification like the total absorption of senses into Paramatma himself! Then the Maharshi explained that the Pranava Shabda connotes the Realisation of the Self as also the Supreme which indeed are one and the same or the qualified Atma and the Absolute Paramatma)

V.3-5) *Sa yadi eka mantram abhidhyaeeeta, sa tenaiva samveditastura jagatyaam abhisampadyate; tam Richo manushyaolak upanayante, sa tatra tapasaa bhahmacharyena shraddhayaa sampanno mahimaanam anubhavati// Atha yadi dvimaatrena manasi sampadyate sontariksham yajurbhir unneeyate soma lokam, sa somaloke vibhutim anubhuuya punaraavarte// yah punaretam trimaatrena Om iti ethenaiva- aksharena param purusham abhidhyaeeeta, sa tejasi Surye sampannah;adhaa paadodaras- tvachaa vinirmuktah sa saamabhir unneeyate brahma lokam, sa etasmaaj jeevaghanaatparaatparam purishayam purusham eekshate: tad eatou shokam bhavet//*

(Even if one does not fully realise the true import of the Single word OM nor comprehend the constitution and basis of it, by one’s thought and partial meditation of it should enlighten the person concerned and ensure the attainment of birth next on earth. Rik Veda Mantras ensure human birth, and that gives ample possibilities of ‘tapasaa brahmacharyena shraddhayaa’ or meditation, self control and faith leading to application of mind to the Basic Truth and Reality. More intensive meditation on the OM mantra- comprising three Letters viz. A-U-M, if coupled with another letter viz. ‘U ’ signifying the mind as also the relevant Yajur Veda would elevate a virtuous person to Soma Loka or the world of the Moon and turns around to human birth again. Further meditation by the third syllable ‘M’ of the word OM to ‘Param Purusham’ or Hiranyagarbha Brahma then, one would get unified with and identified by Surya Deva in the Solar Orbit resplendent with extraordinary luminosity. Then just as a serpent gets rid of its skin, then

the enlightened person concerned deep in meditation gets rid of his sins on account negative deeds and once led by the Saama Veda Chants is purified and qualified from the pursuit of the Supreme.

V.6-7) *Tisro matraa mrityumatyah prayuktaa anyonyasaktaa anaviprayuktaah, kriyaasu baahyaabhyanta - tara madhyamaasu samyak prayuktaasu na kampatejnaah// Rigbhiretam, yajurbhir antariksham, Saamabhurtat kavayo vedayante, tam aumkaarenaivaayatanaanveti vidvaan yacchachaantam, ajaram, amritam, abhayam param cha//*

(The 'tisra matraa' or the three letters viz. A-U-M of OM are no doubt within the range of death but itself. But together, the meditation of 'baahyaabhyantara madhyamaasu' or the three phases of 'jaagrat-svapna-sushupta' or awakeness-dream stage-sleep viz. the external- internal-intermediate stages leads to the realms of mortality or of Immortality. Thus once all the three letters are united, then the person of enlightenment is least disturbed. In sum, 'pathana-manana-tanmayata' or reading-repetition-total absorption of Rigveda mantras achieves human birth, of Yajurveda mantras accomplish Antariksham or the Intermediate Interspace; of Saama mantra chantings one attains what the Seekers would be delighted in for recognition viz. the Truth beyond. Thus the mere Pranava could scale heights by steps to reach the top to realise the Ananta-Ajara-Amrita-Abhaya Param or the Endless-Unaging- Everlasting- Ageless- Immortal Supreme!)

Maitreyopanishad

Introduction : The teachings of accomplishing Paramatma and Antaratma are similar: viz. Vidya- Tyaga- Tapas- Knowledge- Austerity- Meditation- Worship of Brahma Swarupas or of various Deva Swarupas. The symbol of AUM is the Supreme personified. Kaalamaana is the vessel. Prana is the life force. Mind is the navigator. Panchendriyas are the steering wheel and their steadiness. The Ultimate destination is right within! That Antarama is Paramatma. This indeed is Brahma Jnaana the Awareness. The steps are 'jaagrat-svapna-sushupta-tureeya', besides 'pathana-manana-manthana-tanmayatma-and taadaatmya. Pranava the Tisra Mantra AUM could scale the heights by the steps to reach the top to realise the Ananta-Ajara-Amrita-Abhaya Param or the Endless -Unaging-Everlasting- Unfailingly Protective-Supreme Bliss. Right within as Immortal in the Mortal Body as motivated by one's Mind driven by Panchendriyas and their acts of omission and commission , the Antaratma bears witness as a mute spectator yet as an ever active witness.

Chaper Six: 3. The symbol of AUM is the Paramartha Satyam-the Eternal Truth of the Formless and the Form

Dve vaava Brahmano rupe murtaan cha aurmurtan cha;atha yan murta tad asatyam, yad amurtam tad Brahma, tajjyotih, yaj jyotih sa aadityah, sa vaa yesha ityedam atmaabhavat, sa tredhaatmaanam vyakuruta, Aum iti, tisro matraa etaabhih sarvam idam otam protam chaivaasmeeti, evamhyaahaiad vaa aaditya Aum ityevam dhyayata aatmaanam yunjeeteti/ Paramatma is realisable in two ways-one with form and another the formless. Now the Brahman with Form is stated as unreal or a empirical or by way of observation while He who is Real is the Permanent and Everlasting Truth which indeed is of Supreme Radiance and in a way like the Pratyaksha Bhaskara from whom the three folded AUM is derived. The entire Universe as woven like the warp and woof around Him who comprises the Three Letters and the analogy thus is that the Solar Orb of Surya Deva be worshipped and meditated upon as AUM. In sum, the Formed Paramatma is the Form and the Reality is Formless Avyakta- Shashwata-

Sarvavyaapi-Anantam-Ajam-Avyayam tha is The Unknown-Everlasting- All Pervasive- Endless- Birthless- Undiminishing!

4. *Athaanyatraapi uktam, atha khalu ya udgeethah sa pranavo yah pranavah sa ugeetha esha pranavaa iti/ Evam hyaahodgeetam pranavaakhyaam pranateraram bhaa rupam vigata nidram vijaram, vimrityum, tripaadam, tryaksharam punah panchadhaa jneyam nihita guhaayaam ityevam hyaadhorddhva mulam tripaad brahma shaakhaa aakaashaa vaayuvagni udaka bhumyaadaya ekoshvaattha naamaaitad brahmaitasyaitat tejo yad asaa aadityah AUM iti etad aksharasya chata, tasmaad AUM iti anenaitad upaaseetaajasram iti ekasya sambodhaeti evam hyaaha/ Etad evaaksharam punyam, etad evaaksharam param, etad evaaksharam jnaatvaa yo yad icchati tasya tat/* It is stated elsewhere [see Chhandogya Upanishad I.v.1 to be quoted hence] that pranava' or Omkaara is not only the prime performer of sacrificial tasks but the manifestation of the 'antaratma' the Three footed-Three Lettered AUM the five folded Pancha Bhutas as represented in the Panchendriyas of the Beings in 'Srishti'. Indeed Paramatma is comparable to a massive fig tree as resplendent like Bhaskara whose essential radiance is what the syllable AUM represents! Hence the magnificence of the Supreme.

Rig Veda vide X.90 -3-4 stanzas are relevant : *Etaavaanasya mahimaatojyaayaanacha Puurushah, paadosya vishvaa bhutaani tripaadasyaamritam divi/ Tripaaduurthva udait Purushah paadosyehaa- bhavat punah, tato vishvang vyakraamatsaashanaanashane abhi/* The entire universe is far bigger than the Virat Purusha; this immortal Master is the Supreme Energy to the Universe and the various Beings as sustained by food. Of His three feet, three lokas got manifested, one sustained by food and others otherwise.

AUM is the true reflection of Srishi the Universe. Atharvana Upanishad states: *Sarvaan praanaan paramatmani pranaamayateeti pranavah/* Once Pranava recital is taken up then the 'dehendriya praana mano buddhi' or the body parts, life's energy, the mind and its variations get stirred up and rejuvenated. *Sarveshaameva mantraanaam Pranavah praanamuchyate/* or Pranava is the very Life's force, and in reverse sense praana is pranava uitself literally! *Pranavaadaparam japtvaa kadaa mukto bhavishyati/* or there could be no worship nor puja nor any 'mantra' without AUM! Omkaara comprises A kaara-U kaara-Ma kaara. [Bhagavad Gita sums up vide Chapter 8 stanza 12-13: *Sarva dwaaraani samyamya mano hridi nirudhyacha, murdhaa dhyaya -atmanah praanamaasthito yoga dhaaranaam/ Omityekaaksharam Brahma vyaaharan maamausmaran, yah prayaatityajanam deham sayaati Paramaam gatim/* Whosoever is able to control the limbs and senses and stabilise the mind by 'Yoga dhaarana' and concentrate one's thoughts and aim at Paramatma by reciting AUM and unite praana the life energy into 'brahma randhra' shal indeed accomplish HIM! Thus Omkaara is like an unfathomable ocean into which all kinds of meditations and worships of various forms of Paramatma merge into and whosoever is steeped into all types of Devas with no barriers of kula- mata-linga-vayo bhedas or differences of caste-faith-sex-age reach the Almighty alone indeed!]

5. *Athaanyatraapi uktam, svnavati eshaasyah tanuuh yaa AUM iti stree- punnaapumasaketi lingaavatee eshaataagnir vaayur aadityaa iti bhaasvati, esha atha Brama Rudro Vishnuriti adhipativatee, eshaatha garhapatyo dakshinaagnir aahavaaneeyaa iti mukhaavatee, eshaatha Rig Yajur Saameti vigjnaanaa -vatee, esha bhur bhavar swar iti lokavatee, eshaatha bhutam bhavyam bhavisyaad iti kaalaavatee, eshaatha praanognih surya iti prataapavatee, eshaataannam aapas chandramaa iti aapyaayanaavatee eshaatha praanopaanovyaana iti praanavatee, esheti ata AUM iti uktenaitaah pastutaa architaa arpita*

bhavanteeti evam hyaahaitad vai atyakaama paraan chaparaan cha brahmayad AUM iti etad Aksharam iti/ AUM is a 'nisshabda shabda' or a silent sound heard by each and every Being irrespective of age, sex or neutral. This represents Agni-Vaayu- and Surya as the flickering flash within as long as the life lasts. Indeed that is the Real Self the Antaratma which is of the Form of Trimurtis as Brahma-Rudra-Vishnu essentially representing the Tri Gunas of Satvika- Tamasika -Rajasika or of srishthi-samhaara-sthitis. They also represent three types of Homaagnis or sacrificial Fires viz. Gaarhapatya- Dakshina- Ahaavaneeya Agnis viz. the Agni-Mukha Swarupas; or Rik-Yajus-Saama Veda the Knowledge Forms or Bhur-Bhuva-Swah the Forms of the Tri-Lokas-the Kaala maana of Past-Present -Future; Praana-Agni-Suryas the essences of Existence as the sustaining Shaktis; the preservation energies of Food- Water-Moon; the Sense Forms of Buddhi-Manas-Ahamkaaras or Intelligence-Mind-and the Awareness or sense of thoughts; or the Praana-Apaana-Vyaana or the breathing energies. Thus AUM not only represents 'paraa-aparaa' self- existence but also Paramatma too!

Subaala Upanishad

OM is the essence of Life: From Nothingness to Nothingness and from Nothingness to Brahmanda Srishti of Everythingness back to Nothingness and thus the Cycle that Paramatma is fond of as a Play! 'Anda Chatustaya' or Four folded 'Brahmanda' viz. Shakti, Maya, Prakriti and Energy. As 'Materialism' binds any Being, Atma Tatwa is not the Mistaken Self nor the Self Ego and certainly not 'Aham Brahmasmi'. The Self is distinct and is the mirror reflection as stimulated by 'Panchendriyas' as devised by 'Jnaanendriyas' for smell, taste, hear, touch and reproduce and 'Karmendriyas' or nose, tongue, ears, skin and the last .The action-reaction agency being the Mind is essentially qualified for motivation and is governed by the proportionate mix of Satva-Rajas-Tamo gunas and Bhagavan Himself is the Chief Anchor of the unique mix. 'Srishti' right from human beings down to 'krimi-keetaas' or 'sthaavara jangamas' or the moving and non moveable Beings whose Creator is Brahma Deva Himself.

Praano Brahmeti! Vital Energy is Paramatma and the former is the driving force of one's mind which in turn is the charioteer of panchendriyas. This being so, the reverberation of the sound waves by the friction of the 'Pancha Bhutas' or Five Elements named as AUM is the inter-connect between an Individual Self and the Supreme. 'Pancha Pranas' comprise Prana- Apana-Vyana- Udana- Samana.. Praana is the very Life Force , then 'Chakshu' or the EYES are satisfied and so do Surya and Heaven in the circular flow, besides 'Vyana' between the Praana and Apaana or the inhaling and exhaling breaths would initiate the beneficent circle to energise the EARS and hearing capacity, and so do Chandra and Dashas or Directions being thus ending the circle with contentment, progeny, animals, edible food, body brightness and Vedic Knowledge; then is the impact of 'VAAK' or the ability of Speech, besides Agn and jeerna shakti of food; 'Samana', then 'MIND' is satisfied, as also clouds- lightnings and Varuna the Lord of clouds; then 'Udaana' of the Vital Energy , that rises upward in the human body and consequently satisfy 'TWAK' or the Skin besides RASA or Taste, Vayu- Sky blessing with progeny, animals, physical charm, and the brilliance of Vedic Knowledge!

Naarada Parivraajaka Upanishad

VIII-1. Then Narada asked the god Brahma: 'Be pleased to expound the saviour mantra for ending the course of worldly life'. Agreeing to it the Brahma Deva commenced to expound it. The Om (is) Brahman in the mode of viewing it as made up of many separate bodies (vyashti) and as made up of parts each of which is cosubstantially the same with the whole (samashti). Which is the vyashti? Which is the

samashti? The samhara Pranava and srishti Pranava are of three kinds: the inner Pranava (Antah-Pranava), the outer Pranava (Bahya-Pranava) and the combined inner and outer Pranava (Ubhayatmaka-Pranava). The (one) Brahma-Pranava is (sometimes) the inner Pranava (consisting of eight matras) and the practical Pranava (Vyaharika-Pranava). The outer Pranava and the Pranava of the sages (Arsha-Pranava). The combined inner and outer Pranava is the Virat-Pranava. The Samhara-Pranava, the Brahma-Pranava and the Ardhamatra-Pranava. (Thus the Brahma-Pranava is of eight kinds: Samhara-Pranava, Srishti-Pranava, Antah-Pranava, Bahya-Pranava, Vyavaharika-Pranava, Arsa-Pranava, Virat-Pranava and Ardhamatra-Pranava).

VIII-2. The Om is Brahman. Know that the Om consisting of one syllable is the Antah-Pranava. It is divided into eight (matras) - the vowel 'a', the vowel 'u', the consonant 'm', the half-syllable (ardha-matra) the nada, the bindu, the kala and the shakti. Hence it is not four (as its chief matras have been said to be). The vowel 'a' consists of ten thousand parts, the vowel 'u' is of a thousand parts, the letter 'm' of a hundred parts and the Ardhamatra-Pranava consists of an endless number of parts. The Virat-Pranava is possessed of attributes (Saguna) and the Samhara-Pranava is free of attributes (Nirguna), the Utpatti-Pranava consists of both (Saguna and Nirguna). The Virat-Pranava is overflowed . The Samhara-Pranava is 'pluta-pluta' / inundated

VIII-3. The Virat-Pranava consists of sixteen matras and is beyond the thirty-six primary substances. How has it sixteen matras. They are enumerated: the vowel 'a' is the first, the vowel 'u' is the second, the letter 'm' is the third, the ardhamatra is the fourth, the bindu is the fifth, the nada the sixth, the kala the seventh, the kalatita the eighth, shanti the ninth, the santyatita the tenth, the unmani the eleventh, the manonmani the twelfth, the puri the thirteenth, the madhyama the fourteenth, the pashyanti the fifteenth, and the para the sixteenth. Again the Brahma-Pranava though only one attains the state of possessing or not possessing attributes (Saguna and Nirguna), having attained the state of possessing 128 matras, due to the twofold character of Prakriti and Purusha, when it has sixty-four matras each.

VIII-4. This (Brahma-Pranava) is the prop of all, the supreme effulgence and the lord of all -thus (the sages with true vision) look upon it. It consists of all gods and the prop of all universe (the Lord) is in it.

VIII-5. It consists of all the syllables; it is the Time; it is composed of all the scripture and is the auspicious one (Shiva). It is the most excellent of all the Vedas and consists of (the essence) of all the Upanishads; this (Om, the Atman) should be sought.

VIII-6. Past, present and future constitute the three periods - the indestructible syllable Om (pervades and transcends) these; know that it is the beginning (of everything) and the bestower of final beatitude.

VIII-7. The same (Om) which is the Atman has been described by the word Brahman. Similarly experiencing it as the one (without a second), the ageless, the immortal, the Om and super-imposing the Om along with the body (on Brahman) it becomes one with it. Know it for certain then that the triple-bodied Atman is the supreme Brahman.

VIII-8. One should deeply meditate on the supreme Brahman in the due order of Vishva, etc., (the Vishva, the Viraj, the Otir / whipped up as churned and the Turya).

VIII-9-11. This Atman is fourfold - as experiencing the gross aspect (as the Vishva) when it is an individual in the gross aspect, as enjoying (the world) in the dreaming state in a subtle form when it has assumed the subtle form (of the Taijasa), as (enjoying bliss) in the state of identity (of the Prajna and the Ishvara), and as enjoying bliss (in the Turya state). The Atman is of four padas (quarters). The Vishva consisting of four stages (Vishva-Vishva, Vishva-Taijasa, Vishva-Prajna and Vishva-Turya) is the Purusha Vaishvanara. It functions in the waking state. It perceives gross forms (of the phenomenal world)

and experiences them. It possesses nineteen faces (the five organs of perception, the five organs of action, the five vital airs and the four inner senses of manas, buddhi, ahamkara and chitta), has eight limbs (the sky as the head, the sun and the moon the two eyes, the directions the ears, the sea the lower part of the abdomen, the earth the feet), moves everywhere and is the master (Prabhu).\

Dhyana Bindupanishad

9(a). The one Akshara (letter OM) should be contemplated upon as Brahman by all who aspire for emancipation.

9(b)-10(a). Prithvi, Agni, Rig-Veda, Bhuh and Brahma -- all these (are absorbed) when Akara (A), the first Amsa (part) of Pranava (OM) becomes absorbed.

10(b)-11(a). Antariksha, Yajur-Veda, Vayu, Bhuvah and Vishnu, the Janardana - all these (are absorbed) when Ukara (U), the second Amsa of Pranava becomes absorbed.

11(b)-12(a). Dyur, sun, Sama-Veda, Suvah and Maheshvara - all these (are absorbed) when Makara (M), the third Amsa of Pranava becomes absorbed.

12(b)-13(a). Akara is of (Pita) yellow colour and is said to be of Rajo-Guna; Ukara is of white colour and of Sattva-Guna; Makara is of dark colour and of Tamo-Guna.

13(b)-14(a). He who does not know Omkara as having eight Angas (parts), four Padas (feet), three Sthanas (seats) and five Devatas (presiding deities) is not a Brahmana.

14(b)-15. Pranava is the bow. Atman is the arrow and Brahman is said to be the aim. One should aim at it with great care and then he, like the arrow, becomes one with It. When that Highest is cognised, all Karmas return (from him, viz., do not affect him).

16. The Vedas have Omkara as their cause. The Swaras (sounds) have Omkara as their cause. The three worlds with (all) the locomotive and the fixed (ones in them) have Omkara as their cause.

17. The short (accent of OM) burns all sins, the long one is decayless and the bestower of prosperity. United with Ardha-Matra (half-metre of OM), the Pranava becomes the bestower of salvation.

18. That man is the knower of the Vedas who knows that the end (viz., Ardha-Matra) of Pranava should be worshipped / recited) as uninterrupted as the flow of oil (resounding) as long as the sound of a bell.

19. One should contemplate upon Omkara as Ishvara resembling an unshaken light, as of the size of a thumb and as motionless in the middle of the pericarp of the lotus of the heart.

20. Taking in Vayu through the left nostril and filling the stomach with it, one should contemplate upon Omkara as being in the middle of the body and as surrounded by circling flames.

21. Brahma is said to be inspiration, Vishnu is said to be cessation (of breath) and Rudra is said to be expiration. These are the Devatas of Pranayama.

22. Having made Atman as the (lower) Arani (sacrificial wood) and Pranava as the upper Arani, one should see the God in secret through the practice of churning which is Dhyana.

23. One should practise restraint of breath as much as it lies in his power along with (the uttering of) Omkara sound, until it ceases completely.

24. Those who look upon OM as of the form of Hamsa staying in all, shining like Crores of suns, being alone, staying in Gamagama (ever going and coming) and being devoid of motion - at last such persons are freed from sin.

25. That Manas which is the author of the actions (viz.,) creation, preservation and destruction of the three worlds, is (then) absorbed (in the supreme One). That is the highest state of Vishnu.

26. The lotus of the heart has eight petals and thirty-two filaments. The sun is in its midst; the moon is in the middle of the sun.

27. Agni is in the middle of the moon; the Prabha (spiritual light) is in the middle of Agni. Pitha (seat or centre) is in the midst of Prabha, being set in diverse gems.

28-29. One should meditate upon the stainless Lord Vasudeva as being (seated) upon the centre of Pitha, as having Srivatsa (black mark) and Kaustubha (garland of gems) on his chest and as adorned with gems and pearls resembling pure crystal in lustre and as resembling Crores of moons in brightness. He should meditate upon Maha-Vishnu as above or in the following manner.

30-31. (That is) he should meditate with inspiration (of breath) upon Maha-Vishnu as resembling the Atasi flower and as staying in the seat of navel with four hands; then with restraint of breath, he should meditate in the heart upon Brahma, the Grandfather as being on the lotus with the Gaura (pale-red) colour of gems and having four faces;

32-34(a). Then through expiration, he should meditate upon the three-eyed Shiva between the two eyebrows shining like the pure crystal, being stainless, destroying all sins, being in that which is like the lotus facing down with its flower (or face) below and the stalk above or like the flower of a plantain tree, being of the form of all Vedas, containing one hundred petals and one hundred leaves and having the pericarp full-expanded. 34(b)-35. There he should meditate upon the sun, the moon and the Agni, one above another. Passing above through the lotus which has the brightness of the sun, moon and Agni and taking its Hrim Bija (letter), one leads his Atman firmly.

36. He is the knower of Vedas who knows the three seats, the three Matras, the three Brahmas, the three Aksharas (letters) and the three Matras associated with the Ardha-Matra.

37. He who knows that which is above Bindu, Nada and Kala as uninterrupted as the flow of oil and (resounding) as long as the sound of a bell - that man is a knower of the Vedas.

38. Just as a man would draw up (with his mouth) the water through the (pores of the) lotus-stalk, so the Yogin treading the path of Yoga should draw up the breath.

39. Having made the lotus-sheath of the form of Ardha-Matra, one should draw up the breath through the stalk (of the Nadis Susumna, Ida and Pingala) and absorb it in the middle of the eyebrows.

40. He should know that the middle of the eyebrows in the forehead which is also the root of the nose is the seat of nectar. That is the great place of Brahman.

41. Postures, restraint of breath, subjugation of the senses, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi are the six parts of Yoga.

42. There are as many postures as there are living creatures; and Maheshvara (the great Lord) knows their distinguishing features.

43. Siddha, Bhadra, Simha and Padma are the four (chief) postures. Muladhara is the first Chakra. Svadhisthana is the second.

44. Between these two is said to be the seat of Yoni (perineum), having the form of Kama (God of love). In the Adhara of the anus, there is the lotus of four petals.

45-46. In its midst is said to be the Yoni called Kama and worshipped by the Siddhas. In the midst of the Yoni is the Linga facing the west and split at its head like the gem. He who knows this, knows Vedas.

47. A four-sided figure is situated above Agni and below the genital organ, of the form of molten gold and shining like streaks of lightning. Prana is with its Sva (own) sound, having Svadhisthana as its Adhithana (seat), (or since Sva or Prana arises from it).

8. The Chakra Svadhisthana is spoken of as the genital organ itself. The Chakra in the sphere of the navel is called Manipuraka, since the body is pierced through by Vayu like Manis (gems) by string.

49-50(a). The Jiva (ego) urged to actions by its past virtuous and sinful Karmas whirls about in this great Chakra of twelve spokes, so long as it does not grasp the truth.

50(b). Above the genital organ and below the navel is Kanda of the shape of a bird's egg.

51. There arise (from it) Nadis seventy-two thousand in number. Of these seventy-two are known.

52-53. Of these, the chief ones are ten and carry the Pranas. Ida, Pingala, Susumna, Gandhari, Hastijihva, Pusha, Yasasvini, Alambusa, Kuhuh and Sankhini are said to be the ten.

54-55(a). This Chakra of the Nadis should ever be known by the Yogins. The three Nadis Ida, Pingala and Susumna are said to carry Prana always and have as their Devatas, moon, sun and Agni.55(b)-56(a). Ida is on the left side and Pingala on the right side, while the Susumna is in the middle. These three are known to be the paths of Prana.

56(b)-57. Prana, Apana, Samana, Udana and Vyana; Naga, Kurma, Krikara, Devadatta and Dhananjaya; of these, the first five are called Pranas, etc., and last five Naga, etc., are called Vayus (or sub-Pranas).

58. All these are situated (or run along) the one thousand Nadis, (being) in the form of (or producing) life. Jiva which is under the influence of Prana and Apana goes up and down.

59-60(a). Jiva on account of its ever moving by the left and right paths is not visible. Just as a ball struck down (on the earth) with the bat of the hand springs up, so Jiva ever tossed by Prana and Apana is never at rest. 60(b)-61(a). He is knower of Yoga who knows that Prana always draws itself from Apana and Apana draws itself from Prana, like a bird (drawing itself from and yet not freeing itself) from the string (to which it is tied).61(b)-63. The Jiva comes out with the letter 'Ha' and gets in again with the letter 'Sa'. Thus Jiva always utters the Mantra 'Hamsa', 'Hamsa'. The Jiva always utters the Mantra twenty-one thousand and six hundred times in one day and night. This is called Ajapa Gayatri and is ever the bestower of Nirvana to the Yogins.64-66(a). Through its very thought, man is freed from sins. Neither in the past nor in the future is there a science equal to this, a Japa equal to this or a meritorious action equal to this. Parameshvari (viz., Kundalini Shakti) sleeps shutting with her mouth that door which leads to the decayless Brahma-hole.66(b)-68. Being aroused by the contact of Agni with Manas and Prana, she takes the form of a needle and pierces up through Susumna. The Yogin should open with great effort this door which is shut. Then he will pierce the door to salvation by means of Kundalini.69. Folding firmly the fingers of the hands, assuming firmly the Padma posture, placing the chin firmly on the breast and fixing the mind in Dhyana, one should frequently raise up the Apana, fill up with air and then leave the Prana. Then the wise man gets matchless wisdom through (this) Shakti.70. That Yogin who assuming Padma posture worships (i.e., controls) Vayu at the door of the Nadis and then performs restraint of breath is released without doubt. 71-72. Rubbing off the limbs the sweat arising from fatigue, abandoning all acid, bitter and saltish (food), taking delight in the drinking of milk and Rasa, practising celibacy, being moderate in eating and ever bent on Yoga, the Yogin becomes a Siddha in little more than a year. No inquiry need be made concerning the result.73. Kundalini Sakti, when it is up in the throat, makes the Yogi get Siddhi. The union of Prana and Apana has the extinction of urine and faeces.74-75(a). One becomes young even when old through performing Mula-Bandha always. Pressing the Yoni by means of the heels and contracting the anus and drawing up the Apana - this is called Mula-Bandha.75(b)-76. Uddiyana Bandha is so called because it is (like) a great bird that flies up always without rest. One should bring the western part of the stomach above the navel.77. This Uddiyana Bandha is a lion to the elephant of death, since it binds the water (or nectar) of the Akasa which arises in the head and flows down.

78-79(a). The Jalandhara Bandha is the destroyer of all the pains of the throat. When this Jalandhara Bandha which is destroyer of the pains of the throat is performed, then nectar does not fall on Agni nor does the Vayu move.79(b)-80(a). When the tongue enters backwards into the hole of the skull, then there is the Mudra of vision latent in the eyebrow called Khechhari.80(b)-81(a). He who knows the Mudra Khechhari has not disease, death, sleep, hunger, thirst, or swoon.81(b)-83(a). He who practises this Mudra

is not affected by illness or Karma; nor is he bound by the limitations of time. Since Chitta moves in the Kha (Akasa) and since the tongue has entered (in the Mudra) Kha (viz., the hole in the mouth). Therefore the Mudra is called Khechhari and worshipped by the Siddhas.83(b)-84. He whose hole (or passage) above the Uvula is closed (with the tongue backwards) by means of Khechhari-Mudra never loses his virility, even when embraced by a lovely woman. Where is the fear of death, so long as the Bindu (virility) stays in the body.85-86(a). Bindu does not go out of the body, so long as the Khechhari-Mudra is practised. (Even) when Bindu comes down to the sphere of the perineum, it goes up, being prevented and forced up by violent effort through Yoni-Mudra.86(b)-87. This Bindu is twofold, white and red. The white one is called Sukla and the red one is said to contain much Rajas. The Rajas which stays in Yoni is like the colour of a coral.88. The Bindu stays in the seat of the genital organs. The union of these two is very rare. Bindu is Shiva and Rajas is Sakti. Bindu is the moon and Rajas is the sun.89-90(a). Through the union of these two is attained the highest body; when Rajas is roused up by agitating the Sakti through Vayu which unites with the sun, thence is produced the divine form.90(b)-92. Sukla being united with the moon and Rajas with the sun, he is a knower of Yoga who knows the proper mixture of these two. The cleansing of the accumulated refuse, the unification of the sun and the moon and the complete drying of the Rasas (essences), this is called Maha-Mudra.93. Placing the chin on the breast, pressing the anus by means of the left heel and seizing (the toe of) the extended right leg by the two hands, one should fill his belly (with air) and should slowly exhale. This is called Maha-Mudra, the destroyer of the sins of men.

94. Now I shall give a description of Atman. In the seat of the heart is a lotus of eight petals. In its centre is Jivatma of the form of Jyotis and atomic in size, moving in a circular line. In it is located everything. It knows everything. It does everything. It does all these actions attributing everything to its own power, (thinking) I do, I enjoy, I am happy, I am miserable, I am blind, I am lame, I am deaf, I am mute, I am lean, I am stout, etc. When it rests on the eastern petal which is of Sveta (white) colour, then it has a mind (or is inclined) to Dharma with Bhakti (devotion). When it rests on the south-eastern petal, which is of Rakta (blood colour), then it is inclined to sleep and laziness. When it rests on the southern petal, which is of Krishna (black) colour, then it is inclined to hate and anger. When it rests on the south-western petal which is of Nila (blue) colour, then it gets desire for sinful or harmful actions. When it rests on the western petal which is of crystal colour, then it is inclined to flirt and amuse. When it rests on the north-western petal which is of ruby colour, then it has a mind to walk, rove and have Vairagya (or be indifferent). When it rests on the northern petal which is Pita (yellow) colour, then it is inclined to be happy and to be loving. When it rests on the north-eastern petal which is of Vaidurya (Lapis Lazuli) colour, then it is inclined to amassing money, charity and passion. When it stays in the inter-space between any two petals, then it gets the wrath arising from diseases generated through (the disturbance of the equilibrium of) Vayu, bile and phlegm (in the body). When it stays in the middle, then it knows everything, sings, dances, speaks and is blissful. When the eye is pained (after a day's work), then in order to remove (its) pain, it makes first a circular line and sinks in the middle. The first line is of the colour of Bandhuka flower (Bassia). Then is the state of sleep. In the middle of the state of sleep is the state of dream. In the middle of the state of dream, it experiences the ideas of perception, Vedas, inference, possibility, (sacred) words, etc. Then there arises much fatigue. In order to remove this fatigue, it circles the second line and sinks in the middle. The second is of the colour of (the insect) Indragopa (of red or white colour). Then comes the state of dreamless sleep. During the dreamless sleep, it has only the thought connected with Parameshvara (the highest Lord) alone. This state is of the nature of eternal wisdom. Afterwards it attains the nature of the highest Lord (Parameshvara). Then it makes a round of the third circle and sinks in the middle. The third circle is of the colour of Padmaraga (ruby). Then comes the state

of Turya (the fourth). In Turya, there is only the connection of Paramatman. It attains the nature of eternal wisdom. Then one should gradually attain the quiescence of Buddhi with self-control. Placing the Manas in Atman, one should think of nothing else. Then causing the union of Prana and Apana, he concentrates his aim upon the whole universe being of the nature of Atman. Then comes the state of Turiyatita (viz., that state beyond the fourth). Then everything appears as bliss. He is beyond the pairs (of happiness and pains, etc.). He stays here as long as he should wear his body. Then he attains the nature of Paramatman and attains emancipation through this means. This alone is the means of knowing Atman. When Vayu (breath) which enters the great hole associated with a hall where four roads meet gets into the half of the well-placed triangle, then is Achyuta (the indestructible) seen.⁹⁵ Above the aforesaid triangle, one should meditate on the five Bija (seed) letters of (the elements) Prithvi, etc., as also on the five Pranas, the colour of the Bijas and their position. The letter 'Ya' is the Bija of Prana and resembles the blue cloud. The letter 'Ra' is the Bija of Agni, is of Apana and resembles the sun.⁹⁶ The letter 'La' is the Bija of Prithvi, is of Vyana and resembles Bandhuka flower. The letter 'Va' is the Bija of Jiva (or Vayu), is of Udana and is of the colour of the conch.^{97-99(a)}. The letter 'Ha' is the Bija of Akasa, is of Samana and is of the colour of crystal. Prana stays in the heart, navel, nose, ear, foot, finger and other places, travels through the seventy-two thousand Nadis, stays in the twenty-eight Crores of hair-pores and is yet the same everywhere. It is that which is called Jiva.^{99(b)-101(a)}. One should perform the three, expiration, etc., with a firm will and great control; and drawing in everything (with the breath) in slow degrees, he should bind Prana and Apana in the cave of the lotus of the heart and utter Pranava, having contracted his throat and the genital organ.^{101(b)-102}. From the Muladhara (to the head) is the Susumna resembling the shining thread of the lotus. The Nada is located in the Vinadanda (spinal column); that sound from its middle resembles (that of) the conch, etc.^{103-104(a)}. When it goes to the hole of Akasa, it resembles that of the peacock. In the middle of the cave of the skull between the four doors shines Atman, like the sun in the sky.^{104(b)-105}. Between the two bows in the Brahma-hole, one should see Purusha with Sakti as his own Atman. Then his Manas is absorbed there. That man attains Kaivalya who understands the gems, moonlight, Nada, Bindu and the seat of Maheshvara..

A RAJARSHI TURNED BRAHMARSHI

Profile on Vishvamitra

Thrice a day dvijas are expected to perform Gayatri Mantra and during the Invocatory and Viniyogas or attributions of Gayatri / Shiro Mantras state: *Tatsavituriti Vishwamitra Rishih Gayatri chaandah Savitaa Devataa Apojyotiriti Sirasah Pajapatirishi yajuschhando BrahmagniVaayu Suryaa Devataah/* Brahmarshi 'Vishva Mitra' credited as the unique reviver of Gayatri Mantra vide Rigveda's Third Mandala.

A RAJARSHI TURNED BRAHMARSHI

Part I

Vishvamitra was originally a dharmatma king yet the suppressor of all evil energies on earth and a merciful king with 'prajaakshema' as the principal responsibility. He was the famed son of Gaadhi who was the son of Kushnaabha. The maha tejasvi King Vishvamitra reigned for over thousand years. One historic day he proceed on a hunting extravaganza along with an akshouhini of his sena crossing cities, kingdoms, rivers, huge mountains, forests for hunting animals and birds for fun; he also visited several ashrams of rishis deepy engaged in agni karyaas, vaalakhilyas of short stature hanging down huge tree branches engossed in deep meditations and finally landed on the famed 'ashram' of the renowned Vashishtha Maharshi. Vashishtha Maharshi welcomed King Vishwamitra and formaly offered fresh fruits and ground grown tubular vegetables and enquired of the happiness and general welfare of his subjects. Similarly the King enquired of the welfare of the Sage, and the inmates of the ashram.. Then Vasishtha smilingly stated: Maharaja! May I offer appropriate lunch to you and your several follower armymen, as my duty is to provide 'atithya' as behoved of a King and followers. The King responded stating that the honours as from an ashram have been more than fulfilled already; more so it was time for his departure. But as the host insisted the King Vishvamitra as per the insistence of Vasishtha Muni replied that he ought to obey the instruction of Maharshi Vasishtha. Then Vasishtha asked his 'mind born homa dhenu' named Shabali the celestial cow and requested that she might provide such food as would behove of a famed King and his countless followers. 'Divya Kamadhenu'! entreated Vasishtha, ' please get ready with 'shadrassa bhojana' of ' bhakshya-bhojya- lehya-choshya-paaneeya paramaannas' at the earliest. As per Maharshi Vasishtha's request, Kamadhenu Shabala arranged the pancha bhaksyas aplenty and afresh. Maharshi Vasishtha thus served excellent food to the King along with his entire army and retinue of queens and others too to their complete contentment, King Vishvamitra addressed Maharshi Vasishtha! Maharshi! Do accept the charity from my kingdom about a lakh of prize cows yielding barrels of fresh and sweet milk due to my being the overall king of my subjects. It is out of the same authority of my

being the King of this kingdom again, let me exchange Shabala as per the established principle of kingship.[Aachaara khanda of Manu Smriti is quoted in this context:‘ He is the ideal King who is truthfully wedded to the principles of virtue and nyaaya, modest and ideal earnings for the Self and dependents besides spare for charity, and controlled and regulated by moderate and just desires]

Vasishtha replied : Just as a dharmika parayana could never be severed from his inner consciousness, I too could never be aloof from me since my ‘havya-kavya kaaryas’ in my daily routine would certainly get affected severely. My routine of agnihotra-bali-homa- swaaha- vashatkaara and all the practice of related vidyas should get adversely disturbed too in her absence. In short, my very existence is my possession of Shabala. King Vishvamitra then offered fourteen thousand elephants, eight hundred golden chariots each of which adorned with four each of mighty horses of excellent nativity, in addition to which eleven thousand horses of the best possible parts of the contemporary kingdoms too, apart from one crore cows of sweet milk bearing breed. Maharshi Vasishtha declared: King Vishvamitra! I will not part with Shabala as this is my jewel, my prosperity, my life and my totality! . Vasishtha’s firm resolution never to part with Shabala Kama Dhenu, but the King and his mighty men sought to forcibly hurl it away, even as the Sacred Cow felt that as to which big mistake had been done by her that the Maharshi Vasishtha let his devout follower had let her be taken away forcefully! Having deeply felt agitated thus, Shabala with all her strength suddenly kicked off the grip of the strong soldiers and ran back with airborne speed and cryingly stated: Maharshi! why had you allowed those monstrous soldiers to let me be tied and forcibly taken away! Vasishtha replied: ‘ how indeed could you ever imagine that I had allowed you to be discarded! Vishvamitra is not only a mighty kshatriya king with vast army, chariots, elephants, horses, and of fame, where as I am a brahmana practising agni karyas and swadhyaayaas’. Shabala replied: Maharshi! The might of Kshatriyas from their physical strength is nothing before from the spiritual prowess of Brahmanas and likewise the material energy of Kshatriyas pales into insignificance vis-à-vis the excellence of Maharshis. Maha Tejasvi Maharshi! do bestow a modicum of your spiritual vigor to me so that I could generate the force that would destroy and teach a lesson to the so-called mighty King Vishvamitra! Then Vasishtha Maharshi asked Shabala to manifest the prowess of such ‘sena’ to turn to the opponents to pulp. King Vishvamitra was agitated and angered like fire and utilised several ‘astras’ but the kamadhenu retaliated by creating ‘humkaara shabda’ even as several more thousands of defenders were generated. Even as his sena was thus fast getting scarcer by the minutes, the King utilised rather light and low voltage ‘mantrik astras’ which generated thousands of yavana-shaka warriors with golden hued bodies with swords and ‘tri shulas’. As the yavana shaka army was thus generated, Maharshi Vasishtha asked the Kama Dhenu to implement its ‘Yoga bala’ and create yet another band of warriors. Kamadhenu made another ‘humkaara’ which resulted in the generation of ‘kambojas’ of Surya Deva’s radiance, from the ‘stanaas’ came out ‘barbaraas’, from the ‘yoni’ pradesha Yavanas, from the ‘gobara sthaana’ the ‘shakas’, and from the kamadhenu’s body hairs the ‘mlecchhas’ and ‘kiraataas’. Countless pores of the body of Kama Dhenu were sprouted veera-dheera-sena of elephants, horses, and chariots. The youthful sons of King Vishvamitra then arrived but they had to soon retreat and died too. King Vishvamitra saw for himself the devastation and total defeat of the remnant army and the tragic death of two of his three sons and was put to great shame. His haughty temper like the roarings of oceans had dropped to lowest ebbs. It looked that his strong and speedy wings on high skies were cut as of a powerful Kite which dropped to earth as of death itself! His army got decimated and two of his powerful sons died too. Only one son remained and having declared him as the next king to sustain the ‘kshatriyatva’ proceeded to the sideways of Himalayas, which were dominated by naagaas and kinnaraas for Tapasya to Maha Deva. Pursuant to persistent and severe tapasya, Maha Deva appeared and asked for the essence of ‘dhanur vidya’ since apparently he carried revengeful thoughts against Vasishtha! Maha Deva! as you have appeared in person being satisfied by my tapasya and asked me for a boon, may I seek to learn the secrets of Dhanur Vidya in totality, which Deva-Danava-Maharshi- Gandharva, Yaksha, Raakshasaas too be aware of; Maha Deva granted the boon and disappeared. Having been blessed by Maha Deva, King Vishvamitra moved forward to Maharshi Vasishtha’s ashram, and having experimented various astras, burnt off the entire forest in which Vasishthaashram too existed. The latter alerted the ashrama vaashis of his own and others too not to get concerned at the challenging escapades of King Vishvamitra. Maharshi

Vasishtha shouted at King Vishvamitra: Vishvamitra! You have destroyed the ashrams in which the greenery, trees with fruits, and the entire peaceful surroundings prevailing for ages and appear to have gone mad not realising the consequences! So saying angrily, Vasishtha picked up a big stick akin to Yama danda facing the King Vishvamitra. The angry Vasishtha since the devastation of his and other ashramas by the wanton King Vishvamitra shouted asserting: *kva ca te ksatriyabalam kva ca brahmabalam mahat, pasya brahmabalam divyam mama ksatriyapamsana/* Kshatriyakula kalangka Vishvamitra! Where is your kshaatra bala or the might of Kshatriyas and what is Brahma bala or the superiority of braahmana shakti! As Vishvamitra despatched Agneyastra, Vasishtha faced it with Brahmastra wih instantly got dismissed with heavy water falls. Then in retaliation, the King rained a series of astras viz. Maanava-Mohana-Gandharva-Svaapana-Jrumbhana-Maadana- Santaapana-Vilaapana- Shoshana-Vidaarana- Vajraastra-Brahma paasha- Kaala paasha-Vaaruna paasha-Pinaakaastra-ashani- Dandaastra-Paishaachaastra-Krounchaastra-Dharma chakra-Vishnu chakra-Vaayavyaastra- Manthanaastra- Hayashira- Dvi Shakti- Kankaala- Bhayankara Trishulaastra-Kaapaalaastra- and Kankanaashtra. As all these astras failed to stoop Vasishtha, Vishvamitra finally resorted to Brahmastra. On visioning the Brahmastra, Deva-Devarshi- Gandharva- Maha Naagas were stunned and trilokas got rattled. As Brahmastra was released by King Vishvamitra thus, by the vitrue of Maharshi's own excellence of Brahma Teja, his hand stick terminated and cooled down the Brahmastra released by King Vishvamitra! As the Brahmastra got cooled down, the face and profile assumed such roudra swarupa that trilokas were flustered and shocked with fear as though three were fiery blasts emerged from the skin pores of his body. As he raised his handstick he looked that he was carrying 'yama danda' or 'brahma danda' with the fierce 'Kaalaagni'. All the groups of Maharshis raised their arms with raised heads in admiration shouting slogans that brahmatva be vindicated vis a vis kshatratva! Then King Vishvamitra finally decided to attain 'braahmanatva' by self control and 'tapasya' and became a Maharshi. Brahmarshi Vishvamitra's ultimate decision to attain 'brahmanatva' from his erstwhile traits of 'ksatriyatva'. He had made soul searching for long, left the kingdom for good, moved forward with his wife moved south of Bharata, controlled the shad vargas of desire, anger, narrow mindedness, arrogance, infatuation and selfishness and adopted a truthful family life and was blessed with four sons of 'dharmaatva'. His modest life, regular agni karmas, restrained food intake, down to earth living manner and spotless peaceful tapsya regularly attracted Brahma especially the sea change in his attitude and appeared in his vision to state: 'Kushakanandana! Your transformation as of now secures the status of a '**Rajarshi**' already lest the univesre might not feel that your transformation had not been well recognised despite consistent tapsya! ' Thus having been blessed by Brahma earnestly, Vishvamitra has implicitly attained the universal acclamation of **Brahmarshi!**

This being so, it was at that time, there was an Ikshvaku Vamsheeya King of a truthful practioner of Kshatra Dharma of 'Shishta Rakshana and Dushta shikshana' named **Trishanku**. The King once enquired of Maharshi Vasishtha the traditional 'asthaana purohita' of Ikshvaaku Royalties:. Raja Trishanku asked Vasishtha whether he could possibly perform such yajna that could facilitate him to secure swarga by his own mortal body! Vasishtha gave a curt reply that it was impossible to do so and walked off southward of Bharata in disgust as the King could have such absurd and fanciful ideas of ambition. !The King got humiliated with the anger of Vasishtha at his seemingly fanciful but genuine desire. Then it occurred to the King that perhaps Vasishtha Kumaras who were engrossed in long tapsya not far off might help fulfill his wish. The King then prostrated before the Kumaras:Guru Putras! May I seek your help as your father Maharshi Vasishtha has not agreed to the performance of one yajna kaarya; may I request you to take up the same as it is my duty now to approach the Guru Putras indeed! Vasishtha's refusal to perform such yagna to enable King Trishanku to reach swarga in mortal form and the King's approach to Vasishtha kumaras to take up the yagna. Vasishtha Kumaras politely declined stating that once Vasishtha Maharshi refuses then his capability should not be discounted and they too could not take up the yajna. Then the King became insistent and rather arrogantly replied: Vasishtha Maharshi had not agreed and you as his worthy sons too are nor obliging; 'then I have no other recourse but to look for another purohita then!'

As King Trishanku had thus replied to Vashishtha Kumaras, the latter could not control their anger and cursed the King to turn into a 'chandala' the worst of species far below the human level and left away. Then as a chandala, his skin turned blue, his body and body parts turned blue, and even his clothes turned iron blue too. As the King thus got affected by his arrogance, his ministers, courtiers, and the public were frightened and none dared to go near him. In that miserable state of chandalatva, the King was kept aloof by the society for days and nights in disgusting solitude and finally decided to offer himself to flames and as an ultimate resort approached Maharshi Vishvamitra. The Maharshi saw the King Trishanku in the miserable form of chandala and felt melted in his heart; the King narrated the happenings of Visishtha and his sons were responsible for that state of his; Trishanku further repentently said albeit assertingly: Muneeshvara! My life long ambition of reaching heaven with my mortal body to swarga has been not only shattered but turned me to this form of a chandala! I had taken the vow of kshatriya dharma by undergoing various critical situations; I had never in my life lied and openly conveyed my life ambition with frankness publicly and shall continue to do so even now in this critical state; I have had successfully performed several yajna karyas and pleased my Gurus and Devas too consistently and all my efforts lifelong had been for the sake of dharma and service to my public. But now I realise that Daivatva is omnipotent and my fate is inevitable; you are now my singular hope in my life as you could only be the instrument for reviving my life ambition. Maha Muni! Having lost all of my strong belief in being frank all along my life, now I have the conviction to reach my ambition with your singular support to reverse my misfortunes to reality! Vishvamitra took pity on the King Trishanku in the form of chandala and gave an assurance that he should most certainly reach swarga with his mortal body. Then he instructed his disciples to collect and arrange for the required material for yajna kaarya. He further asked them to invite co-brahmanas to join the yajna including Vasishtha kumaras who heckled Trishanku and cursed him to become a chandala. Vishvamitra shishyaas likewise invited all, but Vasishtha Sishyaas were reported to have stated angrily as follows: 'A Chandala desires to perform the yajna and a Kshatriya would be the Acharya. In such yajna, how could pure brahmanas consume the 'havishaanna'! Be that as it may, how indeed a kshatriya turned chandala be despatched to swarga by another kshatriya turned brahmana, that too with the chandaala's mortal body!' Having heard this insinuating remarks of Vasishtha Kumaras, Vishvamitra fumed like fire and declared: I am right now in severe tapasya and am expected to be peaceful without anger and such mental aberrations; yet I am constrained to say that whosoever evil minded invitees to my yagnja talked disparagingly about me and the yajna being proposed be surely be converted as heaps of human ash sooner or later; further in their following births, they should be born as chandalas and roam around begging with frightening forms. Having stated thus Vishvamitra could state nothing more and kept quiet! Vishvamitra took pity on the King Trishanku in the form of chandala and gave an assurance that he should most certainly reach swarga with his mortal body. Then he instructed his disciples to collect and arrange for the required material for yajna kaarya. He further asked them to invite co-brahmanas to join the yajna including Vasishtha kumaras who heckled Trishanku and cursed him to become a chandala. Vishvamitra shishyaas likewise invited all, but Vasishtha Sishyaas were reported to have stated angrily as follows: 'A Chandala desires to perform the yajna and a Kshatriya would be the Acharya. In such yajna, how could pure brahmanas consume the 'havishaanna'! Be that as it may, how indeed a kshatriya turned chandala be despatched to swarga by another kshatriya turned brahmana, that too with the chandaala's mortal body!' Having heard this insinuating remarks of Vasishtha Kumaras, Vishvamitra fumed like fire and declared: I am right now in severe tapasya and am expected to be peaceful without anger and such mental aberrations; yet I am constrained to say that whosoever evil minded invitees to my yagnja talked disparagingly about me and the yajna being proposed be surely be converted as heaps of human ash sooner or later; further in their following births, they should be born as chandalas and roam around begging with frightening forms. Having stated thus Vishvamitra could state nothing more and kept quiet!

As Vishvamitra created a new swarga, the sages attending the Yagna were alerted by Vishvamitra not to disperse in the southern direction as that might not be auspicious but any other direction might be

preferable. In fact, the western direction should be good as there were three Pushkaras of Brahma Deva and those would be truly fruitful and well suited for tapsya. As the sages as per Vishvamitra's advice proceeded westward and found that King Ambarisha of Ikshvaaku Vamsha was organasing a maha yagjnya at Pushkara. At this Yagjna, Indra stole away the 'Yagjna Pashu'. The Purohita raised an alarm to the King that the fact of the Yagjna Pashu was certainly not a good augury for the Yagjna and hence there could be only two alternatives, either to some how recover and restore the yagjna pashu within a reasonable week's time or else to secure a 'Nara Pashu' or a Sacrificial Human Being, for the sin of which there could be a 'praayaschitta' or atonement! Then King Ambarisha declared an offer of thousand cows to secure a 'nara pashu'. By advertising this offer, both the King accompanied by his queen visited in several town ships and villages of his and neighbouring kingdoms too. In the process, they reached the 'ashram' of MuniRucheeka. The latter having heard the predicament of the Rajarshi King Ambarisha suggested that a nara pashu might be possible to be secured if the offer could be for a lakh of cows in which case the Maharshi could perhaps spare one his three sons; the King and the Queen jumped with joy and readily agreed. Then Muni Rucheeka declared: Raja! We have three sons, but since the eldest being the 'vamshoddhaaraka' I am certainly not agreeable to be spared. Then the wife of the Muni asstreted: Oh King! Just as the father refuses to spare the eldest, I am of the firm resolve never to spare my youngest son in any case! Then the middle son stated: *pitā jyeṣṭham avikreyaṁ mātā cāha kanīyasam, vikṛitāṁ madhyamaṁ manye rājan putraṁ nayasva mām/ My father could not spare the eldest son and my mother refuses to sell off the youngest; hence you may take me named the unfortunate Shunashopa away as the 'Nara Pashu'!* Ambarisha readily enhanced the emolument several fold and took away greatly relieved!

King Ambarisha arrived at noon time at the Pushkara Tirtha along with the boy Shunahshepa and rested for a while. While the King was resting, Shunahshepa loitered on the banks of Pushkara and while witnessing several Munis engrossed in tapasya, happened to accidentally met his uncle Maharshi Vishvamitra. As the boy was looking extremely worried and lonely, Vishvamitra cajoled the boy who looked unfed, depressed, and lost, Vishvamitra took him on his lap as the boy said: *na me 'sti mātā na pitā jñātayo bāndhavāḥ kutaḥ, trātum arhasi mām saumya dharmeṇa munipuṅgava/ trātā tvam hi munisreṣṭha sarveṣāṁ tvam hi bhāvanaḥ, rājā ca kṛtakāryaḥ syād ahaṁ dīrghāyur avyaya/ svargalokam upāśnīyāṁ tapas taptvā hy anuttamam, sa me nātho hy anāthasya bhava bhavyena cetasā, piteva putraṁ dharmātmaṁ trātum arhasi kilbiṣāt/ Maharshi! I now have a mother, or father or a relative. You only could save me as King Ambarisha be fulfilled of his desire and I could be too sent to heaven and be blessed with everlong life. As the boy was crying away out of helplessness, Vishvamitra then addressed the Munis around and said : ' it is most unfortunate that the era ended now as fathers longing for such sons who could save them after their own deaths! This helpless boy seeks protection from me!' Then Vishvamitra addressed the young brahmachari boys busy with their duties and said that this boy would seek my protection and therefore come forward to save him by becoming martyrs in becoming Yagjna pashus and offer yourself to flames of fires and make the Yagjna of the King a grand success as several Devas would be satiated with the Sacrifice! As Vishvamitra was addressing the Maharshis , one of them viz. Madhcchanda Maharshi the famed composer of Rigveda hymns and a few other supporters of Nara Pashu Yagjna tauntingly and sarcastically retorted to Vishvamitra stating 'Sir! How come that you could have allowed to be killed your own sons in Shabala Kamadhenu battle with you, but now you wish to save this Shunahshepa now! Just as one might get incensed while dog's meat is served , the same way one ought to have reacted as your own sons were killed; but then why somebody else's son was being sacrificed, you are getting worked up!' Then Vishvamitra got terribly worked up with red eyes and replied: 'You the Maharshis supporting Vasishtha Putras to have had the audacity be blame me not to have been able to save my sons from being killed; now my shaap to you all of you the supporters of Vishvamitra's sons as well as to Vasishtha's sons too to become instantly as dog meat eating 'mushtikas' or beggars for thousand years on earth!' Subsequently, Munikumara Shunahshepa was tied to the pole as the 'yagjna pashu' with red flowered garlands, as the mantras relevant to Indra and Vishnu; the Munikumara requested the King Ambarisha not to delay further even as the co-ritvijas too sought to proceed faster, and having taken the approval of the audience completed the sacrifice. Lord Indra seemed*

to have blessed the 'yagina pashu' with thousand long subsequent life! Maharshi Vishvamitra continued his severe tapasya at the pushkara tirtha itself.

As Vishvamitra's thousand years of tapasya concluded, groups of Devas arrived to bless him and stated that from kshatriyatva, Vishvamitra had now been upgrated as Maharshi . Having heard that encouraging outcome, Maharshi Vishvamitra continued for the next status and resolved to yet another thousand years of tapasya. As he had thus initiated the next phase of tapasya, Apsara Menaka arrived at the pushkara tirtha reedeadying herself to take her sacred bath. Vishvamitra was mentally imbalanced at her alluring body figure and flashy appearance, and invited her to stay in his ashram. As he was unable to lose his self control, both lived together for some months together. But having realised subsequently, he felt anguished that Devas were still unkind to him and they were still testing his self control; he chided Menaka too and having sent her off shifted to the northern heights of Himalayas and took to the severemost tapasya , even as Devas were flustered and approached Brahma. In turn, Brahma Deva was pleased to bless him and stated: Welcome Vishvamitra! I am very pleased to grant you the status of the foremost of Maharshis. Vishvamitra then greeting Brahma with prostrations made an appeal that in case the latter was truly happy with my taspasya then he might bless Vishvamitra with the Title of Brahmarshi. Then Brahma repied: 'Muni shreshtha! You have still not yet ripe as a 'Jitendriya' and should have to resort to further tapasya. As per Brahma Deva's instructions, Maharshi Vishvamitra further continued ruthless and far more rigorous tapasya, and Indra accompanied by Marudganas convened a conference with apsaraas.

Indra at his conference with apsaras addressed pointedly to Rambha who blushed and replied with folded hands that Maharshi Vishvamitra had proved himself as a frightful personality and as such be kindly excused for the onerous task. Indra accorded encouragement and said that she could kindly be requested than being instructed and with all her abilities of physical and psychological nature, Vishvamitra be veered around and subdued. As Rambha then approached him, Vishvamitra recognised Rambhas's voice which was sonorous like of a cuckoo bird and instantly realised the vicious planning of Indra in despatching Rambha. He addressed her: Hey Rambhe the most unfortunate! You desire that I be allured and get attracted to you! For this mean act of seeking me enthralled, may you be cursed by me to become a stone for thousand years. Vishvamitra further said:Rambhe! Once you might be relieved of my curse, a mahe brahmana of unparalleled tapomahima - Vasishtha would be pleased to relieve and racover my curse. Meanwhile, Indra and followers slipped away along with Manmadha desirous of encouraging and assisting the accursed Rambha. Vasishtha then continued his tapasya for thousand years as already resolved by him.

Even as Vishavamitra resorted to the severest possible tapasya he nodoubt got awefully thinned down in body and energy while countless hurdles were faced but his short temper still persisted. As thus the tapasya reached the thousand year mark, Indra approached him as a brahmana medicant soliciting for readily cooked food meant for Vishvamitra himself. Despite his 'mouna vrata' of keeping silence for years, Vishvamitra gave away the entire food to the brahmana. He continued to even stopping his normal breathing and resultantlly from his head emerged smokes of fume.This had created havoc in trilokas and Devata-Rishi-Gandharva-Naaga-Rakshasas got shaken with fright.They made a frantic appeal to Brahma Deva and described that the severity was getting further and further momentum. Ocean waters were raised higher and higher, mountains were getting broken down and earthquakes were hastened repeatedly. Then Maharshi Vishvamitra was of the form of sky high flames and one might imagine that 'pralaya' time had almost arrived nearby. It was at that critical juncture, Brahma Deva arrived before Vishvamitra and said sweetly: Brahman! I have arrived now with Maruganas and am totally contented with your tapasya and bless you to accomplish the glory and name of being a Brahmarshi henceforth. Addressing the Deva ganas headed by Indra, Vishvamitra stated: 'As Brahma Himself blessed me with the unique title and status of Brahmarshi, may Omkara-Vashatkaara (or Seers with intuition- independent judgment-charm-vision-enlightenment-conviction- and equanimity) and Chatur Veda jnaana; besides, dhanur veda-brahma

veda- to be within my reach. Most essentially, Vasishtha Maharshi himself should on his own appear and concede my superiority! Then Indraadi Deva blessed the Brahmarshi acknowledged with 'tathaastu' and disappeared. Maharshi Vasishtha then appeared on his own and congratulated the Brahmarshi.

VISHVAMITRA AND SHRI RAMA LAKSHMANAS

Part Two

One fine day, the King Dasharatha of Ayodhya called up a meeting of purohitas, his queens, and close relatives broached the topic of wedding to the sons. Mean while Maharshi **Vishvamitra** too arrived. The Maharshi sent a message to the King about his arrival as the Koushika Vamsha Gaadhiputra Vishvamitra. The King was rather nonplussed about Vishvamitra's sudden arrival. Yet as accompanied by purohita Vasishtha Maharshi he welcomed the Brahmarshi heartily as Indra would to Brahma Deva himself! Maharshi Vishvamitra informed the King that he was planning for a rigorous 'Vrata' with 'agni karyas' and then enquired of the King's welfare, the plumpness of the kingdom's treasury, the control and intactness of the Kingdom's boundaries, the welfare of his family and associates, and contentment of his Subjects. Later on Vishvamitra enquired of the wellbeing of Vashishta Maharshi and co Rishi- Brahmana ganaas too in the Conference as well. Now having the Guest been seated comfortably, the King made his introductory welcome remarks stating that the visit of Vishvamitra was pleasurable and he would be too happy to assist for the successful completion of the Great Yajna proposed. The visiting Maharshi became too happy at the King's generosity as the latter expressed.

Maharshi Vishvamitra then addressed King Dasharatha: 'On hearing my earnest request, you must swearingly assure me that it should be indeed fulfilled. Maharshi continued to state: King Dasharatha! The maximum part of the Yajnamaharshuna is over but now am concerned of the attacks of Rakshasaas. As you are aware, I am bound by the principles of shanti- mouna-shama- and dama and hence would not be able to get irritated and angered. The Rakshasaas tend to pour rains of blood and minced meat and all my earlier endeavors would get to nought. Indeed, I feel tempted to get angry and give 'shaap' to the rakshasaas but by doing so then what all had been achieved would be negated. That is why: Kindly allow as per your own promise your magnificent Shri Rama the Kaakutsa vamsha dhaari, satya parakrami, shuravera and your eldest son. He should indeed be able to uproot the Rakshasa groups with ease and instantly. This would eventually earn name and fame as the proud son of yours in trilokas! The principal rakshasaas named Mareecha and Subahu could never ever dare to face him and that should also send a warning to the rest of rakshasaas too. Maha Raja! never imagine Rama as your affection and attachment worthy feeling of a son only but I should be able to swear that the two Rakshasas should soon meet their logical conclusions of death and fright! Maharshi Vasishtha and all other Rishis present here are fully aware of Shri Rama's 'satyaparakrama' or of truthful gallantry and heroism. In case, if virtue and truthfulness are to be sustained on Earth, do allow the unique hero to accompany me. Surely, Vashishta and other Maharshis present here should vindicate my stand asserted Vishvamitra. Katutstha nandana Dasharatha! Do therefore spare Shri Rama for ten days to let him prove his heroism worldwide and without further procrastination, do suppress your affection for now so that any further delay would very adversely thwart my timings of my yajna karya. As Maharshi Vishvamitra pleaded so vociferously, King Dasharatha had lost his balance of body and mind and fell unconscious. On gradual recovery from his unconsciousness, King Dasharatha addressed Maharshi Vishvamitra that the lotus eyed lad of hardly sixteen years of age being asked to battle with treacherous groups of Rakshasaas was unnatural and unheard of. 'I have the sena of akshouhinis and I myself should be able to destroy them all in no time. But even to think of Rama facing the Rakshasaas would be fanciful. Rama is yet to be aware of the nuances of battles against Mayavi Rakshasaas. If insisted, then I too might at the most allow him to accompany me

but by any fair way of asking him to face the evil knowingly might not be a constructive proposition. Kushika nandana Vishvamitra Maharshi! I am now of 60000 years of ripe age and do mercifully not insist Shri Rama only. My four sons are the structures of virtue and Rama is the foremost of them all and that is precisely why that he be not made to face the evil Rakshasas! Where and what are they and where is a lad of Rama! Allow me myself to safeguard the Yajna!' As King Dasharatha argued with him thus, albeit politely and seemingly convincingly, Maharshi Vishvamitra replied: Maha Raja! Ravana is a notorious Rakshasa, born in the Maharshi Pulastya. He had taken a boon from Brahma Himself and as such had become a huge menace to Trilokas and thus invincible; [the boon was that only a renowned human of the 'amsha' of Vishnu himself]. It is learnt that Ravana was the cousin brother of Kubera himself as the latter was born to Maharshi Vishva himself. That being the background of Ravanaasura, the latter was encouraging the rakshasa duo named Maricha and Subahu to create troubles wantonly in my yajna. Unfortunately the hint that Vishvamitra gave could not be digested by King Dasharatha. But kept on insisting that he would still intend to protect the Maharshi's Yajna by killing Maricha- Subahu rakshasas all by himself! Despite Maharshi's request that Shri Rama be asked to save his yajna as he could terminate the Rakshasas even after the subtle message about the invincibility of Ravanaasura as per Brahma's boon, the King kept up his adamancy and the Maharshi angrily stated that even after the King's initial assertion that he could do anything to preserve the glory of his ancestry, 'may the King be happy that he had gone back on his- fake -assertions! As Maharshi Vishvamitra was rattled with anger, it looked that Earth might not be shaken and even Deva ganas witnessing the proceedings were in panic. To avert the crisis, Maharshi Vasishtha intervened: 'King Dasharatha! You are the symbol of Ikshvaku Vamasha and of its sustained glory. You are the famed torch bearer of the clan and should not allow any scope for its infringement now. May your assertion to Vishvamitra that his yajna would be concluded successfully be so honoured truthfully without inhibitions of 'ifs and buts' and accordingly let the famed Maharshi with outstanding foresight be pleased to let Shri Rama accompany him most certainly! Whether Shri Rama was well conversant with 'Astra Vidya' or of the full knowledge of archery or not would be irrelevant, but one reality was definite that no Rakshasa in the universal creation could face him never ever! As the fierce fires should keep the pot of Amrit in steady position, Maharshi Vishvamitra should safeguard Shri Rama and no mighty rakshasa could ever dare to go anywhere near him. Shri Rama himself as also Maharshi Vishvamitra are the symbols of Dharma, knowledge and intense concentration. King Dasharatha! The Maharshi was steeped in the knowledge Astra-Shastra Vidya unparalleled. Deva-Rishi-Rakshasa-Gandharva-Yaksha- Kinnara- Maha Naagas too were disabled too to realise their magnificence. Probably Prajapati Kusaasva was in the past was aware of the niceties of the astra-shastra vidya and his son Vishvamitra then a King had inherited it. Raghunandana Dasharatha! That is precisely why the finesse of Vishvamitra turned a Maharshi from an outstanding expert in archery! Indeed he as a Maharshi now is steeped in the knowledge of the past-present and the future. That is why you should never hesitate even for a moment to let Rama happily accompany the Maharshi! As Brahmarshi Vasishtha assured King Dasharatha about Shri Rama's safety in safeguarding the Vishvamitra Yajna, the King was satisfied and allowed Shri Rama to accompany Vishvamitra even as Lakshmana followed Shri Rama. Then the King and queen Koushalya recited 'mantras' of auspicious -ness and blessed the departing sons. Dasharatha touched the forehead of Rama with affectionate send off and handed over to the Maharshi. As cool breezes of winds were passing, it looked that Devas were showering flowers from the skies while tuneful songs and farewell dances were generating send off music by the crowded onlookers on the way. The boys with a container of arrows on their backs and a 'dhanush' on the shoulders proceeded with smiling composure behind the Maharshi as though Ashvini Kumars were accompanying Brahma Deva. Both Rama and Lakshmana were dressed illustriously and wearing glittering ornaments appropriately, along with a sharp knife hanging around a waist belt. In fact the scene was that of Maha Deva being accompanied by Agni Kumara Skanda and Vishakha. As the threesome proceeded towards the banks of the Sacred River Sarayu, then the Kumaras were asked to have a quick 'aachamana' and 'prokshana' in the river soon to return. Vishvamitra explained that these are two potent mantras named Bala and Atibala, and by their recitations they would be never fatigued but fortified with energy, fitness and alertness, conquering illnesses or diseases of any kind whatsoever and of hunger and thirst too. Now, Raghu

nandanas! By practising these two mantras, none indeed could ever face you as being Singular and Invincible. Be it well understood that these two mantras of magnificence are the dear and radiant daughters of Brahma Deva Himself! Brahmarshi stated with emphatic selflessness that he himself accomplished Bala and Ati Bala Mantras by his own long and uninterrupted tapsya of several years and blessed Shri Rama: Thereafter the threesome had comfortable rest for the night. Early morning as Rama Lakshmana Vishvamitras had comfortable night sleep, the Maharshi addressed Rama! As Maharshi explained about the origin of the ferocious Forest which was in the ancient ages was of Indra's blessed villages of Nalada and Kurusha, there appeared a rakshasi which Vishwamitra named as Tataka of mountain like form as of several elephants was the wife of Sunda; her son was Mareecha with round shoulders and huge head with open and extended mouth of giant form . They had been frightening and constatly tormenting the villagers of Malada and Karupa. These Rakshasaas had been in the regular habit of distressing the passers by for a spell of ten to fifteen miles and the entire forest had the notoriety of Tataka Vana . Vishwamitra then declared: Rama! My instruction to you should revive back this forest back to normalcy and worthy of beings moving around freely and fearlessly by throwing away this rakshasi Tataki and company, lest your dutiful loyalty and faithfulness would not be fulfilled. Shri Rama replied to Mahatma Vishwamitra that this Rakshasi being basically a woman as an 'Abala' or without physical strength as per normal usage yet is stated as one with the stature and strength coupled with severe trait of cruelty and courage. Then smilingly, the Maharshi replied that the background of Tataki was that of an yakshini married off by her father viz. Yaksha Suketaki. The latter was bound by dharma but was issueless and hence resorted to severe tapasya. Brahma Deva was pleased and the resultant boon got fructified as of the form of Tataki with a massive physical form and of the might of thousand elephants. In course of time, the girl Tataki became youthful and attractive and the father married her off to Sunda the son of Jambha. Tataki gave birth to Mareecha. Mareecha on becoming youthful played pranks with Agastya Maharshi while in deep tapasya and the Muni cursed that Mareecha would turn out as a Rakshasa. As Sunda protested violently, Agastya Muni killed Sunda too. Picking up the dead body of Sunda, both Taataki and Maricha now turned a Rakshasa roared and broke into the ashram of Agastya. *Agastyah paramakruddhas tatakām api śaptavān, puruṣādī mahāyakṣī virūpā vikṛtānā, idaṁ rūpam apahāya dāruṇaṁ rūpam astu te/*Then Agastya gave a curse to Tataki to turn out at once as a frightful faced 'Nara bhakshini Rakshasi' or a human devourer rakshasi thus the yakshini since turned as a rakshasi. Shri Rama! Now that I have given the background of the Rakshasi, kill her off at once as you are the singular human warrior capable of destroying her. Nara Shreshtha! Do not for a moment get concerned of the established principle of dharma that 'stree hatya' be not resorted to since indeed the general concept of Raja dharma would be hardly applicable in this context. Prajapalaka Naresha ought to uphold the golden duty of being cruel and even sinful as a responsibility in the exceptionl instances and hence the instruction in this specific context. Tataka was a maha paapi and had no scruples of dharama and nyaya even bit and therefore richly deserved of straaghtaway being killed mercilessly. In the remote past, Devi Mandhara the daughter of Virochana desired to destroy the earth in entirety and that was why Lord Indra decided and killed her. Similarly the mother of Shukracharya and Maharshi Bhrigu's wife desired to destroy Indra Deva and Lord Vishnu himself killed them mercilessly. Now, follow my instructions Rama! Obey them and kill Tataki, affirmed Vishwamitra! On hearing the spirited appeal to Rama to kill Rakshasi Surpanakha, the former politely greeted the Sage with folded hands and recalled his father's earnest advice to him to follow the Maharshi's advice as a command and as such he ought to follow the advice undoubtedly. So saying Rama lifted his dhanush and with strong fists and straightened it as a thunderous sound reverberated in the entire forest. On hearing the sound, Tataka wondered as to what was that about and stood up at once angrily and ran towards the direction as to where the deafening sound emerged from. As she was too tall and frightening, her figure could be seen and Rama told Lakshmana that her figure was indeed ferocious and furious and normal human beings could easily get frightened even to death! As she was a 'mayavi' possessive of evil energies she could assume several forms: Lakshmana! Now watch and witness as to how I would snip off her ears and nose so that she would scream loud and run away!As she was of the nature of woman that she could get saved as other wise I should have her disabled even to walk let alone run away by snipping off her legs and feet! By stating so

Rama jumped forward with his uncharacteristic fury ran near her, while Maharshi blessed Rama Lakshmanas raising his voice saying: May there be an auspicious victory to the Princes ushering success of glory! As soon as they jumped forward thus, there appeared a hurricane with dust and fury as the princes were suddenly taken aback but swiftly realised the play of 'maya' even she sought to hurl heavy stones and boulders towards them. The angry Rama Lakshmanas swiftly cracked them to pieces with rains of their arrows, approached her huge figure jumping up on her shoulders and with their knives readily hanging on their waist belts snipped off her ears and nose while she roared and roared repeatedly. In that condition, she appeared in several forms of make belief and finally disappeared. Vishvamitra exclaimed to Rama that it was a sheer waste of kindness towards the Rakshasi who had been always seeking to break up yajnas and should be able to soon recover and repeat her ruthless deeds again and again. Vishvamitra reemphasised that she ought to be killed even now, before the fall of dusk as rakshasis recover and revive themselves at the 'asura sandhya'. In response to what the Maharshi emphasised, Rama Lakshmanas sent rains of arrows to totally disable the rakshasi. She roared ferociously and attacked the brothers while in response she fell down on earth unconsciously terminated. Indraadi Devatas felt so thrilled and applauded especially congratulating Vishvamitra for constantly exhorting the brothers for their heroism. The groups of Devas entreated the Maharshi to methodically teach Rama Lakshmanas the complete nuances of Dhanur Vidya as they would have to face innumerable challenges of battles to be encountered in times ahead. Prompted by what Devas advised, Brahmarshi Vishvamitra touched the heads and foreheads of Rama Lakshmanas and advised them to rest for the night in the Tataka freed forest itself and then return to the ashram next early morning. Having rested in the Tataka vana itself overnight, Vishvamitra addressed Shri Rama smilingly and expressed his great satisfaction at the Tataka samhara and initiated his teachings of applied astra vidya.

Vishvamitra stated that initially he would teach the celestial missiles of danda chakra, dharma chakra, kaala chakra, vishnu chakra, and the most powerful Aindra chakra. Then the Sage instructed the arts of application and throwing away of Indra's Vajrastra, Shiva Deva's trishula praharana, and Brahma's granted Aishikastra and Shira -chedana astra. Then the Maharshi taught the boys of the magnificent vidya of 'gadaa praharana' or the art of battling with maces like 'modaki' - 'prahari' - shikhari of forcible applications of mace strokings, throwings and mace head rubbings. Then Vishvamitra taught the astras of 'dharma paasha-kaala paasha-and varuna paasha'. Subsequently they were taught two kinds of dry and wet rounded applications of astras viz. 'ashani- pinaka-narayanaastras'. Then Rama Lakshmanas were taught Agneyastra fond of Agni Deva resulting in fierce flames of fire renowned as Shikharaastra- Vayavyastra which sweeps away the opponent with virulent sweeps away. Then the Maharshi teaches the Kakutsa nandanaas of 'Hayashira Astra' - 'Krouchna Astra' and 'Shakti Dvayaastra' or of high potent twin astras attacking the opponent with doubled up potency. The Maharshi was pleased to instruct Rama Lakshmanas the astras named 'kankala' -the devastating 'musala' - and the destructive 'Kapaala' and 'Kinkini' and such astras which could lift up and throw the opponents forcefully. Then in the series were taught the famed 'Nandana Astra' of Vidyadharas as well as the associated mace of fame. The 'Gandharva Priya' astras of 'Sammohana' for relapsing into senselessness like 'Prastaavana- Prashamana-and Soumya' were taught too, besides the 'Mohanaastras' such as for varshana-shoshana-santaapana-vilaapana-maadana which was the beloved of Kama Deva Manmadha himself, and the Gandharvapriya 'Maanava astra', besides the Pishacha priya 'Mohanastra'. Brahmarshi Vishvamitra then instructed the Astras named 'Taamasa-Soumana-Samvarta-Durjaya- Mousala-Satya-and Mayamayaastras too. Then the Maharshi imparted to Rama Lakshmanas the glorious 'Surya prabha Astra' which when once released as an arrow would destroy the enemies to ashes. Simultaneously, the Maharshi conferred 'Shishira naamaka Chandraastra', 'Tvashta (Vishvakarma) naamaka 'Daarunaastra', Bhaga Deva namaka 'Bhayankaraashtra' and 'Sheetoshna' naamaka Astra of Manu Deva. Thus with facing the able disciples of Rama Lakshmanas, the Maharshi Vishvamitra was pleased to bestow the 'astra vidya' of his entire learning. He then addressed Rama most endearingly and affirmed: 'we the sages are all your guides and followers alike as the earlier teachings of mine were not so much of teachings but for the enhancement of

knowledge of the contemporary and following public. Shri Rama along with Lakshmana prostrated with reverence and gratitude and got readied to follow the Maharshi of the next steps forward. .

Brahmarshi Vishvamitra as was approached by Rama Lakshmana explained to them vividly as to how and when the Rakshasas were in the habit of destroying the yajni karyas of the tapasvees in the ashrama. Then the ashramavaasi rishis near Vishvamitra replied that Maharshi Vishvamitra had already assumed 'mouna vrata' for six days, and thus Rama Lakshmana would need to be extremely vigilant for six nights long and safeguard from the attacks of the 'nishaacharas'. Accordingly Rama Lakshmana being alert 'dhanurdharaas' had been vigilant standing just by the side of the Maharshi. As 'agni jvalaa' came up initiated by 'Upaadhyaaya' or of the role of Brahma- 'Purohita' of the role of Upadrashta, the flames went up too high as a forewarning indicators of the entry of the rakshasas. Then Vishvamitra along with the Ritvijas initiated the 'aahananeeyaagni' [Panchaagnis being described as Garhapatyaa- Aahavaneeya- Dakshinaagni-Sabyaha and Avasatya representing Heaven-Clouds-Earth- Man and Woman vide Kathopa -nishad]. *Mantravac ca yathānyāyam yajño 'sau sampravartate, ākāśe ca mahān śabdah prādur āsīd bhayānakah/ āvārya gaganam megho yathā prāvṛṣi nirgatah, tathā māyām vikurvānau rākṣasāv abhyadhāvatām/ mārīcaś ca subāhuś ca tayor anucarās tathā, āgamyā bhīmasamkāśā rudhiraughān avāsyjan/* As the resonance of the mantras recited in a pitch increased, there came up the high sounds on the sky with reverberations and dark clouds reflected the massive figures of rakshasas named Maareecha and Subaahu and initiated pourings of blood from the high skies, even as groups of other rakshasas started yelling and joined the task of pouring blood. Rama then addressed Lakshmana and stated that the rakshasas had now arrived and both the Kumaras pitched up their arrows reciting the relevant mantras of 'Manavaastra'. The arrow from Shri Rama was shot at and pierced Maricha's chest and the latter was farflung by hundred yojanas into the depths of the Sea. Smilingly, Rama told Lakshmana that this Mantra of 'Manavasatra' had only helped to faint and farflung Maricha but now let 'agneyastra' be released so that the other mighty Subaahu be killed for good! So saying as Subahu was killed, the rest of the rakshasas fled away for good never ever to return. This was how Raghunandana Shri Rama got rid of all the rakshasa elements of evil energies wantonly spoiling the dharmic duties of yajna karyas by Munis for a very long time. The grateful indwellers of the Ashram praised Rama Lakshmana under the supreme leadership of Brahmarshi Vishvamitra himself.

Proceeding further Rama Lakshmana accompanied Brahmarshi Vishvamitra to King Janaka. Then Vishvamitra conveyed that Rama and Lakshmana being outstanding heroes desired to know about and glance at the famed **Shiva Dhanush**. King Janaka then gave the background of the widely reputed dhanush. In the days of yore, King Nimi was gifted a 'Shiva Dhanush' at the time of the wedding of his son Devarata, and they could lift up this famed dhanush comfortably. King Janaka continued that this 'dhanush' was believed to have been that of Parama Shiva Himself. At the time of Daksha Yajna Vidhvamsa, Bhagavan Shankara playfully materialised this Dhanush and angrily addressed various Devas who attended Daksha Yajna that they had the audacity of participating the proceedings although they were well aware that Parama Shiva himself was not invited to the Yajna and therefore he would like to break their heads. Devas who were present got frightened and tried to mitigate the anger of Shiva with prayers and as a sign of excusing them gave away this dhanush to them all. Devas in turn gifted this invaluable gift at the wedding of King Nimi's son Devarata and that indeed was the background of this Shiva Dhanush. As King Janaka was performing 'Bhumi Yajna' by tilling the land with formal mantras in praise and invocation of 'bhumi devi', the top of the 'hala' or the tiller digging the bhumi was dragging with screeching sound as though some matter was hit as being hidden underneath the ground.; Kshetram shodhayataa labdhva naamnaa Seeteti vishrita, bhutalaad utthitaam saa tu vardhat mamatmaja/ Thus Devi Sita was called 'ayonija' or unborn to a woman. Then and there, the King readily resolved to marry her off only to such a 'Veerya shukla' or a person of mighty semen who could lift up and get it readied for action. As Devi Sita gradually came of age, several suitors aspired for her hand but were told assertively: *teṣāṃ varayatām kanyām sarveṣāṃ pṛthivīkṣitām, vīryaśulketi bhagavan na dadāmi sutām aham/* Only those valiant and virtuous princes who could truly manoeuvre and straighten the Shiva dhanush would be

the eligible youth. Following this announcement, none indeed could do this brave act so far. Several princes of near and far kingdoms in groups became angry and even threatened King Janaka of dire consequences. King Janaka recalled that as my tension increased in view of my predicament, Devas helped me in manifesting ‘chaturanga sena’ of strong foot soldiers, hores and horsemen, chariots and chatioteers, elephants and elephant men which kept the enemies far and near. Then King Janaka thus having narrated his experiences, stated that this being the background of the Shiva Dhanush, he should be pleased to show the Shiva Dhanush reiterating: *Yady asya dhanuṣo rāmaḥ kuryād āropanam mune, sutām ayonijām sītām dadyām dāśarather aham*/King Janaka then addressed Brahmarshi Vishvamitra: In the event of Shri Rama being able to fulfill my ‘pratigjna’ to the avowed statement that who ever could possibly negotiate this Shiva Dhanush should be eligible for Devi Sita’s hand in auspicious wedding with granititude and respectfulness! On hearing the assertive statements of King Janaka, Brahmarshi Vishvamitra coolly replied: ‘ King Janaka! Could you please show the Shiva Dhanush to Shri Rama! Then the King instructed his minister to have the Shiva Dhanush brought over there; then he described that the dhanush had been kept stored in a heavy steel box of eight strong layers on a mobile platform which could be pushed by five thousand persons of extraordinary body strength. Once vizualised the heaviness and hugeness, the Raja Kumaras could certainly guage and appreciate the splendour and grandeur of the Dhanush. King Janaka having shown the Shiva Dhanush, continued: ‘ To this wonder striking Dhanush, the generation of Kings of Mithila had been - and so always in generations - performing daily worship. Brahmarshi! Be this known that all the devas, asura- rakshasaas, gandharvas, yaksha kinnnara, maha nagas too had miserably failed to lift it , let alone to negotiate this dhanush. As the dhanush was brought near, Bahmarshi addressed Shri Rama to have a look at it. Rama replied: *Idam dhanurvaram brahman samspṛśāmīha pāṇinā, yatnavāms ca bhaviṣyāmi tolane pūraṇe ’pi vā*/Now, I keep my hand on the shiva dhanush and shall endeavour to lift it up and straighten it too. Having thus stated: Shri Rama lifted up the Shiva Dhanush as if it were a toy, straightened it with great ease, held the middle part, and as though of a child play broke into two pieces. That breaking resulted in earthshaking like reverberations and the masses of persons, animals and all other living beings, near and far way too collapsed in unconciousness and solid structures fell down to pieces. For quite some time, the King and followers were dazed into unconsciousness and on gradual recovery exclaimed and addressed Brahmarshi Vishvamitra as follows: Brahmarshi! To day with my own eyes I have witnessed the most unbelievable act of Dasharatha nandana Shri Rama. To lift up, straighten, control and finally break it is simply an act of amazement, disbelief, and magnificence. Once wedded to Shri Rama, my daughter ought to be proud to his life partner and bring in unimaginable glory to her father and the Janaka vamsha! Devi Sita my heartthrob from now onward is dedicated to Shri Rama as his ‘sahadhamacharini’! With your kind approval and complaine, may we have the privilege of despatching my minister and senapati to Ayodhya to intimate about the act of incredibility here and request King Dasharatha , his queens and the entire ‘parivaara’ to very kindly visit Mithila for the auspicious wedding. Brahmarshi asserted: ‘tathaastu’ or be it so! [Valmiki Ramayana]

VISHVAMITRA AND HASCHNDRA

Part Three

King Harishchandra on a hunting expedition, he heard the cries of a woman asking for help. Armed with a bow and arrow, he went in the direction of the sound. The sound was an illusion created by Vighnaraja, the Lord of the obstacles. Vighnaraja was trying to disturb the tapasya of Vishvamitra and entered the body of Harishchandra who in turn started abusing Vishwamitra. This disturbed Vishwamitra's tapasya even as Harishchandra came to his senses and realized that the Sage was extremely angry with him, and apologized. Then commenced the ‘Agni Pareeksha’ Harischandra who was renowned for his outstanding Truthfulness. As though Ganesha prompted Vishvamitra by testing the tenacity of Vishvamitra and the glory of Truthfulness of the King alike, the episode of Satya Harischandra got initiated. The King promised to fulfill any of the Vishvamitra’s desires to get rid of his guilt. The King requested to perform

Rajasuya Yagna. There after, when Harischandra offered 'dakshina' to Vishvamitra, the latter surprised the King and demanded his entire kingdom and all his possessions excepting him, his wife Devi Chandramati and son Rohitasya and left the palace. Vishvamitra further demanded another dakshina when Harischandra sold off himself, his wife and son too. The Sage maltreated them all and Harischandra decided to leave for Kashi in utter poverty. Vishvamitra reached there too and reminded about the dues of Dakshina since a month passed meanwhile. Harischandra's wife offered that she could be sold off to pay for the Dakshina. The King fainted at her proposal and she fainted too. But since the Sage gave an ultimatum to pay off at least a part payment by that evening, the couple decided that she was sold in an open market place as a slave of any taker. A Brahmana came forward to buy her and some amount was paid to Vishvamitra, but the young son Rohit did not leave his mother and she begged the Brahmana, who already started insulting and even beating her in the presence of her husband and the Public, finally agreed to allow the son to stay along with her in his home. A few days later, Vishvamitra appeared in the form of 'Kaal' (Mrityu/ the Deity of Death) and demanded that at least another instalment of the payment due to him at once; Harischandra had no other option to sell himself to a Chandala, even while reminiscing his past stature and the absence of his virtuous wife and the dear son. The Chandala gave him the duty of holding a stick to burn off dead bodies and be loyal to the Master and carry out his meanest errands. The Great Harischandra finally got rid of Vishvamitra even if he had to perform the most wretched and heinous duties; he lost his identity and carried on with past memories which also faded away with the passage of time and led a mechanical and handful existence. One fateful day, a woman arrived at the burial ground with a dead body of her son, stated to have been dead as a result of a snake bite. The crying woman recognised the person with his stick with which he was used to burn off dead bodies for years now, and even as he had a dishvelled and ugly hair and beard, with depressed cheeks and hollow eyes. The former Queen- the wife of King Harischandra was herself half clad and hardly identifiable, with her dead son on her lap; she had tired eyes after incessant cries and was looking completely exhausted and hysteric. A man called Harischandra- a non-entity- vaguely felt he saw her somewhere! At last, he recognised her and their dead son and hugged her and the son's body, arranged the dead son on a huge pyre and was about to consign to flames. His wife decided to immolate herself but Harischandra felt that he was not free even to do so without his Master's permission. Finally he decided to join his wife's immolation even if he were to go to hell and the couple performed their last prayers to Almighty. Just at that nick of time several Deities headed by Dharma made their appearance; they included Sadhyaganas, Vishvadeva, Marutganas, Lokapalas, Nagamani, Siddhaganas, Gandharvas, Rudraganas, the two Ashvani Kumaras, Sage Vishvamitra and Lord Indra too. The dead Rohit was revived and presented himself in a Prince's attire. Harischandra and his wife were blessed and were invited to reach Heaven but the King hesitated as he did not secure his Master's permission; Dharmaraja declared that he himself was the Chandala and approved of the Royal Couple to fly by the Pushpak Vimana to Swarga. Lord Indra stated that all the Deities were extremely happy with the Values of Dharma, Sacrifice, Dedication and Truthfulness that were amply demonstrated by the King, his wife and their son and as such the three were fully entitled to Swarga. Indra sprinkled 'Apamrutyu vinaashaka Amrit'/ the Ambrosia that negated death on the Pyre where the dead body of Rahul was kept and the various Deities showered fresh fragrant flowers and Indra personally invited the Threesome to Swarga; .but Harischandra hesitated and said that the Citizens of Ayodhya were highly anguished at our misfortune and hence the King and family alone could not depart to Swarga committing betrayal; the sins of Brahmahatya, Guruhatya, Gohatya, Streehatya are as deplorable as Bhaktahatya; therefore Bhagavan Indra! Kindly return to Swarga, since the pleasure of visiting that Place would not accord as much happiness of our reaching Swarga as our staying in this 'Bhu Naraka' along with our Bhaktas! Thus our resolve is to stay back with our own well-wishers only. Lord Indra was taken aback by the decision of Harischandra and did concur with his proposal as an unusual and exceptional occurrence! Sage Sukracharya commended the example of Harischandra and stated as follows: *Harischandrasamo Raja na bhuto na Bhavishyati!*

VISHVAMITRA- VASHISHTHA RIVALRY

Part Four

After emerging from his penance under water for twelve long years, the Guru of the King Harischandra, Sage Vasishtha, came to learn that Viswamitra tormented the King and his family to such unendurable limits as taking away their Kingdom, freedom of existence, and near extinction of their lives. It was due to the enduring capacity of the King that even Deities like Indra, Dharma and Dikpalakaas complemented him and his family as was so felt by Vasishtha too.. Quite incensed by the deplorable acts of Viswamithra, he gave a Curse saying: *Tasmadduraatma Brahmadvida yajvinaamavatopakah macchhapahato moodhaha sa bakatvamavaapsyati* (Due to this reason, that evil-minded stupid who is a hater of Brahmanas and who seeks to spoil Yagnas being performed by them be cursed to become a stork!). But Viswamitra came to know of the curse and gave a return curse to Vasishtha to say: *Twamaadi bhavasvet* (You become a Partridge!). By virtue of their mutual curses, both the Sages turned out to be birds and kept on quarrelling with each other screeching and shrieking and becoming a nuisance in the surroundings. Brahma himself, as accompanied by Devas headed by Indra ities sought to bring about truce to the fighting Baka (Stork) and Aadi (Partridge) but to no effect. Finally, Lord Brahma over-ruled the mutual curses of the Sages and restored their original forms. Vasishtha and Viswamitra felt ashamed of them; Brahma explained to Vasishtha that the extreme actions taken by Sage Viswamitra against Harischandra and family were only to put them to test but not out of spite or jealousy; even Dharma Raja was an actor in the drama that was initiated by Maha Ganapati Himself! Harischandra and family as also the great illustrious Well-wisher Subjects of Ayodhya were amply rewarded at the end thus explained Lord Brahma.

Conclusion:

Brahmarshi Vishwamitra sought to initiate New Creation, a new artronomical system!!He sought to ceate a mid air Trishanku Svarga; Bramha smiled and so did Parama Shiva as the odd request of an affectionate , stubborn persistence of a child for a passing time period!

Svarga is stated as of the third in the series of seven lokas Bhuloka, Bhuvar loka, Svarga loka (Indraloka), Maharloka, Janaloka, Taparloka, Satya Loka beyond there exist Goloka, Manidveepa and there beyond.Svarga Loka is a set of heavenly worlds located on and above Mount Meru. Swarga is stated as a transitory place for righteous souls who have performed good deeds in their lives but are not yet ready to attain 'Paramaradha'.The capital of Svarga is Amaravati, guarded by Airavata, presided by Indra Deva called the Paradise inhabited by Gandharvas and Apsaras. While 'bhuloka' the Earth perceived through the Panchendiayas or five senses, 'bhuvarloka' - the Space between Earth and Sun, as inhabited by semi-divine beings being the areal region, or the atmosphere- 'svarloka' or the region between the Sun and Polar Star- the Maharloka' - the abode of Maharshis- then Brahmaloika or Karanaloka .' The spiritual universe of 'janaloka'or creative plane Abode of the Brahma putras, while ' taparloka' the plane of austerity and the bode of tapas, and 'satyaloka' the plane of reality Abode of Truth or of Brahma, where atman are released from the necessity of rebirth.

[Maha Bhagavata Purana is quoted providing a hazy idea as follows: Lokaloka is the border beyond which are the three other Lokas, viz.Bhurloka, Bhuvarloka, and Swarloka. On the top of Lokaloka, there are four Gajapaties controlling the planetary system on the four directions;They are Rishabha, Pushkara Chuda, Vamana and Aparajita. The distance from Lokaloka to Bhuvarloka is as much distance as from Meru to Lokaloka. That is a billion miles further.This space is named Aloka Varsha. Lord Sun is situated in Anthariksha in between Bhurlok and the Bhuvarlok. It is the Sun Planet which reveals the entire Universe from various directions and is thus the centre. Sun is the potent energy who is seen and felt to

normal human beings and indeed the super indicator to all parts of the Universe, including the sky, the World, the higher planets and the lower planets. The entire Universe has a diameter of fifty crore yojanas or 4 billion miles. Like the grain of wheat, the lower part of the Universe topping the Earth is sliced half way of the upper part with Antariksha or the outer space as the divider. The Planet Of Sun is situated in the outer space moving forward from north to south (Dakshinyahana) and from south to north again (Uttarayana), emanating tremendous heat and light. The setting of Dakshinyahana to Uttarayana is considered to be of significance as it heralds the six monthly movement influencing the trend of fortunes. As per the movement of Sun through the equator, or beneath it or above and from Tropic of Capricorn (Makara) to that of Cancer (Karkataka) and back, the zodiac signs are passed through too in a systematic manner and the duration of day and night too are short, equal or different. When Sun passes through Aries (Mesha) and Libra (Tula), days and night are equal. As Sun passes through the five Signs headed by Taurus (Vrishabha), the duration of day increases till Cancer and thereafter decreases by half an hour a day each month till Capricorn (Karkataka) in Libra, when day and night are equal again. When Sun passes through the Five Signs beginning from Vriscika, the duration of days decreases compared to nights until Capricorn and gradually increases month after month till they are equal in Aries. As a rule, till Sun travels north the nights become longer and when Sun travels south the days become longer. Sun travels around Manasottara Mountain in a circle. On the Mountain to the east of Sumeru is the Devadhani, the residence of Indra, the King of Gods; to the South is Samyami, the Abode of Yama Raja, God of Death; the West is Nimkolani of Varuna, the God of Rains/Water; and the north is Vibhavari the abode of Moon. Thrayimaya, named as the Chariot of Sun visits all the abodes of Indra, Yama, Varuna and Moon traverses all the Residences of these Gods covering the words 'Bhur Bhuva Swaha' at a speed of 27 million miles approx in one muhurta (30 muhurtas a day)! Interestingly, the Chariot of Sun God is 28 million miles long and seven million miles wide! Arunadeva, the Charioteer, controls the horses and sits in front of the Sun God, but looks backward to Sun. It is said that there might be thousands of rays of Sun, but the important ones are only seven, representing Seven Planets, Viz. Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn. Moon travels faster than Sun. The distance between Sun and Moon is 100,000 yojanas (800,000 miles). In two lunar fortnights, Moon passes through a period of a Samvatsara or a year. In two and quarter days, Moon passes through a month of the Sun, or in one day, it passes through a fortnight of the Sun. Hence, the divergence of Solar and Lunar calculations and Calendars. As the Moon is waxing, it is a day for Gods and a night for Pitru Devatas. The waxing fortnight gradually diminishes the shine till the Moon-fall day (Amavasya) and the waning Moon picks up the shine day by day till Moon-rise day (Pournami). Moon is known as 'Jeeva' (life-provider), or 'Manomaya' (mind-alerter) or 'Annamaya' (potency provider from herbs and plants), 'Amritamaya' (source of life to all) and 'Sarvamaya' (all pervading). From Moon to the Group of Stars, the distance is 200,000 yojanas (16,00,000 miles). Headed by Abhijit, there are twenty eight Stars revolving on their own axis. Above the Group of Stars is the Planet of Venus (Sukra) almost of the distance from the Moon to the Group of Stars. It is a benevolent planet, especially as a provider of good rains and prosperity and moves at the same pace as Sun God. Mercury (Budha), the son of Moon is situated from Venus (16,00,000 miles) or 72,00,000 miles from Earth and this Planet too is benevolent excepting when not moving along with Sun, thus causing cyclones, excess or no rainfall and dusty storms. Equidistant from Mercury or 80,80,000 miles above Earth, is the Planet of Mars (Mangal), which is generally not considered favourable, travelling along with other planets every three fortnights and creates tensions. The Planet of Jupiter (Guru) is away from Earth by some 10,400,000 miles-again 16,00,000 miles away from the planet of Mars- is considered generally benevolent to Brahmins and Universe, unless takes a curved path in conjunction with other planets. Saturn, which is 12 million miles above Earth is also considered generally unhelpful. Normally, each planet is 16,00,000 miles apart from another planet, but the distance from Saturn to the Group of 'Sapta Rishis' or the Seven Sages is 8,800,000 miles from Saturn ie. 20,800,000 miles from Earth. Indeed, the Seven Sages are always the great well wishers of the entire Universe. The Sapta Rishis, viz. Marichi, Angirasa, Atri, Pulsastya, Pulaha, Krathu, and Vasishtha born in Lord Brahma's thoughts to help in the act of Creation. (Reference Maha Bharatha; Shanti Parva). The Seven Sage Constellation of the Great Bear (Ursa Major) is indeed the great well wisher of the entire Universe. The Sapta Rishis circambulate

around the Pole Star, or Dhruva Tara, which is as good as the Abode of Supreme Lord Himself and is prayed to by religious mortals and Gods alike. Some 13,00,000 yojanas (10,400,000 miles) above the 'Great Bear' shines high the Pole Star and the 'Sisumara System' or the Great Machine, comprising the Stars and Planets, resembling a Dolphin in water. Scholars of the Science of Astronomy compare the Formation as an Illustration or an Image of The Supreme Almighty Vasudava Himself, as this 'Jyothi anekam' (Multi-Splendour par excellence) or 'Sisumara Samsthanam' (The Grand Wheel Establishment) is clearly visible on the Sky, and as the The Supreme Almighty is invisible anyway! In other words, it would never be possible to comprehend the Portrait of 'Virat Purusha', let alone by human beings but by Sages and even by Gods or Trinity too, but one could visualise the similarity of God- Head with the Sisumara and be contented with it atleast. The various planets and a multitude of Stars revolve around the Pole Star or the Dhruva Star, each moving around in their own Orbits at their own heights and are not clustered due to law of gravity. The body of Dolphin-like Sisumara Chakra is coiled with its head downward, the Pole Star (Dhruva) at its tail, on the body of its tail are the Planets of demi-Gods viz. Prajapati, Agni, Indra and Dharma; the base of the tail are the Planets of Dhata and Vidhata; at the hip position are the Sapta Rishis; the right side of the Sisumara Chakra are the Constellations of fourteen Stars beginning from Abijit to Punarvasu; on the left side of the coiled body are the Stars of Pushya to Uttaraashadha, thus balancing the body with equal weight of the Stars; on the back side of the body is the Group of Stars known as Ajaviti and on the abdomen flows the Ganges that flows in the Sky (the Milky Way Galaxy), which is the home of Solar System with an estimated 400 billion Stars and planets and thousands of clusters and nebulae); on the upper chin of Sisumara is Agasti; on the lower chin Yamaraja; on its mouth Mars; Genitals Saturn; on the back of its neck Jupiter; on its chest the Sun and the core of heart Narayana Himself; within its mind the Moon; navel the Venus; breasts Aswini Kumars; within its life-air or Pranapana is Mercury; neck Rahu; all over body the comets and pores innumerable Stars. Thus Sisumara Chakra is a mini version of the Supreme Almighty Himself.]

SARASWATI NAMASTUBHYAM

VDN RAO

Saraswati in essence is Vaak- Vidya-Vigjnana being the bridge from the Deep Oceans of Samsara-Illusion-Falsity-Ignorance to Sadhana- Nigraha-Medhas-Awareness and thereafter the Initial Illumination-the Path of Divinity or the 'Deva Yana'-passage to Urthwa Lokas-and finally the Bliss of Realisation of the Equation with or the Reflection of Anraratma as Paramatma!

Saraswati has no barriers of age-sex-materialism-and the pulls and pushes of 'Samsara'; but only the Path of Dharma. Dharmaacharana- Dharma Prachaara- Dharma Paripaalana are the watch words of Saraswati. The tools utilised by Saraswati are Vaak- Vidya-Vigjnaana. The Dharmic Apparatus is to lead from Worldly Darkness to Celestial Radiance to Everlasting Joy; albeit in several stages: the Power of Speech-Mental Caliber-Sankalpa or Determination-Chitta or sturdy Self Belief or Will Power-Meditation or deep contemplation-Dhaayana- Vgjnaana or Enlightenment/ critical self appraisal-balam or physical strength supported by food further propped up by Pancha Bhutas - Smara or Memory power-aasha or aspiration-Praana or Conscious Self or Pragjnatwa- 'manute' or deep perception with faith-nishtha or commitment coupled with karyaacharana. Once any person believes and gets convinced that he - or any Individual Self for that matter -happens to be the spring boat of the Praana, hope, memory, space, water, form and look, strength, food, reasoning and intelligence, mental power, speech, knowledge, rites and all such abilities, then indeed that Self himself or each and every Self like himself, is certainly, nay undoubtedly, the Supreme Self himself with all the accomplishments. He is a symbol of Purity, purity of food, nature, memory, heart, thought, and action. Then the spiritual freedom to escape from darkness, impurities of ignorance, attachment to desire and to speed up the bandwagon of knowledge, mind, thought, resolve, meditation and introspection to discover Truth finally as Himself! Once that stage is reached, then he becomes 'Bhagavan' or God like and He knows the source and cause of Existence, its termination, the entries and exits, as also the knowledge and ignorance of Reality.

*Manikya veenaam upalaalayanteem madaalasaam manjula vaagvilaasaam, mahendra neela dyuti
komalaangim Maatanga Kanyaam manasaa smaraami/ Chaturbhujee chandrakalaa vatamse, kuchonnate*

kumkuma raaga sone, pundrekshu paashaankusha pushpa baanahaste namaste jagadaika maataa/ Maataa marakata shyaama Maatangi mada shalini, kuryaat kataaksham kalyaani kadamba vana vaasini/ Jaya Maatanga tanaye, jaya neelotpala dyuthe jaya sangeeta rasike, jaya leela shuka priye! [Maha Kavi Kaalidaasa] Devi Saraswati the illustrious gift to Sage Matanga excelling in one of the Maha Vidya's! you are the icon of everplayful musical Veena stunningly studded with lustrous gems! You are the symbol of femininity of exhuberant grace and extraordinary beauty! You are the personification of auspiciousness while spreading four arms, moon shine smile, firm and high chested physical charm, carrying mesmerising flowers of intoxicating smell, juicy sugarcane, defensive rope to instantly arrest the evil, an arrow to terminate the malevolent, a mighty goad to suppress immorality and a pundarika or conchshell to warn the wicked! Bless me Mother with your sweet and merciful looks from the benign eye corners even being seated cosily in the unique forest of fragrant and ripe fruits of sweet lusciousness! Victory to you the Universal Mother Matangi even as you resemble the singular blue lotus, ever blissful with celestial musical notes of Veena and carrying a green parrot for mere play and pastime! [Matangi is the Tantrik Maha Vidya-the Goddess of music, arts and knowledge]

SHRI SARASWATI SAHASRA NAAMA STOTRA

Dhyanam: *Shrimatcchanadana Charchitojjolavapuh Shuklamabara dharaa Mallika Malaa Lalitha kuntalaa pravila sanmuktaavali shobhanaa/ Sarva jnaana nidhana pustakadharaa Rudrakshamalaankita Vagdevi vadanambujey vasatumey trailokya Mataa shubhaa/*(Devi Maha Saraswati! You possess a radiant physique smeared with the cool and fragrant sandalwood paste attired in spotless white clothing wearing garlands of aromatic jasmine flowers around the neatly arranged head hair lock of yours and is ornamented with impeccable pearl necklaces. Indeed you are the epitome of wisdom carrying books of knowledge adorned with strings of Rudraksha Beads. You are the unique Goddess of Voice and Speech; the Lotus Faced and the Lotus Resider ; and the Mother of the Three Worlds of Earth, Nether and Higher Realms being the most auspicious and the benevolent.)

Narada Uvaacha: *Bhagavan Parameshaana Sarva Lokaika Nayaka, Katham Saraswati Saakshaat prasannaa Parameshthinah/ Katham Devyaa Maha Vagyaah Satatpraapa sudurlabham, Yetanmey Vada tatvena Maha Yogeshwara Prabho/*(Sage Narada requested Sanat Kumara Maharshi the Maha Yogeshwara to delineate in detail the features of Devi Saraswati the merciful who is none too difficult to learn about, yet so complex to understand in depth and much less to accomplish).

Shri Sanat Kumara Uvacha: *Saadhu pushtam twayaa Brahman Guhyaadguhya manuttamam, Bhayaanugopitam yatnaadidaanim Satprakaashyatey/ Puraa Pitaamaham drushtwaa jagatsthaavara jangamam, Nirvikaram Niraabhaasam stambhi bhutamachetasam/ Srushtwaa Trailokyamakhilam Vaagabhaavaatathaa vidham, Adhikyaabhavatah swasya Parameshthi Jajadguruh/ Divyavarshaayutam tena tapo dushkaramuttamam, Tatah kadaachisanjaataa Vaani Sarvaartha shobhitaa/ Ahamasmi Maha Vidya Sarva Vaachaamadhishwari, Mama Naamnaam Sahasramtu Upadeshyaamyantuttamam/ Anena samstutaa nityam patnitava bhavaamyaham, Twayaa srashtam Jagatsarvam Vaani yuktam bhabishyati/ Idam rahasyam Paramammama naama sahasrakam, Sarva paapougha shamanam Mahaa Saarasvata pradama/ Mahakavitwadama lokey Vaageeshatwapradaayakam, Twamvaa parah Pumaanyastastusta-*

veynaanena toshayet/ Tasyaaham kinkari saakshaat bhavishyaami na samshayah, Ityuttkavaanantarda - dhya Vaani tadaarabhya Pitaamahah/ Stutwaa stotrenaa divyena tatpatitwa mavaaptavaan, Vaaniyuktam Jagatsarvam tadaarabhyaabhaven Muney/ Tatteyham sampravak –shyaami shrunu yatnena Narada, Saavadhaanamanaa bhutwaa kshanaam shuddho Muneshwarah/ (Narada!This utmost confidential narration of the features of Devi Saraswati is indeed worthy of learning by all the persons of virtue as that is not only the effective medium to smash all kinds of fears and impediments but also to pave the smooth way for achieving shining success of possible endeavours. In the times immemorial, Lord Brahma noticed ‘Sthavara jangamas’ or the Moveable or Immobile Beings and after meditation to the Almighty for innumerable Divya Years and at long last succeeded in the creation of the Three Lokas when Devi Vani the Unique Shakti manifested by herself as the Maha Vidya or the Embodiment of Immortal Knowledge as the Goddess of Learning and Vocal Powers. I am now instructing you now the Thousand and Odd Names of Saraswati for the benefit of the posterity so that the latter could live with confidence and self reliance. The inhabitants of the next generations of the Worlds would indeed be enlightened and blessed with this following Script of the ‘Maha Saaraswatwa’ and ‘Vaagishatwa’ – the essence of Saraswati Vidya and of Vaageswari Tatwa as they would be highly contented undoubtedly. The inner voice initiated by Pitamaha Brahma got expressed as Stutis and Stotras of Devi Saraswati ever since then. Narada! Do concentrate the following with earnestness and with clean conscience).

Vaagvani Varada Vandya Varaaroha Varaprada, Vrittirvaageeshwari Vaartaa Varaa Vageesha vallabha/ Vishveshwari Vishya Vandya Vishwesa Priya Kaarini, Vaagvaadineecha Vaagdevi Vriddhidaa Vriddhi kaarini/ Vriddhir Vriddhaa Vishaghni cha Vrishtirvrishti pradaayani, Vishwa – araadhya Vishwa Maata Vishwadhaatri Vinaayaka/ Vishwa Shaktir Vishwasaaraa Vishwaa Vishya vibhaavari, Varenayaa Vangmayi Vriddhaa Vishishta Priyakaarini/ Vishwato Vadanaa Vyaaptaa Vyaapini Vyaapakaatmika, Vyaalaghni Vyaala bhushaani Virajaa Veda naayikaa/ Veda Vedaanta Samvedyaa Vedaanta Jnaana Rupini, Vibhaavaricha Vikranta Vishwaamitra Vidhi Priya/ Varishthaa Viprakishta cha Vipravarya prapujita, Vedarupa Veda Mayi Veda Murtischa vallabha/ (Om Vaachey namah : Salutations to the Goddess of Speech ; Vaani the Deity of Voice; Varada or the Provider of Boons; Vandya the Devi most worthy of sincere greetings; Varaaroha or the One who rides all over and shovers boons; Varaprada the bestower of windfalls; Vritti or the embodiment of Profession and Career; Vaageeswari or the Queen of Conversation; Vaarta or the Symbol of Intelligence and of Business; Vara the Bonus; Vaageesa vallabha or the Sovereign of Expression; Vishweswari the Empress of the Universe; Vishwa vandya or the most deserving of prayers and beseechings; Vishwesa Priya Kaarini or the Cause of Happiness to the Over Lord of the Universe; Vaagvaadini or the Supreme Entity of Analysis and Eloquence; Vaakdevi or the Goddess of Vocabulary and Communication; Vriddhidaa or the Provider of Growth and Progress; Vriddhikaarini or the Prime Source of Advancement; Vriddhi Vriddhaa or the Ageless in bestowing constant Improvement and Development; Vishaghni or the destroyer of every thing poisonous; Vrishti or Progress; Vrishti pradaayani or the Originator of Growth ; Vishwaaraadhyaa or the One who is worshipped by the totality of the Universe; Vishwa Maata the Mother of Creation and Life; Vishwa dhaatri the Supreme Fulcrum of the Universe; Vinayaka or the Destroyer of all Obstacles; Vishwa Shakti or the Unique Power of the Universe; Vishwa saraa or the Quintessence of the Universe; Vishwa or the Manifestation of Universe; Vishwa Vibhavari or the darkness (negation) of the Universe so that the Illumination of Knowledge is appreciated; Vedanta Vedini or the Erudite Master of Vedas; Vedyaa the Learned par excellence; Vitta the Symbol of Wealth; Veda Trayaatmika or the Soul of the Three Vedas of Ruk-Yajur-Saama; Vedajna or She who surpasses Vedas; Veda Janani or the Mother Goddess of

Vedas; Vishwa or the Creation Itself; Vishwa Vibhavari or the Absence of Universe without her is non-perceivable ; Varenya or the Peak of Excellence and Distinction; Vaangmayi or the Symbol of Elegant Voice; Vriddha or the Embodiment of Progress; Visishta Priyakarini or the Distinguished Source of Happiness; Vishwatovadana or the Prime Face the Universe; Vyapta or the All Pervasive; Vyapakatmika or the Omni Present; Vyalaghi the Destroyer of the Wicked and Vicious; Vyala Bhushani or the Ornamented with Poisonous Snakes; Viraja or the Impassioned and Placid; Vedanayika or the Supreme Chief of Vedas; Veda Vedanta Samvedya or the Master of the Four Vedas of Ruk-Yajur-Saama-Adharvanas and of the Six Vedangas of Siksha or the Science of Pronunciation and Articulation, Chandas or the Science of Prosody, Vyakarana or of Grammar, Nirukta or the ulterior explanation of Veda Sentences and Words, Jyotisha or the Science of Astronomy, Kalpa or the explanations of Rituals and Ceremonies; Vedanta Jnaana Rupini or the Personification of the Knowledge of Vedanta comprising explanations of Vedas in the form of Upanishads, the Six prominent Darshanas signifying the Systems of Philosophy, Meemaamsa etc; Vibhavaricha or the Form of Nothingness or of Ignorance or Maya the Illusion; Vikranta or the All Overcoming Power of Victory; Vishwamitra or the Companion and Guide of the Universe; Vidhipriya or the Enforcer and Ruler of destiny as per one's own Karma or Action; Varishtha or the Ultimate; Viprakrishta or the One who entices Brahmanas; Vipravarya prapujita or worshipped by the high echelons of Brahmanas; Veda Rupa or the epitome of Brahmanas; Vedamayi or the System of Vedas; Veda Murtischa or the Ingredient of Vedas; Vallabha or the Beloved or the Supreme).

Om Hreem Guru Rupey Maam Grihna Grihna Aim Vada Vada Vaagvaadini Swaaha

*Gouri Gunavati Gopya Gandharva Nagara Priya, Guna Maataa Gunaantasthaa Gururupa Gurupriya/ Giri Vidya Gaanatushta Gaayaka Priyakaarini, Gayatri Girishaaraadhyaa Girisha Giri priyankari/ Girijnaa Jnaana Vidya cha Girirupa Girishwari, Girmatrey Gana samstutya Gananiya Gunaanvita/ Goodha Rupaa Guhaa Gopyaa Gorupa Gowrgunatmika, Gurvi Gurvambika Guhya Geyaja Griha naashani/ Grihini Grihadoshaghi Navaghi Guruvatsala, Grihatmika Grihaaraadhyaa Griha badhaa vinaashani/ Gangaa Giri sutaa Gamyaa Gajayaanaa Guhastuta, Garudaasana samsevya Gomati Guna Shaalini/ (Devi Saraswati! You are Gauri or of wheatish complexion symbolic of Purity or an alternative form of Devi Parvati; Gunavati or of excellent features; Gopya or Unrevealed or Unknown; Gandharva nagara priya or Devi who is fond of Gandharvas for their extraordinary qualities of Singing especially related to Saama Veda as also Music and Dance; Guna Mata or the Mother of the Trigunas viz. Sattwa-Rajo-Tamasika and their variations; Gunaantastha or the One concealed in the Trigunas; Gururupa or the Supreme Teacher of the Universe; Gurupriya or the Beloved of Brahma the Utmost Preceptor; Giri Vidya the Mountain like Form of Abundant Vidyas or Knowledge spread across fourteen Components viz. Four Vedas, six Angas, Dharma, Meemaamsa, Tarka/ Nyaaya and Puranas Gaana tushta or She who is contented with Song, Singing and Music; Gaayaka Priya kaarini or the Creator of the Topmost Singers and those fond of celestial music; Gayatri or the Sacred Hymn of *Om Tatsaviturvarenyam bhargo Devasya dheemahi dhiyoyona prachodayaat* composed and recited in Gatatri Chhandas and stated to expiate sins and impediments repetitively as per one's capacity and with dedication; Girishaaraadhya or Devi Saraswati as worshipped by Lord Shiva Himself; Girisha or Parama Shiva the Alternate Form of Saraswati Herself; Giri Priyankari or the One who is extremely fond of Shiva-Parvati pair; Girijnaa or possessive of the full knowledge of Parvati and Shiva; Jnaana Vidya or the full knowledge of philosophy that connects humanity and the Supreme; Giri Rupa or of the Mountainous / Gigantic Form ; Girishwari or of the Devi Parvati Swarupa; Girmatrey or the Image of Devi Parvati; Gaana samstutya or the One*

who is invoked by hymns of tributary praises; Gananeeya or the Distinctive and Illustrative; Gunaanvita or of Virtuous Excellence and Eminence; Goodha Rupa or of Concealed appearance; Guha or of the Swarupa of Lord Subrahmanya; Gopyaa or of Invisible Nature; Gorupaa or of the Hallowed Form of a Cow representative of Sacredness and immense utility; Gourguanaatmika or of the Characteristic of purity and transparency; Gurvi the Instructor par excellence; Gurvambika the Goddess Guide to the path of Righteousness and Morality; Guhya or the Unknown yet Actual; Geyaja or the Greatest example of a Singer; Griha naashani the destroyer of Families of disrepute; Grihini or the exemplary house wife; Grihadoshaghni or the demolisher of harmful defects and evils of a family and household; Navaghna- literally a trap or the cracker of impediments and disorders; Guru Vatsala or the affectionate mother / teacher figure to children and innocent; Grihamika or the Guiding Soul of Families and Households; Grihaaraadhyaa or the Worship worthy Devata of each and every household; Griha baadhaa vinaashani or the Eliminator of all kinds of house- hold problems and difficulties; Devi Saraswati! You are akin to Ganga who is swift and clean in purifying all the Beings in Creation; Giri Suta or like the offspring of Giri or Parvati; Gamyaa the Single Final Goal that all the Beings on Srishti crave to reach; Gajayaana or the Devi who rides an elephant with steadiness and surety; Guha stuta or Commended by Shiva Kumara always; Garudaasana Samsevyaa or worshipped and served by Garuda Deva the Celestial Carrier of Maha Vishnu; Gomati or the Sacred River by that name; Guna shaalini or of the One possessive of virtuous features and qualities).

Om Aim Namah Sharadey Shreem Shuddhey Namah Sharadey Aim Vada Vada Vagvadini swaha/

Sharadaa Shaswati Shaivi Shankari Shankaraatmika, Shri Sharvaani Shataghni cha Sharaschandra nibhaanana/ Sharmishtha Shamanaghniccha Shata Saahasrarupini, Shiva Shambhupriya Shradhaa Shruti rupaa Shrutipriya/ Shuchishm,ati Sharmakari Shuddhidaa Shuddhi rupini, Shiva Sivankara Suddha Shivaaraadhyaa Shivatmika/ Shrimati Shrimayi Shraavyaa Shruti Sharavana gochara, Shantisshaanti kari Shanti Shantichaara Priyankari/ Sheela labhya Sheelavati Shrimaataa Shubha kaarini, Shubha Vaani Shuddha Vidya Shuddha Chitta prapujita/ Shrikari Shuta paapaghni Shubhaakshi Shuchi vallabhaa, Shivetaraghni Shabari Shravaneeya Gunaanvitaa/ Shara Shirisha pushpaabhaa Shama -nishtaa Shamaatmika, Shamaanvitaa Shamaaraadhyaa Shiti kantha prapujitaa/ Shuddhihi Shuddhi kari Shreshthaa Shrutaanantaa Shubhaavaha, Saraswati cha Sarvagjnaa Sarva Siddhi Pradaayani/ (Sharada the bashful and modest as stated literally or the Full Moon Kartika Month; but in this context the Deity Saraswati as the Epitome of Vidya and Wisdom; Shaswati or the Ageless and Permanent; Shaivi or the beloved of Shiva in the Form of Devi Parvati; Shankari or the Spouse of Shankara again in the Appearance of Parvati; Shankaratmika or once again in the Form of Devi Gauri; Shri or in the Form of Devi Lakshmi; Sharvani or as Durga the Consort of Shiva; Shataghni or the hundred edged thunderbolt of Indra with the prowess of destroying hundreds of demons in one shot; *Sharaschandra nibhaanana or of the visage of Autumnal Moon akin to a white Lotus ;

*[The Seasons are Vasanta/Spring/Chaitra-Vaishakha/ Feb 19-April 19 approx; Greeshma/ Summer/ Jyeshtha-Ashadha/ April 20-June 21 approx; Varsha/Monsoon/Shravana-Bhadrapada/ June 22-Aug 22 approx; Sharad/Autumn/Ashwin-Kartika/ Aug 23-Oct 22 approx; Hemanta/ Pre Winter/ Margasirsha-Pushya/Oct 23-Dec 21 approx; and Sishira/Winter/Magha-Phalgun/Dec22-Feb18 approx];

*Sharmishtha the epitome of Loyalty and Modesty;

*[Sharmishtha was the younger wife of King Yayati of Maha Bharata fame the elder wife being Devayani

the haughty daughter of Shukracharya the Rakshasa Guru. Sharmishtha the daughter of a Rakshasa King was liked immensely by the King and Devayani's father Shukracharya cursed the King to become old unless any of the sons agreed to exchange his youth to Yayati's old age; Devayani's son Yadu refused but Puru the son of Sharmishtha agreed to exchange his youth to Yayati's old age];

Shamanaghi or the Subduer of Situations of undue placidity where ever needed; Shata sahasra rupinyai or She assumes hundred thousand forms simultaneously; Shiva the incarnation of Auspiciousness; Shambhupriya or the One extremely fond of Shambhu Deva; Shraddha the emblem of Patience and Sacrifice; Shruti Rupa or the personification of Shrutis / Vedas; Shruti priya or She who is eager to hear or assimilate the content of Veda Swaras; Shrutismati or She who has the mental frame of clean thoughts and feelings; Sharmakari or She who is the provider of happiness to Brahmanas encouraging them to affix their names with the word Sharma; Shuddhida or the Provider of 'Bahyaantara Shuchi' or the external and internal purity; Shuddhi Rupini or the Crest of Cleanliness; Shiva or Devi Saraswati in the alternate Form as Bhagavan Shiva; Shuddha or the hall- mark of Purity and Clarity; Shivaaraadhya the One who worships Bhagavan Shiva; Shivatmika or the Soul of Shiva Himself; Shrimati or the Lakshmi Swarupa being the alternate Form of Opulence and Fulfillment; Shrimayi or the one who is surfeit with Material Possessions ; Shraavya the Provider of the the faculty of Pleasant Hearing and Talking; Shruti or the Incarnation of Vedas; Shravana Gochara or the Goddess of Excellent Audibility and Vision; Shanti or the image of Peace and Tranquility; Shantikari the Bestower of Serenity and Repose; Shantichaara Priyankari or Devi Saraswati who is delighted with Peaceful Conduct and Softness; Sheelalabhya or the one who is attainable with character and good behaviour; Sheelavati or the Emblem of excellent demeanour and disposition; Shri Maata the Mother Goddess of Prosperity and Happiness; Shubhakaarini or the Source and Benefactor of auspiciousness; Shubha Vaani or the One with Outstanding Voice of Pleasantness and extraordinary charm; Shuddha Vidya or the Origin of Clean Learning and of Pure Knowledge; Suddha Chitta Prapujita or the One who is worshipped by transparent mind and heart; Shrikari or the Provider of Wealth as an alternate form of Maha Lakshmi; Shruta paapaghi or the eliminator of sins and blemishes perpetrated by humanity against the canons prescribed by Vedas; Shubhakshi or the One with benign looks and eyes; Shuchivallabha or the Alternate Form of Brahma the embodiment of Pureness; Shivetaraghi or the destroyer of the Evil Forces except Bhagavan Shiva or His Alternate Swarupas of Brahma, Vishnu, Devis and so on; Shabari or the illustrative devotee of Shri Rama who was the resident of 'Dandakaranya' awaiting the latter's arrival for decades with unending faith and determination; Shravaniya or the exemplary Devi who is most worthy of being listened to and be worshipped; Gunaanvitha or the Deity who is the Manifestation of Outstanding Characteristics and Features; Shara or Arrow representing speed and power; Shirisha Pushpaabha or the One with a Charming Face adorned with of Sirisha Flowers; Shama nishtha or Devi dedicated to Self-Control and Discipline; Shamatmika or the Emblem of Restraint and Composure; Sitikantha prapujita or worshipped of Bhagavan Shiva whose epithet is black neck deposited with poisonous flames; Shuddhi or the characterisation of Spotlessness; Shiddhikari or the Benefactor of Transparency; Shreshtha or the Noblest and the Unsurpassed; Shrutaananta or the Infinity of Vedas; Shubhavaha the Motif of Happiness and Fortune; Sarasvati the Maha Devi Saraswati the Supreme Priestess of Erudition and Intellect; Sarvajna or the Omni-scient and Sarva Siddhi pradaayani or the Provider of all kinds of faculties and powers).

Om Aim Vada Vada Vaagvaadini Swaaha

Sarasvati cha Savitri Sandhya Sarvepsita pradaa, Sarvartaghi Sarvamayi Sarva Vidya pradaayani/

Sarveshwari Sarva Punya Sarga Sthityanta kaarini, Sarvaraadhya Sarva Mata Sarvadeva nishevita/ Sarvaishwaryapada Nitya Sati Satwagunashraya, Sarvakramapadakaaraa Sarvadosha nishudini/ Sahastakshi Sahasraasya Sahasrapada samyuta, Sdahastahasta Saahasragunalaankrita vighraha/ Sahasrarupa sadrupa Swadhaa Swaaha Sudhaamayi, Shadgrandhibhedini Seva Sarvalokaika pujita/ Stutya Stutimayi Saadhya Savitrupriyakarini, Samshayacchedini Sankhyavedya Sankhyaa Sadishwari/ Siddhidaa Siddhasampujyaa Sarvasiddhipradayani, Sarvajna Sarva Shaktischa Sarvasampad- pradayani/ Sarvaashubhaghni Sukhada Sukhasamvitswarupini, Sarvasambhashini Sarvajagatsammohini tathaa/ Sarvapriyankari Shubhada Sarvamangala, Sarvamantramayi Sarva Tirtha Punyaphala pradaa/ Sarvapunyamayi Sarvavyadhighni Sarvakaamada, Sarva Vighnahari Sarva vandita Sarva Mangala/ Sarva Mantrakari Sarva Lakshmi Sarvagunaanvita, Sarvaanandamayi Sarva Jnaanada Satya naayika/ Sarva Jnaanamayi Sarva Raajyaada Sarva Muktida, Suprabha Sarvadaa Sarvaa Sdarvaloka Vashamkari/ Subhaga Sundari Siddha Siddhamba Siddhamatrika, Siddhamata Siddha Vidya Siddheshi Siddharupini/ Suripini Sukhamayi Sevkapriyakaarini, Swamini Sarvada Sevyaa Sthula Sukshmaa paraambika/ Saararupa Sarorupa Satyabhuta Samashraya, Sita Sita Sarojaakshi Sarojaasana Vallabha/ Saroruhaabhaa Sarvaangi Surendraadi prapujita, Maha Devi Maheshaani Mahaa Saaraswata pradaa/ (Salutations to you Devi Saraswati; *Savitri-the daughter of the Solar Deity called Savitur and the wife of Brahma whose prayer from Rigveda viz. Gayatri Mantra is practised daily thrice by all Dwijas or the Twice Born Brahmans after Upanayana ;

[* An allusion on Savitri was about a Royal Couple Ashwapati and Malati of Madra Desha referred in Matsya Purana who were great devotees of Bhagavati Savitri; the latter blessed the couple with a girl child who was named too Savitri eventually married to Prince Satyavan but in course of time the Prince faced a sudden accident and Yama Dharma Raja was about to take his life away but the Princess Savitri encountered Yama by virtue of her unique devotion to Bhagavati Savitri. Yama granted the Princess Boons like eyesight to her parents, return of the father in law's lost Kingdom and so on, but finally was so pleased with Savitri's Pativratiya, Knowledge of Dharma / Virtue, persistence and devotion to Bhagavati that finally he spared the life of her husband];

Devi Sandhya or Goddess governing the Ritual of worship three times a day as the Pratah-Madhyahinka-Saayam Kaalas or of Early Morning-Mid Day-Evening; Sarvepsitapada or the Fulfiller of desires of the Virtuous and the Truthful; Sarvaaghni or the Saviour of retributions to the faithful; Sarvamayi the Omni Present and All Pervasive; Sarva Vidyaa Pradaayani or the Benefactor of all types of Knowledge and Mental faculties to the well deserved; Sarveswari or the Highest Authority to all Beings; Sarva Punya or the Personification of Abstract Punya or the Fruits or the Return Advantages of Quality Deeds; Sarga Sthityanta Kaarini or the Creator-Preserver-and Destroyer of the Universe; Sarvaaraadhya or the Singular Entity who is Worshipped and Worship-worthy; Sarva Maata or the Mother of One and All; Sarva Deva Nishevita or the One possessive of and accompanied / backed up by all Devas; Sarvaishwaryapada or the bestower of all kinds of affluence; Nitya or the Everlasting; Sati or the alternative manifestation of Sati Devi the Consort of Maha Deva; Satva Gunaashraya or the byword of Satva Guna; Sarvakrama padaakaara or the One with perfect lined steps or the epitome of Logically Systemised Learning; Sarva dosha nishudini or the obliterator of all types of imperfections and flaws; Sahastakshi or the Visioner of countless events and happenings; Saharaasya or of Thousnads of Asanaas or Seats; Sahasrapada samyuta or the One with myriad feet and mobility; Sahasra hasta or has numerous hands and of endless reach ; Saahasra Gunaalankrita Samyuta or the Unique Devi with innumerable variations of features simultaneously; Sahasra Seersha or of plentiful heads and of abundant Thinking Capacity; Sadrupa or of

the Stunningly Distinct Form of Virtue; Swadha the Specified Deity approachable to Pitru Devas; Swaha the designated Deity amenable to Devas through the medium of Yagnas, Homas and Agni Karyas; Sudhamayi the depository of Amrita or of Life-Providing elixir; *Shadgrandhi bhedini or the interrupter knots or breakages of physical energies;

*[Rudra Grandhi is between Agjnaa Chakra / wheel or at the Third Eye Point and Sahasrara Chakra or Super Consciousness; Vishnu Granthi is between Manipura, Anahata and Vishuddhi Chakras signifying high sensitivity points at the top of human head representing human attachments and emotions; and Brahma Granthi at Sushumna Nadi lying in Mooladhara Chakra the balancer and energiser; Devi Saraswati is the Utmost Guru of Yoga Practice to align human energies with the Parama Shakti];

Sevya or the Highest Deity who is venerable; Sarva Lokaika Pujita or the Para Shakti esteemed by one and all including Devas and Danavaas too; Stutya or the One prayed to by all; Stutimayi or the One eulogised sincerely; Saadhya or the One who is achievable spiritually; Savitru or the the Fulfiller and the daughter of Surya; Priyakarini or the Cause of Happiness; Samshayacchedni or the smasher of doubts ; Sankhya Vedyas or the Epithet of Shankhya Shastra which strongly believes in the Concept of Dualism of Purusha the Unknown and Prakriti the Perceivable Matter; Sankhya or the Origin of Numerical / Ganita Shastra; Sadeeshwari or the Exemplary Deity of Virtue and Dharma; Sidhida or the Provider of Accomplishment; Siddha sampujya or the One adored by those who are the Expert Achievers; Sarva Siddhi pradayani or She who enables to secure success; Sarvagjna or the All-Knowing; Sarva Shakti or the Symbol of Highest Power and Energy; Sarva Samprad pradayani or the Contributor of all types of Prosperity; Sarvaashubhaghni or the Total Eliminator of Inauspiciousness; Shukhada or the Giver of Joy; Sukha samvitwarupini or the Personification of Contentment; Sarva Sambhashni or The Goddess of Convincing Skills of Oratory; Sarva Jagatsammohini or the Devi who mesmerises all Lokas by her example and charm; Sarva Priyaankari or the One who pleases all by her mere looks and conclusive talents; Sarva Shubhada or the Donor of enjoyment to everybody; Sarva Mangala the sponsor of Delight; Sarva Mantramayi the Substance of Mantras; Sarva Tirtha punya phalaprada the Granter of Punya or the Fruits of Visits to Sacred Tirthas; Sarva Punyamayi or the Guarantee of Punya earned through right thought and action; Sarva Rajyada or the Awarder of Kingdoms; Sarva Vyadhighni or the Curer of Physical and Mental ailments; Sarva Kaamada or the Fulfiller of Wishes; Sarva Vighnahari or the reverser of obstacles and difficulties; Sarva Vandita the One who is spontaneously saluted and esteemed; Sarva Mangala or the Source of Excellent Propitiousness; Sarva Mantrakari or the Origin of Mantras with which to appease and please Gods; Sarva Lakshmi or the Emblem of Fortune and Contentment; Sarva Gunanita or the Ideal Reserve of Features; Sarvananda mayi or the Unending Spring of Joy; Sarva Jnaanada or the bestower of varied branches of Knowledge and Learning; Satya naayika or the Protagonist of Truth and Virtue; Sarva Jnanamayi the Super Star of diverse disciplines of Learning; Sarva Rajyada or the Conferor of Authorities and Kingdoms; Sarva Muktida the Unique Liberator from the shackles of Samsara or the Cycle of Births and Deaths; Suprabha or the Radiance Personified; Sundari or the Most Charming Female of Beauty and Grace; Sarvada or the One capable of providing disregard of considerations; Sarva or the Totality in absoluteness; Sarva Loka Vashankari or the Enthraller of all Lokas; Subhaga or the Mine of Propitiousness; * Siddha the One Endowed with Ashta Siddhis or Supernatural Faculties;

[*Anima or the capacity to miniaturizing one's Physique-Garima or the art of making one's body heavy as required-Laghima capability to lighten one's body-Prapti or to secure powers to achieve one's desires-

Prakamya or the ability to make one's body invisible-Mahima or the increasing heaviness of one's body-Ishitwa or to attain Divine Powers-Vashitwa or Controlling the behaviour of others]

Siddhaamba or the Devi representing the powers of Siddhas; Siddha *Matrikaa or the Universal Mothers or Shaktis;

*[Several references have been made in Varaha, Agni, Matsya and Devi Mahatmya Puranas to Ashta Matrikas viz. Brahmi with four heads, six arms holding japamala, kamandalu, pustaka, Ghanta, Padma and noose riding a swan; Vaishnavi riding on Garuda with six hands carrying shankha-Chakra-gada,Padma, baana and asi or sword besides abhaya mudra; Maheswari riding Nandi in white complexion, Trinetra, holding Trishula, Damaru, Aksha maala, Kapala, serpents and Moon; Aindri riding elephant in dark complexion, thousand eyes, Vajra or thunderbolt, goad, noose etc; Koumari riding peacock with twelve arms carrying axe, Shakti, bow etc; Varahi with Boar head on buffalo with danda, goad, sword, chakra etc. Chamunda/Kali with Mundamaala or Garland of Skulls, damaru, goad, sword, with three eyes riding a Preta or a corpse with frightening appearance; and Nrisimhi or a Woman Lion with features of Narasimha Deva];

Siddha Maata; Siddha Vidya or the Knowledge of Siddha or of the Supernatural powers personified; Siddheshi or the Goddess of Siddhas; Siddha Rupini; Surupini or of the Swarupa of Virtue and Goodness; Sukhamayi or the Symbol of Ecstasy; Sevaka Priya kaarini or the One who takes full care of her devotees; Swamini or the Master in all respects to her Subjects; Sarvadaa Sevyaa or the One demanding loyalty in all respects; Shtula Sukshma Paraambika the Universal Mother of Huge and Tiny Forms as required by situations; Saara Rupa or of the Quintessential Form; Sarorupa or of the Appearance of a Lotus Pond; Satya bhuta or the Embodiment of Truthfulness; Samaashraya or the Shelter of all Beings in Creation; Sitaasita or the bright and dark phases of Chandra; Sarojaakshi or the Lotus Eyed; Sarojaasana Vallabha or the Alternate Form of Brahma who is seated on a Lotus; Saroruhaabha or of the Most Gorgeous Countenance; Sarvaangi or of the Stunning Physique of Attraction and Allurement; Surendraadi prapujita or the One revered and worshipped by Indra and crores of Devas; Maha Devi; Mahashaani or The Alternative Shakti in the Form of Ishwara's spouse; Maha Saarasvata Pradaa or the Great Instructor of various faculties that she is celebrated for like Speech, Memory, Writing, Voice, Knowledge, Philosophy, Intellect, Wisdom, Art of Communication and Conviction, Veda Shastras and Siddhis).

Om Hreem Aim Maha Saraswati Saaraswata pradey Aim Vada Vada Vaagvaadini Swaahaa/

*Maha Saraswati Muktaa Muktidaa Malanaashani, Maheshwari Mahaananda Maha Mantrtamayi Mahi/
Maha Lakshmirmahavidya Maata Mandaravasini, Mantrigamya Mantra Mataa Mahamantraphalaprada/
Mahamuktirmahaanitya Mahasiddhipradaayani, Maha Siddha Maha Maataa Mahadaakara Samyuta/
Maha Maheswari Murtyai Mokshada Manibhushana, Menaka Maanini Maanya Mrityughni Merurupini/
Madiraakshi Madavaasa Makharupa Maheswari, Mahamoha Mahamaya Maatrunam Murtisamsthitaam/
Mahapunyaa Mudaavaasaa Maha Sampad pradayani, Manipuraika nilaya Madhurupa Madotkata/
Maha Sukshma Maha Shanta Maha Shanti pradaayani, Munistutaa Mohantri Madhavi Madhavapriya/
Maaya Mahadeva Samstutya Mahishiganapujita, Mrishtaannada cha Mahendri Mahendra pada daayani/
Matirmatipradaa Medha Martya Loka nivaasini, Mukhya Maha Nivaasa cha Mahabhagya janaashriya/
Mahila Mahima Mrityuhaari Medha pradayani, Medhyaa Maha Vegavat Maha Moksha phalapradaa/
Maha Prabhaacha Mahati Mahadeva priyankari, Mahaposha Mahaarthyacha Muktahaara vibhushana/
Manikyabhushana Mantramukhya Chandrardhashekhara, Manorupa Manassuddhimanassuddhipradayani/*

*Maha Kaarunya Sampurna Manonayana vandita, Maha Paataka jaalaghni muktidaa Mukta bhushana/
Manomani Mahaa Sthulaa Maha Kratu phalaprada, Mahapunya phala praapya Maha Tripura naashani/
Mahanana Maha Medha Maha Modaa Maheswari, Maalaadhari Mahopaaya Maha Tirtha phalaprada/
Maha Mangala sampurnaa Maha Daridranashani, Maha Makha Maha Megha Maha Kaali Maha Priya/
Mahaa Bhusha Maha Deva Maha Raagni Mudaalaya/*

(Maha Saraswati! You are Mukta or the Personification of Mukti or Liberation from Samsara; Mukta or the *Pearl Oyster or the Mother of the Spotless Pearl [*Component of the Nine Precious Gems viz. diamonds, emeralds, **pearls**, sapphires, Corals, Rubies, Gomedha and Vaidurya]; Muktida or the Bestower of Emancipation from the Unending Cycle of Births and Deaths; Mala naashani or the Great Cleanser of Impurities and Physical-Mental-Psychological Contaminations; Maheshwari or the Incarnation of Devi Parvati; Manaananda or The Source of Eternal Happiness; *Maha Mantramayi or the Unique Deposit of Mantras;

[*Mantras are Vedic Hymns or Sacred Prayers addressed to Deities as Ruchas meant for recitation set up in Metrical or Chhandorupa or Yaju Swarupa meant for reciting in low tones or Saamana meant for chanting in musical form of cadence; or incantations of Veda Samhitas; Beeja Swarupa or the Representative Alphabetic Words of Confidential Invocations to specific Aspects of the Almighty; plain prayers to various characteristics of the Almighty in innumerable Male Forms or Appearances like Vishnu, Mahesha, Brahma, Ganesha, Kumara, Indra, Nava Grahas, and Countless Manifestations of Devis especially Lalitha-Durga-Lakshmi-Saraswati- Gayatri etc. or as the Invocation Medium of Vratas, Pujas, Tirtha Darshanas, Pitru Oriented Karmas, Agni Oriented Karyas, Ritulas like birth / death orientation, Upanayana-Vivahaadi Samskaras; various Mystic hymns, Yoga Practice, Astra-Shastra-Chikitsa based, negative Mantras, and so on].

Mahi or the Mother Earth; Maha Lakshmi Swarupa; Maha Vidyaa Maata or the Mother of all kinds of Learning and Knowledge; Mandara Vasini or the Resident of the famed Mountain Mandara that had the distinction of service as the churning rod in the context of Deva-Danava Amrita Manthana; Mantra ganya or the Ultimate Destination of all types of Mantras mentioned above; Mantra Maata or the Iconic Mother of Mantras; Maha Mantra Phalaprada or the Primary Shakti that imparts the resultant fruits of the usage of the Mantras to the concerned persons; Maha Mukti or the Personification of Mukti; Maha Nitya or the Singular and Formless Nothingness of Eternity; Maha Siddhi pradaayani or the Superlative Power that grants Fulfillment; Maha Siddha or the Embodiment of Siddhi; Maha Maata or the Matchless Mother of Creation; Mahadaakaara Samyuta or The *Virat Swarupa;

*[The Supreme Energy in only a half manifested colossal Form to enable human comprehension rather than of abstraction was described in many Puranas especially Maha Bhagavata as possessive of Earth as feet, Sky as navel, Sun as three eyes, Brahma as the precreating part, Moon as mind, heavenly planets as head, dishas or directions as ears, demi Gods as protecting Planets as arms, destructive Powers as eye-brows, shame as lower lip, greed and arrogance as upper lip, delusion as smile, Moonshine as teeth, trees as body hairs, clouds as head hairs, garlands as Material Energy representing Goodness, Passion and Ignorance; garments as Vedic meters, ear rings as Yoga and Sankhya, Crown as Protection and Courage, Throne as Religiosity and Knowledge, Ananta as the Seat signifying the unmanifested segment of Existence, club/mace as the Life Force or as Prana incorporating Sensory, Mental and Physical energies; Conch shell as the Element of Water, Sudarshana Chakra as the Element of Agni; Sword the Element of

Ether or Sky; Shield as the resistor of Ignorance; Saranga the bow as the Concept of Kaalamaana; Arrows as Material Senses; Chariot or as Speed of Mind or Garuda (Swan in the case of Saraswati); Vedas and Personal Assistant to the Virat; Vishwaksena as Tantras; and the Gate Keepers as Mystic Powers and Siddhis!]

Maha Maheswari Murti or the Alternate Incarnation of Parvati Devi; Moksha daayani or the Bestower of Moksha; Mani bhushana or the One who is magnificently ornamented with invaluable precious jewels; Menaka or the Outstanding Celestial Beauty of Apsaras by that name who was also the Wife of Himawan and the mother of Parvati; Manini the most esteemed Goddess of Knowledge; Manya an Authority of Erudition and Education; Mrityughni or the Destroyer of Death; Meru Rupini or of the Tallest Mountain in Srishti namely Meru; Madirakshi or of such voluptuous looks that Brahma the Creator could not resist marrying her; Madaavaasa or of the Abode of Pride and Resistance; Makha Rupa or of the Emblem of Sacrificial Fire or an epithet for Lord Shiva; Maheshwari; Maha Moha or the Great Enchantress reminiscent of Devi Mohini the Avatara of Lord Vishnu who distributed Amrita by Deva-Danavas at the Samudra Mathana or the Gigantic Churning of Ksheera Samudra of the Ocean of Milk; Maha Maya the Peerless Delusion; Matrunaam or the Mother Figure of the Universe; Murthna Samsthita or the One present at the mid-eyebrow Point or the forehead which indeed is the summit of vision and of thought; Maha Punya or the Unending Deposit of Punya or the Fruits of Virtue; Mudaavaasa or of the Countenance of Pleasure; Maha Sampat -pradayani or the Giver of Lavishness and Luxury; *Mani Puraika Nilaya or the Resident of * Manipura Chakra at the navel point of human body invigorating Icchaa Shakti in the context of Kundalini Vidya since that is the center of dynamism, energy and Siddhi or accomplish ment; Madhurupa or the Look of an intoxicant or of Sweet Honey; Madotkata or full of justified conceit and passion; Maha Sukshma or of the Tiniest form of an atom on account of Anima Siddhi; Maha Shanta or the Embodiment of Peacefulness and Tranquility; Maha Shanti pradaayani or the Bestower of Peace and Righteousness; Muni Stuta or the One who is never tired of Eulogies and homages by Sages; Moha hantri or the demolisher of obsessions and passionate feelings; Madhavi or the Lakshmi Swarupa; Madhava Priya or the Beloved of Vishnu; Maya or Prakriti- the Make-Believe illusion; Maha Deva Samstutya or the One commended by Maha Deva himself; Mahishi gana pujita or the Goddess worshipped by the Followers of Mahishasura who were versatile in achieving Shaktis and Siddhis; Mrishtaannada or the Provider of excellent and lavish food; Mahendri of the Alternate manifestation of Lord Indra's Spouse who too is a Siddha Matrika as aforementioned; Mahendra pada pradayani or the One who could bestow the status of a Mahendri to the well-deserved; Matyai or the Huge Fund of Intellect and Resolution; Matiprada or the Provider of mental faculties; Medha the memory and analytical power besides cerebral energy; Martya Loka Nivasini or the Resider of Bhu Loka where Intellect is much sought after by human beings; Mukhya or the Foremost Deity who is constantly revered by persons in search of intellectual excellence; Maha Nivasa or the Great Abode worshipped; Maha Bhagya or the Personification of Prosperity; Janaashrita or surrounded by all desirous of mental sharpness; Mahila or the Uitimate of Womanhood for all their qualities of grace, service and faithfulness; Mahima or the Seat of Magnificence; Mrityu haari or the Terminator of Death and Destruction; Medhaa pradaayani or the Singular Sourcer of Intelligence; Medhaya or the portrayal of Intellect; Maha Vegavati or the Personification of Speed and Sharpness; Maha Moksha Phalaprada or the bestower of Sublime Status of Liberation; Maha Prabhaa or the Form of Abundant Luminosity; Mahati or Epithet of Paramountcy and Exclusiveness; Maha Deva Priyankari or the One who is immensely fond of by Maha Deva; Maha Posha or the Great Sustainer and Nourisher; Maharthyai or the One approached with supplications for boons;

Muktaahaara Vibhushana or the One ornamented with necklaces of spotless and shining pearls of rarity and exclusivity; Manikya bhushana or Saraswati adorned with priceless and dazzling diamonds all over her physique; Mantra Mukhya or the Goddess who is pleased with the recitation of Mantras; Chandraardha Sekhara or the One who is embellished with the most pleasing half Moon on her crown ; Manorupa or Her Mind as her Image with high transparency; Manah Shuddhih or with her mind of Sparkling cleanliness; Manasshuddhi pradaayani or the Provider of Internal / Mental hygiene; Maha Kaarunya sampurna or the One with unreserved benevolence; Mano nayana vandita or Who is saluted with mental vision; Maha Pataka Jaalaghni or the One who is merciful as also snares even grave Sins that humans beings perpetrate provided they are remorseful and repentant; Muktida or the Giver of Mukti; Mukta bhushana or the One with ornamentation of Pearls; Manonmani or the One with heart as a jewel; Maha Sthula or of Gigantic Physique; Maha Kratu phalapada or the benefactor of those who perform Yagnas of great magnitude; Maha Punya phala prapya or She who grants incredible returns of virtuous deeds; *Maya Tripura naashani or the Destroyer of Tripuraasuras as Devi's incarnation of Mahesha;

[*Following the killing of Tarakasura by Kartikeya, his sons Tarakaksha and Vidyunmali joined by a nasty and obnoxious demon Maya performed most brutal Tapasyas in snow valleys, torrential rains and amid blistering Panchagnis to Brahma who granted the most unusual boons of invincibility of invisible Flying Castles called Tripuras on Earth made of iron, Sky made of silver and beyond Sky made of gold; the boon prescribed that all the City-Castles be simultaneously destroyed, if at all, by one single weapon! The wicked deeds of the demons and their followers became intolerable in course of time and the Three Worlds were subjected to harassment. Maha Deva decided to construct an unusual chariot of Prithvi, Surya-Chandras as Chakras, Meru-Mandara mountains as wheel-axles, four Vedas as horses, famous serpents like Karkotaka, Dhananjaya and Takshaka as horse strings, dhanush made of Six Ritus or Seasons, Nava Grahas and Dikpalakas as the side-warriors, Devi Ambika as the Protector of the Chariot, Brahma as the Charioteer; Vishnu Maya as the propellor of the Chariot and Maha Deva as the Unique Warrior with 'Tri Deva Maya' split in three parts simultaneously and destroyed the Tripuras] ;

Mahaanana or the Giant Face; Maha Medha the phenomenal Brain Energy; Maha Moda the Huge Fund of Joy; Maheswari or of the Form of Devi Parvati; Maala Dhari the One wearing numberless garlands; Mahopaaya or Saraswati who possesses remarkable feasibilities; Maha Tirtha Phala prada or the benefactor to the ardent Pilgrims to Illustrious Tithaas; Maha Mangala Sampurna or the quintessence of Auspiciousness; Maha Daaridra naashani or the great destroyer of utter poverty; Mahamakha or the Great Sacrifice /Yagna or the Epithet of Shiva; Maha Megha or the Huge Cloud, the Representation of Varuna Deva and Indra Deva; Maha Kaali or the Goddess of Extermination; Maha Priya or the One identifiable with Utmost Pleasure and Desire; Maha Bhusha or Goddess with magnificent ornamentation; Maha Deva or the Alternative Image of Maha Deva; Maha Ragini the Empress of the Universe; Mudalaya or the Symbol of Bliss;

Om Hreem Aim Namo Bhagavati Aim Vada Vada Vagvaadini Swaaha/

*Bhuda Bhagyada Bhogyada Bhogayada Bhogadayani, Bhavani Bhutida Bhutih Bhumir Bhumi Sunaayika/
Bhutadhaatri Bhayahari Bhakta Saaraswata prada, Bhuktirbhukti Prajaa Bheki Bhakribhakti pradayani/
Bhakta saayujyada Bhakta Swargada Bhakta rajyada, Baagirahi Bhavaaraadhya Bhagya sajjana pujita/
Bhavasstutya Bhanumati Bhavasaagara taarini, Bhutir bhusha cha Bhuteshi Phaala lochana pujita/
Bhavaghni Bhaktilabhyacha Bhaktarakshanatpara, Bhaktashamani Bhagya Bhogadaanakritodyama/*

*Bhujanga bhushana Bhima Bhimakshi Bhimarpini, Baavini Bhraatru rupaacha Bharati Bhava nayika/
Bhasha Bhashaavati Bhishma Bhairavi Bhairavapriya, Bhutirbhaasita Sarvaangi Bhutidaa Bhutinaayika/
Bhaswati Bhagamalacha Bithishaa daana kritodyma, Bhiksharupa BhaktikaryBhakta Lakshmiprdaayani/
Bhraantighna Bhrantrupa chaBhutida Bhurikaarini, Bhakshaniyaa Bhagvavari Bhaktougha vinaasini/*

Om Aim Kleem Saah Baaley Brahmapatni Aim VadaVada Vaagvaadini Swaha

Bhuda or the Bestower of Landed Property; Bhagyada or the Provider of Fortune; Bhogyia or the Picture of Opulence; Bhogyada /Bhogyadayani or the Provider of Comforts and Luxuries; Bhavani or the Alternate Form of Devi Parvati; Bhutida or the Giver of Welfare and Prosperity; Bhutih the Emblem of Supernatural Powers as also of welfare and fortune; Bhumi or the Goddess of Earth; Bhumi Sunaayika or the Chief of all Events on Earth; Bhutadhaatri or the Sustainer of all the Beings; Bhayahari or the smasher of fears; Bhakta Saarsvataprada or the approver of Acumen and Expertise to her devotees; Bhuktir Muktir Prajaa bhekya or the Awarder of Good Eating / Possession as also Bhukti and reverser of Sufference by neck or Retribution to human beings; Bhaktirbhakti pradayani or the Provider of Devotion or Obsession of Fair and Evil means too; Bhakta Sayujyada or the assigner of Redemption to the Faithful; Bhakta Swargada or the Gifter of Heavenly Life to the Believers; Bhakta Rajyada or the granter of Kingship to Devi's followers; Bhagirathi or the Swarupa of the Sacred River Ganga; Bhavaraadhya or the Goddess of Vidya who is respected by Bhava the epithet of Brahma; Bhagya Sajjana Pujita or worshipped by the Fortunate and Rich persons of Virtue; Bhavastutya or earnestly extolled by Vidhata; Bhanumati or the Swarupa of Surya Deva; Bhava Sagara Taarini or the Goddess capable of crossing the Deep Ocean of Samsara with ease; Bhutirbhusha or adorned with Grandeur and Majesty; Bhuteshi or of the Image of Devi Parvati; Phala Lochana Pujita or esteemed by Trinetra Himself; Bhuta Bhavya Bhavishya or The Visionary of Tri Kaalas of the Past-Present-and Future; Bhava Vidya or the Byword of the Art of Creation; Bhavatmika or the Very Soul of Brahma; Badhaapahaani or the Reverser of Distresses and Disappointments; Bandhu rupa or far more akin to close relatives who look after and share the fluctuations of life; *Bhuvana Pujita or the Singular Goddess who is adored in the Chaturdasha Bhuvanas or the Fourteen Lokas;

* [Upper Lokas of Bhuloka-Bhuvarloka-Swarloka-Maharloka-Janarloka-Tapoloka and Satya lokas as also the Sapta Paataalas viz. Atala-Vitala-Sutala-Talaatala-Mahatala-Rasatala-Paatalas];

Bhavaghni or the Destroyer of the Tribulations of Life; Bhakti labhya or the One who could surely be accomplished by faith and persistence; Bhakta Rakshana tatpara or She who is fully engaged in safeguarding her Admirers; Bhaktaarathi shamana or the Insant Mitigator of the Difficulties of those who are ever truthful to her; Bhagya or the Picture of Fortune and Affluence; Bhoga daana kritodyama or She has the principal misson to reward Happiness and Luck; Bhujanga bhushana or Devi Saraswati is decorated with serpents all over her Physique; Bheema or of the Epithet of Devi Durga or the Formidable or the Pandava Madhyama the Picture of Courage and extraordinary strength of Maha Bharata Fame; Bheemakshi or the One with Dreadful Looks to the Opponents; Bhima Rupini who is of the Image of Valour and Determination; *Bhaavini or the Possessor of 'Bhaavas' or Dispositions or Feelings;

*[Shat/ Six Bhavaas viz. Shanti Bhava or the Attitude of Peacefulness as practised by ages; Daya Bhava or of the Feeling of a Master to a Servant; Sakhya Bhava or the attitude of friends and supporters; Vatsala bhava or of a parent to progeny; Mathura bhava of Love and Belonging; and Tanmaya Bhava or of Spell];

Bhratru Rupa or Devi Saraswati displays the disposition of brother hood to her Admirers; Bharati or the Emblem of Speech, Voice, Eloquence, Argument, Conviction, Knowledge, Acumen, Faculties of Mind and Psychology; [Alternative explanation is that Devi Saraswati is indeed the Prime Celebrity of Bharata Desha being the personification of Vidya and Vedas]; Bhava Naayika or the Heroine of the Drama of Samsara; Bhasha or the Originator of the Innumerable Languages in the Universe and their varied applications and disciplines such as their distinct Alphabets, Expression, Literature, Poetry, Prose, Song, Grammar, Syntax , Phraseology, Pronunciation, and so on; Bhashaavati or the Goddess of endless forms of Languages; *Bhishma or the Swarupa of Shiva the formidable and tough:

*[Another allusion of Bhishma is about the Most Illustrious Character of the Epic of Maha Bharata viz. Bhishma the Grand Father of Pandavas and Kouravas, the son of Devi Ganga and King Shantanu. Devi Ganga abandoned Shantanu as she questioned her actions of immersing their progeny one by one since the sons were actually the Ashta Vashus cursed to be born by a Sage which Ganga only knew. After some time King Shantanu desired to marry a fisher woman called Satyavati and Gangeya / Bhishma made the Extreme 'Pratigjna' or Resolve and Sacrifice of not marrying and not claiming Kingship in his life but allow the next progeny of Satyavati and Shantanu. Incidentally, Satyavati who was the mother of the famed Veda Vyasa who was born of Maha Muni Parashara (the son of Vassishtha) who took one-time fancy for her and gave the boon that she would be be the Queen of Kuru Dynasty and their resultant son would be an Outstanding Manifestation of Vishnu Himself as the Interpreter of Vedas and the Great Scriptor of Ashtaadasha Puranas!]

* Bhairavi or of Dasha Maha Vidya Manifestations

*[viz. Kaali or of the Eternal Darkness; Tara or the Goddess of Kindness; Maha Tripura Sundari or the Shodashi Devi Vidya; Bhuvaneshwari the Creator of the Universe; Chhinna Mastaka or The Self-Destroyer; **Bhairavi** or the Goddess of Degeneration, Goddess of Speech, Meditation, Bright like thousand Suryas, carrying milk, books, dispersing fear, providing boons and with constant smile; Dhumavati displaying smoke, dissatisfaction, widowhood seeking even to harm Shiva; Bagalamukhi the crane headed, elongate-tongued , evil natured and of frightening appearance; Matangi full of pollution, dusky and of negative disposition eating Uchchishtha Bhojana; and finally Kamala Devi / Lakshmi the Goddess of Creation and Preservation, Fulfillment and Auspiciousness];

*Bhairava Priya or Saraswati as the Alternate Form of Devi Parvati;

* [Bhagavan Shiva opened his Third Eye to snip the Fifth Head of Brahma as the latter did the sin of temptation with his own daughter. But the sin of Brahma hatya haunted Bhairava and his atonment was to beg alms in the skull of Brahma which did not leave Shiva's arms . He approached Vaikuntha and Devi Lakshmi gifted him a Vidya called 'Manoratha' and Vishnu directed Shiva to visit Kashi but the latter could not enter the Temple; meanwhile he was bestowed with Anna (Cooked Rice) by Annapurna. Finally Shiva left for Patala and got rid of the skull and the Place was regarded as Kapala Moksha when he was absolved of the Brahma Hatya sin too. The Eight Manifestations of **Maha Bhairava** are Kaala Bhairava, Asitaanga Bhairava, Rudra Bhairava, Krodha Bhairava, Kapala Bhairava, Bhishana Bhairava, Unmatta Bhairava and Samhara Bhairava.];

Bhuti or the Symbol of Contentment and of achievement of powers by Maya; Bhasita Sarvangi or of the Lustrous Physical Parts; Bhutida or the Giver of Fortunes; Bhuti naayika or the Leader of Bhutas or the

Feminine Followers of Maha Deva; Bhaswati or Devi Saraswati; *Bhaga maala the Resident of the Eighth Enclosure of the Navaavarana of the Shaktis representing Excellence, Fortune and Distinction;

[*Bhaga is also the Illustrious Dwadasha Adityas viz. Dhata, Mitra, Aryama, Pusha, Shakra, Varuna, **Bhaga**, Twashta, Viwaswan, Savita, Vishnu and of course Aditya];

Bhikshaa daana kritodyama or Devi Saraswati in the Form of Shiva who resorted to Bhiksha as explained above; Bhiksa Rupa or in this very context Devi assumed the Profile of Bhagavan Shiva; Bhaktikari or the One who encourages the endeavour towards Devotion; Bhakta Lakshmi Pradayani or the Provider of Wealth to her Devotees; Bhrantighna or the eradicator of Illusions; Bhranti Rupa or the Profile of Delusion; Bhutida or the donor of Contentment; Bhutikaarini or the Provider of Happiness; Bhikshaniya or of the Form of Bhagavan Shiva who practised beseeching; Bhikshu Maata or the Mother of Charities; Bhagyavadrusha gochara or the Discerner of Fortune; Bhogavati or the One enjoying Affluence; Bhogarupa or the Substance of Luxury; Bhoga Moksha phalaprada or the Sponsor of Ultimate Status of Salvation; Bhogashranta or the preserver of Wealth; Bhagyavati or the Sourcer of Abundance; Bhaktougha vinashani or the Eliminator of the Sins and Follies of her Followers);

Om Aim Kleem Souh Baaley Braahmi rahmapatni Aim Vada Vada Vaagvaadini Swaaha

Braahmi Brahaswarupacha Brihati Brahmavallabha, Brahmadaacha Brahma Maata Brahmaani Brahmadaayani/ Brahmeshi Brahasamstutya Brahmavedya Budhapriya, Balendu Shekhara Baala Puja karapriya/ Baladaa Bindurupaacha Balasuryasamaprabha, Brahmarupa Brahmamayi Badhnamandala madhyaga/ Brahmani Buddhidaa Buddhirbuddhirupa Budheswari, Bandhakshayakari Baadha naashani Bandhurupini/ Bindwalaya Bindubhusha Bindunaada samanvita, Beejarupa Beejamaata Brahmanya Brahmacharini/ Bahurupa Balavati Brahmanya Brahmacharini, Brahma stutya Brahma Vidya Brahmaandaadhina vallabha/ Brahmasha Vishnurupacha Brahma Vishnvesha samsthita, Buddhi Rupa Budheshani Bandhi Bandha Vimochani/ (Braahmi or the Matrika and the personified Female Energy of Brahma Deva; Brahma Swarupa or the Alternate Form of Lord Brahma; Brihati or The Colossal Form; Brahma Vallabha the Controller of Brahma; Brahmada or the Provider of Brahma Tatwa; Brahma maata or the Mother Figure of all Brahmanas; Brahmani or Role Model of Brahmanas; Brahmadayani or the Provider of Brahmata; Brahmeshi the Paradigm of Brahmanas; Brahasamstutya or The Devi applauded by Brahma; Brahma Vidya or of the Knowledge of Atma and Paramatma or the Awareness of the Self and Beyond; Budha Priya or the Goddess fond of the Virtuous and Righteous; Balendu Shekhara or the One embellished with the Emerging Moon on her head gear; Bala or the Parama Shakti assuming the Form of Bala as one of the Maha Vidyas; Pujaakara Priya or Devi who is pleased with the Proverbial Shodashopachaaras like Avahana-Snaana-Gandha-Pushpa-Dhoopa-Deepa-Naivedyadi Services; Balada or the Bestower of Power and Energy; Bindu Rupa or of the Concept of 'Shoonyata' and 'Paripurnata'- that is of Nothingness and of Sublimity /Ampleness or of Reality and Illusion; Bala Surya Samaprabha or of the Spendor of Rising Sun; Brahma Rupa or of the outline of Brahma; Brahma mayi or full of Brahma Tatwa clearly distinguishing Paramatma and Maya or the Truth and Fallacy; Badhna mandala Madhyaga or of the Pivotal Hold of the Tied Knots of Lokas; Brahmaani or the Authority Figure Controlling the affairs of Brahma; Buddhida or the Awarder of Intellect; Buddhi or the Manifestation of Mental Energy; Buddhi Rupa or of the Sketch of Intellect; Budheswari or the Chief Regulator and Organiser of Buddhi or alternatively of the Planet of Budha; Bandha Kshayakari or the smasher of worldly shackles; Badhaa naashani or the Terminator of Sorrows and Impediments; Bandhu rupini or of the soothing and

encouraging presence of relatives and well wishers; Bindwaalaya or the Temple of Bindu or Parama Shakti represented by Omkaara the Reality of the Almighty as distinguished from Maya.or the Make-Believe; Bindu Bhasha or the Expression of what Bindu is all about; *Bindu Naada Samanvita or Devi Sarasavati –

*The Sound of Omkara represented by Icchaa Shakti, Jnaana Shakti, Kriya Shakti and of select accessibility to these aspects];

Beeja Rupa or the Manifestation of Sacred Seed Mantras that invoke the corresponding Shaktis; Beeja Maata or the Originator of the Beeja Mantras and their methodology of application to gain specific purposes and end-objectives; Brahmanya or the Supreme Possessor of Brahma Tatwa; Brahma Karini or the Shakti that creates the Energy of Brahma; Brahma Stutya or The Power that Brahma acknowledges and applauds;

*Brahma Vidya or the Science of Brahma including the Concept, Origin, Definition, Analysis, Practice, Means of Achievement, and the Capacity of imparting to others;

Brahmandaadheena vallabha or that Primary Shakti which regulates and promotes the Universe in Totality; Brahmesha or the Force that Kick-Starts the Actions of Brahma; Vishnu Rupaacha or of the Essence of Vishnu and his Activities of Universal Evolution; Brahma-Vishnesha Samshtitha or the True Embodiment of Tri Murtis; Buddhi Rupa or the Swarupa or Form of Buddhi or Discernment and Sensitivity; Budheshani or the Controller of Mental Faculties; Bandhi or the One who is tied to the Absorbing Responsibilities of Universal Creation- Upkeep- and Dissolution; Bandha Mochani or the One who alone could break the shackles of the Unending Cycle of Births and Deaths and the great interregnum of Life in between.

Om Hreem Aim Am Am Im Eem Vum Voom Rum Rumta Yem Aim Om Aoum/ Kam Kham Gam Gham Cham Chham Jam Jham Im Tam Tham Dum Dham Nam Tam Tham/ Dum Dham Nam Pam Pham Bham Bham Mam Yam Rum Lam Vam Sham Sham Sum Ham Lam/ Ksham Aksha maaley Akshara Maalikaa Sdamaalamkritey Vada Vada Vaagvaadini Swaaha/

Akshamaala Aksharaakaaraa Ksharaakshara Phalaprada, Anantaananda Sukhadaananta Chandra nibhaanana/ Ananta Mahimaaghora Anantagambhira samyutaa, Adrushtaadrushta bhagyaphala prada/ Arundhatyavyayi Naadha Aneka Sadguna samyuta, Aneka Bhushana adrushya aneka Loka nishevita/ Anantaananta sukhadaa Ghoraaghora Swarupini, Avesha Devataarupa amritarupaamriteswari/ Anavadyaaneka hastaaneka Maanikya bhushana, Aneka Vighnasamharti twaanekaabharana anvita/ Avidyaajnaana samhartri hya Vidyaa Jaala naashani, Abhirupa anavadyaangi hyapra tarkya gati prada/ Akalankarupini cha hyanugraha paraayana, Ambarastha ambaramaya ambara Maalaambujekshana/ Ambikaabjakara abjastha amshumatya amshushataanvita,Ambujaamrita anavara akhandambujaasana maha priya/ Ajaraamara Samsevya ajara sevita padyugaa, Atulaartha prada ardritya atyudaaraa bhayanvita/ Anaadha vatsala ananta priya Aanantepsita pradaa, Ambujaakshya Amburupa Ambujato - dbhava Maha Priya/ Akhandaamarastutya Amara nayika pujita, Ajeya Aja samkaasha Agjnaana naashinya Abhishtadaa/ Akta Aghanena chaastreshi hyalakshmi naashana tathaa, Anantasaara Anantashrir ananta vidhi pujitaa/ Abhishtaa Amartya Sampujyaahya Astodaya vivarjita, Aastika swanta nilaya Astrarupa Astravati tathaa/ Askhalatya Askhaladrupa Askhala dwidyaapraadayani, Askhalat - ssiddhida Ananda Ambuja Amaranaayikaa/ Ameya Avesha paapoaghna Akshara Saarasvata pradaa,

Jaya Jayanti Jayadaa Janma Karma vivarjita/

(Aksha maalaa or Devi! Your main accompaniment is rosary or the string of Rudraaksha to perform constant Tapasya; you are the Aksharaa kaara or of the Swarupa of Aksharas or the Alphabets of Imperishable Syllables which yield lasting value since these constitute a 'Bhasha' or the specific language which indeed is a fountain of words, expressions, literature, poetry, communication and richness of human life; Anantaananda or the Embodiment of Lasting Happiness; Sukhadaanata or the Provider of endless satisfaction; Chandra nibhaavana or of the Cool and Placid Countenance of Moon; Ananta Mahima or of eternal magnificence; Aghora or never distressful; Ananta Gambhira or of boundless equanimity; Adrushtadrushtida or of the Provider of Invisible Vision of Values; Anantaadrushta bhagya phalapra or the granter of imperceivable fortune ; Devi! you are of the Swarupa of *Arundhati, the Eminent wife of Vasishtha -of the famed Sapta Rishis viz. Marichi, Atri, Angirasa, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha-

[* Arundhati Devi is regarded as the highest priestess of conjugal happiness and mutual adjustment of new couples as the latter are asked to invoke the Star of Arundhati on the Sky at the time of nuptial ceremonies ; she was the guardian mother of Devi Sita of Ramayana when the latter was abandoned by Rama before the birth of Lava and Kusha];

Avyayi or the Indestructible; Nadhaa or the Master of any House hold; Aneka Sadguna Samyuta or the Goddess replete with excellent features; Aneka bhushana or Fully ornamented; Adrushya or Invisible; Aneka Loka nishevita or worshipped by many Lokas; Ananta or the Infinite; Ananta Sukha da or the bestower of eternal happiness; Ghoraaghora Swarupini or of the Form at once of Peacefulness and Dreadfulness; Aseha Devata rupa or the Displayer of innumerable Swarupas of Devatas; Amritarupa or the Symbol of Amrita or Elixir; Amriteswari the Personification of Amrita; Anavadya or the Devi of exquisite beauty and grace; Aneka hasta or of countless hands of Abhaya Mudra assuring security and fearlessness; Aneka manikya bhushana or adorned with several priceless diamonds of glitter; Aneka Vighna Samharti or the destroyer of numerous obstacles experienced by the faithful devotees; Anekaabharanaanvita or the Goddess who is adorned with invaluable ornaments; Avidya-Agjnaana samharti or the demolisher of Illiteracy and Ignorance; Abhirupa or of the most pleasing and enchanting profile; Anavdyangi or of gorgeous physique; Apratarkya gati prada or of irrefutable gait and bearing; Akalanka Rupini or of Spotless Form; Anugraha Paraayana or Constantly engaged in offering benevolence and magnanimity; Ambarastha or the One stationed on the Skies; Ambara maya or She is spread all over the Sky; Ambara maala or the garland of the huge sky; Ambujekshana or Devi has the incredible vision and farsight comparable to the softness of Lotuses; Ambika or the Mother of the Universe; Abja karaayai or of the hands comparable to the smoothness of Lotuses; Abjastha or the Resider of Lotuses; Amsumati or of the translucent Mind of a dew drop; Amshu shataanvita or like hundreds of dew drops; Ambuja or the Lotus itself; Amrita or the personification of Amrita itself; Anavara or of excellence; Akhanda or Indivisible; Ambujaasana Maha Priya or the One who enjoys the indulgent comfort of Lotus seat; Ajaraamara samsevya or the worshipper of Devas who are devoid of Old age and death; Ajara sevita padyuga or Devas revere the supple feet of Saraswati; Atulartha prada or the bestower of limitless wealth; Ardrika or the One who possesses extremely compassionate reaction to the needy; Atyudaara or the Epitome of liberal responses; Abhayanvita or the One with Abhaya Mudra or the sign of Fearlessness; Anadha vatsala or the Savior of those who have no succor or help; Ananta Priya or the beloved of Ananta Deva or Vishnu; Anantepsida prada or the fulfiller of endless desires;

Ambujaksha or of the charming eyes of Lotuses; Ambu rupa or of the Form of Clean Water; Ambujodhhava maha priya or Devi Vani who is obsessed with the desire of Brahma Deva who was manifested atop a Lotus stalk ; Akhanda or Unbreakable; Amara stutwaaya or constantly extolled by Amaraas or Devatas; Amara naayaka pujita or worshipped by Indra Deva the Chief of Devas; Ajeya or Invincible; Aja sankasha or the Ever Resplendent Unborn Eternity; Agjnaana nashinya or the Obliterator of the Darkness of Ignorance; Abhishta dayani or the Great Fulfiller of Desires; Akta or smeared like dark night; Aghana or the Sinless; Astreshi or of the Speed and Power of Mantrika Arrows; Alakshmi nashini or the uprooter of poverty and paucity; Anantasaara or the Eternal Truth or the Essence of Life and Death as a cycle; Ananta Shri or the Boundless Opulence or Affluence; Ananta Vidhi pujita or Worshipper of Endless Destiny; Abhishta or the Characterisation of Desire; Amartya sampuyjya or the One ever worshipped by Devas; Astodaya Vigvarjita or the Bhagavati has neither Rise or Fall like in a day and night; Aastika swanta Nilaya or the One who always stays near Confirmists but never the Non – Believers; Astra rupa or of the Form of Sacred Arrows; Astravati or the Possessor of limitless Arrows released with Mantras; Askhalita or the example of chastity- alternative meaning is that Devi is Unshaken or Undaunted; Askhalidrupa or of the Swarupa of Firmness; Askhalidvidya pradaayani or the acceder of complete and unblemished knowledge; Askhaladsiddhi or the Provider of untarnished Siddhis or accomplishments; Ananda or the personification of Happiness; Ambuja or the appearance of Lotuses; Amara nayika or of the High Satus of Amaras or Devatas ; Ameya or boundless or Immeasurable; Aseha paapagnai or She who is the destroyer of huge stock of sins; Akshara Sarasvaprada or the benefactor of lasting Literature and Learning; Jaya or the Personification of Victory; Jayanta or the Son of Indra deputed to accompany the horse deputed for the Sacrifices of Ashwamedha Yagna; Jayadaaya or the renderor of victory in battles; Janma karma vivarjita or the One who is devoid of Samskaraas or Vedic Traditions after the birth of a child such as Naama Karana, Anna Pashana, Chooda Karana, Karna vedha, Vidyarambha, Upanayana etc.)

Om Jyaam Hree Jaya Jaya Jagan Maatah Aim VadaVada Vaagvadini Swaha

*Jagtpriya Jagan mataa Jagadiswara Vallabha, Jaatirjaya Jitaamitraa Japyaa japana kaarini/
Jeenanijeevanilaya Jeevaakhyaa Jeevadarini, Jahnavi jyaa Japavati Jaatirupaa Jayaprada/
Janardanapriyakari Joshaneeyaa Jagat stitha, Jagatjyeshthaa Jaganmaaya Jeevana traana kaarini/
Jeevaatulatika Jeevaa Janma Janma nibarhani, Jaadyavidhvamsana kari Jagadyonirjayaatmikaa/
Jagadaananda Janani Jambuscha Jalajekshanaa, Jayanti Janga pugaghi Janita Jnaana Vgrahaa/
Jataajatavati Japyaa Japa kartru priyankari, Japakrut paapa samhatri Japa krut phala daayani/
Japaapushpa sama prakhyaa Japa kusuma dhaarini, Janani Janma rahita Jyoirvityabhidhaayani/
Jutaajutana Chandraartha Jagat srishtikara tathaa, Jagatraanakari Jaadya dhvamsa kartri Jayeswari/
Jagadbeejaa Jayaavaasaa Janmabhurjanma naashini, Janmaantya rahita Jaitri Jagadyonir japaatmikaa/
Jayalakshana sampurnaa Jayadaana kritodyamaa, Jambharaadyaadi samstutyaa Jambhaa
phaladaayani/ Jagatraya hitaa Jyeshthaa Jagatraya vashamkari, Jagatrayaambaa Jagati jwaalaa jwalita
lochanaa/ Jwaalini jwalanaabhaasaa Jwalanti Jwalanaatmika, Jitaaraati surastutyaa Jitakrodhaa
Jitendriyaa/ Jaraamarana shunyaacha Janitri Janma naashini, Jalajaabhaa Jalamayi Jalajaasana
Vallabhaa/ Jalajastha Japaaraadhya Jana Mangalakaarini, Kaamini Kaamarupa cha
Kamyakaamyapradayani/*

(Jagatpriya or the One who is most sought after in the Universe; Jagan Matrey or the Unique Mother of the Worlds; Jagadeeswara Vallabha or the Companion of Maha Deva; Jaati or the Chaturvarna / Four

Established Castes of Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishya and Others; Jayaamaya or of the Essence of Massive Victory; Jita mitra or the One who ensures that her friends are victorious; Japyaa or the worshipped by way of Japa; Japana kaarinya or the One who is the cause of the Japa; Jeevanya or the very Life Force of all; Jeeva nilaya or the Storage and Stock of Life; Jeevaakhya or the chapter of Life; Jeeva dhaarini or the One who preserves life for others; Jahnavi or of the Swarupa of Sacred River; Jyaa or its Tributary; Japavati or Devi Saraswati is the portrayal of constant Japa or meditative repetition of Mantras; Jayaprada or the One ensuring success to the followers; Janardana priya kari or the One who mobilises ardent devotion to Vishnu; Joshaniya or Symbol of Awakening; Jagat Sthita or the Preserver of the Universe; Jagajjeshtha or the Eldest of the Universe; Jaganmaya or the Illusion of the Universe; Jeevana traana karini or Shelter and Saviour of Life; Jeevatu latika or the Unique Creeper enabling gradual evolution of Life; Jeeva Janani or the Mother of Existence of the Beings; Janma nibarhani or the destroyer of Life; Jadya vidhwamshana kari or the exterminator of diseases; Jagadyoni or the Supreme Creator; Jayatmika or the Profile of Victory and Success; Jagadaananda Janani or the Universal Mother of Delight and Contentment; Jamba seed /fruit; Jalajekshana or of the Charming Looks of Lotus; Janita Jnaana Vighraha or the Figure of Self-Manifested Knowledge; Jataa or of similar matted hair of Bhagavan Shiva; Jataavatya or the Devi possessive of the affinity of Shiva Juta; Japya or the Deity who is constantly recited about; Japa kartru priyankari or She provides fulfillment to those who perform Japa in her name; Japakritphala dayinyai or the Bestower of the fruits of the Japa to the concerned devotees; Japa Pushpa samaprakhya or of the charm and beauty of Japa Pushpa commonly called the China Rose; Janani or the Supreme Mother; Janmarahitaya or Devi who is devoid of Beginning and End; Jyotirvityabhidaayina or The massive Deposit of Lustre greets Devi constantly with veneration; Jataajutana Chandraardha or the Half Moon ornamenting the Jataajuta of Shiva is paying tributes to Devi ; Jagatsrishti kari or She is the Creator of the Worlds; Jagatraana kari or the Preserver too; Jaadya dhwamsakari or the blower of illnesses; Jayeshwari or the Queen of Triumphs; Jagad beeja or the Creative Seed of the Jagat; Jayaavasaayai or the Full Form of Conquest; Janma bhuvay or the Creative Energy producing countless Births; Janma Nashinyai or the destructive Energy too; Janmanta rahita or the Force responsible for the cycle of births and death; Jaitri or Conqueror an epithet of Vishnu; Jaya lakshana supmurnaa or the One with the Fullness of the never faulting features of Success; Jaya daana kritodyama or One who is launching victory on the success pad of charity and sacrifice; Jambharadyadi samstutya or Rakshasas like Jambhasura eventually realised the magnificence of Devi and were fully engaged in commendations to her; Jambhari phaladayani or She granted the fruits of pardons by the Asura's realisation of Devi's supremacy; Jaga Traya hita or Devi always aims at the welfare of all the Three Worlds; Jyeshtha or the Senior Most Elder of the Universe; Jagatraya Vashankari or the Unique Mesmoriser of the hree Worlds; Jagati or She is the Universe herself; Jagayonaye or the Paramount Mother-Creator; Japatmika or the Personification of Japa; *Jwaala or the Goddess of Flames the Alternate Form of Shakti as Devi Saraswati [One of the reputed Shakti peethas in Kangra in Himachal Pradesh]; Jwaalita lochana or of flames as her eyes; Jwaalinya or the Sourcer-Goddess of Flames; Jwalanaabhaasa or the Countenance of Flames; Jwalanti or the Symbol of Flames; Jwalanatmika or the Inner Form of Burnig Flames; Jitaaraati surastutya or the Devi appealed to by all the Leading Devatas to assume calmness; Jitakrodha or Devi has overpowered wrath and fury; *Jitendriya or the One who controls physical parts and features;

*[‘Panchendriyas’ of Eyes, Ears, Nose, Tongue and Skin and the corresponding senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch, besides ‘Shadvargas’ viz. Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsaras and the corresponding human aberrations of Desire, Anger, Greed, Infatuation, Arrogance, and Jealousy;]

Janitri or the Supreme Mother; Jaraamarana Shunya or completely free from old age and death; Jalajaabha or of the splendid resemblance of a Lotus; Jalamaya or full of water; Jalajaanana Vallabhya or of the Alternate Form of rahma, Jalajashtaa or the inhabitant of water; Japaraadhya or she who is worshipped by the medium of Japa; Jana mangala kaarina or Devi Saraswati is the provider of auspiciousness to the General Public; Kaamini or the Fulfiller; Kamarupa or the pictogram of Desire and Aspirations; Kaamyaa or the One identical to fulfillment; Kamaprada or the deliverer of wishes);

Aim Kleem Kalyani Kamadharini vada vada Vagvaadini Swaaha

Kamakhya Kamada Kartri Kratakarma Phalaprada, Kritagnaghni Kriyarupaa Karya karana rupini/ Kanjakshi Karunarupa Kevalaamara sevita, Kalyana kaarani Kanta Kantida Kanti rupini/ Kamalaa Kamalaa vaasa Kamalotpala Malini, Kumudwati cha Kalyani Kanta Kamesha Vallabha/ Kameshwari Kamalini Kamada Kamabandhini, Kamadhenuh Kanchanakshi Kanchanaabha Kalanidhih/ Kriya Kirtikari Kirti Kratusreshtha Kriteshwari, Kratuh Sarva Kriya Stutya Kratu krutpriya kaarinii/ Kleshanashakari Kartri Karmada Karmabandhini, Karmabandha Hari Krishna Klamaghni Kanjalochana/ Kandarpa janani Kanta Karuna Karunavati, Kleem kaarini Kripaakaara Kripasindhuh Kripavati/ Karunadra Kamalodbhava Kirtikari Kalmashaghi Kriyakari , Kriyashakti Kamarupa Kamalotpalagandhini/ Kala Kalavati Kurma kutastha Kanja samsthita, Kalika Kalmashaghi cha Kamaniya jataanvita/ Karapadma Karaabhishtaprada Kratuphalapada, Koushiki Koshadaa Kavyakartri Kosheswari Krusha/ Kurmahyaana Kalpalata Kaalakuta vinaashani, Kalpodyaanavati Kalpa Vanastha Kalpakaarini/ Kadamba Kusumaabhaasa Kadamba Kusuma priya, Kadambodyana Madhyastha Kirtida Kirtibhushana/ Kula maata Kulaavaasaa Kulaachara Priyankari, Kulaanaatha Kaamakala Kalanaatha Kaleswari/ Kundamandara Pushpabha Kapardasthita Chandrika, Kavitwada Kavyamaata Kavimaata Kalaaprada/

Om Souh Kleem AimTato Vada Vada Vaagvaadini Swaaha

(Kamakhya or the Goddess of Sensuousness and gratification; Kaamada or the giver of one's requirements in full; Kartri or the Performer; Kratakarma phalaprada or the bestower of the fruits of accomplishing Yagnas; the exterminator of the ingratitude; Karya Karana Rupini or Devi the Swarupa of the Cause and Causation/Action; Kanjakshi or the Lotus Eyed; Kevalaamara Sevita or the One worshipped by Devas in entirety and exclusivity; Kalyana Karini or the Subscriber of Propitiousness; Kanta or the Epitome of Womanhood; Kantida or the Generator of Illumination; Kanti rupini or the Profile of Lustre; Kamala or the Lotus; Kamala vaasa or the Home of Lotuses; Kamalotpala or the Generator of Lotuses; Malini or the Garland of Elegance; Kumudvati or the White Water Lily stated to open at Moon Rise-an epithet of Vishnu; Kalyani or the Blessed Excellence; Kanta or the Ideal Femininity; Kamesha Vallabha or of the Dominant Power Form of Shiva; Kameshwari or the Auxiliary Form of Parvati; Kamalini or the Substitute Swarupa of Lotus; Kamada or the Originator of Kama or Desire; Kama bandhini or the Binding Power of Aspirations; Kamadhenu or the Celestial Milch Cow that fulfils wishes; Kanchanakshi or the Golden Visioned; Kancha nabha or Vishnu the Golden Navelled; *Kalanidhi or the Presider of 'Shodasha Kalas' or of Sixteen Art Forms;

[* Shodasha Chandra Kalas: Amrita, Manada, Tushti, Pushti, Rati, Dhruvi, Shashini, Chandrika, Kanta, Jyotsna, Shri, Priti, Angada, Poorna and Poornaamrita; The Corresponding *Shodasha Nitya Devis are: Maha Tripura Sundari, Kameshwari, Bhaga maalini, Nityaklinna, Bherunda, Vahni vaasini, Maha Vajreshwari, Shiva dooti /Roudri, Twarita, Kala Sundari, Nitya, Vijaya, Sarva Mangala, Jwala Malini and

Chidrupa]

Kriya or the Action Form, Kirti kari or the Harvester of Reputation; Kirti or the Celebrity; Kratu Shreshtha or the Luminary of Yagnas; Kriteswari or the Goddess of Deeds; The Authority of Organising the Systematic Acts of Kratus; The One who enjoys the Organisation of Kratus; Klesha naashakari or the blower of obstacles; Kartri or the Supreme Performer; Karmada or the Decider of the Results of Actions; Karma bandhini or the Enforcer of Resultant Fruits of Actions; Karma bandha hari or She has the power of reversing the effects of Karma also; Krishta or the One who pulls / cultivates or motivates action; Klamaghni or the Liberator from Obstacles; Kanja lochana or the Visionary of clearness like that of Lotus Eyes; Kandarpa Janani or the Mother Figure of Manmadha or that of Devi Lakshmi; Kanta or the Exemplary Female Energy; Karuna or the byword of Compassion; Karunavati or the Rarity of Kindness; *Kleem Kaarini or of the Creator of Seed Energy from the Word Kleem *[Kleem generates Spiritual Power connecting the Supreme and Maha Maya or the transformer of Materialism into Spirtualism as facilitated by a Guru to seek Spiritual Empowerment];

Kripaakara or the Profile of Mercy; Kripa Sindhu or the Ocean of Benevolence; Kripavati or the Goddess of Compassion; Karunardra or the One replete with Kindness; Kamalodbhava or Manifested from Lotus; Keertikara or the Provider of Fame and Recognition; Kalmashagni or the destroyer of imperfections and blotches; Kriya kari or the Facilitator of Action; Kriya Shakti or the Top Inspirer of Motivation; Kamalotpala gandhini or the Huge Stock of Fragrance from Lotuses; Kala or the Art Form [See Kala Nidhi above]; Kalavati or The Characterisation of Kalas as referred to above; Kurma or the Incarnation of Maha Vishnu who steadied the Huge Churner of Vasuki in the context of Amrita Mathana by Deva-Danavas; *Kutastha or the Dormant olr Latent Shakti which gets activated at the time of Universal Peril as assured by Lord Krishna stating : *Pavitraanaya Sadhunaam Vinashayacha dushkrutaam, Dharma samsthaapanardhaaya sambhavami yugey yugey/*; Kanja samsthita or the inhabitant of Lotuses; Kalika or of the Kalika Swarupa; Kanameya jataanvita or Devi the possessor of soft matted head hair; Kara Padma or the Displayer of Lotus Stalk in her hand; Karaabhishta pradaaya or the hand provider of wishes to her devotees; Kratu phala pradaya or the conferrer of the positive results of observing Kratus; *Koushiki or the Extension Shakti of Devi Parvati;

*[There are two versions of manifestations of Koushiki; Markandeya Purana described that Durga Devi created Koushiki from Durga's body cells / Kosha as the Devi was fighting the demon brothers Shumba and Nishumbha. Matsya Purana described that originally Devi Parvati was of dark complexion and resorted to extreme Tapasya to Lord Brahma who enabled the transfer of the dark cells of Parvati's body to Devi Kaushiki and created new cells of extreme fairness and brightness to Parvati called Devi Gauri! It is widely believed that the manifestation of Koushiki resides in Vindhya Region as present there].

*Koshada or Devi is the Resider of * 'Koshas' or the Sheaths of Human System akin to layers of an Onion;

* [The layers are stated to be Annamaya or food based; Pranamaya or based on Vital Air; Manomaya or based on mind or mental faculty; Vigjnaana maya or wisdom / intellect based and Anandamaya or on the basis of extreme gratification or bliss];

*Kanya or maiden;

[* Mythologically stated there are Pancha Kanyas whose worship assures the washing of sins; these were Mandodari, Ahalya, Draupadi, Kunti and Tara; these illustrious women represented Pancha Bhutas; during Devi Durga Nava Raatri Pujas Kanya worship of girls before the state of puberty is still observed each day as representing Durga Devi herself ; Kumaris from the age of one year to Sixteen are known as Sandhya, Saraswati, Tridha, Kalika, Shubhaga, Uma, Malini, Kubjika, Kaala Sandarbha, Aparajita, Rudrani, Bhairavi, Maha Lakshmi, Peetha Nayaki, Kshetrajna and Ambika];

Kartri or the One who is Action-oriented always; Kosheswari or Devi Lakshmi / or the Kuberi or the Celestial Treasurer; Krisha or of the Form of Extreme Thinness as is the constant practitioner of Tapasya; Kurma yana or the leisurely pacer of the Universe to take stock of the activities of Beings; Kalpa Lata or the Interminable Creeper Form of the Worlds bestowing boons to the virtuous and punishing the wicked; Kaala Kuta Vinaashani or the destroyer of poisonous flames; Kalpodyaanavati or Saraswati the charming damsel enjoying the beauty of Celestial Gardens; Kalpa Vanastha or the Resider of Heavenly Forests; *Kalpa kaarini or the Maker of Kalpas;

* [Kaala Mana or the Time Frame is repetitive, cyclical and everlasting. A human year is a day of Devas. The totality of Four Yugas is 1200 Deva years comprising Satya Yuga of 4800 Deva Years + Treta Yuga of 3600 Deva years+ Dwapara Yuga of 2400 Deva Years + Kali Yuga of 1200 Deva Years. One Maha Yuga is a circle of Yugas and 100 Maha Yugas make one **Kalpa**. It is stated in Matsya Purana that there are 30 Kalpas named Sweta, Nilohita, Vamadeva, Rathaantara, Rourava, Deva, Brihat etc. We are in Sweta Varaha Kalpa now being the first half. Thus Kalamaana is in a continuous flux and Yugas and Kalpas roll by for ever; after the Yugas Pralayas would happen and after Kalpas the Maha Pralayas and a fresh count of thirty Kalpas would recur again!]

Kadamba kusuma abhaasa or of the beauty and fragrance akin to that of a Kadamba flower; Kadamba kumsuma priya or Devi Saraswati is enormously fond of the Flower; Kadambodyana madhyastha or She enjoys being in the middle of the Kadamba garden; Kirti daaya or the boon provider of reputation and distinction; Kirti bhushana or She enjoys the ornamentation of status and fame; Kula mataa or the Mother of all Kulas and Vamshas; Kulaavasa or She feels at home or happy in any Kula or Family; Kulaachara priyankari or is delighted in observing the regulations and disciplines of all or any Kula; Kalaanaatha or is the Prime Deity of every Kula; Kama kala or the embodiment of romance and love; Kaleswari or the Goddess of all types of Art Forms; Kunda Mandaara Pushpaabha or of the bright countenance of Mandara Pushpa; [Mandara is stated to be one of the six kinds of flowers of the celestial gardens of Indra like Kadamba, Mallika, Padma, Parijata]; Kaparda sthita Chandrika or Devi Saraswati is comparable to the inimitable illumination and grace of the half moon ornamented on Parama Shiva's Jataajuta or the matted and curled head hair; Kavitva daayi or Saraswati is indeed the Authority of Excellent Poetry; Kavya matrey or She is the Mother ready to bestow the gift of scripting and rendering Kavyas to her admirers and followers; Kavi maata or the unparalleled Goddess Mother of Poets and Creativity; Kala prada or the Symbol of Magnificent Arts and Artistic Faculties).

Om Souh Kleem Aim Tato Vada Vada Vaagwadini Swaaha

*Taruni Tarunitraatey Taaraadhipa Samaanaya, Triptaye Triptiprada Tarkya Tapani Taapinitatha/
Tarpani Tirtha RupaachaTripada Tridasheswari, Trideveshi Trijanani Trimaataa Trayambakeshwai/
Tripura Tripureshaani Traimbaka Tripurambika, Tripurashrstrayirupa Trayivedya Traishwari/
Triyantavedini Taamraa Taapatrtaya haarini, Tamaala sadrushya Traatreya Tarunadityasannibha/*

*Trailokya Vyapini Triptaa Triptikrit Tatwarupini, Turya Trailokyasamstutya Triguna Triguneshwari/
Tripuraghni Trimaataacha Traimbika Trigunaanvita, Trishnaachhedakari Tikshna Tiksha swarupini/
Tulaatulaadi Rahita Tatwa Brahma Swarupini, Traanakartri Tripaapaghni Tripadaa Tridashanvitaa/
Tatthya Tri Shaktistripadaa Turyaa Trailokyasundari, Tejaskari Trimurtyaadya Tejorupa Tridhaamata/
Trichakra Kartri Tribhaga Turyaatita Phalaprada, Tejaswini Taapaha Taapopaplava naashani/
Tejogarbhaha Tapassaara Tripura Priyankari, Tanyai Taapanasantushta Tapanangaja bheetinut/
Trilochana Trimargaacha Tritiya Tridashastutaa, Tri Sundari Tripathagaa Turiyapada daayani/*

(Taruni or Youthful and Vivacious; Tarunitraatey or the Great Protector of Womanhood; Taaraadhipa Samaanaya or the One alike Chandra Deva; Triptaye or the Symbol of High Contentment; Triptiprada or the Provider of Fulfillment; Tarkya or She has the Capacity to endure and bear difficult situations; Tapani or the Sacrificer; Taapini or the One to make others suffer; Tarpani or the One who observes libation of water to Pitru Devatas and performs daily homas; Tirtha Rupa or the One Present at Tirthas and inculcates the habit of pilgrimages by infusing their faith and devotion; Tripada or the One who takes three steps always by being present in Three Lokas; Tridasheswari or the Goddess governing the three dashaas of life viz. Koumara, Youvana and Varthakya or of Studentship, Householder and the Old; Trideveshi or of Devis engaged in Srishti-Sthiti-Samhara; Tri Janani or of the Swarupas of Lalita-Lakshmi-Saraswati representing Courage-Prosperity and Wisdom; Tri Mata or the Three Mothers responsible for Birth, Upbringing and Termination; Trayambakeshwari or of Three Goddesses; Tripura or the Goddess Tripura Sundari referred to as Kali with four hands bearing Akshamaala and Abhaya Vara Mudra, Asura Munda or the head of a demon, Paasha and Khadga as existent in Tripura a North East State of Bharat; Tripureshaani; Tripurambika; Tripura Shri; Trayirupa or of the Three Forms; Trayi Vedyaa or the Exponents of Ruk-Yajur-Sama Vedas; Trayeshwari; Trayyanta Vedini or the Expert of Vedaantaas; Taamra or of a coppery red complexioned Devi Parvati; *Taapatraya harini or the destroyer of three Tapatrayas of three kinds;

*[Adhi Bhoudika or Ailments of Physical Nature; Adhyatmika or of Mental-Psychological Nature; and Adhi Daivika or of Natural Calamities like Earth quakes, floods, lightnings etc. beyond human control];

Tamala sadrusya or like a dark bark of a tree; Traatrey or the Great Shield of Protection; Tarunaaditya sannibha or of the Heat and Radiance of mid-day Sun; Trailokya vyapinya or the Devi who is spread all out among the Bhu-Akasha-Patala Lokas; Tripta or the Icon of Contentment; Tripti kritey or the One who grants satisfaction; *Tatwa rupini or of the Swarupa of Tatwas;

[*Maha Tatwa emerged from Maha Purusha and Prakriti leading to three kinds of Ahamkaras or Egos or Self Awareness viz. Vaikarika, Taijasa and Tamasa; the Ahamkaras created Five 'Tanmatras' or Subtle Forms of Matter comprising Pancha Bhutas of Prithivi-Jala-Teja-Vaayu and Akasha or Earth-Water-Radiance-Air and Sky; of Shabda-Sparsha-Rupa-Rasa-Gandha or Sound-Touch-Vision-Taste-Smell from the corresponding Jnanendriyas or Body Parts viz. Ears-Skin-Eyes-Tongue-Nose; Karmendriyas of Hands, feet, tongue, Paayu or Anus and Upastha or Marmendriya as also of Manas or Mind. Thus the Tatwas of Trigunas, Pancha Bhutas, Pancha Tanmatras, Pancha Jnanendriyas, Pancha Karmendriyas all controlled by and Manas or Mind].

Turya or the Final State of Soul in which Yogi becomes identified with Brahman; Trilokya samstutya or Devi is extolled and admired in the Tri Lokas; Triguna or the Single Entity displaying all the Three Features or Characteristics of Satvika-Rajasika and Tamasika nature yet being a Nirguna; Triguneswara

or the Presiding Deity of the Three Gunas; Tripuraghi or the destroyer of Tripurasura in the Form of Maha Deva as explained above ; Tri Maata; Trigunavita; Trishna cchedakari or the eradicator of thirst; Tikshna or the Byword for Sharpness or Severity; Tikshna Swarupini or of Ruthlessness and even Cruelty; Tula or Highly Balanced and Composed; Tuladi Rahita or She has no similarity or likeness in terms of her features or actions; Tatwa Brahma Swarupini or of the likeness of Brahma; Tranakartri or the Eminent Defender; Tripapaghi or the eliminator of three kinds of Sins perpetrated by Mind, Tounge and Action-wise ie.Manasa-Vaachaa-Karmana;Tripada or of Three Steps leading to Trilokas; Tridashaavita of Bound to Three Directions viz. on Earth, Sky High or Underneath; Tathya or the Absolute Truth and the Reality Alone; Trishakti of Creation-Progress-Extinction; Triprada or of imparter of Dharma-Artha-Moksha; Turya or of Climactic and Super-Consciousness; Trailokya Sundari or the Unparalleled Beauty of the Three Worlds on Earth, Sky and Underneath; Tejaskari or the Creator of Luminosity; Tri Murtaadya or the Originator of Brahma-Vishnu-Maheshwara; Tejorupa or the Personification of Illumination; Tridhaamata or the Essence of Three Supreme Abodes of Satya Loka of Brahma, Vaikuntha of Bhagavan Vishnu and Kailasha of Maha Deva; Tri Chakra Kartri or the Creator of Three Wheels or Paths to achieve Moksha viz. Karma, Bhakti and Jnaana; *Tribhaga or the Shakti of the three parts of day or night in Vedic Astrology;

*[Tribhaga Bala or the power of three parts of day or night is indicated in reference to Grahas or Planets: Budha gains strength in the first third part of a day; Surya gains strength in the middle one-third of a day and Shani becomes powerful in the last one third of a day; Similarly Chandra, Shukra and Mangala gain strength in the successive one-third parts of the night; however Guru is powerful all the times in a day or night.]

Turyaatita phala prada or Devi Saraswati is capable of bestowing the Status far beyond Turya or of Supreme Awareness; Tejaswini or the Grand Fund of Radiance and Vivacity; Taapaha or the mitigator of extreme heat; Tapoplava nashani or the terminator of dangerously high temperature; Tejogarba or the Devi whose belly is replete with sparkle and energy; Tapassara or the Quintessence of Tapas or Magnificent Meditation; Tripura Priyankaari or the Beloved of Tripura Samhara; Tapaswi or the exemplary meditator of excellence; Taapana samtushta or She is exhilarated and excited in performing elevated level of Tapasya; Taapasangaja bheetinudey or as though one might be apprehensive of the abnormality of her physical health due to the rigorous tapasya; Trilochana or of Three Eyes when the third is never opened unless extreme situations are called for; Tri Maraagaya or Devi commends Three Paths of Seeking Salvation viz. Bhakti or Jnaana or Vairagya; Tritiya or the Third Day of each month both in the Shukla Paksha and Krishna Paksha with special significance on Akshaya Tritiya in Vaishakha and Teej Festival for women in Shravana months; Tridasha Stuta or Commended by the three directions of Sky, Earth and the Under worlds of Patala; Tri Sundari or the Paradigm of Charm and Gorgeousness in the Tri Lokas; Tripathaga or of the Three Paths seeking Vidya, Vitta and Vairagya; Turiya Pada daayni or the Goddess with powers to guide Yogis to the Supreme Reality).

Om Hreem Shreem Kleem Aim Namasshuddha Phaladey Aim Vada Vada Vaagvadini Swaaha

Shubha Shubhavati Shanta Shantida Shubadayani, Sheetala Shulini Sheeta Shrimati Shubjanvita/

(Shubha or the Auspiciousness of Devi; Shubhavati or the Image of Propitiousness; Shanta or Tranquility; Shanti daa or the Endower of Peacefulness; Shubha dayani or the provider of Contentment; Sheetala or Coolness; Shulini or the Displayer of Trident as a gesture of Confidence to her devotees;

Sheeta or the One with placidity devoid of anxieties; Shrimati or Lakshmi Swarupa or the Jewel of Womanhood; Shubhanvita or the Harbinger of favourableness and success).

Om Aim yaam Eem Yum Youm Yah Aim Vada Vada Vaagvadini Swaaha

*Yoga siddhiprada Yogya Yagnenaparipurita, Yajya Yagnamayi Yakshi Yakshinin Yaksha Vallabha/
Yagjnapriya Yagjna pujiya Yagnatushta Yamastuta, Yamaniyaprabha Yamy Yajaniya Yasaskari/
Yagnakartri Yagnarupa Yashoda Yagjna samstuta, Yagneshi Yagnaphalada Yoga Yoniryajustuta/
Yamisenyaa Yamaraadhya Yamipujya Yameswari, Yogini Yogarupaacha Yogakartru priyankari/
Yogayuktaa Yogamayi YogaYogiswaraambika, Yoga Yagnamayi Yonih YamaadyashataangaYogata/
Yantritaaghaughasamhara Yamalokanivarini, Yashtivyashtishasamstustya Yamaadyashtangayogayuk/
Yogiswari Yogamataa Yoga Siddhaa cha Yogadaa, Yogaaroodha Yogamayi Yogarupaa Yaviyasi/
Yantrarupacha Yantrastha Yantrapujya cha Yantrika, Yuga kartri Yugamayi Yugadharmavivarjita/
Yamuna Yamini Yaamyam Yamunaajalamadhyaga, Yataayaata prashamani yatanaanaam nikruntani/
Yogaavasa Yogivandya Yattacchabda Swarupini, Yogakshemamayi Yantra Yaavadakshara Matrika/
Yavatpadamayi Yavacchabdarupa Yatheswari, Yattadiya YakshavandyaYadvidya Yati samsthuta/
Yaavadvidyaamayi Yavadvidyaabrinda Suvanditaa, Yogihrudpadma nilaya Yogivaryapriyankari/
Yogivandya Yogi maata Yogisha phaladayani, Yaksha vandya Yaksha pujiya Yaksharaja supujita/
Yagnarupa Yagnatushta Yaayajuk swarupini, Yantraaraadhya YantramadhyaYantrakatrupriyankari/
Yantraarudha Yantrapujya Yogidhyana parayana, Yajaniya Yamastutyaa Yogayukta Yashaskari/
Yogabaddha Yatistutya Yogagjna Yoganayaki, Yoga Yagnaprada Yakshi Yamabadhaa vinaashani/ Yogi
Kaamyam pradaatricha Yogimokshapradayani/*

*Iti naamnaam Saraswatyaahasram samudeetam/ Mantratmakam MahagopyamMaha
Saaraswatapradam, YahpathecchrunuyadbhaktyaTrikalam Sadhakah puman/ Sarva Vidyanidhissaakshaat
sa eva bhavati dhruvam, Labhatey Sampadassarvaah Putra poutraadi samyutaah/Mookopi Sarva Vidyaa
Suchaturmukha Ivaaparrah, Bhutwa prapnoti Saannidhyam Antey Dhaturmuniswara/ Sava Mantramayam
Sarva Vidyaamaana phalapradam, Kasmai Chinna pradaatavyam Praanaih Kantha Gatairapi/ Mahaa
Rahaasya satatam Vani naama Sahasrakam, Susiddha masmaadeenaam Stotram tey samuditam/*

Iti Shri Skaanda Puraaney Shri Saraswati Sahasra Naama Stotram Sampurnam/

(Yoga Siddhiprada or Devi Saraswati is the provider of Achievement to Yogis; Yogya or the Manifestation of Worthiness; Yagnjena paripurita or the Successful accomplisher of all Yagnas; Yajya or the One to whom Yagnas are addressed to; Yagnamayi or the Incarnation of Yagnas; Yakshi or the High representation of Wealth being the wife of Kubera the Treasurer of Devas; Yakshini or of the Form of Yakshinis or the Female Form of Yakshas or Nymphs who is in the service of Devi Durga; Yakshini Vallabha or the Goddess of Yakshas; Yagjna priya or the One who is delighted with Yagnas or the Sacrificial Offerings to Devas; Yagjna pujiya or the Goddess worshipped through the medium of Yagnas; Yagjna Tushta or the Deity who is happy and contented with the performance of Yagnas; Yama Stuta or the Goddess is acclaimed and well applauded by Yama Dharmaraja; Yamaniya prabha or the fresh brightness of each 'Yaama' or Three Hours of a Day/Night; alternatively explained as the personification of Self-Restraint and Discipline; Yaamyam or the One with tolerance and leniency; Yajaniya or Worthy of high worship in the medium of Yagnas; Yasaskari the awarder of name and fame; Yagnakartri or the Top Organiser of Yagnas; Yagjna Rupa or the very appearance of Yagnas; Yashoda or the contributor of reputation and eminence or alternatively explained the foster mother of Lord Krishna and the wife of

Nanda; Yagjna samstuta or She is celebrated by Yagjnas as their Goddess; Yagjneshi or the Presiding Queen of Yagjnas; Yagjna phalata of the provider of the fruits of Yagjnas; Yogayoni or the Mother Goddess of Yagjnas; Yajustuta or the Personification of Yagjnas is never tired of commending and praying to her; Yami Sevya or the Devi worshipped and served by the wife of Yama the God of Death;

[*Yama is a component of *Ashtaanga Yoga: ‘Yama niyamaasana Praanaayama Pratyahra Dharanaa Dhyaana Samaadhyayoshtangavavaani’ or Yama-Niyama-Aasana-Prayanama-Pratyahara-Dharana-Dhyana-Samadhi];

Yogini or Saraswati is herself the Supreme Practitioner of Yoga; Yoga rupa of the Original Expression of Yoga; Yoga kartru priyankari or Devi Vani is extremely pleased with Yoga Practitioners; Yogayukta or the One with the Unique Art of Yoga; Yagamayi or the one Immersed in Yoga; Yoga Yogiswaraambika or the Goddess of Yoga and of Yogiswaras the High Qualified Masters of Yoga; Yoga Jnaana mayi or the One with the Specialised Knowledge of Yoga; Yonih or the Generator of Yoga Vidya; Yamaadyashta - anga Yogata as explained above; Yantrita or the Deity of Yantras and their extensive Science; Aghougha samhara or the Exterminator of Sins and Sinners; Yamaloka nivarini or the Preventor of Yaaloka Yatra; Yashti Vyashtisha samstuta or hailed and venerated by the General Public and the Distinguished Classes of the World alike; Yamaadyashtaanga Yoga yuk or the Perfectionist of Yama-Niyama and such other Eight-folded Yoga; Yogiswari; Yoga Maata; Yoga Siddha or the Paramount Accomplisher of the Art of Yoga; Yogada or the Teacher and Instructor of Yoga too; Yogaarudha or the One seated on the High Seat of Yoga; Yogamayi or the Essence of Yoga; Yogarupa or the Image of Yoga; Yaviyasi or the Incarnation of Yoga; Yantra rupa or the embodiment of Yantras; Yantrastha or embedded in Yantras; Yantra Puja or Goddess Saraswati is worshipped by the totality of Yantras; Yantrika or She is the Yantra herself; *Yantrika or the Symbol of Unique Energy of mystical / spiritual nature as the word ‘Yam’ seeks to create, sustain and support the inherent power; *[There has been a very wide range of Yantras and Sadhana or Practice of the Yantras has been in existence from times immemorial addressed to varied Deities such as Devis and Devis, Planets, Spirits etc. invoked for countless end-purposes some for Self-Enhancement, some for attaining Siddhis and some others even for destructive ends.]

Yuga Kartri or the Creator of Yugas or Passages of Kaala or of Time Circles; Yugamayi or Devi who is the Essence of the concerned Yuga kaala; but She is Yuga dharma Vivarjita or is devoid of the features and regulations of the concerned Yugas since she is the Decider of the Yuga dharmas as also of the Enforcer of the Principles; Yamuna or of the Swarupa of the Sacred River by that name as also the daughter of Lord Surya and the Sister of Yama, Vaivaswata Manu and Lord Shani; Yamini or the Swarupa of a sister or daughter; Yaamyaa or the Personification of Yaamaas or Units of Three Hours of Time each; Yamunaa jala madhyaga or Devi Saraswati flowing at the mid-point of River Yamuna as the Antarahini at Prayaga; Yaataayaaa prashamani or the Controller of rapid motion; Yaatananaam nikruntani or the obstructor of the high speed of the water-flows; Yogaavaasa or the Resider of Yoga; Yogivandtya or Devi is saluted and respected by all the Yogis; Yattatcchabdha swarupini or the Manifestation of Each and Every Sound of Words and Sentences; Yogakshemamayi or the Goddess of tracking the welfare of one and all; Yantra or the Instrumentation of Spiritual Enablement; Yaavadakshara Matrika or the Mother-Goddess of Alphabets; Yaavatpadamayi or the formulator of Steps in terms of Words, Sentences and Expressions; Yaavacchabda Rupa or the Image of endless Sounds and Vocabulary; Yateshwari or the Independent Self-Starter unbound by barriers; Yattadeeya or as She thinks and Acts as per her imagination freely and spontaneously; Yaksha Vandya or worshipped by Yakshas; Yadvidya or

Vidya or Knowledge is as per her own creation alone; Yati samstuta or commended incessantly by Yatis of extraordinary Powers; Yavadvidyaa mayi or the Personification of all kinds of Vidya or Knowledge; Yaavad- Vidyaa brinda Suvandita or all the Branches of Knowledge do prostrate before her Magnificence; Yogi hridpadma nilaya or Devi Saraswati is the dweller of the Mind-Visioned Lotus of Yogis in Totality; Yogivarya priyankari or the Unique Magician and Fascinator of the Best of Yogis in the Worlds; Yogi Vandya; Yogi Mata; Yogisha phaladayani or the Rewarder of Favours and Largess to the Outstanding Yogis; Yaksha Vandya; Yaksha Pujya; Yaksha Raja Supujita or Devi is worshipped by the King of Yakshas Kubera; Yagjna Rupa; Yagjna tushta or contented by Yagjnas; Yaayayajaaka Swarupini or of the Emblem of Yaajana or Yagjna; Yantraaraadhya or Devi Saraswati is best worshipped by the media of Yantras; Yantrakatru priyankari or Devi is excited and gladdened by the worship through Yantras; Yantraarudha or the Presiding Deity seated high on Yantras by the means of Sacrifices and Mantrik Applications ; Yantra Pujya or all the Yantras are demonstrative of their reverence; Yogi Dhyana Parayana or the Single Objective that all Yogis seek and surrender; Yajayeena or perform Sacrifices and Yagjnas to Devi the Supreme; Yama Stutya or entreated to her by Lord Yama; YogaYukta or She is always accompanied by Yoga Vidya; Yashaskari or the bestower of High Fame and Distinction; Yoga baddha or She is regulated by the rigourous discipline and regulation of Yoga; Yati stutya or implored by Yatis of Outstanding Virtue; Yogagjna or Totally Knowledgeable of Yogas to such an extent that there could be nothing beyond; Yoga nayaki or the Queen of all the nuances of Yoga Vidya; Yoga Jnaanaprada or the One who imparts the best of Yogic Knowledge; Yakshi; Yama baadhaa Vinaashani or the destroyer of various kinds of difficulties threatened by Yama Deva; Yogi kaamyapradatri or the Ultimate Fulfiller of the wishes of Yogis; Yogi Moksha pradayani or the final bestower of Moksha to Yogis);

Phala Shruti

Iti Naamnaam Sarswatyaaah Sahasram Samudeetam: The above are the Thousand Sacred Names of Maha Devi Saraswati; Mantraatmakam Maha Gopyam Maha Saaraswata pradam or These Outstanding Names are replete with Mantras which are of Confidential nature constituting the Quintessence of Invaluable Knowledge, Wisdom and Discernment that Devi Saraswati is all about; Yah pathetcchrunu yad Bhaktyaa Trikaalam Sadhakah Puman or those who accomplish full reading and hearing of the Devi Naamas three times a day are indeed bestowed the best of everything; Sarva Vidyaanidhi -ssaakshaat sa yeva bhavati dhruvam or They are blessed high with Complete Fulfillment of achieving unique Vidyas most certainly; Labhatey Sampada or Prosperity in Full; Putra poutraadi samyuta or the benediction of excellent progeny of several generations ahead; Mookopi Sarva Vidyaasu Chaturmukha Paraa Parah Bhutwa Praapnoti Saannidhyam or Even the dumb, mute and wreched human beings once exposed to the invaluable Sahasra naama in commendation of Devi would be eligible to excellence in the domains of Knowledge by the grace of Chaturmukha; all those absorbed in this Sahasranamaa shall indeed attain Devi Saannidhyam or Appearance and nearness; Sarva Mantra mayam Sarva Vidyaa maana Phalapradam or this Sahasranama is a concentrate of Sarva Mantras and is the conferrer of Sarva Vidyas; Mahaa Rahasya satatam Vani Naama Sahasrakam, Su Siddha masmadaadeenam Stotram tey samuditam/ Susidda masma daadeenam Stotram : This Highly Confidential Sahasra naama of Devi Vani naama is the most appropriate and rewarding to persons of my minimal standing and average intellect in all respects.

Iti Shri Skaanda Puraaney Shri Saraswati Sahasra naama Stotram Sampurnam/ (This as a Part of Skanda Purana describing the Thousand Names of Shri Saraswati)

*Prathamam Bharatinaama Dwitiamcha Saraswati, Tritiyam Sharadadevi Chaturtham Hamsavaahana/
Panchamam Jagati Khyatam Shashthim Vaageeswari tathaa/ Kaumari Saptamam Prokta mashtamam
Brahmacharini/ Navamam Buddhidhatricha Dashamam Bhuvaneshwari, Brahmi Dwadashanaamaani Tri
Sandhyam Yah Pathennarah, Sarvasiddhikari tasya prasanna Parameswari/*

SATYAMEVA JAYATE

Truth alone is paramount! Truthfulness is bliss. Having accomplished Truthfulness none would ever slip down. Persons who attain it are named as ‘Sat’ or persons who reach the pinnacle and they indeed are of Satyam or Truthfulness! The Self is achievable through the understanding as to what is truth and untruth as also tapsya or austerity with control of mind and senses, as indeed the best form of such tapasya is the control of mind and senses; it is out of this ‘samyak jnaana’ or the knowledge in surfeit as backed by tapsya is the gateway to Enlightenment; some of the essential inputs are ‘brahma charya’ or abstinence, straightforwardness, non pretentiousness, and falsehood, a clean and blemishless inner conscience leading to ‘Atmajyoti’ or Self Illumination. That indeed is the Path of ‘Parama Nidhaana’ which truly indeed is hiranmaya or the golden hued! The Unique Motto that Bharata Desha had rightly adopted is ‘Satyameva Jayate’ or Truth triumphs and never the Untruth. It is by the path of Truth that Devas tread and thus is called Devayana. It is again that very path that Rishis and Seekers of the Eternal Truth ascend by to finally achieve its heights. Brahman is attainable only through the disciplines of Truthfulness and similar traits: It is ‘Divya’ Self-Resplendent; ‘Achintya Rupam’ or of Unimaginable Form; Sukshmantaram or Subtle like ‘Antariksha’; Vibhaati or of such illumination of Surya Chandraadis; ‘sudure’ or extremely distant to the ignorant since the wise are awareness as deep within quite nearby; and ‘guhaayam’ or is deep in the cavity of everybody’s Self, but imperceptible to the blind and ignorant. Indeed it is incomprehensible by the sensory organs and faculties of vision, speech, and so on except through the minds’eye that too by intense ‘dhyana’ fully backed by ‘Karma’ and ‘Dharma’; It is reachable by ‘jnaana prasaadana vishuddha sattva and jnaanamaya’ or only through the favourable medium of knowledge and purity of thought and deed. The subtle Self is within the heart where the Life Energy Praana enters the body of five forms of ‘praanaapaanodaana vyaana samaanas’ into the subtle Self hidden by the sensory organs but attainable clearly by the vision within. ‘Satyam’ or the Truthfulness alone triumphs as the key factor as by virtue of ‘Satyam’ alone as Vayu Deva blows wind, Bhaskara shines on the sky, speech and all other faculties of panchendriyas of Beings are manifested and indeed the essence of Truth alone would be the basic principle leading to Moksha. ‘Tapas’ and penance again is an aid to the hard way of attainment which Maharshis practised to attain Bliss. Dama or forbearance and extreme self control which often Asuras too practiced for a numberless years to seek fulfillment even of violent and virtueless desires or which Sages seek for Eternal Joy. ‘Shama’ or of extreme disposition of calmness of body and extreme control of the ever changing mind and psyche, verging on ‘Ananda’ and tranquility. ‘Daana-dakshina’ at Sacrificial contexts and the spirit of philanthropy in general springing from the heart to the unfortunate sections of the Society’s have-nots is too an aid to reach the gateway of fulfillment leading gradually the path of Permanent Joy!

Satyameva Jayate – Teachings from Mundakopanishad

Satyena gacchhati/ Satya – Truthfulness – is indeed the Brahma Swarupa; Satya is indeed the Tapasya or deep introspection; Satya is the kaarya kaarana of Praja srishti; Satya is the fulcrum of Samsaara and the concept of Satya alone be the cause and effect of Swarga or the access to the higher form of the superior swarga loka or of Liberation . Anritam tamaso rupam/

Asatyam or Untruthfulness is of darkness and of tamogunam as of ‘agjnaanam’, while Swargam be ‘ prakaasha mayam’ as against Narakam as of ‘andhakaaramayam’. Both the precepts are relevant to manushyas as other species in the Creation be irrelevant anyway. Hence be the explanation of Dharmadharmaas are the extensions of Satya and Asatya or illumination and darkness, and of the fall out Sukha Duhkhas. In other words, wherever there be Satya, there be Dharma- where Dharma be, there be prakaasha the illumination- and hence the Sukha Duhkhas too!

II.i.5) Satyena labhyastapasaa hyesha atmaa samyajnaanena brahmacharyena nityam, antahshareere jyotirmayo hi shubhro yam pashyanti yatayah khseena dishaah/

The Self is achievable through the understanding as to what is truth and untruth as also tapsya or austerity with control of mind and senses, as indeed the best form of such tapasya is the control of mind and senses; it is out of this ‘samyak jnaana’ or the knowledge in completion as backed by tapsya is the gateway to Enlightenment; some of the essential inputs of such ‘samyak jnaana’ are ‘ nitya brahma charya’ or abstinence for good; ‘ jihvaamritam maya’ or straightforwardness, non pretentiousness, and falsehood; ‘antashshareera shubhrata’ or a clean and blemishless inner conscience leading to ‘Atmajjoti’ or Self Illumination. That indeed is the Path of ‘Parama Nidhaana’ which truly indeed is hiranmaya or the golden hued!

III.i.6-9) Satyameva Jayate naanrutam satyena panthaa vitato Deva yaanah, yenaakramanti rishayo hi aaptaa kaama tatra tat satyasya paramam nidhaanam// Brihaccha tad divyam achintyarupam sukshmaaccha tatsukshmataram vibhaati, duuraat suduure tad ihaantike cha pashaatsva ihaiva nihitam guhaayaam/ Na chakshusaa grahyate naapi vaachaa naanyar Devaih tapasaa karmanaavaa, jnaana prasaadena vishuddha sattvah tatastu tam pashyate nishkalam dhyaayamaanaah// Eshonor aatmaa chetasaa veditavyo yasmin praanah panchadhaa samvivesha, praanaischittam sarvam otam prajaanaam yasmin vishuddhe vibhavati esha aatmaa//

The Unique Motto that Bharata Desha had rightly adopted is ‘Satyameva Jayate’ or Truth triumphs and never the Untruth. It is by the path of Truth that Devas tread and thus is called Devayana. It is again that very path that Rishis and Seekers of the Eternal Truth ascend by to finally achieve its heights. Brahman is attainable only through the disciplines of Truthfulness and similar traits: It is ‘Divya’ Self-Resplendent; ‘Achintya Rupam’ or of Unimaginable Form; Sukshmantaram or Subtle like ‘Antariksha’; Vibhaati or of such illumination of Surya Chandraadis; ‘sudure’ or extremely distant to the ignorant since the wise are awareness as deep within quite nearby; and ‘guhaayam’ or is deep in the cavity of everybody’s Self, but imperceptible to the blind and ignorant. Indeed it is incomprehensible by the sensory organs and faculties of vision, speech, and so on except through the minds’ eye that too by intense ‘dhyana’ fully backed by ‘Karma’ and ‘Dharma’; It is reachable by ‘jnaana prasaadena vishuddha sattva and jnaanamaya’ or only through the favourable medium of knowledge and purity of thought and deed. The subtle Self is within the

heart where the Life Energy Praana enters the body of five forms of 'praanaapaanodaana vyaana samaanas' into the subtle Self hidden by the sensory organs but attainable clearly by the vision within.

III.i.10) Yam yam lokam manasaa samvibhaati vishuddha sattvah kaamayate yaamscha kaamaan, tam tam lokam jayate taamscha kaamah tasmaad aatmajnam hyerchayed bhuri kaamah/

So far what ever afflictions had been experienced so far are instantaneously faded and replaced by the person concerned of pure consciousness and now on the screen of his inner vision could experience the lokas of his choice, be it the world of Devas or Manes, whatever desires are thought of are fulfilled now with the Brahma Jnana. Indeed the Knower of the Antaratma the Pure Consciousness or the Self possessed of all the abilities can obtain and world or its joys instantly!

Satyameva Jayate – Teachings from Brihadananyaka

Prajapati Brahman's heart also qualifying as Intellect is the varied form of Satya or Truth signifying Gross and Subtle Forms of Antaratma and Paramatma!

V.iv.1) Tad vai tat, etad eva tadaasa satyameva; sa yo haitan mahad yaksham prathamajam veda; Satyam Brahmeti; Jayateemamlokaan; jita invasaa asat ya evam etan mahad yaksham prathamajam veda; Satyam Brahmeti, Satyam hi eva Brahma/

Meditation is targetted to Pajapati Brahman who has been described above as his 'Hridaya' or Intellect; further qualification of that Hridaya-Intellect-Brahman pertains to Truth as well. That Truth is Satya Brahman; the expression 'tat' or 'that' is repetitive since Hridaya, Intellect, Brahman and now Truth all refer to just the same. The phrase 'Satyameva' also signifies the idioms SAT and TYAT, viz. 'Murtha' or Gross and 'Amurtha' or Subtle; the gross body being 'Pancha bhutaatmika' or of Five Elements. Satya Brahman also made the worlds for Himself and is unconquerable by enemies like the 'Arishad vargas' viz. Kaama-Krodha-Lobha-Moha- Mada-Matsaras as He is far beyond such complexities. Indeed Satya Brahman conquers all the worlds, he is the very first born, and all pervading!

Satya Brahman manifests as Water, Surya and Bhur-Bhuvah-Swah

V.v.1) Apa evedam agra aasuh taa aapah Satyam ashrajanta, Satyam Brahma, Brahma Prajapatim, Prajapatir Devaante Devaah Satyam evopaasate, tadetat Trayaksharam: Satyamiti, sa etyekam aksharam; ti iti ekam aksharam, yam iti ekam aksharam:prathama uttame akshare Satyam, madhyaton- tram; tadetad

anritam ubhayatah Satyena parigraheetam Satya bhuyaam eva bhavati/ Naivam vidiwaam- sam amritam hinasti/

At the very beginning of the Universe water got manifested and that was basically meant as the liquid oblations connected with the rites connected with Agnihotra. In fact all the Elements in their undifferentiated form were designated as water. That water led to the materialization of Satya or Truth and as such Satya Brahman was the first appearance. Satya Brahman created Prajapati or Viraja the Maker of the Beings as also Devas. Now, Satya Brahman in short form was Satya; the latter comprised three syllables viz. Sa-Ti-Ya; the words Sa and Ya are stated to be totally free from all kinds of death or destruction while the middle 'Ti' denotes Mrityu and Anruta or Death and Untruth. Thus Reality being the quintessence of Brahman, the middle mass of Unreality is inserted and slotted in between by the principal chunks of Truth! Since Untruth is hemmed in on either side of Truth, there is a predominance of Truth and as such, wise persons who are aware of the reality are little perturbed by fallacies!

V.v.2) Tad yat tat Satyam asaou sa Adityah; ya esha etasmin mandale purusho yaschaayam dakshinekshan purushah; taavetaavanyonyasmin pratishthitau; rashmibhir eshosmin pratishthitaah praanair ayam amushmin, sa yadotkrammisyan bhavati/ Shuddham evaitan mandalam pashyati, nainam ete rashmayah pratyayanti/

While deliberating on body parts, one should realise that the foremost aspect of Truth relates to Surya and in this context the Solar Orb be synchronised with the right eye; it is stated that the Sun and the eye rest on each other and there is a relationship of mutual cooperation of the Individual Self as identified with the body part concerned and its Presiding Deity. Indeed the relationship of the eye as the identified body part and the concerned Deity viz. Sun in the instant case is strengthened by the Sun Rays. When the Self is destined to leave the mortal body, the latter could no more vision the Sun Rays! Indeed the mutual helpfulness between the two entities-the eye and Sun-ceases at the signals of death!

V.v.3) Sa esha etismin mandale purushastasya bhurita shirah; ekam shirah, ekametadaksharam; bhava iti baahuh, dvau ete akshare; swar iti pratishthaa; dve pratishthe dve ete akshare; tasyopanishad ahar iti; hanti paapmaanam jahaati cha, ya evam Veda/

In respect of this Individual Self whose eye is coordinated with the Solar orbit -which essentially is Satya the Truth-there are three significant syllables that are relevant viz. 'Bhuur' or the head of the Self concerned; 'Bhuvar' or two arms and 'Svar' the two feet; further more, there is a secret name called 'Ahar' derived from the root expression 'Haa' which means 'to destroy and spurn' the evil forces!

V.v.4) Yoyam dakshinekshan purushah, tasya bhuur iti shirah, ekam shirah, ekam etad aksharam; bhava iti baahuh; dvau baahu, dve ete akshare; swar iti pratishthaa; dve pratishthe, dve ete akshare; tasyopanishad aham iti; hanti paapmaanam jahaati cha ya evam Veda/

Similarly, of this Individual Being who has its physical right eye, 'Bhur' is his head, 'Bhuvar' his two arms, 'Swar' his feet and 'Aham' is his secret name who destroys evil!

Mind is the key indicator of Reality and Falsity as Yogis extol Mind and sift Truth from Untruth

V.vi.1) Manomayoyam purushah bhaah satyah tasmin antarhridaye yathaa vreehirvaa yavo vaa; sa esha sarvasyeshaanah; sarvasyaadhipatih, sarvamidam prashaasti yadidam kincha/ Iti shashtham Brahmanam/

Among the various body attachments of the Individual Self with distinct features, back-up Devatwas, functional specialisations and so on, Mind happens to be the outstanding body asset. The Mind is considered as the interiormost chamber of the heart and is likened to the inner grain of say rice or barley. Mind reveals every thing and in fact the Individual Self is identified with it and its brightness. It is considered by Yogins as the prime commander of the various other body parts. Mental stamina and stability are the cause and effect alike of meditation to the Supreme; indeed mind is Brahman and identical since 'one becomes precisely as one meditates upon the Almighty'!

Vidyut Brahma or lightnings flash darkness and highlight Paramatma

V.vii.1) Vidyud Brahma iti aahuh; vidaanaad vidyut, vidyati enam paapmaanah, ya enam veda , vidyud hi eva Brahma/ Iti Saptamam Brahmanam/

Satya Brahma or the Supreme Truth is also likened to flashes of Lightnings on the Sky! This indeed is because the Vidyut or Lightnings disperses darkness and makes one realise what is Ignorance and Knowledge and what is unawareness and consciousness or perception like! Lightnings flash dark clouds, just as virtue dispels evil. Thus Lightning is indeed like Paramatma Swarupa!

Vaak Brahma highlights speech signifying Vedas and Scriptures screaming loud about Truth / Untruth!

V.viii.1) Vaacham dhanumupaaseeta;tasyashchatvaarah stanaah; Swaahaakaro Vashatkaaro hantakaarah; tasyai dvau stanou Devaa upajeevanti- Swaahaakaaram cha Vashatkaaramcha Hantakaaram Manushyaah; Swadhaakaaram Pitarah; tasyaah Praanarushabhah, Mano Vatsah/ Ityashtamam Brahmanam/

Another facet of meditating Brahma is through 'Vaak' or Speech, meaning Vedas and Scriptures. This highly specialised means of praying to the Lord viz. Speech or Vedas is likened to a Cow. This most auspicious component of Dharma or Virtue and Justice embodied as a cow which possesses four teats of meditation akin to what calves suck are known as the sounds of Swaaha, Vashat, Hanta and Swadha!

Swaha and Vashat are the sounds signifying the oblations to Agni targetted to Devas; hanta is meant for human beings as the food for them, literally meaning; ‘ if required’; swadha denotes the sound of the utterance of the mantra used for offerings to Pirtu Devas / manes as Shraaddhiya Vasthus or offerings in Shraddha Karmas. In this context, speech is likened to a bull which indeed is the Vital Force or Praana, while calf is the mind which stimulates the flow of milk. In other words, one who meditates Brahman uses speech the Cow and mind as the calf and bull as the vital force!

Vaishwanara Agni Brahman declares his splendour clearly distinguishing Truth/Untruth

V.ix.1) Ayamagnir Vaishwaanaro yoyamantah purushe, yenedam annam pachyate yadidam adyate; tasyaisha ghosho bhavati yam etat karnaavapidhaaya shrunoti sa yadoskramishyan bhavati nainam ghosham shrunoti/

After identifying with the radiance of mind, then Vidyut or Lightning, and Speech signifying a cow and its means of meditation, now another medium of mediation is Agni and the personification within it as a Being viz. Vishvaanara, since Shruti states ‘Ayamagni Vaishvaanara’; indeed this Agni is well outside the Purusha or a Human and far before the human body! It digests food consumed by the person and the heat of his stomach. As the fire digests the food, it emits sound stopped by the ears with one’s fingers. Thus one should meditate upon the Agni as Vaishwanara or Viraja. Indeed however, when a Being leaves the body, he or she no further hears the sound since the ‘bhokta’ or the Consumer in the body loses his sense of hearing.)

Vaayu Brahma or Prana demonstrates its prowess by its presence/absence and segregate Truth/ Untruth

V.x.1) Yadaa vai Purushosmaalokaat praiti, sa vaayum aagacchati; tasmai sa tatra vijiheete yathaa ratha chakrasya kham; tena sa urthvaa aakramate, sa Aadityam aagacchati; tasmai sa tatra vijheehite yathaa lambarasya kham; tena sa urthwa aakramante, sa chandramasam aagacchati, tasmai sa tatra vijihite yathaa dundubheh kham; tena sa urthwa aakramate; sa lokam aagachati ashokam ahimam; tasmin vasati shashvateeh samaah/

Indeed the objective and fruits of meditations is to attain Salvation! The human being who is constantly engaged in meditation is aware that once the Being has to necessarily reach the air and remain crosswise heading for the sky and that the body would be left behind and motionless! When the Self departs, the Vital Force makes an invisible exit hole that separates the body and its Self; this hole is akin to a chariot wheel and the Sukshma Rupa of the Self goes upwards towards the sky, reaches the Aditya Loka, the Lunar zone and finally reaches the world of Hiranyagarbha. That world is stated to be free from sorrows and tribulations. On reaching up there, there would be no sufferings and unfulfilled desires; indeed that is world of Hiranyagarbha where the self resides for several Kalpas!

Satyameva Jayate – Teachings from Ishopanishad

Involvement of Evil Forces blinds the brightness of Truth and the pace of recovery is slow to nil

III) Asuryaa naama te lokaa andhena tamasaa vritaah, Tamaste pretyaabhi gacchanti ye ke chaatmahano janaah/

How do the worlds of Devils get involved by blinding human beings in deep darkness! Indeed this is due to the ignorance caused by the severe play of body adjuncts of Pancha Karmendriyas of eyes, ears, skin, nose, and reproductive organs and the Pancha Jnaanendriyas viz. vision, hearing, touch, breathing and generation acts- all guided by the ‘Manas’ or Mind! These demonic and wicked influences tend to the hide the Reality of the Self and till such time the Panchendriyas are present in the body or till its termination! The nature of the Self is such that its consciousness is literally imprisoned from the sway of the Maya or hallucination or false sense of perception of the True Reality. Death and the pursuant trans - migration of the Self provide another opportunity for the enlightenment but alas, the influence of the Panchendriyas might in all probability would continue in the subsequent birth too! This being so, one would like to define what all this Self about any way! The experience of this ‘Antaratma’ or the Self and its self declared superiority asserts that it is free from decay, disease and death!

Unity of the Self and the Supreme is evident to body organs and senses in respect of the Self and the Universal Elements in reference to the Truth

IV) Anejadejkam manaso javeeyo nainaddevaa aapnyuvanpurvamarshat, taddhaavaonyaananatyeti tishthaat taasminnapo maatarishvaa dadhaat/

This Self is stationary and motionless yet the fastest as the known entity in the Universe is the mind only, since the body senses are unable to move faster than mind anyway. The Supreme too is identical to the Self or the Consciousness since mind has the comparable feature viz. Air and Space viz. ‘Maatarishvaa’ since it moves or ‘shvayati’ and ‘maatari’ sustains activity. The common features of the Self and the Supreme are the same viz. Unity which is the Reality or the Truth while duplication and duplicity are the Untruth! The truism of cause and effect too are common to the Self and the Supreme: to the Self the Jnaanendriyas are the causes and effects are the Karmendriyas where as in respect of the Universal context the Supreme is the Commander of the Five Elements, as indeed ‘ from the fear of the Supreme the wind blows as Taittiriya Upanishad (II.viii.1) states: Bheeshaah asmaat vaatah pavate, bheeshaadeti Suryah, bheeshasmaat dhaavati agnih cha Indra cha mrityu panchamah/ or it is out of fear of the Supreme that the Wind blows, Sun keeps his course, Agni and Indra too obey and the fifthly mrityu or death does his duty too!

V) Tadejati tannaijati taddoore tad vadantike, tad antarasya sarvasya tadyu sarvasyaisya baahyatah/

Both the Supreme and the Inner Self are stable yet on the move, near yet faroff, right within yet outside

In reference to Self as the entity, it moves or does not move; it is quite near and yet very far off; it is : Tat antah or right inside the body, organs and senses or Sarvasyah or it is omnipresent and all pervading. Both the Realities are unified and the one too many, none denying the reality of the other as the one is eternal while others are manifestations, being figments of the mind which is different from the sense of the other's eternal background! Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (III.iv.1) explains: 'Eshaa ta aatmaa sarvantarah yah pranena praaniti sa atma sarvantarah, katamaah Yajnyavalkya, sarvantarah/ yah praanena praaniti, sa ta aatmaa sarvantarah, ya udaanena udaaneeti sa aatmaa sarvaantarah'/ or the Self is within all; that which breathes through praana or the life force is within all; that which moves downwards through the Apana is the Self that is within all; that which pervades through the 'vyaana' is the Self that is within all; that which goes out through the Udaana is the Self is within all; Samana is the balancer or equaliser of the Air is within the Self. Now, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also asserts vide: IV.iv.13: Yasyaanuvittaah pratibuddha aatmaasin samdehye gahane prathishthaah, Sa Vishvakrit, sa ha sarasya kartaa tasya bhavanti, athetare dukkham evaapiyanti/ or the one who has realised the Innermost Self that had entered the most dangerous and inaccessible maze of body, its organs and its impulses that Paramatma himself made and that Paramatma is none other than the Self present in the bodies of all the Beings in the Creation! In other words, there needs to be introspection about the Self which Paramatma is all about! Indeed that is the Truth!

The Self has no hatred for others since the action-reaction syndrome does not affect it in the least and those Yogis when realise this Reality wonder where is the hatred and where is the love!

VI.) Yastu sarvaani bhutaani aatmaivaabhud vijaanatahtatra ko mohah kah shokah ekatvam anupashya -
tah, Sarvabhuteshu chaatmaanam tato na vijugupsate/

This Individual Self which is common in all the Beings in Creation is equally poised and placid within all and has no emotional impulse of hatred or liking since it is the same entity. Being conditioned by the same 'Panchendriyas' in the respective bodies, the mind of the various beings would naturally exhibit dissimilar actions and reactions as reflected by the cause and reaction syndrome yet the Self as such is totally immune from the same even while it remains as a mute evidence. Basically however the Self Consciousness is pure, untainted, and transparent! Bhagavad Gita in the Jnaana Yoga Six Adhyaaya 29-30 verses, Lord Krishna affirms:

Sarva bhutastamaatmaanam sarva bhutaani chaatmani, Ikshate yoga yuktatmaa sarvatra samadashanah/
Yo maam pashyati sarvatra sarvam cha mayi pashyati, Tasyaaham na pranashyaami sa cha me na
pranashyati/

Those Yogis and Siddhas realise me as countless manifestations of the Singular ME with 'Samyak Drishti' or Common Vision called Atma Drishti or Inward Vision! Such yogis who discover me in them as elsewhere are near to me as they are near to me too!

As there is 'tadaadmya' or absolute Identity, the Self and the Supreme ought to be the same, irrespective of the play of senses and thoughts that the body carries!

VII.) Yasminsarvaani sarvaani bhutaani atmaivaa bhud vijaanatah, Tarta ko mohah kah shoka ekatwamanupashyayatah/

In the vision of that person whose realisation that all the Beings are the very Self, then where is the sorrow and where is the fantasy or flight of imagination!

Sarvabhuta sthitam yo maam bhajatyekatva maasthitah, Sarvathaa vartamaanopi sa yogi mayivartate/ Gita V.31/

Once there is 'tadaatmya' or the Unity of the Self and the Supreme, then such an enlightened person attains the same position as Paramatma even if he moves about in his current existence, since : Nistraigunye pathi vicharitaam ko vividhih ko nishedhah/ In other words he has no barriers of movement nor of features!

Paramatma is pervasive, pure, unborn, self existent, body less, and blemishless who allotted duties to all!

VIII) Sah paryagaat shukram akaayam avranam asnaaviram shuddham apaapaviddham, kavirmaneeshi paribhuh swayambhuh yaathaatyatorthaan vyadadhaacchaashvateebhyas samaabhyah/

The Self is omnipresent like Space, is symbolic of Purity, without a subtle body, 'asnaaviram' or without sinews or tendons, 'shuddham' or taintless, 'apaapaviddham' or devoid of sins and blemishes, and 'kavih' or the omniscient! Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (III.viii.10 -11) explained that Absolute Power was never visioned but indeed the faculty of vision itself! It was never heard but heard but the personification of hearing itself; it was never known for thinking but the Supreme Thinker and manifestation of thought itself; likewise the knower and Seat of Knowledge and Intellect! This Super Power is like the unmanifested ether and is all pervading as the Ultimate and Unknown! This Absolute Power is never seen as it is neither a sense object but the supreme vision itself! It is never heard as it is not an object of hearing but is the Unique Thinker and personification of Thought and Intellect by itself. It is by this Absolute Power that the unmanifested ether is permeated all over. Brahman or that Supreme Energy is indeed the direct and instantaneous Self within all the species and is beyond and afar the several attributes of hunger, thirst, desire, lust, anguish and envy. That Reality is the Ultimate Goal and the Truth of Truth

and the Unique! Now, as Hiranyagarbha's own body was utilised as the Sacrifice, Pajapati's 'Ahamasmi' or I am Myself manifested Purusha and Prakriti. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (I.iv.17) then explains that the wife and son performed virtuous deeds and rites dutifully, created the Individual Self, praana, mind, vision, hearing capacity viz. the Panchendriyas and functions ; Devas, and Deva Tulya ganas, human and various beings and further detailing Naama- Rupa- Karma or Name-Form- Work of the innumerable nucleuses or their cores as further explained in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad vide I.vi.1. Besides allotting duties and eternal years of life span of Gods elsewhere and within the respective bodies, the Immutable also created Vidya and Avidya or Knowledge or Awareness of the Almighty and of Ignorance besides Karma of either Good or bad natures; it is stated that the world of Gods would be available through Vidya and those who have no access to Vidya follow the Southern Path after death explains Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (I.v.16) as follows: There are three worlds that are attainable by Scriptures and these are the world of human beings, Pitru loka and Deva Loka. Good Karma arising out of Vidya or Awareness would take the Soul after death by 'Deva Yaana' or the Northern Path!

SHRI KAMAKSHI VILASA

Shri Maha Tripura Sundaryai Nanamah, Shri Devi Kamashyai Namah

Ayodhyaa Mathuraa Maayaa Kashi Kaanchi hyavantika

Puri Dwaravati chaiva Saptaitaah Mokshadaayikaah/

Prathamopaadhyaya-Devi Kamakshi as Tripura Dhaarini

As a part of Markandeya Purana's Vidya Khanda, King Suratha* prostrated before Maharshi Markandeya and requested him to enlighten him about the Secret and hitherto undisclosed details of 'Peetha Trayas'. The Maharshi explained that in the entire Bhu Mandala spread over fifty crore yojanas, there indeed were sixty four thousand 'Maha Peethaas' (Abodes) of Devi of which sixty Peethas were Superior; fifty of these were the selected ones but twenty four ones were further selected; among these closely selected Peethaas were eighteen in number but finally Three of the Outstanding Peethaas were **Kamaraja Peetha** which was also known as 'Vaakbhava Kutaa' or of Vaakbhava Beeja -*Aim*, which was worshipped by Bhagavan Hayagriva; the second one was called **Jaalandhara Peetha** which was Madhya Kutaa or of Manmadha Beeja-*Kleem*, which was worshipped by Bhrigu Maharshi; this was called as 'Jwala Mukhi Kshetra'[some call it as the Jwala Mukhi Temple in the Area of Mannur near Ongole in Andhra Pradesh and some others opine that this is in Assam as the Temple of the same name]; the third one was called **Odyana Peetha** known as the Shakti Kutaa of the Shakti Beeja-*Souh*, which was worshipped by Veda Vyasa Maharshi in Kamarupa Region [stated to be in Assam].

Of these Three Outstanding Peethaas called the Tri Peethas, the Kamaraja Peetha is stated to be in **Kanchipura** in Dakshina Bharat situated near the Sea towards East and this Samudra was blessed that there were no restrictions of bathing in it irrespective of day and night and would be eligible for 'Vishnu Pada Prapti'. To the Nirruti (South West) of the Eastern Sea within a sixty yojana distance was a Sacred River called River *Dakshimna Pinakini* ; the Shiva Dhanush or Shiva's Bow which was lying on Bhumi (Ground) was lifted by Bhrigu Maharshi and as he lifted it up there sprang a River named by the Maharshi as Pinakini and blessed the River that whosoever bathed in it would be freed from all his/her sins and would attain Vishnu Loka. To the Vayavya (North West) of the Eastern Sea was situated within a seven Yojana distance, a Sanctified *Shilahrada* or a Rocky Water Body where Lord Hanuman washed

‘Sanjeevini Oushadhi’ (Indigenous Medicine) and enabled Lord Lakshmana to get revived in the latter’s battle with Indrajit the son of the Ramayana Epic’s King Ravana; this Tirtha was blessed to any person bathing in the Holy Water would live long with Sainly Stance and then achieve Vishnu Loka. To the Ishana (North East) of the Eastern Side of the Shilaahrada was situated *Swami Pushkarini Tirtha* which indeed was River Viraja; in the days of yore Bhagavan Narayana desired to wed Padmavati and on assuming the Form of a Siddha Muni directed each of his disciples to bring in the waters of various Tirthas which was basically converted as Viraja River, eventually named as Swami Pushkarinki; those who would bathe in this consecrated Tirtha would enjoy fulfillment of life and achieve Vishnu Loka eventually. To the west of the Eastern Sea -----

*King Suratha was defeated by enemies and took refuge in the Ashram of Sage Sumedha and the Sage taught the Shodashaashari Mantra of Devi Chamundi; a Vaishya named Samadhi who was disenchanted with his family also approached the Sage and was taught the Traykshari Mantra of Devi; both the King and the Vaishya did severe Tapas and Devi gave boons to King to regain his Kingdom and Vaishya who opted for Salvation secured his wish. (Source: Devi Bhagavata)

was Dundeera Mandala ruled by the virtuous King Dundeera and region was the famed *Maha Balipuram* was originally constructed Bali Chakravarti who made severe Tapas to Parameshwara and secured great affluence and fortune before defeating Devas. To Nirruti the South West of Maha Bali Pura was *Devaki Pura* where King Ugrasena worshipped Hara Deva and sighted a maiden named Devaki and thus the Place was known by that name. Brahma Deva created a Place called *Virinchi pura* for the sake of Apsara Rambha to the Vayavya (North West) of Devaki pura where Rambha worshipped Mahesha and was blessed by the latter to get closer to Indra. To the Ishanya (North East) of Virinchi pura was a Place called *Naagahala* where Maha Deva devoured ‘Haalahala’ during the course of Deva-Danavas’ churning of ‘Ksheeraabdhhi’ to obtain Amrita (nectar); not far from this Area was *Tapovana* where Devi Parvati meditated for long and got hallowed. To the West of Mahabalipura were *Triveni Sangama pura* which yielded the benefit of bathing in Triveni Sangama at Prayaga and *Vyaaghra Vana* where Parama Shiva performed Shiva Tandava (Cosmic Dance) at the request of Maharshi Vyaghra Paada who meditated and pleased Shiva.

Almost of walking distance of Vyaghra Vana was *Ksheeraabdhhi Nagar* where Narayana obliged a Bhakta with the vision of Bhagavan’s lying posture on the Ocean of Milk. Again not distant from Ksheeraabhi Nagari was *Nandi Gangaapura* where Maha Deva showed his kindness to let a Chandala bathe in Ganga which emerged through a ‘Vrishabha Mukha’ or the mouth of bull and the Chandala was blessed to attain Kailasha. In the midst of a rectangular around Nandiganga pura was a Place called *Brahma Shaala* where Brahma performed Ashwamedha Yagna. Hardly one yojana away from Triveni Sangamapura was the Abode of *Paanchaalikaa Durga* which was a Hari Kshetra and hardly away from there was *Kanyakeswara* a Shankara Kshetra. *Surya Pushkarini* was the Sacred Tirtha (Sarovara) and right on the banks of the Tirtha was *Sweta Vishnu* Temple; the other side of the Tirtha called *Chandra Pushkarini* were the abodes of *Kshetraangi Durga* and *Paanchaalika Durga*.

Such were the hallowed environs of **Kanchi Kshetra** where Bhagavan Vishnu stayed and Bhagavan Shiva too resided there itself. However Maha Shakti’s prominence was predominant: *Maha Shakti Prabhaavaadhyam Shakti praadhaanya Vaibhavaat, Vinaasha rahitam Kshetram Tasmaatsatya*

vrataahvayam/ (As Shakti's influence was of primacy, this Kshetra was indestructible and as such was of Eternal Truth; hence it was replete with Satya Vrata.) The Kshetra was full of Temples put up over River and hills and thus designated as 'Bhaskara Sanjnaka' or representative of Surya Deva; it was also representative of tall bilwa trees and hence called 'Daijasa Sanjnaka' or representative of Celestial Beings.

Shiva Shaktyaatmikam Kshetram tathaa Hari Haraatmikam, Yaatma Shaktirmaha Mayaa saa Mayaa Swagunairdwidhaa/ Vishnu Shakti Bhaavaabhyaam Nirgunaa hyekadhaa cha saa, Tatra pravartatey Devee Sagunaa Trividhaatmikaa/ Tasmaatsaa Mahaa Khsetrey Sunya Streepumsa bhedatah, Trividhaatmakarupaadhyam Kshetram Shaaktaahvayam varam/ (This Kshetra is 'Shiva Shaktyaatmika' or of the Soul of Shiva Shakti. It was also 'Hari Haraatmika' or of Vishnu and Shiva Swarupas and of Maha Maya Swarupa or the Parama Shakti basically being Eka Rupa or of Unique / Singular Form who is Nirguna or Featureless yet of Sagunatmika or of the Three Features of Satva-Rajo-Tamo Gunas. The Parama Swarupa was of Two Forms of Vishnu and Shakti and also of Shiva-Keshava-Shakti Rupa devoid of Male-Female distinction).

Thus Kanchi Kshetra was Trividhaatmaka or of Three Rupas surrounded by 'Sadhujanaas' or of the Virtuous. Indeed, this was the unique Place on Earth where Kailasa, Vaikuntha and Shripura were visioned simultaneously. Its trees were like 'Kalpa Tarus' fulfilling wishes; its water was like of Ganges; human beings were like Devas; Stones were like Shiva-Keshavas; its light was purifying and winds were sin-destroyers and Siddhas and Rishis were all 'Moksha gaamis' or steadily desirous of and targetting for Moksha. Maharshis had thus designated the entire Dundeera Mandala as Kanchi Mandala. The Sacred Water Body 'Ksheeroshini' passed through the Mandala; it was firmly believed that this Water Body was in the Form of 'Sudha' or nectar flowing from Mother Lalitaa Parameswari's breasts in Krita Yuga, like Ksheera Vahini in Treta Yuga, like ghee in Dwapara Yuga and Sweet and Sacred Water Flow in Kali Yuga bestowing Atma Jnaana, eradicating the sorrows of old age and untimely deaths besides Moksha after life.

Maharshi Markandeya thus initiated the description of Kanchi Kshetra to King Suratha and asked him to concentrate on his further narration. In the remote past, Brahma realised that Skanda Kumara attained brilliance and glory due to his drinking of Maha Devi's milk and with the aid of Maha Mantra instructed by Maheshwara performed sincere Tapas and Dhyana for hundred years; Paraa Devi was pleased and commanded Ksheera Devi to materialise a Flow of Milk and Brahma was delighted to drink plentiful to his heart's contentment with four of his faces and the eternal flow of milk assumed the Form of a River of Milk and flowed downward on the Southern side of Bharat as four rivulets named Samaagamana Vrittha, Baahu, Kundalini and Gada and having travelled via Kanchi terminated into the Eastern Sea. Brahma then provided a boon that whoever bathed in the Ksheera Nadi would gain the memory of previous births and of 'Satya Jnaana' or of the Knowledge of Truth to enable them to accomplish Kaivalya. Countless human beings took advantage of Brahma's boons and attained Salvation. In fact, one Vipra who in his earlier lives perpetrated several serious sins became a frog and with the awareness of the past life having been devoured by a snake in the previous life, attained Salvation due to its bathing in the Sacred Rivulet Kundalini.

Trirupa Dharini Kamakshi: Once Brahma decided to perform Tapasya and Yagna to Devi Kamakshi to secure a boon of reviving the dead back to life as also to prevent death to those who lived and entered a hole for privacy in the Temple in Kanchipura; in order to avoid disturbance as also to safeguard the

Place of his worship where he materialised two Daityas viz. Madhu and Kaitabha from Narayana's ears. After some time Devi Kamakshi got annoyed with the behaviour of Daityas and assuming the Form of Narayana nipped their heads. On learning of this development, Brahma got enraged and suspected Vishnu to have killed Mathu-Kaitabhas. Vishnu denied his involvement of the murders of Madhu-Kaitabhas and pointed his fingers at Rudra. Brahma approached Rudra with great anger and the latter looked to release Pashupatastra at Brahma but meanwhile Rudra disappeared and Hari stood there instead! Brahma got utterly confused and left the place in awe.

Paschat Kaanchi Maha Kshetry Twayvakta Jyotiraamakah, Sa Shiva Shankarashambhu Mahapralayakey Vibhuh/ Chuta beejaakrutirbhutwaa Babhaavekaamra sanjnayaa, Tathaiva Bhagavan Vishnurtejasaa vyaktavigraha/ Brahmaashwa medhayaagnou babhou Varada ityapi, Tasmaadvishnu Mahaadevou taa Vibhou Shakti revahi/ Saa Shaktitraya Kaamaakshi trividhaa tatra saa Paraa, Tasyaa Vilaasatrividhaa Hari Shakteesha bhedatah/

Then there was an Avyakta Jyoti Swarupa of Shiva assuming 'Chuta Beejaakriti' or of the Form of Mango seed with the Sanjna (Symbol) of **Ekaamra**; and Vishnu of Avyakta Rupa had manifested himself with the Sanjna of **Varada** from the Agni of the Ashwamedha Yagna performed by Brahma. Thus Shiva and Keshava both were of Shakti Swarupa and not different, affirmed Maharshi Markandeya to King Surata. Hence that Parashakti in Kancheepura was Ekaamranad ha, Varada Raja and Kamakshi as the Trirupa Dharini.

Whosoever reads or hears about the Magnificence of Devi Kamakshi and her Trirupa Shakti would fulfill their desires; 'Mushtimaatra' or fistful Anna Daanam in Kanchi Kamakshi Pura would equate Kuru Kshetra 'Tulaadaanaphalam'!

Dwiteeyadhyaaya-Kanchipura as Bhuloka Vaikuntha

Vapaaparimalollaasa Vaasitaadhara Pallavam, Mukham Varada Raajasya Mugdhasmitamupaamhe! (I implore Shri Va rada Raja Swami's charming and petite smiling face which is like the tender and ever-fragrant flower bud; so described Markandeya to King Suratha.)

In Kanchipura, there was Kshetraangi Durga; to her Agneya was Purandeswara Swami and to his South was Panchali Durga. A Simhalaya was built to Panchali Durga which again was stationed the aforementioned Kshetraangi Durga. In the Center of this Square was shining the idol of **Varadaraja Hari**. Any charity performed in this Kshetra was stated to get multiplied by a crore and was thus acclaimed as Punya Koti Kshetra. To the Agneya of the Kshetra was Vighneswara whom Brahma worshipped before he performed Vaajapeya Yagna to ward off obstacles. There was also Kartikeya to the east of Ganesha whom Brahma worshipped before performing an Ashwamedha Yagna. Brahma also worshipped Panchalika Durga to Kartikeya's Southern side as also Kshetraangika Durga as the latter killed Hayasura before executing Hayamedha Yagna. To the south of Kshetraangika was Kambudharini Durga who was worshipped by Bhagavan Vishnu and secured his Shankhu or conchshell. Baanaambika Durga resided in the Village of that name to Kambudharini's 'Agneya Disha' and to her Southern side was Swayambhu Koteshwara Shiva whom Brahma worshipped; Brahma also worshipped to Manikantheshwara in whose honour Brahma did an Ashwamedha Yagna. To the Ishana of Manikantheshwara was Satyanadheshwara who bestowed the boon of thousand eyes to Lord Indra. A Digambara Vishnu in a lying posture was positioned in the Northern direction of Satyanadheshwara and the Digambara Hari destroyed the ego of Devi Vani. A Guha Simha Vishnu resided to the Agneya of Digambara and to the Nirruti of Guha Simha Hari was Ashta Bhuja Vishnu who fell down Maya Kali and sat on her head. Vidyakunda naama Hari was the Southern Resident of Ashtabhuj Vishnu and this Hari killed Kapalika the practitioner of Evil Mantras. To the North of Vidyakunda Hari was Deepaadhaara Janardana who terminated Maya Vahni and held a 'Deepa' by his hand. That Vidyakunda showed to the King Tundeera the Swarupa of Vaikuntha Hari who was in the direction of Ishanya. Lord Janardana was the resident of Vaikuntha Hari's

Ishanya and Janardana tore the stomach of a daitya and drank his blood thus converting his body blood red. To this blood red Janardana Bhudevi worshipped with flowers and secured Chaturbhuj Vishnu as her husband. *There were two Lizards of Gold and Silver hung on a ceiling girder to the East of Chaturbhuj Vishnu and these Lizards were two Brahmanas cursed by Indra!* To the Southern side of these Lizards were twenty four steps which were originally built by Vishwakarma the Builder of Devas for use at Shri Shaila Kshetra. To the western side of the Steps Devi Lakshmi was wedded to Hari and occupied Vishnu's 'Ardhaasana'. There was a 'Punya Koti Sangjnika Vimana' gifted by Mahendra to Vishnu to the Ishanya of Lakshmi Devi and to the Vayavya of the Vimana was Adishesha Sarovara and whosoever took bath there, especially on Saturdays, and prayed there would secure 'Kaveri Snaana Phala'. Not far from there was Bhaktodaya Tirtha in which bathing on Ekadashis would yield Ksheerabधि Snaana phala; Pourandara Tirtha Snaana on Wednesdays provided Yamuna Snaana phala; similarly Panchalaka Durga Tirtha Snaana during Shravana Nakshatra provided Victory in all deeds as Devi Kalika gave Sudarshana chakra gave Sudarshana Chakra to Vishnu and Dhanishtha Nakshatra Snaana in the same Tirtha would grant Viraja Nadin Snaana. In all in the Varadaraja Hari Kshetra, there were the Abodes of one Vighneshwara, one Shanmukha, Three Residences of Shivas, Eight of Janardana, their Five Mudras and five of Tirthas.

The Agneya direction of Kanchipura was acclaimed as *Bhuloka Vaikuntha* and all the Residents of the Kshetra were virtually 'Vaikuntha Vaasis'. This Vaikuntha had Five Names of Fame viz. Hari Kshetra, Punya Koti, Vaikuntha, Hasti Shaila and 'Tri Srotas'. Of this Hallowed Land of Hari was associated with certain Legends of Hari Bhaktas: There was a Brahmana named **Gargi** who was of 'Sindhu Tira' of Vasishtha Gotra, a follower of Rig Veda and a Resident of Baanakunda Nagara, who was an incorrigible sinner with all blemishes like Para Daara, Paraanna Bhokta, and Duraachaara Paraayana ie. fond of other's wives, others' food and other's 'Aacharas' / or Traditions. Once the Brahmana spent a night on an Amalaaki / Amla or Goosebury Tree on a Chaitra Month and reaped plenty of Goosebury fruits for his family; when a Brahmana traveller on way happened to reach the same Amlaka Tree and requested Gargi to give him a few Amla fruits, he readily gave the fruits which quenched the Brahmana's thirst; Gargi also directed the Brahmana as to how to reach a water pond nearby. Gargi who belonged to the Baanakunda Nagari died eventually and promptly Yama dutas claimed Gargi to take him away to Narakas. But Vishnu's followers made a counter claim saying that firstly Gargi belonged to Hari Kshetra and that *prima facie*, he should reach Vaikuntha; what was more Gargi gave away plenty of goosebury fruits to a Traveller Brahmana and saved the latter from considerable thirst and also showed him the way to a water body. On both these counts Gargi should attain Swarga! When Dharma Raja approached Vishnu, the latter explained that Gargi was a confirmed sinner through out his life, but he was a Brahmana, Vishnu Bhakta, and saved the life of the Traveller and as such he deserved Vishnu Loka since fire would burn off the material that white ants destroyed too. Indeed, whosoever reads or hears the Legend of Gargi would realise the significance of 'Hari Kshera Nivasa'!

Triteeyodhyaaya-Hasti Shaila Mahima

Markandeya Maharshi described the **Significance of Hasti Shaila** to King Suratha : Hasti Shaila was an ornament of Hari Kshetra and was famed among the Punya Koti Kshetras of Bharata where Mahendra became an Elephant as a victim of Devi Saraswati's 'shaapa'(Curse). At one stage, Saraswati assumed self-pride and arrogance that she was the Goddess of Learning in the whole Universe. Similarly, Devi Lakshmi felt egoistic that she was the root-cause of Wealth and Prosperity par excellence. Both Saraswati and Lakshmi entered into arguments claiming mutual seniority of status and importance and reached Mahendra to decide. Indra replied that Lakshmi was indeed superior since not only because he was the consort of Narayana but also because she was the Root Cause of 'Bhoga Bhagyas' or of Wealth and Fulfillment and moreover she was the mother-in-law of Saraswati. On hearing this Saraswati got furious and became highly critical of Mahendra as characterless as 'Ahalyaachaara' or the Spoiler of Ahalya Devi, arrogant, partial-minded and power monger and as such cursed him to turn out to be an elephant. Devi

Lakshmi was ever-merciful and understanding ; she assuaged his hurt feelings with the curse and stated that none could cross the lines of Fate or 'karma praarabdha'. She counselled Indra that on descending from Swarga to Bhuloka he should as an Elephant serve and worship at Simhachala Kshetra near Dandakaaranya to worship Nrisimha Deva as also commend Prahlada; seek from Prahlada the 'Naarasimhaanishtubha Maha Mantra' to qualify for entry into Hari Kshetra in Kanchipura and meditate the compassionate Hari. Indra followed the precise advice of Maha Lakshmi; *Samgruhya Mantraraajaanam Naarasimha mahamanum, Tadeka Dhyaanatasshakra Divya Jnaanamprajaayatey/ Tadjnaana kushalatwam hi Harikshetra praveshadam, Avashaaccha bhavetatra Mantramadhaanumuttamam/* (After securing the Maha Mantra, Indra entered Hari Kshetra and performed concentrated Dhyana on a mountain) Then Narakesari witnessed Indra in the Form of an Elephant, pierced his sharp nails through its thick skin , broke into his heart with his Yoga Shakti by assuming a 'Bimbaakaara' when Indra was engrossed in deep Dhyana. While seeing the Bimba, Indra was surprised to see two Brahmana Boys on the mountain. Indra asked as to who they were; they replied that they were the sons of Shringabheri Muni of Shandilya Gotra, that they were named Hema and Shukla, that their Guru was Gautama Maharshi who instructed them to fetch water from Bhadra River, that while bringing the pots of the water they kept the pots down and went up a tree to cut 'Samidhas'(twigs), that a lizard fell in the pot of water and that one Yaksha cursed the boys to become lizards. The lizards fell on the back of the Elephant while they were cutting the twigs and that elephant was none other than Indra! The boys then said that per chance, they as lizards fell on the back of the Elephant who entered Hari Kshetra. Indra who too got relieved of the Saraswati Shaapa touched the lizards who became Brahmana boys again and thanked Indra profusely. Indra in turn commended the Hasti Shaila as the most Sacred Mountain and blessed it: *Mudaa Shailaaya Devendro Dattavaanvaramutthamam, Ekaadashyamahoraatram Vishnossankeertanena cha/ Yatphalam Tatphalam Nrinaam Hasti Shailasya Darshanaat, Iti datwaa Varam Shakro Gatasswabhavanam Mudaa/* (Those 'Maanas' who visit the Hasta Giri and worship it day and night on Ekadashaas by fasting and singing 'Harinaama' would indeed reap memorable fruits).

One instance of the Experience of **Ganu Brahmana** would suffice to amplify the significance of Hasti Giri told Markandeya Maharshi to King Suratha: There was a Brahmana named Ganu of Bhardwajasa Gotra and an Expert in Shukla Yajurveda living on the banks of River Sarayu; he was also an adept in Dhanurveda or a Dhanur Vidya or the Art of Archery! But this Brahmana misused his expertise in Archery and cheated the tourists and travellers by frightening them and earning enormous money. On learning of the dirty ways of Ganu Brahmana as a menace to the travellers, one strong and valiant hero overpowered the Brahmana, tied him up, shaved his head, insulted him and threw him in a gutter. Ganu Brahmana was put to shame and while travelling for some time reached Kanchi Kshetra providentially and went up the Hasti Giri and out of exhaustion collapsed and died. Surprisingly, 'Vishnu Dutaas' were waiting Ganu Brahmana to lift him to by Vimana to Vishnu Loka! Maharshi Markandeya assured that whoever would read out or hear the account of 'Kari Giri Darshana' should be rewarded with Hasti Shaila Darshana Phala!

Chaturdhyaya- The Splendour of Varadaraja Swami

Sincerely greeting that Paramatma acclaimed as **Varada Raja Swami** , Maharshi Markandeya revealed the Glories of that Jagatsrashta who appeared in Kanchipura following the successful conclusion of the famed Ashwamedha Yagna executed by the Chaturmukha Brahma. *Atha tatra Nripa Shreshtha Hari Kshetra dharaataley ta Vaarana Shailasya shringey Devaadhiraajakah/ Vartatey Varadastatra Jaganmohana Vighraha, Shankha Chakra gadaabheetirdadhaanassyaamalaa krtih/ Sarva bhushaa bhushitaango Neela maanikya sundarah, Divya Padmadalodbhaasinayana dwaya shobhitah/ Shri Vatsa Shri Dharashyashriman Shringaara rasa shevadhih, Sachaamararamaa bhubhyaam Savya dakshinayoryutah/ Padmanaabho Ratna garbhah Kiriti Kundaloojjwalah, Punya kotathyaam nivaasena Punyakoti Padaanvitah/ Abheeshta Varado Vishnuh Pura Padmaasanaaya cha, Srishti danda pradaataa*

cha Sarjana hetavey/ Sadaham Sampravakshyaami Puraavrittam Charitrakam, Tasya Shrivana maatrena Sarva Paapaih pramuchyatey/ (Shri Varada Raja Swami excelled himself in the Hari Kshetra on the Hasti Shaila Shikhira bestowing desired boons to humanity as Devadhi Deva, ‘Trijaganmohanaakaara’ or he who mesmerised Trilokaas with his strikingly charismatic Form, as the Holder of Shanhka-Chakra-Gadaabhaya mudra, with his Indra Nila/ Blue Sapphire coloured Body, with lustrous Lotus Eyes, ornamented with a wide ranging variety of jewellery, adorned with Kaustubha Mani on his chest, hand fanned for mild coolness by Ramaa and Bhumi Devis, as the Epitome of Shingara Rasa or Romantic Classical Love, wearing a Nine Gem studded Golden Head- gear of brilliance, earlobes decked with Mani Kundalas, and in all as an exotic and enchanting Figure ‘par excellence’! He was the Cause of Creation and Extermination. Indeed hearing about his splendours itself would destroy one’s sins and blemishes!).

As in the previous Adhyaaya, Lakshmi and Saraswati asked Brahma to give his honest opinion as to the superiority between them and almost immediately Brahma favoured Lakshmi Devi. Saraswati was highly disappointed and even annoyed with Brahma and took away the ‘danda’ or an Insignia that Vishnu once gave to her which was the power of Brahma enabling the latter to undertake Srishti or Creation of ‘Charaachara Jagat’ or of the Moveable and Immovable Beings. Thus the action of Brahma to create was disabled. Brahma did not wish to entreat Saraswati to return the Srishti Danda but left for Himalayas to perform penance to Vishnu to request for an Emblem with Vishnu Amsha to Create instead of a Saraswati-oriented Crest. Vishnu was pleased with Brahma’s Tapas and directed Brahma to perform hundred Ashwamedha Yagnas. Brahma then decided that instead of performing hundred such Yagnas it would be sufficient to execute one Yagna at the Hari Kshetra and asked Vishwakarma the Architect cum Builder of Devas to construct a huge Yagna Shaala right opposite the Idol of Narasimha; he discarded Saraswati as his partner at the Yagna but preferred Buddhi Devi as his ‘Yagna Patni’ to share the duties of a wife as prescribed. Brahma invited Devas, Devarshis like Narada, besides Gandharva-Yaksha- Kinnara- Apsara; Siddha- Saadhya-Muniganaas and decided to perform a Year- long Yagna; he worshipped Ganeshwara first to facilitate the Yagna without obstacles and then worshipped Yoga Narasimha Swami and initiated the Yagna with formal Mantras by appointing Kumara Swami as Adhavarvu, Maheswara as Udagaata, Varuna as Prastota, Yama Dharma Raja as Hota and Indra who performed hundred such Yagnas in the past as the Yagna Brahma. Since Brahma did not invite Saraswati to participate, she was furious and created powerful flames with her Maya Shakti with a view to destroy the Yagna but the Saviour of the Hari Kshetra viz. Vishnu arrested the Maya Shakti’s both the hands and disabled her. Saraswati took it as a challenge and released Kapalika Shakti but Vishnu in the Form of Nara Simha destroyed the Shakti. Enraged by her discomfiture, Devi Saraswati released ‘Daithyaastra’ but Daityaari Narayana made the Astra futile. Vagdevi then created ‘Karaala Vadana Kalika’ and instructed the Maha Shakti to demolish the Yagna but Vishnu assumed an Eight-Hand Swarupa and having suppressed the Shakti sat firm on her shoulders. Finally with all her powers being overcome, Saraswati was humiliated and swooned out of anger and frustration and took the Form of ‘Pralaya Swarupi’ called Vegavati River with disastrous speed from Brahmaloaka down to Earth heading towards the Hari Shaila. Vishnu sensed the impending danger and decided to resort to her ‘maanabhanga’ or assault her physically; having become nude he stood before the lightning flash of gushing waters and like a Huge Log lied across against the flow. Saraswati having visioned Narayana’s nudity was thus put to shame and without being able to face him entered a ‘Bhu bila’ or a big fissure of Earth and escaped. Then the Yagna commenced without any hindrance; the Yagna Pashu or the Sacrificial Horse was let loose and returned invincible and at the successful completion of the year long Yagna, the ‘Purnaahuti’ or the Ultimate Offering to Agni as the climactic Homa of Cow’s ghee was accomplished and Brahma visioned a Massive Flood of Illumination on the Eastern Sky and offered wide and palmful of concentrated homage to that Spendour. That was the most awaited Moment of Sweta Varaha Kalpa’s Vaivasva Manvantara- Krita Yuga- Nrisimha Bhagavatmika Samvatsara- Vaishakha -Shukla Paksha- Chaturdashi’s Hasta Nakshatra Suryodaya when Devadhi Deva the Supreme Lord of the Universe manifested himself from the Yagna Homaagni’ as **Varada Raja Swami** and handed over the Insignia of Srishti to Brahma Deva. The latter

went into raptures and placed the Insignia on his chest with tears of joy and got non-plussed momentarily. After recovering from the pleasant shock, Brahma Deva installed Bhagavan on the Hasti Shaila on a 'Suvarna Simhasana' or a Golden Throne in the presence of Devas and other Celestial Beings and Maharshis; in order to cool down the charged and excited atmosphere as also to supposedly quench the thirst of Narayana who was just manifested from Agni, Brahma performed 'Abhisheka Snaana' to Varadaraja with potful thousands of Kamadhenu's ghee with chantings of Sacred Veda Mantras and offered 'Shodashopacharaas' or the traditional Sixteen Services such as Aasana- Vastra-Yagnopaveeta-Gandha-Dhupa- Deepa-Pushpa- Phala-Naivedya- Tambula-Mantra Pushpa-Sangeeta-Veda Pathana-Tambula-Chhatra-Chaamaraas. The formal Pujas was followed by bhojanas (Hearty Meals) served to Special Invitees with Bakshya- Bhojya-Lehya- Chokshya-Paneenias to all concerned in the Maha Yagna. Also Anna Santarpana or Free Meals were organised to the entire citizens of Kanchipura. Vishwakarma made a 'Pratibimba Swarupa' or Replica of 'Aalaya'; and 'Nagara' Pradakshinas or Temple wise and Nagari wise Pradakshinaas or circumambulations were done on Elephant-back; in fact daily worships, Bhojanas and 'Gajotsavas' were also organised eversince. Pleased by all these arrangements, Varada Swami addressed 'Brahmaadidevaas' and Munis : *Yathaaaham Virajaa teerey mama Vaikuntha pattaney, Jagadvyaapana sheelaavaad Vishnurityabhidhaayutah/ Prasiddho nivasaamyatra tathaa Kaanchi-purottamey, Harikshetram samaashritya Sarvaabheeshta pradaanatah/ Varadaabhidhayaa khyaato nivasaami nirantaram, Sarvey bhavanto madbhaktaassada maddarshaney rataah/ Sarvadaattraiva tishthantu Vaikunthaadati paavaney, Varshey Varshey Meshamaasi mama Janmadiney Shubhey/ Ghrithadhaaraa sahasraabhishechanam mama pujanam, Utsavamcha prakurut Viprabhojana purvakam/*

(My Bhaktaas! Just as I had settled in Vaikuntha on the banks of River Viraja and got spread all over the Universe as Vishnu, I will now reside in the Hari Kshetra of Kancheepura; hence those desirous of visioning me could do so with my name as Varada or he who would be the Bestower. In fact I will stay here for good thus making Hari Kshetra as significant as Vaikuntha if not even better! You may therefore even reside at this Kshetra. Every year on my birthday during Mesha month you should all therefore perform 'Goghritha dhaaraa sahasra -abhishekaa' or thousand Abhishakaas of Cow Ghee (bathing) of my Murti and celebrate this day as a Festival and of 'Brahmana Bhojana.) Then Brahma Deva addressed all the Invitees of the Yagna to follow the instruction of Varadaraja Swami and assured that those who would participate in the Festival on the lines as instructed would secure 'Maha Phala'.

Maharshi Markandeya narrated to King Suratha one telling instance about a devotee who actually experienced this kind of Maha Phala : In the past, one Vaadaadhyayi Vipra named Bhanuvarna of Gokula on the banks of River Yamuna visited Kanchipura and happened to perform 'Ghrithaabhisheka' most coincidentally on the 'Janma dina' of Varadaraja Swami at the Hari Kshetra and on return to Gokula after some time passed away; Bhanu varna was being flown to Swarloka by Devaganaas to honour him with the status of Indra but 'Haridootaas' intercepted his Soul and took it away to the Everlasting Vishnupada; such indeed was the graceful gesture of Varadaraja Swami! Whoever recites the above account of Varadaraja Swami would certainly secure Varadaraja Darshnana, as assured by Maharshi Markandeya.

Panchamaadhyaya-Vegavati Prabhaava

Markandeya Maharshi greeted Devi Saraswati who was frustrated and as Vegavati merged with River Payoshni but having departed from the latter after fifteen yojanas made her Sangama (final fusion) with the Eastern Ocean; Vegavati was also reputed as 'Punya koti' since she entered the Punya Koti Kshetra. As she had the 'Maanabhanga' by her view of Vishnu's nakedness, she went to Paataala and resorted to a highly austere Tapasya to Narayana with the request to him to absolve her from the sins of disrupting her 'Pativratya' and 'Maanabhanga' and purify her body and mind; she prayed to Vishnu to give her the boons of 'Pavitra Tatwa' and attainment of normalcy in her strained relationship with her husband Brahma. The ever-merciful Narayana assuaged Saraswati's wounded feelings and stated that she should leave her ego

and repent for her arrogant deeds of fighting with Brahma and even himself, that she was after all of his 'Amsha', that she should merge with the Saagara and at that very time she would be blessed with his boons so that Chaturmukha would possess her back as his own and everything would be a closed Chapter. Thus Saraswati secured the pardon of Brahma and Vishnu and they both gave boons to Vegavati as whosoever bathed and swam in that River would pave their paths to Moksha eventually.

An illustration was narrated by Markandeya Maharshi to King Surata about a Brahmana named Dhoumya of Gangaapura on the banks of Ganges who no doubt was an erudite scholar of Sama Veda and rich but was a womaniser and a victim of venereal diseases; eventually he changed his life-style out of remorse and came to know that a visit to Hari Kshetra and bathing in the Sacred Vegavati River would cure him of his diseases and destroy his sins. Accordingly he undertook a journey to Hari Kshetra for a holy dip in the River Vegavati and darshan of Varadaraja Swami. On his return to Gangapura he was a fully transformed person physically and mentally and at the termination of his life secured Vishnupada.

Markandeya recommended to the devotees of posterity that recitation of the following Dwadasha Slokas while taking bath in the Sacred Vegavati River followed by Hari Kshetra Darshana would readily obtain 'Baahyaantara Shuchi' (physical and internal cleanliness):

*Gangaayaa Dakshiney bhaagey yojanaanaam Shatadwaye,
Pancha yojana maatrena Purvaambhodesu Paschimey/*

*Vegavatuttarey theerye Punyakotyaam Hariswayam,
Varadassarvabhutaanaa madyaapi paridrussyatey/*

*Vapaa parimalollaasa Vaasitaadhara pallavam,
Mukham Varada Raajasya Mugdhasmitamupaasmahey/*

*Yo dadaati Harikshetrey daanam yaadharthya bhavatah,
Koti Yagjna phalam labdhvaa Vishnulokam sa gacchati/*

*Yo Vasey Harikshetrey Kshaanaarthwam vaa tadarthakam,
Muktassa Sarva Paapebhyassaakshaat Vishnurnaraakrutih/*

*Punyakoti vimaanaankam Tatwa Sopaana bhushitam,
Nrisimhaadhishtitaguham Hastishailam Namaamyaham/*

*Ekaadashyaamahoraatram Vishnossamkeertanenacha,
Yatphalam tadbhavey Nrunaam Hasti Shailasya darshanaat/*

*Brahmayagjna samudbhutam Divya Maanikya Sundaram,
Jagadaadi Gurum Devam Varadam ta Maham bhajey/*

*Harijanmadiney kaamchyaam Ghrita dhaaraa sahasrakaih,
Varadam yobhishimcheta Koti Yagjna phalam bhavet/*

*Koti Brahma pratishthaayaam yat phalam labhatey narah,
Tatphalam samavaapnoti Sakrudvarada sevayaa/*

*Namastey Brahma Patni! Twaam Saridrupaam Sarasvateem,
Sarva paapa prasamaneem Vegavatyabhidhaam stumah/*

*Yah Pumaan Praatarutthaaya Snaana Kaaley Pathecchhuchih,
Shloka dwaadasha paathena taduktaphalamaapnuyaat/*

(Whosoever would recite or hear the ‘Vegavati Prabhaava’ as above would secure the ‘Vegavati Nadi Snaana phalam’).

Shashthyadhyaya -Rudrashaalaa Mahatmya

Markandeya Maharshi extolled **Ekaamreshwara Linga** as follows to King Suratha:

*Umaasamaalingana samkraanta kuchakumkuma karakankana mudritam,
Lingamekaamra naathasya saikatam Samupaasmahey/*

(I greet Ekaamreshwara Linga who has the shining imprint of the wrist ornament coloured red due to the ‘Kumkuma’ of Uma Devi’s breast- embrace of her husband!)

To the Southern side of Sweta Prabhaava Vishnu in Kanchi Mandala was the Sacred Presence of **Gayorahana Shiva** and to the latter’s West was **Kanyakeshwara Shiva**. **Kailaasanatha Shiva** was placed to the North of Kanyakeshwara. In the center of this Square -at the Vayavya of Kanchipura- was ‘Rudra Shaala’ where there was a powerful Shiva Linga whose ‘Archanaabhisheka’ was stated to bestow the fruits of Koti Lingarchana and that was why this Shiva Linga was called **Rudra Koti**. Nearby the Rudrakoti and Gaayaadhirohana Shiva was **Vikata Ganapati** who in the past gifted Suradshana Chakra to Vishwaksena and almost adjacent to Vikata Ganapati was a Rasaala Vriksha and underneath the Tree was **Shanmukha Deva**; Maharshi Markandeya claimed that it was under that **Rasaala Vriksha** he attained ‘Sangjnaata Jnaanatwa’. In the Eastern Side of the Rasaala Vriksha was **Pralaya Bandhini Durga** as she brought Ganga River under control. To the South of Pralaya Bandhini was **Sampatkari Durga** who out of consideration for Rishis killed **Gajasura**. Nearby Sapatkari was **Renuka Durga** who bestowed an eye to Vipra named Jambuka in the past. A little far from Renuka Durga was **Veera Vareswari** who mitigated the anger of Veerabhadra after destroying Daksha Yajna. **Gayaadhihorana Shiva** rewarded the boon of ‘Sasharira Swarga’ or Entry to Swarga along with Mortal Body to King Yayati while **Jwara Hareshwara** provided relief from ‘Maheshwara Jwara’ to Devas and Rishis. **Anekapeshwara Shiva** gifted Vajraayudha to Mahendra to kill Vritraasura and **Kailasa Shiva** granted Kailaasa Nivaasa to King Tundeera in the past. **Paschimeshwara** saved Vaalakhilyas from their fright of Rakshoganaas. **Vishweswara Shiva** was the only Deva who could absorb from Ganga of all the sins of those who bathed in her. **Dounakanteswara** rewarded ‘Khadga Shulas’ to ‘Douna Kantaas’. **Smashaaneshwara** enabled his own Shakti Lalitambika to kill Bhandasura.

To the Nirruti of Smashaaneshwara were **Pandava duta** Krishna, **Chandrageeva Madhava**, and **Sweta Varna**-all of Janaardanaamsha. Pandava Duta Krishna sought peace from Kauravas before Maha Bharata Yuddha, Chandragriva Madhava wore Chandra dyuti around his neck and Sweta Varna was illuminated by Chandravarna Daitya in darkness.

From Sweta Varna Janardana towards Ishanya was the abode of **Choraikaamreshwara** where interestingly Rudra assumed the Form of a Thief before manifested himself as a Shiva Linga! Markandeya Maharshi was also installed as a Vighraha as per the instruction of Maha Deva himself! To the north of Markandeya was **Elaalaka Ganga** sharing Shiva’s ‘Ardhaasana’. **Dhavalikaamra nayaka** near Choraikaamreshwara viewed Ganga and assumed a Linga Swarupa, adjacent to whom was **Veerabhairava** as ‘Smashana Paalaka’ or the Sentinel of Smashana under Shiva’s instruction. There was a **Ganga Tirtha** to the Vayavya of Virabhadra even a mere touch of its waters would fetch Shambhu Loka; Devi Parvati granted a boon that ‘snaanaas’ in that Tirtha on Mondays would yield Jahnvi Snaana Phala. There was also a **Mangala Tirtha** to the Agneya direction of Ganga Tirtha and Kuja Deva secured

relief from his Agni Swarupa and as such Kuja Deva gave a boon to all those taking bath in that Tirtha on Tuesdays would secure the Punya of Saraswati Snaana. To the Nirruti direction of Mangala Tirtha was **Jwaraha Tirtha** where Munis and even Devas used to take baths in it and those persons who bathed in it would be blessed with Kapila Tirthga Snaana. There was also a **Pandava Tirtha** towards the Vayavya of Jwara Tirtha where Bhagavan Krishna endeared Pandava Brothers and mutually resolved a Friendship Pact; mere darshana of the waters would destroy one's sins and 'Sparsha' (touch) would secure Shambhava Loka while bathing during the Roudra Nakshatra provided 'Krishna Nadi Snaana Phala'.

Thus in this Sacred Place of Ekaamreshwara there were the presences of a Vighneswara in the Rudra Shaala, Skanda, four abodes of Durgas, Eight Shiva Murtis, Three Vishnu Murtis, Five Mudras, and four Tirthas as per Shiva's instructions. Kanchipura Vayavya pradesha was stated as Bhu Kailasa by Rishis within which there were five glorious Places viz. Rudra Shaala, Rudra Koti, Kailasa, Ekaamra and Maha Smashaana. A person spending even a minute in the Rudra Shaala would be relieved of all kinds of sins and could be identified as a human being with 'Shivaamsha'; in the past, several residents of this Kshetra were stated to have completely avoided even the visuals of Naraka Lokas and excelled in 'Shambhupada'.

There was a tale in vogue in Kanchipura about a Brahmana named Koushika who stayed in 'Elaapura' on the banks of River Krishna. He was an evil-minded, avaricious and cunning person; he had fields in his possession stated to have underground 'Nidhis' or deposits and the local beliefs in the vicinity were that the Nidhis could be obtained if sacrifices of good and learned Brahmanas were performed then the Nidhis could be made available so that the owner of the concerned land might become very rich from the underground deposits. Koushika sought the help of Experts with the knowledge of such underground Nidhis and identified such locations. Then he used to lure travellers into the Village who were good and learned but poor and helpless; he would take such unsuspecting strangers to his home, feed them well, provide them with expensive dresses and gifts and after a few months kill them as human sacrifices and excavate those specific and pre-identified areas to secure the deposits and earn plenty of wealth. In the process of attracting the unsuspecting strangers, only once Kaushika made available to a thirsty traveller a glass of butter milk most sincerely and generously as a strange exception. In course of time, the villagers came to realise the source of Koushika's ill-gotten wealth and the King of the Land imprisoned and tortured him in the prison to have killed several innocent victims as human sacrifices. As he was subjected to extreme torture, Koushika died in the prison itself. The Followers of Lord Yamadharmaraja dragged Kaushika's tormented Soul on way to Narakas. But Rudra's men seized Koushika's Soul having forced Yama's Followers despite the latter's specific orders. A hurt Yama visited Rudra Loka and complained of this great injustice to Rudra Deva. Then Rudra replied: *Bhumaalestu Sukshetram Rudrashaaletu Vishrutam, Tatkshestravaasiney Purvey Viproyam paapa sattamah/ Dadou Viprayaa tatkrodam matkukshou tat prashasyati, Tasmaattagjnaana maatrena mama bhaktoti punyavaan, Esha Satkarma samyukto nishpaapi matpadochitah/*

(There was a Sacred Place called **Rudra Shaala** underneath the Earth in the possession of Koushika; no doubt he might have committed atrocities in ignorance. But as a Traveller Rudra himself in disguise visited Kaushika and he quenched his thirst with genuine kindness! The person who stayed in that Rudra Shaala was the most blessed being ever and since that person pleased Rudra himself and provided butter milk with sincerity and genuineness – albeit once only- should deserve Rudra Loka! Such indeed was the significance of Rudrashaala and its stay there! Whoso ever reads or hears of this above incident with sincerity and faith would be blessed with 'Rudra Shaalaa Nivaasa Phala'!)

Saptamaadhyaaya- The Significance of Ekaamra Vriksha

Shiva beeja samudbhutam Vedashaakhaabhirujjwalam, Mrukandutanayaadhaaram Rasaalam tam Namaamyaham/ (I commend that Rasaala Vriksha viz. Ekaamra Vriksha, which sprang from the Shiva

Rupa Beeja or of the Seed of Shiva and vivified with Branches of Vedas and scripted by Maharshi Markandeya)

In the illustrious Rudra Shaala to the East of Pandava Tirtha there was an Ekaamra Vana which was maintained Deva Parvati herself that was full of Sacred Trees and inhabited by Maha Munis. In this 'Vana' was a famed Rasaala Vriksha called **Ekaamra** also popular as 'Rudra Koti' since the Tree was situated in Rudra Shaala. The upkeep and safety of this Tree was entrusted by Maharshi Markandeya in the past. The background was providing this responsibility was as follows: there were 'Chatusshasti koti' or Sixty Four Crores of Shiva Shaktis whom all no doubt Shiva was fond of. But in course of time, they claimed equal status and seating arrangement on par with Devi Parvati! Shiva explained to the Shaktis that Parvati's position was far above that of various Shaktis and it was not possible to equate her eminence with that of theirs. The Shaktis stated that Shiva was being unfairly partial to Parvati! Was she superior to them in Knowledge or Grace and Beauty or Susheelata / Sadgunas or Excellence in Romance! They thus challenged him to prove her superiority. Shiva smiled as the Vastras of all the Shaktis slid down their bodies and they had to make desperate efforts to hide their nudity but Devi Parvati's dress was intact. The Shaktis felt ashamed of their nakedness and Devi Parvati closed Shiva's three Eyes while the Shaktis were swiftly getting dressed up again. As per the Time calculation of Devas, a full 'Muhurta' elapsed while the Shaktis were getting dressed up again. During this time, Surya Chandraagnis perished; the entire Universe vanished and the Charaachara Jagat became extinct; there was utter darkness and Maha Pralaya! However Markandeya was still breathing although struggling to gasp finding no way to save himself in that pitch darkness and hopelessly praying to survive. He then narrated to King Surata as follows: *Aadhaara Kaankshayaan tasmin Kaaleham Parameshwaram, Sadaa Shiveshaana Rudra Hari Brahmaadi kaaranam/ Devi Divya tanou leena chittam Kaameshamavyayam, Mahaa Tripura Sundaryaa Naayakam Nirgunam smaran/ Aadhaaramatra Devesha Dehimey twam kataakshatah, Iti Sampraapya Devesham Jalagarbheyvi- sham shramaat/ Tatah kripaanidhisshambhustatra madrakshaneychayaa, Chidrupo Rudra shaalaayam vasannavyaktatejasaa/ Chuta beejaakrutirbhutwaa Chaturaamnaaya shaakhinam, Vrikshamutpaadayaamaasa swabeejaatthatra Shankaraha/ Bhitwaa jalanidhim tatra tadjjalaadbhahi raayaou, Atha tacchutavrikshopi kshanena Vavrudhey kramaat/ Tatsshaakhaa vibhushaadhyam Pralayaateetamunnatam, Athaaham tam tarum drushtwaa taduparyeva samsthitah/ Pralayaarnava –maalokya vismayaannischalaakritih, Tamchutam Shiva rupena dhyaatwaa Saakshaatparasshivah/* (I prayed to that Avyaya- Nirguna Kameshwara who was the 'Kaarana Bhuta' or the Original Cause of the existence of Brahma-Vishnu-Rudra-Ishana-Sada Shiva and who was absorbed in the thoughts of Tripura Sundari's Divya Vighraha; then I meditated Maha Deva desperately to provide me a hold and entered the depths of Pralaya Saagara. Dayanidhi Shankara apparently decided to save me and stood firm in the Rudra Shala; there was the Form of a Mango Seed which germinated within no time, a huge Saala Vrisha with Chaturveda Shaakhaas pierced through the Pralaya Water. It was amazing that there was a Maha Vrisha that grew suddenly and survived in the Pralaya and the Maharshi since rescued got self-convinced that Maha Deva himself assumed the Swarupa of the Vriksha).

Seated on a peacock **Shanmukha** Skanda sat on the top of the Tree enjoying ripe mango fruits and Maharshi Markandeya enquired as to who that Six-Headed boy was. Kumara Swami replied that whenever there was a Pralaya, this Kanchipura was rescued by the kindness and splendour of Maha Tripura Sundari and that was why this Kanchi Kshetra was famed as 'Pralaya Jit' or the Victory of Pralaya; this Rasaala Tree was of Shankara's own Self and whoever consumed the fruits of the Rasaala would become Veda Vidya Guru and attain 'Koti Lingarchana Phala' by the grace of Maha Deva.

Markandeya narrated the above experience of his own about the Ekaamra Vriksha Mahima to King Suratha and further illustrated the Tree's significance as follows: There was a Vipra named Krouncha who lived on a 'Shringi Shaila' or a Mountain Top on the banks of Tungabhadra River; he stole a Golden Shiva Linga from a Temple and eked his livelihood. He begot sixteen sons but due to the sin of stealing the Golden Linga they were 'Linga heenas' or devoid of male organs. Highly disappointed by this calamity,

he visited 'Rudra Shaalaa Kshetra' along with his entire family and rested under the Rasaala Vriksha just for a few moments; he then experienced the miracle of gaining the masculinity of his sons and ever since then continued his life at Kanchipura itself till his death and achieved Rudra Loka. Such was the grandeur of the Ekaamra Vriksha. Whoso ever recited or heard about the glory of the Sacred Tree sincerely with faith would secure the fruit of residing under the shade of the Rasaala!

Ashtamaadhyaaya: The Glories of Ekaamreshwara and Baalaa (Tapah) Kamakshi

*Suprasannam Mahaa Devyaa Nitya Kalyaana Sundaram,
Mahaapralayapaapagnam Rasaaleshamaham Bhajey/*

(By greeting Ekaamreshwara who manifested himself by destroying the effects of Maha Pralaya, who enjoyed the grace of Devi Parvati always and who provided auspiciousness to one and all, Maharshi continued the narration of Kamaakshi Vilasa to King Suratha)

Devi Parvati installed a Grand Shiva Linga made of sand to the East of Ekaamra Tree in the Rudra Shaala: *Hastapramaanaamulaat Kadali kusumaakritih, Umaalinganasankraanta kuchakankana mudrutah/ Kshitilingaswarupascha chutalingaakriti Swayam, Sadaa Shivaanugrahaatmaa sa Chatur murti madhyagah/ Shivaamshashivajashuli Kailaasaatsamupaagatah, Mrigaankushavaraabhiti viraajita Chaturbhujaha/ Kundenduhavalaakaaro Nitya Kalyaana sundarah, Vyaaghra charma paridhaano Gajacharmottareeyakah/ BhasmoddhulitaSarvaangastrinetra Shashi Shekharah, Sachaamombikaa Gangaa Savya Dakshina sevitah/ Gangaabhujangavilasat jataamakuta manditah, Rudrakotyaaam nivaasena Rudrakotiriti shrutah/ Ekaamra nilayasshambhuh Puraav Devyaa stuto harah, Mahaa Pralaya Paapagnah punah Kalyaana hetavey/* (Then Maha Deva Linga who manifested himself was of hand size, of the shape of Plantain Tree Flower as though with the Mudraas / imprints of Parvati's hand-bracelets caused by her embracing her husband Shiva; the Prithvi Linga was of Sada Shiva Swarupa; Chaturmurti madhya or the Middle of Four Deities ; Rasaala Lingaakaara or of the Linga of Mango Shape, Shivaamsha Sambhuta or manifestation of Shiva; Shiva Sangjnnaata, Shuladhaari, Kailasa vaasa, Abhaya Virajita Chaturbhujha or upbeat with Protective Four Hands, Dhavala Chandraakaara or of the Shape of Full Moon, Nitya Kalyaana Sundara or Ever Propitious, Vyaaghra / Gaja charma dhara or the wearer of Tiger / Elephant Skins as his colthing; Tri Netra, Bhasmadhulita Sarvanga or he who smeared ash all over his body; Chandrasekhara; ornamented with Ganga and Serpents around his head gear covering his knotted hair; with Ganga and Ambika serving with their hand fans on both the sides; and the resident of Rudra Kshetra famed as Rudra Koti! Thus Haimavati commended Shambhu who resided as and at the Ekaamra Mahiruha Mula!

As Devi Parvati then recalled to Shiva about the incident of Shaktis and her closing his Three Eyes when Pralaya took place as described in previous pages, she suddenly noticed that Maha Deva's golden coloured Body had turned blue and asked him about the possible reason for this colour-transformation. Shiva replied that actually Devi Parvati herself was responsible for this since she closed his three eyes to save her of the embarrassment of all the Shaktis getting naked and due to that unpardonable sin that she committed there was Pralaya and the whole sequence of happenings followed! Parvati felt ashamed of her action that caused the entire havoc and fell on his feet begging of Maha Deva for a remedy to atone of her incorrigible sin. Parama Shiva then instructed Parvati to manifest herself as baby child at Badarikaashram and a childless Maha Muni named **Katyaayana** would bring her up with great care and affection till she attained Eight Years. Later on , the Bala could bestow Moksha to the Muni and collect his 'Yoga Danda'/ Stick, Japamaala/ counting beads, Deepas, Chaamaras or hand fans used for worship, Pustaka or Books, Vyaghraasana or Tiger skin to sit on, Ganga Tirtha, Ganga-sand and umbrella to proceed to Varanasi for meditation.

Maha Deva stated that there would be a 'Kshaama' or drought in Kasi and then Parvati should distribute 'Anna' (food) to one and all and secure the Epithet of **Annapurna Devi**. Thereafter she should travel to South and settle down at a Place which would be called **Kanchipura!**

*Yatra Vyaaghraasanam Soma Vrittham tat Sutrakam Ghatam, Saikatam Linga Rupam cha Japaaksho
Bilwa maalika/ Nagabhushanam chhatra Trishulam Yoga dandakam, Chaamaram Yuvati yugmam
Vyanjanam Shukarupakam/ Ghata deepa dwayam vahni rupam Dhenuscha Pustakam, Vidyaadharam
Suchikaam cha Taptamudram cha Saankuram/ Gangaatirtham Payorupam Bhavedyattra Manonmani,
Tat Kanchinagaram viddhi tatra Somasuvrittakey/*

(Where there is Vyaghraasana, Soma Vrittha or an Edifice to install Shiva Linga, Sutrakam or pipe to drain holy water after Abhishka, a Saikata Linga or a Sand-made Linga, Japamaala, Bilwamaala, Naagaabharana or Ornaments of Serpents, Chhatra / Umbrella, Trishula, Yoga danda, Chaamara, Yuvati Yugma or two maids, a Shuka or Parrot, Ghata Deepa Dwaya or Two Deepas made of Mrittika, Vyajana or fan made of Yak's hair, Dhenu or Cow, Pustaka, Vidyadharam, Diksuchika, a Tapta Mudra, Gangaajala and such other Sacred items utilised for Shiva Puja would be the Place called **Kanchi Nagara** where Devi Parvati should settle down!

Maha Deva instructed Devi Parvati further that she should perform daily 'Ksheeraabhisheka' to the 'Saikata Linga' on the Soma Vrittha along with Soma Sutra adorned with Bilwamaala and Nagaabharana, while carrying Trishula, Yoga danda and parrots on her shoulders as chaamara would be served by two maids on the sides and offering 'Naivedya' of Mudgaankura or of sprouted greengram; she should then execute Dhyana amid 'Panchaagnis' standing on 'Suchakoparitalaas'. Shiva then assured that her 'Maha Paapa' in causing Pralaya by closing his Three Eyes would be washed out.

Following Maha Deva's instructions, Devi Parvati commenced her atonement by converting herself as a Baby in Varanasi where Katyayana Maharshi brought her up till she was of eight years as a **Baala**, then as **Annapurna** during the drought period saving Varanasi from hunger and providing Moksha to the King of Kashi and down to Dakshina Bharata having carried all the Puja Dravyas as prescribed by Shiva above. Having searched for a suitable Place in Kanchipura, surprisingly she discovered a Single Mango Tree and named it as **Ekaamra Vriksha** and decided to perform severe 'Tapas' under it. Meanwhile Brahmaarshi Narada who was on a Tirtha Yatra arrived at Kanchipura and spotted an Eight year old **Baala** preparing herself to perform Tapas under the shade of the Maha Chuta Vriksha. As he approached her she conveyed to him that she decided to marry Chandrachuda Shankara, that she was physically and mentally prepared to carry out Tapas and requested him to help her. Narada was extremely delighted and gave to her 'Upadesha' (Instruction) of 'Pancha Baana Mantra' and left Southward. Devi Parvati commenced her Tapas as **Tapah Kamaakshi** on her 'Janma Nakshatra'; she performed such severest and most austere Pancha Baana Japa that created flames of Kaamaagni targeted to Shiva which could not be endured by him any longer; he then directed Devi Ganga to reach the Tapaswini at once. Ganga then attracted three crore fifty lakh Tirthas from Shiva's body-hair roots and having assumed the Swarupa of Maha Pralaya travelled at such top speed and heavy sound towards where Gauri as Tapah Kamakshi was in meditation that even Gauri shouted 'Kampa' 'Kampa' as she was badly disturbed in her concentration of Tapas; as her two companions viz. **Maha Kaali** and **Durga** arrived, Gauri instructed them to forestall the gushing flow of Ganga. Durga Devi stood against the Pralaya Jala and displayed the **Kapaala** in her hands with a Signal called 'Vishwa Bhakshana Sanjnaka'; but that massive flow of high tides had the instruction of Shiva to Ganga and thus Shiva was offended as was terminated by the show of a Kapaala. Devi Kaalika supplemented her efforts and stopped and diverted the flow and Gauri commended Kaalika and gave her the encomium of *Mahaa Pralaya bandhini*. But the offended Shiva threw with anger a piece of his 'Jataajuta' and the fury of Ganga that emerged from the knotted hair of Shiva was simply unconquerable! Since the sound and fury of the rushing water was unstoppable not only by her maids but even by herself, Gauri Devi prayed to her brother Purushottama so that her Tapas would not be disturbed.

Janadnana then assumed a gigantic Swarupa from Earth to Sky wearing Chandra around his neck as **Chandra- Kanthaakya**; Parvati shivered with fright that instead of Narayana, Maha Deva appeared himself as that huge Figure wore Chandra around his neck. But Narayana asked Gauri not to get frightened, that Massive Figure was himself and that soon Maha Deva would arrive as he was merely testing Gauri's tenacity to perform Tapasya!! Devi Gauri then tightly embraced the Shiva Linga and having closed her eyes said most emphatically and desperately that Maha Deva was her ultimate refuge! Meanwhile, Chandrakanthaakya Vishnu appeared in a smaller Form and assured Parvati that he would continue to reside before where she resided.

During the Taamasa Kalpa- Bhautyaakhya Manvantara- Kritha Yuga- Bhavanaamaka Vatsara -Chaitra Shukla Pournami- Uttara phalghuni Tritiya Paadaaramba when Kurmaavataara took place, Mahadeva held Tapah Kamakshi, lifted her and got her seated on his left lap. Then Devi Kamakshi prostrated before Maheshwara and returned to her seat. Shiva then addressed Hari in the presence of Brahmaadi Devas, Muniganaas, Nandi and Rudra ganaas to say that he gave a promise to Agastya Maharshi to celebrate his wedding with Gauri every year and hence he as Gauri's brother could now commence the Celebrations. Hari then made an open announcement and Invitation to one and all while all the Devas and Devis took up various preparations rightaway. Some took charge of cleaning and illuminating the Streets of Kanchipura, Vishwakarma got ready with the construction and decoration of a huge Hall and Stage Arrangements, Gandharvaas and Kinnaraas held the duty of organising musical and dance extravaganzas, some assumed the charge the kitchen and catering, some others took care of Invitations and Protocol. Devis Lakshmi, Saraswati and Indrani were fully in charge of all arrangements concerning the Bride and the minute details of her dresses, ornaments, perfumes, flowers and so on suited to each function during the Grand Wedding. Sapta Maharshis were concerned with the procedure of the wedding and details of step-wise functions, the Mantra mix, the Homaas and men and material required. As the Run-Up before the Wedding Day, there were celebrations for nine days with singings and dances, feasts and festivities, Shiva Pujas and Abhishekas, Vedaadhyanas and Shiva / Parvati Stutis and Group Chantings of their Glories.

On the arrival of the most auspicious 'Sumuhurta' on the Tenth Day of the Celebrations in Uttaraphalguni Shubha Nakshatra, Maha Deva accompanied by Nandi and Pramathaganaas was most reverentially welcomed by Narayana accompanied by Brahma and Indra and was ushered to the Vivaha Vedika when Sapta Rishis prostrated and recited 'Ahwaana' Veda Mantras. Deviganaas including Lakshmi, Vani, Indrani, the wives of Dikdevatas and of Sapta Rishis accompanied Shri Kamakshin Devi with bhakti to the Vivaha Vedika where Paramshwara was already waiting. Sapta Rishis initiated Sankalpa and further proceedings, when Narayana washed Maha Deva's feet while Devi Lakshmi was pouring Ksheera and Gangodakas from a golden vessel and Narayana dried Shiva's feet with his silk upper garment softly and respectfully gave Devi Gauri's hand in the hand of Shiva. Then Brahma requested Maha Deva to tie up Mangala Sutra around Gauri's neck and as per Veda Mantras requested the couple to perform Jayaadi homas, Saptapadi, Laaja homas, Naak Bali and such other Mangala Karyas. Devas and Rishis recited Vaidika Mantras; some greeted in raised voices 'Hara Hara' and others with slogans of 'Jaya Jaya'. Then Muni Patnis (wives) sang delightful 'Mangala Haaratis'. As Vishnu materialised 'Pancha Bhakshya Bhojya Lehya Choshya Paaneeyaas', all the Guests relished the most satisfying and grand Bhojana along with 'Amraphalaas' and were treated with Taambula-Chandana-Kasturi and a plethora of expensive gifts while the guests were delighted to utter 'Parameshwara - arpanamastu'. On this most auspicious occasion, Vishwakarma gifted to Devi and Maha Deva a golden chariot like the one gifted to Maha Deva at the time of Tripura samhara; Indra gifted a Sphatikamani Chhatra. Brahma gifted a 'Navaratna Ranjkita Jataa Kireeta'. On that evening, there was a procession of Kamakshi and Ekamreshwara when the latter announced to all the Bhaktaas that on every Chaitra Shukla Purnima, that there should be celebrations and 'Kalyanotsava' of Kamakshi and Ekamreshwara and that who the ever performed or atleast visioned the Sacred Function would attain Shasvata Shambhu Loka.

Devi Kamakshi was called by that name since she was the Fulfiller of ‘Kaamaas’ or the desires of one and all.

Maharshi Markandeya affirmed to King Suratha that a Shambhu naamaka Vipra happened to see and even participate in the kalyana and received ‘Sahasra Kanya Kalyaana Phala! Who ever reads or hears the above account of Shri Kamakshi sahita Ekaamra Swami Vaibhaa would achieve Koti Linga Pratishtha Phala and Moksha!

Navamaadhyaaya: Sarva Tirtha Mahima

*Hararoma Samudbhuta Sarva Titrha samudbhuta Sarva Tirtha Samanvayaat,
Sarva Tirthaarthaahyamam Vandey Kampayaa Puritam sarah/*

(I commend the Sarva Tirtha which was a Grand Fusion of Koti Tirthas that materialized from Maha Deva’s body hair-roots including Kampaa Jala collected from the Kapaala Paatra of Pralaya Bandhini Durga).

Maharshi Markandeya described the unique significance of the **Sarva Tirtha** near the Rudra Shaalaa to the Nirrti Disha of Ekaamreshwara as that Tirtha was a Sangama of the waters from Koti Nadis as emerged from Shiva’s body-hair roots. These included the flows of Nandi Shaila, Kshhera Nadi, Gopura, Varaaha namaka Paksha Puri, Ambikaanagara, Deva Mula, Chuta Mula, Surya Pushkarini, Chandra Pushkarini, Kshetraprastha, Kundika, Ksheera Nadi called Nishanna, and Samudra which indeed was the final destination of Koti Nadis. Most significantly, this Sarva Tirtha included the Kampaa Jala that got collected in the Kapaala that subdued the most ferocious flow of Ganga despatched by Maha Deva himself as executed by Pralaya Bandhini as referred to in the preceding Chapter; Devi Gauri called her maids Maha Kaali and Durga as she desired to perform Tapas without disturbance caused by the roar of gushing water of Ganga and appreciated as to how Kaalika Devi displayed the Kapaala in her hand and restrained the sound and fury of the high rising flow of Ganga and granted her the Epithet of Pralaya Bandhini.

The back ground of the Kampa Jala was that once when Maha Deva embraced Gauri Devi he found the marks of his wrist ornament on her breasts and he was amused but Gauri got confused and embarrassed; in order to make a diversion Maha Deva pulled out a hair from his ‘Jataajuta’ and trampled a flow of Ganga under his feet which went underground then; it was that powerful flow that assumed the ferocity and huge roar of sound and went to Devi Gauri as Pralaya Ganga to test her concentration in Tapas as commanded by Maha Deva.

When Shiva realised that the ‘Sarva Tirtha’ contained Kampaa Jala also, he felt somewhat sentimental and instructed Vishvakarma to construct the banks of Sarva Tirtha proper steps and paved surroundings to enable those to take baths. Bala Gauri took her Snaana there and thereafter invited Ruk-Yajur-Saama-Atharva Veda Jnanis and gave away generous daanaas to them of Go-Bhu-Hiranyaas to recite Vedic Acclamations of the Sarva Tirtha to exist till ‘Achandrataaraarka’ or as long as Surya Chandra Nakshatraas would last on the Sky! She then entered ‘Kama Koshta’ (literally the Belly of Desires but meaning of the Treasure Store of Wishes), got a Dharma Shaala constructed, worshipped Maha Tripura Sundari, performed thirty two Dharma Karyas or deeds of Virtue, arranged an ‘Akshaya Paatra’ or an Ever Lasting Vessel, a Kaama Dhenu or a Desire Fulfilling Cow, a Kalpa Vriksha or a Tree of Boons, ‘Chintaamani’ or a Jewel for Providing Materials; a Dharma Shaalaa; besides appointing a King to administer all these Items judiciously. Kamakshi thus materialised an elaborate infrastructure of Dharma, worshipped Kacchapeshwara, prostrated before Ekamreshwara and Pradakshinas, reached Sarva Tirtha to

perform Pradakshinas and gave the boon to all those who took even a single Sacred Bath in the Tirtha would be granted the Fruit of performing in all the Punya Tirthas elsewhere.

To illustrate the High Sacredness of ‘Sarva Tirtha’ Snaan, Maharshi Markandeya conveyed to King Surata about a legend of ‘Sama Vedaadhyaya’ Soma Sharma and a Tapaswi who however committed an indiscretion of sleeping with a youthful low class woman and begot a child. When Soma Sharma once performed the Shraaddha of Pitras, the ‘Pindas’ offered at the Ceremony turned out to be worms. Soma was agitated and did atonement of proceeding on Tirtha Yatra; as he reached Rudra Shaala and took bath in the Sarva Tirtha, the Shraaddha Pindas that he offered henceforth were retained with ‘Anna Rupa’ or of the Form of Cooked Rice. As this miracle was experienced, Soma Sharma decided to stay at the rest of his life and finally achieved ‘Shambhu Loka’.

Those who take Sacred Baths in the Sarva Tirtha and Darshana of Rudra Shaala, Ekamra Vriksha, Devi Kamakshi and of Ekamreshwara would be advised to recite the following ‘Dwadasha Shloki’ for reaping the benefit of Koti Sarva Tirtha Snaan and Moksha Prapti:

*Shrishailasyaagnidigbhaagey yojaneychaiva vimshakey, Kaveri Krishna yormadhey tatra Goari
tapovaney/ Kmpaaaa Dashiney Kooley Rudra Shaalaa dharaataley, Ekaamra naayakasshambhu –ssadaa
sadaa taraiva vartatey/ Umaalingana samkraanta Kuchakankana mudritam, Linga Ekaamra naadhasya
Saikatam samupaasmahey/ Yorchaye Rudraa shaalaayaam Lingamekam prayatnatah, Koti Lingaarchana
phalam Shiva Lokam cha Gacchati/ Yo Vasey Rudra shaalaayam Kshanaartham vaa tadardhakam,
Muchyatey Sarva Paapebhyah Sakshaabhargo Naraakritih/ Shiva Puja samudbhutam Veda
shaakhaabhirujjvalam, Mrikandu tanayaadhaaram Rasaalam tam namaamyaham/ Shrimadekaamra
Vrikshasya, Yo Vaseynmula bhutaley, Guna Vriddhyaa Muhurtasya Koti Lingaarchanam Bhavet/
Suprasannam Mahaa Devyaa Niya Kalyaana Sundaram, Mahaa Pralaya Paapagham Rasaalesha
Maham bhajey/ Chutesaambika yoph Kaamchyaam Shivaa virbhaava Vaasarey, Kalyaanam krvatah Koti
Kanyaa daana phalam bhavet/ Koti Lingaprathishthaa –yaam yatphalam sthaapakasya tu, Tatphalam
labhatey Marthyasskrutcchutesha sevayaa/ Hara roma samudbhuta Sarva Tirthasamanvayaat,
Kampayaa ritam vandey Paatram tatsarva Tirthakam/ Yaatrayaa Sarva Tirtheshu snaanato yatphalam
Nrinaam, Sarva Tirtheshu Sakutsnaanaattatphalam labhatey narah/*

Those who read or hear the contents of this Adhyaaya on Sarva Tirtha Snaan would achieve the fruits of performing ‘Sarvatirtha Sarovara Snaan Punya.’

Dashamadhyaaya: Kamakoti Sthala Nirnaya

*Jagatkaarana Kalaakaaram Naabhisthaanam Bhuvahparam,
Padapadmasya Kamaakshya Maapeetha mupaasmahey/*

(Maharshi Markandeya greeted Shri Kamakshi’s Maha Peetha where she rested her feet which was hailed as the Prapancha Kamakalaakaara or the Place of Fulfillment of Universal desires and the navel of Bhumi and narrated the further narration to King Suratha).

To the East of Kaanchinagara’s Sweta Prabha Vishnu, there was Kshetraangikaa Durga and to her Southern direction was ‘Simhachala’ and to the latter’s West was ‘Gayaadharohana Tirtha’; to complete a Deerga Chaturasra the afore mentioned Sweta Vishnu resided to the North of the Gayaadharohana Tirtha. At the Central Point of these Deerga Chaturasra was the **Pancha Shara Sadana**. Hence Kanchipuramadhya Pradesha was known as *Kamakoshtha* where recitation of any Mantra or Prayer would have the effect multiplied by a crore! That was the reason why the Kama Koshtha Pradesha came to be popularised as **Kamakoti!**

From Kshetraangi Durga to the Nirruti direction was situated *Shankudhara Ganapati* who was worshipped by Deva Shilpi Vishwakarma and had his Vaastu Shuddhi passed by Ganapati before undertaking the ‘Shanku Sthapana’ or laying the Foundation Stone and initiated the construction of Kancheepura. From the Shanku to the West was *Kumarakoshtha* where Skanda instructed the Pranava Mantra to Brahma. Ugra Rupa *Maha Durga*, a Graama Devata, was installed to Shanku and Brahma Deva worshipped her. To the North of Shanku was *Andonikaa Durga* who was an Expert in Dhanur Vidya whom Shankara worshipped. Not far from there was *Pancha Sandhika Durga* who accepted ‘Bali’ or Sacrifices and removed obstacles. Around the Shanku were *Peethaavarti Durga* who killed Trishiraasura in the past; *Durvaa Varna Vishnu* whom Lakshmiworshipped and secured Manmatha as the son; *Trivikrama Vishnu* whom Adi Sesa worshipped to provide him strength to bear the weight Bhu Devi; *Madhu Murti Vishnu* who rained Madhu at noon time; *Kaalaangu Vishnu* whom Shiva prayed and secured progeny; *Bhattaarakeshwara* Shiva to whom Brahma prayed and analysed Vedas; *Phanaadhara Shiva* who as a Sarpa assumed blue colour of his hoods by the Dwadasha Surya’s rays; *Phaneesha* who protected Naagaas from the Sons of Devi Kadru like Garutmanta; *Kancheeshwara* Shiva whom Brahma, Shaasta or Devasenaani, Kacchapa, Chandika, Kumara Swami, Sanatkumara, and Devas prayed to.

From Kancheshwara to the Vaayavya was situated ‘Tapo Vesha Dhaarini Kamakshi’; *Annapurna* who in the past relieved hunger of the residents of Kaashi during ‘Kshaama’ and any body prayed her by three Pradakshinas through the Dharma Dwaara would be fulfilled of their wish; *Santana Stambha* which was circumambulated by Vaivaswata Manu and was blessed with excellent progeny; *Pancha Tirtha* which was famed as generated from Shiva’s Pancha Mukha bestowing Snaanas on Fridays would yield Gadavari Snaana; *Gaayaadhirohana Tirtha* which enabled King Yayati to attain ‘Sasharira Mukti’ and its snaana on Thursdays would fetch Sindhu Nadi Snaana; *Siddha Tirtha* which blessed Sanat Kumara to relieve himself of a Shaapa and its Snaana on Sundays would provide Reva Nadi Snaana; *Chakra Tirtha* which helped Karta Veeryaajuna to obtain back his original Form and its Snaana during Purvaphalguni Star would achieve Gandaki Snaana; thus Kamakoshtha possessed one Ganeshwara, one Shanmukha, four Durga swarupas, four Vishnu Forms, Five Rudra Swarupas, and four Devi Tirtha. The Central Region of Kanchi was called Shripura, Kamakoshtha, Kamakoti, Bhadra and Jeevan Mukta.

In the past there was a Brahmana named Jagannadha who was a Rigvedaadhyaayi at Kundini nagara on the banks of Ganga but was a sinner of unpardonable deeds like Gohatya and meat eating. Once a traveller from Kamakoshtha arrived at Kundini and Jagannadha helped the traveller with a little amount and with that money spent a few days at Kundini and returned back to Kamakoshtha. After some time, Jagannadha died and Yamabhatas were taking him away to Yamapuri. But under instructions from Devi Kamakshi, her soldiers brought the Soul of Jagannadha and reached Devi’s feet. But Yamadharma arrived to convince Devi that the Brahmana was a great sinner having lived a highly disgusting life. The Devi explained that a Tourist visited Kundini Nagar from Kamakoshtha and Janannadha gave away some money to him with the aid of which the tourist stayed at Kundini leading a very frugal life and returned to Kamakoshtha; meanwhile Jagannadha died and Yamabhatas were taking him away; but on Devi’s instruction Deviganaas brought Jagannadha to Shripura which was Devi’s abode; whosoever travelled from Shripura, Kamakoshtha, or any of Devi’s Abodes to outside elsewhere, would be Devi’s own persons and in this specific case Devi herself was the traveller to Kundini and Jagannadha donated some amount with which the Tourist lived at Kundini frugally.

Hence any traveller from Kanchi Kshetra to any where should be considered as of ‘Kamakshi Swarupaas.’

Ekaadashaadyaaya: Exaltation of Kamakoti Bila

*GaatrimanthapaadhaaramNaabhistaanamBhuvahPuram,
Purushaartha pradam Shambhor bilaabhram tramaamyaham/*

(Markandeya hailed the 'Bilaakaasham' which was the hold of Gayatri Mandapa and the Central Point of Bhumi as her navel and was Purusharthaas that Shiva provided to humanity).

From Kama Koshta Siddha Tirtha's Ishaanya there was the Kamakoti Maha Bila (The Great Sacred Cave of Desires) which was the Sukshma Tapasthaana likened to the Naabhi (navel) of Bhumi, the Loka Janma Sthaana and Parama Shiva's Physique. That also was the Point of Creation of Shripura, Tri Murtis, Dikpalakas, Sarva Lokas and Dharani (Earth) in the Form of a Cow. This Maha Bila was the Cause of Causes, Deva Swarupa and Kama Koti Sangjna (Emblem). If any Being desired of anything under the Sky near the Bila those wishes were fulfilled instantly and the Bila was thus the famed as the **Kamakoti Bila** the Unique Provider of Purusharthaas or the of Dharma-Artha-**Kaama**-Moksha or the Supreme Human Aspirations or Desires. Kamakshi was stated to have provided 'Kama' to Kameshwara who literally had no Kama since he was **Linga heena!** Markandeya narrated as to how Maha Deva became Linga Heena. In the past, Maha Deva assumed the Form of a Youthful and highly attractive Nomad and entered Daruka Vana which was the Residence of Maharshis and their families. The Maha Munis were Vedadhyayis, Nitya Yagjnaadi Kartas always leading a highly austere and disciplined life. But Parama Shiva decided to teach a lesson to them that merely following a methodical life was not enough but they should expose themselves to the influences of life and then be able to overcome them instead of shunning them outright. But in the process, the womanhood of Daruka Vana was so deeply attracted to the youthful Jangama that the Munis who were angry, confronted him and forced him to drop his male organ thus he became 'linga heena'. Henceforth, Linga Puja became Universal. The Munis realised their mistake but in a way Linga Pujaabhisheka came to stay as a means of enabling human beings to worship a Symbol and attain Moksha.

Meanwhile a Rakshasa named Bandhaka pleased Brahma by means of difficult Tapasya for long time and became invincible by his boons; he not only defeated Devas but even disturbed Maha Deva at Kailasa. Devas had to leave Swarga and reached Gomukha Kshetra; from there they left for **Maha Bila** and as though from Aditi's Garbha-exited from the Kama Koshta Bila. Mid-way of the Bila, they visioned Kama Koteeshwari Maha Tripura Sundari and requested her to relieve them of their difficulties on account of the deeds of Bandhaka. As they came out of the Bila, they met Shiva and enquired him about the Darukaavana's incident as also reported to him about the reason of leaving Swarga. Then Maha Deva addressed Devas as follows: 'This Bhu Devi is Brahma Putri and in the Swarupa of a Cow bears the brunt of the whole Universe; Gomukha is Bhumi's mouth, Shri Pura is her Shira, Himalaya her throat, Kedaara her Udara or stomach, Varanasi her backbone, Kamalaalaya her bottom, and in the middle of Kanchi is her Kama Koshta. He stated that he too passed through the Maha Bilwa and as such he was rid of Maharshis' Shaapa of Linga Heenata and regained his original position as he was purified fully with his malehood. As far as the difficult times that Devas were passing through, Shiva stated that birth as a human being that too as a Brahmana was very difficult to achieve and one should avail of the opportunity by performing worthy deeds; the best among such deeds would be the entry and passage of the Maha Bila; since they too passed through the Holy Bila, they should certainly tide over the present crisis caused by the Rakshasa Bandhaka. Then Devas were delighted by what Maha Deva assured and then performed Bila Pradakshinas again and again.

Markandeya gave the example of Brahmana called Balabhadra who was a resident of the banks of River Narmada who had a lovely wife named Vajreshwari. But Balabhadra became a victim of desire for other women and of venereal diseases. He performed charity of cows, gold and Bhumi and spent considerable money to get cured but to no avail. Then another Brahmana took pity on the victim and informed him of the Mahtamya of the Kama Koshta Bila; he reached the bila, performed hundred Pradakshinas a day and got fully cured of his diseases. On returning to his town, Balabhadra was extremely happy and having enjoyed long and healthy life died when 'Devi dutaas' transported him to Devi Loka. The Maharshi blessed all the readers of this Chapter of Kamakshi Vilasa about the Maha Bila Mahatmya.

Dwadashaadhyaya: The Magnificence of Maha Tripura Sundari

*VishwakaarananetraadhyaamMahaTripuraSundareem,
Bandhakaasurasamhatrim Kaamaashim taamaham bhajey/*

(My sincere supplications to Maha Tripura Sundari Kamakshi who has the benign and bright eyes that caused the entire Creation of the Universe and its contents and terminated Bandhakasura effortlessly, stated Maharshi and continued his narration of Kamakshi Vilaasa to King Suratha).

*Atha tatra Nripa Sreshtha Kamakoshti dharaataley, Gayatrimandapey tatra Bila peethaasaney Shubhye/
Gayatyonkaara koney saa Kamamaakshi vartatey sadaa, Adi Shakti Swayam vyaktaa Sarva Vipasya
kaaranam/ Padmaasaney Nishpaapaa saa Kamapeetha Nivaasini, Chaturbhujaa Trinayanaa Mahaa
TripuraSundari/ Mula Shaktir Brahma Vidya chaadi Lakshmiriti Shrutaa, Atma Shaktir Jagaddhaatri
Rajiva sadyashaprabhaa/ Ardhendu Shekharaa Divya Kirita parimanditaa, Paashaankushokshu Kodanda
Pancha Baana Lasatkaraa/ Tapanodupa taatankaa Meena Kundala Dhaarini,Divya Shringaara
Veshaadhyaa Divyaabharana bhushitaa/ Raktaambara dhara Rakta Raajiva Vara maalini,
Soubhaagyaabharanopetaa Divya Mangalya dhaarini/ Rajarajeshwari Raamaa Mani manjeera raajitaa,
Shri Chakra Nagaraadheeshaa Shri Vidya Parameshwari/ Shankaraadhitokaaraa Shankaraatma
Swarupini, Shaarira Kalaadheeshaa Sarva Tatwa Swarupini/ Praanini Vishya Bhutaashyaa Kaala
Chakra Swarupini, Shri Kaanchi Naaraadheeshaa Kaanchitaartha Pradaayani/ Sachaara RamaaVaani
Savya dakshina sevita, Kaamakoteeti Vikhyaataa Kaamaakshi Divya Mangalaa/ Sadaa Shiva
Murtinaam Gouryaadeenaam cha Kaaranam, Janani Chutalingasya Chuta Beejaartha Rupini/
Shivaadhikaa Shivaangasyaa Shiva Murtirishshivan- kari, Mahaa Kaamesha Mahishi Mahaa Tripura
Sundari/ Puraa hitaa Devaanaam Bandhakaaraasuramardini, Tadaham Sampravakshyaami
Puraavritam Charittrakam/ Tasya shravana maatrena Sarva Paapaih pramuchyatey/ (Devi Kamakshi is
seated in Padmaasana in the Omkara Kona of Gayatri as Bila Peethaasana on the Gayatri Mantapa in the
Kama Koshta. She is Visha Vyapaka; Adi Shakti, Swayam Vyakta Swarupini or Self Generated;
Jagajjanani, Chaturbhujaa, Trinayana, Mula Shakti, Brahma Vidya, Adi Lakshmi, Atma Shakti,
Jagaddhaatri or the Grip of the Universe, Lustrous like Lotuses, Arthendu Shekara or with half-
Moon retained head; adorned with a Celestial Kireeta or Headgear; ‘Paashankushekshu Kodanda Pushpa baana
bhraajamaana Karaambujaa’ or with the bright lotus-like hands carrying Noose- Goad-Sugar cane like
bow and Flower arrows; TatankaYugali bhuta tapanodupa mandalaa or wearing ear-rings like Surya and
Chandra having cosmic relevance; Divya bhushana bhushita or adorned with celestial ornaments; Divya
Shringaara vesha or donning such a dress that enhances love; wearing blood red and bright clothing;
Rakta Raajeeva Maalaalankrita or decorated with the garlands of red lotuses; Sowbhagya
Vardhanaabharanopeta or bedecked with such jewellery that augments auspiciousness; Divya Mangala
Sutra Dharini or festooned with Mangala Sutra the Symbol Married Life of Prakriti and Purusha;
Gunjaana mani manjeera viraajita or possessive of graceful feet softly tied up with tiny jingling bells;
Shri Raja Rajeswari; Shri Chakra Nagaraadheeshwari or the Empress of Shri Chakra Nagara, Shri Vidya
Parameshwari, Shivaadhaarita, Jeevakalaadheesha, Sara Tatwa Swarupini, Praana Rupini, Sarva
Bhutaantasthita or the Antaraatma of all Beings; Kaala Chakraatmika or the Supreme Shakti that revolves
the Time Cycle; Shri Kaanchipura Raagjni; Kaankshitartha Pradaayani or the Bestower of the Required
Desires of devotees; Sachaamara Ramaa Vaani Savya Dakshina Sevita or Server of Chaamara by
Lakshmi and Vani on both the Sides; Kamakotinaamapradhita or Popularly celebrated as Kamakoti;
Divya Mangala Vighraha; Kaamaakshi or Possessive of Eyes that bestow fulfilment of all righte-
minded desires; The Cause of Causes of Sada Shivaadi Murtis and of Devi Gauri; The Cause of Ekaamra Linga’s
very materialisation, The Swarupa of the ‘Beeja’ or the Seed of the Sacred Mango Tree; Shiavadhika;
Shivaanka viraajita or She who shines on Shiva’s bosom; Shiva Murti, Shivankari, Mahaa Kamesha
Mahishi, Mahja Tripura Sundari, and Bandhakaasura Samharini the Story of which would be naraated by
me instantly said Maharshi Markandeya to the King Surata.)*

As instructed by Shiva, all the Devas who took to the Form of Shukaas (Parrots) at Kama Koshta on the Champaka Tree were sincerely praying to Devi Kamakshi as Kanya for several years as the latter was in the Maha Bila. Kamakshi then decided to help Devas who were thrown out of their legitimate Place of Swarga and at the same time released her subdued rage against Bandhaka. She emerged out from the Maha Bila assuming a Sagunaatmika Tri Shakti who first uttered the word 'KA' and created Brahma from her left Eye, uttered the second word 'AA' from her right Eye and then the third word 'MA' and generated Maha Deva from her Phaala Netra or the third eye on the forehead. She then named the Sishurupa (infant form) Brahma and fed him with 'Srishti Vidyaatmaka' Ksheera; Vishnu with Shiti Vidyaatmika Ksheera and Maha Deva with Laya Vidyaatmika Ksheera. The infants eventually grew up as youths and wondered what happened about the Universe! Brahma then created 'Characharas' or the Moving and Immovable Beings and Vishnu and Shiva continued performing their respective duties. Then the entire Scenario looked like a dream as Devas were in the form of parrots on the Champaka Tree and the re-created Bandhakaasura became visible. The Kanyaka Devi who as Maha Tripura Sundari became furious at the sight of the Asura and assumed a Mammoth Form of 'Ashtaadasha Bhuja' or of Eighteen-Hands with Chakra and other Ayudhas and in the presence of the Tri Murtis and Devas placed one foot of hers on the Asura's heart, another foot on his neck and trampled him while holding his head with two of her hands and smashed him to death in a second, searched his sons and relatives meticulously and killed them all, dragged the Asura's huge body into the Kamakoshtha Bila as an innocent and girlish Bala with a graceful and fully ornamented Swarupa. Devas discarded their Shuka Swarupas and celebrated Devi's victory as they rained flowers from the Skies, Gandharva-Kinnaras sang tuneful melodies, Apsaraas performed attractive and graceful dances and Munis recited Veda Mantras and the highly delighted went in trances as they were under suppression for countless years of shameful existence. In the midst of this festive atmosphere, the Kanyaka Devi announced that in the Maha Bila itself the huge body of the Asura would be buried and a 'Vijaya Sthambha'(Pillar of Victory) would be installed. Inside the Bila there was a Temple materialised with a Divya Simhasana or a Celestial Throne. The Bila Vasini was then installed in the centre of a 'Navaavarana' or Nine-Enclosed Area as 'Shadaadhara' or supported by six hinges; 'Shatchakra Sancharini' or the Moving Shakti of Six Chakras (Circles); 'Shatdarshana Pratipaadya' or of Six sided Visions; and 'Shada -amnaaya Samaaraadhyaa' or worshippable by Six Amnaayas or 'Krama' or order of Seriatim. The Para Devata was then invited and devotees commenced worship by reciting Omkaara Veda Mantras with 'Abhisheka' of waters of Ganga and other sacred Tirthas ; coconut water; Go Ksheera-Dadhi- Ghrita-Madhu-Shuddhodakaas or of Cow's milk, curd, Ghee, honey and Pure Waters respectively; followed by Pancha Puja with Pushpa-Kumkumaakshata-Dhupa-Deepa-Naivedya of Panchamrita- Bhakshya Bhojyaadi Shad -rasopetaanna-Karpura Taambulas. Then Bali Daanaas with the observance of Silence and highly concentrated Dhyaana and Japaas should be followed.

Over night when the doors were opened Devi was present as Bimba Rupini Tripuraambika and the entire Area of the Bilwa was occupied as a Chaurveda Vedika, trifurcated the Vedika with Gayatri Mantra of Om Bhuh tatsavitunenyam-Om Bhuvah Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi-Ogum Suvah dhiyo yonah prachodayaat as three Pillared partitions; and prepared Varna Traya Pranava of Aa+Vu+M as the Peetha and thus materialised a Gayatri Mandapa. Then as instructed by Kanyaka Devi herself she was worshipped from mid-night onward to Sun Rise. In the morning of that Shri Mukha Samvatsara-Phalgunma Maasa-Krishna Paksha-Pratipattithi-Shukra vaara-Arunodaya-Purva-phalguni Nakshatra when Surya was in Kumbha Raasi, the Kanyaka Devi then finally manifested herself as **Maha Tripura Sundari**.

As Devas who worshipped her as Kanyaka Devi and wondered who that new manifestation was and Devi explained that she assumed the Tripura Sundari's Form at the time of terminating the Asura and returned to Kanya Rupa later but now she resumed the new Avatara as Tripura Sundari; she defined her name as 'Kakaara-Akaaraa-Makaara' or **Kamakshi** again. She assured that from then onward she would discard the Maha Bila and reside at the Gayatri Mandapa for good permanently. Then Vipraas recited Stotras continuously and worships followed without break eversince. Deva Shilpi Vishwa karma gifted her a box

named 'Kuntala' as a Souvenir; Brahma presented a pearl lace and golden Chhatra; Vishnu offered a Nava Ratna Kireeta and Shiva a 'Shri Chakra Pataka'. That Evening Devi was taken in a Memorable Procession.

Devi Kamakshi assured that she would spend as much time in Kanchipura as she would in the Chintaamani Griha at Mani Dweepa and that as Kamakshi would continue in the Shripura at Kanchi. Maha Deva announced that those who would venerate Kamakshi on her 'Avirbhaava Dina' at Kanchi would secure Koti Yagjna Phala.

Shiva again reappeared as Durvasa Maharshi along with Koushika Putra Goutama Maharshi and Bharadwaja Putra Kundini Kumara and appointed them as the 'Archakas' and instruted to them about in Nitya Pujaa Vidhana; he declared that in Krita Yuga he would appear as Durvasa; in Treta Yuga as Bhargava; in Dwapara Yuga as Dhomya and in Kali Yuga as Muka Muni; Maha Deva further stated that in Krita Yuga he himself would script Dwi-Sahasra naamaavali in praise of Kamakshi; in Treata Yuga Panchashataadhika Sahasranaamaas; in Dwapara Yuga Sahasra Shlokas and in Kali Yuga Pancha Shata shlokaas. Then onward Kanchi Kamakshi Pujas had been executed eversince as stated by Maharshi Markandeya to King Surata.

Among the crores of Devotees who visited and worshipped Kamakshi Devi, there was a poor Brahmana, a Krishna Yajurvedi, named Jayadeva who was able to visit Kanchi from a Place on the banks of River Godavari with great difficulty. After his darshana of Kamakshi Devi he returned to his 'Kutira' or a very modest abode which got converted as a big Building with all comforts and luxuries. Any visitor to Kamakshi Temple in Kanchi and worship the Devi most faithfully and bhakti would thus achieve multiplied benefits in several ways and means that one could not even imagine! Whoso ever reads or hears the contents of the above Adhyaaya even casually would certainly secure her Darshan soon!

Trayodashaadhyaaya : Eminence of 'Bhutabandha Janardana'

Sthaana trayastam Devesham Trividhaakaaramachyutam, Prati Lingaagra Samyuktam Bhuta bandham Samaashraye!

(Markandeya Maharshi extolled the Bhutabandha Janardana existing on the top of the Trayaakaara Linga Swarupas or of Tri Formations of Shiva Lingas)

As Kanyakaa Devi assumed the mighty Swarupa of Tripura Sundari to kill Bandhakaasura, dragged his body to Kama Koshti and installed the Victory Dhruva, She asked Devas to dig up a specific spot and as they did so, Devatas spotted a Daitya called 'Mallaka' and the highly surprised Devas were taken aback; Vishnu then killed the Daitya. But each drop of the spilt blood of the dead body of the Asura created futher Asuras. Maha Deva sought to help Vishnu and pulled out a 'Jata' of his knotted hair and hit it on the ground. Two Bhutas were materialised of whom one was male and another was female. These Bhutas drank up the blood of the Asura's body but as they were used to drink up blood ran after Sri Hari. Vishnu taught a lesson by subduing them and sat heavy on them, but they overpowered Srihari who fell down; this irritated Vishnu and trampled the Bhutas heavily so that the latter apologised and came to senses finally. They requested Vishnu to purify their minds and the merciful Janardana prayed to Maha Deva in the latter's Pancha Mukha Form and Shankara released Ganga from his Five Faces as 'Pancha Dhaaraas' which fell on the Kama Koshti and these flows fell down as Pancha Tirthas. Srihari asked the Bhutas to bathe in the Pancha Tirtha as Maha Deva blessed the **Pancha Tirthas**. Shiva further stated that whoever took bath in the Agneya side of Pancha Tirtha would be relieved of 'Swarna Steya Paataka' or the sin of stealing Gold; Dakshina 'Dishaa Snaana' would relieve of Surapaa Paana Pataka; Pashima Dishaa Snaana would nullify 'Paradaara Sangama'; Uttara Disha Snaana would destroy Praana Harana Pataka; and the Tirtha Madhya Snaana would rectify the sin of cooperating any of the earlier Patakaas. Maha Deva then manifested a Tri-Linga Swarupa and Vishnu addressed Devas and Manavaas that

whosoever jumped in the Pancha Tirtha would attain Brahmanatwa even if that person was not so then, that he or she concerned be relieved of Bhuta-Preta-Piscacha-Graha difficulties, that the person be blessed with good progeny and eligibility too secure Vaikuntha. Thus Devas took snaana in Pancha Tirtha and secured the boons and worshipped Bhuta bandhana Janardana as also the Pancha Mukha (Five-Faced) Maha Deva.

Maharshi Markandeya narrated an incident related to a Vipra called Girindra of Ramapura on the banks of River Krishna. He married five women but was not fortunate to beget a child. He visited Kama Koshta and along with his wives and bathed in the Pancha Tirtha; there after he deeply meditated Bandha Mochana Janardana who appeared before him and gave him Divya Madhu (Honey). Having consumed it he returned home and was able to obtain hundred sons and attained Vaikuntha after his death. The Maharshi recommended fully that the devotees visiting Kanchipura ought to bathe in Panch Tirtha and experience miracles by the grace of Janardana and Devi Kamakshi. Recitation of the following 'Dwadasha Shloki' while taking early morning Snaanaas should instantly experience fulfillment of desires:

Swaami Pushkarini Tirtha Prva Sindhuh Pinaakini, Shilaahradaschatur madhyam Yavat Tundeera Mandalam/ Madhyey Tundira Bhu Vritham, Kampaa Vegavati dwayoh, Tamor madhey Kaama Koshtam amaakshi tatra vartatey/ JagatKaamakalaakaaram Naabhisthanam Bhuvah Param, Pada padmasya Kaamaakshyaah Mahaa Peetha mupasmahey/ Kamakotih smrita tasmaat Kaaranaa Deva chinnabhah, Yatra Kaama kruto Dharmo Jantunaa yena kenavaa/ Sakrudwaapi Sudharmaanaam Phalam Phalati Kotishayah, Yojapey Kama Koshtesmin Mantramishtaatha Daivatam/ Kotivarna phaleynaiva Muktilokam sa gacchati, Yo vasey Kamakoshthesmin Kshanaartham vaatatardhakam/ Muchyatey Sarva Paapebhyassaakshiddevi Naraarith, Gayatri Mamndapaadhaaram Bhu Naabhi Sthaanamutthamam/ Purushaatha pradam Shambhor Bilaabhrantannamaamyaham, Yatkuryaat Kama Koshtasya Bilaabhrasya Pradakshinam/ Pada Sankhya kramenaiva Gogarbhajananam Labhet, Vishwa kaarana netraadhyaam Shrimat Tripura Sundareem/ Bandakaasura samharteem Kamaksheem taamaham bhajey, Paraajanmadiney Kaachyaam Mahaabhyantara margatah/ Yorchayettatra Kamaaksheem Kotipujaa phalambhavet, Tatphalotpanna Kaivalyam Sakritkaamaakshi sevayaa/ Tristhaananilayam Devam Trividhaakaaramachyutam, Bhuta bandham ta maashraey!

Chaturashyaadhyaya: Shiva's defeat, Brahma's blindness, Shri Chakra Puja and beneficiaries

Sarvaangeem Ratnabhushaadhyam Shukra hastaam Shuchismitaam, Kanchee nivaasinim Vandey Kamasheem Kamitarthadaam/

(Maharshi Markandeya paid his homage to Suvarna Kamakshi who is tastefully decorated with most invaluable and exquisite jewellery including Golden Parrots in her right hand as she is the Paramount Symbol of Purity and Sanctity settled in Kanchipura always ready to fulfill any and every aspiration of her devotees)

To the East of Pancha Tirtha in the Kama Koshti Region was manifested Suvarna Kamakshi and Markandeya was excited to provide a brief portrayal of her to King Suratha as follows:

Paraa Phaalaakshi Sambhuta Kamakshi Swarna Vighrahaa, Dwinetraa Dwi bhujaa Shyaamaa Daksha hasta lasatechukaa/ Lamba Vaama Karaambhojaa Tribhangi Dakshakunchitaa, Saa Dhanur Vighrahaa Tanvi Sarvaabharana bhushitaa/ Nava Padma Dalaankaara Nayana dwaya shobhitaa, Peetaambara dharaa peetaa Manikundala manditaa/ Varaankitadharaa Gouri Brahmanaa rachitaa krutih, Manonmani Linga Shaktischuta Lingasya Vallabhaa/ Brahmanaa krita bimbeysow pura saannidhyamaatanot, Tadahamsdampravakshyaami Puraavrutam charitram/ Tasya Shravana maatrena Sarva Paapaih pramuchatey/

(Shri Kamakshi was manifested from Paraa Shakti's forehead as of Golden Form with two hands; she was holding a Parrot in her right hand and was of a long left arm and raised right side; she was of Three Postured Seating with Dhanuraakaara or Bow-like Rupa; she was fully ornamented with such magnetic eyes putting bright and tender lotus leaves to embarrassment; she is tastefully dressed up in silks; her body colour was a mix of 'Haridra Peeta' or yellow and orange; wearing lustrous ear rings of gems; she kept her hands in the stance of bestowing boons; she was of the 'Hema Bimbaakara' created by Brahma; was the Unique Enchantress; of Linga Shakti; indeed she was Gauri the Sweet Wife of Ekaamreshwara popular as Kamakshi!)

Manmatha Deva the God of Love arrived at Kama Koshta and performed very severe and tough Tapsya to Kamakshi Devi for a number of years and as she granted her darshan finally, he prayed to her and requested that his 'Ananga Swarupa' or Non-Physical Form that Maha Deva gave as the only dispensation consequent on his scorching Madana into a heap of ash. Manmatha begged Kamakshi to return his original Swarupa. Devi Kamakshi granted his request and blessed him that his life would be Everlasting and Joyful. Puffed up by Devi's boon, Manmatha reached Maha Deva and poured streams of flowery arrows targeted to him. A highly enraged Shiva threw his Trishula and later the most powerful 'Pashupatastra' but surprisingly Trishula proved ineffective while the 'Astra' was converted as a Flower Garland! Shiva was puzzled and realising that his discomfiture of his was due to Devi Kamakshi's boons to Manmatha, he approached Kamakshi but the latter asked him as to who was he as he seemed to have come near to her out of blind passion! Shiva reasoned with her that she was after all his wife and wondered what had upset her so much that she disliked of him! She replied to Shiva sternly that she was not Gauri as Shiva mistook her and that she was Maha Shakti responsible for the creation of Brahma-Vishnu and Maheshwara. Shiva tried to man-handle her out of his physical lust as generated by Manmatha and also due the disgrace inflicted on him by his arrows! Devi snubbed and repulsed Shiva and asked him to apologise to Manmatha. Later she created crores of Manmathas and instructed them to beat Shiva. He in turn created Koti Rudras and there was a fierce battle between flowery arrows and Trishulas! Madanas had an upper hand and Shiva became helpless. Kamakshi heckled Shiva and asked him to go begging and handed over a begging bowl to him. She then displayed her real Swarupa as Maha Shakti and demanded that he should take protection from her. Maha Deva prostrated before Kamakshi and as per her instruction Manmatha became a Star on the Galaxy and continued Devi Dhyana for ever!

Some time later Brahma visited a few Shiva Temples and found that there was no presence of Shivani there! Virinchi prayed to Kamakshi and the latter granted her dispensation that all the Shiva Temples from thence forth would have the presence of Devi too except Kamakoshta since Shiva was defeated by Manmatha there by her grace and hence this Place would be called 'Shivajit Kshetra. She further stated that this would be an exceptional place where Gauri would not be present in a Shivalaya and that she would do so only when Shiva could defeat Manmatha! In other words Ekamreshwara Linga could enter Kama koshta only then! Brahma raised a doubt as to how annual celebrations of Gauri-Ekamreshwara Kalyanaas be performed! Then Kamakshi replied that there could be some Ekamba Devalayas and that she would assume Sthaanu Swarupa in such Temples; Ekaameshwara Temple was in a case in point! On the day of Kamakshi-Ekamreshwara Kalyana, the Sthaanu Vighraha of Gauri be invoked for due worship and after the celebration of the Kalyana she should be returned to a 'Dhruvaalaya' as Sthanu Swarupa where no Pujas to Devi be performed beyond two days; it would be a violation of Devi's instruction otherwise!

Hema Kamakshi made her appearance in Shri Mukha Samvatsara Kartika Krishna Dashami coinciding with Lakshmi Vaasara at Suryodaya of Purva Phalguni Nakshatra. As soon as she manifested herself she was of Bimbakaara, Divya Laavanya, Japaa Maalaankrita, Jataamakuta Dharini, Prasanna Vadana, Chicchakti Rupa, and Tripura Sundaryaakaara. Brahma worshipped her and got an Idol made as a Divya Vighraha in Loha. As she was 'Dhruva Sthita' or Sthanu Rupa, She was invoked with Anga-Kara and other

Nyaasas and was worshipped for six months but Brahma decided to celebrate with reverence her Kalyana Mahotsava with Maha Deva.

Brahma's blindness and Sarasvati offers solution: As Brahma became blind all of a sudden, Devi Sarasvati explained the reason of his blindness; in Kanchipura under the Kama Koshtathere was the Gayatri Mandapa beneath which Shiva built a Kundalini Griha and who ever visited that Mantapa should perform **Shri Chakra Puja** and who did not perform so and walk across would turn blind! Sarasvati divulged this secret to Brahma as she learnt of it from Shiva. Brahma visited Kama Koshta and performed Shri Chakra Puja; he also had a darshan of Hema Kamakshi since only she could pardon the sin of not performing Shri Chakra Puja and trample the hallowed Place!

Kamakshi Naama Panchaka: Maharshi Markandeya enlightened the King Surata that Devi Kamakshi had five names viz. Swarnanangi, Shuka Hasta, Chuta Linga Vallabha and Dharma Devi; and the Dhruvatma (Sthanu Swarupa) had five other titles viz. Tapasvini, Ghana Shyama, Sarva Shaivalaeshwari, Kamakshi and Kalika. Bhagavan Shankara had the names of Chuta Jyoti, Nirgunatma, Shiva, Kameshwara and Ekaamranadha. He also was known as Yagodbhava, Punya Koti, Maha Deva, Deva Raja and Abheeshta Varada. Kanchi had thus the fame of Three Swarupas viz. Shri Devi, Shiva Rupa and of Vishnu Swarupa. One should meditate the Nirguna-Saguna Swarupa of Shakti bhava Shiva and that was how Lalita Parameshwari was titled 'Shiva Shaktaika Rupini'!

Shiva Shaktaika Puja Vidhana: In view of the Oneness of Shiva and Shakti, one must always perform Shiva Shaktaika Puja for augmenting propitiousness. The Puja be first performed as addressed to Shiva followed by Paraa Shakti Puja; Markandeya emphasised that while performing Puja, Shiva should not be conceived in Gauri Bimba and Gauri should not be prayed to in Shiva Bimba; in fact the Maharshi warned not to confuse the specifics of the Puja for good results of Mukti and any mix up might end up in adverse consequences of Naraka! The Bimba Puja should definitely follow this instruction! Generally speaking, there should be awareness of Bimba Bheda, Yantra Bheda, Tantra Bheda and Mantra Bheda! While elaborating of specific 'Bimbhas', Markandya clarified that Purnaamsha Devi was manifested in the Tripuraa Bimba, Kalaatma Devi in Gauri Bimba, Dhruveshwari in Utsava Yogya Bimbhas, Nirguna Swarupa in Rasaala Vriksha, Saguna Swarupini in Ekaamra Linga and Purusha Rupini in Varada Raja Vighraha. However, the 'Purnaamsha' or Completed Magnificence was stated to be in Kama Koti or Kamaraja Peetha and those who had a darshan of that hallowed Place were blessed indeed!

Shri Chakra Puja: Those who might not be fortunate to visit Kamaraja Peetha might as well perform Shri Chakra Puja. In the Shri Chakra, one should pray to one's Guru on the Tri Kona Purvaagra or the encircled Triangle's right top. At the same Place prayers were to be offered to Parama Guru, Parameshthi Guru, Paratpara Guru, Narayana, Padma Sambhava, Vasishtha, Shakti, Paraashara, Vyaasa, Shuka, Goudapaada, Kouliki and Manavoughama and ponder about Maha Kamehwari Kuta with Shri Vidya or Pancha Dashi Mantra. Later on, one should the Koulika Dharma Vettha (the Performer of the Puja) must recite Shri Vidya atleast one thousand times. If the 'Chaapaka' or the Person responsible for the Puja was unable to perform 'Anna Daana' then he or she should seek pardon from Shri Devi. But the most significant aspect of Shri Chakra Puja would be the 'Shri Vidyaa Yajana' or the Japa as prescribed.

In the past, the Shri Vidya Chakra Puja was successfully executed by Devi Lakshmi, Hayagriva, Manu, Dasharatha, Tunda, Kantaara Chola, Pannaga Raja and Shiva:

Beneficiaries of Shri Chakra Puja: At the time of Samudra Mathana, Vishnu who was of a naturally fair complexion turned blue and Lakshmi joked with Vishnu that she would not be fit to be her husband as she was of golden complexion; Vishnu gave a repartee to her that she was old and cursed her to turn of 'Anjana Neela' complexion. Then **Lakshmi** did 'Shri Vidyopaasana' and regained her natural colour.

Hayagriva Muni was engaged in continuous meditation of Shri Vidya of Devi Kamakshi when once a Rakshasa named Padma sat on the Muni and forced him to travel to Pataala Loka as a horse; Devi

Kamakshi appeared in Pataala to save the Muni by killing the Asura. Hahagreeva assumed Vishnu Swarupa and tricked Rakshasa Guru Shukraachaarya and took away the 'Akshaya Kumbha of Mrita Sanjeevani' kept with the Acharya for the revival of dead Asuras and performed Abhisheka of the Sanjeevini to Devi Kamakshi. **Vaivaswata Manu** assumed Manvatwa as bestowed by his father Surya Deva but he had no knowledge what so ever about the fine distinctions of Paapa-Punyas and as advised by Vasishtha Muni and visited Kama Koshta; Durvasa Maharshni provided the 'Upadesha' or instruction of Shri Vidya Mantra and the Manu did Dhyana and Tapas to Devi Kamakshi for hundred years. Then Kamakshi arrived near Manu in the Form of a Brahmana Woman and performed Abhisheka to Manu with the Sacred Waters of Pancha Tirtha as a mark of declaring him as a Chakravarti and imparted the Knowledge of Ideal Administration; till date the 'Dharma Smriti' continues as the Guide of Dharma. **King Dasharatha** was advised by Vasishtha Muni to visit Kama Koshta to perform Shri Chakra Puja and there was a Celestial Voice assuring the birth of Epoch making sons of Shri Rama and others. In the days of yore, **King Aakaasha** joined some followers of Boudha Guru and as directed by the latter stole considerable money of the Kingdom and mis-spent for wrong purposes and due to this sin became childless. He repented and abandoned the Boudha Guru and approached Gorakshanadha Muni who directed him to worship Kamakshi and taught Shri Vidya. He was then blessed with a boy like Vighneshwara as his son. As the King and Queen continued Devi worship daily, one day after the conclusion of the Puja-Homa-Dampati Puja-'Brahmana Samaaradhana', there was a miracle of Suvarna Varsha / Rain of Gold! Although the Brahmanas and Munis at the Bhojanam were unable to explain, the twelve year old son of Akaasha explained the reason: in the meals that were normally served at the daily 'Samaaraadhana', there was a golden pebble in the greengram which was also cooked and served from the Bhojan consumed by an elderly 'Sumangali' woman who was Kamakshi herself and hence the Rain of Gold! The King's son ate a portion of the left over remnant of what the Suvasini ate, then he became a 'Sarva Tantra Visharada' or an expert of 'Tantra Gyana'; he was considered as Ganeshwara by those present and was named **Tunda** and was named the King of Kanchi Kshetra. In the Agneya direction of Kamakshi Temple there was an Idol of King Tunda that called for a Pradakshina lest the Devi Darshana Phala would reach to King Tunda's account! **King Vikrama Chola** was dethroned by his younger brother Shalya Chola aided by his schemy friend Parjanya. Vikrama Chola and his wife roamed about aimlessly and luckily reached Kama Koshta and organised a flower garden and supplied excellent garlands to Devi Kamakshi daily. Pleased by their service and devotion, Devi blessed them a female child. As the daughter grew of marriageable age, Kamakshi appeared in a dream to the Pandya King Uddhaajit and asked him to defeat a battle with Shalya Chola and marry the daughter of the latter's elder brother who presently was supplying flower garlands to her. The Pandya King followed Devi's instructions and with passage of time King Vikrama Chola retired in favour of his son and devoted his time in the service of Kamakshi. Among various deeds of virtue, he developed gardens by extending them into forests thus securing the epithet of **Kaantara Chola**. While he was working in the forests, he had a serpent bite and he as well as the serpent attained Moksha by the grace of Devi.

Phala Shruti

Those who read or hear Shri Kamakshi Vilasa is blessed by her grace and grandeur. The renderings about Devi as Tripura Sundari, Kanchipura as Bhuloka Swarga, Hasti Shaila Mahima, Splendour of Varada Raja Swami, Vegavat Nadi Prabhava, Rudra Shaala Mahatmya, Significance of Ekaamra Vriksha, Glories of Ekamreshwara and Bala / Tapas Kamakshi, Sarva Tirtha Mahima, Kamakoti Sthala Nirnaya, Kamakoti Bila, Magnificence of Maha Tripura Sundari, the proceedings of Shiva-Kamakshi Kalyana, Eminence of Bhuta bandha Janardana, Shiva's discomfiture by Manmadha, Brahma's blindness, Shri Chakra Puja Vidhana and illustrations of the Benefeciaries of Shri Chakra Puja notably of Lakshmi-Hayagriva, Vaivaswata Manu, King Dasharatha, King Tundeera and King Kantaara Chola; Hema Kamakshi Seva Phala and other aspects were absorbing and sanctified. The Pathana-Shravana- Dhaarana of Shri

Kamakshi Vilasa would take steps forward to the realisation of the Devi and her supremacy. On completion of the experience of the accounts of the Shri Kamakshi, there should be 'Shodashopachara Puja' of the Devi followed 'Brahmana Satkaara' with Vastra-Bhojana- Dakshinas and Anna Daana. Maharshi Markandeya who scripted and rendered Shri Kamakshi Vilasa to King Suratha blessed the latter who prostrated to the Maharshi and paid his reverences. Markandeya also blessed the readers or listeners of the Maha Kamakshi Vilasa with 'Deerghaayu- Putra Poutraabhivridhi-Sakala Kaamita Siddhi and Shri Devi Pada Prapti'!

ANNEXURE I

Agastya-HayagrivaSamvada

Anaadyanantamavyaktam Vyaktaanaam adikaaramam, Anandabodhaika Rasam Tanmahasya Upasmahey/ (I meditate that Supreme in my heart and Soul that has no Beginning nor End; neither Perceivable nor Imperceptible but the Cause of Causes and the root of Knowledge and Fulfilment)

Brahma's commedation of Tripura Sundari

Agastya Muni requested Bhagavan Hayagriva about Kanchi Kamakshi and Bhagavan explained that Maheshwara had two operational eyes viz. Kashipura and Kanchipura of which Kanchi Kshetra was a Shiva Saannidya Vaishnava Kshetra. Brahma made relentless Tapasya to Tripura Sundari Devi and she appeared as seated in Padmaasana along with Vishnu and Lakshmi. Brahma extolled as follows:

Jaya Devi Jaganmaatarjaya Tripura Sundari, Jaya Shrinatha Sahajey Jaya Sarva Mangaley/ Jaya Jaya JagadambaNitya Rupey Jaya Jaya Santata Loka Soukhyadey, Jaya Jaya Karunaabdhi bhutey Jaya Jaya Shringaara Naayakey Devi/ Jaya Jaya Nilayaayitaraatma Vidye JayaJaya Yogindra Vandita -anghrey, Jaya Jaya Nija Bhaktasaatkritashrirjaya Jaya Nijanetra jaata Shiva Kaamey/ Jaya Janmasthiti dhwamsapidhaana anugrahaanrmuhuh, Yaa karoti Swasankalpaatthasmai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Varnaashramaanaam Saankarya kaarakaan Durjanaam Swayam, Yaa hanyattha teekshnaa –strai tasyai Devyai namoh namoh/ Naagamairna cha Vedaischa na ShaastrairnachaYougibhih, Suvedyaayaa Swasanvedyaa tasmai Devaim Namoh Namah/Rahasyaamnaaya Vedaantaistatwavidbhur Muneeshvaraih, Param Brahmehi yaa proktaa tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Hridayasthaapi Lokaanaam yenakenaapi drushyatey, Sukshma Vignaana rupaayai Tasyai Devai Namoh Namah/ Brahma Vishnuscha RudraschavIshwarascha Sadaa Shivah, Yaddhyaanaika Paraa Nityam tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Pancha kaarana krutyendraa yadaagnaameva bibhrati, Saamraajya sampra deeshaayai tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Vedaani Shwasitam yasyaa Veekshitam Bhuta Panchakam, Smitam Charaacharam Vishwam tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Sahasra sirsha Bhogeendro Dharitreem yhadanujnayaa, Dhattey Sarva janaadhaaraam tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Jalayagnasta patyarko Vaato Vaati yadaagnayaa, Jnaana Shakti Swarupaayai tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Pancha Vimshati Tatwaani Maayaa Vidyaaadi Panchakam, Yanmayam Munayah Praahustasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Shiva Shaktishwaraaschaiva Shuddha Vidyaa Sadaa Shivah, Yadyanmesha Vibhedaassyustasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Gururmantro Devataacha Manah Praanaascha Panchadhaa, Yaa Virajati Chidrupaa tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Sarvaatma naamaantaraatma Paramaananda Rupini, Shri Vidyaiti smritaa yaatu tasmai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Darshanaanicha Sarvaani yadangaani Vidurbudhaah, Tatthanniyamarupaayai rupaayai tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Yaabhaati Sarva Lokeshu Mani Mantroushadhaatmanaa, Tatwopadesh rupaayai tasmai Devyai Namoh Namah/ Desha Kaala Padaardhaascha yadyadvastu yatha yathaa, Tadrupena yaa bhaati tasyai Devyai namoh Namah/ Sacchidaananda rupaa yaa Kalyaana guna shaalini, Vishvottheernoti Vikhyaataa tasyai Devyai Namoh Namah/

(Jaya Jaya Jagajjanani, Tripura Sundari, Shri Nadha Sahodari, Sarva Mangala, Nitya Swarupini, Karunaamrita Sindhu, Shringaara Nayaki, Atma Vidyaa, Yogendra vanditaanghrey or she whose

physique is worshipped by Yogendraas; provider of prosperity to Bhaktas; creator of Shiva's desires from her own eyes; she who could create, preserve, destroy and re-create by her mere thought; You are Kalika who severely punishes those responsible for tampering the Varnaashrama Dharmaas; You are clearly discernible by the means of Vedas, Shastras, Agamaas and Yogaas; you are realisable only by one's own 'Antaraatma' of those Munis who are experts in Rahasyaamnaas, Upanishads and Tatwas address you as Para Brahma; though you are present in each and every human heart, not every one could realise you; you are Sukshma Jnaana Rupini; Brahma-Vishnu-Rudra-Ishwara-Sada Shivas worship you regularly; Saamrajya Sampadeshwari! Panchendriyas and Pancha Krityaas are under your instructions; Devi! Your sighs are Vedas and your looks are Pancha Bhutas; your smile is the Charaachara Srishti; it is with your command that Ananta Deva holds on his thousands of hoods the weight of Bhudevi; it is with your approval that Agni burns, Surya provides heat, Vayu carries life; Jnaana Shakti Swarupini! Pancha Vimshati or Twenty Five Tatwaas and Mayaavidyaadi Panchakaas are your Forms as confirmed by Maharshis; Shiva-Shakti-Ishwara-Suddha Vidya-Sadaa Shiva are all your variations; Guru- Mantra-Devata-Mental faculty and Praana are all your manifestations; you are the Antaratma of all Beings; you are Symbol of Everlasting Paramaananda or Bliss; indeed you are the Shri Vidya; all kinds of 'Darshanas' or blessings and Yogas are your body parts; You are the Mani Aoushda Swarupa; Tatwopadesha Rupini! The kaleidoscopic differences of Desha-Kaala-Padartha or of Place-Time-Materials in the Universe in totality are but your own handi-work; You are Sacchnaanada Rupini! Sakala Kalyaana Guna Shaalini! Vishvottirna Vikhyaataa or Famed beyond the capacity of the Universe!

As Brahma prostrated before Tripura Sundari, she was extremely delighted and asked him for a boon; he requested her to be ever present in Kanchi and she readily agreed. Then he requested Janardana also to reside there for good and Sri Hari too approved. Further Brahma prayed to Devi that Maha Deva too should reside there especially due to his affection for her. Instantly, Parama Shiva manifested himself along with Gauri and they also agreed to Brahma's proposal. Then Vishnu announced Shiva-Gouri Kalyana Mahotsava and invited Indraadi Devaas, Vaswaadi Pitru Devataas, Markandeyaadi Munis, Vasishthaadi Saptarshis, Sanaka sanandanaadi Yogis, Naradaadi Devarshis, Vaama devaadi Maha Jnaanias, Shuikaadi Jeevanmuktaas, Yaksha-Kinnara-Kimpurusha-Gandharva-Siddha- Vidyaadharaas, Pramatha Ganaadhipati Vighna Naayakas, Nava Durgaas, Brahmaadi Sapta Matrikas, Apsarasas and so on. The most Memorable Wedding was then celebrated as Devas sounded dundhubhis (Celestial Drums), arranged light showers of flowers, dances and music. Brahma and Vani, Vishnu and Shri Lakshmi, Indra and Indraani, Devas and their spouses and the rest of Invitees made Pradakshinas and Prostrations when there were sky-high reverberations of Victory Calls of 'Jaya Jaya Kamakshi' and 'Jaya Jaya Kameshwara' all over the Universe!

'Shri Kamaakshyaapaada Mastaka Varnana' (Shri Kamakshi's Physical Description)

*Pashyatam sarvadevanam tatraivaantaradhiyata, Atha Dhataa Maha Gouryah pratibimba manoharam/
Chakaara Divyalohena Maha Gourisamaakruti, Tarunaaruna Rajiva soundarya charana
dvayam/Kanatkanaka manjira pinjari kruta pithakam, Vidyudullasa Vasanamano gnyamanimekhalam/
Ratnakeyura vilasiddhirajita bhujadvayam, Mukta vaidurya manikya nibadhodhara bandhanam/
Vibhrajamanam madhyena valitritayashobhina, Jahnavi saridavartashobhinabhi vibhushitam/
Paatira panka karpur kumkuma alankritastanam, Aamuktamuktaalankara bhasurastanachuchukam/
Vilasena katideshanyasta vamkaarambujam, Manikyashakalaabadha mudrikabhiralankrutam/
Dakshahastaambujaasaktasnidhotpalamanoharam Aadhyamaprapadeenaischa divyakalpakadambakaih/
Deepta bhushana ratnamshu rajirajitadinmukham, Tapta haataka samklyupta ratnagraiveya
shobhitam/Mangalyasutra ratnanshushreneee manjula kandharam,
Valeevatmsa maanikya taatanka pari bhushitam/Japavidruma lavanya lalithadhara pallavam,
Dadimiphalabijaabha dantapankti viraajitam/Shuchimandasmitollaasi kapola phalkojjvalam,
Aoupamyara hitodaara nasamani manoharam/Vilasattkila pushpa shrivijayodyata nasikam,
Isha dunmesha madhura nilotpala vilochanam/Prasunachaapa chaapa Shri Lalita bhruvilasakam,*

*Ardhendutulitam phaaley purnenduruchirananam/Saandra saurabha sampanna kasturi tilakojvalam,
Maktalimala vilasadalakaadhya mukhaambujam/Paarijaata prasuna stragvalugu dhammilla bandhanam,
Anargha ratna khachita makutaanchita mastakam/Sarvalavanya vasatim bhavanam vibhramaashriyah/
Shivo Vishnuscha tatradyaassamastaascha mahajanah, Bimbasaya tasya Devyasch na bhedom
jagruhustada/ Atha bimba Maheshani swatantraa pravivesha tat/
Agratassarva Devaanaamaascharyena prapashyataamBimbaakrutyaatmano Bimbey samaagatyaa
sthitaam cha taam/*

(Shri Maha Gauri's sacred feet are bright and delicate like red lotuses with her ankles strung around with golden chains fitted with tiny tinklets made of a flash of precious stones making soft sounds partly hiding the glory of the lustrous silk sari that she was dressed in. She was ornamented with a charmingly designed 'Odhyana bandhana' (girdle) of gold with Nine Gems enhancing the glitter of the Sari. Her ever-forgiving hands have Nava Ratna Khachita Keyuras or armlets. Her vakshasthala was smeared with Karpura- Kumkuma-Akshataas and her graceful left hand carried ruby studded rings of gold; her right hand carried 'snigdhotpala' or fully blossomed lotus; her Mangala Sutra was augmenting the beauty and splendour emitted by the Kiranas / rays of a graceful mix of neck laces; her Adhara Pallavas (tender lips) were of soft and crimson redness; her cheeks were dimpled and constantly smiling and benign; her nose excels with distinction wearing a noselet of a single but unique diamond; her forehead was like half moon but her full face was far beyond the cool brightness of a Full Moon; her Suvarana Kireeta / golden headgear full of a sparkling mix of multi-coloured and dazzling precious Stones unavailable and unseen by the Eyes of Devas let alone human beings; She was the Epitome of Grace; the Embodiment of Kindness and the Personification of Auspiciousness).

As the description of Maha Gauri's Physique ended, Vishnu and Maheshwara could not distinguish between her and her Bimba (Hallow) and she got absorbed in it. Shri Hari prostrated before her and requested her that as per the past practice, they would wish to celebrate the Sacred Wedding of Gauri and Maha Deva so that the general public would not be deprived of an opportunity to reach their Fulfilment of desires besides attaining Salvation. There was a Celestial Approval of the Wedding Proposal stating 'Tathaastu' or so be it. The Kalyana was celebrated as described above in the same Annexure I and the Deities settled in their respective positions; while Shri Kama Koshta was in the center of Shripura, Devi Lakshmi was to its left and Vishnu was to the right. Each year, human beings should celebrate the Kalyanotsava and continue to enjoy prosperity, long life and happiness.

ANNEXURE II

Agastya Maharshi requested Hayagriva Deva to enlighten him about the grandeurs of Shri Lakshmi Kamakshi and Hayagriva replied:

The Top Five

*Mahaa Tripura Sundaryaa Maahaatmyam samupaadishat, Tatprabhaavaanam vedyi kinhitadvakshey
na chaanyathaa/ Rahasya Mantra tadvakshey shrunu tatvam samaahat, Na Brahmaa nacha Vishnurvaa
na Rudrascha Trayopyami/ Mahitaa maayayaa yasyastureeyascha Maheshwarah, Sadaa shivo vaa
jaanaati kimuta Prakrutaamaraah/ Sadaa Shivastu Dharmaatmaa Sacchidaananda Vighrah,
Akartyumanyathaa Kartaa Yasyastwanugrahaat/ Sa kadaachitta Devaaham Maanya maano
Maheshwarah, Tanmayaa mohito bhutvaa twavashas –shavataatagaat/ Kinchidatra Viseshosti
Vaktavyassopi tatkshunu/ Brahmaa deenaam trayaanaam cha Tureeyasteeshwarah Prabhuh/
Chaturnaamapi Sarveshaamaadi Kartaa Sadaa Shivah, Saiva Kaaranametesaam
Srishtisthitilayeshwapi/ Maadrasahyam kathitam tasmaascharatimadbhutam, Punareva prayakshaami
Saavadhaanaah shrunu/ Atra sthitaapi Sarveshaam hridayasthaa Ghatod –bhava, Tattatkarmaanurupam*

*saa pradattey dehinaam phalam/ Yatkinchidvartatey Lokey Sarvamasya vicheshtimam,
Yatkinchittchantayatey kaschistwacchaanda vididhaatyasou/ Asyaa yevaavataarastu Tripuraadyascha
Shaktyayah/*

(Brahma-Vishnu-Rudraas as also Maheshwara and further Superior Sada Shiva too did not realise my Magnificence and after all how about Devas! Only the Superior Sada Shiva was free to act or react to do or undo as he enjoyed Devi's confidence. Maheshwara once felt that he was the Para Deva then he had to be turned out as a Corpse! However Maheshwara was no doubt senior to Tri Murtis but could not arrogate Superiority beyond that stage. Basically the five of them were answerable to the Deeds of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhaaraas. But above all was myself being present in the hearts and Souls of every person or Deva or their manifestations. The Top Five were thus answerable to Devi and the rest was my own **Vilaasa!**

Hayagriva continued his narration to Agastya as follows: At the beginning Devi Kamakshi materialised three eggs; these three created Tri Purushas and Tri Shaktis: The First Egg manifested Gauri and Narayana; then the Second couple were Lakshmi and Brahma and the third in the series of were Vani and Shiva. Then Maha Devi made the arrangement herself and made the combination of Brahma and Vani; Vishnu and Lakshmi and finally Shiva and Parvati. Maha Devi also made three Abodes of Satya Loka to Brahma, Vaikuntha to Vishnu and Shiva to Kailasa and firmed up their duties as well of Creation-Preservation and Destruction.

Parvati's sin, Kamakshi's pardon and Gauri-Shiva's Kalyana: Devi Parvati closed Shiva's three eyes playfully once and the representations of Surya-Chandra-Agnis of the eyes were put off when the Universe was drowned in darkness and there was Pralaya. Shiva advised Parvati to atone for her sin by performing severe Tapasya by assuming the Form of 'Baala' keeping Tulasi before her for long spells of time on the banks of Ganga at Varanasi and later at Kanchipuri near Kampa Nadi. Tripura Sundari Kamakshi was pleased by her Tapasya and pardoned her sin and infused her Shakti into Parvati. Kamakshi also instructed Shiva as the latter was in Tapasya too to accept Manmatha whom Shiva destroyed in the past with his Third Eye since Manmatha disturbed Shiva's concentration. Initially Shiva resisted Kamakshi's instruction but being overpowered by her Superiority succumbed to her magnificence. Then Kamakshi Devi as Tripura Sundari blessed both Gauri and Shiva to get remarried again.

Brahma's Seniority claim, Shiva beheads Brahma, atonesand Kamakshi's pardon: In Brahma Sabha once when Tri Murtis, Dikpalakas, Devas and Maharshis were present, there was some confusion about the identity of Brahma and Shiva as both had Five Heads. Brahma claimed his seniority but Narayana stated that after all Brahma was generated from the lotus top that sprouted from his navel and thus was his son. Brahma retaliated that he was the Srithti Karta and that he created Rudras too. An argument developed resulting in confrontation when a 'Jyoti Stambha' or a huge Pillar of Light appeared. Narayana realised that the Pillar was Maheshwara but the quarrelsome Brahma attempted to reach its top and failed and Narayana sought to slide down to ascertain the foot of the Pillar and failed too. The arrogant Brahma disregarded Maheshwara too and the latter grew angry and out of the rage was materialised Bhairava who snipped one of Brahma's Five heads and there was pandemonium all around. Bhairava tried to get rid of the Kapaala of the detached head of Brahma but it got stuck to him as the sin of 'Brahma Hatya'. Bhairava visited several Kshetras from Kashi onward and finally reached Pancha Tirtha at Kanchipura; He found Vasudeva was engrossed in the meditation of Kamakshi seated south of her and Lakshmi was immersed in the Dhyana of Kamakshi as seated to the latter's north. Bhairava realised that Vishnu and Lakshmi were in the dhyana of Kamakshi and went into a rapturous Yoga Samadhi. Sometime around mid night, Devi Kamashi appeared before Bhairava who pleaded her to be freed from the sin of Brahma Hatya as followed by the Brahma Kapala. She replied that he was indeed of her own Swaupa, blessed him

and asked him to dip in the Pancha Tirtha next morning. Miraculously Bhairava got freed from the Kapala and simultaneously Shiva got rid of the begging bowl being the Brahma Kapala at Varanasi!

Kamakshi blesses King Dasharatha with Excellent Progeny

Maharshi Vasishtha instructed the childless King Dasharatha to worship Tri Pura Sundari who manifested at Five Maha Punya Kshetras of Ayodhya, Madhura, Maya, Kashi, Kanchi and Avanti. The King along his three wives worshipped the Devi at Ayodhya for three days and nights. On the third mid-night, as the King was asleep Devi appeared and assured that he would no doubt beget illustrious sons but he had some possible impact on the longevity of the progeny due to blemishes in his previous births; she therefore directed him to visit Kanchipura, take Sacred bath in Pancha Tirtha, secure her Darshan at Kanchi and perform Shri Chakra Puja. She further instructed the King to enter Kama Koshta and the Maha Bila which was worshipped by Tri Mutris and Maharshis; She was present as seated with 'Praangmukha' or facing East as Invisible 'Maha Raagini', that Maha Gouri manifested from Kamakshi's forehead would be seated towards the Southern Side; that Maha Lakshmi would be seated to Kamakshi's left as Bimbaakaara; that her mere view would destroy all sins and flaws and then the King should perform 'Shodasopachara Puja' as prescribed. The excited King visited Kanchi at once along with his queens under the direction of Guru Vasishtha Maharshi, performed the Shri Chakra Worship as instructed by Tripura Sundari, prostrated before her, did Pradakshinas most reverentially, gave away charities liberally, arranged Brahmana Puja with respects and arranged Anna daanas. At the conclusion of the Worship, the King made Devi Stuti as follows:

*Paadaagra lamba Paramaabhii rama Manjeera Ratna Ruchi Manjula Paada Padmey,
Peetaambarasphuratapeyshala Hema Kaanti Keyura Kankana Parishkruta Baahu Valli/ Pundrekshu
chaapa Vilasamridu vaama paaney, RatnormikaaSuma shaaraahatadaksha hastey/ Vakshoja mandala
vivalga Vaksha haarey, Pashaangushaanghadalasad bhuja shobhitaangi/ Vaktashriyaa Vijita shaarada
Chandra bimbe, Taataanka ratna karamandita bhaagey/ Mandasmitasphurana shaalini manjunaasey,
Netra triya Vijita neela saroja patrey/ Subhrulatey Suvadaney Sulalaata chitrey, Graiveyaka sphurita
kambu manojna kanthey/ Ratnaanuvibhutaneeya Mahaakireetey Sarvaanga sundari Samasta Surendra
Vandye/ Kaankshaanurupa varadey Karunaardra chitrey, Saamraajya sdampadabhimaanini Chakra
naathey/ Yogeendra maanasaSaroja nivaasa hamsi, Simhaasaneshwari Parey Mahi Saannidhehi/*

(Devi! You are ornamented with 'Diyaabharanas' emitting splendours of anklet chains adding the illuminations of your soft feet; you are possessive of hands with 'Suvarna Kankanas' on your wrists as your left hand with gem studded finger rings has a sugar cane bow with flower arrows and the right with 'Paashaankushaas'; you wear silk dresses doubling the radiance of your body shine of gold; your long neck laces made of Nava Ratnas touching 'Vakshojaas' make fun of Chandra bimba; your shapely nose heckles moon shine; enticing eyes are like Neela Sarojas; you are of Su Vadana or of charming face; Su Lalaata or charismatic forehead; Kanthaabharanaas are exquisitely bedecked; and your 'Nava Ratna Kireeta' enriches 'Sarvaanga Soundarya'. Para Devata! Sakala Suraasura Vandaniya or worshippable by Devas and Asuraas; Yoga Maanasa Hamsi! Vanchita Varapradaa! Karunaalayaa! Samraajya Daayini! Shri Chakreshwari! Simhasanshwari! Tri Pura Sundari!)

As the King prayed to her, Kamakshi Devi blessed him with four sons with Devaamsha. Bhakta Ganaas do get their desires fulfilled as in the case of Dasharatha. Indeed Shri Devi's Mahatmya is unparalleled and inexpressible to Brahma- Vishnu- Maheshwaras!

[The above Annexures were extracts from the Hayagriva-Agastya Samvada of Kamakshi Mahima as quoted by Markandeya Maharshi to King Surata].

OM SHRI LAKSHMI KAMAKSHYAI NAMAH

SKANDA MAHATMYA

Scripted and edited by V.D.N.Rao

Shakti hastam Virupaaksham Shikhvaaham Shadaananam, Daarunam- Ripu- Rogaghnam, bhaavayet kukkuta dhvajam/

Consequent on the flash back of Daksha Yajna Dhvamsa- Devi Sati's Yagnaahuti- the Fury of Shiva Tandava - the Emergence of Shakti Peethas- Shiva's extreme tapsya-Devi Parvati's bhakti and service to Shiva the Maha Tapasvi-Indra Deva's secret plan for the wedding of 'Shiva -Parvati'- Brahma's boon to Tarakasura that only Parama Shiva's brilliant son could kill Tarakasura- Manmatha's flowery and amorous arrows disturbing Shiva Tapasya - Trinetra Prayoga burning Manmadha's physique yet surviving by Maya Shakti- and the consequent and the glorious birth of Skanda Kumara and his extermination of Tarakasura for 'Loka Kalyana'.

As the Universal adversary Tarakasura's arrival on Prithvi and relentless tapasya to Brahma who granted the boon of invincibility, the Asura resorted to destroying 'varnaashrama vyavastha', 'veda brahmana kaaraagaara', 'stree maana bhangas'. He perpetrated untold harrassment to Maharshis and Celestials, declaring : 'I am Ishvara, Sarva Devata-Brahmana-Kula Devata' ! Maha Munis and Indraadi Devas approached Maha Vishnu who was in Yoga Nidra and thus approached Parama Shiva who left Kailasa foe severe tapasya in deep mountain caves 'in cognito'. Then there was an 'aakasha vaani' announcement that only Shiva Putra Skanda could destroy Tarakasura, and Indraadi Devas broke into rapturous dances. They made a desperate appeal to 'Maha Maya Shakti, Loka Rakshaakari, Paratparakala'; then a thunderous voice was heard that they should initiate prayers to Devi Parvati of my 'amsha' who had already appeared as Himaputri to reach Parama Shiva for performing nitya seva of Shiva - as a bhilini or mountain tribe woman to serve the latter for fetching puja dravyas like flowers, fruits etc in his tapasya with her singular desire to be the life partner. As Maha Maya thus assured, Indra and Devottamas convened a 'Meet' and the resolution was that Manmadha and Devi Rati be at once summoned to

cooperate in the ‘Maha Deva Karya of Shiva- Parvati Parinaya’! Kaama Deva with the request to Agni Deva to be involved in the divine task of Tarakasura Vadha so that even the ‘achanchala manas’ of Parama Shiva in deep tapsya might be diluted.

Kama Deva having reached the picturesque spot where Lord Shiva was in deep tapasya, he found the atmosphere was clean with gorgeous and green surroundings of huge trees, splendid and aromatic flowers, transparent flows of water, and in all a highly romantic yet ideal background for concentration. Manmadha hid himself in the bushes but the Lord realised that there appeared to be slight disturbance of plant trees and winds. From his celestial vision, Parama Shiva discovered Manmadha with pointed flowery arrows in both of his hands! He twisted his eye brows even as the ‘Phala Chandra’ on his forehead was alerted and raised his tone saying: who had created this sinful creature facing death! Kamadeva trembled in fear and prayed to Indraadi Devas in waste and looked up Maha Deva seeking pardon but the latter opened up His third eye above and His eyebrows opened up with a single flap and Manmadha was done to ashes instantly. Indraadi devaas were frightened in shudder and approached Maha Deva in repeated prostrations seeking his pardon as they did so only for Loka Kalyaana! Meanwhile Bhilini appeared, eased the tensions as thus displayed, cooled down Shiva gradually, pardoned the prostrating Indraadis in shivers and lightened the total atmosphere with diluted humour. Parama Shiva too smiled and invited the ‘bhilini’ and flew off by the Nandeeswara to Kailasa!

Ever during the honey moon period for several years, Devi Parvati continued her feelings of guilt in her inner conscience recalling the desperate and frustrated beggings of Indraadi Devas. In a distressed and frantic Brihaspati the Acharya of Indradi Devas appeared in her vision while ‘samasta devaganas’ headed by Indra was performing Maya Yagjna for the destruction of Tarakasura. As intructed by Brihaspati and Indra, Agni Deva approached Devi Parvati and Shiva as a mendicant at their doorstep for begging; the startled Parama Shiva even advising Parvati to don her vastras at once, dropped his semen. Agni was taken aback as even a drop of the semen could burn off Prithvi and the entire samsaara could be turned into ashes. By this instant reaction, Agni swallowed the drops and spitted off the drops in Holy Ganga and purified himself and left away. Agni could never bring in sukha-shantis to the Lokas theresince! That was time when Surya entered the Tula Raasi in Shouramaana Kartika Month, when Agni Deva sought for Deha Shuddhi in the ‘ushah kaala’ snaana in pavitra Ganga and spitted off and got self purification, Agni could never bring in sukhs shantis to Lokas eversince. As Agni exited, Six Krittika Devis too were also seeking shuddhi snaanas and inadvertantly swallowed drops of Parama Shiva’s veerya but spitted off too on the ‘sarkhandas’ / grass roots on the river bank. Sage Narada seeking Shivadarshana noticed this scene in his microscopic vision and instatnly carried the ‘sarkhandas’ or the grass roots on the banks of Ganga to Devi Parvati and eventually a Six headed Shanmukha was born to Devi Parvati as caused by the Six Kritthika Devis! Narada exclaimed as follows: *Aagacchantaa maya drishtho Gauri! Marge tavaatmajah, Shanmukho dwaadashaa bhujjo Suryakoti samaprabhah/ Gangaateere nipatisti tasyakste Shanmukho nu kim,koti kandarpashobhaadyo garjitakhobhitaakhilah/ Katham nishthutaakaari Gauri sundara baalake/ Devi Parvati! On my way to Kailasa, I noticed your magnificent and unparalleled son in an embroy form as with six faces and twelve hands with ‘koti Surya samaana kanti’ on the banks of holy Ganga. By his birth, samasta lokas are reverberated with shrieks of joy and relief!*

On seeing the glorious countenance of Kumara, Devi Parvati was elated with ‘tanmayata’ as her breasts automatically sprang up with streams of milk and embraced and showered kisses on his cheeks, especially with his touch with mouth to start sucking. She then ruminated as where was Agni- Ganga-Krittikas-and Narada, leave alone Parama Shiva! As the boy grew up there was the namakarana ceremony for which Brahma Deva and Deva Guru Brihaspati arrived. The experts decided that since the Kumara was born in the month of Kartika, the boy’s first name should be Kartikeya besides very many. However, since Six Krittikas were on the scene of his birth the boy be named as Shanmatura and Shanmukha or Shadaanana.. Since the Baalaka was destined to demolish Tarakasura, he be named as Tarakajit. Since he was born

from Shiva veerya, he also be named as Skanda Deva. As the boy was to eventually be the Chief of Deva Sena, he be named as Senapati. In the celebrations of naama karana festival of Kumara, Devas and Muni gana were in raptures, Apsaras danced away, Narada Tumburas joined the musical reverberations of Gandharvas, and the entirety of three crore Devatas headed by Indra and overseen by Trimurtis blessed Kartikeya heartily. On this happy occasion, Indra and Devas who were already in attendance sought a special darshan of Karetikeya, made a special puja to him and as the latter was pleased, honoured Kartikeya to be the Head of Devasena with the title of Senapati. They then politely broached the topic of Lokakantaka Tarakasura vadha. As years rolled by with Kartikeya's vidya prapti and yagjnopaveeta dharana, Kartikeya became mentally and physically mighty far behind his childhood experiences like his enamour to reach and kiss Chandra Deva and Brahma made a timely warning politely! But now, Kumara had since accomplished buddhi of Brihaspati and shakti far beyond of Indra. Eventually he met his parents Shiva and Devi Parvati, praised Shiva on his famed victories like against Tripurasura ! Indeed, You are Sarvagjna, Sarvaantaryaami and Savavyaapi! Do very mercifully instruct me such a unique vrata pujavidhana which is 'sarva siddhi daayaka, putra sampadvisddhi daayaka, sarva paapa naashaka and dharmarth kaama daayaka and most importantly sarva shatru vijaya shubha daayaka'!

The above is about the glory of Skanda Deva as per Ganesha Purana. There are three versions of Skanda Deva janana and Mahatmya in Padma Purana, Skanda Purana and Matsya Puranas; especially in regard to Skanda Kumara Janma and His everlasting magnificance.

Padma Purana first:

It traces back the birth of Takakasura and his destruction by Lord Kumara Swami as follows: Sage Kashyap blessed his wife Diti to give birth to a great warrior 'Vajranga' who like a diamond was unbreakable and indestructible. Diti desired to avenge the killing of several Asuras in the past by Indra and asked Vajranga to defeat and bring down Indra imprisoned in person; on doing so, Diti put Indra to shame and released him saying that his subduing was worse than his death. Meanwhile, Vajranga did severe Tapasya to Brahma and the latter created Varangi as the wife of Vajranga. Brahma gave a boon to the pair that a Maha Shaktivaan called Tarakasura would be born after being retained for thousand years in confinement. There were harsh earthquakes and sea-uprisings when the Asura was born and the parents were filled with wild joy and excitement. As the boy attained youth, he turned out to be a frightening demon and developed friendship with other Asuras like Kujambha and Mahisha. Eventually, he reached a Pariyatra Mountain to perform Tapasya without food for hundred years, for another hundred years by consuming only dried leaves and for additional years by drinking water only. Brahma was pleased and gave a boon of invincibility except for a child of seven days of age, to be born of Shiva. After securing the boon from Brahma, Tarakasura raised a huge army of ten crore well-versed and trained soldiers along with the armies of renowned Asuras like Mahisha, Kujara, Megha, Kaalanemi, Nimi, Manthana, Jambhaka and Sumbha. As Tarakaura declared war with Indra and Devas, Indra commissioned Vayu Deva as an emissary as per the advice of Deva Guru Brishaspati, but the mission failed and so did the proverbial Four ways of 'Rajaniiti' or the Art of Politics viz. Sama (War-Counselling), Daana (luring by gifts), Bheda or by using the dividing politics of the opponents and Associates and finally 'danda' or actual war. Yamaraja was the Senapati, the Commander sitting over his Vahana Buffalo; Indra sat on his Durjayta ratha (chariot) with Malini as his driver; and all other Devas like Agni, Vayu, Varuna, Kubera, Chandra and Aditya, besides Ashvini Kumars, Marudganas, Sandhyaganas, Yakshas, Gandharvas etc. But Tarakasura was too powerful to Devas whose soldiers were badly bruised and ran without direction. Indra and Devas approached Brahma and he replied that none excepting a seven day son of Shiva and Devi Parvati, called 'Kartikeya' could kill Tarakasura and none else in the world. At this juncture, Indra prayed to Sage Narada to advise further plan in the context of the birth of Kartikeya. The Sage designed a route-map of action, first to approach Himavanta and his wife Mena as also Parvati to prepare them to wed Mahadeva; to secure access to Mahadeva for his consent to let Parvati assist the former in his daily Pujas

and approach Kama Deva and Rati Devi to stealthily despatch 'Pushpa Baanas' or Amorous Arrows of Love in favour of Parvati while she was in service to Mahadeva. But the Plan did not quite succeed as Mahadeva's eyes searched for Kama Deva and burnt him off with his third eye. As Devi Rati prayed to Maha Deva, the latter assured that Kama Deva would soon be created again as 'Ananga' or devoid of Physique. As Devi Parvati was shaken by the news of Kama Deva's turning into ashes, she decided to take to Tapasya; her father Himavan addressed the daughter to say: 'U' 'Ma' meaning 'Don't do so'! But still she left to such a Place to perform rigorous Tapasya where even Devas did not desire to visit and was so inaccessible at the heights of Himalayas. As the Plan as scripted by Narada Muni was not yet in place, Indra prayed to 'Sapta Rishis' to intervene. The Rishis tested her unambiguous decision to perform the severe Tapasya by arguing with her that she was bent on marrying Maha Deva and none else; in fact she became angry with the Rishis that she reacted sharply against them and even condemned them to suggest any other name as her spouse excepting Shiva Deva. Sapta Rishis approached Maha Deva, underlined Parvati's strong mental make up to wed only Maha Deva and emphasised the angle of 'Loka Kalyan' or the Universal Cause of destroying Tarakasura which could be accomplished only through the wedding with Parvati. Taking the consent of Maha Deva, Saptarishis negotiated the transaction of the holy wedding of Shiva and Parvati successfully and smoothly. At the appointed Muhurtha, the Greatest, the Most Auspicious and Most Unique Wedding of Shiva Parvati was celebrated in which Vishnu and Brahma along with Lakshmi and Vani took active part and so did Indra, Devas, Dikpalakas, the Planets along with their spouses; Yakshas, Danavas, Kimpurushas, Pramathaganas and Piscachas were all thrilled; Gandharvas sang tuneful songs, Apsaras danced away to their glories and Maharshis and Muniganas chanted Vedas and Hymns. Such an event was neither commemorated in the Yugas that preceded nor followed. As Devi Parvati and Shiva were enjoying their post-wedding life in beautiful gardens and Sarovars, one fine morning Parvati desired to take her bath and sought to clean up her body dirt after applying scented oils and made an idol of a handsome boy whose head resembled that of an elephant. Shiva played with that idol of a boy for a while and threw it in Ganga who was Parvati's companion. Ganga brought the idol back from the flow and interestingly the boy became real with life and Devas called him as Gajanana and worshipped him; Brahma gave Gajanana the authority to head Ganas and was called as Ganapati or Ganadhyaksha eversince.

For a number of years, Shiva and Parvati were in a joyful mood after their marriage and there was little news for Indras and Devas about the possible arrival of Kartikeya who alone could terminate Tatakasura. Agni Deva took the form of a parrot and entered the Palace of Shiva and Parvati who found that Parvati was enjoying a bath in a Sarovar playing with lotus flowers and Lord Shiva was resting in his bed. She found six Krittikas in the Sarovar and told them that she was desirous of seeing the water drops inside the lotus bulbs; the Kritthikas replied in fun that they would show the water drops provided they allow them also to share the joy of a child in her 'garbha'! The Krittikas further said that they should allow them too to own the child as their own as much as that of Devi Parvati and she agreed to the mutual deal; Krittikas showed the water drops inside the lotus bulb and drank them. As soon as she drank the water drops, there emerged a handsome and healthy boy from Devi Parvati's right abdomen with Sun-like luster and a powerful Physique wearing a 'Shula' and 'Ankush' in both of his hands. He was called 'Kumar' as many entities claimed parentage mainly of course by Lord Shiva and Devi Parvati but also the Krittikas and even Agni. The boy had six brilliant faces and was popularly called by several names viz. Vishakha, Shanmukha, Skanda, Shadaanana and Kartikeya. Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and various Devas gifted the Child several valuable souvenirs like Chandan, Malas, Dhup, Toys, Umbrellas, and Bhushans and instantly appointed him as the Senapati or the Commander-in-Chief of Devas. Lord Vishnu presented several 'Ayudhas' or Arms; Kubera provided ten lakh of Yaksha Sena; Agni gave his Tej (Radiance) and Vayu provided speed as his 'Vahan' (Chariot). Kumar desired to ascertain as to what he could do for them and in one voice they wanted the demon Tarakasura to be killed and Kumar assured saying: So be it! Inspired by what Skanda Deva guaranteed, Indra sent an emissary to Tarakasura saying that soon Indra

and Devas would arrive to destroy the demon and his followers. Danavas wondered that an additional Shakti must have joined the Deva Sena as otherwise they would not dare send a messenger alerting them to come prepared for a battle! Tarakasura remembered Brahma's boon to him with the qualification of the risk of his death in the hands of a boy! Even Kalanemi and other Daityas had creepy feelings about the might of the stranger who joined the Deva Sena. As Tarakasura finally saw the so-called additional Shakti, he laughed away and made fun of the baby boy; he said that Devas did great injustice in projecting him ahead of them so that they could conveniently run away if need be! Kumar replied that there was no need to make fun of us since in a battle of 'Shastras', there was the brain power that was important but not the brute force; moreover, one did not require a huge serpent to kill an opponent but even a tiny snake could finish off the enemy by a small bite of poison! Bala Surya was always difficult to look at and never underestimate a boy! Even as Kumar's reply was over, the Asura threw a mace but the reply by way of a mighty Chakra from Kumar was instantaneous. The Daitya threw a metallic Bhindipal which Kumar stopped merely by one of his hands. Kartikeya targeted a ferocious mace which made ear-blowing sound and the demon was hardly able to escape its impact. The demon then realised that this boy was not an ordinary kid and one had to be tough with him; he used a very powerful Shashtra which was undone by Kartikeya instantly. Then Kartikeya came into his form and massacred thousands of demons and the so-called mighty demons like Kalanemi could hardly defend themselves and ran away to save their skins. As a last resort, Tarakasura hit Kumar's vahana of Peacock and going wild with this act, Kumara finally used the 'Nirmal Shakti' in his hands and threw it with force and speed and the Shakti dazzled the demon's vision; he tried his best but could not evade it since it flew behind wherever he went and ultimately pierced into his heart as the mountain-like Tarakasura fell making a thud, like a cloud-burst and the handful soldiers of the huge army of Danavas left behind alive ran for their lives. Devas went into a state of ecstasy with loud shouts and battle-cries of relief showering fragrant flowers all around, Gandharvas sang earsplitting songs of victory, Apsaras danced with gay abandon and the whole Universe wore a memorable look of unprecedented carnival. Vishnu and Brahma were highly satisfied that finally Dharma and Nyaya were vindicated by Kumara. Maha Deva and Devi Parvati seated on Nandi with Ganesha and Kartikeya flew across to Kailasa Mountain witnessing festivities all along the route! Devas affirmed that whosoever read, or heard or analysed the Story of Kartikeya would be blessed; his life-span would increase, would become healthy, popular, and contented in life without unfulfilled desires and at the end of Life would qualify for Salvation.]

Skanda Purana too describes extermination of Tarakasura as follows: Lord Siva was engaged in continuous 'Tapasya' in recluse and was disinterested in usual activities following the self-immolation of Devi Sati's life after Daksha's insults at Daksha Yagna. The Demon Tarakasura did rigorous penance and obtained a boon of invincibility except by a child of Lord Siva as the latter was in meditation and was very unlikely to wed and beget a child. Meanwhile King Himavanta was blessed with a daughter Girija as Devi Bhagavati's incarnation and at her age of eight approached Lord Siva to help Him for His daily pujas and Bhagavan agreed reluctantly. In course of time as Girija continued to serve Parama Siva in the chores of worship, the Deities, who were frustrated with the dreadful deeds of wickedness of Tarakasura hurting Devas, Sages, and the Righteous Beings, planned that Manmadha the God of Love along with Devi Rati would use his flowery arrows to kindle thoughts of Love in Bhagavan's mind in favour of Devi Girija as a stepping stone for their wedding to beget a son to Siva and Girija who alone could kill the imperishable Tarakasura. But the plan of Devas got badly misfired, since Bhagavan's third eye of fury opened and Manmadha got burnt as ashes. The inconsolable Rati Devi appealed to Lord Siva as after all it was at the behest of Devas that Manmadha acted for a 'Devakarya' or a Divine Task and the brunt was borne by her husband! Devi Girija assured Rati Devi that she would help to revive Manmadha and also please Bhagavan to ask for her hand in wedding. She commenced such rigorous meditation as would shake up the whole Universe by not taking food for long, not even consuming dried leaves dropped from trees thus earning an epithet of 'Aparna' and finally even discarding water. As the Trilokas were ablaze

with the heat of her Tapasya, Devas and Sages approached Lord Vishnu who assured that Bhagavan Siva was indeed a 'Purana Purusha' or the Most Ancient, approachable to one and all with clean mind; Varenya or Varaneeya (Devotion worthy) and the Paratpar Paramatma. Thus along with Brahma and Devas, Vishnu prayed for the vision of Pinakadhari Maha Deva who was in a Yoga Samadhi with Vasuki Serpent as Yagnopaveet or the Sacred Thread, Kambal and Aswatar Snakes as His earrings, Karkotak and Kulik as wrist ornaments, Shankh and Padma Serpents as shoulder ornaments, tiger skin as loin cloth, Bhagirathi Ganga and Ardha Chandra or half moon on His head inside the jatajut or His twisted hair and Blue Throat, while Nandi Deva too was nearby. As Lord Brahma eulogised Maha Deva, slowly the latter opened His eyes and described the prevailing situation created by Demon Tarakasura, Brahma's boon that only Bhagavan's son could kill him, the efforts made by Himaraja and Devi Girija whose Tapasya of extreme nature was bursting into flames across the Universe, the burning of Manmadha and Sati's agitation and finally the grand request being submitted to Bhagavan to wed Devi Girija which would eventually lead to the birth of an Illustrious Son who would exterminate the hazardous Demon Tarakasura. Bhagavan replied that as far as Kama Deva was concerned, the decision to burn him off was justified as all the Devas and such other Celestial Beings who had been victims of passion and worldly temptations were unstable of mind and action thus far and after Kamadahan or the destruction of Kama, they would all be like Himself and could all now concentrate in Samadhi the pursuance of Truth and Virtue and seek real bliss of Sat-Chit-Ananda; Bhagavan further said that 'Kama' would inevitably lead to 'Krodha' or anger, Krodha would lead to 'Sammoha' or infatuation and rigidity of thinking, Sammoha would further lead to 'Bhrama' or Maya / Illusion which would for sure camouflage Reality or Truth or the Everlasting; thus Kama the root cause be better put ablaze. Meanwhile Parvati was fully engrossed in high meditation. Bhagavan Siva was indeed impressed but desired to test her sincerity and unswerving attachment to Him. He took the form of a Brahmachari and enquired from Devi Girija's associates around her as to who she was and why was she performing such severe Tapasya? The associates replied to the queries and the Brahmachari had a hearty laugh that the Tapasya of such severity was a sheer waste as the Tapaswini was replete with ignorance since Rudra was an abhorable and wild person with a 'kapaala' (skull) in hand, a dweller of Smashaan (Burial Ground), an odd exhibitionist of poisonous serpents all over His Body, a bearer of Tiger skin as Loin Cloth, an unkempt and ugly hair style with water flowing from head, always in the highly inauspicious and disgusting company of Pisachas, Goblins, Pramatha Ganas and a typically crazy creation of God! This beautiful and attractive lady coming of a wonderful family background could indeed wed a Demi-God like Indra, Dharmaraja, Varuna Deva, Kubera, Vayu or Agni, but never ever that horrible species like Rudra! Devi Parvati got infuriated with white anger and asked the Brahmachari to be lifted and thrown out at once to have affronted such Mahatma; the stupid and arrogant person was an unpardonable sinner, a Veda-dushak and a brainless brute! Bhagavan Siva then showed up in His real form to Devi Parvati who felt shy and reminded Rudra that She was a reincarnation of Devi Sati and that She gave birth to Devi Meena with the immediate and noble cause of begetting a Son, who alone could free the Universe from the great peril of Tarakasura. On being asked her by Lord Siva for a boon, Devi Parvati desired that Bhagavan should approach her father Himavanta to allow Him to wed her! To this Siva replied that Parvati had indeed declared her real form of Maya or Illusion and that of Maha Tatva which was a display of the interaction of three Gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas and that He would never extend His hand to 'receive' as Bhagavan was always a 'Giver'!! However, Bhagavan Siva deputed 'Sapta Rishis'-the illustrious Seven Sages viz. Marichi, Atri, Angeera, Pulasthya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha- to Himavant's residence to formally present Devi Parvati and Himavant proposed his daughter to wed Siva after consulting the bride's mother Mena and the co-Mountains like Meru, Nishadh, Gandhamadan, Mandarachal and Mainak. The Sapta Rishis who conveyed the most auspicious news to Siva and suggested that Lord Vishnu be immediately called and along with Him Lord Brahma, Indra, Dikpals, Devas, Rishiganas, Yakshas, Gandharvas, Nagas, Siddhas, Vidyadharas, Kinnaras, Apsaras and their spouses and cohorts. Sage Narada among the Sapta Rishis was commissioned to personally invite Vishnu, Brahma, Indra and Devas. Gargacharya was asked to supervise the rituals of

the wedding and Viswakarma constructed the 'Mangala Vedika' or the Auspicious Platform to perform the Wedding and oversee the decorations. Chandra provided coolness in the atmosphere, Surya the luminosity, Vayu Deva blew fragrant airs and Indra organised dance, music and instrumental extravaganza. The Bridegroom arrived on Nandi, accompanied by Vishnu, Brahma and Devas, Maharshis, Pramathaganas, Rakshasas, Ghosts, Goblins, Pisachas and Spirits. Indeed the unprecedented and the Most Glorious Wedding of Siva-Parvati was the unique talk of the entire Universe. At the Wedding 'Muhurat', Himavan declared: 'I, Himavan of the Gotra and clan of Mountains have the greatest privilege of offering the hand of my daughter Devi Parvati to Parama Siva in the august presence of Brahma and Vishnu. In turn, I wish to know the Gotra and Vamsa of Bhagavan'. As Sage Narada lifted his Veena instrument, Himavan stopped Narada not to play on it as a reply about the Gotra and Vamsa of Bhagavan; Narada told Himavan that the Gotra and Vamsa of Maha Siva was 'Naad' or Sound and that was why Narada lifted the Veena as a reply! Bhagavan is 'Naadamaya' or the Embodiment of Naada and one could realise Siva only through Naada, as He has no Gotra and no Vamsa since He is above these nomenclatures and yet belongs to all Gotras and all Vamsas. He has neither beginning nor end; He is the Most Supreme Energy beyond comprehension! Then Himavan gave the 'Kanyadaan' or the offering of his daughter saying: 'Imam Kanyaam thubhyamaham dadami Parameswara! Bharyartham prathi gruhneeshva' (Parameswara! I am offering my daughter as your 'Dharma Patni'; kindly accept). After wedding, Maha Deva and Devi Parvathi moved on to Mountain Gandhamadan to a luxurious and lonely place for their honeymoon. As Bhagavan's virility was so potent that parts of humanity were getting destroyed and Vishnu asked Agni Deva to take the form of a Hermit and asked Parvati to donate it and extended his hand which was immediately consumed by Agni even before Her eyes. Parvati got angry and cursed Agni to become 'Sarva Bhakshak' or he who consumes everything. Agni could not bear the brunt of the virility of Maha Siva and begged Him to show a way to pass it on to someone; Siva advised that the same be planted into virtuous women and Sage Narada annotated that such women of high merit taking bath on an early morning in the instant month of Magha would be attracted to Agni and his hot flames and they would be the best choice for the transfer of the virility in particles. As advised by Narada, Krittikas approached Agni seeking warmth from the cold morning and Agni transferred some drops of virility to the ladies through their skin pores. Kritthikas got pregnant and their angry husbands gave a curse to them to roam on the Sky. They became Stars in a constellation and aborted their pregnancies. The major portion of the virility got left however on top of the Himalayas which was lifted by a crane and pushed into Ganges and the drops which were radiant like fire sparks got meshed up in the river bed plants (Sarkhand) of Ganges, who carried the foetus to a secluded place in the bushes thus emerging a Six Headed Child Kartikeya! As soon as the boy of highly chiselled face and limbs was born with extraordinary splendour, there was such illumination that travelled all over the Three Worlds instantly. Siva Deva and Devi Parvati appeared at once on their Vrishaba carrier and were overwhelmed with parental love and affection. Soon Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and the entire Devaloka assembled and so did Rishis, Yakshas, Gandharvas and all Celestial Beings. Veerabhadra and Pramathaganas as also the whole entourage of Maha Deva were ecstatic with boundless rapture. Devas put their chins up with indescribable relief that it would not be far for the greatest menace of Takakasura to be devastated by the new arrival on the scene! The whole atmosphere was of liberation, festivity and celebration. The Deities commenced preparations of war to kill Tarakasura but a Celestial Voice was heard that victory would be assured only under the Leadership of Kartikeya and hence all the Devas requested Skanda to become the Chief of the Army of Devas. Meanwhile, Devasena, the daughter of Mrityu Devata, became his wife and hence Skanda was known as Deva Senapati. Kartikeya led the army of Devas of the rank of Indra, Agni, Vayu, Kubera and Yama Dharma Raja and was seated on an elephant. Tarakasura arrived with a huge army of mighty warriors who dominated and controlled the opponents initially. Indra's 'Vajra' was overpowered by Tarakasura's weapon called Shakti and wounded Indra. King Muchukunda who fought for Devas and sought to stop the domination of Daityas but Tarakasura felled him on the ground; Muchukunda wanted to use the 'Brahmastra' but was restrained by Sage Narada as that weapon would no doubt create havoc

but would be ineffective to destroy Tarakasura and hence Kartikeya would have to be warmed up gradually. Veerabhadra swung into action and slaughtered thousands of Demons; Tarakasura realised that Veerabhadra was not easy to control and thus used his 'Maya' and assumed a thousand arms. Lord Vishnu suggested that the time was ripe to kill the Big Demon before he became more powerful and asked Skanda to charge him. With his mighty weapon Shakti on hand, Kartikeya chased Tarakasura but the latter retaliated with his own 'Shakti' and even got Skanda unconscious for a while. After quickly recovering his poise, Kartikeya prayed to his parents and released the Maha Shakti which was fortified with the blessings of Bhagavan and Bhagavati and finally annihilated Tarakasura who incidentally was a Great Siva Bhakta! But Siva Himself was so pleased at the valour of the lad who was more than a match to the Greatest Demon of the times who sent shock waves across the Three Worlds! While Devas and Gandharvas were engaged in unending praises and noise of resounding musical notes, Rishis were engaged in Vedic Hymns to please Kartikeya and there was ecstasy across the Globe. Whoever reads or hears the details of the historic victory of Deva Senapati over the obnoxious Demon would be rid of Sins of even great severity and magnitude. Sage Viswamitra recited the following Ashtottara Namavali (108 names) about Skanda Deva on the most significant day of Kartika Pournami of which Kartikaya is fond of as follows: (1) Brahmavaadi (Profounder of Parama Tatvas) (2) Brahma (Creator and the Reciter of Vedas) (3) Brahma Vid (The Exponent and Interpreter of Brahma Gyan) (4) Brahma Vatsala (The beloved of Lord Brahma) (5) Brahmanya (Brahmana Bhakta) (6) Brahmadeva (7) Brahmada (The Donor of Brahma Gyan) (8) Brahma Sangrah (The absorber of Vedardha or the Para Brahma's reality) (9) Sarvotkrushta Parama Teja (The Highest of All of Super Luminosity) (10) Mangala Mangala (The Most Propitious of the Propitious) (11) Aprameya Guna (He who has countless qualities) (12) Mantra Mantraga (The Quintessence of Mantras) (13) Savitrimaya (Full of Pranava or Omkara) (14) Sarvatra Aparajita (Always unconquerable) (15) Sarvatmika Mantra (The universally applicable Mantra) (16) Deva (Replete with Divinity) (17) Shadakshara Vatam Vara (The best reciter of Om Namassivaya) (18) Gava Putra (The Illustrious Son of Cow or Ganges) (19) Surarighna (The Destroyer of the Enemies of Devas) (20) Sambhava (He who makes the Impossible possible) (21) Bhava bhaavana (The Creator of the Universe in the form of Brahma) (22) Pinakini (The Carrier of Pinakini Dhanush in the form of Shankara) (23) Shatruha (The Terminator of Opponents) (24) Swetha (He assumes the form of a white Mountain or Himalaya) (25) Guudha (Born in a hidden place or He who has latent Shakti) (26) Skanda (He who jumps while walking) (27) Suraagrani (The Chief of Suras) (28) Dwaadasha (Who has twelve eyes and ears) (29) Bhū (Bhū mandala Swarupa or the Form of Earth) (30) Bhuvah (Antariksha Rupa or Of the form of Sky) (31) Bhavi (Bhavitva Rupa) (32) Bhūva Putra (Bhūmi Putra as Siva's manliness was absorbed into Earth) (33) Namaskruth (Saluted by one and all) (34) Nagaraja (The King of Serpents) (35) Sudharmatma (Epitome of Virtue) (36) Naka Prushtha (He is the Base of Swarga as He is the Saviour of Devas) (37) Sanatan (He is Eternal) (38) Hema garbha (Born of Siva's gold-like semen) (39) Mahagarbha (Born of several mothers) (40) Jaya (Victorious) (41) Vijayeswara (The Deity of Victory) (42) Karta (The Performer) (43) Vidhata (The Preserver) (44) Nithya (Everlasting) (45) Nithyarmardana (The constant destroyer of enemies) (46) Mahasena (The Chief of a huge army) (47) Maha Teja (The most Illuminated) (48) Virasena (Commander of a Valiant army) (49) Chamupati (The Leader of Militia) (50) Surasena (The Principal of an intrepid band of soldiers) (51) Suradhaksha (The Supreme Head of Devas) (52) Bhimasena (The Chief of a terrifying military) (53) Niramaya (Devoid of illness) (54) Shouri (The most gallant Son of Shankara) (55) Patu (Smart and Enterprising) (56) Maha Teja (The highly radiant) (57) Viryavan (Personification of Might) (58) Satya Vikram (Courageously Truthful) (59) Tejogarbha (Agni Putra) (60) Asuripu (Antagonist of Demons) (61) Suramurthi (A byword for Devas) (62) Surojit (More gutsy than Devas) (63) Krutajna (Grateful to those who stand by Him) (64) Varada (Bestower of windfalls) (65) Satya (Satyavadi or He who stands for Truth) (66) Sharanya (Protector of those who seek refuge) (67) Sadhu Vatsal (Affectionate and kind to the Good) (68) Suvratha (Benefactor of those who perform good Vratas) (69) Surya Sankash (Luminous like Sun) (70) Vahnigarbha (Begotten of Agni) (71) Ranotsuk (Enthusiastic of Battles) (72) Pippali (Consumer of Pippali) (73) Seeghraga (Travels at top

speed) (74) Roudri (Son of Rudra) (75) Gangeya (Son of Ganges) (76) Ripudarun (Demolisher of Foes) (77) Kartikeya (Son of Krittikas)(78) Prabhu (Highly accomplished) (79) Kshanth (Forgiving and Patient) (80) Neela-damshtra (Blue Thoated) (81) Mahamana (of large heart disposition) (82) Nigrah(Possessive of Restraint) (83) Netha (Leader) (84) Suranandana (Provider of happiness to Devas) (85) Pragrah (Controller of Enemies) (86) Paramananda (Extremely blissful) (87)Krodhagna (Alleviates the anger of Devotees) (88) Thad (Producer of heavy sound) (89)Vucchrit (High stamper of feet) (90) Kukkuti (Keeper of Cock as chariot flag) (91) Bahuli (Possessor of many useful implements) (92) Divya (Has Divine illumination) (93)Kamad (Fulfilled of desires) (94) Bhurivardhan (Has extreme amusement) (95) Amogh (Unconquerable and ever successful) (96) Amritada (Endower of Amrit) (97) Agni (Agni Swarup) (98) Shatrughna (Terminator of Opponents) (99) Sarvabodhan (Provider of Knowledge to one and all) (100) Anagha (Devoid of sins) (101) Amar (indestructible)(102) Sriman (Highly Prosperous) (103) Unnati (High Profiled) (104) Agni Sambhava(105) Piscacha Raja (King of Piscachas and Siva Ganas) (106)Suryabha (Akin to Sun God in radiance) (107) Sivatma (Siva Swarupa) and (108) Sanatana (Eternal).Phalasaruti: Those who recite the Ashtottara of Kartikeya become fearless, contented, and happy; a pregnant woman reads or hears the Ashtottara would be blessed with a son of virtue and fortune; and if unmarried girls read they are sure to secure ideal husbands.]

Matsya Purana's Skandopaakhyana now: Brahma Manasa Putra Prajapati Dhaksha married Veerini and they were blessed with sixty daughters; of these daughters, ten were married to Dharma, thirteen to Maharshi Kashyapa, twenty seven to Chandra Deva, four to Arishtanemi, two to Bahuka and two to Krushaswa. Kashyapa's wives were Aditi, Diti, Danu, Vishwa, Arishta, Surasa, Surabhi, Vinata, Taamra, Krodhavasha, Ira, Kadru and Muni. Aditi begot Devendra, Upendra, Surya and all Devatas. Diti gave birth to Hiranyakashipu and innumerable Daityas. Danu gave birth to Danavas; Surabhi the cows and other animals; Vinata the birds like Garuda; Kadru the Nagas and other reptiles; and so on. As Devas and Daityas developed mutual hatred and enmity, there had been periodical battles and each time Daityas defeated and occupied Swarga for long spells of time, Devas with the help of Narayana were regaining Swarga again and there had been as a result mass killings of Daityas and Devas had been enjoying the last laugh! Diti was unable to bear this let-down time and again. Kashyapa Muni taught to perform a severe Vrata which she performed meticulously for thousand years and after some time got pregnant. Indra came to know the purpose of Diti's Vrata viz. to bless her to conceive a boy who could terminate Indra and Devas, Indra utilised his powers / Siddhis of Anima and Parakaya; entered her womb and cut the foetus with the help of his Vjrayudha seven times making seven slices from each of the seven parts thus making forty nine 'Marudganas'. After this tragic end, Diti once again prayed to Kashyapa to grant her a son who was indestructible even by a Vajra and as result of ten thousand years of Tapasya there was a mighty Daitya called Vajranga was born to Diti. As per Diti's instruction Vajranga brought Indra imprisoned to his mother. But Brahma and Kashyapa asked Vajranga to release Indra by saying: *Apamaano Vadhah proktah Putra Sambhaavitasyacha, Asmadvaakyena yo mukto viddhitam mrutamevacha/* (Son! Respectable personalities like Indra ought to feel humbled and humiliated; hence release Indra on my instruction.). Brahma also created Varangi so that Vajranga would wed her. Brahma instructed the couple to perform Tapasya in difficult situations, some times by raising hands, sometimes sitting with Panchagnis around, sometimes sitting in deep waters and invariably without food and even water. Finally, the couple was blessed with a mighty and unique son, named **Tarakasura**. Fully understanding the purpose of his birth which his parents had strived for after performing thousands of years of Tapasya as also to fulfill the singular ambition of his grand mother to destroy Indra and Devas, Tarakasura took a vow at a grand conference of Daityas and Danavas-the descendents of Diti and Danu- and proceeded to Paritraya Parvat (the western side of Aravali and Vindhya mountain range and observed strict Tapasya during hundred year time-slots by rotation by way of 'Niraahaara' (without food), Panchagni (in the midst of Five huge Fire bodies) in sizzling summers, 'Jala madhya' inside in chilled running water in the worst winter nights, eating only fallen dry leaves, etc. Brahma had no option but to present himself and ask for his boons. He

bargained of absolute invincibility and deathlessness but finally agreed that only a seven days long boy could kill him, if at all! Not far from the day when Brahma bestowed the boons, Tarakasura redesigned and reformed his lines of Military Forces and attacked Indraloka. A long-drawn and ferocious Devasura-Daitya ensued when there was considerable blood-shed in either side. Danaveswara Grasan and Yama Dharma Raja, Jambha and Kubera, Durjaya and Varuna, Mahishasura and Chandra, Kalanemi and Surya were the prominent opponents. As it looked that Devas were at the moment of collapse under the leadership of Tarakasura, Lord Vishnu sat on Garuda Deva and alighted on the battle field. All the Asura-leaders surrounded Vishnu and rained Astras against him in one go; Kalanemi shot sixty arrows, Nimi hundred arrows, Mathan fired eighty arrows, Jambhaka seventy, Shumbha ten powerful Astras, and many others as many as they could at just one target, viz. Narayana. Bhagavan Vishnu responded to all these arrows and shot severally and on one-to-one basis. The battle continued on and on; inspired by Vishnu Deva, Indra regrouped Deva Sena by strengthening patches and enlarging the volumes of the Deva Sena by recalling Yakshas, Gandharvas, and Kinnaras who brought their own powerful weapons. Vishnu called up for the assistance of *Ekadasha Rudras viz. Kapali, Pingala, Bheema, Virupaksha, Vilohita, Ajasha, Shasana, Shasta, Shambhu, Chanda and Dhruva*. The Rudra Swarupas dominated the battle field by annihilating thousands of Daityas. **Maha Daitya Gajasura** was torn into pieces and his skin was draped over the body of Kapila Rudra the Daityas made ‘hahaakaaras’ when they ran helter-skelter. Indra attacked Daitya Nimi and thumped his chest with his ‘Vajrayudha’. At the humiliation of the death of Gajasura by Rudra, **Jambhasura** challenged Indra and after a fearful skirmish, Lord Indra shot Brahmastra and the Daitya was killed instantly. But fully armed by the boon of invincibility, the end result was that Tarakasura over powered Devas, Vishnu was indeed aware of the boon to Tarakasura and withdrew from the battle and the defeated Indra and Devas were dislodged from Swarga. Indra and Devas reached Satyaloka to seek Brahma’s help and the latter predicted that soon the King of Himachala would be blessed with a daughter named Parvati who would be married to Parama Shiva and the couple would beget a child named Skanda; that boy after attaining seven days should kill Tarakasura. Brahma further told Devas that meanwhile they would have to be patient and that he had already chalked out action plans till the objective was achieved. Having assured Devas thus, Brahma called for Devi Vibhavari (Ratri Devi) and briefed her that Shiva’s earlier wife Sati Devi had immolated herself as she could not control her emotions arising out of her own father’s (Daksha Prajapati) misdeeds of insulting Bhagavan Shiva, that the latter avenged Sati’s self-immolation by destroying Daksha Yagna and Daksha and that Shiva was at the moment not in a mood to remarry but that the Sacred Wedding between him and Devi Parvati was of top urgency since the child of their union could save the entire universe as their son could only kill Tarakasura as per the boons that the Demon secured. The instruction of Brahma to Devi Vibhavari therefore was as follows: *Virahokanthitaa gaadham Hara sangama laalasa, Tayoh sutapta tapasoh samyogah swaacchhubaaney/ Garbhastaney cha tanmaatruhu swena ruupena rajjaya/* (As both the ‘Tapaswinis’ would be tempted to unite with each other, she should enter Devi Parvati’s ‘garbha’ and imprint Shiva Deva’s manly image there). Then the virility so discharged would be carried by Agnideva and the Sarovara’s reefs that would carry the drops would help Krittikas to bring up the boy from the spills-over of Shiva’s virility; Devi Parvati would then retire to bed and would know only later that she gave birth to a boy. In the action plan, the next step as devised by Indra was to stimulate Shankara with feelings of romance and to create favourable situations around; indeed Kamadeva was able to succeed momentarily but when Shiva understood the game plan; Manmatha was burnt into ashes by Shiva’s ‘humkar’ followed by the opening of third eye in a split-second! Devi Rati was stunned at the sudden turn of events, since she felt that the Act of Madana Kumara was to usher in propitiousness and happiness as the worst menace of three Lokas would be rid of by the end of Tarakasura, pursuant to Shiva- Parvati’s wedding and the hastening of their son’s auspicious birth. Unfortunately, her husband became the victim, for no fault of his, as the entire drama was enacted by Indra Deva, who too could not be blamed since each step in Lord Brahma’s Action Plan was for the great advantage of the Universe as a whole. She stooped down at her husband’s ash-heap and while crying incessantly prayed to Bhagavan Shiva as

follows: *Namah Shivaayaastu Niraamayaaya Namah Shivavaayastu Manomayaya/ Namah Shivaayaastu Suraarchitaaya, Tubhyam Sadaa Bhakta Kripaaparaaya/ Namoh Bhavaayaastu Bhavodbhavaaya, Namostu tey Dhwaasta mano bhavaaya/ Namostutey goodha mahaa vrataaya, Namostu Maaya Gahanaashrayaya/ Namostu Sharvaaya Namah Shivaaya, Namostu Siddhaaya Puraatanaaya/ Namostu Kaalaaya Namah Kalaaya, Namostutey Jnaana vara prasaadaaya/ Namostutey Kaalakatigaaya, Namoh Nisargaamala bhushanaaya/ Namostvameyaandhaka mardakaaya, Namah Sharanyaaya Namoh gunaaya/ Namostutey Bheemaganaanugaaya, Namostu Nanaa bhuvananakartrey/ Sarvaavasaaneyhyavi naasha netrey, Namostu Naanaa Jagatey Vidhhaatrey, Namostu tey Chitra phala Prayoktrey/ Namostu Bhaktaabhimata pradaatrey, Namah sadaa teybhava sanga hatrey/ Ananta rupaaya sadaiva tubhyamasya kopaaya namostu tubhyam/ Shashaanka chihnaaya sadaiva tubhya mameya maanaaya namah stutaaya/ Vrishendrayaanaaya Puraantakaaya, Namah prasiddhaaya Mahoushadhaaya/ Namostu Bhaktya - abhimata pradaaya, Namostu Sarvaarti haraaya tubhyam/ Charaachara vichaaravar maachaaryamutprekshita bhutasargam/ Twaamindu moulim sharanam prapanna Priyaaprameyam mahataam Mahesham/ Prayacchamey kaamayashah samruddhim, Punah Prabho jeevatu Kamadevah/Priyam binaa twaam Priya jeeviteshu, Twattoparah ko bhuvaneshwahaasti/ Prabhuh Priyaayaah prasavah priyaanaam, Praneetaparyaaya paraparaarthah/ Twameyvameko Bhuvanasyanaatho Dayaalurnmeelita bhakabheetih/(Parama Shiva! My salutations to you; you are the Spotless; the mental reflection of all the Beings; worshipped by all the Devas always; the epitome of kindness to the devotees; the Supreme Creator of the World; you burnt up Kamadeva, my husband and my deferential apologies to you for the disturbance caused when you were in a confidential Vrata. Kindly accept my devotion since you do protect those and who take refuge as they become victims of the forests of 'Maya'; You are the Punisher as well as the Provider of Propitiousness; the Kala Swarupa /Appraiser of Time as also of Achievements since you are the Supreme Gyani / with the knowledge of those who transgress limits of time; You are the Form of Nature and the Wearer of Sacred and Untainted Ornaments; You possess spontaneous Might and destroy Evil Forces like Andhakaraasura; the Nirguna devoid of features and the point of ultimate refuge; You are the Creator of several Worlds and the Scriptor of many Universes; the bestower of multiple benefits, the patented destroyer at the time of Pralayas as also the saviour of a few Beings at such extreme situations; the Enjoyer of the due 'Yagnaphala' which is liberally distributed to devotees; the demolisher of worldly desires; you possess myriad forms but your anger is unbridled; you are the coolness of Moon, the Symbol of self-esteem , the eulogy to all, the carrier of Nandi, the obliterator of Tripuras, the Source of 'Aushadhis'/ medicines, the donor of desires, the remover of all difficulties, the Ultimate Regulator of 'Achaaras'/ 'Vichaaras'-traditions and customs; The 'Acharya' or the Unique Guide to the Moving and Immobile Object; The Over Seer of the entire Srishti; the Provider of Coolness and radiance to the Moon of his head; the Unparalleled Personification of Pure Love, Maheshwara! do kindly bestow everlasting fame and name to my husband Kama Deva with which he would get back to life; You are the one and only Saviour who could bring blossoms to his ashes; who else in the Universe could be competent to get my husband back to Life!). Pleased by the 'Stuti' of Rati Devi, Maha Deva cooled down from his anger and pacified her to assure that she would secure her husband back after some time and would be popularly called 'Ananga'. Disturbed by the happenings that happened as Kama Deva was burnt by Maha Deva and Devi Rati's distress, Devi Parvati was rather disillusioned and decided to proceed to perform Tapasya. Her father gave her encouragement and said: *Umeti Chapaley Putri! na kshamam taavakam vapuh, Sodhum klesha swaruupascya Tapasah Soundarya darshiney/* (My daughter, you are too restless; 'U'-stands for THIS and MA-stands for: 'do not do this'; in other words: 'you do not have to perform 'Tapasya'; Your slender and tender body is not capable of withstanding Tapasya). As Himavan was pleading to his daughter not to think of Tapasya thus, there was a Celestial Voice (Akasha vaani) addressed to Himavaan which asserted that Parvati should not think in terms of Tapasya; *Umetinaama tey naasyaa Bhuvaneshu Bhavishyati, Siddhim cha Murtimatyashey Saadha vidhyanti chintitaam/* (Himaraja! what you uttered was that your daughter was really 'Chanchala' or highly unsteady and wavering; in the entire Universe her name shall be everlasting and*

would always be bestowing boons to the fulfillment of her ‘Bhaktas’). Indra Deva who was anxious to take further steps in expediting Shiva-Parvati’s wedding, called up the illustrious Sapta Rishis to ascertaining the mind of Devi Parvati by visiting her personally and once convinced to visit Parama Shiva too to find out his inclination too. The Chief Negotiators were thus engaged in the delicate task which however had to be given a soft and swift push; they reached Parvati first and presented to her a negative picture of Shiva stating that he was perhaps not an appropriate candidate befitting her beauty and grace and that she might as well seek of another ‘greater’ and more presentable and qualified husband; they argued that he was a semi-clad, uncouth, funnily dressed, resident of ‘Smashaanas’/ grave yards, kapala dhari / wearer of skulls, bhikshukh / mendicant, with frightening eyes, apparently looking mentally unsound! Devi Parvati was rather annoyed and even surprised at the opinions expressed by the Sapta Rishis of their popular standing and affirmed: *Naaham Bhadraah kileycchaami Rutey Sharvaat Pinaakinah, Sthitamcha taaratamyena Praaninaam paramam twidam/ Dheebalai –shvaryaakaryaadi pramaanam mahataam mahat, Yasmaatra kinchitaparam sarvey yasmaat pravartatey/Yasvaishwaryamanaadyantam tamahamsharanam gataa, Eshamey Vyaavaasaayascha deerghoti vipareetakah/* (Bhadra Purusha Saptarshis! I am not at all ready to wed any unsteady and petty-minded entities, excepting Pinakadhari Shankara Maha Deva; despite what might be described about the greatness of other suitors, I am most emphatically anchoring my hopes on him, as he is the most certainly outstanding Maha Purusha, whose might, mind and magnificence are unparalleled. This unflinching resolution of mine might look odd to you; you may either concede or quit!). As the Saptarshis heard Devi Parvati, they were overjoyed; they said they were only testing her resolve before approaching Maha Deva to sound his mind. May this determination of yours be fulfilled soon! After all, how could the radiance of Surya be without Surya! How could the sparkle of a diamond be without the diamond! How could the meaning of ‘Aksharas’ (letters / alphabet) be detached from their ‘meaning/ implication’! Similarly how Devi Parvati could be disconnected from Maha Deva! So saying, the Saptarshis proceeded to Himalaya Mountain peak to meet Parama Shiva to sound him on the subject of the most auspicious wedding of Shiva-Parvati. They met the Veeraka the Dwarapalaka and sensitised him about the purpose of their visit and in course of time, Bhagavan met the Saptarshis. The latter being an Omniscient he said: *Jaaney loka vidhhanasya Kanyaa satkaarya mutthamam, Jaataa praaleya shailasya samketaka nirupanaah/* (I am aware that for the welfare of the whole world, the role of this damsel is quite significant; she is the daughter of Himavaan and you are desirous of proposing her for this task). *Satya mutktah kanthitaah sarvey Deva kaaryarthamudyataah, Teshaam twaranti chetaamsi kinthu kaaryam vivakshitam/* (This is indeed true that there has been considerable enthusiasm and haste, yet there would be some slow down in completing the task). *Lokayaatraanugantavya viseshana vichakshanaihi, Sevantey they yato Dharma tat pramaanaayaat parey sthitaah/* (The Vidwans would do well in properly following the formalities and the established traditions of ‘Dharma’, since this action plan would constitute a regular standard to the posterity). The implication of what Maha Deva stated was fully understood by Sapta Rishis and they left to the Palace of Himavanta instantly. They conveyed to Himavanta and his wife Mena the exciting news of Maha Deva’s implicit consent to offer himself as the bridegroom to Devi Parvati. Mena said that normally the parents of the bride would propose an alliance but the bridegroom proposed instead! Anyhow, she asked that they might as well approach Parvati directly. The Rishis replied that the ground was already prepared and Parvati was in fact performing Tapasya only to accomplish Shiva’s hand. In any case, they would approach her as a formality and in response, Parvati terminated her Tapasya and came back home. Parvati felt so anxious that the previous night before the wedding preparations commenced was like ten thousand long nights. Next morning at the ‘Brahma Muhurta, the propitious acts were initiated; the ‘Shadritus’ or the Six Seasons arrived; Vayu Deva and Varuna Deva took up the cleaning operations of the huge mountain range to receive the Wedding Guests; Devi Lakshmi set various arrangements including the golden and silver vessels required; Chitamani and many other jewels were spread all over; Kalpa Vriksha and Kamadhenu were pressed into service; all kinds of ‘Aoushadhis’, ‘Rasaayans’, and ‘Dhatus’ turned up to be of use in the food preparations. There at the ‘Gandhamaadana’

Mountain range, assemblies of Maha Munis, Nagas, Yakshas, Gandharvas and Kinnaras started hotting up. Brahma initiated the make-up of Parama Shiva and for a start, combed the 'Jatajutas'/ the coarse hair and set the position of 'Chandra Khanda' right; Devi Chamunda decorated a big 'kapaala' on one side of Shiva's broad head and said that once a son was born from the wedding, the latter should fill up the skull with the blood of Tarakasura and gift that Kapala to her to enjoy the drink! Vishnu arrived with a golden 'Kirita' ('head gear) studded with 'Nava Ratnas' and well-ornamented with live snakes which added to the luster of the 'Sarpa Manis' on the heads of the snakes; Indra arrived in haste with the 'Gaja Charma'/ Elephant Skin and draped it on the body of Shiva; Lord Vayu took over the charge of Nandeswara and took great pains to swathe a gold-laced white silk bejewelled with nine gems decorated on the back to make a cushioned seat on which Maha Deva could be seated comfortably; 'Loka Sakshis' (Ready Universal Evidences) Surya, Chandra and Agni Devas lit up the 'Three Netras'/Three Eyes with renewed radiance and radiation and garnished them with dark clouds as eye-tex; Preta Raja Yama Deva embellished Shiva's broad forehead with 'Chita bhasma' in three straight lines and ornamented his fore arms and wrists with strings of human bones; Kubera gifted invaluable jewellery made of nine gems studded in pure gold worn along with a heap of live and hissing snakes, while Varuna brought special 'Kundalas'/Ear rings with coiled Vasuki and Taksha serpents. As the bride groom got ready and sat comfortably on Nandeswara, the procession commenced with firm and dignifiedly slow steps and Bhu Devi was in shivers with each step of Nandeswara carrying the Supreme Lord of Trilokas, and behind him were Vishnu, Brahma, Indra, Dikpalakas, the Nava Grahas, Devas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Pramatha Ganas and so on each with their wives, unless they had already reported to duty at the bride's Palaces. Veerak, the Dwarapalaka of Maha Deva, in the lead was addressing hoarse the surging crowds ahead of the 'Ratha' to make way and let it pass; after all, when Maha Deva was himself moving ahead, could any one in the hysteric mass of humanity resist the temptation of catching a glimpse of Bhagavan! Behind the Dignitaries following the procession were the celebrations of singing Gandharvas, dancing Apsaras, and the tuneful Kinnaras, further followed by Maharshis, Sages and Brahmanas reciting Vedas and Sacred Hymns. The whole Universe was charged with myriad emotions as the groom's party arrived at the bride's palace. At the 'Kalyana Mandapa', the Parvata Raja Himavan was in a state of dazed ecstasy since Parama Shiva himself was his son-in-law. *Pranateynaachalendrena Pujitho Chaturmukhah, Chakaara vidhinaa Sarvam Vidhimantra purah saram/* (Parvata Raja performed puja with respects to Brahma and with the full course of formal Mantras, the wedding was celebrated in tradition and dignity); *Sharveya Paanigrahana maagneena saakshikamakshatam, Daataa Mahibhrutaam Natho hotaa Devaschaturmukhah/ Varah Pashupati Saakshaat Kanyaa Vishaaranistathaa* (Then Parama Shiva wedded Parvati with Agni Saakshi or in the presence of Agni, when Daata / donor was Himavaan, Brahma as Hota (the Head Priest), Shiva as the bride groom and bride as Aranibhuta Devi Parvati.). Devas were extremely happy that the best was yet to happen; Indra gifted a golden umbrella, Gandharvas sang tuneful songs, Apsaras danced to their best, Kinnaras organised instrumental extravaganza and the whole world celebrated, but of course Daityas and Danavas who had ruled for thousand years were highly dejected quite understandably. After a few days the new couple of Shiva and Devi Parvati took permission of Parvata Raja Himavaan and moved back to Mandarachala. Years passed by and Shiva and Parvati continued to enjoy their marital bliss. Out of fun, Bhagavan Shiva teased Parvati once as follows: *Shareerey mama tatwaangi sitey bhaasya sitadyutih, Bhujaangee vaasita shuddhaa samslishtaa chandaney tarow/ Chandraatapena sampruktaa ruchirambaraa tathaa, Rajaneevaasitey pakshey drushti dosham dadaasimey/* (Devi Parvati! As your physical colour is rather dark and mine is fair, it looks that a dark serpent is circling a chandana tree! Also, there is a similie-comparison- of a shining Moon against the background of dark cloud on the sky!). Understandably, Parvati was not amused, and in fact, badly hurt, when Shankara made these remarks even as a joke. Instantly, she left out home and proceeded to perform 'Tapasya' to Brahma for a number of years to change her body colour. Any amount of pleading and supplication by Shiva did not change her mind. Meanwhile, the son of Andhakasura and the brother of Bakasura called 'Aadi' performed strict 'Tapas' to Brahma Deva and asked for the boon of

‘Amaratwa’ or immunity from death. As Brahma could not grant this advantage, Aadi amended the request that he should be able to convert his Body Form as per his wish; Brahma agreed provided that the Daitya could do so only twice. As Veerak was guarding the Entry Point of Shankara and as it was not possible to enter ‘Shiva dwar’, Aadi converted his Form as a snake and entered Shankara’s abode through an under ground hole and slithered in; thereafter Aadi assumed the Form of Devi Parvati, approached Maha Deva and pretended that she had given up Tapasya as the severity of meditation just to change of body colour from ‘Krishna Varna’ to ‘Gaura Varna’ was not worth the strict regimen. Parama Shiva was happy initially that she changed her mind and returned back to him. But on second thoughts and knowing that Parvati would not take a flippant decision to return without achieving her objective, he suspected the fake Parvati and killed the ‘Mayavi’ Daitya. The original Parvati Devi’s Tapasya pleased Brahma Deva and blessed her to change her body colour as she pleased either as of Gaura (white)Varna or of Shyama Varna; Parvati returned home to Maha Deva but the unwitting Veeraka, the ‘Dwarapalaka’ refused her entry to her own house! As any amount of convincing did not help Veeraka, Devi Gauri was tired out to reason him and finally gave a ‘Shaap’ that he would be born as a human and after the duration of the curse would return to her again. Parama Shiva was so excited as Gauri entered his interior bed room that a delegation of Devas headed by Indra was turned out saying that he was busy. Indra detailed Agni Deva to take the form of a parrot and peep in through a window as to what was happening inside their bed-chamber. Exactly at that time, the parrot peeped in when Shiva-Parvati were actually seen in action on their bed; Shiva noticed the parrot and recognised Agni. He scolded Agni and said now that he created ‘Vighna’ (obstacle) between him and Parvati and hence he might as well rectify the situation by drinking up his virility. The highly explosive drops shining like molten gold punctured Agni’s belly and got spread over the Maha Sarovar nearby. Several lotus flowers which got sprouted all over in the deep waters emitted strong and fragrant scents and the intoxication affected ‘Krittikas’ who happened to bathe in the Sarovar; the Krittikas desired to take the lotus leaves home but Devi Parvati jocularly remarked to the Krittikas that she could take the drops of water on the lotus leaves as well. In turn Krittikas joked that they would take the water home, provided the child born of the water consumed by them should have equal right to the motherhood of the boy so born! As the deal was struck between Krittikas and Parvati, the Krittika damsels gave the lotus leaves as also the water drops to Parvati. Subsequently, Devi Parvati drank up the water around the lotuses and from her right and left ‘kukshis’ gave birth to two male children later united into one and the child who had the extraordinary radiance of Surya Deva; each of the Six Krittikas shaped up one head each of the child; thus the boy was named ‘Kumara’ by Parvati; ‘Kartikeya’, ‘Shanmukha’, ‘Shadvakra’ by the Krittikas and as ‘Vishakha’ or the different ‘Shakhas’/ branches of the lotus leaves that carried the golden drops. On Chaitra Shukla Shashthi, the child was declared as the ‘Deva Senapati’/ the Commander-in- Chief of Devas. Vishnu gifted varieties of ‘Ayudhas’/ Arms and ‘Astras’ or Mantrik Arrows. Kubera presented him a lakh-strong of yaksha army. Vayu Deva gave him a ‘Mayura Vahana’/ Peacock Carrier, while Twashta Prajapati gifted a toy in the form of a Cock which could change its form as the boy wished. All the Devas presented souvenirs, prostrated before Skanda and extolled him: *Namah Kumaaraaya Mahaa Prabhaaya Skandaayacha Skandita daanavaaya, Navaarka Vidyutdyutaye Namostutey, Namostutey Shanmukha Kaamarupa/Pinadwi nanaabharanaaya Bhartrey Namoraney Daarudaaranaaya, Namostu teyrka pratima prabhaya, Namostu Guhyaaya Guhyaaya tubhyam/ Namostu Thrailokya bhaayaapahaaya, Namostutey Baala kripaa paraaya, Namovishaalaamala lochanaaya, Namovishaakhaaya Maha Vrataaya/ Namonamastestu Manoharaaya, Namonamastestu Ranokataaya, Namomayurojjwala vaahanaaya, Namostu Keyura dharaayatubhyam/ Namodhrutodagna pataakiney Namonamah Prabaavapranataaya testu, Namonamastey Varaveerya shaalininey, Kripaaparo nobhava Bhavyamurtey/ Kripaaparaa Yagnapatim cha stutwaa, Viromirowam twamaraadhi paadyaah, Yevam tadaa Shadwadanam tusendraa mudaa santhushta Guhastatastaan/* (Our Greetings to You, Kamarupa Shanmukha! You are Kumara, the radiant son of Maha Shiva and the destroyer of Danavas; your physical form is the glow of rising son and of the heat of Agni; you are appropriately adorned, the Army Chief of Devas; the dreadful on the battle

front; Guhya Rupa, the abolisher of fear in Trilokas in the Form of a Child; gifted with broad and clear eyes; Vishaakhaa! Our reverences to you as the practitioner of Maha Vratas; you are a terror in battle fields although of pleasant visage otherwise; you have a peacock as your carrier and wear a Keyura / wrist bangles; the high flier of flags; the bestower of boons to devotees; the high profile symbol of courage and strength; you possess a Magnificent Form. This was how Indra and Devas extolled Skanda.) Even as Kumara was replying to assure Devas that very soon the desire of retrieving their lost glories would be fulfilled, an emissary of Tarakasura arrived and conveyed their Chief's message to Indra with a warning not to repeat his past mistakes of challenging a giant Daitya of the stature of that great Tarakaura who shook up the Universe and converted Devas as his servants; he also remarked that instead of playing balls and toys, the baby boy Skanda should gradually get acclimatised to battle fields and face mighty Asuras much later in life! As Tarakasura was in a jocular mood, Skanda Deva said: 'Taraka! Never underestimate the 'Shakti' of a kid; can you not realise that a baby serpent could perform permanent damage to you and that a boy who has 'Alpaakshara Gyan' in releasing 'Astras' could reach you directly to Naraka! Even while Skanda was conversing like this, Taraka threw a 'Mudgara' (hammer) and an agile Kumara destroyed it with his 'Vajraayudha'; Taraka threw a 'Bhindapaal' which was destroyed by Kumara's own hands. Skanda materialised a Gada / Mace and despatched it against Kalanemi Daitya who became furious and rained a stream of Arrows. These arrows had little impact on Skanda. Instead, Kalanemi and his associates were thrashed by Kumara and they had to sprint from the battle lines. Takakasura then appeared center-stage and was furious in releasing a powerful arrow which hurt Kumara Swami's 'MayuraVahana'; The infuriated Skanda and threw the most potent 'Shakti Baana' which was indeed the decisive point that sealed Tarakasura's fate and the greatest menace in the Trilokas who dominated the scene for thousands of years was finally destroyed, even as Devas sounded 'dunhubhis' (large drums) and showered rose petals which filled up the Earth, Sky and the Nether lokas with the fragrance of Parijata flowers from Swarga. Gandharvas and Kinnaras sang mellifluous praises of Kumara and his proud parents, Apsaras were ecstatic and Sapta Rishis recited Mangala Mantras. Those who read or hear about the glories of Skanda would neither have sins nor diseases but lead a contented life ahead!]]]

Annexure

PRADHANA SUBRAHMANYA KSHETRAS

Swami Malai: One of significant six Subrahmanya Kshetras worthy of visit in Dakshina Bharat viz. Tiruttani, Palani, Tiruchendur, Tiruppuramkunnam and Palamudircholai is Swami Malai-literally meaning God's Hill- some 30 km near Kumbhakonam at an elevation of 82 ft. totally dedicated to Swami Nathan, called locally as 'Tagapan Swami' or Father God! The legendary background was that the Lord taught the true meaning of OM or Pranava to Maha Deva himself! As Brahma Deva failed to interpret the word adequately to Kumara Swami, he chided him; when Maha Deva asked Kumara to explain in a convincing manner, he analysed the depth of the meaning he did so even as the father learnt it intently as though a Teacher to a Vidyarthi! The Swami Malai Temple performs 'shat kaala dainika puja' or six worships a day round the year, besides celebrates many festivals like Krittikai every month, Rathotsava in April, Vishakha in May, Navaratri in May, Kanda Shashthi in October, Kartikai Utsav in November, Taipuccham in January and so on. The Golden Chariot utilised for all the festivals are made of 7 kg of gold and 85 kg of silver-copper alloy with sparkling illumination. There is a Sweta Vinayaka Temple made of white foam of Sea representing Ksheera sagara that created Amrit!

Palani: Some 38 km from Trichy and 100 km near Coimbatore is another Subrahmaya Kshetra of the reputed Six as mentioned above, the Abode of Dandayudhapani. There are two mythological references to this Temple; one is that since this Palani Hill was of the 'amsha' or of relationship with the highest mountain of the Universe viz. Meru, Sage Narada provoked Vindhya that the latter was, after all, not taller than Meru; this hurt Vindhya and tried to grow even taller as one side of the Universe was bright but the other side remained dark for ever since Sun became unreachable to the side at all. Parama Shiva asked Agastya Muni who was a resident of Kashi to teach a lesson to Vindhya; the Muni reached Vindhya who as a reverent to the Muni bent down and the Muni asked Vindhya never to stand. Agastya then moved to Dakshina Bharat to stay at Palani Hills for long before moving down further down to other Southern parts of Bharat. Another explanation about Palani Hills was that Sage Narada visited Kailasa to pay respects to Shiva and Parvati and gifted a Fruit of Jnana or Knowledge; he requested to conduct a test between Ganesha and Kartikeya viz. pradakshina or circumambulation of the Universe. Kartikeya instantly flew by his Peacock Vehicle while Ganesha performed a pradakshina and was rewarded with the Fruit. Kumara on return got furious and made Palani his abode as an ascetic assuming danda or a staff and 'koupeena' or loin cloth. Subsequently the parents Shiva and Parvati reached Palani to cajole the Dandayudhapani saying: *Gnaana paam nee Appa!* Or 'Indeed you are the personification of the fruit of Knowledge yourself, darling son!' There are daily worships including Kaala and Shanti Pujas- Alankaras-Aariti-Deepa- Swarna Ratha/ Golden Chariot Darshana. Festivals like Thai-Poosam/ Purnima, Tirtha Kavadi Yatras, Diamond Vel or Shula (javelin) yatras, Pankhuni Uttiram, Vaishakhas, Soora samhara etc. all drawing large crowds, especially due to the rope way facility up the hill, although many climb by steps owing to vows with or without foot wear or by Kavadis slung on shoulders!

Tiruttani: Yet another among the six Subrahmanya Tirthas is of Murugan Temple at Tiruttani, near by the border of Andhra Pradesh and distant by 84 km from Chennai up a hill of 250 ft elevation connected by good hill motorable road. Besides the Sanctum of Muruga, there are Temples of Mkahashasura Mardini, Veera Anjaneya, Arumuga Swami, Narasimha Swami, Mangaleshwara Shiva and so on. Besides Trikala Pujas and Deepa-aradhanas, festivals as observed at other Subrahmanya Tirthas as at Swami Malai are celebrated, especially Kanda Shashti, Nava Ratras, Kritikas and Vishakhas as also Shiva Ratri penances.

From Madurai to about 3 km is *Tiruppuramkkundam* and nearby there is a small mountain and up there is a cave inside which a Sarovar and a fairly big Mandir with a high rise gopura dedicated to Lord Subramanya, besides Murtis of Shiva-Parvati-Ganesha Idols; the belief is that Kumara's wedding was celebrated here and a row of Peacocks with Shiva- Parvati-Ganesha Murtis present as the audience! This is one of the six Subramanya sthalas of Dakshina Bharat. Passing by near the southern side of Vaigai river, one encounters a large Sarovara where the Ratha Yatra of Meenakshi-Sundareshwara Parikrama terminates at the Maryamman Koil. *Palamoodicholai* hardly 2km from Alagar Koyil up the Mountain and this too is one another six Abodes of Lord Kumara as a Tiruppuruk kundam. This too is one of the six Subramanya sthalas of Dakshina Bharata.

Tiruchendur is among the Five most famous and Sacred Subrahmanya Tirthas in Bharat, viz. *Swami Malai, Tiruttani, Tiru- chendur, Palani and Tirukundram.* Tiruchendur is on the shores of the Sea and normally yatris perform Samudra Snana before entering this Sacred Kshetra, which has a large Mandapa after crossing which only the Main Temple unfolds the Lord's darshan. The Golden Murti of the Lord Swami Kartikeya is indeed brilliant both in terms readily arresting features and shape as also the artistic attraction readily experiencing inner vibration of feelings.

Vaitheswara Koil of Angaraka: Dharani garbhasambhutam Vidyurkanti sama prabham, Kumaram Shakti hastam tam Mangalam pranamaamyaham/ Being the son of Bhu Devi Mangala Deva is of the flashy brightness of a Lightning and he too like Lord Subrahmanya the embodiment of Power and Courage ever worthy of worship. The Temple of Lord Vaideeswaran the Supreme Deity of Healing and of Medical Treatment as the key to Arogya or Health is situated some 27 km of Chidambaram and 52km from Kumbhakonam. Built by Kulottunga Chola of 11th century, Vaideeshwaran Temple encompasses large precincts with a 5tier Gopuram with its principal Sanctum dedicated to Vaideeshwara Linga and a metal image of Muttukumara Subramanya, besides those of Nataraja, Soma Skanda, Angaraka as also stone sculptures of Durga, Dakshina murti, Surya, Jatayu, Vedas and Sampatti. Temples of Taila Nayaki standing with medical oils to cure diseases and another of Dhanvantari and Angaraka are in Place, besides a Vriksha Sthala with medicinal properties in the vicinity. Nadi Jyotisha written in Tamil Script is practised in Vaideeswaran extensively and near the Temple. Brahmotsavas during January- February, Kartigai Festival during November and Kanti Shashtis at Muttukumara Temple are big draws besides on Tuesdays.

Subrahmanya Kshetra: Within the State of Karnataka in South Kanara District is the renowned Koumara Kshetra where Parashu Rama established a Mukti Kshetra like Mookambika, Udipi, Gokarna etc. Mangalore is the nearest Railway Station from where Subrahmanya is some 40 km although the roads are through forests and dusty and rather difficult to reach in rainy season but recommended from November till May. Main Mandir is of Lord Subrahmanya as seated on a Mayuraasana or on a Peacock. On the platform up at the Temple He is a Shadaanana Murti or of Six Heads, with a Pratima of Sarparaja Vasuki in the middle and at the bottom is Sesa Bhagavan and facing the Temple is a Garuda Dhwaja stated to offset the impact of poisonous flames emitted by the Sarpas. There is a Bhairava Mandir to the South, a Mandir for Uma Maheshwara in the northern side, a Veda Vyasa Samputa Nrisimha Mandir in the Southern side of the Main Mandir, besides a Parashurama Mandir again in South. In Kerala, the main places of worship are Kasargod, Payyanur, Haripad etc. In Andhra, Skandagiri in Hyderabad is famed while in East Godavari's Bikka volu is well known for worship of Subrahmanya Swami just as Karnataka has exclusive Temples venerated Him as Kukke Subrahmanya.

Apart from the famed Subrahmanya Khetras in Southern India, there has been a considerable following in North too. Pehova in Ambala of Punjab is the famed Swami Kartik Mandir near Prithishwar Maha Dev who is of Four Faces. Pilgrims worship him with oil and sindur as also perform Pitru Karyas on the banks of Sarasvati River. Swami Malai in New Delhi too has acquired great name for daily abhishakea pujas daily twice to the imposing figure of Lord Murugan at Vasanta Vihar. Worship of Kartikeya especially during Devi Navaraatras and all through the Kartika Month in West Bengal and Odisha is extensive.

In Sri Lanka, there is a huge following of Murugan, especially at Jafna. Batu Caves in Kaula lumpur and ardent worship of Dandapani on Tank Road of Singapore are widely popular and so are in the Subrahmanya Temples in London, Midlands and Liester. Murugan worship is also widespread in USA, Canada, Australia, not to mention of Mauritius and South Africa.

VEERA ANJANEYA

Scripted and edited by V.D.N. RAO based on Valmiki Ramayana

Origin of Anjaneya : Kesari-Shambanaada-Anjana Kumari and Vayu Deva

Kesari was the son of Gautami Rishi and Kesari's wife was Devi Anjana who secured a son named Anjaneya. Once Raakshasa Shambasaadana spied on Anjana Kumari who was playfully singing a song but a dirty hand of a Rakshasa tried to draw her close as she was bewildered with fear as was seeking her near, whispering in a heavy: My dear dove! Why are you fleeing from me! As shrieked saying 'help me , help me.' The Rakshasa said : none ever can save you; not even God. Kesari a huge Vanara saw from a tree top and jumped down and intervened. There followed a roaring fight but the Rakshasa overpowered Kesari, who in turn aimed at the rakshasa with his bow and arrows. The fight continued as the Rakshasa took the form of a huge elephant. The rain of arrows continued yet the rakshasa remained invincible since the thick skin of the elephant was infact boomeranging back to Kesari. Then Kesari suddenly assumed a miniature form, flew on to the elephant head, tortured the weakest points of the elephant's brain cells. The Rakshasa in response dropped the miniaturd vaanara down to earth as Kesari's blood cells were cut and blood started flowing out. Meanwhile, the dazed Anjana Kumari prayed to Lord Shiva, and a whispering voice was heard: nothing could happen to the rakshasa as he is invincible, except by the rakshasa's own blood. Anjana Kumari got the hint, secretly crawled on the ground, picked up an arrow from Kesari, smeared rakshasa's own blood there on, whispered to Kesari, reached the bow and arrow to his hands and hit at Rakshasa once again. Meanwhile, Shambasaadana took the form of a huge bull with a view to gore Kesari's writhing body to trample to death by lowering the bull horns. Kesari stood up somehow and shot his arrows- as smeared by Shambaraasura's own blood- at the bull's eyes. The bull's eyes were punctured and the rakshas's blood came out in flows and the Rakshasa collapsed down. Kumari Anjana had quickly smeared the rakshasa's own blood on to Kesari's arrows and supplied to the bow of Kesari. Thus crashed

down the Rakshas's huge bull body to death. As Maharshis witnessd by their 'divya drishti' appeared and endeared both Kesari and Anjana and having taken their mutual consent blessed them as ideal couples. Kesari the son of Gautami Rishi and Kesari's wife Anjana secured a grand son named *Hanuman* with the 'Amsa' (facet) of Parama Shiva and Vayu Deva too was responsible in the birth of the boy. Mistaking Surya Deva for a red-coloured fruit, the boy was tempted to fly skywad tried to hold Surya Deva, as Indra threw his Vajra on Hanuman's body and Ravana tried to hold Hanuman's tail but Hanuman never left his firm hold of Surya Deva. Ravan kept on fighting for a year in vain and tried to wriggle out of Hanuman's powerful clasp. Meanwhile Rishi Vishrava arrived at the spot and eulogised Hanuman to release Ravana the terror of the Universe. There after Hanuman resided for long time at Pampapura on the banks of PampaRiver as a strong fixture and was thus acclaimed as 'Sthanu'. Also since Ravana who had dictated the World and controlled Devas was humiliated by *Anjaneya*, his name and fame spread as Hanuman: *Nighnanta cha Suraan mukhyan Ravanam Lokaraavanam, Nihanti Mushtirbhayah sa Hanumaaniti vishrutah.* (Ravana who was in the habit of badly hurting Devas and related Demi-Gods and killing Vishnu- Bhaktas without mercy had thus been restrained badly and received a jolt by Hanuman; the 'Mushtighatas' or 'Hanus' (beatings of closed hand grasps) damaged Ravana was the reason why Hanuman was named as such. Lord Brahma informed Hanuman that during the twenty eighth Tretayuga's first Part of Vaivaswa Manvantara, Bhagavan Vishnu would take the Incarnation of Shri Rama and that he would achieve Rama's unreserved devotion to Hanuman and destroy the clan of Ravana, his cruel brothers and sinful sons.

Jambavan along other veanara veeraas approaches Anjaneya recalling the latter's birth, latent capabilities and prepares him to cross the maha samudra

As the full strength of lakhs of Vanaras were assembled on the Sea shore, Jambavan addressed Veera Anjaneya: *vira vānaralokasya sarvaśāstravidām vara, tūṣṇīm ekāntam āsṛitya hanuman kiṁ na jalpasi/ hanuman harirājasya sugrīvasya samo hy asi, rāmalakṣmaṇayoś cāpi tejasā ca balena ca/ ariṣṭaneminaḥ putrau vainateyo mahābalaḥ, garutmān iva vikhyāta uttamaḥ sarvapakṣiṇām/* Veeraanjaneya! Samasta Shastra Vetta! Why are you seated secluded here quitely on a corner in this miniature 'swarupa'! You are of Sugriva's par with, if not excel, by brawn and brain; in fact of Rama Laksmna's calibre and of eminence. We know of Kashyapa Prajapati and his progeny of Garuda, the son of Vinata who is reputed as the fastest of the Beings on earth, but indeed that is a weak comparison against you - the '*manojavam maaruta tulya vegam, jitendriyam buddhimataam varishtham, vaataatmajam,vaanara yudha mukhyam, Shri Rama dutam sharanam prapadye!* Hanuman! I have seen Maha Garuda several times flying across the Samudras and from his mouth are seen Maha Sarpas. His wings, their sweep, their strength, and parakrama are no less than of yours. *balaṁ buddhiś ca tejaś ca sattvaṁ ca harisattama, viśiṣṭam sarvabhūteṣu kim ātmānam na budhyase/* Vaanara shiromani! Your bala-buddhi-tejas-and dharya is the outstanding of all the Beings in Brahma shrishti. Then Mahaanjaneya! Why indeed are you not yet ready for jumping off this Samudra! Veeranjaneya! Your origin and of birth are indescribable: Pujikasthala was indeed a famed Aprsasa was cursed to be born as 'Kapini' or Vanara Stree famed as Anjana who was wedded to Kesari. As the Kapini had the ability to assume any form as she pleased and during the rainy season was seated on a mountain top dressed in silks, with priceless ornaments and decorated with sweet odoured flowers. Then there was a sweep of wind and Devi Anjana and Vayu Deva touched her tightly. *sā tu tatraiva sambhrāntā svṛttā vākyam abravīt, ekapatnīvratam idaṁ ko nāśayitum icchati/ añjanāyā vacaḥ śrutvā mārutaḥ pratyabhāṣata, na tvām hiṁsāmi suśroṇi mā bhūt te subhage bhayam/* But Devi Anjana was an ideal 'Pativrata' and in that hesitant concern, did not make further advances and was in act terribly afraid. Then Vayu Deva smiled reassuringly and said: 'Who indeed wishes to spoil your paativratya vrata! Sushreni! Don't you be scared as your mind must be rid of misleading thoughts. *manasāsmi gato yat tvām pariśvajya yaśasvini, vīryavān buddhisampannaḥ putras tava bhaviṣyati/ abhyutthitam tataḥ sūryam bālo dṛṣṭvā mahāvane, phalaṁ ceti jigṛkṣus tvam utplutyābhyapato divam/* Yashasvini! I would only like to embrace you mentally by way of 'maanasika sankalpa' but not

physically. As a result of such ‘maanasika samyoga’, you would be blessed with a ‘Maha Bala Paraakrama, Buddhi Sampanna Putra praapti’ who could cross oceans with speed and great ease!.Subsequently, Anjana Devi gave birth in a mountain cave! Even in childhood, you always felt that urya Deva too was a sweet fruit on the sky. *śatāni trīṇi gatvātha yojanānām mahākape, tejasā tasya nirdhūto na viśādam tato gataḥ/ tāvad āpatatas tūrṇam antarikṣam mahākape, kṣiptam indreṇa te vajram krodhāviṣṭena dhīmatā/ tataḥ śailāgraśikhare vāmo hanur abhājyata, tato hi nāmadheyam te hanumān iti kīrtiyate/* Maha Kape! Therefore you jumped up by three hundred yojanas once and felt that you could not still reach Surya. You kept on trying and finally reached Surya Deva, but Indra Deva was angry and hit you with his Vajraayudha. That was why your left side - hanu- was hurt and hence your name is ‘hanuman’! On seeing the entire scene, Vayu Deva was terribly concerned and thus the Prabhanjana Deva Vaayu stopped his movement in trilokas and then the Ashta Dikpalakas tried their best but finally Brahma Deva had to pacify Vayu Deva blessing Anjaneya would be immune from ‘astra shastras’! *vajrasya ca nipātena virujam tvām samikṣya ca, sahasranetraḥ prītātmā dadau te varam uttamam/ svacchandataś ca maraṇam te bhūyād iti vai prabho, sa tvām kesariṇaḥ putraḥ kṣetrajo bhīmavikramaḥ/ mārutasyaurasaḥ putras tejasā cāpi tatsamaḥ, tvām hi vāyusuto vatsa plavane cāpi tatsamaḥ/* Anjaneya! Even ‘vajra prahara’ by Indra Deva would be futile on your body and Mrityu is in your control’. Finally, Maha Jaambavaan asserted: *tad vijymbhasva vikrāntaḥ plavatām uttamo hy asi, tvadvīryam draṣṭukāmeyam sarvā vānaravāhini/ uttiṣṭha hariśārdūla laṅghayasva mahārṇavam, parā hi sarvabhūtānām hanuman yā gatis tava/ viśāṇṇā harayaḥ sarve hanuman kim upekṣase, vikramasva mahāvego viṣṇus trīn vikramān iva/* Parakrami Mahaanjaneya! Now is the time that you have to proclaim to the trilokas to heighen your stature as the Vanara Sena is longing to witness what you really indeed are. Kindly get up and cross this Maha Sagara in one jump as that indeed is a sure step for Loka Kalyana. All the Vaanara Veeras are right now are on the verge of collapse. As Maha Vishnu as Vamana Deva measured the Universe with three steps, please put forth three steps ahead to sure success!

Hanuman crossing the Maha Sagara

Veera Hanuman had decided to perform such impossible feat that no earthly beings could ever perform as he commenced expanding his head and shoulders. His intention was to move about freely all over the earth and cross the Maha Sagara even with the facility of divinities like Surya-Indra-Pavan-Brahma. He took to such gigantic physique that with that body he would trample mountains with his hold and feet into pieces. As the Mountain Mahendra was subdued, the creatures in the mountain caves were rattled and created screeching sounds. As the Mountain was suppressed, the big size serpents made loud hissing sounds seeking to crush the mountain boulders. The thirst and speed of the jumpings of Hanuman shook up the tall and strong trees in such a manner that heaps of flowers fell right onto the surfaces of the gushing and roaring sea waves spreading heavenly smell all around. The plentiful spread of inherent natural herbal medicines on the mountain ranges seemed to have failed the free flows of heaps of poisons as emitted from the huge serpents. Then, tapasvi Vidyadaraas and Siddha Chanuraas felt that some Maha Shaktis were annoyed and parvataas were being broken down and as such left their abodes along with their woman folks and shifted skyward. Then they soon realised that Vewera Hanuman was seeking to cross the Sea. Meanwhile, Hanuman roared with the strength of thousands of lions as if Vayu deva was creating reverberations along with Varuna Deva across the sky. *lāṅgalaṃ ca samāviddham plavamānasya śobhate, ambare vāyuputrasya śakradhvaja ivocchritaḥ/ lāṅgūlacakreṇa mahāñ śukladaṃṣtro ’nilātmajaḥ, vyarocata mahāprājñāḥ pariveṣṭiva bhāskaraha/* As Hanuman was virtually floating on winds his tail like the dharma dhvaja of Lord Indra Deva was similar. Buddhhimaan Pavana putra Hanuman’s white beard and the tail curled up and twisted in circles as though the globe of the Surya Mandala was flashed up gloriously and thus the Celestials could recognise him readily especially by the flashes of his long and elongated tail. *Khe yathaa niputtulukā uttarāntād viniṣṭā, dṛśyate sānubandhā ca tathā sa kapikuñjaraḥ/ patatpataṃgasamkāśo vyāyataḥ śuśubhe kapiḥ, pravṛddha iva mātāṃgaḥ kakṣyayā badhyamānayā/ upariṣṭac charīreṇa chāyayā cāvagāḍhayā, sāgare mārutāviṣṭā naur ivāsīt tadā kapiḥ/*

Just as meteor or rapidly shooting Star creating streaks of incandescence, Hanuman is ever recognised by its tail! Further his Surya like colossal form is recognised by the tail just like an elephant is recognised by the strong iron rod fixed deep on the earth. *khe yathā nipataty ulkā uttarāntād viniṣṣṛtā, dṛśyate sānubandhā ca tathā sa kapikuñjaraḥ/ patatpatamgasamkāśo vyāyataḥ śuśubhe kapiḥ, pravṛddha iva mātāṅgaḥ kakṣyayā badhyamānayā/ upariṣṭāc charīreṇa chāyayā cāvagāḍhayā, sāgare mārutāviṣṭā naur ivāsīt tadā kapiḥ/*Just as meteor, known as a shooting star or falling star-a comet or asteroid through Earth's atmosphere, -after being heated to incandescence by collisions with air in the upper atmosphere in its wake- Hanuman's tail too is visible on the sky line. Like the ever mobile Surya Deva, Hanuman too is clearly distinguishable on account of his ever long and mighty tail, even as a King of elephants could be seen clearly by the iron rod with which its mobility is halted. *yam yam deśam samudrasya jagāma sa mahākapiḥ, sa sa tasyāṅgavegena sonmāda iva lakṣyate/ sāgarasyormijālānām urasā śailavarṣmaṇām, abhighnaṁs tu mahāvegāḥ pupluve sa mahākapiḥ/ kapivātaś ca balavān meghavātaś ca niṣṣṛtaḥ, sāgarām bhīmanirghoṣam kampayām āsatur bhṛśam/* Interestingly as and when Hanuman's colossal body moved farther and farther up on the high Sea, the waves rise higher only to see, stare and admire his massively unbelievable physical frame. The Maha Vegashaali Maha Kapi Huanman like of the height of mountains then raced up across by making forcible ways by smashing such waves and making further way by the might of his huge and brawny chest. As the Kapi Shreshtha with mountain like form was dashing with the speed of 'Vaayu', the high tide waves seemed to have been distressed with panic and what with the vayu garjana and the dreadful atmosphere all around. The fishes of small and huge dimensions were jumping up quite high and deep down quite visible to the onlookers on the shores., especially the fishermen running far away from the shores. *daśayojanavistīrṇā trimśadyojanam āyatā, chāyā vānarasimhasya jale cārutarābhavat/ śvetābhraḡha -narājīva vāyuputrānu - gāminī, tasya sā śuśubhe chāyā vitatā lavaṇāmbhasi/*The shadow of Hanuman at that time was of the dimension of ten yojanas of width and thirty yojanas of height looking fantastic from the onlookers on the shores. The shadow of His profile if one could follow was similar to the linings of white clouds up above on the sky. As the Maha Vaanara likes was dashing to the southern direction, Deva-Gandharva-Chaaranas from the high skies were performing rains of flowers; this was especially so as Veera Hanuman was dashing on Shri 'Rama Karya' and Vayu Deva was accordingly cooperating to shower and reach the Great Messenger! Rishi Munis on earth too were showering 'veda pravachana ashirvaadas' too simultaneously. *tasmin plavagaśārdūle plavamāne hanūmati, ikṣvākukulamānārthī cintayām āsa sāgaraḥ/ sāhāyyam vānarendrasya yadi nāham hanūmataḥ, kariṣyāmi bhaviṣyāmi sarvavācyo vivakṣatām/ aham ikṣvākunāthēna sagareṇa vivardhitāḥ, ikṣvākusacivaś cāyam nāvasīditum arhati/*The Deva Karya in the context of Anjaneya was intending to perform was in the interest of the famed Ikshvaku Vamsha. In case the Vanara Raja Hanuman were not to have dutifully done then that would have become a target of blamefulness. The glory of Ikshvaku Kula was pioneered by Sagara Chakravarti Himself. In case, Veera Hanuman had not performed the present noble and virtuous deed despite his outstanding ability to help then the posterity would most certainly dishonour Anjaneya! Then Sagara Deva on his part decided to help Anjaneya by giving the latter some rest and diversion and approached the golden coloured 'Giri Shreshtha Maina Parvata'. As the Maha Vaanara was dashing to the southern direction, Deva-Gandharva-Chaaranas from the high skies were performing rains of flowers; this was especially so as Veera Hanuman was dashing on Shri 'Rama Karya' and Vayu Deva was accordingly cooperating to shower and reach the Great Messenger! Rishi Munis on earth too were showering 'veda pravachana ashirvaadas' too simultaneously. *tasmin plavagaśārdūle plavamāne hanūmati, ikṣvākukulamānārthī cintayām āsa sāgaraḥ/ sāhāyyam vānarendrasya yadi nāham hanūmataḥ, kariṣyāmi bhaviṣyāmi sarvavācyo vivakṣatām/ aham ikṣvākunāthēna sagareṇa vivardhitāḥ, ikṣvākusacivaś cāyam nāvasīditum arhati/*The Deva Karya in the context of Anjaneya was intending to perform was in the interest of the famed Ikshvaku Vamsha. In case the Vanara Raja Hanuman were not to have dutifully done then that would have become a target of blamefulness. The glory of Ikshvaku Kula was pioneered by Sagara Chakravarti Himself. In case, Veera Hanuman had not performed the present noble and virtuous deed despite his outstanding ability to help then the posterity would most certainly dishonour Anjaneya! Then Sagara Deva on his part decided to help Anjaneya by giving the latter some rest and diversion and approached

the golden coloured ‘Giri Shreshtha Maina Parvata’.Samudra Deva then addressed Mainaka Parvata to cooperate with Anjaneya to relax for a while and said : ‘Shaila Pravara! Please recall that Lord Indra asked you to close the path for Patala as that that way happened to be a direct route to that from where Asuras as their desperation to enter Bhuloka to create a scare here especially to Tapasvis. Thus you are standing here only for that purpose.Shailottama! We are blessed with the inherent ability to grow up or down or to expand or contract. *sa eṣa kapiśārdūlas tvām uparyeti vīryavān, hanūmān rāmakāryārthaṁ bhīmakarmā kham āplutaḥ/ tasya sāhyaṁ mayā kāryam ikṣvākukulavartinaḥ, mama ikṣvākavaḥ pūjyāḥ paraṁ pūjyatamās tava/ kuru sācivyaṁ asmākaṁ na naḥ kāryam atikramet, kartavyam akṛtaṁ kāryam satām manyum udīrayet/* Maha Shaila! Please note that Maha Parakrami Veeraanjaneya is about to cross you on the way to Lanka on Shri Rama Karya siddhi and as you might be aware that Ikshvaku Vamsha Kings are paramount dharmatmas. Veera Hanuman is right travelling across the Sea and one cannot afford to annoy satpurushas like Hanuman especially crossing the Sea but in fact to one’s best to please them. *salilād ūrdhvam uttiṣṭha tiṣṭhatv eṣa kapis tvayi, asmākam atithiś caiva pūjyaś ca plavatām varaḥ/ cāmīkaramahānābha devagandharvasevita, hanūmāms tvayi viśrāntas tataḥ śeṣaṁ gamiṣyati/ kākutsthasyānṛśaṁsyam ca maithilyās ca vivāsanam, śramam ca plavagendrasya samīkṣyotthātum arhasi/ hiraṇyanābho maināko niśamya lavaṇāmbhasaḥ, utpapāta jalāt tūrṇam mahādramalatāyutaḥ/* That is why , you may please increase your height to facilitate Hanuman to jump down with ease so that he could feel relaxed for a while. Mainaka Parvata Raja! Indeed you are pleased with golden ‘shikhara’. May Hanuman be your honourable guest and let him be falicitated accordingly. Maha Mainaka! You are respected by Devatas and Gandharvas always . After resting for a while, respectable Hanuman would proceed further. As Samudra Deva requested Mainaka Parvata, the latter having raised the height, addressed Hanuman: *duṣkaram kṛtavān karma tvam idaṁ vānarottama, nipatya mama śṛṅgeṣu viśramasva yathāsukham/ rāghāvasya kule jātair udadhiḥ parivardhitaḥ, sa tvām rāmahite yuktaṁ pratyarcayati sāgaraḥ/ kṛte ca pratikartavyam eṣa dharmah sanātanaḥ, so ’yam tat pratikārārthī tvattaḥ saṁmānam arhati/* Vanara shiromane! You have decided on an unprecedented adventure! Now, do please take a brief break before you may proceed further. Samudra Deva has asked me to perform ‘satkaara’. The ancestors of Raghu Vamsha enabled Samudra Vriddhi and now Samudra decided to do good to you as this is as per Sanatana Dharma. Saagara Deva is therefore asking me to do ‘Sanmaana’ to you stating that you have firmed up your decision to cross the Samudra by hundred yojanas and as such you might wish to have some rest and relaxation on your way. Atop this mountain is a wealth of trees with sweet fruits and a number of herbs and roots for your enjoyment. *atithiḥ kila pūjārhaḥ prākṛto ’pi vijānatā, dharmam jijñāsamānena kiṁ punar yādṛśo bhavān/ tvam hi devavariṣṭhasya mārutasya mahātmanaḥ, putras tasyaiva vegena sadṛśaḥ kapikuñjara/ pūjite tvayi dharmajña pūjām prāpnoti mārutaḥ, tasmāt tvam pūjanīyo me śṛṇu cāpy atra kāraṇam/* Dharma jigjnaasa purushas asserted that even a normal ‘atithi’ be treated as ‘atithi deva’ and you are an unprecedented ‘athithi’ in your very special context; you are Vayu Putra, Dharma jnaata and worshipping you is as good as worship Vayu Deva Himself! *pūrvam kṛtayuge tāta parvatāḥ pakṣiṇo ’bhava, te ’pi jagmur diśaḥ sarvā garuḍānilaveginaḥ/ tatas teṣu prayāteṣu devasaṁghāḥ saharṣibhiḥ, bhūtāni ca bhayaṁ jagmus teṣāṁ patanaśaṅkayā/ tataḥ kruddhaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ parvatānām śatakratuḥ, pakṣāṁś ciccheda vajreṇa tatra tatra sahasraśaḥ/* In the remote past of Satya Yuga, all the mountains used to have wings and like Garuda Deva had the ability to fly as they wished. But Indra was unhapy and clipped off the wings of the mountains with his ‘vajraayudha’ and were stayed placed as they were. *sa mām upagataḥ kruddho vajram udyamya devarāt, tato ’ham sahasā kṣiptaḥ śvasanena mahātmanā/ asmiṁl lavaṇatoye ca prakṣiptaḥ plavagottama, guptapakṣaḥ samagraś ca tava pitrābhirakṣitaḥ/ tato ’ham mānayāmi tvām mānyo hi mama mārutaḥ, tvayā me hy eṣa sambandhaḥ kapimukhya mahāguṇaḥ/*At that very time Indra raised his vajraayudha on me too, but your father Vaayu Deva had carried me off and I fell in the ‘kshaara sumudra’ and saved me as a great exception. And hence I am ever greatful to him eversince! *asminn evaṁgate kārye sāgarasya mamaiva ca, prītiṁ prītamanā kartuṁ tvam arhasi mahākape/ śramam mokṣaya pūjām ca grhāṇa kapisattama, prītiṁ ca bahumanyasva prīto ’smi tava darśanāt/* Thus after a long gap of time, I have the honour of repaying the debt and please accept this offer. Kindly oblige me. Then Kapi shreshtha Hanuman replied that he was very pleased as his offer to rest was quite welcome and could not be negated in any case, but

in the presence of a huge multitude of Veera Vaanaraas, he made a ‘pratigjna’ and as such he would not be spare much time. Having thus stated by Maina Parvata, he touched Maina with affection, received his atithya with veneration, and flew in continuation of Shri Rama Karya of Sitanveshana. Then *tato devāḥ sagandharvāḥ siddhāś ca paramarṣayaḥ, abruvan sūryasamkāsām surasām nāgamātaram/ ayaṁ vātātmajaḥ śrīmān plavate sāgaropari, hanūmān nāma tasya tvaṁ muhūrtaṁ vighnam ācara/* Deva-Gandharva- Siddhha-Maharshis then assembled and approached ‘Naaga Maata’ to test Veera Hanuman’s endurance and create some disturbance of his psychology and will power and prove to the world that it was not his bravado but unswerving determination to accomplish. They asked the Naga Maata to assume the form of a raakshasi: *rākṣasam rūpam āsthāya sughoram parvatopamam, damṣṭrākarālam piṅgākṣam vaktram kṛtvā nabhaḥsprśam/ balam icchāmahe jñātum bhūyaś cāsya parākramam, tvāṁ vijesyaty upāyena viśadam vā gamiṣyati/* In a truly heinous form of hers with grotesque cruelty, yellow eyes and agry looks, the test would be to create horror and dissuade or at any rate delay Hanuman for long enough time. She addressed Hanuman disgustingly: ‘Vanara! You have now entered my face and could never get out of it.’ Having said thus she expanded her face further and stood right before him. Then Hanuman replied: You may keep expanding your face as much as you would feel far heavier with my weight and volume, and kept quiet; Surasa magnified her face by ten yojanas while Hanuman doubled the size to twenty yojanas, infact he got irritated and further expanded to thirti yojanas. As she made it forty, he did fifty. Suras was still on the counter move and expanded upto sixty yojanas. The competition continued till Surasa made a full hundred yojanas. *tad dṛṣtvā vyāditam tv āsyam vāyuputraḥ sa buddhimān, dīrghajihvam surasayā sughoram narakopamam/ sa samkṣipyātmanaḥ kāyam jīmūta iva mārutiḥ, tasmīn muhūrte hanumān babhūvāṅguṣṭhamātrakaḥ/ so ’bhipatyāśu tad vaktram niṣpatya ca mahājvaḥ, antarikṣe sthitaḥ śrīmān idam vacanam abravīt/* As Surasa thus expanded her face up to hundred yojanas, Vayu putra Hanuman very cleverly started shrinking his massive body to the size of just a finger ring. *praviṣṭo ’smi hi te vaktram dākṣāyaṇi namo ’stu te, gamiṣye yatra vaidehī satyam cāstu vacas tava/ taṁ dṛṣtvā vadanān muktaṁ candram rāhumukhād iva, abravīt surasā devī svena rūpeṇa vānaram/ arthasiddhyai hariśreṣṭha gaccha saumya yathāsukham, samānaya ca vaidehīm rāghaveṇa mahātmanā/ tat tṛtīyam hanumato dṛṣtvā karma suduṣkaram, sādhu sādhu iti bhūtāni praśaśamsus tadā harim/* Then he asserted to the rakshasi swarupa Surasa Naga Devata and thundered: ‘Daksha Kumari! My greetings to you! I have now comfortably entered into your mammoth face and your boon of truthfulness to me stands consolidated and accomplished now. Now I should be able to reach Devi Sita very easily and quickly’. So saying, Veera Hanuman had freed himself from the hundred yojana size of the face of Maha Nagini Surasa just as Chandra Deva gets relieved from the tight clasp of Rahu Graha! Then Maha Nagini complemented Hunuman and wished him best wishes to soon meet Videhanandini Devi Sita soon. Then Hanuman started racing forward as though he was tearing through the red, yellow and white clouds while receiving the compliments of all the Beings on earth for having successfully encountered the third difficult issue to on the way thus far. *plavamānam tu taṁ dṛṣtvā simhikā nāma rākṣasī, manasā cintayām āsa pravṛddhā kāmārūpiṇī/ adya dīrghasya kālasya bhaviṣyāmy aham āsitā, idam hi me mahat sattvam cirasya vaśam āgatam/ iti samcintya manasā chāyām asya samakṣipat, chāyāyām samgrhītāyām cintayām āsa vānaraḥ/ samākṣipto ’smi sahasā paṅgūkṛtaparākramaḥ pratilomena vātena mahānaur iva sāgare/* He was rushing forward by changing his sizes from miniature to mammoth, he faced the Maha Kaya Rakshasi named Simhika. She was happy to see a Vanara and was delighted that he could be a nice prey to enjoy his delicious meat. Thus thrilled at the golden chance, the rakasasi quickly grabbed that that unfortunately for her that was a mere shadow of Hanuman. She regretted her misgiving to catch the shadow but not the real vanara and ruminated: ‘aho! I have only caught hold of the shadow of the Vanara as the sweep of winds misled me that the shadow was not the real one. *tiryag ūrdhvam adhaś caiva vikṣamāṇas tataḥ kapiḥ, dadarśa sa mahāsattvam utthitam lavaṇāmbhasi/ kapirājñā yad ākhyātām sattvam adbhutadarśanam, chāyāgrāhi mahāvīryam tad idam nātra samśayaḥ/* Then Hanuman saw up and down and realised that on the banks of the Maha Sagara and its high tides had shown a clear shadow of a huge figure. He recalled that once before Sugriva did mention that a ghastly encounter with a Maha Rakshasi would be possible on reaching the shores of Lanka. *Sa taam buddhvārtha -tattvena simhikām matimān kapiḥ, vyavardhata mahākāyaḥ prāvṛṣṭiva balāhakaḥ/*

tasya sā kāyam udvīkṣya vardhamānaṁ mahākapeḥ, vaktraṁ prasārayām āsa pātālāmbarasainnibham/ sa dadarśa tatas tasyā vikṛtaṁ sumahan mukham, kāyamātraṁ ca medhāvī marmāṇi ca mahākapiḥ/ sa tasyā vivṛte vaktre vajrasamhananaḥ kapiḥ, samkṣipyā muhur ātmānaṁ niṣpapāta mahābalaḥ/ Then had mentally confirmed that the Rakshasi was apparently the Simhika Rakshasi. The latter made a huge roaring sound enlarging her from as if from Patala to Aakaasha and ran after Hanuman. The intelligent Anjaneya aimed at her ‘marma sthaana’ and gave a strong but deadly punch. Then as the proceedings of Hanuman’s landing on the Seashore were being closely monitored, ‘Siddha Charuna Mahatmas’ had instantly visioned the scene Hanuman’s punch effect in the deathwise fall of the huge figure of Simsika. There were hailings from them saying: ‘Kapi Vara! I have just performed a frightful deed indeed by virtue of presence and timely application of your mental caliber. Now hopefully your way ahead is of victory. *asya tv etāni catvāri vānarendra yathā tava, dhṛtir dṛṣṭir matir dāksyaṁ sa karmasu na sīdati/ sa taiḥ sambhāvitaḥ pūjyaḥ pratipannaprayojanaḥ, jagāmākāśam āviśya pannagāśanavat kapiḥ/ prāptabhūyiṣṭha pāras tu sarvataḥ pratilokayan, yojanānām śatasyānte vanarājim dadarśa saḥ/ dadarśa ca patann eva vividhadrumabhūṣitam, dvīpaṁ śākhāmṛgasreṣṭho malayopavanāni ca/* The celestial voices further hailed: ‘Vaanarendra! A Being of dhṛiti-drishti-mati-deeksha or courage- visualisation - application of mind, and dedication would never face failures in life. Thus having successfully killed Simhika, Hanuman got up to the sky again as having covered the distance of the hundred yojanas of the Sea successfully and reached the Malaya named mountain and saw the gardens there. Then having discarded his varying physical forms of giant to very minute sizes assumed the normal and natural size. Subsequently he stared at the magnificence of Lanka from above. As Hanuman in a miniature form sought to stealthily enter Lankapuri which is like the Bhoga Puri like Bilva swarga surrounded by countless poisonous snakes, had the close view of the city with awe inspiring looks. But then he appeared in his normal stature. Then a Vikaraali Rakshasi shouted at Veera Hanuman: *Kastvam kenacha karyena iha praaptonam vanaalaya, kathayasveha yat tatvam yaavat praanaa dharanti te/ Nashakyam svalivyam Lankaa praveshtum vaanara tvayaa, rakshitaa Ravana balairabhi guptaa samantataḥ/* Vanara! Who are you and why are you here! As long as you are alive now, tell me as for which purpose you are here; tell the truth! Are you not aware that entry to Lankapuri is strictly forbidden except with my my permission! Hanuman had sternly shouted: ‘Very arrogant you are; are you not! I may perhaps inform you why I am here; but who are you to interrogate me this way! Your looks are red with anger; but why! Can you not be polite!’ Then Lankini replied: I am the trusted servant woman of King Ravana being the in charge of this gate for entry into Lanka. I feel like beating you so that you may rest in peace for good.’ Then the ever intelligent Hanuman explained to Lankini that he wished to see and enjoy the grand spectacle of Lanka, its of green gardens, excellent buildings and so on, what else! After thus enjoying I would return away’. As Hanuman explained rather unconvincingly with affected innocence, Lankini shouted boisterously and gave a resounding slap to him. *Tatah kritvaa mahaa naadam saa vai Lankaa bhayankaram, talena Vaanarashreshtham taadayaamaas vegitaa/ Stree cheti manyamaanena naatikrodhah swamam kritah, saa tu tena prahaarena vihvalaangee nishaacharee, papaata sahasaa bhumou vikritaanana darshayaa/ Praseeda sumahaa baho traayasva harisattamah, samaye soumya tishthanti satvavaanto maha balaah/* Then Anjaneya extended his left hand, closed his fist and gave her a swooning hit. In fact having realised that Lankini was after all a stree, the hit was not that severe to death. The Nishaachari fell flat on the ground and then her face was distorted. Then Hanuman took pity on her yet sought to put an end to her irritating attitude. Then she had slowly recovered, stood up and slowly responded: Maha bali Vanara! Believe me I am the gatekeeper of the entry into Lankapuri. But I wish to confess something significant: *Idam cha tatthyam shrunume bruvatyaayai bruvatvaa vai Harishvara, svayam svayambhuvaa datthham varadaanam yathaa mama/ Yadaa twaam Vaanarah kaschid vikramaad vashamaanayet, tadaa tvaa hi vijeyam rakshasaam bhayamaagatam/* Vanareshvara! I would now like to truthfully confess as Svayambhu Brahma Himself blessed and stated as follows: ‘Whenever a Vanara would approach me and hit me with a strong slap down to earth and subdue me, then do realise that hard days would commence to Lankapuri! Maha Veera! By my interaction and altercation with you do herald the doom of Lanka and Maha Ravanapura! Soumya! With your ‘darshan’, Lord Brahma’s statement gets vindicated right now! *Sitaanimittam raajastu Ravanasya duraatmanah, rakshasaam chaiva sarveshaam vinaashah*

samupaagatah/ Tat pravishya harishrashtha pureem Raavana paalitaam, vidhvsatva sarva kaaryaani yaani yaaneeha vaanchasi/ Pravishya shaapopahataam hareeshwara pureem shubhaam raakshasa mukhya paalitaam/ Now only due to the cause of Devi Sita, the days of the arrogant and sinful Ravana's destruction along with his followers is round the corner. Kapi shreshtha! My best wishes now and do please enter Lankapuri now for good.

Hanuman's search for Devi Sita

Pavana Putra Hanuman entered Lankapuri in the night, as the sky was enriched with the clouds, the houses of Rakshasaas were silent; the houses were displaying Swasti symbols as also of the shapes, representing 'Vardhamaana Sangjna' or the representation of progress. The houses are with four entrances in four directions known as 'Sarvato bhadra' of Safe from all sides and are stated to bring in prosperity from all the directions! From the interiors of the homes were heard instrumental music sounds, sweet songs, and even 'swaadhyaya' mantras of asuras. Some groups of Rakshasas were assembled on high road interjections, mainly extolling the glories the King Ravana, his family members and his close followers. *rājamārgam samāvṛtya sthitam rakṣobalam mahat, dadarśa madhyame gulme rākṣasasya carān bahūn/ dīkṣitān jaṭilān muṇḍān go 'jināambaravāsasaḥ/* One might also notice quite a few 'Gupatacharaas' of Ravana or the King's Intelligence persons, some look having taken 'deeksha, some with beards and twisted hairs, some dressed in hides of cow or deer skins, some with hidden 'aayudhas' or weaponry, and some with open arms. *Ekaakshaaneka varnaascha lambodarapayodharaan, karaalaan bhugnavaktrāmś ca vikaṭān vāmanāmś tathā/ dhanvinaḥ khaḍginaś caiva śataghñī musalāyudhān, parihottamahastāmś ca vicitrakavacojjalān/* Some of the Rakshasaas are single eyed in their foreheads, and some with varied skin colours; some with their stomachs up to their chins and likewise of varied bodypart combinations. Some are too tall and some too short. Similarly their voices are of unusual sounds. *nātiṣṭhūlān nātikṣān nātidīrghātihrasvakān, virūpān bahurūpāmś ca surūpāmś ca suvarcasah/ śaktivṛkṣāyudhāmś caiva paṭṭisāsānidhāriṇaḥ, kṣepaṇīpāśahastāmś ca dadarśa sa mahākapiḥ/* Some 'nishaacharaas' are unusually fat, of short or too high and similarly their body complexions are queer and disgusting. Most of them were armed differently as per their body statures. *śatasāhasram avyagram ārakṣam madhyamam kapiḥ, prākārāvṛtam atyantam dadarśa sa mahākapiḥ/* Hanuman estimated that over a lack of foot soldiers were guarding the center of Lanka with varied weaponry. Having thus noted the ever preparedness of the army of Ravana and the range of weaponry that the soldiers were well equipped with proceeded to Ravana's 'antahpura' for 'Sitaanveshana'.

Hanuman then enters the 'antahpura' or the interior palaces of Ravana'sura systematically but gets disappointed with no sign and indication of Devi Sita. Hanuman then extended the scope of search for Devi Sita in Ravana's own palace, besides at the houses of his follower Rakshasaas. Hanuman witnesses the inside out of the Pushpaka Vimana - indeed it was surfeit with Sundara Kanyas. In the process of 'Devi Sitaanveshana' in the Pushpaka Vimana in Ravana's residence, Hanuman witnessed countless 'strees' of youthful charm being playful inside; why had Ravana forcefully abducted Sita, despite his reputation of never forcing a woman but willingly married! In the process of searching for Devi Sita, Hanuman was confused by seeing Devi Mandodari to Devi Sita! Hanuman on seeing Mandori, took time self assure about Devi Sita, continued the search even while self introspecting of his own honesty in the atmosphere of food-dance and lust; yet dismissed such thoughts. Hanuman in his remote thoughts wondered and was even concerned of Devi Sita's very existence but quickly recovered from such apprehensions resumed 'Sitanveshana' yet again with confidence and belief! Despite his sincere efforts of finding Devi Sita, the indications were slimmed and might even return disappointed. Yet, visited 'Ashoka Vaatika'. Hanuman yet in his miniature form finally visioned Devi Sita near a 'Chaitya Praasaada Mandira' and identified her and felt ecstatic..

Hanuman finally succeeds Devi Sita Darshana

Hanuman having finally ensured that Devi Sita was visioned, felt that as to why she, an outstanding Pativrata, why and how Ravana has been disgusting, yet sad. Hanuman was no doubt happy to see Devi Sita most closely with sympathy, yet contrarily was repulsed with hatred at the sight of the Rakshasa streets encircling her. Ravana'sura along with his beloved females enters Ashoka Vatika and the spot where Devi Sita was being guarded as seen by Anjaneya in his miniature form. Even with a single nasty and desolate glance of the detestable Ravana'sura, Devi Sita was drowned in gloom-fear-and apprehension as noticed by Hanuman. Ravana then addressed Devi Sita opening his heart fancying her, praises her origin, charm and conduct, and seeks to convince her to discard fear complex, to be sympathetic to him, and wait for her consent. Devi Sita emboldens herself and replies highlighting Ravana's wretched manner of abducting her and of his features of cruelty, selfishness, and ego; mocks his ability and readiness to face hero Rama. As Sita heckled Ravana's claim of heroism and his stealthy timidity, she asserted her 'pativrata', and challenged him to face Rama- as Ravana threatened her granting three months to change or get killed. While a few of enlightened Rakshasis sought to convince Devi Sita to wed Ravana, the rest of the cruel lot threatened her to death and fancy to taste her flesh, cook it with spices, and eat with wine and dance! Totally rattled by the perilous intimidation of the Rakshasis to nearly kill her and celebrate, Devi Sita nearly resorted to 'praana tyaga' especially cursing her fate still disabling her from Shri Rama darshana. Hanuman witnessed series of Ravana's sweet offers to wed Sita, her no-nonsense reaction, his three month notice, violent threats of Rakshasis, Trijata's forebodings, now desires to appear before her, but how! Veera Hanuman sings Shri Rama Katha exclusively for Devi Sita but she wonders its genuineness! Then Hanuman appears before Devi Sita in his own form and conveys about Shri Rama's welfare, his arrival here, and assures Rama's arrival soon. Devi Sita still unconvinced fully about Hanuman's genuineness he describes Rama's physical features and mental acumen and bravery, pleading his own authenticity. Devi Sita finally concedes Hanuman's genuineness- then he describes Rama's 'guna ganaas', how Rama missed her, Sugriva's help repaying Rama's help by killing Vaali- Sampati's guidance to reach her. Maha Veera Hanuman bestows Shri Rama's finger ring to Devi Sita as a memory refresher- the highly excited Devi Sita falls back to her memory screen, as Hanuman assures Rama's arrival too soon! As Devi Sita seeks Hanuman to hasten Shri Rama's arrival at Lanka, Hanuman suggests carrying her and reach Rama swiftly, but she declines giving reasons, especially stressing Rama's invincibility. Before handing over her 'choodaamani' to Hanuman, Devi Sita recalled how Rama expressed his concern by using 'brahmastra' on a crow- Indra's son- pestered her; the crow went from pillar to post and fell at Rama's feet; though Rama pardoned, still had to block any crows's vision of left eye ever since! Having taken the possession of precious Sita 'Choodaamani' as a proof of meeting her, Hanuman felt elated to display his grit, devotion and resolution to all concerned, especially for the delight of Rama! Devi Sita reiterated what Anjaneya should convey to Rama about her life's threats while handing over hair clip to Shri Rama; Hanuman reiterates his reaching Rama's soonest. Veera Hanuman devastates Ashoka Vatika- on witnessing this the frightened Rakshasis surrounding Devi Sita ran away to Ravana'sura stating some Celestial Being had reached at the Ashoka Vatika to destroy it. Ravana'sura on learning of a stranger devastating Pramadaavana, despatches a strong regiment of his army of well trained eight thousand rakshasa force named Kinkaras. Mahabali Vayu Putra then devastates 'Chityapraasada'- the Rakshasa Kuladevatashthana and the rakshasas around it. Veeranjaneya smashes the expertise of 'baana-prayoga' of the Maha Rakshasa Jambumali, as Ravana'sura decided to utilise the extraordinary skills of archery of the Prahasta Putra to pull down the enemy. As Hanuman successfully killed Kinkaras and Jambumali and demolished Pramadaavana and Chatya Praasada along with inmates, enraged Ravana instructed the mighty sons of his Ministers to face Hanuman. With successive deaths of his select Rakshasa Veeras, Ravana'sura had wondered that even one Vanara of Hanuman demoralised him as a wake up call and despatched his five Senapatis who too were killed! Anxiously awaiting Hanuman's destruction by the Five Senapatis and army forces, Ravana got negative messages. As he was dismayed, his son Akshaya Kumara, well versed in war tactics, then too his turn. Shattered with putra shoka and humiliation, Ravana finally asked Indrajit to use his brahmastra to end up the menace of Hanuman and save the Rakshasa Samrajya and his personal prestige and fame at stake!

Veera Hanuman was no doubt impressed by Ravasasura's accomplishments and his own personalised feelings. Pretending as bounded by Indrajit's Brahmastra, though Brahma granted his immunity from Brahmastra faced Ravana whose Minister asked him why he visited Lanka; he confirmed, he was Shri Rama's messenger. Addressing Ravana, Veera Hanuman detailed Shri Rama's 'Prabhava' and warned that if Devi Sita were in any way hurt, that would be the instant final doom of Ravana and Lanka; Ravana went mad with fury. Infuriated by Hanuman's insinuations of Ravana's record of failures and praising Rama's successes, Ravana orders the vanara be killed-Vibhishana pleads against killing a messenger, as Ravana heeds. As Vibhishana appealed, Ravana consents to burn Hanuman's tail to display the blazings to Lanka's public. As Rakshasis conveyed, Sita prays to Agni to lessen the heat. Hanuman starts the revenge. Hanuman's vengeful 'Lanka Dahana and Vidhvamsa' as the Rakshasas were shocked wonderstruck whether he was of Rudra Swarupa or Rama Bhakta! Veera Anjaneya's successful 'Lanka Dahana' but concerned of Devi Sita's safety- her 'punardarshana'. Hanuman reassuring Devi Sita of soonest arrival of Rama Lakshmanas, jumped off from Arishta Parvata to cross the Maha Sagara as vanara pramukhas were waiting anxiously. As Vayu Putra dashed through thick sky high clouds to return to the ever awaiting Vanara yodhas, the latter were ever concerned, but his return overjoyed them especially Angada and Jambavan. On his victorious return from Ravana's Lankapuri, Hanuman briefly detailed the happenings, especially Devi Sita darshana, killing spree of Rakshasas, challenge to Ravana, burning his tail and Lanka dhvamsa. Viranjaneya details the actual status of Devi Sita's physical and psychological condition to Shri Rama in the presence of Lakshmana Sugrivas. Reacting to Hanuman's handing over Devi Sita's 'choodaamani' Rama got worked up with his sweet memories, showing anxiety to hear what was her message to him. Hanuman detailed her actual status and parting appeal still concerned of urgent action to save her very life!

Shri Rama lauds Hanuman's unique heroism as the latter explains of Lankapuri's impregnability

As Shri Rama heard about Veera Hanuman's memorable success as he was truly impressed and affirmed that none could have ever possibly achieved this kind of achievement on earth, excepting Garuda and Vayu Deva. Even Deva-danava-yaksha-gandharva-naaga-rakshasas could ever dare conquer Lankapuri but Veera Anjaneya who had literally shattered and put it to flames. *ko viset suduradharsham rakshasais ca surakshitam, yo vīryabalasaṃpanno na samaḥ syād dhanūmataḥ/ bhṛtyakāryam hanumatā sugrīvasya kṛtam mahat, evaṃ vidhāya svabalam sadṛśam vikramasya ca/ yo hi bhṛtyo niyuktaḥ san bhartrā karmaṇi duḥkare/ kuryāt tadanurāgeṇa tam āhuḥ puruṣottamam/* None indeed Hanuman could ever enter and exit after success after challenging Maha Rakshasas in this fashion. He had truly vindicated himself not only as hero but follower and dedicated to a master and King of Vaanaras Sugriva should be proud, grateful and fortunate to have a Hanuman for such an unbelievable act. He has accomplished a duty for his master in this manner and with thunderous success being of the prime rank. Further, a follower who is no doubt faithful and trustworthy is stated as a sincere achiever of medium range while those sevakas who no doubt are disciplined and sincere are the third rank ordinary followers. Further having been dedicated to Swami Karya, he had not only ensured the esteem of me and his King but never belittled his own too always. *ahaṃ ca raghuvaṃśas ca lakṣmaṇas ca mahābalaḥ, vaidehyā darśanenādyā dharmataḥ parirakṣitāḥ/ idaṃ tu mama dīnasyā mano bhūyaḥ prakarṣati, yad ihāsya priyākhyātur na kurmi sadṛśam priyam/ eṣa sarvasvabhūtas tu pariṣvaṅgo hanūmataḥ, mayā kālam imaṃ prāpya dattas tasya mahātmanaḥ/* Now, only he had truly discovered Devi Sita, met her, convinced her, and kept up the prestige of me and Lakshmana. Now I am not in a position to a gift worthy of awarding yet he had truly worthy of offering him yet bestowed to me a life extender and anguish pacifier. I can only offer him an invaluable and heart to heart embrace. Then Shri Rama addressed the Vanara Sena and prominent personalities of distinction: dear comrades! Doubtless, Hero Hanuman had accomplished 'karya siddhi' just for my sake, but my enthusiasm is getting blunted right now as to how --best to cross the Maha Samudra and reach the other side of the shores and Devi Sita's very life breathing! What indeed could really be the practical way forward and reach the other side! Thus Shri Rama became terribly penitent for reaching the other side of the hundred yojana distance of the Maha Sagara ! Then Veera Hanuman provides the full account of

Lanka's impregnability, statistics of gates, inbuilt locational advantages and so on, yet emphasizing the attacking abilities of vanara sena too. As 'buddhimaan' Sugriva thus addressed Shri Rama never to get concerned with the task of setu bandhana but trust his own unchallenged valor and encourage him with his own 'marga darshaka pratibha' as his outstanding vanara sena are ever ready to bear the brunt with uncommon gusto and zest, Shri Rama addressed Veeranjanya thus: Vanara Veera! you had already visited Lanka and are fully aware of the details; tell me what was the distance from one dwara durga to another. Then Anjaneya detailed as follows: 'Bhagavan Shri Rama! I shall give you the details as to how Lankapuri's safety was ensured, how the rakshasa sena's safety was ensured, what kind of rakshasa sena was the impact of the love and admiration for Ravana's dedication and devotion from them, what kind of prosperity that the public of Lankapuri enjoyed, how dreadful was the Maha Samudra and its shores, how many foot soldiers were posted there on the shores, how many vahanas were engaged of those foot soldiers on the shores, etc. Then Hanuman started the detailing: Rama prabho! Lankapuri is fully contented with pleasures of life, several elephants, chariots, and each and every citizen lives with longevity as they do not understand what are physical illnesses and threats to life. The city has huge, strong, four entry gates, with sturdy windows yet impossible to break mountain boulders or mantrik arrows even by invoking Indradi Devas and even Brahma. The purpose of outside vision from the wonderfully trained foot soldiers, cavalry, elephantry, charioteers and so on, while the ably flying soldiers send signals of even far distant approaches of the enemies and are thus truly impregnable. The 'dwaraas' as constructed by rakshasa veeras and rakshasa architects apart, there are thousands of 'shataghniyaas' or of 'loha gadaas' or iron maces of four feet breadth ever ready to fire enemy attacks fully loaded to resist and bring it down to ashes in a 'truti' of time almost instantly. Each of the 'dwaaraas' or the exit-entry high gates, there are 'kandakaas' or of bottomless deep waters with 'maha matsyas' like whales, sharks and huge crocodiles instantly disappearing. At the same time there are four entry-exit gates equipped with massive wooden bridges of automatic provision to be hoisted and folded down to enter and exit. As and when 'shatrusena' seeks to attack and enter, countless precautions are thus ready to defend and reattack by throwing back in to the deep waters. *Swayam prakritisampanno yuyutsu rama ravanah, utthitash cāpramattash ca balānām anudarśane/ laṅkā purī nirālambā devadurgā bhayāvahā, nādeyam pārvataṁ vanyam kṛtrimam ca caturvidham/ sthitā pāre samudrasya dūrāpārasya rāghava, naupathash cāpi nāsty atra nirādeśash ca sarvataḥ/* Raghunadha! Ravana'sura himself keeps his poise while defending or attacking as he keeps reviewing the readiness of his sena always. Thus as of now, Lanka is just not possible to attack even by Devas; having been protected naturally too by mountains and the maha dakshina samudra Ravana'sura had made it impregnable further. *ayutam rakṣasām atra paścimadvāram āśritam, sūlahastā durādharṣāḥ sarve khaḍgāgrayodhinah/ niyutam rakṣasām atra dakṣiṇadvāram āśritam, caturāṅgeṇa sainyena yodhāsh tatrāpy anuttamāḥ/ prayutam rakṣasām atra pūrvadvāram samāśritam, carmakhaḍgadharāḥ sarve tathā sarvāstrakovidāḥ/* Behind Lankapuri's eastern gate there is ten thousand rakshasa 'nivaasa', each of them are ready to defend and attack. On the southern gate there is a 'chaturanga sena' of a lakh strength. On the western front the strength is ten times more. *arbudam rakṣasām atra uttaradvāram āśritam, rathinash cāśvavāhāsh ca kulaputrāḥ supūjitāḥ/ śatam śatasahasrāṅgām madhyamam gulmam āśritam, yātudhānā durādharṣāḥ sāgrakoṭish ca rakṣasām/ te mayā samkramā bhagnāḥ parikhāsh cāvapūritāḥ, dagdhā ca nagarī laṅkā prakārāsh cāvasāditāḥ/ yena kena tu mārgeṇa tarāma varuṇālayam, hateti nagarī laṅkāṁ vānarair avadhāryatām/* Now the northern dwara is truly impenetrable as being safeguarded by an arbuda or ten crore rakshasa yodhaas either mounted by excellently trained horses or chariots. Moreover the central Lankapuri is the stronghold of Maha Rakshasa Sena with countless Rakshasa Sena of over a crore in reserve. But, I was still able to overcome the obstacles while appropriately adjusting my physical form from diminutive to gigantic stature, smashed the 'praanganaas' and burnt off some one quarter of Lankapuri. We among the 'maha vanara sena' too do possess the skill and wherewithal to smash down likewise some how. *aṅgado dvivido maindo jāmbavān panaso nalaḥ, nīlaḥ senāpatish caiva balaśeṣeṇa kiṁ tava/ plavamānā hi gatvā tām rāvaṇasya mahāpurīm, saprakārām sabhavanām ānayaṣyanti maithilīm/ evam ājñāpaya kṣipram balānām sarvasaṅgraham, muhūrtena tu yuktena prasthānam abhirocaya/* Shatru bhayankara Shri Rama! The vanara sena under the command of King Sugriva is blessed with maha veeraas like Angada, Dvidida,

Mainda, Jambavan, Panasa, Nala, and Senapati Neela would suffice to bring you laurels as mere illustrations, apart from the 'apaara vanara sena. Raghu Nandana! Angadaadi maha vaanaras could fly and on reaching Lankapuri could smash down the protective hills, forests, Lanka dvaras, living residences and the so called Rakshasa veeraas and their kith and kin, and finally rescue Devi Sita safe. In view of all these facts and figures may I assure you that soon enough, let an auspicious time be declared to initiate the duty of 'Setu bandhana' and soon thereafter cross the bridge and attack.

Vibhishana seeks Shri Rama's refuge and Anjaneya supports as as Sugriva and other Vanaras hesitated while Rama endorsed:

Meanwhile Vibhishana appeals Ravana to release Devi Sita, praising Rama and his valour - Prahasta, Indrajit and other Mantris heckled Vibhishana- as the latter retorts that neither Ravana with 'vyasnaas' nor his followers could match Rama. Despite consistent appeals to release Sita, Ravana refuses finally- out of desperation Vibhishana leaves Lanka off for good! As Vibhishana seeking asylum from Shri Rama, raises doubts of Vaanara Veeras like Surgiva, Angada and so on, Hanuman felt yet that it was genuine for apparent reasons and asks for Rama's instructions. Shri Rama being a 'sharanaagama rakshaka' replies to Sugriva and co vanaraveeraas, especially VeeraAnjana Putra, and asks the Vanara King to allow his darshan. On hearing the assurances of Hanuman, Shri Rama was pleased and addressed Sugriva and the rest of select Vanara Veeras as follows: No doubt the new arrival Vibhishana is a maha raksasa of the very clan of Ravanaasura, yet as he had arrived at my refuge. Let me assure you that even among rakshasas too there would be 'neeti shastravettas'! Hence, notwithstanding all other considerations of birth, upbringing, co existence, one might depart especially after a climactic and continuous excesses of adharma and in any case the fundamental kshaatra dharma requires fulfillment of protection to an enemy. Surely, may the arrival of Vibhishana at this critical juncture be an auspicious omen!

Shri Rama prays to Samudra Deva and Setu Bandhana facilitated

Rama invoked Samudra Deva for three days long, lost patience and threatened by shooting arrows. Maha Sagara himself personified restraining Rama's fury- advised Vanara's 'maha shilpi', the method of constructing 'Setu Bandhana' to facilitate Ramas and the huge Vaanara Sena to cross the Maha Sagara- As Rama with Vanara Sena finally crossed the Sagara, the flustered Ravana despatched Shukha-Saaranas as Vanaras, Vibhishana gets them caught, but the kind Rama releases yet with an alert message. Ravana asserted not release Devi Sita any way, yet asked Sarana about about Vanara yodhaas and the latter mentioned Angada, Nala, Shweta, Kumuda, Chanda, Rambha, Sharabha, Panasa, Krodhana, Gavaya-Saarana further added to the list of Vanara Pramukhas like Jambavan- Jambavan, Samnadana, Kratana, Pramaathi, Gavaksha, Kesari, Shatabali and so on now right at the door steps of Lankapuri- As Saarana reported of his findings to Ravana, Shuka detailed about about Sugriva's Ministers, Mainda-Dvididas, Hanuman, Rama Lakshmanas, Sugriva Vibhishanas, and further details of the number of Vanara Sena. Vibhishana noticed Shardula as Rama pardoned- Then Shardula the spy ran back, Ravana desired as to the origin of Pramukha Pramukha Vanaras like Jambavan, Sushena, Kesari, Sushena, Dadhimukhi, Sumukha, Sveta, Mainda brothers, Nala, Vegashali and so on. Final placement of Rama Sena with followers of Lahshmana- Vibhishana- Sugriva- Maha Vaanaras at the Lankapuri Dvaras coordinating up above and near the gates reminding of Deva- Danava Yuddha!- Dwandva Yuddha of Ravana- Vaanara Bhallukas day long yuddha between Indrajit- Angada, Jambumali- Hanuman, Shatrughna- Vibhishana, Gaja-Neela, Prathasa- Sugriva, Virupasha- Lakshmana and so on- During the night long Rakshasa Vanara Yuddha, Angada defeats Indrajit, but out of shame as the latter disappears by maaya and did 'naagastra bandhanastra prayoga' on Rama Lakshmanas.

Rama Lahshmanas tied with Indrajit's 'Nagastra' - Rama wriggled out yet Hanuman was getting readied to reach Himalayas to fetch herbs from Sanjeevani Parvata, Garuda Deva arrived to free Lakshmana

As Rama Lakshmanas were tied down by 'Nagastra' by Indrajit in hiding, Vaanara Shreashthas tried to locate him who too were the victims of Indrajit's astras as the bewildered Maha Vanaras broke down too. As Indrajit was yet in his invisibility, avoiding the search party of Hanuman, hit Jambavan and other Vaarara Veeras, as Vibhishana pacified Sugriva as 'Satyameva Jayate'. As Vaanaras rescued Rama Lakshmanas from naaga bandhana, but Trijata assured so too yet with hurdles. All of a sudden Shri Rama with his physical and mental strength tore off the 'naaga pasha' but was distressed to see Lakshmana could not, and kept on crying missing him and got readied even to retreat! Vibhishana distressed at Lakshmana unrecovered, Rama decides to withdraw from the battle; Sushena advises Hanuman to get herbs from Sanjeevani Parvata but happily, Garuda lands and frees from 'naaga bandhana'.

Hanuman killed Dhumraksha, Akampana, Devantaka, Trishira and many Rakshasa Veeraas and contributed to resist Kumbhakarna too whom Shri Rama finally killed.

Rattled by Rama Lakshmanas release, the worried Ravana despatched Dhumraksha, but Hanuman crashed the chariot and the head of Dhumraksha. Ravanaasura got furious that Dhumraksha was killed by Hanuman, he instructed Vajradamshra to take revenge, as Rakshasa Vaanara Maha Yuddha followed yet Angada crushed Vajradamshta to death. Senapati Akampana volunteered to attack the shatru sena but Veeranjanya despatched the Senapati and many Raashasas to Yama Loka. As even Akampana too was crumbled to death by Hanuman, Ravana hesitated but Senapati Prahasta consented but Maha Vaanara Senapati Neela succeeded to crush the Rakshasa Senapati to death. Ravana's entry with a wallop and exit with a whimper by subduing Sugriva, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Neela Yodhdhas but exited as Shri Rama disgraced him! Having left battle with disgrace as defeated by Shri Rama, Ravana instructed that Kumbhakarna be awoken from long slumber; once awoken with food and drink reached Ravana as Vaanaras were scared- Vibhishana traces Kumbhakarna's origin, maha bala and spells of 'deerghanidra'. As Kumbhakarna boasted off his certain victory, Mahodara warned of Rama's invincibility but the latter was infuriated, demanded Sita's surrender and proceeded against Rama with four more Rakshasa Veeras- Kumbhakarna 'Rana Yatra', notwithstanding spates of 'dusshakunas' - As many Vaanaras were dazed at Kumbhakarna ran way despite Angada's appeals for death with veera swarga, then Maha Vanaras like Neela, Gavaksha, Hanuman then decided to confront the enemy - Displaying initial 'prataapa' against Angada, Sugriva and Hanuman, Kumbhakarna calling Lakshmana as 'baalaka' attacks Rama who had systematically slashed off his right and left shoulders and finally his head and body to Vanara's thrill and the dismay of Ravana! - On hearing the unbelievable and tragic end of Kumbhakarna, Ravana was stunned and as his sons/ cousins broke down; he realised the retributive impact of his criminal deeds but now too late. As Ravana felt the never dreamt of Kumbhakarna's fall, Trishira cooled down his anguish while Ravana Putras /cousin kumaras readied yet Narakantaka too resisted much as Angada removed him dead- Hanuman shattered Devantaka and Trishira, Neela demolished Mahodara and Rishabha smashed Mahapaarshva-Atikaya the Kubera Putra whom Ravana considered as his own son; Brahma gifted an impregnable Kavacha to Atikaya; after a bhayankara yuddha, Lakshmana finally killed him by brahmastra itself.. Totally smashed to smithereens, Ravanaasura reviewed several Maha Rakshasa Veeraas had sacrificed lives for him so far and instructed safety of Lankapuri, specially where Devi Sita resided- Indrajit devastated Vanara Veeraas being invisible on skies and by using brahmastra made Rama Lakshmanas too victimised as Ravana was thrilled and so were Rakshasaas and Lankapura.

The utmost critical of Ramayana was to save Shri Rama Lakshmanas by Hanuman by fetching Mrita Sanjeevini from 'brahmastra prayoga'

As Vaanara Veeraas wondered with 'kim kartavya' as Rama Lakshmanas collapsed senseless, Jambavan advised of fetching Mrita Sanjeevini off Himalayas which Hanuman did the glorious act successfully. Then Vibhishana broke the silence stating that that after all was not the end of the world any way and

assured them all: ‘Vaanara Veeraas! Never get disheartened in this manner and this is such a critical moment that one would need to face with determination and resolve. After all, Rama Lakshmanas are in a senseless condition but happily alive. Swayambhu Brahma did provide Indrajit the potent most brahmaastra which got the maha purushas temporarily senseless and one would need to negate its temporary spell by seeking and exporing means to negate.’ Then Hanuman addressed Vibhishana: ‘Rakshasa Raja! I do heartily endorse and appreciate your sense of determination instead exploring ways and means and share our assurances too’. That was the time of nightfall dusk when there was no rakshasa sanchaara as they ought to be celebrating victory. Hence Vaanara Veeraas though physically hurt somewhat could fortify themselves with mental resolve. Then Vibhishana and Hanuman witnessed Sugriva, Angada, Neela, Sharabha, Gandamaadana, Jambavaan, Sushena, Vegadarshi, Mainda, Nala, Jyotirmukha and Dvidida were in their respective conditions of being rather badly hurt. Vibhishana in that sandhaakaala’s dim light recognised Jambavan and said: Arya! Hope you are not so grievously hurt! Jambavan replied: ‘Rakshasa Raja, I am able to recognise you only my your voice and my eyes also not enabling to see you due to pain; hope veera Anjaana Vaayu Putra Hanuman is alright! Then Hanuman reached and touched him tenderly and with renewed vigour Jambaan fondled Hanumaan with reciprocative gesture and stated: Vaanara Simha! This precisely is the perfect time to save the prestige of we vaanara bhallukaas which even devatas too are unaware of. This is the most critical mode of this crisis as caused by Rama Lakshmanas are to be saved by removing the brahmastra baana. *gatvā paramam adhvānam upary upari sāgaram, himavantam nagaśreṣṭham hanūman gantum arhasi/ tataḥ kāñcanam atyugram ṛṣabham parvatottamam, kailāsaśikharam cāpi drakṣyasy ariniṣūdana/ tayoh śikharayor madhye pradīptam atulaprabham, sarvaauśadhiyutam vīra drakṣyasy auśadhiparvatam/* Veera Hanuman! Do fly across the maha Samudra and seek to reach the Himalaya Parvata Shreni. Shatru Sudana! On reaching there you would endeavour to sight the suvanamaya Rishabha and Kailasa shikhara darshana. Veera! there between both these mountain shikharaas there is a glittering Mahoshadhi Parvata could be sighted and there would be ever radiant mahoshadhis are aplenty. *tasya vānaraśārdūlacatasro mūrdhni sambhavāḥ, drakṣyasy ośadhayo dīptā dīpayantyo diśo daśa/ mṛtasamjīvanīm caiva viśalyakaraṇīm api, sauvarṇakaraṇīm caiva samdhānīm ca mahauśadhīm/ tāḥ sarvā hanuman grhya kṣipram āgantum arhasi, āśvāsaya harīn prāṇair yojya gandhavahātmajaḥ/* Vaana simha! On that parvata shikhara there are four life saving mahoshadhis named Mrita Sajeevani-Vishalyakarani-Suvarna karani and Sandhaayani. Hanuman Pavana Kumara! Try to secure these mahoshadhis at the earliest and fly back to this very spot and promise the praana daana to assert the pride and indelible glory of Vaanaras for generations now and forever. No sooner that Veeraanjaneya heard this that the most experienced bhallula pitaamaha Jambavan detailed than he crossed the mahaa saagara and got dropped on earth as mahaa vrikshas were shattered, parvata shikharaas crumbled and mountains too quaked. Parvataakara Pavana Kumara Hanuman then reached Malaya parvata shikhara. Then there were huge vrishkas, maha sarovaraas where Deva Gandharvas visit often as that was of the area of about sixty yojanaas. Vidyaadhara- Rishi Muni Apsaras reside there with comfort with mriga samuhas in the mountain caves. Pavana kumara Hanuman witnessed groups of Yaksha, Gandharva, Kinnaraas were upset by his gigantic vaanara’s sudden appearance. From there, he extended his hands and shoulders like Garuda Deva pushing down dasha dishas and flew up in the high skies towards Himalaya ranges with alarming speed even as the jala jantu samuhas of the Maha Samudra were alarmed. *sa parvatān vṛkṣagaṇān sarāmsi; nadīs taṭākāni purottamāni, sphītāñjanāms tān api samprapaśyañ; jagāma vegāt piṭṭulyavegaḥ/ ādityapatham āśritya jagāma sa gataśramaḥ, sa dadarśa hariśreṣṭho himavantam nagottamam/ nānāprasravanopetaḥ bahukamdarānirjharam, śvetābhracayasaṃkāśaiḥ śikharaiś cārudarśanaiḥ/* Veeraanjaneya’s momentum and velocity was truly like his inheritance from his father Vayu Deva, swiftly crossing parvatas, birds, sarovaraas, rivers, nagaris, samruddha jaanapadas, and so on. Veera Hanuman was also like of his father’s parakrama vegashaali followed Surya maarga and like Surya Vayus never tired too. Remembering the valuable words of Jambavan; he got quick glimpses of Himalaya ranges, deep caves, shikharas shrouded by clouds, the prakrita soundarya of green tall vrishas and bushes and reached there comfortably. *sa tam samāsādyā mahānagendram; atipravṛddhottamaghoraśṛṅgam, dadarśa puṇyāni mahāśramāni; surarṣisaṃghottamasevitāni/ sa brahmakośam rajatālayam ca; śakrālayam rudraśarapramokṣam,/*

hayānanam brahmaśiraś ca dīptam; dadarśa vaivasvata kimkarāms ca/vajrālayam vaiśvaraṇālayam ca; sūryaprabham sūryanibandhanam ca, brahmāsanaṁ śamkarakārmukam ca; dadarśa nābhīm ca vasumdhārāyāḥ/ kailāsam agryam himavacchilām ca; tatharṣabham kāñcanaśailam agryam/ This Maha Pravata Raja shikharas were glittering like gold and Anjaneya notices parama pavitra ashramas where devarshi samudaayaas reside with rising flames of homa prakriyas. It was on that sprawling mountain range is stated as that of Hiranyagarbha Brahma Bhagavan’s ‘nivasa sthaana’ as his alternate ‘rajatanaabhi sthaana’ and Indra bhavana too. It was also believed as the very place from where Rudra Deva released his mighty arrow against Tripuraasuraas, also the vaasa sthaana of Bhagavan Hayagriva abd Yama Raja Sevaka nivasa too. Hanuman also witnessed passingly the glimpses of the nivaasa sthaanaas of Agni Deva, Kubera, Dwaadsha Suryas too as also of the places of Chaturmukha Brahma, Shiva Dhanush, Vasundhara naabhi sthaanaas too. Then Veeranjaneya was able to spot out Kailaasha Parvata, Himalaya Shila, Shiva vaahana vrishasha and suvarnamaya Rishabha Parvata. *sa dīptasarvauśadhisampradīptam; dadarśa sarvauśadhiparvatendram/sa tam samikṣyānalaraśmidīptam; visiṣmiye vāsavadūtasūnuḥ, āplutya tam cauśadhiparvatendram; tatrauśadhīnām vicayam cakāra/ sa yojanasahasrāṇi samatītya mahākapiḥ, divyauśadhidharam śailam vyacaran mārūtātmajah/ sa parvatān vṛkṣagaṇān sarāmsi; nadīs taṭākāni purottamāni, sphītāñjanāms tām api samprapaśyaḥ; jagāma vegāt pīṭṭulyavegaḥ/* Then Maha - Kapi readily spotted the flashes of dazzle and sparckle of mahoshadhis. He saw the ‘agniraashi samaana parvata’ and was greatly surprised and jumped off once ar the parvata raja and looked for the afore mentioned divoushadhis by Jambavaan. But, having noted that the mountain top was of sprawling saharra yojanas and was unable to distinguish the specific aoushadhis. *sa tā mahātmā hanumān apaśyamīs; cukopa kopāc ca bhṛṣam nanāda, amṛṣyamāṇo ’gninikāśacakṣur; mahīdharendram tam uvāca vākyam/ kim etad evam suvinīscitam te; yad rāghave nāsi kṛtānukampaḥ, paśyādya madbāhubalābhībhūto; vikīrṇam ātmānam atho nagendra/ sa tasya śṛṅgam sanagam sanāgam; sakāñcanaṁ dhātusahasra - juṣtam, vikīrṇakūtam calitāgrasānuḥ; pragṛhya vegāt sahasonmamātha/ sa tam samutpāṭya kham utpapāta; vitrāsyā lokān sasurān surendrān, samstūyamānaḥ khacarair anekair; jagāma vegād garuḍogravīryah/* As it was not possible to do so, Hanuman was frustrated and got angry and made simhagarjanas and with his red looks addressed the parvata raja. ‘Nagendra! You seem not to cooperate for the revivl of Shri Rama Lakshmanas who are indeed the yuga purushas. Now get ready to test my ‘baahu bala’. Having asserted so, Veera Hanuman held the Maha Parvata Shikhara along with all the dhaatus intact yet with maha vrikshas, elephants and so on and pulled it out with his unimaginable physical grit and grip as the samasta loka vaasis were frightened having been taken aback bewildered and flew off like Garuda Deva as all the celestial beings shovered praises on the Vayu putra’s daring escapade. *sa bhāskarādhwānam anuprapannas; tad bhāskarābham śikharam pragṛhya, babhau tadā bhāskarasamnikāśo; raveḥ samīpe pratibhāskarābhaḥ/* Following the Surya Marga, like Surya Himself, Pavana Putra lifed the Sanjeevani Parvata right on his massive shoulders. Then Hanuman too was looking like one parvata carrying another parvata. *tām vānarāḥ prekṣya tadā vineduḥ; sa tām api prekṣya mudā nanāda, teṣām samudghuṣṭaravaṁ niśamya; laṅkālayā bhīmataram vineduḥ/* Awaiting long all throught the night for the arrival of Anjaneya, the desperate Vaanara Bhalluka Sena especially the stalwarts like Sugriva-Angada-Jambavaan- Vishishana were overwhelmed the Parvata samaana Veeraanjaneya having placed the Mahoshadhi Parvata with the Mrita Sanjeevani and the other herbal plants to revive Rama Lakskmanas lying unconscious overnight. *tato mahātmā nipapāta tasmiṅ; śailottame vānarasainya - madhye, haryuttamebhyah śirasābhivādyā; vibhīṣanam tatra ca sasvaje saḥ/ tāv apy ubhau mānuṣarājaputrau; tam gandham āghrāya mahauśadhīnām, babhūvatus tatra tadā viśalyāv; uttasthur anye ca haripravīrāḥ/ tato harir gandhavahātmajas tu; tam ośadhīśailam udagravīryah, nināya vegād dhimavantam eva; punaś ca rāmeṇa samājagāma/* Then Hanuman placed the Mahoushadhi Parvata atop Trikuta Parvata where Vaanara Bhalluks Veeraas were anxiously awaiting all through the night, greeted Jambavan, Vibhishana and Vaanara pramuhkas who were truly enraptured and mesmerised with such inexpressible and overwhelming feat of the hero and embraced the outstanding Vanara of eternal fame. Then they had all got collected the ‘murcchita dehas’ of Rama Lakshmanas and applied the ‘sugandha vilepana’ and in seconds and minutes, Rama Lakshmanas stood up erect and soon enough, the ‘maantrika

baanaas' were removed as of normal physiques. Then Prachanda Pavana Kumaara Hanuman gave a massive thrust and lashed off the Mahoushadhi Parvataa to reach back to the Himaalayan Range.

Quick introspective of further Rama Ravana Yuddha

Sugriva being relieved of Rama Lakshmana's revival, ordered Vanaras to break into Lankapuri and terrorise Rakshasas with flames- Ravana instructed Kumbhakarna Putras, Kumbha Nikumbhas, to attack. As Angada destroyed Rakshas Kampana and Prajanghaka, Divida killed Shonitaakshaka, Mainda uprooted Yupaksha and Sugriva's 'mushti ghaatas' demolished Kumbhaasura. As his dear brother Kumbhaasura was killed by Sugriva, Nikumbha attacked Hanuman and got killed by him. As per Ravana's instructions, Makaraaksha challenged Rama with baana varshas for long, but Rama smashed the charioteer, as the asura took to a Shiva shula, yet Rama with his Vayavyastra killed the asura-As instructed by Ravana, Indrajit invoked abhichaara yajna and with antardhana shakti tormented Rama Lakshmanas, but Rama warned Lakshmana of brahmastra prayoga yet the latter made a 'shapatha' to kill Indrajit. Hanuman witnessed Sita Devi killed, Vanara sena was aghast and Hanuman had initially pacified the vanara sena and take revenge but later agreed for temporary withdrawal and to inform Rama Sugrivaas. Meanwhile, Indrajit fooled Hanuman and vanaras of Maya Sita having been killed. Shri Rama finally dismissing Indrajit's 'maaya Sita's vyavahara' instructed Lakshmana to proceed to Nikumbhila Mandira with Vibhishana and Vaanara sena -On arrival at the Nikumbhila, Vaanara Rakshasa battle followed - Hanuman challenged Indrajit for malla yuddha, Indrajit raised his dhanur banaas against Hanuman, but Lakshmana raised his dhanush instead. Lakshmana-Indrajit battle followed while the latter's chariot etc was shattered-The sequel of Lakshmana -Indrajit maha samgrama concluded with Lakshmana's domination, the celestial world felt relieved with the vindication of dharma and nyaaya- Lakshmana accompanied by Vibhishana, Sugriva and Vaanara Bhalluka Veeraas reached Rama who was immensely impressed and praised Lakshmana with intimate affection and recoup from his injuries soon. Totally forlorn with Indrajit's end by Lakshmana, Ravanaasura desired to kill Devi Sita the root cause of the yuddha, but Mantri Suparshva appealed not to kill Sita but instead kill Rama Lakshmanas instead. Having been demoralised with Indrajit's loss, Ravana directed the combined senas of the Mantris as led by them, but Rama utilised gandharvastra which created a spell devastating lakhs of Rakshasas- As many families heroes were dead, affected Rakshasa streeas cursed Ravana recalling that Brahma varaas excluded manavas of invincibility while Shiva predicted Devi Sita to be born for Rakshasa vanaashana- Noting the 'arta naadaas' of Lanka's fallen Rakshasas by Rama, Ravana himself attacked vanaras along with senapatis Mahodara, Mahaparshva and Virupaksha. As Ravana was razing Vanaraas they approached Rama Sugrivas, as Sugriva attacked Virupaksha, killed his elephant, angry rakshasa slashed Sugriva who got recovered and destroyed Virupaksha. Ravana having been upset by the fall of Virupaksha, asked Mahodara to regain the success of Rakshasaas; but Sugriva after prolonged one to one encounter could severe 'Mahodara mastaka'. Mahaparshva got furious at the deaths of Virupaksha and Mahodara and demolished numberless vanaras, but Angada with his mighty 'mushti ghaatas' tore off Mahodara's chest and heart with fatality. Furious Ravana re-entered the battle, released 'Taamasastra' killing vanaras, resisted Lakshmana, attacked Rama, got hurt by his roudrastra, as his asuraastra which was realiated by Rama's agneyastra! As Rama Ravana yuddha was intensified, Lakshmana intervened and the infuriated Ravana released his Mayaasura's Shakti aayudha by which Lakshmana was swooned and Rama asserted his 'prateekara'. Shri Rama 'vilaapa' for Lakshmana's fainting away, but Vaanara Sushena applied Sanjeevani brought earlier by Hanuman and Lakshmana got revived again and the latter reminds of Rama's 'satya pratigjna'. Indra sent Matali with chariot, Rama initiated baana varsha but Ravana destroyed the chariot, hurled his Shakti aayudha but Rama attacked with arrows and Indra's 'Shakti' too which severely hit Ravana's body. In the course of the dwandva baana praharaas, Ravana boasted off and Rama listed his shameless Sitaapa-harana and such adharmas; Ravana hit Rama and the latter smashed off so much as Ravana's sarathi ran back yet returned later. As Shri Rama was delighted as seated on Indra's Chariot encouraging Matali the celestial charioteer, there were a spate of 'asubha soochanas' for Ravana just ahead of the epic battle of Rama Ravanaas. As Rama Ravana Yuddha got anti

climaxed as Ravana's heads sprang up again and again , but neither Shri Rama nor Ravana got tired and continued the battle overnight and the next day too. As Matali reminded of the Brahmastra which Agastya Muni bestowed to Rama, he recalled its universal impact and released on Ravana as his notorious life was closed, vindicating dharma and nyaaya again. As the joyful Celestials returned to their lokas from their sky high assembly after Rama Vijaya, Shri Rama thanked Matalii, Indra- Sugrivadi Vanaras, and celebrated Vibhishana Pattaabhisheka. Hanuman reached Ashoka Vaatika for Sita darshana, talked at length and complemented Anjaneya profusely. Hanuman accompanied Devi Sita for Shri RamaDarshana. Rama chides Vibhishana not to make a big scene, then Devi Sita sights her glorious husband after long miseries at Ravana's directives-Rama asserted that he underwent several issues to resurrect Dharma although Sita's freedom now was only incidental - as she stayed under Ravana's care for long, he would free her seeking her own comfort--Devi Sita explaining and asserting her origin of 'ayonijatva', upbringing and paativratya to Rama and the assembly of public had finally entered into the agni jwaalaas as celestials and the public witnessed-As Devi Sita entered 'agni jwaalaas'set by Lakshmana with Rama's implicit awareness, sarva deva mandali headed by Brahma praised Rama as of Vishnu avatara and Sita as Maha Lakshmi. Reacting to Brahma's declarations, Agni Deva emerged in public view and presented Devi Sita asserting her purity even being in Ravana's 'antahpura' for long as Rama desired to test her so to convince public. Maha Deva complemented Rama and pointed out at Dasharadha's Soul from Swarga as the latter blessed Rama stating that he redeemed his soul as Ashtavakra did to his father and assured Kingship with glory. As Rama requested to Indra to revive the lives of countless dead vaanara-bhallukaas at the yuddha, the latter having realised that it was unprecedented yet granted as dead ones came alive as from deep sleep! Vibhishana requested Shri Rama to stay back for a few days and enjoy his hospitality, but Rama displayed his anxiety to return the soonest as he was yearning to return to Ayodhya. As Shri Rama alighted the Kubera's Pushpaka Vimana with Sita Lakshmanas, Vibhishana requested Rama to accompany with Sugriva Vaanara sena too, and the celestial vimana had taken off. Enroute Ayodhya, Rama highlighted to Sita of Yuddha bhumi- Setu bandhana vidhana- kishkindha pick up of strees- drishyas of Janasthaana- their crossings of maha nadis- Muni ashramas and Ayodhya finally! Rama approached Muni Bharadwaaja to enquire of the yoga kshemaas of his mothers, Bharata and Ayodhya in general, and the all knowing Muni blessed Rama for his glorious return and blessed-Rama with his sharp mindedness instructed Hanuman to visit Nishada Guha about their 'punaagamana' and to Bharata, who was worshipping Rama Padukas, was specially elated. Hanuman then had briefly narrated to Bharata of the proceedings after the latter's earlier darshana of Shri Rama-Sita-Lakshmanas, till their much awaited Ayodhya Darshana. As Sita Rama Lakshmanas were arriving, Bharata Shatrugmas made elaborate arrangements at Ayodhya; the much excited Bharata hands over the Kingdom as of a deposit to Rama after a public announcement. Bharata's handing over Ayodhya Rajya- Sita Rama Nagara Yatra-Rajyabhisheka.

Anjaneya.s 'janana-shaishavaavastha' - his ability to float even to reach Surya-mistake Rahu as Surya-angry Indra defended Rahu hitting the child with vajrayudha- enraged Vayu stopped breathings of trilokas

śauryam dākṣyam balaṁ dhairyam prājñatā nayaśāadhanam, vikramāś ca prabhāvaś ca hanūmati kṛtālayāḥ/ dṛṣṭvodadhīm viśīdantīm tadaiśa kapivāhinīm, samāśvāsya kapīn bhūyo yojanānām śatam plutāḥ/ dharsayitvā purīm laṅkāṁ rāvaṅāntahpuram tathā, dṛṣṭvā sambhāṣitā cāpi sītā viśvāsītā tathā/Hanuman is abounding in the qualities of shurata-dakshata-bala-dharya-buddhimatta-neeti-parakrama and prabhava undoubtedly. On seeing the vaanara seva was frightened, but veera Hanuman jumped off the hundred yojanas of distance of the Maha Samudra in one long jump! Further he having swarupa of Lankapuri's 'adhi daivika swarupa' had hardly stunned him and was able to see, met, and conversed with Devi Sita convincingly with 'dhairya sahasaas' besides with dexterity. senāgragā mantrisutāḥ kimkarā rāvaṅātmajāḥ, ete hanumatā tatra ekena vinipātītāḥ/ bhūyo bandhād vimuktena sambhāṣitvā daśānanam, laṅkā bhasmīkṛtā tena pāvakeneva medinī/ na kālasya na śakrasya na viṣṇor vittapasya ca, karmāṇi tāni śrūyante yāni yuddhe hanūmataḥ/ etasya bāhuvīryeṇa laṅkā sītā ca

lakṣmaṇaḥ, prāpto mayā jayaś caiva rājyaṃ mitrāṇi bāndhavāḥ/ There from Ashokavana itself, being single handed destroyed Ravana's senapatis, mantrikumaraas, rakshasa veeraas, and Ravana putra Akshaya Kumara had devastated. Thereafter having feigned Meghanaada's naaga paasha got out of it voluntarily, conversed with King Ravana with dharya sahasaas, and burn off the best part of Lankapuri to heaps of ashes. In the context of Yuddha parakrama, Hanuman was veerataa purna karma kriyas negating even Kaala Deva, Indra, Bhagavan Vishnu, Varunaas. Muneeswara! It indeed was that owing to Hanuman's crucial advice that I was enabled to make friendship with Vibhishana, besides of course my own 'kaya dakshata and baahubala' attained me the shatru vijaya, Lanka Rajya, Ayodhya Rajya and Sita, bandhujana prapatti along with Lakshmana. *hanūmān yadi me na syād vānarādhipateḥ sakhā, pravṛttam api ko vettuṃ jānakyāḥ śaktimān bhavet/ kimarthaṃ vālī caitena sugrīvapriyakāmyayā, tadā vaire samutpanne na dagdho vīrudho yathā/ na hi vedītavān manye hanūmān ātmano balam, yad dṛṣṭavān jīviteṣṭam kliṣyantam vānarādhipam/ etan me bhagavan sarvaṃ hanūmati mahāmune, vistareṇa yathātattvaṃ kathayāmarapūjita/* If I were not have met Hanuman, could I have attained Sugriva maitri and 'Sitaanveshana' ever! I still would not comprehend that as Sugriva and Vaali became rivals, I burnt off the davaanala vriksha and how Vaali too could have been burnt off in the same agni too! I guess that Hanuman was aware of his own latent energy. That was why his dear Sugriva was not saved far earlier! Deva vandyā Maha Muni! Do kindly inform me more detailed information about Veera Hanuman. Then Agastya narrated the following to Shri Rama:: *satyam etad raghuśreṣṭha yad bravīṣi hanūmataḥ, na bale vidyate tulyo na gatau na matau paraḥ/ amoghaśāpaiḥ śāpas tu datto 'sya ṛṣibhiḥ purā na veditā balam yena balī sann arimardanaḥ/ bālye 'py etena yat karma kṛtam rāma mahābala, tan na varṇayituṃ śakyam atibāla -tayāsyā te/* Raghukulatilaka Shri Rama! What all had been informed by you was indeed truthful. There would never be anybody else in 'srishti' like Hanuman, be it his bala-buddhi-gati and so on. Raghu -nandana! In the hoary past, a Maha Muni's 'shaapa mahima' was responsible to him to become aware his own magnificence. In his very childhood too he had performed such memorable acts which were unbelievable. Those days in his 'baalya dasha' what all that he had executed are unbelievable. Do listen to me carefully: *yadi vāsti tv abhiprāyas tac chrotuṃ tava rāghava, samādhāya matiṃ rāma niśāmaya vadāmy aham/ sūryadattavarasvarṇaḥ sumerur nāma parvataḥ, yatra rājyaṃ praśāsty asya keṣarī nāma vai pitā/ tasya bhāryā babhūveṣṭā hy añjaneti pariśrutā, janayām āsa tasyām vai vāyur ātmajam uttamam/ śālīśūkasamābhāsam prāsūtemaṃ tadāñjanā, phalāny āhartukāmā vai niṣkrāntā gahane carā/* Raghunandana! Bhagavan Surya Deva's varadaana mahima, Hanuman's physique assumed ever golden colour, while his father Kesari was the King of Kesari Rajya near Sumeru Parvata. Kesari's wife was the well famed Devi Anjana. From her garbha was born the Anjana Putra Anjaneya. As Anjanaya was born in peak winter time he was of the pingala varna like of rice grain's agra bhaaga. One day mother Anjana moved out of their 'ashrama', she desired to secure an 'anjana phala' by 'vihanga maarga'. That precisely was the time that baala putra of Anjana felt hungry and thirsty and was crying away ceaselessly like Kartitaya in the sarakanda vana. *ṣa mātur viyogāc ca kṣudhayā ca bhṛśārditaḥ, ruroda śīsur atyarthaṃ śīsuḥ śarabharād iva/ tatodyantaṃ vivasvantaṃ japāpuṣpotkaropamam, dadṛṣe phalalobhāc ca utpapāta raviṃ prati/ bālārkaḥbhimukho bālo bālārka iva mūrtimān, grahītukāmo bālārkaṃ plavate 'mbara -madhyagaḥ/* As Anjana was away, Shishu Anjaneya then mistook Surya Deva as a luscious bright fruit and jumped off from his bed and tried all our efforts to jump up from the bed and got air floated up and up the sky. *etasmin plavamāne tu śīsubhāve hanūmati, devadānavasiddhānām vismayāḥ sumahān abhūt/ nāpy evaṃ vegavān vāyur garuḍo na manas tathā, yathāyaṃ vāyuputras tu kramate 'mbaram uttamam/ yadi tāvac chiśor asya īdṛṣau gativikramau, yauvanaṃ balam āsādya kathaṃ vego bhaviṣyati/* As the saishava Anjanaputra was flying up and up, Deva Danava Yakshas were surprised thinking that this Vayuputra was seeking to reach the high skies, was he imitating Vayu Deva or Garuda Deva! If this shishu were like this, what could happen when he might be grown up to be youthful! *tam anuplavate vāyuḥ plavantaṃ putram ātmanaḥ, sūryadāhabhayād rakṣaṃs tuṣāracayaśītalaḥ/ bahuyojanasāhasraṃ kramaty ṣa tato 'mbaram, pitur balāc ca bālyāc ca bhāskarābhyāśam āgataḥ/ śīsur ṣa tv adoṣajñā iti matvā divākaraḥ, kāryaṃ cātra samāyattam ity evaṃ na dadāha saḥ/* Then Vayu Deva was then concerned that this 'shishu' was heading to Surya then he might not be burnt off by the severity of Surya and thus carried loads of ice behind the child. In this manner, baalaanjaneya tried to

make the best of his father's speed and strength and had almost reached Surya Deva. Surya Deva realised that Vaayuputra was indeed a child and having considered as a deva karya had therefore diminished his severity of heat to the minimum and did not burn off the shishu. *yam eva divasam hy eṣa grahītuṃ bhāskaram plutaḥ, tam eva divasam rāhur jighṛkṣati divākaram/ anena ca parāmṛṣṭo rāma sūryarathopari, apakrāntas tatas trasto rāhuḥ candrārkamardanaḥ/ sa indrabhavanam gatvā saroṣaḥ simhikāsutaḥ, abravīd bhrukuṭīm kṛtvā devam devaganair vṛtam/ bubhuksāpanayam dattvā candrārkaumama vāsava, kim idam tat tvayā dattam anyasya balavṛtrahan/* That was the time that Rahu Deva was attempting to devour Surya. Anjaneya having noticed that Rahu Deva was trying to catch up the Surya Ratha, then Rahu the all potent devourer of Chandra and Surya had withdrawn from his abortive endeavour to devour Surya having been afraid of a third party intervention. Then Simhika Putra Rahu out of anger entered the Indra Bhavana and reprimanded Indra as to why he had allowed a third party to devour Surya instead against the established principle of the Universe! Rahu shouted at Indra: ‘*Vritraasura vadha kaarana Vaasava! Why had you allowed this kind of intervention had been arrogated all by yourself! adyāham parvakāle tu jighṛkṣuḥ sūryam āgataḥ, athānyo rāhur āsādya jagrāha sahasā ravim/ sa rāhor vacanam śrutvā vāsavaḥ sambhramānvitaḥ, utpapātāsanam hitvā udvahan kāñcanasrajam/ tataḥ kailāsakūṭābham caturdantam madasravam, śṛṅgārakāriṇam prāmśum svarṇaghaṇṭāṭṭahāsinam/ indraḥ karīndram āruhya rāhuṃ kṛtvā puraḥsaram, prāyād yatrābhavat sūryaḥ sahānena hanūmatā/* To day being the Amavasya day, I felt that I should get readied to devour Surya, but you seem to have most suddenly altered the principle, but why and how! Then Indra too was concerned and even was afraid of the intervention in the conduct of natural justice having been tampered with and ascended his Iravata vahana wit Rahu Deva ahead of him and discovered ‘baalaanjaneya’ in the action. *tataḥ sūryam samutsṛjya rāhum evam avekṣya ca, utpapāta punar vyoma grahītuṃ simhikāsutam/ utsṛjyārkaum imam rāma ādhāvantaṃ plavaṅgamam, dṛṣṭvā rāhuḥ parāvṛtya mukhaśeṣaḥ parānmukhaḥ/ indram āśamsamānas tu trātāram simhikāsutaḥ, indra indreti samtrāsān muhur muhur abhāṣata/* Then Baalaanjaneya had mistaken Rahu as Surya and sought to attack Rahu instead of Surya and made a long jump forward at Rahu. Then Rahu got bewildered as strange situations were occurring that amavasya day! Then Simhika putra Rahu Deva had reached Indra for self defence sreeching away! *rāhor vikrośamānasya prāg evālakṣitaḥ svaraḥ, śrutvendrovāca mā bhaiṣīr ayam enam nihanmy aham/ airāvataṃ tato dṛṣṭvā mahat tad idam ity api, phalam tam hastirājānam abhidudrāva mārutiḥ/ tadāsya dhāvato rūpam airāvatajighṛkṣayā, muhūrtam abhavad ghoram indragṇyor iva bhāsvaram/ evam ādhāvamānam tu nātikruddhaḥ śacīpatiḥ, hastāntenātimuktena kuliśenābhyatādayat/* Indra then consoled Rahu and stated: ‘Rahu! Don't you get alarmed, I shall soon subdue the one attacking you. Meanwhile, baalaanjaneya saw the Iravata on whose top Indra was seated and felt that the elephant too was interesting to be devoured in and started running after Iravata on which Indra was seated upon. Now Shachipati Indra got furious as the child was getting berserk and hurled his Vajrayudha on the Vayuputra. *tato girau papātaṣa indravajrābhītāḍitaḥ, patamānasya caitasya vāmo hanur abhayaḥ/ tasmims tu patite bāle vajratāḍānavihvale, cukrodhendrāya pavanaḥ prajānām aśivāya ca/ viṇmūtrāsāyam āvṛtya prajāsv antargataḥ prabhuḥ, rurodha sarvabhūtāni yathā varṣāni vāsavaḥ/ vāyuprakopād bhūtāni nirucchvāsāni sarvataḥ, samdhibhir bhajyamānāni kāṣṭhabhūtāni jajñire/* As the vajrayudha was tossed at the Baala Vaanara, he fell down steeply on a parvata shikhara. Then the left HANU or the Jaw was broken and there after Anjaneya came to be called as HANUMAN! This resulted in the fury of Vayu Deva on Mahendra and having taken Anjaaa Putra into that very mountain cave had withdrawn him self thus impacting the ‘ucchvaasa-nishvaasaas’ or the normal breathing process of the common prajas. *niḥsvadham nirvaṣaṭkāram niṣkriyam dharmavarjitam, vāyuprakopāt trailokyam nirayastham ivābabhau/ tataḥ prajāḥ sagandharvāḥ sadevāsuramānuṣāḥ, prajāpatiṃ samādhāvann asukhārtāḥ sukhaīṣiṇaḥ/ ūcuḥ prāñjalayo devā darodaranibhodarāḥ, tvayā sma bhagavan sṛṣṭāḥ prajānātha caturvidhāḥ/* As the normal breathing was affected the Beings in srishti and triloka pranis were of ‘chetanaa shunyata’ or of any limb movement as of dead bodies being senseless and lifeless. In trilokas, there was neither ‘veda swadhyaaya’ nor ‘yagnaacharana’. Dharma Karmas were ceased and tribhubana pranis experienced ‘naraka yaatana’. Then, gandharva, devata, asura-manushyas made frantick appealed to the Srishtikarta Brahma Deva. Meanwhile devataas got their bowels bloated with mahodara roga. They addressed

Brahma: ‘Bhagavan! You have made chaturvidha srishti and entrusted to Vayu Deva. *tvayā datto 'yam asmākam āyusaḥ pavanaḥ patiḥ, so 'smān prāṇeśvaro bhūtvā kasmād eṣo 'dya sattama, rurodha duḥkham janayann antahpura iva striyaḥ/ tasmāt tvām śaraṇam prāptā vāyunopahatā vibho, vāyusaṁrodhajam duḥkham idam no nuda śatruhan/ etat prajānām śrutvā tu prajānāthaḥ prajāpatiḥ, kāraṇād iti tān uktvā prajāḥ punar abhāṣat/* Vayu Deva is our praneshwara and now as the antahpura stree we are incapacitated to live or lay dead; this situation is neither life nor of death. Hence our refuge unto you. Prajapati Deva! do very kindly relieve us from this Vayujanita naraka baadha at once. Then Brahma replied: *yasmin vaḥ kāraṇe vāyus cukrodha ca rurodha ca, prajāḥ śṛṇudhvaṁ tat sarvaṁ śrotavyaṁ cātmanaḥ kṣamam/ putras tasyāmareṣena indreṇādyā nipātitaḥ, rāhor vacanam ājñāya rājñā vaḥ kopito 'nilaḥ/ aśarārah śarīreṣu vāyus carati pālayan, śarīram hi vinā vāyūṁ samatām yāti reṇubhiḥ/ vāyuh prāṇāḥ sukham vāyur vāyuh sarvam idam jagat, vāyunā saṁparityaktaṁ na sukham vindate jagat/* Praja loka! Vayu Deva was annoyed due to a cause and effect cyclical impact. Indra got Rahu Graha’s complaint and hit Vayuputra and Vayu Deva got annoyed and stopped performing his normal duty of keeping your lives ticking. Thus indeed without Vayu the bodies of all the Beings are left high and dried. Hence in the case of non cooperation of Vayu entire jagat is stand still. *tataḥ prajābhiḥ sahitaḥ prajāpatiḥ; sadevagandharva -bhujāṁgaguhyakaḥ, jagāma tatrāsyati yatra mārutaḥ; sutam surendrābhihataṁ pragṛhya saḥ/ tato 'rkavaiśvānarakāñcanaprabhaṁ; sutam tadotsaṅgagataṁ sadāgateḥ, caturmukho vīkṣya kṛpām athākarot; sadevasiddharsibhujāṁgarākṣasaḥ/* Then Prajapati himself led a procession of Deva, Gandharva, Naaga, Guhyakaas and praja too reached Vayu Deva who was mourning his son’s loss of life and reached the Chaturmukha Brahma Deva who took pity on the child’s status of virtual non existence.

Agastya Muni narrates Anjaneya’s origin-childhood leelaas- encounter with Surya, Indra’s vajra prahara, Vayu Deva stops breathings, Brahma’s revival of the child, his Muni’s shaapa of forgetfulness]

As Brahma Deva had arrived, Vayu Deva kept Bala Hanuman on his arms fold and stood still for a while and having folded his legs down fell at Brahma’s feet thrice over repeatedly. Brahma raised Vayu and Bala Hanuman. *spṛṣtamātras tataḥ so 'ha salīlam padmajanmanā, jalasiktaṁ yathā sasyaṁ punar jīvitam āptavān/ prāṇavantam imam dṛṣtvā prāṇo gandhavaho mudā, cacāra sarvabhūteṣu saṁniruddham yathāpurā/* Just as the severely dried up agricultural fields receive gladdening rains, Kamala yoni Brahma Deva’s ‘ mridu hastasprarsha’ itself got Bala Hanuman got revived as ‘punarjeevita’. As this miracle happened, the ‘praana swarupa Vayu Deva’ was pleased and removed the obstacle of breathing of sarva pranis. There after Brahma Deva- (who is ‘triyugma sampanna’ or three couples of six kinds of Aishvarya viz. Opulence, Dharmacharana, Keerti, Prosperity, Jnaana and Vairagya- Tri Murtidhara viz. of Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva Tri Dasha or three stages of life viz. Baalya, Pouganda, and Kaishora viz. three devataas of three avasthas or stages of life) addressed Indra, Agni, Varuna, Maha Deva , Kuberaadi devataas as follows: this balaka Anjaneya would bring in several karya iddhis to you all and to please Vayu deva, you may all gove your own boons. Then Indra garlanded the boy and said: *matkarotsṛṣtavajreṇa hanur asya yathā kṣataḥ, nāmnaiṣa kapiśārdūlo bhavitā hanumān iti/ aham evāsyā dāsyāmi paramaṁ varam uttamam, ataḥ prabhṛti vajrasya mamāvadyo bhaviṣyati/* Since the vajrayudha as released from my hands had affected his ‘hanu’ or jaw the boy would henceforth be famed as Hanuman. Further he should henceforth be immune from Vajrayudha. Then Surya Deva gave the boon to Hanuman that he would always be immune from the severity of heat and Surya’s fury. Surya further gave the boon that Hanuman would gain the sarva shastra jnaana and be an orator of outstanding caliber. Then Varuna Deva gave the boon to Hanuman that he would be a deerghaayu for ten lakh years and would be immunised from ‘jala paataas’ for ever. Yama Dharma Raja blessed him to be ever freed from his yama danda prahaaraas. Then ‘pingala varna ekaakshi’ Kubera Deva gave the boon that in any kind of clash in yuddhaas, he would never be discontented and none ever could face an enemy who would be left alive. Bhagavan Shankara gave the boon that no trishula be ever hurt him nor be destroyed. Deva shilpi Vishvakarma the the Baala Hanuman would be invincible from any of his ‘astra shastra nirmitaas.’

Then finally Brahma Deva blessed Veeraanjaneya: *amitrāṇām bhayakaro mitrāṇām abhayaṁkaraḥ, ajeyo bhavitā te 'tra putro mārutamārutiḥ/Kaamarupah kaamachaaree kaamagah plavataam varah, bhavatyaaahagatih keertimaamshca bhavishyati/ rāvaṇotsādanārthāni rāmaprītikarāṇi ca, romaharṣakarāṇy eṣa kartā karmāṇi saṁyuge/* Maruta ! this famed son of yours Maaruti would be as much a 'simha swapna' to his enemies as equally so helpful to his 'mitras' and none indeed would ever control him ever. He could change his body as per his wish and so would be his speed as per his desire too and this Kapishreshtha would be of sarvakaaya Yashasvi! Having blessed Brahma Deva and Devendraadi Devas had disappeared and so did Gandhavaahana Vayu Deva too having left Bala Hanuman free to be himself. Thereafter, Baalaajaneya with no bounds of his own willfulness took to 'swacchha vihaaraas' and dauntlessly went around 'muni maharshi ashramas' with carefree irresponsibilities creating disorder and 'tapo-agni karya bhanga kaaryaas' nonchalantly. Shantachitta Muni Mahatmas witnessed their 'yagjopaveeta paatra saamagris, agnihotra saadhanabhuta shruk-shruva, valkala vastraas torn off and upset the muni ashramaas. *tato maharṣayaḥ kruddhā bhṛgvāṅgīrasa -vaṁśajāḥ, śepur enam raghuśreṣṭha nātikruddhātmanyavaḥ/ bādhasa yat samāśritya balam asmān plavaṅgama, tad dīrghakālam vettāsi nāsmākaṁ śāpamohitaḥ/ tatas tu hṛtatejaujā maharṣivacanaujasā, eṣo śramāṇi nātyeti mṛdubhāvagataś caran/* Then the Bhṛgu- Angeera vamsheeyaadi vamsheeya Maharshis were dazed and severely annoyed at the 'atyaacharaas of Baalaajaneya'. Then they shouted at Bala Hanuman: 'Vaanara veera! The very reason of your awareness and the memory of the innumerable blessings and boons as were showered on you by Brahma and Devaas would be forgotten and wiped out from your memory screen although could be revived only after some other party might remind you again and again. Thereafter Anjaneya had forgotten of his own inherent abilities unless reminded and had since been sobered down thereafter. Further he drifted off and visited places while wandering and reached Riksha Rajya. The Riksha Raja had reigned for long and was blessed with two vaanara putras named Vaali-Sugrivas. Vaali was made the Vanara Raja and Sugriva the yuva raja and both the brothers were closely attached together. Eventually when Vaali Sugrivas were separated, even then neither of them was aware - much less Hanuman himself was aware of his inner abilities. But indeed, who else could be like him with his latent qualities of paraakrama, utsaaha, buddhi, pratapa, susheelata, madhurata, neeti-aneeti viveka, gambheerata, chaturata, uttama bala, and dhairya. Hanuman is a 'vyakaranaadhyaya' as also of 'sutra-vritti-maha bhagya-sangraha mahaadhyaya, being 'shastra jnaana and chhandaadhyaya maha vidvaan' comparable to Deva Guru Brishaspati.' Then Maha Muni Agastya described about other Vaanara Veeraas like Sugriva, Mainda, Dwivida, Neela, Taara, Angada, Nala, Rambhaadi maha kapeeshvaraas too who were all of devaamsha sambhutaas. And so were Gaja, Gavaaksha, Gavaya, Mainda, Sandrushthra, Prabha, Jyotimukha, Nalaadi Vaanaraas and of course Jambavan like reechha pramukhas. As Agastya explained in some detail, Shri Rama was truly enlightened of the detailed background of Hanuman !

Illustrative Stutis of Veera Anjaneya

Manojavam Maaruta tulya vegam jitendriyambuddhimataam varishtham, aataatmajam Vaanara yudha mukhyam Sri Rama dutam sharanam prapadye/ I bow in reverence to Anjaneya whose thinking capacity as fast as wind, who is in all respects like his father the Vayu Deva in speed and mental agility, as the master of senses, the Supreme among intellectual strength, the leader of the Monkey brigade and the foremost follower of Shri Rama Chandra! *Hanuman anjanaasunur vaayuputro maha balah, Rameshthah Phalgunasakhah pingakshomita vikramah udadhityukramanaschaiva Seetaashoka vinaashanah Lakshmana praana daataacha Dasha greevascha darpaha, dvaadashaitaani naamaani Kapeendrasya Mahaatmanah svaapakaale pathennichyam yaatraa kaale viseshitah tasya mṛityu bhayamnaasti sarvatra vijayee bhavet/* Maha bala Hanuman, the illustrious son of Anjana Devi and Vayu Deva! You are the

beloved of Lord Shri Rama and dear friend of Arjuna; famed for brown eyes, the valiant hero of popularity who crossed the ocean with the unique purpose of assuaging Devi Sita's tearful misery, the wreckless destroyer of the fabled Ashoka Garden, the saviour of Lakshmana by fetching mrita sanjeevani overnight from Himalayas and the historic subduer of Ravana! Even a fleeting prayer to you by a sincere devotee frees from death and leads to victory especially during one's travels! *Atulita baladhaamam hemashailaabhideham, danujavana krishaanum jnaani naama agraganyam/ Sakala guna nidhaanam vaanaraanaamadheesham Raghupatipriya bhaktam Vaatajaatam namaami/ Om ham Hanumate namah/ Anjaneya!* Our sincere salutations to you! Your body strength is like that of a golden mountain; you are like gigantic fire destroying the huge forest full of demoniac enemies; yet you are the symbol of wisdom and knowledge, the outstanding devotee of Shri Rama the singular and illustrious son of Vayu Deva! *Buddhi balam yasho dhairyam nirbhayatvam arogataa, ajaadyam vaakpatutvam cha Hanutsmaranaadbhavet/* We pray to Hanuman Deva to surely secure 'buddhi balam' or mental sharpness and physical strength, reputation and fearlessness, resistance to physical diseases or even ailments and above all finesse in expression and convincing power! *Yatra yatra Raghunadha keertanam, tatra tatrakritamastakaanjalim/ Baashpavaari paripurna lochanam Maarutim namata raakshsaantakam/* When and where there are singing and music sessions of Lord Rama's glories, there and then Lord Hanuman is readily seated with folded hands and emotionally charged wet eyes! Such indeed is the scene of Anjneya who provides a safety zone to Rama bhaktas.

Daily Hanuman Mantra:

The Hanuman Mantra for daily recital on the 11 days of worship is as follows: *Om namo Hanumate prakata rupaaya, aakraanta digmandala yashovitaana dhavaleekrita jagatpita vajra deha jvaladagni Suryakoti samaprabha tanuuruha Rudraavataara Lankaapuri dahana udhadhi langhana Dashgreeva shirah kritaantaka Seetaa sevaasana Vayu suta, Anjanagarbha sambhuta Shri Rama Lakshmana - andakara, Kapi sainya praakaara Sugreeva sakhya kaarana, Bali nibarshana kaarana, drona parvatotpaatana, Ashoka vana vidaarana, Akshakumaarakacchedana, Vanarakshaakara samaanayana, Baalodita Bhaanumandala grasana, Meghanaada hom vidhvamsana, Indraajivadha kaarana, Seetaa rakshaka raakshasee sangha vidaarana, Kumbhakarnaadi vadha paraayana, Shri Raama bhakti tatpara, Samudravyomadruma langhana mahaasaamardhya, Maha tejah punja viraajamaana, swaami vachana sampaadita, Arjuna samyuga sahaaya, Kumara Brahmacharin, gambheera shabdodaya, Dakshinaashaa Martaanda, Meruparvata peethikaarchana, sakala mantraagamamaachaarya, mama sarva graha vishaadasana, Sarvajvarocchaatana, Sarva Visha vinaashana, Sarvaapatti nivaarana, Sarva dushta nibarhana, Sarva vyaaghraadi bhaya nivaarana, Sarva shatruccchedana, Mama parasyacha trihuvana pum streena pumsakaatmaka Sarva jeeva jaatam vashaya naanaa naamadheyaan sarvaan raagjna saparivaaraan mama sevakaan kuru kuru, Sarva shastraastra vishaani vidhvamsaya vidhvamsaya, mama sarva kaarya jaatam saadhaya saadhaya sarva dushta durjana mukhaani keelaya/* Recital of this Paramapavitra Hanuman mantra japa bestows veeratva, keerti, tejas and ojas.

Another popular stanza of for daily recital is as follows:

Hanunaananjanaa soonur Vaayu putro maha balah, Raameshtah Phalguna sakhah pingaakshomita vikramah/ Udadhi kramanaschiva Seeta shoka vinaashakah, Lakshmana praana daataacha Dashagreevascha darpaha/ Dvaadashitaani naamaani Kapeendrasya mahabalalah, svaapakaale pathennityam yaatraakaale visheshatah, tasya mrityu bhayam naasti sarvatra vijayee bhavet/

Vishnur Vishnu Vishnuh- Sarva Lokaan Vishnumayaah

The First Ever such Entity was created on its own and hence called 'Swayambhu' / Narayana who created 'Apo Naaraa' or the Radiant Water first and was thus known as 'Narayana' who floated on water. He deposited his 'Veerya' or virility as an indication of his resolve to create and as a result there appeared a Golden Egg and floated on the Radiant Water. 'Hiranya garbha' Brahma himself sat in the Egg for a year; the Egg had two parts viz. 'Diva'/Urthva Loka and 'Bhuva' / Earth, the space in between being 'Aakaasha'. He then created 'Dasa Dishas' or Ten Directions viz. Uttara (North), Ishanya (North-East), Purva (East), Agneya (South-East), Dakshina (South), South-West (Nairutya), West (Paschima), North-

West (Vayavya), Urthwa (Overhead) and Athodik (Underneath). Further, he created Kaala (Time), Manasa (Thought), Vaak (Speech), Kaama (Desire), Krodha (Anger), and Rati (Physical joy). 4 Brahma then created Eleven Rudras (Mahaan, Mahatma, Matimaan, Bhashana, Bhayankara, Ritudwaja, Urthwakesha, Pingalaksha, Ruchi, Shuchi, and Kaalaagni Rudra) out of irritation and annoyance and further on the Sapta Rishis viz. Marichi, Atri, Angirasa, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasishtha as his mind-born sons. The Kumara brothers Sanaka, Sandandana, Sanat and Sanatanas were born too but they did not take up Srishti. Brahma created further Vidyut, Vajra, Megha, Rohita, and Indradhanush; Ruk-Yajur-Sama Vedas; Sadhya Devatas and smaller such creations like 'Pakshis'. As the momentum of creation was very tardy, hence Brahma decided to divide himself into two,

'Dashaavataaras' (The Ten Incarnations)

Matsya Avatara: As the Universe time drew near to Final Destruction including the 'Bhulok' (Earth), 'Swarglok' (Heaven) and 'Bhuvarlok' (intermediate Region), it was flooded with water. As 'Vaivaswata Manu' (son of Surya) was in prayers in River 'Kirtimala'; he found a tiny fish in the water on his palms which begged him not to throw it as big fish might swallow it. Manu kept it in a pot, but soon the fish grew big to occupy the ocean and asked him to build a mammoth Ship and transfer 'Sapta Rishis' (Seven Sages) and a sample each of flora and fauna. Vihnu in the form Matsya declared that the Universe would be flooded soon, that the ship would be saved along with Manu and others, that He would destroy demon 'Hayagriva' and re-create the Universe.

Kurma Avatara: As 'Asuras' (Demons) and 'Suras' (Devas) were on fierce battle for long time, Lord 'Brahma' (The Creator) and Lord 'Vishnu' (The Preserver) arrived a truce between the two parties who churned 'Kshira Sagar' (the Ocean of Milk) to attain 'Amrita' (Elixir). The mountain 'Mandara' was commissioned as a rod for the churning and 'Vasuki', the Great Serpent as the rope. Demons grabbed the face of 'Vasuki' out of pride and many perished due to the poisonous flames from its several mouths, whereas Devas preferred to opt for the tail of the Serpent out of veneration for Vasuki. Since the Mountain could not be balanced in the Ocean, Lord Vishnu took the form of a Turtle (Kurma) and withstood the weight and speed of the churning. In the course of churning, came out a colossal poisonous fire, named 'Kalakuta', which engulfed the whole Universe. Lord 'Eswara' swallowed the Great Fire and kept it in His Throat and thus came to be known as 'Neelagriva' (The Blue Throated). Eventually, a number of Objects emerged as a result of the churning but the Demons rejected them all as they were only bent on 'Amritha' and none else. Among the Objects were: 'Sura' (The Divine Drink), 'Parijata' the Tree bringing heavenly fragrance by its flowers since opted by Indra for his Garden; 'Koustubha' the Holy Jewel adorning Lord Vishnu's chest, the Celestial Animals viz. 'Kapila' the Sacred Cow, 'Utchaiswarya' the Divine Horse and 'Iravata' the Elephant used by Indra; 'Apsaras', the Heavenly Dancers; Lakshmi the Goddess of Wealth, who preferred to be the Consort of Lord Vishnu and finally emerged 'Dhanvantari'- the God of Medicine, along with the most awaited 'Amritha', which was sought to be grabbed by Demons and Gods alike. To sort out the confusion, there appeared a dazzling damsel 'Mohini' (The Unique Enchantress)-who was Lord Vishnu Himself-and both Suras and Asuras accepted her as an arbitrator and 'just' distributor of Amritha. Mohini made both the parties wait for their turn and served Devas first and declared that the stock of Amritha was all consumed and disappointed the Demons. One of the Demons, Rahu- pretended to be the Moon God and consumed Amrita; on conceding the protests of Sun and Moon, Mohini cut his head. But since he managed to take sips of the Life-giving Drink, Rahu survived and in fact managed to secure a boon that he could devour both Sun and Moon and hence the

Solar and Lunar Eclipses. As a result of the drama Demons were defeated and Devas retained power in Heaven thus vindicating the Divine Position of Devas.

Varaha Avatar: Sage Kashyapa and his wife Diti gave birth to ‘Hiranyaksha’, who in turn pleased Lord Brahma, and managed a boon that no force on Earth could destroy him in battles. He conquered all the three worlds, viz. the Earth, Heaven and the Under-World. In fact, he dragged Earth into the depths of the Ocean and there was complete chaos in the Universe. Lord Vishnu had to take the form of a boar, which after a prolonged battle destroyed the demon and restored Earth by lifting it by His tusks. The Balance of the Universe would have been completely upset if Earth were not saved along with the virtues of Mankind, the Holy Scriptures and the very concept of Righteousness and Godliness.

Narasimha Avatar: As his elder brother Hiranyaksha was killed by Lord Vishnu, ‘Hiranyakashipa’ desired to avenge the death. But he realized that unless he pleased Brahma (Lord of Creation) with rigorous meditation and sacrifice, he would not receive the boons that he wanted. Finally, Brahma acceded to all of his wishes that he could not be killed by any human being or beast, by night or day, in the sky or on the Earth or in water. Having secured the boons, the Demon became all powerful and tormented one and all, especially those who prayed to Lord Vishnu. In fact, he insisted that he alone should be prayed to. He attacked Sages, destroyed ‘Yagnyas’ (Sacrifices) and temples and sought to terminate the Good and the righteous. But his own son, named ‘Prahlada’, was an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu from his childhood. Hiranyakashipa tried all means of cajoling, threatening and finally used various methods of killing him. Yet, each time that he sought to destroy the son, he was saved and Prahlada’s devotion became more intense than ever. Finally in a fit of desperation, the father asked the son: ‘Many a time, I tried to murder you, you are saved! Where is your Vishnu? You say that he is everywhere! Can you show him to me in this pillar?’ The son replied coolly that He is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent! Enraged by this reply, the Demon struck the pillar and there emerged Lord Vishnu in the form of Narasimha (Half-Man and Half-Lion), kept the Demon on His lap and tore him into pieces. As per the prescription of the boon received by the demon from Lord Brahma, the annihilation happened neither by a human being nor a beast, not at a time when it was night or day (viz. dusk time) and neither on earth, sky or water! In this Incarnation, Lord Vishnu had thus not only saved Prahlada, as also established a firm victory of Goodness over Evil, Virtue over Sin, and Permanent over Ephemeral!

Vamana Avatar: ‘Bali’, the grandson of Prahlada, was a Demon King in the lineage of Hiranyakashipa, who became all powerful and was most dreaded by ‘Devas’. He drove Devas away from Heaven, who fled away to Lord Vishnu for refuge. Vishnu assured Devas that Bali, who was in fact a benevolent King although dominant, would be humbled and that they would be restored to Heaven soon.. Eventually, the Lord was born to Kashyapa and Diti and grew as a midget (‘Vamana’). As King Bali was performing a Ritualistic Yagna (Sacrifice), he declared that on the occasion nobody would be turned out without fulfilling their wishes. Vamana arrived and asked for a ‘small boon’, viz. a three feet of land to be given as a ‘dakshina’ (a fee) to his Guru (Teacher). The Guru of Demons, Sage ‘Shukracharya’ suspected that the dwarf was a fake and might perhaps be Lord Vishnu Himself. King Bali said that if the dwarf were the Lord Himself, then the posterity would remember the King as a donor to the Lord. Thus saying the King asked Sage Sukracharya to sprinkle the holy water from a vessel to commence the ritualistic proceedings. Guru Sukracharya still tried to prevent the act of donation and entered the vessel in a miniature form so that the holy water could not be sprinkled. Vamana was clever enough to pierce a piece of grass into the curved mouth of the vessel and thus pricked into one of the eyes of Sukracharya by doing permanent

damage to the eye. As the action of donating the three feet of land was complete, Vamana assumed a huge body and occupied one foot with Bhuloka, (Earth), another with Bhuwarloka and still demanded a third step for Swarloka. Thus King Bali had no other recourse to shift himself to 'Patala' (Under World). Lord Vishnu was immensely pleased with Bali's altruism and gave him the boon to bear the title and powers of Lord Indra, the King of Heaven.

Parasurama Avatar: As per the 'Varna Dharma' of Hinduism there are four categories of castes of which the first category is of 'Brahmins' practising ritualistic prayers, Sacrifices, religious preaching, temple-running etc. Next category comprises 'Kshatriyas' or the Warriors and Kings, whose duty is to protect all other classes of people, especially the Brahmins. In this background, Kshatriyas had over a few generations neglected the interests of the three 'Varnas' and became despotic and cruel. It was at this time, that Lord Vishnu came to mortal life as the son of Sage 'Jamadagni' and 'Renuka' and assumed the name of 'Parasu Rama' or the one with an axe to punish the evil. 'Kartaveerya' was the contemporary King who was an ill-famed and cruel tyrant, with thousand hands. He not only subjected his own people with oppression and brutality but became a terror among his neighbouring Kingdoms too. He had a few boons from Lord Dattatreya which were misused and tormented one and all. On one occasion, the King visited the Ashram (the Hermitage) of Jamadagni and was impressed with the Holy Cow, 'Kamadhenu', as the cow could fulfill all desires of human beings. The King had forcibly taken away the Cow, despite Jamadagni's protests. Parasurama waged a war with the King and cut off his thousand hands. His sons retaliated by killing Jamadagni and destroyed the Hermitage, when Parasurama was away. As a sequel, Parasurama had not only killed the progeny of Kartaveerya, but also hunted and shattered the totality of the Kshatriya clan by waging some twenty one wars to avenge the killings of his father and followers. Eventually, Parasurama retired and lived at MountMahendra. He returned again to Earth only in the subsequent 'Yuga' (the second in the Time-series of human existence, viz. Threta Yuga').

Rama Avatar: Lord Vishnu's next incarnation was that of Rama. He was born into 'Surya Vamsa' (the ancestry of Sun God) to 'Dasaratha' and 'Kousalya', while his brothers were born to his step mothers as 'Laxmana' to 'Sumithra', 'Bharata' and 'Shatrughna' to 'Kaikeyi'. As the boys grew up, Sage 'Viswamitra' asked for the help of Rama to protect the Yagna (Sacred Ritual) from Demons, as they tended to spoil the Ritual by pouring blood into the 'Agni Kunda' (the Fire Pit). Dasaratha was most reluctant to depute Rama for the purpose as he was still in teens and said that he was prepared to defend the Yagna himself. Viswamitra insisted only on Rama and Dasaratha had to agree; Rama was accompanied by Laxmana too, as he was not only the closest among his brothers, but also devoted to Rama. The Yagna was performed successfully and Rama killed a dreadful 'Rakshasi' (demoness) named 'Tataka' and demon by name 'Subahu'; Rama also threw away thousands of miles off the high Sea another demon named 'Maricha' by the power of his arrows. As a symbol of his appreciation to Rama, Viswamitra taught how to use valuable 'astras' (Divine Arrows) to destroy enemies, in addition to those which were already taught to him by his own Guru 'Vasishtha', another Great Sage in the court of King Dasaratha. On way back to Ayodhya, the Capital of his Kingdom, Viswamithra took Rama to the CapitalCity ('Mithila') of another King namely 'Janaka'. The latter announced a 'Swayam Vara' (Self-choice of a husband by a daughter; in this case Lady Sita), the criterion of eligibility for a suitable suitor being that 'Shiva Dhanush'-a Divine Set of Bow and Arrow, belonging originally by Lord Shiva Himself to be fixed and broken. Rama succeeded in breaking the 'Shiva Dhanush' and married Sita, who was basically Goddess Lakshmi, the spouse of Lord Vishnu Himself. Alongside, Janaka performed the weddings of his other daughters to Rama's other brothers, viz .Lakshmana to 'Urmila', Bharata to

‘Mandavi’, and Shatrughna to ‘Shrutakirti’. On way back to Ayodhya after the joyous weddings, Rama had an encounter with Parasurama, another incarnation of Lord Vishnu Himself, as Parasurama was annoyed that Rama broke the Shiva Dhanush. But Rama sought to convince Parasurama and more significantly the entire world that he was indeed the Avatar of Lord Vishnu. As there was a seeming threat posed by Parasurama, Rama broke another powerful Set of Bow and Arrows, viz. ‘Narayana Dhanush’ as given by Parasurama. On return to Ayodhya, Dasaratha declared Rama to be the ‘Yuvraj’ (heir apparent). The entire Kingdom and all the citizens felt highly overjoyed and ecstatic at the great news, as even by then, Rama was considered as a role model for humanity and a ‘Maryada Purush’ (an exceptionally noble and lovable person). But, the youngest wife of Dasaratha, Kaikeyi, opposed the proposal and as instigated by her maid servant ‘Manthara’, reminded the King of two of his boons to her that were due to her when she nursed him after a battle with a demon in the past. She asked for fulfilling her boons that Bharata, her elder son, be made the heir apparent and that Rama be consigned to forests for 14 years. Dasaratha had no choice but to concede her requests. Rama obeyed the paternal wishes, as conveyed to him by Kaikeyi, since Dasaratha had already swooned after hearing the undue demands. Rama was accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana. Subsequently, Dasaratha died of heart attack. Bharata was away from Ayodhya to Mithila, as pre-planned by Kaikeyi, and on return, felt hurt by the terrible turnover of events, reprimanded his mother, refused to become the King, kept the throne unoccupied as he was only a caretaker, that too when asked by Rama whom he met in the forests, and carried back Rama’s ‘Padukas’ (wooden footwear) to Ayodhya to be cherished on the Royal Throne. Meanwhile, Rama and Sita, accompanied by Lakshmana moved on to ‘Dandakaranya’ (Thick interior of Forests) and lived in a hermitage, named ‘Panchavati’ on the quiet banks of River ‘Godavari’. In course of time, a Rakshasa woman, by name ‘Surpanakha’ approached Rama and desired to marry her. Rama said that his wife was already with him but perhaps another male viz. Lakshmana might agree to do so. Lakshmana got Ram’s coded message and slit Surpanakha’s ears and nose. The latter desired to avenge the insult and prevailed on her brother ‘Khara’ to attack Rama and Lakshmana with his full army. The demon and his men were all killed in the battle and Surpanakha approached the mighty King of Lanka, viz. the ten headed and most dreaded ‘Ravana’ to retaliate. Enraged by the series of the deadly events, Ravana ordered Maricha to take the form of a Golden Deer to entice Lady Sita, so that Rama would chase it and thus abduct Sita. Rama killed the deer but shouted Rama’s name aloud as a ploy and Lakshmana left Sita alone and went in search of Rama. Meanwhile ‘Ravana’ succeeded in abducting Sita and took her away to Lanka. The Great Kite ‘Jatayu’ intercepted Ravana to rescue Sita but Ravana killed Jatayu. While dying, Jatayu informed Rama and Lakshmana, who were searching for Sita, that Ravana abducted Sita. Wandering in the forests, Rama made friends with ‘Sugriva’, the illustrious Monkey Chieftain, along his supporters, especially the illustrious ‘Hanuman’, who had become Rama’s instant devotee and unfailing follower. Sugriva was being harassed by his elder brother ‘Vali’, who was a powerful and tyrannical King of ‘Kishkintha’. Rama helped Sugriva to kill Vali and made him the King of Kishkintha. Sugriva sent his Monkey soldiers far and wide to locate Sita. Finally, Hanuman crossed the Sea and met Sita in a garden of Ravana under an Ashoka Tree. He identified himself as a devotee of Rama with the help of his golden ring that was given by Rama himself as an identity. Hanuman created havoc in the Ashoka garden and killed many Rakshasa soldiers. Ravana’s son, ‘Meghanadh’ had to utilize his prize ‘Brahmastra’ (the Divine Weapon of Brahma) to control Hanuman and present him in the royal court of Ravana. King Ravana ordered that Hanuman should be taught a lesson by scorching Hanuman’s tail. In turn, Hanuman destroyed palaces, public places and a large part of Lanka’s Capital and finally returned to Kishkintha to report the presence of Sita, who was being pressurized to marry Ravana as also the happenings of his visit to Lanka. Rama,

Lakshmana, Sugriva, Hanuman, the giant Bear Jambavanta, and the massive Monkey- Brigade reached the shores of the Sea and built a gigantic 'Ram Sethu' (Bridge) across the Sea, inscribing the name of Rama on each rock and let it float! Having crossed the Sea, the 'Rama Sena' (Rama's Army) was composed and formulated to surround the entire Island of Lanka. One of Ravana's brothers, 'Vibhishana', who was a man of principles and morals tried to reason out with Ravana not to combat with Rama on the flimsy grounds of obsession with Sita, but he left the party of Ravana to join Rama, where there was 'Dharma' (Justice and Truth). In the fierce and long drawn battle that ensued, Rama killed Ravana's monstrous brother 'Kumbhakarna' and his outrageous son Meghanadha, alias Indrajit. The all powerful Ravana himself had to be wrecked by Rama by utilizing the massive Brahmastra while the entire Rakshasa community was destroyed by Rama's followers. After a long lapse of fourteen years, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana returned to Ayodhya, accompanied by the memorable Hanuman, Sugriva, Vibhushana and innumerable fellow warriors of the Rama Vijay (Rama's Victory) to witness Lord Rama's Coronation. The popular 'Rama Rajya' (Rama's Administration) was a bench-mark as per Hindu Mythology, witnessing the practice of Dharma in full force. The ideals that were followed were as per Scriptures of the Yore and reached peaks of human existence of Justice and Nobility.

Krishna Avatar: The eighth incarnation of Lord Vishnu was of Krishna, belonging to the 'Yadava' Community which was traced back to the ancestry of Lord Brahma. The lineage of Brahma commenced from his son 'Atri' onward to- Soma-Pururuva-Ayu-Nahusha-Yayati-and Yadu. Thus Krishna was born into 'Yadava Vamsa' to 'Vasudeva' and 'Devaki' in Mathura. Devaki's wicked brother 'Kamsa' was the tyrant King, who heard a Divine Voice from the Skies that Devaki's eighth son would kill him. Thus he imprisoned his sister and husband and killed each of the babies born to them. Kamsa took extra precautions to ensure that the eighth child ought not to vanish from the prison. Somehow Vasudeva managed to sneak out the child to safety on a stormy midnight into the cradle of a child just born to 'Nanda' and 'Yashoda' at 'Gokul' across the river 'Yamuna' and the couple brought up the child as their own. The baby since exchanged and brought back to the prison flew away from Kamsa's hands trying to kill that baby too, who flew away from Kamsa's hands and thundered from the sky that the real child, Krishna was safe in Gokul. Having spotted the house where Krishna was safe, Kamsa deputed several demons to somehow kill the child; the demons that turned up thus included 'Pothana', 'Arishta', 'Vrushabha', 'Keshi', 'Dhenuka', 'Gardabha' and so on and Krishna killed them all. Krishna also overpowered a poisonous snake, 'Kaliya', in a poisonous pond as he entered the pond chasing a play ball with his friends. Krishna humbled Lord Indra, who rained incessantly at Gokula since the inhabitants of that place did not offer prayers to the Rain God, 'Varuna', by lifting a huge mountain, 'Govardhana' by his little finger. As Krishna and his elder brother 'Balarama' grew up, Kamsa invited them to Mathura on a so-called friendly visit, with the malicious intention of killing them. On their entry into the city, Kamsa let loose a mad elephant, which was killed. Kamsa also arranged a duel with two renowned wrestlers, but Krishna and Balarama killed them too. Finally Krishna destroyed Kamsa and got rid of a terrible King bringing great relief to all concerned. Close to the end of Kamsa, another mighty devil named 'Jarasandha' challenged Krishna and sought revenge for Kamsa's (his brother in law) death. Jarasandha too was killed by Krishna. Yet another enemy of Krishna, named 'Sisupala' met his extermination later. There was another momentous occasion, when Krishna and his spouse, 'Satyabhama' fought a deadly demon, 'Narakasura'. It was destined that Satyabhama would terminate the Rakshasa, since Krishna pretended unconsciousness on the battle field to enable her to take the lead-role of killing the 'Asura'. The Victory Day was celebrated as 'Deepavali', the Memorable Festival of Lights. This occasion

also led to Krishna's presenting a boon to Satyabhama and her request to Krishna to fetch the celestial flower, Parijata, from the Garden of Lord Indra in Swarga). The Story goes on that unfortunately the Parijata Tree brought from Swarga was planted in the Garden of Rukmini, the senior consort of Krishna and led to jealousies and quarrels in Krishna's intimate family affairs! Moreover, Narakasura imprisoned sixteen thousand daughters of various Devas, Gandharvas, and Yakshas-all from celestial families and Krishna married them, besides his own eight Royal Queens! Besides, Radha the beloved of Krishna led to the concept of 'Ras-Leela' or Group Dances and singing by Gopikas (the girls infatuated with Krishna.) The Chapter on Harivamsa makes references to Krishna's many sons. But, the Stories of 'Pradyumna' and 'Aniruddha' became popular. Through Rukmini, the Principal Consort of Krishna, Pradyumna was born, but as soon as he was born, a Rakshasa named 'Shambhara' abducted the child and threw him in a Sea. A fish swallowed the child but a fisherman caught the fish and out of its stomach emerged Pradyumna. Eventually, Pradyumna killed Shambhara and married 'Mayavati'. Aniruddha was born to the couple and Krishna felt happy. Aniruddha and 'Usha' were in love, but 'Baana'; an evil-minded King did not approve the wedding and fought with Aniruddha. Finally, Krishna vanquished Baana and made Aniruddha and Usha happy. Closely linked with the Avatar of Krishna is the Story of '**Maha Bharata**', the Great Indian Epic of Ancient India. In fact, the Mahabharata Epic is but an excuse to enact the drama of 'Pandavas' and 'Kauravas', of which the Central Role is of Krishna himself. Pandavas represented nobility, justice, valour and idealism, whereas Kauravas stood for evil, jealousy, meanness and injustice. Krishna sought to depict the good and bad qualities distinctly and reveal that Truth triumphed finally and decidedly. In the lineage that originated from Brahma to Atri down to Yayati, the latter had two wives viz. Devayani, who had two sons named Yadu and Turvusu, while Sharmishtha had three sons named Druhya, Anu and Puru. Krishna was born into Yadu Vamsa, whereas Kuru into Puru Vamsa. King Shantanu was in Kuru Vamsa and he had two wives, Ganga and Satyawati. Bhishma was born to Ganga, whereas Chitrangada and Vichitraveerya to Satyawati. Chitrangada died early and Vichitraveerya was sickly. Meanwhile, Bhishma conquered the King of Kasi and brought three of his daughters, Amba, Ambica and Ambalika with the intention of having them wedded to Vichitraveerya, his younger brother. The three daughters demanded that Bhishma should marry them since they were conquered by Bhishma, but Bhishma took a vow that he would be a bachelor always as he promised his father to facilitate Kingship to the progeny of Satyawati. The eldest daughter, Amba became furious and killed herself in 'Yoga Agni' as she was not married to Bhishma (In her subsequent birth, Amba was reborn as Sikhandi, a transgender who killed Bhishma subsequently). Since there was a crisis of family lineage to be perpetuated, Bhishma requested Vedavyasa to bless Ambica and Ambalika into bed. The girls did not initially agree and sent their 'Dasi', a servant maid and thus was born 'Vidura'. On the persuasion of Bhishma the sisters followed into the bed later; Ambica closed her eyes in the union and thus begot a blind son named 'Dhritarashtra', while Ambalika paled away in the union with the fright of Vyasa and thus had 'Pandu' as her son with congenital skin disease. Dhritarashtra was married to 'Gandhari', who also preferred to close her eyes with cloth as a respect to her husband. They got hundred sons, most important of them being 'Duryodhana' and 'Dussasana'. Pandu married Kunti and Madri. Even before her wedding, Kunti was blessed with a son, Karna, by the grace of Sun God, and after marriage she begot Yudhishtara through God Dharma (God of Justice), Bhima by 'Vayu' (God of Wind) and Arjun by God Indra. By the grace of Aswini Gods were born to Madri and they were named Nakula and Sahadeva. As a result of a curse by a Sage, Pandu died untimely and ever since then, Pandavas became fatherless and grew under the care of their paternal uncle Dhritarashtra the blind King. (Vidura, the son of a servant maid born to Vedavyasa was disqualified to become the King and thus became the Chief Adviser to the King.) The hundred strong

progeny of Dhritarashtra headed by Duryodhana grew up as the spoilt and much pampered children and developed hatred towards their Pandava cousins, day by day. Karna was disowned by Kunti since she was an unwed mother but tried out an experiment to test a boon given by a Sage and invoked Sun God resulting in her pregnancy and birth of a boy; she packed off the child in a box floating in a river and a chariot driver, 'Suta' and his wife Radha brought up the child as their son. Karna had joined Duryodhana. The Kauravas and Pandavas had a common Guru (Teacher), Drona Acharya, to train them in the art of archery and military skills. Invariably, Pandavas excelled Kauravas in the training sessions and that was an added angle of jealousy to Kauravas, which eventually turned out as hatred. As Bhima was an expert in physical duels and the art of using mace in duel-fight, Duryodhana got envious. Similarly, Arjun was an expert in archery and used to draw praise from Drona. Duryodhana sought to pit Karna in the art of archery, but Guru Drona did not allow Karna in the classes, as Karna was not a Prince, as all others were. At once, Duryodhana being the heir apparent to the Throne declared Karna as the Prince of a subordinate State of the Hastinapura Kingdom and made Karna eligible to join the elite of Princes. In course of time, Kauravas tried several means of terminating Pandavas. The evil minded uncle of Kaurava sons, 'Shakuni' had been an active party in all such wicked actions. In fact, there was a group of four villains- 'Dushta Chathushtaya', comprising Duryodhana, Dussasana, Shakuni and Karna- who were responsible to somehow destroy Pandavas. They arranged a mansion made of shellac to inhabit Pandavas and tried to put it on fire overnight. Lord Krishna, who had all along been on the side of Dharma (Justice) and of Pandavas, had forewarned them of the evil plans of Kauravas to burn the mansion and got them transferred safe through a tunnel leading to a village nearby. Pandavas were disguised as a Brahmin family and rented a small house. Kauravas, including the King and the citizens, believed that Pandavas were ablaze in the mansion. Even in disguise as Brahmins, the five Pandava sons and mother Kunti lived on and rescued the entire village by Bhima from the menace of a Rakshasa, named 'Bakasura', who demanded a villager a day as his food. In course of time, they attended a 'Swayamvara' (Bride seeking to secure a suitable bridegroom) of Draupadi, the daughter of King Drupada and among all the aspirant-suitors only Arjuna was able to smash up a fish revolving fast in a circle placed above the head level and seeing down of its reflection in a water flowing down under. Kaurava sons and Bhishma also attended the function and recognized Pandavas. Kaurava sons were dismayed, but gave great relief to Bhishma and all the well-wishers of Pandava. But, Arjun's victory of winning Draupadi's hand posed a problem since Arjun could not marry ahead of his elder brothers. The puzzle was sorted by Bhishma in consultation with the Sages, Draupadi and elders concerned that she should marry all the Pandava brothers in a lot. Following the Wedding, Bhishma advised King Dhritarashtra to give half of the Kingdom to Pandavas. Thus Yudhishtara became the King and gradually annexed many Kingdoms and became powerful and wealthy. Pandavas celebrated 'Rajasuya Yagna' (Royal Sacrifice) and elected Krishna as the Chief Guest of the Grand Function. Sisupala, another King and cousin of Krishna objected that the honour to Krishna, whom he defeated in successive wars. But the reality was that his mother requested Krishna to spare Sisupala for one hundred mistakes, before he was destined to die in Krishna's hands finally and thus Krishna hid himself from the wars with Sisupala and suffered him thus far. On reaching the hundred mistakes, Krishna terminated Sisupala. As Pandavas were at their climatic position, Kauravas felt highly jealous and as advised by the wily Shakuni, invited Dharmaraja for a Game of Chess, in which Shakuni played foul. Dharmaraja lost not only the Kingdom, but also Draupadi, who was forcibly brought into the Royal Court by Dussasana in the presence of Dhritarashtra, Bhishma, Drona and all the gentry; she was insulted and sought to be disrobed. Further, Dharmaraja was made to agree that Pandavas would spend in the forests for twelve years and an additional year in 'Ajnatavas' (in disguise and not to be noticed or

identified by Kauravas or anyone else), failing which, another twelve years of forest life would be re-imposed! After completing the Forest life for twelve years, Pandavas (with the exception of Kunti who stayed with Vidura) took refuge in the Kingdom of 'Virata' in disguised forms viz. Dharmaraja as King Virat's Brahmana- Adviser and companion to play chess, Bhima as the Royal cook, Arjuna as the trans-gender dance teacher of the King's daughter, Uttara; Nakula and Sahadeva as trainers in the Royal stable of the King's horses and Draupadi as the Queen's Principal Maid. During the disguised stay of Pandavas, Bhima weeded out Keechaka one night without trace, even as the King himself was not unhappy about his brother-in-law's villainy and over-control. In the meantime, Kauravas attacked Virat's Kingdom and forcibly took away thousands of cows of King Virat's. Arjun had then decided to take away the disguise of Pandavas, as the period of one year of 'Ajnavas' was just concluded. In fact, all the Pandavas revealed their own identities. Arjun had defended Virat's Kingdom single handed and frightened away Kauravas by his powerful arrows and finally utilizing just one 'Sammohan Astra', the Divine Arrow putting the entire Kaurava Army unconscious. Not realizing the real identity of Pandavas, King Virat and family as also the subjects of the Kingdom extended apologies to Pandavas. The Princess Uttara was married to Abhimanyu, the son of Arjun. Back to normalcy after suffering the Forest life for twelve years and the disguised existence for one year, Pandavas demanded their share of Kingdom again. In fact, Bhima, Arjun and Draupadi refused to pardon the innumerable misdeeds of Kauravas and wished to take revenge on the battle field, but for the restraint imposed on them by Dharmaraja. Lord Krishna was deputed for peace talks. Kauravas on the other hand refused to part with even a pin worth of land, let alone five villages for Pandavas. Thus the epoch-making Great Battle of Maha Bharata became inevitable. Kurukshetra was the historic war- field, where the battle lines were drawn and the composition of both the fighting parties were identified. As per options offered by Krishna, Duryadhana secured large number of soldiers and Arjuna agreed to be Krishna's charioteer, without fighting himself. Elders like Bhishma and Drona had to fight on the side of Kauravas, though reluctantly, since they had been loyal to King Dhritarashtra. As several grandfathers and uncle figures, close relatives and cousins were faced on the opposite side for a bloody war, Arjuna got bewildered and made a scene of his inability to fight and jumped out of his chariot. Krishna had then delivered his immortal 'Gita Pravachan' (The Discourse of Gita) which constituted the Quintessence of Holy Hindu Scriptures. He explained in detail that the death of stalwarts like Bhishma and Drona or close relatives of Pandavas or of anybody else, would merely mean the destruction of their physical existence but their Atma (Inner Soul) is indestructible as 'It' would don another body in the never-ending cycle of life, according to the Register of their previous lives viz. 'Sanchita' or the Stored Results of their actions in earlier births and of 'Prarabdha' or their own destinies which would shape their future. Arjuna was just an instrument in the drama of Life. The real quest of life is to attain the Union of individual Atma or the Inner Soul with 'Paramatma', the Super Soul. This is what 'Gyana' (Knowledge or Awareness) is all about and what Yogis (Sages) have all along endeavored to achieve through the ages. Arjuna was thus pacified and was asked to do his Dharma (Duty). In the fierce battle that followed for eighteen days, there was destruction all around from both the sides of warriors. Bhishma, the war-veteran and Commander-in-Chief withdrew from the battle as he was faced with a trans-gender, named Sikhandi, whom Bhishma refused to fight with and thus fell a victim but did not die; he had the boon to live as per his choice-day and preferred to live through the entire duration of the battle and waited for 'Uttarayan', i.e. the first day of Solar journey upwards the northern direction. Drona, the next Commander stopped fighting at the false news confirmed by Dharmaraja, (ever known for his utterances of Truth only) in hushed tone that his son Aswatthama (meant actually named after an elephant) died. Drona was thus killed by Dhrishtadyumna without resistance. Karna who was the next

Commander of Kauravas was arrowed to death by Arjuna, as the former could not remember the secret 'Mantras' (stanzas) while releasing arrows favoring specific Gods to invoke special powers; Karna's amnesia was the resultant curse by a Sage which let him down to Arjun's arrows. The Final chapter of the Great Battle of Mahabharata, the Legendary Epic was scripted by a powerful and climactic duel of maces between Duryodhana and Bhima. As Duryodhana defended his position for long, Krishna gave a gesture to Bhima to hit the opponent on his thighs as the former's body was made sturdy all over excepting the thighs; Gandhari, mother of Duryodhana had the power of fortifying any part of a body by opening her ever closed sight just once but Duryodhana hid the loins and thighs and hence were vulnerable. Thus ended the sordid tale of Duryodhana, who was the Prime Villain of the Epic. Dharmaraja was made the King again to Hastinapur Kingdom and after him, the Dynasty carried on the Kingship by Parikshit, the son of Uttara. Lord Krishna who had firmly re-established Dharma on Earth, not only by his own fascinating deeds to vindicate 'Nyaya' (justice) and Nobility, but also by using Pandavas as instruments to bring success to His efforts. Once again He proved through His Avatar (Incarnation) of Lord Vishnu that each time human existence gets disturbed by evil forces, He would appear as an earthly figure and rectify imbalances of the Universe.

Buddha Avatar: As there was an ongoing battle of Devas and Asuras for long time, Devas approached Lord Vishnu to revive 'Dharma' and 'Nyaya' and beseeched Him to take human form once again. The Lord said that 'Mayamoha' would soon take birth as Buddha to one Sudhodana. But the illusions that would be created in the name of Buddha would be such that many evil persons would call themselves as Buddhists and undo all the Golden Traditions established in Vedas and other Scriptures. The misleading ways would advocate materialism in detestable manner and finally end up in the last phase of 'Kali Yuga'.. [Note: While Agni Purana had thus prophesied the sinful and irrecoverable era ahead, Buddha himself was stated to have provided a silver-line in the quest of Truth and Dharma. He preached the concept of Self -Realisation and recommended the right path to this Goal. He found that the basis of evil was unhappiness and desire, while the means of overcoming the evil is the attitude to secure freedom from material happiness. He preached the eight fold path, viz. the right view, the right intention, the right speech, the right thought, the right livelihood, the right action, the right mindfulness and the right concentration. Another significant preaching of Buddha was to follow the principles of 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) and 'Samyam' (Restraint). But in the post-Buddha period, varied interpretations of Buddhism were adopted to suit some of the following generations, including the practice of low and misleading Tantras]

Kalki Avatar: Agni Purana also prophesied the Final Avatar of Lord Vishnu as Kalki, to be born to 'Vishnuyasha'. He would be fully armed to destroy the disbelievers of God and perpetrate sins and criminal acts and re-establish Dharma (Virtue) and Nyaya (Justice) and revive the concepts of four 'varnas'(castes,) viz. Brahmana (the nobility), Vaisya (the business class), Kshatriya (the Warriors and Defenders) and Sudra (the Others).The revival of the four 'Ashrams' (Stages of Life) too would happen viz. Balya (Childhood), Grihastha (the family person), Vanaprastha (the senior and religious class) and Sanyasa (Seekers of Truth and death-awaiting). [Note: The popular belief is that by the close of the fourth phase of Kalki Yuga (era) as against the first phase now, Lord Vishnu would take the 'Avatar' (Incarnation) riding a flying white divine horse, brandishing a sword, destroying the Evil and reviving the Virtue, thus heralding a completely New World Order following the Great Destruction and evolving a Fresh Cycle of Creation.

The profile of Universal Creation

Prior to Creation, Vishnu the Eternal and All Pervasive created Water and there was no day, night or time. He materialised 'Prakriti' and with its interaction with Prakriti created 'Maha Tatwa' and from the latter emerged 'Ahamkar' (the feature of the Self and Ego). Ahamkar was of three forms viz. 'Vaikarika' or Satvika, 'Thajasa' or Rajasa and 'Bhutadirupa' or Tamasika. From Tamasika Ahamkar, there was the Tanmatra of 'Shabd' or Sound which produced 'Aakaash' (Sky); from Sky was generated the Tanmatra of 'Sparsh' or the Touch which in turn created 'Vaayu' (Air). From 'Vayu' the Tanmatra of 'Rupa' or Form, enabled the emergence of Agni (Fire). From Agni, the 'Rasa' Tanmatra created 'Jal' (water). From water the 'Gandha Tanmatra' or the feature smell created Bhumi or Earth. Such is the chain reaction from Sound to Touch to Form to Rasa to Smell—all the creations of Tamasika Ahamkar. From the Rajasika/ Tejasika Ahamkar, Ten 'Indriyas' or physical parts got created while the most significant physical component is 'Manas' or Mind viz. the eleventh Indriya is the product of Satvika 'Ahamkar. Then the 'Swayambhu Shakti' or the Supreme Energy generated water. He sowed a Seed (virility) into the Water and on the Water Surface, and there floated a Golden Egg or the Brahmanda, from which emerged Lord Brahma. The Golden Egg opened in two parts, one as Heaven and the other as Earth, the connecting link being the Sky. Brahma then created Earth in Water and ten directions, besides 'kaal' (Time), 'man' (mind), 'kaam' (desire), 'vani' (speech), 'krodh' (anger) and 'rati' (passion). Then emerged Vidyut (Lighting), Thunder, Clouds, Rainbows, Words and Anger. He created from His Body the Texts of Vedas (Rig, Yajur and Sama) mainly to make sure and also enable Yagnyas and other Sacred Ceremonies. He created the four Sanaka brothers, the manifestation of anger as Rudra; and the seven sons from His Powers, viz. Marichi, Atri, Pulasthya, Pulaha, Kratu, and Vasishtha. Brahma materialised half of his body as Purusha (male) and the other half as 'Stree' (Female). The 'Srishti' from the females led to that of 'Prajas'. Human Creation was made possible by the first Manu called Swayambhu Manu and his wife Shatarupa; the couple gave birth to two sons Prayamvrata and Uttanapaada and a daughter Devahuti who married Sage Kardama. Agni Deva then described the lineage of Swayambhu Manu who included the illustrious Dhruva and Chakchusha Manu, Prachetas, Daksha Prajapati, Ashtaa Vasus (viz. Aap, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Anila, Anala, Pratyusha and Prabhasa), and Eleven Rudras (stated to be the main Rudras besides thousands and more) viz. Hara, Bahurupa, Triambaka, Aparajita, Vrishakapi, Shambhu, Kapardi, Raivata, Mrigavyaadhya, Sarpa and Kapali). Thus Agni Deva described Prakriti / Maha Tatwa Srishti or Brahma Sarga, the second one was known as Tanmatra Srishti called Bhuta Sarga, the Third Srishti is 'Vaikarika' or Aindra Sarga. The Fourth Srishti is called Mukhya Sarga or 'Sthavara' Srishti of 'Vriksha, Parvat adi' / Trees, Mountains etc. The 'Tiryagyonya' Srishti of 'Pashu-Pakshis' or animals and birds is the Fifth Srishti. The sixth Srishti is of Deva Sarga (Urthva Stotra/ higher); the seventh Sarga is Manava Sarga and the eighth Sarga is Anugraha Sarga based on Satvik as well as of Tamasika-orientation. The ninth variety is Nitya Sarga or the usual Srishti.

Vishnu Vibhuti:

While all the above are of Vishnu Swarupas only, Janardana also assumes the Chatur Vibhaagas of Srishti-Sthiti and Laya: the first Amsha is of Brahma, the second one of Prajapatis like Marichi; the third is of Kaala and the final one is of Pranis; indeed creation and cremation of Manavaas occurs almost every minute! Maharshi Parashara thus addressed Sage Maitreya:

Yete sarvey pravartasya shitow Vishnormahaatmanah, Vibhuti Bhutaa Raajaaney ye chanye Munisattama/ Ye bhavishyanti ye Bhutaah Bhuteswaraa Dwijaa, Teysarvey Sarva Bhutasya Vishno ramshaa Dwijothamaa

(Hey Munisattama! These and various Administrators and Kings engaged in the Upkeep of their respective Territories are all Vishnu Vibhutis. Those Kings in the past and those who in future would be too of Vishnu Rupas! All the Devatas, Daityas, Danavas; all the Pashus, Pakshis, Manavaas, Sarpaas, Nagas; and all the Vrikshas, Parvataas, Grahaas and so on are Narayana Vibhutis are Vishnu Rupas. The Past-Present-Future are of Vishnu Rupas. Thus

Yeva meshaa Jagatsrushtaa Jagatpaadaa tathaa Jagat, Jagatbhakshayitaa Devaha Samastasya Janaardana/ Srishtistityanta kaaleshu Tridhaivam sampravartatey, Gunapravruthya paramam padam Samastasya Janaardana/ Taccha Jnaanamayam vyaapi swasamvedya manoupamam, Chathus prakaaram tadapi Swarupam Paramatmanah./

(As such, Janardana creates, maintains and finally destroys, he himself the Unique Jagat Swarupa; Bhagavan Vishnu is indeed responsible for Jagadutpatti, Sthiti, and Antaby assuming Tri-Gunas of Satwa-Rajo-Taamasa but basically is Nirguna or Featureless! Paramatmaa's Swarupa is of four kinds viz. Jnaanamaya (Embodiment of Knowledge), Vyapaka (All- Pervading), Swasamvedya or Swayam Prakaasha (Self-Illuminated) and Anupama (Unparalleled).

Then Sage Maitreya desired to know from Maharshi Parashara about an in-depth analysis of the 'Chatush-prakaara' characteristics of Bhagavan; the reply was: Just as Bhagavan is the raison d'tre or the cause of the material world, so is he the Sadhana or the 'means' too; the 'Siddhi' is the accomplishment; and 'Sadhya' is called a possibility! In other words, the Yogis aiming at Mukti could follow the 'Sadhanaas' like the Ashtaanga Yoga or the Eight-Limbed Yoga viz. 1) Yama (Yogik Principles), 2) Niyama (Personal discipline), 3) Asana (Yoga Posture), 4) Pranayama (Control of Breathing) 5) Pratyahaara (withdrawal of senses) 6) Dharana (Concentration of an object) 7) Dhyana (Meditation) and 8) Samadhi (Mukti). Indeed, thus Parabrahma is Sadhya! This kind of Sadhana by means of Yoga is called *Swaadhana -alambana Jnaana*. There is another type of Jnaana viz. *Aalambana Vijnaana* which discards Samsara and seeks Paramatma by complete withdrawal and renunciation. Yet another type is *Advaita Jnaana* in which the Self seeks merger into the Totality, that is *Aham Brahmaasmi* or I am Brahma meaning thereby that the Inner Consience or Jeevatma is the same as Paramatma. The aim of the three types of Jnaana target the Supreme Experience of Atma Swarupa Parabrahma that is :

Nirvyaapaara manaakhyeyam Vyaaptimaatra manupa -mam, Atmasambodha vishayam sattaamaatramalakshanam/ Prashaantamabhayam Shuddham Durvibhaavyamasamshrayam, V ishnorjnaana mayassyoktamk tadjnaanam Brahma samjnitam/

The Jnaana Swarupa Bhagavan Vishnu is Nir-vyaapaaram or devoid of activities of Samsara; Anirvachaneeyam or Undefined; Vyaptamaatram (Omnipresent), Anupama or Unparalleled), Atmabodha Swarupa (Self-Realising), Alakshana (Featureless), Shanta (Ever Tranquil), Abhaya (Fearless and Protective), Shuddha (High Mark of Purity and Translucent), Bhaavaateetam or beyond comprehension; Ashraya heenam or the Holdless since he is the Supreme Holder Himself; and indeed that is Brahma Jnaana!

*Evam prakaaramalam Nityam Vyapakamakshayam, Samasta heryarahitam Visdhnavaakhayam
Paramam padam/Tad Brahma Paramam Yogi yato naavaratey punah,Shriyatya punyoparamey
kheenakleshoti nirmalah/ Dwey Rupey Brahmaanastasya Murtam chaa murtamevacha, Ksaraakshara
swarupo tey Sarvabhuteshthavasthitey/ Aksharam Tapp;aram Brahma Ksharam Sarvamidam Jagat,
Ekadeshasthitasyaagneyerjyotsnaa visteerani tathaa,Parasyabrahmaanah Shaktistatheymadakhilam
Jagat/*

(In this way Vishnu Paramapada is percievable which is Nirmala-Nitya- Vyapaka-Akshaya-and Heya Guna varjita; this Unique Form devoid of Paapa- Punya and Samsara Kleshaas is such that would have no return as the Person concerned gets absorbed into Para Brahma! That Brahma has two manifestations of *Murta and Amurta!* And Akshara is the Everlasing Para Brahma and Kshara is the Transcient Universe. Brahma Shakti is akin to the all powerful Agni which spreads fast its heat and radiance and its impact is also according to the distance or closeness that the Practitioner Yogi concerned.

Vishnu Maha Stuti: Muni Maitreya requested Maharshi Parashara to portrayBhagavan Vishnu in his Complete Form and the Maharshi quoted Vasiththa Maha Muni as follows:

(Hey Muney! I saluteJagat palaka, and Aprameya Vishnu and narrate the samewhich Maha Muni Vasishtha described earlier: Srihari Bhagavan who is Nirlepa- Nirguna-Nirmala and Shuddha Kshetrajna Swarupa wears Kaustubhamani; Shri Ananta sought the company of VishnuasSrivatsaRupa and Buddhi adorned Madhava in the form of Gadaa; Vishnu is also ornamented by Shankha which is of Tamasa Swarupa and Shaaranga Dhanush of Raajasa Ahamkaara; the Chakra which out smarts the speed of Vayu is basically of Satvika Swarupaand adorns the lotus like smooth hands of Vishnu. Bhagavan also wears a Pancha Rupa Vijayanti Maalaa made of Mukta-Manikyaa-Marakata-Indraneela and Heeraas, representing Pancha Tanmatraas and Pancha Bhutaas. Bhagavan also keeps ‘baanaas’ or arrowswhich are the embodiments of Jnaana and Karma! Further Vishnu wears a sharp Khadga or sword which pierces throughAvidya and brightens Vidyaamaya Jnaana.Muni Maitreya! In this manner, all kinds of features like Purusha, Pradhana, Buddhi, Ahamkara, Pancha Bhuta,Manas, Indriyas, Vidya and Avidya are all surrounded by Vishnu. Srihari who has basically no Form but in a Maya Swarupa keeps Astras and Ornaments to help and encourage various Praanis. This is how Parameshwara seeks to facilitate the deeds and thoughts of various Beings with the help of Vidya-Avidya, Sat-Asat, and such characteristics. Vishnu is also present as Kaala Swarupa in the form of Kala-Kaashtha- Nimesha- Dina- Ritu- Ayana-and Varsha! Bhagavan is spread all over the Bhurloka- Bhuvarka- Swarloka-and Maha-Jana- Tapa-and Satyalokas! He is the Origin of Origin-Purvaja toPurvajas; Sarva Vidyaa Swarupa; Swayam Lokamaa Swarupa; Niraakaaa- Sarveswara- Ananta- Sarva Buta Swarupa inclusiveof Deva-Maanava-Pashu- Pakshi and so on; He is Ruk-Yajur- Sama-Atharva Veda Swarupa; Itihasa-Upavedaas like Ayurveda; Vedanta Vaakya; Vedaanga; Manvaadi krita Dharma Shastra; Purana-Aakhyaana- Anuvaaka (Kalpa Sutra)-Kavya Charha-Sarva Shabda Murti Dhaari-and so on. Whichever Murta-Amurta Padaardhaas exist are of Vishnu’s Mighty Physique! He assures: I am the totality of the Universe and there is neither a Karana- Karya-Kaarana beyond me! A person who believes in this simple Truth would have conquered Dwandwa Rupaas and attains me!)

Having rendered theVishnu Maha Stuti as above, Maharshi Parashara assured Maitreya Muni that who so ever reads or listens to it would be freed from sins. That person would be eligible for the Punya that daily Snaanaas and worship in Pushkata Kshetracould fetch by merely hearing the Stotra. This unique piece of

homage to Maha Purusha Janardana describing the Creation of Deva-Rishi-Gandharva-Pitru-Yaksha and others is adequate to bestow the blessings of Narayana.

By assuming the incarnation of Varaha, Lord Vishnu salvaged Earth (Bhu Devi) from being sunk into the under-world of 'Rasatala' by the fierce demon Hiranyakasipu. The Great Boar lifted up Earth by His 'damshttra' (Jaws) even as the demon was annihilated. Bhu Devi was stupefied in bewilderment but after recovering from the shock, she was emboldened to pose a volley of queries to Varaha Deva as to how the entire Universe got dissolved, how the process of Creation was revived after each Kalpa, how 'Dharma' (Virtue) and 'Adharma' (Vice) were balanced and in which kind of extreme situations that Lord Vishnu would incarnate in various forms. Lord Varaha outlined Bhu Devi's difficult queries in a brief manner:

The Origin of Creation:

The Supernatural Power is indeed singular and eternal. Once this fundamental fact is recognised, explanations on the above queries would not be far to seek. At the commencement of Creation, the Supreme Energy created 'Pancha Bhuthas' (The Five Elements) of Air, Sky, Fire, Water and Earth; 'Ahamkara' (Ego or the Sense of Self or Personality); the Maha Tatva (The Great Element); Nature; the Collective and Individual Consciousness reflected in the 'Tri-Gunas' or Three Aspects or qualities of Behaviour viz. 'Satva' (Pure as coloured white), 'Rajas' (Passion as coloured red) and 'Tamas' (Ignorance as coloured dark) in varying permutations and combinations; the 'Atman' or 'Kshetrajna' (Soul) and 'Prakriti' or Maya (Illusion); the 'Tanmatras' or the subtle forms of Matter as produced by the interaction of the Three Gunas; the 'Pancha- Indriyas' (Sense Organs) which are created by Tanmatras viz. Eyes, Ears, Nose, Tongue and Skin; the extensions of the Five Sense Organs or the 'Jnanendriyas' (Cognitive) as perceived in the forms of Vision, Sound, Smell, Taste and Touch as also the further extensions viz. the 'Karmendriyas' or the Active Expressions of Speaking, Grasping, Moving, Eliminating and Reproducing. (Together, the Jnanendriyas constitute the Entrance Doors of the Sense Organs and the Karmendriyas constitute the Exit Doors).

Before the conception of the basic canons of Creation as described above, the Supreme Force manifested as Lord Narayan-'Nara' meaning water and 'ayan' denoting abode- who in turn created Earth. Together, Narayan and Earth produced an Egg and from the navel of the Lord, who was lying in yogic sleep, sprouted a lotus; on the top of the lotus stem appeared Lord Brahma who was asked to commence Creation. Lord Brahma could not succeed and out of anger and frustration appeared Lord Rudra who too entered water to perform penance. Brahma executed severe penance too and eventually attained the powers of Creation. He created Prajapathi from the left toe of his right foot and also created the latter's consort from the right toe of his left foot. The copulative action of Prajapati and his consort had thus paved the way of 'Srishti' in a formal manner. Swayambhu Manu who was born from the Prajapathis had thus launched the creation in a regular manner.

While Creation was initiated at the end of each Kalpa, there were more of such steps in the Process. For instance, there were five kinds of 'Avidyas' (False Knowledge) produced by Lord Narayana viz. 'Tamas' (Darkness), 'Moha' (Attachment), 'Maha Moha' (Extreme attachment), 'Tasmira' (Jealousy) and 'Andha Tasmira' (Anger). Thereafter, there was the 'Mukhya Sarga' or the principal creation of immovable objects like mountains and trees. Also, there was 'Thiryaksrota' related to animals (quadruped); the sixth creation was called 'Satvik Sarga' or of Deities with Virtuous nature; the Seventh creation was called 'Arvaaksrota Sarga' related to human beings; the Eighth creation viz. 'Anugraha Sarga' pertaining to

Sages and hermits and finally the ninth creation was of 'Kaumara Sarga' related to Eternal Adolescents like Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana, and Sanat Kumara; then emerged the Ten Manasa Putras viz. Marichi, Angira, Atri, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulasya, Pracheta, Bhrigu, Narad and Vasishtha. But, the foremost creation of Lord Rudra was as 'Artha Nareeswara'; collectively there were Eleven Rudras, viz. Maha Deva, Shiva, Maha Rudra, Shankara, Neelalohita, Esana Rudra, Vijaya Rudra, Bheema Rudra, Deva Deva, Bhavodbhava and Adityatmika Sri Rudra; their corresponding consorts are Dhee Devi, Dhriti Devi, Ushna or Rasala Devi, Uma Devi, Neeyut Devi, Sarpi Devi, Ela Devi, Ambika Devi, Iravati Devi, Sudha Devi and Deeksha Devi.

Varaha Deva describes 'Aparadhas' (Offences) to be avoided

Having narrated the causes of grief or joy to Bhudevi, Bhagavan Varaha described certain 'Aparadhas' to be avoided in one's mundane life. No doubt, symbolic eating of Bhagavan's Prasad by humans is not disapproved but offering 'Bhog' not suitable to be offered to Devas is unpardonable. In fact, offering of that kind of 'Bhojan' or food which is unfit for consumption to anybody is considered as an 'Aparadh'. Going near to a person without 'Dantadhavan' or cleaning teeth, tongue and face especially if the person is performing 'Dharmik Karma' or a Virtuous Deed is considered as second 'Aparadha'. To approach near or touch the Idol of Varaha Deva is a third Aparadha. Approaching Varaha Deva for His 'Darshan', let alone His worship, after seeing a female in the period of menses is noted as a fourth 'Aparadha'. Similarly, a person should perform 'Achanam' after seeing a dead body. Worse still, if a person touches a dead body, one should take head-bath, perform the 'Samskaras' and approach Divinity. The Seventh Aparadha is to perform ablutions during worship time and worse still not to purify the body and mind to resume the interrupted Puja with 'Kshamaapana' Mantra. Wearing a blue 'Vastra' or cloth to perform Vishnu Puja is the eighth 'Aparadha'. Telling lies during Bhagavan Puja is a ninth offence. Touching with impure hands the Puja Items meant for worship is a Tenth Aparadha. The eleventh offence is that an angry person engaged in unreasonable tasks and allowed to do so. The twelfth Aparadha is to use Vishnu's name in the Society to secure favours. The thirteenth offence is to wear a red cloth while performing Vishnu Puja. The fourteenth offence is that the puja is performed by wearing a black vastra. The fifteenth offence is that somebody touches the body of the devotee. A devotee feeding an 'Agnani'/ Unethical person by himself is the sixteenth blemish. Performing puja by wearing an uncouth cloth is a seventeenth offence. Worshipping the Deva after consuming fish and meat is considered as a grave mistake. Eating chicken meat before Deva Puja is the nineteenth fault. Touching 'Dipa' (light) and without 'Achanam' and touching Devas is the twentieth mistake. Having visited 'Smashanas' (burial ground) and seeking to touch Deva's Idol without purifying the self by bath etc. is a known blunder and constitutes a grave sin. If Bhagavan Puja is taken up, after consuming 'Pinyakam' (Pitthi), it would be construed as the twenty second offence. Worship after consuming pig meat, wine and kusumb flower are the twenty third, twenty fourth and twenty fifth offences. Whoever wears somebody else's Vastra while performing the Puja of Deva is accused of a blunder numbered twenty sixth in the series of 'Aparadhas'. Consuming the 'Anna Prasada' (food) meant for offering to Devas and Pitras before the 'Naivedya' ('Mantrapurvak'- offering) constitutes an abject blunder and is the twenty seventh in the series. Those who wear 'padarakshas' (chappals) and perform Deva's worship would have committed a grave error which is counted as the twenty eighth 'Aparadha'. Worship after massage is considered as an affront to Varaha Deva bearing number twenty ninth in the series of 'Aparadhas'. Performers of Deva Puja suffering from 'Ajeerthi' (Stomach upset) attract the thirtieth offence. Those worshippers of Vishnu Deva offering 'Dhoop' or incense would have made a mistake for the thirty first offence since that offer has a negative

effect without Gandham (Sandal Paste) and Pushpam (flowers). Finally the Door of Deva's symbolic abode ought to be opened by the resounding sounds of Bheris, conch shells and big bells; else this Aparadha too would have been perpetrated as the thirty third one!

'Sa-mantrak Vishnu Puja' (Worship to Vishnu by Mantras)

Varaha Deva explained to Bhu Devi the 'Puja Vidhan' (Procedure of Worship) of Narayana supported by relevant Mantras. After taking bath and formulating a sincere 'Sankalpa' or mental resolve to complete Vishnu Puja successfully, the 'Karta' or the Performer should turn to the East with 'Jwalajwali' (Fire initiator) and 'Kusha' grass in folded hands and state that the Creator of all virtuous beings should bless that the Narayana Puja be accomplished. Then turning to the West the Performer recites the Mantra: Om Namō Narayana repeatedly.

Also recites the Mantra: *Yatha nu Devam Prathamadi Karta Purana kalpam cha yatha vibhutih, Divi sthita chaadimananta rupah Amoghamogham Samsara Mokshanam/* (I pray at the beginning the Original Creator or Adikartha, Puranakalpa, Embodiment of Enormous Opulence, Anantha Swarupa, Unfailing Decider and Provider of Mukti). Then facing North, the Karta keeps on reciting Om Namō Narayana and states the Mantra as follows:

Yajamahe Divyaparam Purana manadi madhyanta mamanantha rupam, Bhavodbhavam Samsara mokshanam / Tatastheyinaiva Kaalenabhutva vai Dakshina-, mukhah Namah Purushottamayethyuktva imam Mantramudarahet (I worship to Divinely, Supreme, and Ageless Narayana, You have neither beginning, center, nor end; You are the Creator of the Universe as also its Destroyer; thus saying facing South, May I recite *Om Namah Purushottamaya*); The next Mantra states:*Yajamahey Yajnamahō Rupajnam Kaalam cha Kalaadikamaprameyam, Anantharupam Samsaaramokshanam, Achutey th manah krutva imam Mantramudahareth* (I pray to You, Rupajnam, Kaala Swarupa, Kaaladika, Aprameya, Yajna Swarupa, Anantha Rupa and Provider of Salvation from thee Universe).Further the Karta becomes stable and motionless and states: '*Yajamahe Soma Pathena Bhaavey Thri saptalokanatham, Jagatpradhaanam Mrityu Swarupam Samasara mokshanam / Ethesham Thrishu Sandhyasu Karma chaiva Samaacharet, Buddhimaan Mathiman bhutva yadeecheth Paramam gatim/ Yogonaam Paramo Yogo Gruhaanaam Guhyaanam Guhyamutthamam Samkhyaanaam paramam Saankhyam Karanaam Karmachotthamam/* ('You are realisable by endless and selfless devotion about the Three Worlds viz. Urdhva or the Higher World, the Madhya or the Central World and Athah or the Lower World; Also You could be perceived about the Seven Lokas viz. Bhu, Bhuvah, Swah, Mahah, Janah, Tapan and Satyah; as also the Lower Lokas viz. Atal, Vithal, Satal, talathal, Rasathal, and Patala; You are the Super Lord of the Universe, Mrityu Swarup and Mukti daata.' In case, the goal of Life is to reach 'Parama gati', the Karta has to strengthen his outlook to perform 'Tri Sandhya' or Sandhya Vandana thrice a day, acquire Jnaan, and practise Sankhya Yoga which is the best of Karmas or activities.')

'Enmarana kaalepi Guhyam Vishnu prabhaashitam, Buddhimaan Mathimaan bhutva vismaretra kadaachana/ Ya etat pathatey nityam kalyothyaya dhridhavrathah, mamaapi hridaye nithyam sthitah satva gunaavnithah/ ya thena vidhaanena Tri Sandhyam karma kaarayet, Trigyanapi samprapya mama Lokaya gacchathi/ (If a person with good mind and consciousness at the time of death remembers the totality of the gist of the above Mantras, or Whoever reads the above Mantras in the morning and performs Tri Sandhya shall be fortified with the consciousness of Paramatma and shall take firm steps towards that goal). He shall indeed attain Vishnu loka!

Vishnu Puja-‘Aparadha Prayaschyaas’ (Correctives for misdeeds)

‘Karmana Manasa Vaacha ye Paaparuchayo janaah, Aparadhagruhaasthey thu viparithaastu Sadhava / Ajnaanaacha pramadaaccha esham Praaptamayantaram, Praayasthittham dahet Savamaparadha malothitham /

(Either due to ignorance or carelessness, quite a few ‘Aparaadhaas’ (blunders) are committed in the context of Vishnu’s worship; Corrective steps be taken to burn off all the sins.) The examples of such blunders are using harsh language; wearing unclean, blue coloured and blood-mixed clothes; disrespect for Gurus and the learned; eating spoilt and inedible food; eating while in Puja, entering Temples and Sacred Places with footwear; Puja of Deities with prohibited flowers; puja in a condition of anger or lust or inebriated stage; Puja in darkness without light, etc. Puja in improper clothing could be corrected by fasts on one day, two days or three days, followed by bath and ‘Panchagavya’ (or a mix of equal measure each of cow dung, cow urine, milk, ghee or butter and curd-all cow products) and finally food. Wearing of Blue dress should be preceded by aforesaid procedure plus Paajaapathya Vrata including ‘homam’. Insulting or abusing Gurus or Men of Elders must be compensated by Chandrayana Vrata or eating fistful of food in an increasing scale from one fist on Partham day to Purnami and again from fourteen fists to Amavasya on a decreasing scale! The blunder of eating inedible food or ‘Abhaksha Bakshana’ would attract the Corrective of Chandrayana Vrata, Prajaapathya and Go Daan and ‘Annadaan’ or food to anybody after sanctifying as Prasad to any Temple God / Goddess. The sins of Puja in an inebriated condition or wearing footwear in a Temple precinct should be treated with ‘Panchagavya’. The indiscretions of performing Puja without flowers or Pushp Mala to Vishnu should be absolved by Mantroktak ‘Panchamritha’ to the Deity. ‘Surapan’ or far worse still, the performance of Vishnu Puja in an inebriated condition, the Brahmanas should execute four Chandrayana Vratas in one hundred and twenty days. The rest of the sins ranging from bad stomach with gas to romance or passion with women or worse still Stree Sangam attract light to heavy punishments as per one’s own conscience since the nature of ‘Paschattapas’ (High sense of remorse) and the ‘Aparadha Prayastischyas’ are to be determined by the norms afore mentioned as per one’s own conscience or the Guidelines laid. In any case, the hidden or unnoticed ‘Aparadhas’ must be warded off with the following steps viz. external and internal cleanliness, concentration, kirthan, recitation, shravanam (‘hearing), ‘pathanam’(reading), ‘mananam’(Retention), ‘dhyanam’(meditation) and surrender.

Famed Ashtottara Shata Vishnu Kshetras:

Ashtottara shataastaneshwaavirbhutam Jagatpatim, Naami Jagataameesham Naraayanamananya dheeh/ Narayana is as Vaasudeva in Vaikuntha, Sankarshana at Aamoda; Pradyumna at Pramoda, Aniruddha at Sammoda; Vishnu in Satyaloka; Padmaksha at Surya Mandala; Shesha shayi in Ksheera Saagara; Taaraka in Shweta Dwipa; Narayana at Badarikashrama; Avinashi Hari at Naimisharanya; Shalagrama at Harikshetra; Rahavendra Shri Ramabhadra at Ayodhya; Bala Krishna at Mathura; Madhusudana at Mayapuri; Bhogashayana at Kashi; Avanipat at Avantika; Yadavendra at Dwaraka; Gopijana Vallabha at Vraja Bhumi; Nandanandana at Brindavana; Govinda at Kaliya hrada; Bhava nashaka at Govardhana; Shouri at Gomanta Parvata; Jagatpati at Haridwaara; Veni Madhava at Prayaga; Gadadhara at Gaya; Vishnu at Ganga Sagara Sangama; Raghava at Chitrakuta; Rakshasa hanta at Nuanda grama; Vishwa rupa at Prabhasa; Achala Kurma at Shri Kurma; Purushottama at Neelachala Jagannaatha; Paana Nri-Simha at Simhachala; Gadapani at Tulasivana; Paapahara at Ghrita shaila; Simhaswarupa at Shwetachala;

Yogananda at Dharmapuri; Andhra Nayaka at Shri Kaakula; Hiranyantaka at Ahobila; Panduranga Vithala at Pandaripura; Srinivasa Balaji at Tirumala Venkatachala; Narayana at Melkote; Nrisimha at Ghatikachala; Varadaraja Kamala lochana at Kanchipura; Yathokari at Shiva Kaanchi; in Kanchi itself there are as many as eighteen Vishnu Swarupas; Vijaya Raghava at Grudhra Sarovara thata; Veeraraghava at Vikshaaranya; Tangashayi at Totadri; Gajarti nashaka at Gajasthala; Maha Bali at Balipura; Jagatpati at Bhakti saara; Maha Varaha at Shri Mushna; Padmalochana at Mahindra; Ranga natha at Sriranga; Janaki vallabha at Shridhama; Saranatha at Sara Kshetra; Harachapa bhanjaka at Khandana; Purna at Shrinivasa Sthala; Suvarna at Swarna Mandira; Maha Vishnu at Vyaghrapuri; Bhakti daata at Bhakti sthaana; Shanta Murti at Shweta hrada; Bharga at Bhargava Sthala; Madhava at Vaikuntha; Bhakta sakha at Purushottama; Sudarshana at Chakra Tirtha; Chakrapani at Kumbhakona; Sharanghadhara at Bhutapuri; Gajartihara at Kapisthala; Govinda at Chitrakuta; Anuttama at Uttama; Padmalochana at Shwetachala; Parabrahma at Parthasthala; Madhusudana at Krishna koti; Mahananda at Nandapuri, Vrishaashraya at Vriddhapuri; Asanga at Sangamagrama; Shri Sharana at Sharanya; Jagatpati Gopala at Dakshina Dwaraka; Maha Simha at Simha Kshetra; Mallari at Manimandapa; Nibidakara at Nibida; Jagadishwara at Dhanushkoti; Kalamegha at Mouhura; Sundara at Madurai; Parama Swami at Vrishabhachala; Shri Natha at Varagna; Ramapriya at Kuruka; Goshthipati at Goshthipura; Darbha shayi at Darbha shayana; Shouri at Dhanvi Mangala; Baladhya at Bhramara sthala; Purna at Kurangapura; Srikrishna at Vata sthala; Achyuta at Kshudra Nati pranta and Padmanabha at Anantapura. It is firmly believed that among the above Kshetras, Bhagavan's Vighras were self generated at Eight Places viz. Sriranga, Srimusha, Venkatashala, Shalagrama of Hari Kshetra, Naimisha, Thotadri, Pushkara and Badarikashrama.

Divya Vihnu Kshetras

Ashtottara shata sthaanepyaavirbhutam jagatpatim, Namaami Jagataameesham Narayanamanayadhih/ (May I prostrate before the most hallowed Places of worship with intense concentration and dedication to Jagatpati Narayana!)

The details of the 108 Maha Punya Kshetras as forty in Chola desha, eighteen in Pandyaadesha, thirteen in Kerala, two on Madhya desha, Tundeera mandala or Kanchi Pradesha as many as 22, Uttara Desha eleven and additionally Vaikuntha and Khseera Sagara. But this count by Alwars are far more in Bharat . Thus retaining what the Alwars had counted , additional Vishnu Kshetras are given as follows:

1) Shri Rangam at Tiruchinaapalli as dakshinaabhi mukha Shri Ranga -natha shaayi and Shri Ranga Lakshmi on the banks of Kaveri River along with Chandra Pushkarini and Punnaga Tree in the premises of the Temple. Shri Rangam Temple is perhaps unique in terms of its largest and most sprawling area in Bharat. Situated right on River Kaveri as an island, its length is approx. 16 miles and width some three miles. The actual Temple has seven 'prakaaraas' or boundary wall constructions, eighteen big or small 'Gopuras' and a middle street and four sub streets with houses reserved for pandaas or priests , brahmanas and others. Inside the fourth circle, there is a very big 'Mandapa' or a raised platform with a 'Sahasra Stambha' or a thousand pillars-actually 960- on which are figures of horses and 'Muthis' as horsemen. In the fifth enclosure on the southern side there are two gopuras and on the northern gopura there is a beautiful Garuda mandapa with a sizeable Garuda Murti. There is a circular shaped Sarovara named Chandra pushkarini where devotees take bath regularly. Near to the Pushkarini is situated a tree named Kalpa Vriksha, and old idols of Lord Shri Rama and Vaikunthanatha. There behind is the famed Shri

Ranga Nayaki Lakshmi Temple, opposite which is Kamba Mandapa, where in the olden times, Poet Kamba himself used to recite the Glorious Kamba Ramayana. In the sixth enclosure there is a western gate leading to the seventh enclosure and to its north is the Shri Ranga Nayaka's own temple. Behind this Mandir are kept under a shaded low ceiling a number of Deva Murti Idols. Yet another such shaded ceiling there are the Idols of Acharya Ramanuja, Vibhishana and Anjaneya vigrahas. From there itself Shri Ranga Mandira Shikhara could be seen. In fact there are stairs leading to the Shikhara and there atop, one could witness the Idol of Vaasudeva. Shri Ranga Nayaka in his Mandir is witnessed lying as 'shesha saayi' as the latter spreads out five of his hoods as the umbrella to the Lord. Near at the feet of Ranga Nayaka are the Devi Ranga Nayaki and Vibhishana as seated. There besides, the Vigrahas of Sri Devi and Bhu Devi as the Utsava Vigrahas or Idols meant for Parikrama are placed too. Significantly enough, the southern side of the Main Mandir flows River Kaveri's principal flow and all the flows are reachable by well laid straired steps. From the Shukla Pratipada Tithi till Ekaadashi of every Pousha month there are splendid celebrations with special pujas and allied activities as climaxed with Vaikuntha Ekaadashi. The background of this world renowned Sri Ranga Temple was that Lord Brahma himself presented the most hallowed Vigrahas of Sriranga Nayaka and Nayaki to King Ikshvaaku the son of Vaivaswata Manu pursuant to an extreme Tapasya; originally, Shri Ranga Nayaka /Nayaki Vigrahas were installed at Ayodhya and that Mandir became the most sacred descendant Kula Vigrahas for generations. In Treta Yuga, Cholaraja Dharma Varma was invited once by Emperor Dasharatha to Ashwamedha Yagjna and being greatly impressed by the Sri Ranga Nayaka returned to his Kingdom to perform severe Tapasya; a gathering of Maharshis approached the Chola King and sensitised him that Sri Ranga Nath was himself coming down to his Capital. Meanwhile, Lord Shri Rama killed Ravanaasura at Lanka and returned to Ayodhya in connection with Rama Rajyaabhsheka Celebrations. As Lord Rama distributed send off gifts, King Vibhishana desired to receive the gift of Sri Ranga Nayaka Nayakis. As Vibhishana was returning to Lanka, several Devas strongly felt that the just ravaged Lanka after the Battle was not suitable for the insallation of the Vigrahas and selected the island of Kaveri river; Vibhishana was no doubt disappointed that he could no longer perform the daily worship but Devas suggested that he could visit the selected spot daily for the worship; more so the King Dharma Varma conceded to grant the gift of Dasaratha that Sri Ranga Nayaka be shifted to the ideal Kaveri Island. Vibhishana reconciled to the proposal that he might visit Sri Ranga as so shifted to Kaveri; during one of his chariot rides to the New Temple from Lanka, Vibhishana's chariot hit a Brahmana and as the latter died, the co- Brahmanas caught hold of Vibhishana and were about to kill him while the latter prayed to Lord Sri Rama as the Lord granted long life till the end of the present Kalpa even as his mortal body would disappear so that his immortal self could serve the Lord's another Swarupa as Sri Ranga Nayaka till the Kalpaanta! Hence his presence along with Sri Raga Nayaki as a shasha sayi at ri Ranga Mandir! But Devarshi Narada at once gave the news to one and all in Ayodhya and Lord Rama appeared before the Brahmana in distress facing death and assured that a blunder made by Vibhishana was of Rama's too. As such, the deceased Brahmana got immortalised as an Alwar and till date there is a Shankara Guru kula and Vani Vilas Mudranaalaya at Sri Ranga! 2) Koliyur-Nichulaapuri or Vorayyur near Trishirahpalli where Sundarraja and Vaasa Lakshmi wed in the presence of 33 crore Devas on the banks of a rivulets of Kunmurutti and Kalyana Tirtha 3)Tiruvellaarai or Shvetagiri 10 miles north of Shriranga is the divine temple of Pundarikaaksha with his wives Pankajavalli and Champakavalli Lakshmi Swarupas; this is also the hallowed birth place of Padmaksha or Uyyakkondaar and Vishnuchitta or Aaingallvar. Shri Vishnuchitta and Shriparakaala performed the Mangala Shasana or consecration to this Kshetra.4) Anbil or Dhanvinahpura near Trichy and Lalgudi where one could vision Nambi Sundarraja and Allkiyavalli or Sundaravalli as Shesha shaayi; it is stated

that Lord Brahma and Maharshi Valmiki had visioned the Vishnu Swarupas. Alvar Bhaktisaara did Mangala Shashana to this Place. 5) Tirupper nagara or Koviladi, Shriramanagar is situated some ten miles from Tanjor where Appakuduttaan Raghunatha and Devi Lakshmi are visioned. This place is on River Kaveri and IndraTirtha where Maharshis Upamanu and Parashara visited and Alvars Bhakti Sagara, Shathagopa, Vishnu chitta and Parakaala did the Mangala Shasana. 6) Kadambanore Uttamara koil north to Sriranga and Anbil is the Temple of Sri Purushottama and Puva Devi Lakshmi as sesha saayi and this hallowed Tirta was visited by Sanaka-Sanandana-Sanaatana-Sanat kumaras and Alwar Sriparakala did mangala shasana or sanctification.7) Tanjaimaamani koel or Sharanya nagar near Tanjavur comprising three Temples viz. Shri Neela Megha Bhagavan and Sainkamala Valli or Red Lotus Devi Lakshmi as consecrated / Mangala shasana by Alvars Bhutayoi and Sri Parakala; Nrisimha and Tanjai nayaki Lakshmi visioned by Markandeya Maharshi and the third Temple of Manikuntapper/ Manikundala Perumal and Ambujavalli Lakshmi Devi 8) Tirukkandiyur or Khanda Nagar is some four miles from Tanjaimani kovil with Bhagavan Hara shaapa vimochana Vishnu and Kamala valli Lakshmi depicting Shiva slicing off Lord Brahma's fifth head on his hand and Vishnu pardoning Shiva; this temple was stated to have visited by Agastya Muni and Alvar Sriparakala consecrated the Temple. 9) Cuddalore or Sangama Pura is about a mile from Tiruvaiyaaru on the kaveri river banks again where Vaiyagam or Jagadraksha seated along with Padmasana Valli; this was visited by Maha Muni Nandaka and revived and consecrated by Alvar Parakaala 10) Kapilasthalam is four miles away from Cuddalore with the Temple of Gajendra Varada Bhagavan with Ramamani Poktaamara Lakshmi as shesha saayi on the banks of Kaveri and is also called Champakaranya; this sacred Tirtha was famed as both Gagendra and Kapisthala as was visioned by King Gajendra and Bhakta Hanuman; it was consecrated by Alvar Sant Bhakti Sagara. In fact, Alvar Bhaktaanghirenuka was born at Tirumandi-kkudi some four miles away from Kapilasthalam.11) Pullabhudungudi is another sacred Place very near to Tirumandikkudi where Vallinvalli Rama or Rama with very strong bow and arrows along with Pottamaraiyal / Lotus Lakshmi visioned as sesha saayi or in lying condition. This is the Griddhra Tirtha too where the huge Kite who prevented Ravana'sura to abduct Devi Sita but could not despite the best efforts of the bird and got blessed by Rama to attain salvation. Alvar Sant Shriparakala had done the consecration of this Temple. 12) Aadanur (Gopuri) is hardly a mile away from Pullabhudungudi where devotees witness Aandalakkamaayan or Bhaktaananda Murti Raghunadha along with Devi Ranganaayaki Lakshmi even as Bhagavan was in lying position. This Kshetra is also famed as Surya Pushkarini. Alvar Parakala is stated to have visioned 'Kaama Dhenu' or the Celestial Cow fulfilling desires of all visitors.13) Tirukkundai or Kumbakonam is away by five miles from Aadanur where Aaravamuda Perumal Sharangapaani Bagavan is in a lying posture with Komalavalli Lakshmi nearby. River Kaveri and Hema pushkarini are nearby and Hema Maharshi was stated to have the Perumal actually visioned the Sharangapani Perumal himself. The illustrious Alvars Bhutayogi, Maha Yogi, Bhaktisaar, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Parakaala did the consecration of the Great Temple. Sant Bhaktisaar passed away at this very hallowed Place.14)Tiruvishnugaram or Akasha Nagar is about four miles away from Kubhakonam where Uppiliappan or the Lord Vishnu of Salt features and Bhumi Lakshmi are popular in standing postion. This place is also blessed with Arti Pushkarini (Ahoratra or Day and night). GarudaDeva, Maharshi Markandeya, Kaveri and Dharma were stated to have visited this Temple and Alvars Maha Yogi, Shathagopa and Shri Parakaala had performed the consecration. Interestingly, Uppiliappan receives the 'naivedya' of saltless food only. This place is also Tulasi van. Alvar Shathagopan performed sanctification of the this Uppili Appan Temple. 15) Tirunaaraiyur or Sugandhagiri Temple stands six miles south east of Kumbhakona where Lord Nambi and Nambikkai or Purna and Purni are the deities of

Maha Vishnu and Devi Lakshmi and the Temple is situated on the banks of Mani Mukta River. Alwar Sant Shri Parakaala sanctified the Temple along with hundred cows. Interestingly, this Temple of Nambi-Nambakkai is famed for the killing of an Asura who had forcibly taken away the daughter of Muni Medhavi and restored her back to the Sage. Another episode of this Temple related to a Rakshasa who stole the 'Vairamudi' or Pearl headgear of the Lord but Garuda Deva confronted the Rakshasa and in the scuffle, the 'Manimukta kireeta' fell down in a waterbody which became popular as Mani mukta River. Till date, on significant festival days of the Temple, the Kireeta is taken in a procession, but each time the 'Vairamudi' is weighed, it weighs very differently. There is a Garuda Idol worshipped in the Temple. Incidentally, this hallowed temple is more popular as the Nacchiyar Koel or the Lakshmi Devi's Temple even more than the Nambiar's Temple! Alwar Parakala was unable to sanctify this Temple as he did to many others and interestingly enough he got absorbed on his end as with the Nayika bhaava or with the unique mindedness of the Devi herself! 16) Tiruccherai also called Saarakshetra is just three miles way from Sugandhagiri Temple and Saaranatha Bhagavan along with Saara Lakshmi is worshipped as in erect position of standing; Devi Kaveri as the River worships the Main Deities at the time of Tula Sankranti in the month of Kartika stated to praise Saara Lakshmi as of far greater Mahatmya than that of Ganga Devi! Alwar Sant Shri Parakaala performed Mangala shasana here! 17) Nandapuri Vishnugaram is also situated three miles south of Kumbhakonam. At this sacred place are Vishnugar, Jaganaatha, Nathanatha accompanied by Champakavalli Lakshmi where there is Nandi Titrha too. It is stated that the illustrious Shibi Chakravarthi visited this hallowed place and had the 'saakshat- kaara' or actual vision of Maha Vishnu[Sibi was tested by Agni and Indra assuming the forms of a pigeon chasing a kite and when prevented by Sibi, the kite demanded the pigeon as its food but the pigeon demanded safety of its very life. Finally, the King measured an equivalent flesh from his thigh as of the pigeon's meat and settled the noble principles of Dharma and Nyaya-Virtue and Justice and became the most ideal King ever!] Similarly Nandi Deva too was blessed by Nathanadha and immortalised the title of Nandapuri Vishnu! Alwar Sriparakala consecrated the Kshetra. 18) Tiruvelliyankudi or Bhargavapuri is a Place of Divinity again 5 miles from Kumbakonam where the devotees see for themselves the Kolabilli Raman or Vichitra Kodanda Raman accompanied by MarakataValli Lakshmi as the Lord is in 'shesha shayana' posture. This temple is also blessed with Shukra Pushkarini the Brahma Tirtha, as visioned by Brahma, Indra, Sukra and Maharshi Parashar too. Alwar Sri Parakaala performed Mangal Shaasana at this place of high virtue. Maharshi Shukracharya overcame his blindness as was caused by Lord Vamana the 'Avatara' or incarnation of Maha Vishnu as he stopped the flow of water from the vessel of King Bali while the latter sought to pour the water from the Vamana's vessel as donating the three lokas in charity and created an obstruction in the nozzle of the Daana Paatra or the charity vessel. 19) Teraullundur or Rathapaata Sthala some three miles off Kutralam Railway Station is blessed with the temple of Aamarudhi Appan Devadhi Deva along with Devi Senkamalavalli or Aruna Kamala valli Lakshmi in standing position. Dharma, Uparichara Vasu and Kaveri had the divine vision of the Deva-Devis and Alwar Parakala performed the Mangala Shasana of the Temple. The background of this Appan and Kamala valli temple is recalled as once there was an argument between the Vasu Devata and Maharshis in regard to a point of dissent in the context of performing yagnas and in the argument, the chariot of the Vasu fell down from the sky to earth due to the curse of the Maharshis! It is also stated that Dravida Poet who scripted Ramayana viz. Kamba was born at this very place. 20) Tiruvindalur or Indrapur which is three miles near Mayavaram Junction has the divine temple of Sugandha Vananatha, Maruviniya Mandan Bhagavan along with Chandra shaapa vimochanavalli or Pundarikavalli Lakshmi in 'veera shayana' posture. This Temple has sacred water body viz. Indu Pushkarini, besides the presence of Kaveri River. Chandra Deva prayed to Vishnu to get rid of

the curse of his father in law Kashyapa Maharshi as the latter received the complaint of his daughters viz. the thirty one Naksharas that Chandra was in excessive love for Tara the wife of Devaguru Brihaspati in complete neglect of the wives. Alwar Parakala consecrated this holy temple. 21) Shirupuliyur or Vyaghrapura near Parelam Railway Junction at Kollumaagkadi where Arulmakadal or Karuna Samudra Bhagavan is stationed in the holy Temple along with Tirumaa magal Devi or Samudra Kanya Lakshmi in 'sesha shayya' posture near Ananta Sarovara or Manasa Pushkarini. Both Veda Vyas and Vyaghrapaada had the celestial vision at this place while Alwar Shriparakala sanctified the Temple. 22) Tirukkanna - puram or ShriKrishnapur, Kanvapura is on way from Peralam to Tiruvaayur at Nannilam is the hallowed Temple of Shouriraja Bhagavan and Kannapura/ Krishna pura Nayaki Lakshmi in standing position where there is Nityapushkarini as visioned by Kanva Maharshi. Alwars Shathakopa, Kulashakara, Vishnuchitta and Parakaal had together sanctified this Temple. There is a scar on the face of the Shouriraja Bhagavan as the Chola King Kumikantha out of vengeance took to a spree of converting Vishnu Temples destroyed replacing with Shiva Mandiras and a singer at this Kannapura Temple sang very emotional songs meaning as to why Shouriraja tolerated this betrayal of Vishnu Devotees and threw the cymbal at the Bhagavan's idol and even now that scar on the Idol's face continues even as the King was punished for his misdeeds! 23) Tiru Krishnamangai or Krishna Mangalapur near Tiruvaayur is the sacred Temple of Bhaktavatsala Bhagavan along with Abhisheka Valli Lakshmi. Varuna Deva and Lomesha Maharshi had 'saakshaatkara' of the Bhagavan. Local devotees have firm belief that several Devas do personally worship the Idols in view of certain evidences noticed by them. Sri Parakaal Alwar had concecrated the idols in the past. 24) Tirukkannank- gudi (Krishna Kutu) on Tiruvayur-Kouvilore line is situated the holy Temple of Shyamalamenipperumal Bhagavan and Aravindavalli Lakshmi as also Ravana Pushkarini. Maharshis Bhrigu and Gautama visioned the Vishnu- Lakshmi Swarupas and Alwar Sriparakal consecrated the Temple. 25) Tirunaagai or Nagapattinam is famed for the Koil of Soundraya Raja Perumal and Soundaryavalli Lakshmi in standing position where Saara Pushkarini is the famed waterbody. This was the very Temple where Alwar Sriparakaala had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the Lord. Incidentally, there is the Sundara Raja Perumal Koil in Madurai too as the Lord is seated on a throne with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi as also a Madhuvalli Lakshmi sub temple seperately. 26) Kaalisseerama Vishnugaram or Trivikramapur near Shiyali Railway Station is blessed with the Temple of Trivikrama Murti Bhagavan along with Amritavalli Lakshmi are in standing posture where Chakra Tirtha and Shankha Pushkarini too are ever flowing. Shri Ragavenrda Swami spent his last days of life here. It is locally believed that Maharshi Ashtavakra had the 'saakshatkara' at this holy temple. Incidentally, Ulaganadha Perumal Koil in Kanchipura with Vamana Deva with foot up hitting the high ceiling as acoompanied with Devi Amudavalli Lakshmi is a famed Vaishnava Temple, besides of course the famous Varadaraja Swami Koil. 27) Tiruvaali Tiru nagari or Parirambhapura near Shiyali again is known well as the koil of Sundara baahu Bhagavan and Amritavalli Lakshmi where two pushkarinis viz. Ilaakshani and Ahladini. This was the temple where Prajapati had the 'saakshatkara' of the Vishnu- Lakshmi Swarupas and so did Alwar Parakaala who also sanctified the Temple. 28) Manimand Koil or Tirunaagur-Nagpuri Koil is near Vaideshwaram Koil has the sacred Nara-Narayan Bhagavan and Pundarikavalli Lakshmi as seated in a pranava viman. This temple is blessed with Indra Pushkarini and Rudra Pushkarini. Both Devendra and Ekadasha Rudras had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the Lord and Alwar Parakala performed the consecration of the deities. 29) Vaikuntha Vishnugaram or Vaikunthapura is Tirunaagur with Shri Vaikunthanaath Pundarikaaksha and Devi Vaikunthavalli Lakshmi as seated in the Ananta vardhana vimana; both Lakshmi Pushkarini and Uttanka Pushkarini are well known here as Uttanka Muni and Upachara Vasu had the 'saakshatkaara' of the Deities and Alwar Sriparakaala performed the temple's

‘mangala shaasana’ or sanctification. 30) Arimeya Vishnugaram or Nabhapur is situated in Tirunaagar itself where the temple of Kunjamaagkutta Perumal or the Dancer on Clouds and Devi Arunakamala Valli Lakshmi are seated on Uttunga Vimana. This temple has two Tirthas viz. Koti Tirtha and Amuda or Amrita Tirtha. Uttanga Muni visioned the Deities and Sriparakaala had performed the ‘Mangala Shashana’. 31) Vishnupurushottamam or Purushottama Temple is again situated in Tirunaagar itself with Purushottama and Devi Nayaki and this hallowed Mandir has the flow of Ksheeragandhi Pushkarini while Upamanyu Muni visited and had the ‘saakshatkaara’ and Alwar Sri Parakala consecrated the Temple and the Idols. 32) Semponseya Koil or Swarna Mandira too is in Tirunaagar with Swarnaranga natha and Allimaamlar Lakshmi in standing posture as Kanaka Tirtha and Nitya Pushkarini flow and Rudra deva visioned and Alwar Sri Parakaala had sanctified. 33) Tiruttendri-yambalam or Lakshmi Ranga natha in Tirunaagara has two principal deities viz. Senkanamamaal or Arunaakhsa Bhagavan and Senkamala valli or Aruna kamala valli Lakshmi in ‘shayana’ posture; this Kshetra has Surya Pushkarini while Shesha Deva visioned and Sriparakaala had sanctified the Mandir. 34) Tirumanikkudam or Manikuta is near by Tirunaagar with the temple of Manikutaka naayaka and Devi Tirumakal Lakshmi with Chandra Pushkarini while Garuda Deva had ‘saakshaatkaara’ and Sri Parakaala Alwar had sanctified. 35) Near by the Tirumanikkudam is the temple of Tirukkaavalampaadi or Talavan with Gopala Krishna Bhagavan and Devis Rukmini and Satyabhama as visioned by Vishvaksena, Mitra and Rudra Devas as the Alwar performed the mangala shasana, while Padma Pushkarini flows near by. 36) Tiruddevanaar Tokai or Keelaicchhaalai Deva nagar near Tirunaagar with the idols of Deva naayak and Kadalamakal or Samudra Kanya Lakshmi along with Shobhana Pushkarini while Maharshi Vasishtha had the ‘saakshaatkara’ or direct darshan. 37) Tiruvellakulam or Swetahrada near Thiru Devanaar is the Koil of Bhagavan Krishna Narayana along with Devi Purvartirumkala Lakshmi as the Sweta Pushkarini flows and Ikshvaaku vamshiya Svetaraja visioned the Deities. 38) Parthanpalli or Partha sthala also around Tirunaagar is blessed with the presence of Taamirai natha or Padmanatha accompanied by Taamirai nayaki or Padma nayaki in standing posture. Shankha Pushkarini flows here. Varuna Deva, Ekadasha Rudras and Partha Arjuna were fortunate to have their actual vision of the deities and as stated at most of the temples, Alwar Sriparakaala performed the mangala shasana here too. 39) Talaicchanka- naamnamadiyam / Talaicchenkaadu or Shankhapur is hardly three miles away from Parthanapalli where there is a Temple of Naamandiyapperumal Velasudapperumal or Bhagavan Chandra paapa vimochana Chandrakanta along with Devi Tallechanga Nachiyar - Senkhamala Valli or Aruna Kamala Valli blesses the devotees in the standing position. Chandra Deva and Devas had the ‘saakshaatkaara’ of the Deities in celebration of the annulment of curse to Chandra. Bhruyu Yogi Alwar, besides Parakala Alwar had danctified the Temple. 40) Tillai Tiruchitrakutam near Chidambaram-the city otherwise popular for the Akasha Linga as Nata Raja- is also the sacred temple of Govinda Raja Bhagavan and Devi Pundarika Valli in shayana or lying position. There is a Pundarika Sarovara too at this Temple. Maha Deva and 3000 dikshitaas besides Kanva Maharshi had ‘saakshaatkaara’ of the Deities in the Temple. Alwars Kulashekhara besides Parakaala had performed ‘mangalaashasana’. 40) Tirukkunadal or Madurai hosts Sundara Raja Perumal accompanied by Vakulavalli, Marakata valli, Varaguna valli, and Madhuravalli Lakshmis too seated comfortably. ChakraTirtha and Hema Pushkarini are the two water bodies. Maharshis Bhriyu and Shounaka had their ‘saakshatkara’ At this hallowed Temple. Alwar Vishnuchitta and Sant Parakaala performed ‘mangalaashasana’ at this Temple. 41) Tirumohur or Maahur is some seven miles away from Madurai is the temple of Kala Megha Deva and Mohurvalli or Meghavalli Lakshmi in standing position. At this Temple there is a Ksheeraabhdhi Pushkarini. Rudra, Brahma, Indra and several Devas were all blessed with Megha Deva Vishnu and Meghavalli Lakshmi with their celestial darshan. This was the Place

where Vishnu turned into the form of Mohini and distributed Amrit to Devas and subsequently assumed the swarupa of Kaala Megha, as prayed by the Devatas. Alvars Shathagopa and Parakaala did mangalaashasana at this temple. 42) Tirumaaliramcholai or Vrishabhadri is some 12 miles from Madurai being the famous *Alagar Koil*. References to this Mandir are made in a number of Puranas including Varaha Purana, Vamana Purana, Brahmada Purana and Agni Purana! Yama Dharma Raja performed Tapasya to Maha Vishnu by assuming the form of a Vrishabha or a bull and secured his Darshan and thus this Mountain is known as Vrishabhaadri. When in his ecstasy as Maha Vishnu appeared before Yama, the latter danced and from the 'nripura maala' or a string of trinket bells tied around his feet fell out a bell that materialised a water spring called Nripu Ganga, stated to be a wash out of sins by taking bath in it. One needs to purify by the body bath and enter the Temple of Bhagavan Alagar and the original installation of Sundara Raja Narayana / Kalagar along with Sridevi and Bhudevis on either side was performed by Yama Dharma Raja himself. None knows as to when the construction of the Temple was made but the belief is that Shri Poigai Alwar, Bhutattalwar and Payalvar are traced back to have venerated the Idols even during Dwapara Yuga times as given in Vaishnava Scriptures. Even Pandavas along with Draupadi Devi visited the Temple and stayed in the cave of the Mountain worshipping Alagar Bhagavan and till date there is a Pandava Shayya or the bed rocks in the cave during their 'Agjnata Vaasa' or Living In-cognito following their agreement with Kauravas as they lost the bet in a dice game. The daily abhisheka of the Main Deity continues to be performed by the Nripura Sarovara water only since any other type tends to discolour the Deity. Karuppu Swami is venerated with daily pujas as he is the guardian of the entire establishment at the Temple. A grand festival is celebrated now for five days on Chaitra Shukla Chaturdashi as Bhagavan Sunderraja on the Purnima day commences his Yatra from Madurai reaching Nanduiyur after crossing Vegavati River, rest overnights there, reach Tenur, Ramaraya Mandapa, Mysore Raja Mandapa and return to Vrishabhadri on the fifth day. Another such festival for five days is also organised from Ashadha Shukla Purnima. 43) Srivilliputtur: Famed for Ranganannar Mandir, this Place is some 16 km from Viruddhunagar the birthplace of Perialwar Vishnuchitta Swami, whose daughter Andal or Godamba, stated to be of Devi Lakshmi's Manifestation. This hallowed Place is the abode of Ranganatha / Ranga Mannar as affectionately popular. The Ranganatha Mandir is known for wall paintings depicting Bhagavat Leelas and Incidents of Maha Bharata. At the Sanctum of the Temple are the Idols of Ranganatha and Godamba. At this Temple itself is situated another Mandir underneath which is the Murti of Bhagavan Nrisimha and on the upper level is Seshashayi Vishnu with Devi Lakshmi at his feet, besides Vatapatrasaayi Murti in the company of Garuda Deva and of Maharhis like Durvasa. Nearby the Ranganannar Temple is a Sarovar where Andal Devi used to bathe. Some distance away is Shiva Linga Vishwanatha and a separate Parvati Mandir, where Shiva Ratri Festival is observed. Further to the Shiva Temple is situated a Lord Venkateshwara Mandir with Sridevi and Bhudevis. *Shankarnarayana Koil* is a unique presentation of Shankara and Narayana as half body parts as in the concept of Arthanareeshvara of Shiva- Parvati; interestingly the Hari-Hara Deva Idol is installed in between the two separate Murtis of Shankara and Narayana! 44) Tirukoshthiyuror Goshti pura : Some 10km from Tirupattur on Trichy-Shiva Ganga highway, 50 km from Shiva Ganga and hardly 15-16 km from Karaikudi is Tirukoshtham where Tri Murtis conferred each other as to how to exterminate Hiranyakashipu and was also the birthplace of Nambi Andar the Preceptor of Ramanuja Acharya. More so, this hots the famed Tirukoshtyur Temple where Lord Perumal is worshipped in a four tier structure in distinct postures as Bhagavan Ktishna in dance form, Soumya Narayana as in shayana / reclining posture, Adheeshta Narayana and the final one as Paramapada natha. It was at the top tier that Ramanujacharya was administered the Ashtakshari Mantra *Namo Narayanaya namah* by his Guru Nambi Adar in the

presence of Swami Narasimha. To learn this mantra, Ramaujacharya is stated to have visited 17 times from Srirangam but the Guru declined to meet him each time; as and when he knocked at the Guru's door, he introduced himself as 'Ramanuja has arrived' but there was no response and finally on the 18th time he announced saying ' your beloved Ramanuja has arrived and the Guru opened the door. The legend is recalled that having conferred like wise at Ahobilam another famed Vaishnava Sthala for planning the termination of Hiranyaaksha by Vishnu's 'Varahavataara' in the past, this would be another 'Goshti' or serious discussion since Hiranyakshpu achieved the boon of non execution of a species of neither a man nor animal and not even a Deva. At the Goshti finally it was decided that the Asura could be killed by a special species viz. Nara + Simha or Narasimha! Hence the solution arrived was that Hiranyakashipu could be killed despite the boon received by the demon. The festivals observed at the Temple are Chitrai Tiruvila (April-May), Maasi Magham (Feb-March) and Adipooram (July-Aug) each for 10 days. Alwars Bhutayogi, Maha Yogi, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Parakala had all performed mangala shasana to this very sacred Tirtha. Satyagiri is on way from Trichinapalli-Manadurai Railway Line where Satyagirinath Bhagavan and Uyyavadaal Lakshmi. This Place has Satyagiri, Satya Tirtha, and Kadamba Pushkarini. Satya Devata was stated to have had his celestial darshan here.46) Tiruppullaani or Darbha shayana: The next Railway Station from Rameshwaram is Ramanatha puram where Darbha Shayana Mandir is distinct and popular as Kalyana Jagannatha Devassilaiyar Bhagavan and Devi Kalyana Valli / Devasmilai Lakshmi are presented in standing posture. Before launching the program of Ravana Samhara, Samudra Setu bandhana was the very first step and thus the worship to Samudra Deva was performed. As Sumudra Deva did not initially respond even as Rama requested the Samudra Deva by spreading a bed of Darbha grass, Rama lied on the bed conveying his protest. Finally he had to threat the Samudradeva that he would destroy the Seas as Samudra appeared and apologised to Rama and as a result, the high tides subsided and the Sea waters lost their pounding speed and roar. Hence the fame of the Darbha shayana Kshetra and the importance of the Mandir with the big Idol of Kodanda Rama with his Dhanush! This Place too is worthy of snaanam, dana and puja especially in Hema Tirtha and Shukra Tirtha besides an Ashwattha Vriksha. Tiruppulani is also situated where Rama inclined as a 'Darbhasayi' (lying on a Darbha mat) soliciting Varuna Deva to facilitate smooth cross-over of the Sea to reach Lanka; Shrines of 'Nava Grahas' whom Rama prayed to remove obstacles during the ensuing Rama-Ravana battle. Maharshi Darbharani had his celestial vision of Rama as darbha shaayi. *Devipattana* also away some 12 miles where barren women are blessed with progeny as also Jagannadha Shrine where Ravana's brother Vibhishana surrendered to Rama and was made the King of Lanka later on. Skanda Purana refers to this Place as that for hiding the remaining followers of Mahishasura killed by Durga Devi, as they drank the waters of Dharma Pushkarini where Rama performed puja to Nava Grahas but Shri Rama pulled them out and destroyed them at Chakra Tirtha since Sudarshana pulled the Asuras out and terminated. Devi pattana is also called Nava Pashayana a Stone Pillar signifying Nava Grahas.47) Tiruttamkaalore or Shitodyaana pura in near Shivakaashi where stands a 'divya kshetra' where Appan, Tanakaalappan and Anna nayaki and Ananta nayaki are visualised in standing position. It is stated that Pandya King Shalya had the divya darshan of the Appan and Nayaki and so did Shri Vallabha and Vyaghra Rishis while Alwars Bhuta Yogi and Parkala had sanctified the Divya Vigrahas and the Temple. 48) Sirippillur at is Railway station on Viruddh nagar and Tenkashi Raiway line is famed for its Periyalvaar or Vishnuchitta Swami's birth as also that of his illustrious daughter ANDAAL or GODAMBA, considered as the incarnation of Sri Lakshmi herself. This hallowed Place has the Temple of Sri Ranga Nath or Ranga Mannar and Godamba as of Lakshmi form. The Main Deities are in shayana posture being under a Vata Vriksha with Garuda Deva in service. The Temple premises has Tirumukkula Tirtha and Alwar Vishnuchitta had performed

Magala shasana.49) Sri Varamangai/ Totadri- Nanganeri: From Tirunelveli to about 20 miles is the sacred Temple of Vanamalai Perumal (Devanayaka Totadri) and Devi Varangmai Lakshmi as they are seated in 'padmaashana'. This extra –ordinary Vaishnava Kshetra of Dakshina Bharata is near to the heart of Shri Ramanujacharya and one of the Moola Peethas of his whose Upa danda, Kaashthasana or the Seat on which he sat, theshankha chakra mudras as always cherished by him are still preserved. Besides the principal deities, also present are Sri Devi, Bhu Devi, Neela Devi, Vishvaksena, Garuda, Chamara graahini, and Chandra-Suryas. It is stated that Brahma Deva, Devendra, and Maharshis Bhrigu, Lomesha and Markandeya achieved their divine vision and Alwar Shathagopan did mangala snaana. According to Kshetra Mahatmya, the Vanamala Perumal was dug up deep from Earth, and from his body there were some dig pits or cracks felt on the body of the Idol and that is why there is a 'taila snaana' or oil bath of the idol daily! Half of the oils used for the 'tailabhishkas' are deposited in the Pushkarini which is taken by the devotees for curing incurable skin and indigestion / wind diseases since the waters of Pushkarini possess herbal values from the 'abhishekas'. *This is the center of Totaadri matha.* The charana padukas or the foot wear of the Totadri Perumal are considered as Vishnu Chitta Alwar himself.

- 50) Tirukkurinkudi or Kurunga nagar: From Totadri/ Vaanmaamalai to some 8 miles south-west is Kurung nagar where Bhagavan Tiruppalkadala Nambi along with Kurukkungudivalli Lakshmi; this Bhagavan is also known as Vaishnava Nambi, Malai Mela Nambi, Ninnar Nambi, Iduna Nambi, Tiruppalkadala Nambi. Parama Shankara himself had the divya darshan of the Bhagavan, while Alvars Bhaktisaara, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Sriparakaal had performed 'mangala shaasana' / sanctification.
- 51) Tirukkurukur or Alwar-Tirunagari-Shrinagari: In between Tirunelveli and Tiruchendur is the Temple of Adi Nath Perumal and Adi Nayaki in standing posture. At this Place flows Tamra River as also Brahma Tirtha. Brahma, Alwar Sathagopa and the famed poet Madhura Kavi are stated to have divya darshana of the Perumal. The legendary background of this place is described as Bagavan Adi Nath directed Lord Brahma to perform Tapasya – *Hey Ka, Kuru!* Or Brahma Deva! Do perform Tapasya or intense meditation at this Sacred Place! Incidentally, this is the Mukti Place of Alwar Sant Shathagopa!
- 52) Tulaivillimangalam or Dhanvi Mangala: Two sacred Temples are situated at Alwar Tirunagari viz. Devanath Bhagavan and Devi Karundkingya Lakshmi as also Aravinda Lochana and Kumudakshivalli Lakshmi. The River Tamraparni and Varuna Tirtha are near these twin Temples. Indra, Vayu and Varuna Devas had the benefit of divine vision of these deities. Alwar Shathakopa had concecrated these temples.
- 53) Shri Vaikuntham has the hallowed temple of Kallippiraan Vaikuntha natha Bhagavan and Vaikunthar valli Lakshmi both in standing posture on the banks of Tamraparni river, besides Prithu Tirtha. Devaraja Indra and Devas who accompanied had the celestial vision and Alwar Shathagopa did the sanctification.
- 54) Varagunamangai or Varaguna is close to Sri Vaikuntham with the Temple of Vijayaasana Bhagavan and Varaguna Lakshmi are seated comfortably facing east. At this hallowed place are Deva Pushkarini and Agni Tirtha. Agni Deva had the celestial vision and Alwar Shathagopa performed Mangala Shasana.
- 55) Tiruppulinkudi or Chinchakuti is close by a mile to Varaguna where there is the temple of Karyanchanavendan Bhagavan and Malaramangai Nacchiyar or Padmajavalli Lakshmi are in shesha saayi posture facing east. Varuna tirtha and Nirruti Tirtha are situated at the Temple premises; Nirruti Dikpaala, Varuna and Dharma Devatas had 'saakshatkaara' and Alwar Shathagopa did the 'Mangala Shaasana' here.
- 56) Tirukkulandai or Perinkulam Brihattadaag is seven miles near Shri Vaikuntham, where Maayakoothan Bhagavan along with Kulandai Valli or Ghata Valli Lakshmi are signified in a standing posture. Perunkullam or Brihattadaag is adjacent to the holy temple. Brihaspati had the celestial vision.
- 57) Tirupperai or Shri Naampura is south west of Alwar Tiru nagari as at 51 above. This is the sacred

temple of Makarengukkulaikkaadan / Makaraayita karna paasha Perumal and Devi Makaaayitakarna-paasha Naacchiyar or Nayaki Lakshmi seated eastward. The Temple premises has the sacred Tirtha named Shukra Pushkarini. Brahma, Ishana Rudra and Shukra had all their 'divya saakshaatkaaras' here.

58) Tirukkollur or Mahanidhipura near by a mile to Tirupperai has the sacred temple of Bhagavan Vaittamanidhi / Nikshepanidhi along with Devi Kollurvalli Lakshmi as lying on 'shesha shayya'. Kubera and Madhura Kavi had the divine vision of the deities and Alwar Shathagopa did the 'mangalashasana'.

59) Tiruvantapuram: Trivendram, the Capital of Kerala State, is better known as the Unique Tirtha Sthana being the Abode of Ananta Padma Swami in 'Anantavanam' mentioned in Maha Bharata and Brahma Purana. Lord Padmanabha as relaxing in Yoga Nidra on the soft bed of of Ananta the celestial Serpent bestows the fulfillment of desires of Deva-Danavas, Yogi-Rishi Ganas and sarva charaachara jeevas, especially human beings. The legendary background of this manifestation of Maha Vishnu the singular Preserver of 'Srishti'/ Creation as known through Puranas and Epics was that Maha Vishnu disguised as a mischievous boy, who wantonly spoilt a Sacred 'Salagrama'-representing Bhagavan Himself-which a Sage worshipped and out of anger he chased the boy. As the Swami found the boy subsequently wandering on the Sea Beaches, a fisher woman heard a shouting at a boy whom the Swami identified ; she was threatening to throw the boy into the forest near Anantankadu Nagaraja Temple ie the place infested with poisonous serpents. Having got a clue, the Swami discovered the mischievous boy at the Temple forest; as expected the boy was hanging on the top of a 'Illuppa' Tree; even as he saw the boy, the tree branch got broken and suddenly he manifested himself as huge figure of Anantashayana Murti the Vishnu Swarupa with Ananta as his head at Tiru Vollom, nabhi at Tiruvanantapuram and lotus feet at Tiruppadapuram! Swami was dazed as he never ever even in dreams was that boy full of pranks! He broke down in a trance and having recovered somewhat, prayed to the Lord in ecstasy and beseeched him to shorten his alarmingly big swarupa to that of thrice his 'danda' or staff. Even so, the figure got shortened in three parts viz. *Tiru mukham, Tiru vudal and Tiruppaadam*- that is: Mangala Mukha-Mangala Deha-Mangala Paada or Lotus Feet of Auspiciousness. The Swami offered Naivedya of Rice Kanji, Uppu manga or Salted Raw Mango pieces in a coconut shell. The huge Swarupa of Ananta Padma naabha was installed in a Temple after anointing with chandana kasturi etc. and so on in an appropriate new Temple with the assistance of the King, Brahmanas and Bhaktas on a single massive stone platform with carved embellishments. The Swami is reclining on the Maha Sarpa Ananta / Adi Sesha with hoods facing inwards signifying contemplation. Down his right hand is a Shiva Linga while the Swami has her consorts Sri Devi representing prosperity and Bhu devi representing Patience and Power are seated nearby even as Lord Brahma seated on a Lotus emerges from the Swami's navel. He is surrounded by some 1200 shaligrams from Nepal's Gandaki River banks. Over the Samadhi of the Sadhu Mahatma who discovered the Swami was arranged to the west of the Main Temple, and subsequently the Bilwa Mangala Krishna Mandir stood up over the Samadhi. Two major Shrines inside the Temple are of Ugra Narasimha and Krishna Swami. Ekadashi days are special. Two major Festivals are Alpashy in Oct- Nov and Phanguni in Mar- April each for 10 days; besides every Navaratra is celebrated when Alankaras change daily. Also Laksha Deepam festival is celebrated for 56 days onec in every 6 years, the latest being in Jan 2014 when the atmosphere is simply celestial with Veda Pathanas, Cultural and other activities are continuous and full of faith. Dress code is compulsory and entry restrictions are strictly enforced. The Temple is indeed very opulent with considerable gold, jewellery and liquid cash. Besides ths glorious Temple, Tiruvananta puram is proud of very many other illustrious Temples of repute and faith venerated by thousands of yatris through out the year despite the Seasonal aberrations.

60) Tiruvattaar Adi Keshava (Parashurama Kshetra): From Trivendram to Tiruvattar the distance is some 7 km where on the banks of River

Tamraparni, the Temple of Adikeshava and Marakata Valli Lakshmi is popular. The height of the idol of Adi Keshava as Sessa shaayi Adi Keshava. is as of some 16 feet; from one 'Dwar' or gate, the Bhagavan who is in a lying posture is visible with his Shri Mukha or propitious Face, the second 'dwar' displaying his 'Vakshasthala' or the region of his heart, and the third dwar displays his lotus feet, with his body crushing a Rakshasa. The legendary belief is that the Demon prayed to Brahma and in his liberal mood, allowed free access to a 'Kadali phala vana'/ banyan fruit garden to assuage his hunger; but the demon started harassing the Brahmanas and Rishis interfering in their 'Dharma Karyas' and the latter appealed to Vishnu who suppressed the demon; the latter appealed to Vishnu to always be under his body in that posture. This famed Kshetra is also called Parashurama khetra as Lord Parashu Rama had the 'saakshaatkaara' of Adi Keshava. Alwar Shiromani Shathagopa executed the 'mangalaashaasana' of this Kshetra.61) Janardana:From Trivendrum to Varkala is some 16 km where Janardana Temple is famed for ever-emerging 'dhup' or the scented smoke of 'Sambrani' or Agarbatti made of scented crystals called 'mengruk' a by-product of bamboo. In fact yattris collect the raw material of dhup from the Temple as that wards off diseases of skin as also a 'drishti' to children and garbhinis or pregnant women. Yattris bathe in a water fall collected from the Arabian Sea merging into a local sub-river and this Tirtha has sweet water called locally as Paapa Mochan or Rinamohan, Savitri, Gayatri and Saraswati; in fact persons observing Samudra Snaanans invariably take their baths at this Sacred Tirtha and then seek the darshan of Janardana whose Temple is at a height after ascending a few steps and washing their feet at a Chakra Tirtha near the entrance of the Temple. In the Center of an open area is the Temple surrounded by smaller Mandirs of Shasta Kumara, and Shankaa beside a Varta Vriksha, in which the main Deity Lord with a four handed Form of Shyama Janardana. The story of the Temple is recalled that once Brahma was performing a holy yagna and during this austerity period, a Sadhu who was moving about at the yagna premises asked for food and as food was served, the Sadhu expressed at the disappointment at the variety and quality of food served. Brahma being the host apologised for the quality. Brahma realised that the principal host Vishnu himself was the Sadhu and prostrated to Janardana who displayed his own form as Brahma requested him to be in same form for ever as the latter consented and ever since the miracle of the Vighraha emitting the scented smoke of Agarbattis always with the scented crystals available aplenty.62) Tiruvansparisaaram (Ramya sthala): Near Naagar koil is the Tiruvaal Maarban or the Ramya Vakshah-sthala of Venkatachalapati Bhagavan along with Kamalavalli Lakshmi seated purvaabhi mukha. In the premises of the Koil is the Lakshmi Tirtha. In fact, Sumudra snana is stated as of significance here as Kanyakumari Kshetra is only 20 miles southward to this Temple. Vinda Devi and aari Raja are stated to have had divine darshan of the Deva-Devis while Alwar Shathagopa performed mangala shasana here. 63) Tiruchchenkunur or Sourabh pur: In the state of Kerala on way to Tiruvananthapuram and Virudhnagar Railway line there is a town ship named Kottaarkara from where some 30 miles there is a Sacred Temple of Bala Krishna Bhagavan and Senkamalavalli or Arunakamala valli Devi on the banks of River Tiruchitraaru or Chitra. Shankara deva prayed to the Deities in connection with the killing of Padmasura. 64)Kuyttinaad or Shardula nagar is near Tiruchendunur has the hallowed Temple of Maayappiraan/ Adinath Bhagavan with Swarnatantuvalli Lakshmi. Near this Temple flows Papa vimochana Tirtha. Sapta Rishis had the divine vision of Adinatha while Alwars viz. Shathagopa and Parkala did the sanctification. 65) Tiruvanvandur is near Tiruppuliyur and Papanashanam and the Sacred Temple of Paampanyaippan or Paapanaashana Bhagavan along with Kamalavalli Lakshmi in standing posture. Maharshi Markandeya and Brahmarshi Narada had the 'saakshatkaara' of the Bhagavan and Devi Bhagavati blessed both them. 66) Teruvallivaal or Keralpur is near Teruvanvandore has the temple of Kolappiraan/ Gopala Krishna and Devi Selvatirukollindu or Balakrishnaayaki. In the premises of this Sacred Temple is the Ghantaakarna

Tirtha, besides the River Manimaala. Alwar Sant Shathagopa enjoyed the divya darshana of the Deities.

67) Tirukkudittaanam has the temple of Adbhuta Narayan and Kalpavalli Lakshmi which is not far from Keralpur. This koil in its premises with Bhumi Tirtha had in the days of yore blessed King Rukmanga by the Narayana-Lakshmi Deities[as quoted from Narada Purana,the King enforced his subjects to observe Ekdashi Vrata by way of fasting and puja to such an extent that the pressure on Yamaloka decreased and traffic to Vaikuntha got a boost on deaths!] Alwar Shathagopan conducted sanctification of this Temple.

68) Tiruvaaranvallai Arranmulai or Samridi Sthala is a few miles away from Sirabhpur mentioned at 63 above. Here Bhagavan Tirukkuralyappan or Shesha bhogaasana and Maha Lakshmi are seated in 'Padmasana' as the temple has Veda Vyasa Sarovara and is on the banks of Pampa River. Brahma Deva had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the deities and Arjuna had the distinction of performing the Idol 'Pratishtha'.

69) Tirukkaatkarai / Maruttat is at Idepalli on Ernakulam- Shornoor Railway line where stands the divya kshetra of Kaatkarai Appan or Maruttataadhisha Bhagavan along with Devi Peruncchelpa nayaki Lakshmi. Maharshi Kapila was blessed here with the darshan of the Murtis and Kapila Tirtha is present!

70) Tirumallikkalam (Shri Mooli dhaam) is at Angamali-Ernakulam- Shoranur Railway line and the well known temple there is of Tirumulikkalam or Sri Moolidheesha and Devi Madhura veni Lakshmi. Maharshi Hareeta was blessed with his divine vision. The Temple which has a Brihat tadaka was sanctified by Alwars Shathagopa and Parkaala.

71& 72) Vidvatpura and Nava pura Divya Koils on the Shoranoor-Calicut Railway line itself are two Temples of sanctity, one near Pattaambi and another at Enkolam. These are Vidvatpura and Navapura. The former is the Abode of Vidya Bhagavan and Devi Vidya vardhini and the latter is of Bhagavan Narayana and Bhagavati Malarmangai or Devi Puyshpavalli. The former had the saakshatkaara of King Ambarisha while the latter by Gajendra while Alwars Shathagopa and Parkala had performed mangala shaasana of the both these two Temples and the Deities.

73) Tiruvayindira puram or Ahindrappur has the Temple at Cuddalore of Deva nayak Bhagavan and Devi Vaikuntha Nayaki Lakshmi. This Place is on the banks of Garuda River and also Shesha Tirtha in its precincts. Both Garuda and Chandra were fortunate of the sakshatkaara of the deities while Acharya Vedanta Deshika scripted 'Deva Nayaka Panchaashat' and dedicated to the Deities. It was at this very place Sri Vedanta Deshika organised 'Aoushadhagiri' and also had the divya darshan of Hayagriva Bhagavan too. The illustrious Alwar Parkala had the fortune of performing the 'Mangala shaasana'.

74) Tirukkoyalore on the Villupuram-Katpadi Railway line is the Temple of Aayanar Trivikrama Bhagavan and Pankajavalli Naacchiyar Lakshmi are presented. Bali Chakravarti and Mrikunda Maharshi had their divya darshan of Trivikrama and Lakshmi at this very temple. This is the hallowed Temple where Saroyogi, Bhutayogi and Mahayogi not only had divya darshan and initiated Paramapada yatra!

75) Tiruvallikkoni or Vrindaranya Kshetra is a cluster of Temples at Chennai viz. the famous Partha Saarathi Temple along with Rukmini, Lakshmi, Pradyumna, Anirudda, Balarama, and Satyaki in Ananda Vimana all in standing position. The belief is that Maharshi Veda Vyasa had done the Pratishtha and Maharshi Atri initiated the Araadhana. Arjuna, Sumati Maharaja, and Tondaiman Chakravarti had the 'saakshaatkaara'. Mannaatha Bhagavan and Devi Vedavalli in shesha shayya posture had the benefit of 'saakshatkaara' by Bhrigu Maharshi. Tellyasingar or Nrisimha Deva is in another cluster of temples as he blessed Maharshi Atri and Jaabaali with celestial vision and moksha too. Chakravarti Tirumakan or Lord Shri Rama along with Bharata, Lakshmana, Shatrughna along with Devi Sita is visioned by the devotees as standing in the Pushpaks Vimana facing southward. Deva Perumal as seated on Garuda Deva on sesha vimana is also in another temple cluster as Maharshi Saptaroma had the celestial vision. There is a Kairavini Sarovara in the Temple premises which is stated to merge Pancha Tirthas of Indra-Soma-Meena-Agni-Vishnu and Maharshis viz. Bhrigu, Atri, Marichi, Markandeya, Sumati, Saptaroma and

Jaabaali all performed tapasya. Alwars Mahayogi, Bhaktisaara, and Parkaala did mangala shasana here. 76 & 77) Tiruninnarvur and Tiruvevvalur viz. Tinnanore and Veekshaaranya respectively are the two sacred places situated on the Chennai-Arkonam Railway line. The former is known for the temple of Bhaktavatsala Bhadraadri Bhagavan and Devi Ainnaietta Tayar or Jagajjanani which was visioned in physical swarupas by Varuna Deva while the latter temple of Bhagavan Veera Raaghava and Kanakavalli Lakshmi by Shalahotra Maharshi. Varuna and Hutaashana Tithas are present respectively. 78) Tirukkadikai or Ghatikaachala is a very significant Kshetra which offers ready evidences and proofs of problems of preta badha and vyadhi nivritti or deadly experiences of ghosts and instant relief of body ailments. This temple is dedicated to Yoga Nrisimha and Devi Amritavalli and is situated atop a hill some eight miles away from Sholingur on the Arkonam-Baaja Road. There is a Tatkaal Pushkarini & a Hanuman Mandir. 79) Tiruneermalai or Toyadri is some three miles south of Pallavaram Station near Chennai is again a cluster of temples, viz. Neela megha varna and Padmahasta Lakshmi, Ranganatha and Ranganayaki, Saanta Nrisimha, Ulaganda or Trivikrama, and Charavarti Tirumakan Shri Rama. Maharshi Valmiki/ Bhrgu and Markandeya, besides Bhakta Prahlada had all the divya darshana of the respective Deities. 80) Tiruvidvendai or Varaaha Kshetra near Vandalore Station near Chennai off some 13 miles is the Sacred Temple of Varaha Swami and two of his consorts of Komalavalli and Akhilavalli, and Maharshi Markandeya had the celestial vision of the Deva-Devis. 81) Tirukkadalmalai at Chengalpat-Tirukkulakunnam is known for the temple of Sthala shaayan Bhagavan along with Neelamangai Lakshmi where Garuda River flows. Maharshi Pundarika had the celestial vision. One renowned wrestler named Mahamalla Nrisimha Varma hailed from this place and as such is named Mahamallaapur. This is also the birth place of Alwar Sant Bhuta yogi too. 82. Hastigiri / Varada Raja Temple in Kanchipura is the most famed Kshetra of Vaishnavasampradaya besides Tirumala Balaji and Srirangam. The Varada Raja Temple is encircled by three broad enclosures with its east facing eleven storied gopura with the west facing main entrance and the sanctum of Varada Raja Swami. Its passage from the gopura gate to the sanctum is from the Shata stambha mandapa where the procession of the Utsava Vighras commences. Near to the Mandapa is the Koti Tirtha Sarovara also called 'Anantasara' leading to a bridge and a Madapa and the Temples of Bhagavan Varaha, Sudarshana and Yoga Nara Simha on one side and on the other side is the Ramanujacharya Vighraha and the Vaishnava Peetha Complex, being renowned Eight Maha Peethas like Shri Ranganam, Tirukoshti, Melkote, Udipi and so on. Ahead the Garuda Stambha in the second enclosure is the Lakshmi Mandira of Sri Perum Devi and Vishnu Vahanas like Hanuman, Elephant, Horse, Garuda, Mayura, Tiger, Lion, Sharabha etc. In the third enclosure is the Varada Raja Temple within a high rise platform called Hastagiri like 'Irvata' as also Yoga Nrisimha, Vishwakshena. Varada Raja Swami is in the posture of a Sesa Shaayi even as lying on a float of water as presumed. The Sanctum of Varada Raja is called Vimana approachable by a staircase of 24 steps and inside the dwara he is Shyama Varna Chaturbhuj with shalagramas as his garland along with his Utsava Murti also. Having had their darshan, yatis take down the staircase and down the sanctum in a parikrama sight the Idols of Andal, Dhanvantari, Ganesha and others. Detailing the Varada Raja Mahatmya, Maharshi Markandeya recalls in Kamakshi Vilasa that Lord Brahma after the conclusion of his Ashwamedha Yagna at the Hari Kshetra on the Hasti Shaila Shikhira extolled Varada Raja Swami as 'Jagan Mohanaakara' or the Universal Mesmoriser with his 'Chaturbahu' Shankha-Chakra- Gadaa-Padma Mudra with his appearance as 'Jagadarakshra'. Markandeya then narrated a legend about the origin of Varada Raja as quoted: Lakshmi and Saraswati asked Brahma to give his honest opinion as to the superiority between them and almost immediately Brahma favoured Lakshmi Devi. Saraswati was highly disappointed and even annoyed with Brahma and took away the 'danda' or an Insignia that Vishnu once

gave to her which was the power of Brahma enabling the latter to undertake Srishti or Creation of 'Charaachara Jagat' or of the Moveable and Immovable Beings. Thus the action of Brahma to create was disabled. Brahma did not wish to entreat Sarasvati to return the Srishti Danda but left for Himalayas to perform penance to Vishnu to request for an Emblem with Vishnu Amsha to Create instead of a Sarasvati-oriented Crest. Vishnu was pleased with Brahma's Tapas and directed Brahma to perform hundred Ashwamedha Yagnas. Brahma then decided that instead of performing hundred such Yagnas it would be sufficient to execute one Yagna at the Hari Kshetra and asked Vishwakarma the Architect cum Builder of Devas to construct a huge Yagna Shaala right opposite the Idol of Narasimha; he discarded Sarasvati as his partner at the Yagna but preferred Buddhi Devi as his 'Yagna Patni' to share the duties of a wife as prescribed. Brahma invited Devas, Devarshis like Narada, besides Gandharva-Yaksha- Kinnara-Apsara; Siddha- Saadhya-Muniganaas and decided to perform a Year- long Yagna; he worshipped Ganeshwara first to facilitate the Yagna without obstacles and then worshipped Yoga Narasimha Swami and initiated the Yagna with formal Mantras by appointing Kumara Swami as Adhavarvu, Maheswara as Udagaata, Varuna as Prastota, Yama Dharma Raja as Hota and Indra who performed hundred such Yagnas in the past as the Yagna Brahma. Since Brahma did not invite Sarasvati to participate, she was furious and created powerful flames with her Maya Shakti with a view to destroy the Yagna but the Saviour of the Hari Kshetra viz. Vishnu arrested the Maya Shakti's both the hands and disabled her. Sarasvati took it as a challenge and released Kapalika Shakti but Vishnu in the Form of Nara Simha destroyed the Shakti. Enraged by her discomfiture, Devi Sarasvati released 'Daithyaastra' but Daityaari Narayana made the Astra futile. Vagdevi then created 'Karaala Vadana Kalika' and instructed the Maha Shakti to demolish the Yagna but Vishnu assumed an Eight-Hand Swarupa and having suppressed the Shakti sat firm on her shoulders. Finally with all her powers being overcome, Sarasvati was humiliated and swooned out of anger and frustration and took the Form of 'Pralaya Swarupi' called Vegavati River with disastrous speed from Brahmaloaka down to Earth heading towards the Hari Shaila. Vishnu sensed the impending danger and decided to resort to her 'maanabhanga' or assault her physically; having become nude he stood before the lightning flash of gushing waters and like a Huge Log lied across against the flow. Sarasvati having visioned Narayana's nudity was thus put to shame and without being able to face him entered a 'Bhu bila' or a big fissure of Earth and escaped. Then the Yagna commenced without any hindrance; the Yagna Pashu or the Sacrificial Horse was let loose and returned invincible and at the successful completion of the year long Yagna, the 'Purnaahuti' or the Ultimate Offering to Agni as the climactic Homa of Cow's ghee was accomplished and Brahma visioned a Massive Flood of Illumination on the Eastern Sky and offered wide and palmful of concentrated homage to that Spendour. That was the most awaited Moment of Sweta Varaha Kalpa's Vaivasva Manvantara- Krita Yuga- Nrisimha Bhagavatmika Samvatsara- Vaishakha -Shukla Paksha- Chaturdashi's Hasta Nakshatra Suryodaya when Devadhi Deva the Supreme Lord of the Universe manifested himself from the Yagna Homaagni' as **Varada Raja Swami** and handed over the Insignia of Srishti to Brahma Deva. The latter went into raptures and placed the Insignia on his chest with tears of joy and got non-plussed momentarily. After recovering from the pleasant shock, Brahma Deva installed Bhagavan on the Hasti Shaila on a 'Suvarna Simhasana' or a Golden Throne in the presence of Devas and other Celestial Beings and Maharshis; in order to cool down the charged and excited atmosphere as also to supposedly quench the thirst of Narayana who was just manifested from Agni, Brahma performed 'Abhisheka Snaana' to Varadaraja with potful thousands of Kamadhenu's ghee with chantings of Sacred Veda Mantras and offered 'Shodashopacharaas' or the traditional Sixteen Services such as Aasana- Vastra-Yagnopaveeta- Gandha-Dhupa- Deepa-Pushpa- Phala-Naivedya- Tambula-Mantra Pushpa-Sangeeta-Veda Pathana-

Tambula-Chhatra-Chaamaraas. The formal Puja was followed by bhojanas (Hearty Meals) served to Special Invitees with Bakshya- Bhojya-Lehya- Chokshya-Paneenias to all concerned in the Maha Yagna. Also Anna Santarpana or Free Meals were organised to the entire citizens of Kanchipura. Vishwakarma made a 'Pratibimba Swarupa' or Replica of 'Aalaya'; and 'Nagara' Pradakshinas or Temple wise and Nagari wise Pradakshinaas or circumambulations were done on Elephant-back; in fact daily worships, Bhojanas and 'Gajotsavas' were also organised eversince. Pleased by all these arrangements, Varada Swami addressed 'Brahmaadidevaas' and Munis : *Yathaaham Virajaa teerey mama Vaikuntha pattaney, Jagadvyaapana sheelaavaad Vishnurityabhidhaayutah/ Prasiddho nivasaamyatra tathaa Kaanchi-purottamey, Harikshetram samaashritya Sarvaabheeshta pradaanatah/ Varadaabhidhayaa khyaato nivasaami nirantaram, Sarvey bhavanto madbhaktaassada maddarshaney rataah/ Sarvadaattraiva tishthantu Vaikunthaadati paavaney, Varshey Varshey Meshamaasi mama Janmadiney Shubhey/ Ghrithadhaaraa sahasraabhishechanam mama pujanam, Utsavamcha prakurut Viprabhojana purvakam/* (My Bhaktaas! Just as I had settled in Vaikuntha on the banks of River Viraja and got spread all over the Universe as Vishnu, I will now reside in the Hari Kshetra of Kancheepura; hence those desirous of visioning me could do so with my name as Varada or he who would be the Bestower. In fact I will stay here for good thus making Hari Kshetra as significant as Vaikuntha if not even better! You may therefore even reside at this Kshetra. Every year on my birthday during Mesha month you should all therefore perform 'Goghrittha dhaaraa sahasra -abhishekaa' or thousand Abhishekaas of Cow Ghee (bathing) of my Murti and celebrate this day as a Festival and of 'Brahmana Bhojana.) Then Brahma Deva addressed all the Invitees of the Yagna to follow the instruction of Varadaraja Swami and assured that those who would participate in the Festival on the lines as instructed would secure 'Maha Phala'. Maharshi Markandeya narrated to King Suratha one telling instance about a devotee who actually experienced this kind of Maha Phala : In the past, one Vaadaadhyayai Vipra named Bhanuvarna of Gokula on the banks of River Yamuna visited Kanchipura and happened to perform 'Ghrithaabhisheka' most coincidentally on the 'Janma dina' of Varadaraja Swami at the Hari Kshetra and on return to Gokula after some time passed away; Bhanu varna was being flown to Swarloka by Devaganaas to honour him with the status of Indra but 'Haridootaas' intercepted his Soul and took it away to the Everlasting Vishnupada; such indeed was the graceful gesture of Varadaraja Swami! Whoever recites the above account of Varadaraja Swami would certainly secure Varadaraja Darshana, as assured by Maharshi Markandeya.

83. Venkataachala Mahatmya:

Venkataadri samam sthaanam brahmande naasti kinchana, Venkatesha samo Devo na bhuti na bhavishyati/ (There indeed is no God like Lord Venkateshwara on Earth and none else like the self-manifested singular Deity worthy of faith, commitment and total dedication for now and for ever)!

Crossing the Seven Hills of Vrishabhadri named after Nandi, the Shiva Vahana; Anjanaadri of Lord Hanuman; Neeladri named after Shakti Neela Devi; Garudadri the Vishnu Vahana; Seshadri named after Lord Shesha the comfortable serpent bed- abode of Vishnu; Narayanadri named after Lord Narayana and finally the Venkatadri the hallowed Temple Tirumala Venkateshwara is the 'Deva Sthana' of Andhra. This is one of the wealthiest and most visited Hill Shrines of Hindu Pilgrimage at a height of 3200 ft or 976 m approx. approachable by foot, road, rail and Air, beckoning the glittering 'Suvarna Shikhara' or Golden Top, *par excellence!* Around the Temple, the most significant places of interest included are Axakasha Ganga, Srivaari Sacred Feet, Paapa vinashana, Shri Ramanuja Shrine, Swami Pushkarini, Varaha Swami Temple and down the hills the famed Shri Padmavati Temple.

Being the Outstanding and World famed Tirupati-Tirumala Divya Kshetra, the most Sprawling Temple Town of Balaji literally elevates the yattris to heights of Sacrifice and Faith on the bedrock of Dharma. Magnetising devotees from far and wide, the torrential flood of yattris is perennial here. Indeed Lord Venkateshwara is the wealthiest God of the World, crossing the hopes of the Pope in the Vatican City! *Shrinivasapuraa Vedaah Shri Nivasaparaa makhaah, Shrinivasa paraah sarvey tasmaadanyatra vidyate/ Sarva Yagna Tapodaana tirtha snaane tu yat phalam, Tat plalam koti gunitam Srinivaasasya sevayaa/ Venkataadri nivasam tam chintayan ghatikaadwayam, Kulaikavimshatim dhutwaa Vishnu loka maheeyate!* (All the Vedas do merely propose Bhagavan Shrinivasa only exclusively. All the yagna karyas do target Shrinivasa only. Indeed, all kinds of Bhakti or devotion merge into and identify with Shrinivasa alone. The totality of Yagjna, Tapa, Daana, Anushthaana and Tirtha Snaanans falls far short of Shrinivasa seva! Those residents of Venkatachala engrossed in the true service of Venkateshwara shall liberate the souls of the previous twenty one generations and qualify themselves too to Vishnu Loka). The yattris invariably halt over at Tirupati down the Tirumala's Seven Hills where Govinda Raja Temple set up by Ramanujacharya with the Shesha saayi Narayana is the Main Attraction with some 15 smaller Deva Mandiras in and around the Sanctum. One of the Ashta Peethas of Ramajucharya is also significance here. Tirupati is also the Abode of Kodandra Rama, Devi Sita, Lakshmana and Huanuman. Once up the Seven Hills, the prime destination no doubt is that of Lord's Divya darshana, yet the primaries are the Kalyana gattaa for the Hair Sacrifice, Swami Pushkarini followed by Varaha Swami darshana and then to the Q complex to Vaikuntha for the climactic experience of bliss. Most significant Tirthas up the Hills are Akasha Ganga, Paapa nashana Tirtha, Vaikuntha Guha dhara, Pandava Tirtha, and Jaabali Tirtha. In the 'Vaishnava Khanda' of Skanda (Kartika) Purana, Varaha Deva gave 'Upadesha' (instruction) of the Sacred Mantra *Om Namah Shri Varahaya Dharanyu Uddharanaya Swaha* to Bhudevi and its significance; the Mantra fulfills all desires and leads to liberation. A Manu called Dharma recited the Mantra persistently and attained Moksha; Indra chanted it and regained his throne that was occupied by demons therebefore and Anantha the Chief of Serpents secured such extraordinary strength as to hold the weight of Prithvi (Earth) on his hoods. Bhudevi expressed her gratitude to Varaha Deva to have saved from the grip of Demon Hiranyakasipu as also taught the Great Mantra. She admired Varaha Deva for providing the power and perseverance to hold the weight of huge mountains and desired Him to describe to her the names of some of the illustrious Mountains the weight of which was borne by her. These include Sumeru, Himachal, Vindhya, Mandarachal, Gandhamadhan, Chitrakoot, Malyavaan, Pariyatrik, Mahendra, Malay, Sahya, Simhachal, Raivat and Anjana; in the South of Bharat the most significant are Arunachal, Hasthiparvat, Grudhrachal, Ghatikachal and most importantly the Narayana Giri or Venkatachala which possesses the Seven Tirthas in the Mountain Range viz. Chakra Tirth, Daiva Tirth, Akasha Ganga, Kumaradhari Kartikeya, Papanashani, Pandava Tirtha, and Swami Pushkarini. Varaha Deva affirmed that in Krita Yuga, the most important Mountain Range was that of Anjanagiri; in Treta Yuga it was Narayana Giri; in Dwapar Yuga was Simhachal and in Kali Yuga again the most sacred mountain range is Venkatachala. In Magha month when Surya Deva is in Kumbha Rasi on Purnima day coinciding with the Makha Star, Skanda worships Venkateswara on the banks of Swami Pushkarini Tirtha at the noon time and devotees performing 'Snaan' and Puja as also 'Annadaan' are blessed by the Lord. Similarly, Snaans, worships and charities at Venkatachala are highly beneficial on the auspicious timings when Surya is in Meena Rasi on Purnima with Uttaraphalguni in Thumbha Tirtha; when Surya is in Mesha Rasi on Purnima with Chitra Star in Akasha Ganga at early mornings; when Surya is in Vrishabha Rasi in Visakha Shukla / Krishna fortnights on Dwadasi Sunday / Tuesday at Pandava Tirtha on evenings; on Sundays of Shukla / Krishna fortnights, coinciding Saptami at Papanashana Tirtha; on Brihaspati /

Vyakteeta Yogya, Star Pushya / Sravana Mondays etc; Varaha Deva described to Bhudevi that Emperor Akash decided to perform a Grand Yagna on the banks of Arani and while tilling, he found a girl child and as he was issueless, brought her up as their own, named as Padmavati. Once Sage Narad met Padmavati as she was grown up as an eligible bride and predicted that she would be the wife of Lord Srinivasa of Venkatachal. Almost immediately she met a Stranger in the Royal Garden and introduced himself as Ananta or Veerapati from Venkatachal Mountain and that he was hunting a wolf. Padmavati's companions rebuffed Ananta Deva that hunting was prohibited in their garden. Ananta returned but desired intensely that Padmavati should become His life partner and sent Vakulamala to the court of Emperor Akash to negotiate their wedding. The Emperor had no bounds of joy and the holy wedding of Lord Venkateswara and Padmavati took place in style and grandeur when Devi Lakshmi was present to make Padmavati happy and comfortable, whereafter they all resided in Tirumala bestowing boons to lakhs of Devotees till date. Varaha Deva narrated the background of Padmavati's earlier birth as Vedavati to Bhudevi. Vedavati was a companion of Devi Lakshmi and when the latter became Rama's spouse as Sita, she left for forests to perform Tapasya, but demon Ravana misbehaved with her and she ended her life by jumping into fire and cursed Ravana that his entire clan would be wiped out because of a woman. Sita was abducted by Ravana by creating such circumstances that Maricha was converted as a Golden Deer; Sita took fancy for it and prevailed Sri Rama to chase the animal which deceitfully wailed as though Rama was in trouble and Lakshmana had to leave Sita alone even by drawing a Lakshman Rekha that none could cross. The vile Ravana dressed as a Tapsvi revealed his real form as soon as she was prevailed to cross the fiery Lakshman Rekha and forcibly took her to Lanka. After Rama killed Ravana, there was 'Agni-Pariksha' (Proof of Purity / by Fire), Sita came out unscathed. But the real fact was that Agni Deva hid real Sita in Patala and Agni's wife Swaha assumed the role of Maya Sita; in fact Vedavati's earlier birth was of Swaha Devi! Thus, Vedavati / Swaha turned to Maya Sita was Padmavati. Devi Prithvi enquired of Bhagavan Varaha as to where and how to secure the 'Darshan' (Vision) of Lord Venkateswara and the former replied that He would mention of those future happenings as recorded in the past. There was a Nishad (Hunter) in Shyamak Jungle named Vasu and his wife Chitravati and Son Vira. Nishad was the Chief of his clan living honestly and peacefully by eating cooked rice and honey. Both his wife and he decided one day to a nearby forest to search for additional stock of honey and entrusted the responsibility of looking after his followers and daily chores to Vira, their son. The daily practice was that the family cooked rice and mixed with honey, offered the same as Naivedya to Venkatachalapati and ate the Prashad. But, Vira in their absence for the day offered some portion of the honeyed rice into Agni, some to tree bushes and the rest was consumed. On return from the other forest, Vasu became furious to learn that no offer of the honeyed rice was made to Venkatachalapati but gave it away as described above. Vasu felt agitated and remorsefully guilty and even tried to kill his son for what was considered as Sacrilege. Lord Venkatachal appeared before Nishad in full glory with His four hands, fully ornamented and armed and stopped Vasu from harming his son; he was completely taken aback. The Lord said that the acts of his son Vira were in fact worth emulation and not condemnation for he did a homam (Offering to Agni); homage to Nature and only the remainder was consumed with dedication as 'prashad'. Nishad was so happy that he heard this from Bhagavan Himself! Varaha Deva also narrated an incident related to King Tondamanand Nishad. As an ideal Prince, he imbibed all the qualities required of a King, viz. of nobility, intellect, valour and devotion to Almighty. Once he took King's permission for hunting in Venkatachal forests, chased an elephant, crossed the River Swarnamukhi and reached the Ashram of Brahmarshi Suka and an Idol of Goddess Renuka nearby. As he proceeded further, he found a 'Pancharangi' (Five Coloured) Parrot screeching the name of 'Srinivasa, Srinivasa' and followed the bird

till the mountain top. There he met Nishad who informed that the parrot was very dear to Suka Muni as also to Bhagavan Srihari and hovered around the Pushkarini Tirtha; by so saying the Nishad desired to have a Darshan of the Lord and the Prince too accompanied him. Thondaman was indeed thrilled with the Darshan and witnessed the 'Naivedya' of Cooked rice and honey performed by Vasu Nishad. He was overpowered by the magnificent experience of the Lord and thereafter met Suka Muni and secured his blessings that soon he would become a King after his father's retirement and serve Srinivasa for long time to come. A few days after Thondaman's return to his Capital, he was made the King and started settling in his throne. Suddenly after a few months, Vasu the Nishad approached the Palace in an agitated manner and told the King that he dreamt chasing a 'Varaha' which entered a thick bush, that he started digging up and swooned, that his son was also near him, that the Varaha entered his mind and body and made him say the following: 'Nishada! You must reach King Todarman and ask him to perform 'Abhishek' with lots of milk to a 'Shila' (Stone) underneath this thick bush, pull it out and ask a 'Shilpi' (Sculptor) to prepare an Idol of my features with Bhu Devi on my left lap, set up plants of Tamarind and Champa as are loved by Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively and invite learned Sages and Brahmanas to attend a grand function to be hosted by Tondaman and wait for my further instructions. The King followed the instructions as conveyed by Nishad and called Sages and Brahmanas to a Grand Puja of Varaha Deva and Bhu Devi through an underground passage and continued the daily practice of taking bath, worshipping the Murthis of Varaha and Bhu Devi and arranging 'Prashad' or the left-behinds of Naivedya to Brahmanas and visitors. As this practice got routinised and the interest of Bhaktas snow-balled gradually, a Brahmana stranger approached the King that he was on way to Kasi, Prayaga and a few prominent Tirthas but his wife was unable to travel as she was in the family way; he requested the King to provide accommodation and food to his wife and generally supervise her welfare. The Brahmana returned very late after several months but unfortunately the wife had a miscarriage and died just a couple of days before the return of the Brahmana after visiting several Pilgrimage Centers and Tirthas. The King got frightened at the tragedy as he gave a surety to the Brahmana's wife and approached Srinivasa, who instructed that the Queens as well as the body of the Brahman's wife should be made to take bath in the Asthi Sarovar Tirtha and as the queens took dips in the holy water and came out, the Brahmana's wife too would emerge. The Brahmana was thrilled at the miracle witnessed by co-devotees! Raja Todarman followed the practice of worshipping Srinivasa with golden lotuses daily. He found one day some Tulasi leaves pulled out from muddy plants and wondered how this indiscretion happened. As the King was wondering about this, there emerged a voice saying: "There is a pot maker (Kumhara) who also did daily Puja to me with the muddy Tulasi leaves from his house and that I have accepted his worship too!" The King reached Kurmapuri in search of the Kumhara, who replied to the King that he never ever did any puja to Srinivasa! But when the King said that there was a voice which said these words, the Kumhara and his wife recalled the voice of Srinivasa in their earlier births that as and when a King would knock their hut, and then a Pushpa Viman would arrive to pick them to Vishnuloka! Indeed that had just happened! The King returned to Venkateswara Temple to perform worship again after this unusual happening and Srinivasa appeared before Tondaman and bestowed him the blessing of a lasting Abode of bliss. Parikshit, son of Abhimanyu of Pandavas, was no doubt a noble and virtuous King, but unfortunately did the unpardonable sin of hanging a dead serpent around the neck of Samika Muni who was in deep Tapasya and his son Shringi cursed Parikshit that he would be dead within a week as a result of a snake bite. Takshak was assigned the task of killing Parikshit but Brahmana Kashyap who could indeed have prevented the tragedy and even demonstrated his ability to do so, was won over by dubious means by Takshak and Kashyap who did the sin was sought to be washed off by a bath in Swami

Pushkarini and worship to Srinivasa, as advised by Shakalya Muni. Indeed the sin of Kashyap was eradicated by the Grace of Lord Venkateswara. Another illustration of the Sanctity of Snaan in Swami Pushkarini was given by Sutha Maha Muni to Rishis at a Congregation at Naimisharanya (The forest of Naimisha). A King of Chandravamsa called Dharmagupta was a rare example of nobility and virtue. He went hunting and by the evening desired to perform the Puja of Gayatri and was delayed to late hours and had to stay back on a tree. A lion came running after a wolf and ascended the same tree; it asked the King not to worry and would not hurt him in any way. It asked the King to come to an understanding that it would sleep off half night and he might sleep off the other half. The lion tempted the wolf to drop the King down and share a good portion of the King. The wolf rejected the proposal outright as ingratitude was a far heinous sin than the 'Panchapatakas' or the Five known major sins. During the other half of the night when the King was to guard the wolf, the lion gave a similar proposal to him; he accepted and tried to drop the sleeping wolf. But luckily, the wolf was saved and preached the King against ingratitude and gave a curse to the King to become a mad man. It said that he was a Sage, named Dhyanakashtha, who could take any form and told the lion that in his earlier birth he was a Minister in the Court of Kubera and was cursed by Gautama Muni to become a lion as he was standing naked in the Sage's garden with his woman. As regards Dharmagupta's curse for ingratitude, Sage Jaimini suggested a bath in the Sacred 'Swami Pushkarini' on Venkatadri on the banks of River Suvarnamukhi, followed by worship of Lord Venkateswara. Suta Maha Muni described that those who purify themselves in the Pushkarini would surely avoid hells named Tamisra, Andhamisra, Rourav, Maha Rourav, Kumbhipak, Kaalsutra, Asipatravan and such others. On the other hand, the devotees attain the 'Punya' of performing Aswamedha Yagna and achieve Buddhi (Intellect), Lakshmi (Wealth), Kirti (Fame), Sampatthi (Prosperity), Gyan (wisdom), Dharma (Virtue), Manoshuddhi (Purity of mind) and Vairagya (Other Worldliness). Krishna Tirtha is a Tirtha named after a deeply devoted Brahmana whose Tapasya was so severe and extensive that his body developed mole-hills (Valmikas) and Indra rained forcefully to wash off the mud. Lord Srinivasa was impressed by the relentless and highly dedicated devotion and blessed him with His Darshan, created a Tirtha after his name, declared that those who have the fortune of bathing in it would become as learned and focussed and bestowed Salvation to him. Paapanaasha Tirtha is such a powerful place that even merely uttering its name, sins of the past and present get vanished. There was a Brahmana named Bhadramati who had enormous knowledge of Vedas and Scriptures but was acutely impoverished having six wives and several children. His each day was a harrowing experience of poverty with several mouths to feed. One of his wives named Kamini told him one day that her father met Sage Narada who described Tirtha called Papanashana lying on the Venkateswar Mountain cluster was a big draw and a bath, preferably after giving away a small token 'bhudaan' to a deserving Brahmana followed by a darshan of the Lord would abolish poverty, and fulfil all human desires. This emboldened Bhadramati to travel along with his family to the Srinivasa Mountain. He was fortunate to obtain on way a token of five feet of land. The entire family took bath in the Papanashana Tirtha and gave away charity of the five feet of land to a deserving Brahmana. Bhagavan Vishnu had instantly appeared before Bhadramati; the latter was extremely thrilled at the darshan and eulogised Him as follows: As Bhadramati praised Lord Srinivasa, He blessed him to enjoy full-swing prosperity to him and family and attain Moksha to him thereafter. 'Akasha ganga Tirtha' was well known for bestowing boons to the highly erudite and dedicated Brahmana called Ramanuja. He did Tapasya of rigorous nature on the banks of Akashganga by standing with 'Panchagni' (Five flames) around him during the hot summer mid-days and under the sky in heavy rains fully exposed chanting the Ashtakshari Mantra 'Om Namoh Narayanaya'; he ate dry leaves fallen from trees for years together, for some years by drinking water and many other years

by consuming air only. Finally, Bhagavan appeared and Ramanuja who was almost dying with the severity of his Tapasya became fully normal and healthy instantly. He received the boons that the Place of Akasha Ganga where Ramanuja had the fortune of discovering Vishnu in person would be an Eternal water-spring and those who performed 'Snaan' would change his entire life style and become an ideal Bhakta and at the end they would have no other birth and would get salvation. In another context, Akash Ganga was immortalised as the Tirtha where Devi Anjana executed penance, since she and her husband Vayu Deva were not blessed with a son. Vishnu Bhakta Sage Matangi directed Anjana Devi to reach River Suvarnamukhi, far south of Vindhya Mountain, reach Vrishabhachal on whose top was situated the famous Swami Pushkarini, worship Varaha Deva and Venkateswara, proceed to north, find Akashaganga and perform Snaan in a formal manner along with Vayu Deva. The Sage confirmed that if the couple did so, a Son of unparalleled prowess and 'Swami Bhakti' (Loyalty to the Master) would be born, to be called Hanuman who was invincible by Devas, Raakshasas, Sages, Brahmanas, Celestial and human beings. As Anjana Devi followed the instructions to the last letter and spirit, Bhagavan Venkateswara appeared before her and blessed that such a Son would be born that his parents would indeed be proud of and play a pivotal role in Treta Yuga as the most powerful personality of 'Shiva Amsha'. Besides the above, Venkatachal has quite a few other Tirthas like Chakra Tirtha where a Maha Muni Padmanabha prayed to Srinivasa to chase away the dread of Rakshasas and Bhagavan stationed His Sudarshan Chakra known for dispelling the fear of Evil Spirits; Varaha Tirtha, Pandu Tirtha, Tumba Tirtha, Kapila Tirtha, Kumara Tirtha, Jaraharaadi Tirtha Traya, Phalguni Tirtha, Deva Tirtha, Jabaali Tirtha, Sanaka Sanandana Tirtha, Asthi Sarovara Tirtha, Kataha Tirtha and Manvadyashtottara Tirtha. Thus the outstanding significance of Tirupati-Tirumala Deva's unparalleled magnificence of Lord Venkateswara!

84) Tiruvekka or Yatthottakari: This is very near to at Kanchipura Varada Raja Bhagavan's Temple. Shri Yatthottakari Bhagavan and Devi Komalavalli Lakshmi are presented at a Temple as the former is in a shesha saayi posture. In this temple, there is a Saroyogi Pushkarini as Sant Saroyogi was born here. Brahma and Devi Saraswati had their divya darshanas. 85) Ashtabuja also near Varadaraja Temple in Kanchi is dedicated to Bhagavan Adikeshava Chakradhara and Devi Alarmelmangai where King Gajendra had his divya darshana. 86) Tiruttanka near Varadaraja Temple presents Valukkoil Perumal or Deepa Prakasha Deva and Devi Marakavalli Lakshmi. Acharya Vedanta Deshika was born here. Devi Saraswati had her 'sakshatakaara' at this Temple. 87) Uragam / Trivikrama is in Shiva Kanchi Kshetra being a distinguished Avatar of Vishnu as Vamana Deva, the Vighraha is oversized almost hitting the ceiling with one of his feet lifted up. This form of Trivikrama Vishnu is just like as a hooded serpent. 88-89-90-91) Neerakam or Neerakara again near Kanchi at the surrounding sub-temple of Uraga Trivikrama temple is Aradhya Deva Bhagavan Jagadeesha accompanied by Neelamangaivalli Lakshmi; likewise at the sub-temple of Uraga Vaamana is Kaarakam presenting Aradhya Deva Karunaakara and Devi Padmaamani; and Kaavarnam too as the surrounding main Trivikrama temple presents Shri Kalwar or Meghaakaara and Devi Kamalavalli Lakshmi. Similarly the fourth sub temple is Aradhya Deva Adi-Varaha and Devi Anjillaivalli. These four sub temples were celestially visioned by Akrura-GarhaRishi-Devi Parvati and Ashvatta Narayana respectively. 92) Paatakam or Pandavadoota is in the Main Kanchi itself where Bhagavan Pandava doota and Devis Rukmini- Satyabhaamas are visioned. Always Bhutayogi, Mahayogi, Bhaktisaara and Parkaala had performed mangala shaasana, while King Janamejaya and Maharshi Harita had their divya darshanaas.

93-95) In the Main Kanchi itself , there are the small sized temples viz. Pravalavarnam, Parameshwara Vishshnugaram and Tiruppukkuli but of far reaching significance. Bhagavan Pravalavarna Bhagavan and Devi Pavalavalli who blessed Ashvini Devatas with their divine vision. Juat nearby is Haritavarna Bhagavan and Marakatavalli Lakshmi who granted saakshaatkaara to Bhrigu Maharshi; Vishnugaraam with Paramapadanath and Vaikunthavalli as actually visioned by King Pallavaraya; and at Tiruppukkulli or Gudhra Kshetra with Vijayaraghava Bhagavan and Marakatavalli as visioned by Jatayu which fought with Ravana and sacrificed its life to save Devi Sita.

96) There is a famed Kshetra named Singavellukutram on Kadapa- Guntakal Railway Line, very popular as Ahobila. *Aho veeryam aho shouryam aho bahu parakramam, Narasimham para daivam aho bilam aho balam/* Ahobila Kshetra is a popular Vaishnava (Vadakala) Kshetra split at two levels called in the Telugu local language as ‘Eguva’ and ‘Diguva’ or Upper and Lower levels- in the ‘nallamala’ forests of Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh at the distance of 40 km from Nandyala or 150 km from Hyderabad at the Nallamala forest range at an altitude of 1000 ft. plus. That is the fabled Abode of Lord Narasimha or Prahlada Varada, the fourth incarnation of Maha Vishnu to terminate Hiranya Kashipu the demon who rescued Prahlada the illustrious Vishnu Bhakta. Amrita Valli is the corresponding Devi Lakshmi of the Godeless. Ahobila Kshetra opposite the Akshaya Tirtha where devotees purify themselves with snanas, before entering the Sacred Place portrays nine forms of Narasimha spread among nine Temples viz. Bhargava Nrisimha bestowing Lakshmikara siddhi or excellent prosperity as incarnate at the lower level of Ahobila, Yogananda Nrisimha also at the lower level signifying the aspect of compassion and overcoming problems of one’s life; Chatravata Narasimha representing Ketu Graha bestowing comforts of Life and expertise in Fine Arts; Ugra Nrisimha Temple at the upper level along with Chenchu Lakshmi or a Goddess as of a local Tribe Leader’s daughter who sought to cool down the fierce form of the Lord and eventually married to her representing Devi Lakshmi herself and teaching devotees the qualities of courage and timidlessness yet of maturity; Varaha Narasimha Swami at the upper level again along with his consort of Lakshmi; Malova Vara Nrisimha along with Shri Lakshmi at Lakshmi Hill granting total fulfillment and auspiciousness to devotees; Jwala Nrisimha as had just annihilated Haranya kashipu since a pond of brick colour with which the Lord had just washed his hands with the blood of the demon called Rakta gunta Tirtham; Paavana Nrisimha or Kshetra Ratna Nrisimha or Pamulati Nrisimha Swami who provides safety and succor to devotees and finally Karanja Nrisimha or He who represents Shadvidha or six types of austerities and purities viz. those of ‘Kara- charana- vaak- kaaya-karma- shravana- nayana’ or by hands, legs, tongue, mouth, body, actions and mid- borne nature! At the Ahobila Complex, the significant Festivities are Phalguna Month celebrations, Janma Nakshatra (Swati) Mahotsavas, Gramotsavas, Monthly Celbrations and Tirumanjana Sevas. *Simhachala Tirtha*: Some 16 km near Vishakapattanam in Andhra Pradesh is another significant Nrisimha Kshetra in Bharat is at Simhachala or the Lion Giri viz. Varaha Lakshmi Nrisimha of 15th century built by Gajapati Raja of Kalinga, the present part of Odisha State and King Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagara also attended the Opening Ceremony Brahmotsavas as given in available Inscriptions. The Legend about this incarnation of Nrisimha is due to the curse to the Gate keepers to Maha Vishnu’s Vaikuntha by Brahma Manasa Putras viz. Sanaka Sanandana Sanat Sanatana Kumaras who were stopped entry; the respective Danavas were Harayaksha in Varaha; Ravanasura and Kumbhakarna in Shri Rama Avatara, and Kamsa and Shishupalain Krishnavatara, besides Hiranya kashipu in Nrisimha Avatara. The Bhakta saved from Hiranya kashipu in the Nrisimha Avatara was Prahlada. Special Festivals at Simhachala are of Akshaya Triteeya with Chandana Lepana or Alankara with Gandha and during Vaishakha Month. The main attractions at the

Temple are a fantastic Stone Ratha and a 16 pillored Mandapa depicting Dashawataras and many Nrisimha Swarupas.

97) Dwaraka: Skanda Purana in its Prabhasa Khanda describes in detail Dwaraka Dhaam's Mahatmya. (By the grace of Dwaraka, all kinds of sinners born as krimi keetakas or flies, pashu pakshis or serpents- all attain salvation; what else one has to say about those who visit or reside there and become surfeit with Bhagavan Shri Krishna's darshan and worship! Those residents of Dwaraka should attain such kind of salvation as even illustrious Maha Munis with extraordinary control of physical organs and senses might possess! Dwaraka vasi's darshana or sparshana or mere touch, would destroy human's gravest sins and bestow long stay in Swarga. Even the sand flown by the wind of Dwaraka would destroy all the sins; why talk of residence in Dwaraka itself!) Such is the narration by Markandeya Maharshi in this Purana! He further describes that those persons who spend time at Lord Krishna's idol at Dwaraka are blessed and fulfilled deserving to be saluted and prostrated to. Further those devotees of Shri Krishna have the opportunity of bathing his sacred head with milk should reap the fruits performing Ashwamedha Yagna. But those devotees who, with no return favour from the Lord, perform affectionate yet devotional bathing to him should be blessed with Moksha. After the snaana, those who dry and wipe his body with a clean cloth would have his or her past and present sins. Those after bathing and dressing up, decoration of him with a fresh fragrant flower garland while the sound of conch shell is rendered and recite his sahasra naama with faith and dedication, then each word of the 'namaavali' would fetch him the fruit of giving away the daana of a kapila cow per each stanza of it. Additionally the recital of Gita, Gajendra moksha, Bhishma stava, or any of the Stotras by Maharshis would have the same benefit: *Yoga Shastraani Vedantaan yoginah Krishna sannidhou, Pathanti Ravi bimbam tu mithwaayaanti layam Hareyh/ Gitaa Naama shasram tu stavaraajastavanu smritih, Gajendra mokshanam chaapi Krishnasyaa staviya durlabham/* (Those Yogis recite Yoga shastra and Vedanta in the presence of Krishna shall break the barriers of Surya mandala and enter right into Vishnu Dhaam. The Five Maha Stotras viz. Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Vishnu Sahasra naama, Bhishma Stava Raja, Anusmriti and Gajendra Moksha are indeed the dearest Stotras of Bhagavan Shri Krishna. As briefly narrated the Mahatmya of Dwaraka from Skanda Purana, the basic and immediate cause for Lord Krishna headed by Yadavas is explained in Maha Bhagavata Purana, Vishnu Purana, Maha Bharata etc. Maha Bhagavata describes as follows: Pursuant to the termination of Kamsa, the tyrant King of Mathura -who had the discredit of imprisoning his own father Ugrasena out of ill justified ambition as well as his own sister Devaki and brother in law Vasudeva out of fear that their son Krishna, yet unborn might kill him- the two Queens of Kamsa, named Asti and Prapti, approached their father Jarasandha the evil Monarch of Magadha. Jarasandha attacked Mathurawith some twenty three 'akshouhinies' of infantry, cavalry and elephantry and challenged Krishna and Balarama. But as Krishna was to fight with massive opponents even with a minor number of Army basically with Kamsa's carry-forward loyalties, he called for his (Vishnu's) Saaranaga Dhanush with limitless arrows or his mace/ gada named Koumudi while Balarama's Hala or Plough and Musala. Thus Jarasandha despite his huge Army was no match and ran away from the battle. But he regrouped and strengthened his army again and again, each time getting routed. There were such attacks by some seventeen times. When Jarasandha was expected to attack for the eighteenth time, his allies viz, the alien mlechha forces called Yavanas headed by Kalayavana attacked Mathura with a massive thirty million barbarians of desperation and cruelty. Then Krishna and Balarama calculated that no doubt they could face the combined Army of Jarasandha and Kalayavana too but discretion being the better part of valour, especially since Yadava Army should not be hurt at all even in small number, they thought of a Master

Stroke: one to eliminate Kalayavana by tricking him and another to shift their Capital of Yadavas from Mathura to Dwaraka. They planned to build a new Capital City named Dwaraka on the West Coast , a modern City with 12 gates and all amenities and asked Vishwakarma, the Architect-cum-Builder ; the latter created a beautiful and well structured fortress touching the western Sea. By means of His mystic Yoga Maya or the power of Illusion, the citizens of Mathura got transferred lock-stock and barrel, over night to Dwaraka and found themselves in their own luxurious Palaces. Even as Balarama was defending Mathura, Lord Krishna attracted the attention of Kalayavana, passing singly by foot, by the main gate of Mathra; Kalayavana followed Krishna closely but always unreachable with some distance apart and led the Mleccha into a Mountain Cave. Thinking that Krishna known for his tricks had himself assumed a new form as an old and haggardly man inside the dark cave kicked him forcefully as the old man was fast asleep. Indeed, the old man was none other than Muchukunda, the son of Mandhata of Ishvaaku dynasty. He was the defender of Demi- Gods from Daityas for long in TretaYuga and Lord Kartikeya the Commander-in-Chief appreciated Muchukunda's efforts and granted him rest and sleep till Lord Vishnu Himself as his Avatara named Krishna would bless him at a later date in Dwapara Yuga. As Kalayavana forcibly kicked Muchukunda, the former burnt off Kalayavana by his angry looks and realised Krishna as his Saviour when Krishna instructed Muchukunda to perform Tapasya. Thus Krishna got rid of Kalayavana even all the Mathura resident Yadavas got nicely transported to their new Capital Dwaraka! Incidentally, Jarasandha finally got killed by Bhimasena, thanks to Krishna's finger-sign advice to Bhima to tear Jarasandha's body into two and throw the two parts apart topse-turvey; after Bhima killed Jarasandha some thousands of Kings defeated in wars besides countless youthful girls kidnapped were liberated. Skanda Purana prescribes the method of Yatra to Dwaraka Dhaam; after satisfying with wholesome meals to good Vaishnava Bhaktas, the yattris need to sleep on the ground peacefully observing Celibacy and while travelling keep reciting Vishnu Sahasra naama, Purusha Sukta, Shrimad Bhagavatam etc. Then having taken bath in Gomati Nadi, Chakra Tirtha etc. enter the Dham with extreme devotion and total faith. The then Dwaraka township got drowned in the Sea anyway as soon as Lord Krishna disappeared and assiduous researches over considerable time reveal- though contradictory- that the ancient Dwaraka is perhaps under Arabian Sea at Kathiawad. The newly constructed Dwaraka- some 450 km from Ahmedabad- is stated to be on the banks of Gomati River but one version is that this is not Gomati but an extended body of Sea water, and that is why some call Dwaraka as Gomati Mukha where nine ghats have been constructed viz. Sangama Ghat, Narayana Ghat, Vaasudeva Ghat, Go ghat, Parvati ghat, Pandava ghat, Brahma ghat, Suravana ghat and Sarkari ghat. The Main Mandir called Dwarakaadheesh (also called Ranchodrai Mandir but one of the devotees was stated to have transferred the earlier Shama Sundara Chaturbhuj Murti took it away to Dhakor and another similar Murti appeared in a Well at a Ladwa village and thus got replaced here); this Mandir is said to have been built in 6th or 7th century. As it stands now has a shikhar height of 170 ft. its entry gate named Swarga Dwar and exit gate as Moksha Dwaar. Besides other Mandirs around Dwarakaadheesha Main Mandir, near Moksha dwaar there is Kusheswar Shiva Mandir which is significant as the legend prescribes that in case the Yattris not obtaining the Darshan of Kusheswara Linga, half of the Dwaraka Yatra Phala is taken away by Daityas. Sharada Mandir is another highlight of Dwaraka as Adi Shankaracharya established one of the Main Peethas as at Puri, Badari, Shringeri and Kanchi.

Bet (Island) Dwaraka/ Shankho dwar: is some 15 km from Dwaraka which in the past was a full-fledged Port before the development of Ohka Port. On way from Dwaraka to the Bet is the famed Rukmini Devi Mandir some 2 km near the Main Temple stated to have been built in the 12th century. In the 'Bet' itself

is the old Shamkho Narayan Mandir and the Idols of the Queens of the Lord viz. Lakshmi, Radha, Satyabhama and Jambavati. Shri Krishna Mahal also earlier called Pradyumna Mandir, besides Rancchod and Trivikrama Mandir are there too on the Bet. In fact, there are Shivalayas, Vaishnava Temples, Hanuman and Devi Mandirs are scattered all over. The well known Gopi Talaab is nearby where Gopikas were stated to bathe often.

98) Ayodhya: *Akaaro Brahmatah proktam Yakaaro Vishnuruchyate, Dhakaaro Rudra rupascha Ahodhyaanaama raajate/ Sarvopa Paatakairyuktair rahmahatyaadi paatakai, Na yodhyaa shaktate yasmaattaam ayodhyaam tato viduh/* (Skanda Purana, Vaishnava Khanda Ayodhyaa) Ayodhyaa is defined as ‘A-kaara is Brahma, Ya-kaara is Vishnu and Dha-kaara is Rudra Swarupa; thus Ayodhya is a composite form of Tri Murthis. Maha Pataakas too are demolished by naming the Name of Ayodhya!) Valmiki Ramayana in Bala kaanda exclaims: *Manunaa Maanavendrena saa Puri nirmitaa swayam/* (Manu confirms that he himself constructed Ayodhya himself!) In his opening introduction of Ayodhya Kaanda of Skanda Purana, Maha Muni Suta greets Bhagavan Shri Rama saying: *Namaami Parama-atmanam Ramam rajiva lochanam, Atasikusuma shyamam Ravanaantaka mavyayam /* (My greetings to Lord Shri Rama the Paramatma who is lotus eyed and of blue colour the terminator of the cruel and vile Ravanaasura). Ayodhya puri is so sacrosanct that sinful beings could ever enter it, let alone reside there! From his right foot thumb emerged Ganga and Sarayu river got manifested from left foot thumb. That is why both the Rivers are Sacred and worthy of prostrations and bathing in these rivers is as effective as destroying Brahma hatya sin. Even before the Avatara of Shri Rama, Ayodhya was the Capital of Surya Vamsha Kings of Ikshwaku; the latter was the son of Vaivashwata Manu and to this dynasty belonged to the illustrious Bhagiratha, Ambarisha, Nahusha, Yayati, Nabhaga, Ajan and Dasharatha. Skanda Purana in Vaishnava Khanda, Ayodhya Mahatmya gives the account of Veda Vijnana Vishnu Sharma whose severe Tapasya attracted Maha Vishnu darshana and the Pandita’s request to him him the boon of constant Vishnu darshana; in turn Maha Vishnu instructed Sudarshana Chakra to dig up Bhumi and bring up Ganga from Patala Loka and the resultant Sacred Water flow was materialised as *Chakra Tirtha*. Earlier, Brahma himself resided at Ayodhya even before the incarnation of Shri Rama and hence the emergence of *Brahma Kund*. Brahma conveyed to Devas about the significance of this Tirtha -as given in Skanda Purana- would be such as that whoever performed formal snaana at the Kund and gave away daana would have been deemed as securing Ahwamedha yagna phala and blessed to fly as clad in Divya Vastras to Brahma Loka for residing there till the ensuing Pralaya. From Brahma kunda to the not too far Sarayu River is *Runa Vimochana Tirtha* where Muni Lomasha popularised specially among his followers who were delighted as the debts of one’s very existence by way of births and deaths to parents and sons and the teacher, quite apart from the material debts of the current and past ‘janmas’ are cleared by snanas at the Tirtha. To the east of the Runa Vimochana Tirtha is the *Paapa mochana Tirtha*. Skanda Purana narrates the story of Panchala desha Brahmana was Maha Paapi who became conscious of his heaping stocks of sins and casually heard the conversation of a Group of Sadhus visiting Ayodhya. He visited Paapa Vimochana Tirtha along with them and happened to bathe on a Maagha Krishna Chaturdashi and also performed daana karyas and he realised an unusual transformation in his psyche and was surprised to vision a Viman beckoning him and flew to Vishnu dhaam. Ahead of the glorious Paapa machana Tirtha is the *Sahasra dhaara Tirtha* which is known for demolishing all obstacles in life and overcoming enemies by mere snaana with faith and mental discipline. This indeed was the very Tirtha where after the close of the entire Ramayana, Lord Shri Rama instructed Lakshmana to bathe and by his own Mantra Shakti assume the Form of Adi Sesha! Actually, the background was that when Shri Ram who had once had an

important visitor viz. Kaal Devata about which even Lakshman was unaware and instructed Lakshman not to enter and allow any visitor to enter either. Lakshman was faithfully guarding the entry of Rama Nivas by taking sincere rounds up and down the 'dwaar'. Meanwhile Maha Tapaswi Durvasa Maharshi who is noted for his short temper arrived and affectionately asked Lakshmana to let Ram inform of his arrival for Rama darshan. Lakshman being aware of Durvasa's shaapa shakti alerted Rama of the Muni's arrival. With a view to protect his own Satya Vak Paripalana of Lakshman's disobedience despite his instruction, Rama had to resort to the extreme step of asking Lakshmana to perform Prana tyaga of Lakshmana. As Lakshmana took the form of Adishesha and visited Indra Loka even as the Sahasra Manis and their luster vanished, the lest the Tirtha place on Sarayu diminish significance, Indra and Devas arrived on the Spot ensured and in fact doubled its glory and sanctity and named it Sahasra Dhaara Tirtha and Lord Shri Rama blessed the title too for the benefit of posterity and Loka Kalyan. *Swarga dwara dhaara*: Skanda Purana further describes as follows: Every Tirtha darshana has one's own benefits yet Swarga dwara Tirtha has its own: Pratah kaala snana, japa-tapa-havana-upavasa-darshana-dhyaana-adhyana- daanas have their distinct results and those beings like the Chatur varna humans, mriga-pakshi-jala chara-krimi keetakaadi pranis happen to die at this Tirtha are qualified to direct access to Swarga and Vaikuntha dhaam. Bhagavan Vishnu in his Avatara Swarupas, especially of Shri Rama with his wife and brothers are stated at this Tirtha to select beings for their respective Punya Phalas and decide their 'nirnyas' based on their own past karmas overshadowing their contributions at the Swarga dwaara snaanas and punya karma mix. And so does the presence of Kailasha Vaasi along with Devi Parvati and their followers would oversee the process of selection of Beings for the Higher Loka Prapti, asserts the Skanda Purana. Near Swarga dwaara is the Nageshwara nath Mandir; it is stated that originally this Murti was originally made of Kusha grass but later King Vikramadyta resurrected and re-established the Idol with Veda mantras in a move to revive several 'Praachina' or age old Mandirs in Ayodhya. Yatris perform Pinda daana at Swarga dwaara Ghat with great devotion and bhakti. *Chandra Sahasra Tirtha* where Chandra sahasra vrata Udyapana is performed as also Argha danas are done on every Purnima Tithis to Chandra-Rohini Devis. *Swarna Tirtha* where Maharshi Vishwamitra's sishya Koutsa Muni called on Raghu Rama once and said that he wished for so much of wealth which he desired to give to his Guru which Rama too might not possess. Shri Rama thought for a while and requested the Muni to please stay back in his court of Ayodhya overnight. Then Shri Rama invited Kubera Deva to bring considerable gold and on receiving it gave it away to Koutsa Muni. Next morning, Rama gave away all the gold given by Kubera and kept up his word by redonating the same to the Muni and truly satisfied him. This Swarna Tirtha had thus attained a gold-bestowing reputation and fulfill the material desires of who ever performed worship by way of snaana- daana-Japas with utmost faith. One of Ayodhya's major Mandirs is *Kanak Bhavan* which is quite big and mention worthy whis was supposed to be of Shri Ram's 'antahpura' or the interior palace hall where Devi Sita resided too. There are big sized Sita Rama Idols seated on a throne together in the Mandir as also the idols of the very past which were however smaller. From Kanaka Bhavan away is the most famed **Shri Rama Janma Sthaana** which was stated to have been rebuilt as Masjid Babri ; this Masjid which became the hot controversy was partially destroyed to make way for the original now albeit as a small make believe Mandir. Near to Raa Janma Sthaana are Sita Rasoyi or kitchen, Kopa bhavan or the Place where the love-fight Rama- Sita couple stayed; Ratna Simhasan or the Royal Throne made of jewels, Ananda Bhavan or the Palace of Joy, Ranga Mahal or the Hall of Music and Dance etc. The other Places worthy of visiting in Ayodhya's Sarayu River banks include *Lakshman Ghat* with a five feet Lakhmana Swami in the Mandir exclusively dedicated to him; *Ahalya Ghat* where Lord Rama is stated to have performed Yagna; *Hanuman gadhi* on an elevated sixty steps an Lord Hanuman in seated form;

Darshaneshwar, Mani Parvat with Ashoka Stupa of broken 200 ft; *Dantana Kund* where Rama was stated to have had his mouth wash, where also Gautama Buddha, while in Ayodhya too rested. *Dasharatha kund* was the Place some few km. away on Sarayu River banks where King Dasharatha's 'Antya Dahana' was stated to have been performed. A mini- Parikrama of some 4 km around Ayodhya touches Ramaghat, Raghunadha Das gaddi, Sita kund, Agni Kund, Vidya kund, Mani Parvat, Kubera parvat, Sugriva parvat, Lakshman ghat, Swarga dwaar and back to Ram ghat. While no doubt Shri Rama Navami Celebrations on Chaitra Shukla Navami are famed for several days every year, Shravana ShuklaPaksha festivities and Sarayu River snaaas are considered as very sacred, especially on Kartika Purnima.99) Naimisharanya:The 41st Adhyaya of Uttarakanda of Kurma Purana makes a detailed reference of Naimisharanya when Suta Muni in his address to Rishis and Brahmanas said as follows: *Idam Trailokya vikhyatam Teertham Naimishatanyamuttamam, Maha Devapriyakaram mahapaatakanaashanam/* (This Naimisha Tirtha is reputed all over the Trilokas as the most beloved of Maha Deva and the demolisher of all kinds of blemishes and sins.) The Purana further states that Lord Brahma materialised this Tirtha to facilitate the Tapasya of Maha Munis like Marichi, Atri, Vasishta, Kratu, Bhrigu and Angira and their generations as these Maharshis made express supplication to this effect. Brahma told the Maharshis: *Satram sahasramaasadhwam Vaangmanodoshah varjitaah, Deshamcha vah pravakshyami yasmin desho charishyatha/* (Maharshis! Do perform thousands of Yagjnas by sacrificing all kinds of vocal and mental shortcomings; I shall specify a Sanctified spot where you could perform these deeds of virtue) So saying Brahma materialised a Manomaya chakra or Mind borne wheel and asked the Maharshis to follow it soon. He further said: *Yatrasya nemih sheeryet sa Desha Purusharshabhaah, Tatomuvaacha tacchakram te cha tatsamauvrajan, Tyasya vai vrajatah kshipram yatra nemirashershayat, Naimisham tatsmrutam naamna punyam sarvatra pujitam/* (Wherever the Manomaya chakra's outside circle would break off, that specific spot would indeed be worthy and highly auspicious of executing all deeds of virtue like Yagjnas and so on). That Spot indeed has eventually become famed as having been frequented by Deva, Gandharva, Yaksha, Naaga, Rakshasas too besides Maharshis and Brahmanas who all seek Parameshwara. *Anna daanam tapastaptam snaanam japyaadikam cha yat, Ekaikam paavbayet paapam sapta janmakrutam Dwijaah/* (What ever Punya Karyas like Danas, Tapa, Snaana, Japaadis are executed here should indeed root out all types of sins for seven previous births with retrospective effect). In the days of yore, Vaya Deva himself narrated the Brahmanda Purana as scripted by Brahma to Rishis performing yagjnas here. Also Rudra Deva along with Pramatha Ganas was in the habit of freely moving about this hallowed Naimisharanya! *Atra praanaan parityajya niyamena Dwijaatayah, Brahma lokam gamishyanti yatra gatwaa na jaayate/* (At the last stages of life the prescribed regulations are to eke one's life and indeed be eligible to pack up for Brahma Loka itself and would not have to have a rebirth!). Besides Kurma Purana, Chapters of Shiva Purana, Maha Bhagavata, Maha Bharata and so on are devoted about the Naimisharanya Tirtha where Suta Maha Muni rendered discourses to congregations of Sages headed by Shaunaka Muni about the Eighteen Maha Puranas after performing daily Yagjnas at this hallowed Naimisharanya where the Kala Chakra's paridhi or the circumference or outer circle called 'nemi' collapsed here and hence the Hallowed Place has been called Naimisha on the banks of Gomati River, off 160 km from Luknow the Capital of Uttar Pradesh. Naimisha is also one of the major 51 Sacred Spots for Pitru Sthaanas and the practice of Somavati Amavasya Tarpanas are still organised. During Dwapara Yuga, Balarama Deva performed Yagjnas here, besides Veda Vyasa divided the single Veda to four distinct Vedas, scripted Maha Bharata here too and various other Scriptures. Lalitha Devi's worship is performed at the main Mandir here while Chakra Tirtha is of legendary background. This Tirtha attracts thousands of devotees to perform 'snaanas' till date

especially on Pournamis and Solar/Lunar eclipse days. *Chakra Tirtham maha Punyam sarva Paapa pranaashanam, Vateete madhya bhage tu prithvyaah sarvanathakam/ Kurukshetre tu yatpunyam Rahugrassita Divakare, Tat phalam labhate naiva Chakra Tirthasya majjananaat/ Naimishe Chakra tirtheshu snatwa Bharata sattama, Sarvavyaadhi vinirmukto Brahma loke maheeyate/* -Maha Bharata Shanti Parva. (Chakra Tirtha is Maha Punya Prada and Maha Paapa vinashaka; the Tirtha is as significant as that of the Chakra created by Brahma's heart; the maha Phala that is accrued to snanas at Chakra Tirtha is stated to be that one attains at Kurukshetra on Solar Eclipse day when Rahu devours Surya. Snaanas at Chakra Tirtha are such as the unique smasher of all sins) It is believed that Chakra Tirtha is fathomless and delegations of British swimmers and navigators desirous of disproving the myth organised experiments by diving upto 1000 mts or 30,000 feet depth and gave up for want of oxygen reserves. There is also a 18 ft high Hanunan Idol carrying Rama and Lakshmana on his shoulders as having rescued them from Mahi Ravana hidden in Patala Loka. The local belief is that when Indrajit the son of Ravana was killed in the Ramayana Battle, Ravana asked his brother Mahi Ravana the King of Patala; a conspiracy was hatched to some how abduct Rama Lakshmanas and despatch them to Patala so that the brotheres could be sacrificed to Chandi Devi. Vibhishana now in Rama's camp came to know of the plot and warned Hanuman to be vigilant but assuming Vibhishana Rupa, Ravana succeeded in abducting Rama Lakshmana in deep sleep and despatched them to Patala. Hanuman realised the deceit and reached Patala and with the help of Makaradhwaja who was Hanuman's sweat born son helped entry into Patala and destroyed Mahi Ravana and carried them on his shoulders to Chakra Tirtha at Naimisha. Devi Bhagavata describes the significance of Lalitha Devi Mandira at Naimisha as that of Vishalakshi Mandira at Varanasi: *Varanasyam Vishalaakshi Gauri Mukha nivasini, Kshetre vai Naimishaaranye proktaa saa Linga dharini*/It may be recalled that 51 Shakti Pithas were given in detail in the earlier pages of this Script, but actually 108 Shakti Peethas are stated and the Linga Dharaini Lalitha Devi's heart in part [besides at Baidhyanath Dham as Jaya Durga in Jharkhand] also fell of Devi Sati's mortal body at Naimisha. Apart from Vyasa Shukadeva Sthaana afore mentioned, Swayambhu Manu and Devi Shatarupa 'Taposthaana' too is mention worthy as the lineage of Fourteen Manus including the current Vaivaswata Manu got initiated since then. The famed Dashaashwamedha Yagna or the tenth Ashwamedha performed by Shri Rama, Devi Sita and Lakshmanaadi brothers and wives was a memorable success here at Naimisha on Treta Yuga. Annapurna and Vishwanatha mandir at Naimisha is known for devotees executing Pitru Karyas. Dadhichi Kund Snana is stated to be of great importance as that is the Sacred Place where Dadhichi Muni donated his backbone and body with which Indra made Vajrayudha and many other armoury of Devas with which Vritrasura was executed for Loka Kalyan or Universal Relief and Auspiciousness. Suta Muni Gaddi and Pancha Prayaga on the banks of which Akshaya Vata Vriksha are worthy of not missing by yattris. Naimisharanya Parikrama of some 4-5 km covering most of the Sacred Places mentioned is possible. More than this organised tours are conducted from far off Places upto Lucknow for Yajna karyas and Bhagavata Saptahas for week long stays at Naimisha which provides unique spiritual solace and fulfillment. Hardly 5 km from Naimisha is Gomati River known as Dhouta-paapa and Sita kunda Tirthas too, where Devi Janaki was bathing getting ready for Ashwamedha Yagnas!100) Mathura : Puranas signify the Uniqueness of Mathura which is called with varying names like Madhupatra, Madhupuri, Mathura or Madhura as this was described in Itihasas was rid of the torments by Madhu Daitya by Shatrughna the younger brother of Lord Shri Rama of Ramayana and more so as the Sacred Place of Bhagavan Krishna. Varaha Purana describes: *Na vidyate cha Patale nantirikshe na maanushe, Samaanam Mathurayaahi priyam mama Vasundhare/ Saa ramyaa cha sushastaa cha janmabhumistathaa mama/* (There is no other more beloved Tirtha like Mathura for me even better than

those in Patala, Antariksha or Bhuloka) *Maha maghyam Prayage tu yat phalam labhate Narah, Tat phalam labhate Devi Madhuraayaam dine dine/* (The same fruitful results that one could reap at Prayaga the Sangama Place of Three Holy Rivers of Ganga-Jamuna-Saraswati on Magha Month's Pournami is normally available each day at Mathura) *Purna Varha sahasram tu Varanasyaam hi yat phalam, Tat phala labhate Devi Madhraayaam kshanamna hi/* (Residing thousand years at Kasi is considered as fruitful as a 'Kshana' or a moment at Mathura). Similarly, the visit to Pushkara Tirtha and stay there on Kartika Pournami is indeed fruitful and that would bless a person to accomplish with Mathura Yatra. Vishnu Purana also describes that snana and darshana of Mathura Krishna on Janmashtami, Yama Dwiteeya, and Jyesta Shukla Dwadashi are considered to be of great consequence. Vajramandali has twelve Sacred 'Vanas' viz. Madhunvana, Kumudavana, Kamyakavana, Bahula vana, Bhadravana, Swadiravana, Shrivana, Mahavana, Lohajinghvana, Bilvavana, Bhandiravana, and the most popular Brindavana. While each of these Vanas have their own significance, indeed Brindavana is of utmost prominence. Padma Purana underlines the special status of Brindavana: *Guhyad guhyatamam ramyam madhyam Brindaavanam Bhuvi, Aksharam Paramanandam Govindasthaanamavyayam/* (Brindavana on Earth indeed is the body of Bhagavan Srikrishna itself and is seat full of joy and even the touch of the dust would pave the way for salvation. When asked about the way to attainukti, Bhagavan Krishna smilingly replied that let 'Vraja raja' or the dust from Vraja Bhumi may fall on your head! The old name of Madhura was Madhuvana where in the days of yore Swayambhu Manu's grandson Dhruva who sparks on the sky as a Star was directed by Narada Muni to perform severe Tapasya stating *Punyam Madhuvanam yatra saannidhyam nityadaa Hareyh!* and Bhagavan Vishnu blessed him to attain stardom! Madhura on its banks flows Yamuna River and as many as twenty four main 'ghats' are spread out like Vishrama Ghat, Prayaga ghat, Kankhala ghat, Bindu ghat, Bangali ghat, Surya ghat, Chintamani ghat, Dhruva ghat, Rishi ghat, Moksha ghat, Koti ghat, Brahma ghat, Ganesa ghat, Manasa ghat, Dashashwamedha ghat, Chakra tirtha ghat, Krishna ganga ghat, Soma tirtha ghat, Brahma loka ghat, Ghantaabharana ghat, Dharapatana ghat, Sangama Tirtha ghat, Nava Tirtha ghat, and Asikunda ghat Each of these Ghats has an episode to describe such as Vishrama ghat where Krishna and Balarama rested for a while King Kamsa was killed; Asikunda Ghat is renowned as Varaha Kshetra and so on. On all the four sides of Mathura are four Shiva Mandiras viz. Bhuteshwara in the Western side, Pippaleswar on the Eastern side, Rangeshwar on the Southern side and on the Northern side is Gokarneshara. *Dwarakaa - dheshwara* is the most well known Mandir. Besides the other Mandirs are Gatathama Narayana, Vaaraaha, and Govinda Mandirs. Mathura Parikrama is applauded in Varaha Purana: *Mathuraam samanuprapya yastu kuryaat Pradakshinam, Pradakshini kruta tena Sapta Dwipa Vasundhara/* (Those who perform parikramas of Mathura are stated to have done so around Sapta Dwipas from Vasundhara/ Earth).

Brindavana: About 8 km from Mathura is Brindavan comfortably reachable by motor and on way one could see Gita Mandir. Many perform Parikrama to Brindavan daily too. Brahma Vaivarta Purana details the origin of Brindavan that in the Satya Yuga King Kedar's daughter Brinda performed intense Tapasya to attain Krishna Bhagavan [mortal Krishna was an Incarnation in Dwapara Yuga] and Bhagavan blessed Brinda with his darshan and Brinda Devi was the principal figure in the Rasa Leelas stated to have been performed with Brinda at Brindavana by Lord Krishna the Avatar in Dwapara Yuga. The significant places on the banks of the Sacred Yamuna River are Kaliya Hrada at Nandanavana where Bala Krishna punished Kaliya serpent; Yugala ghat where Yugala Kishora Mandir with Radha Krishna Idols are present; Radhavallabha Mandir with swaambhu Shalagrama shila, Shri Ranga Mandir, Govinda Deva Mandir, Shahji Mandir, Biharji Mandir of Thakur, Krishna Balarama Mandir (Iscon), Madan Mohan

(Chaitanya Maha Prabhu) Mandir, Garud Govinda Mandir, Jaipur Mandir, Radha Damodar Mandir, Radha Ras Bihari Ashta Sakhi Mandir, Kesi Ghat where Krishna decimated Kesi demon etc. Not far from Brindavan are Gokula, Mahavana, Baladeva, Nandagaon and Govardhana some 10 km from Mathura. Vraja Desha Parikrama stated to be of 84 kms of distance with a duration of 16 days would witness among others Madhuvan, Talavan, Kumudvan, Danvaktra dhvamsa, Vallabhavana, Radhakund, Govardhana, Paraseeli which Vallabhachaya followers consider this Place as Bridavana, Kamavana, etc. 100) Tiruvaayippadi: This is a Shri Krishna Leela sthala. Lord Nava Mohana Krishna along with Devis Rukmini and Satyabhama are visualised as standing together viewing Nanda Deva.. Alwar Vishnuchitta and Goda Devi had their divya darshana

(101) Badarika Dhaam: *Narayanah prabhu Vishnuh shaswatah Purushottamah, Tyasyaatishasah Punyaam vishaalaam Badarimanu, Ashramah khyayate punyastrishu lokeshu vishrutah, Anyatra maranaan muktih sadharma vidhipurvakaat, Badari darshanaadeva muktih pumsaam kare khyaatam/* (Maha Bharata) (Bhagavan Narayana who is eternal and all pervasive Purushottama and is stated to get concentrated in Badari without exaggeration as its Ashramas are stated to be seats of Maha Punya of universal renown; deaths in all other Punya Kshetras are known for bestowing mukti to any human being especially on practice of one's own Varna dharma but Badari Darshana in itself would suffice to achieve the goal.) There is a detailed chapter on Badarikaashrama Mahatmya in Skanda Purana of Vaikuntha khanda. *Harati hridaya bandham karma paashaadimtaanaam virati padamucchairalpa janmaika bhaajaam/ Janana marana karma shranta vishraanta hetu trijagati manujnaanaam durlabhah satprasangah/* (In all the Trilokas 'Satsanga' or Ideal Company of persons of virtue is rare to secure, but once they are fortunate then their KarmaPaasha or shackles of Samsara would free their hard knots of heart get loosened and facilitate the hard screws of the ever rotational wheel of births and deaths get released) This being so, the Parama Tirtha Badari is replete with Maha Sadhus as that indeed is the Seat of Narayana and their 'sahavasa' is certain to get the process of snapping the shackles referred above. Maha Bharata also describes similarly: *Yatra Narayano Devah Paramatmaa sanatanah, Tatra kurustram jagat sarvam tirthonyaayatanaani cha/ Tat punyam paramam Brahma tat Teertham tat tapovanam, Tat param pramam Devam bhutaanaam Parameshwaram/ Shaswatam paramam chaiva dhaataaram paramam padam, Yam viditatwaa na shochanti vidwamsah shastra drushtyah/* (Where Narayana Himself is, that indeed is the Parama Tirtha or the Outstanding Place in the entire Universe and Tapovana where Parabrahma-Paratpara-Parameshwara who is the Ultimate Spot totally devoid of anguish, anxiety, and everlasting bliss as strongly believed with conviction by Shastra Vettas). Varaha Purana states: *Shri Badarashramam punyam yatra yatra sthitah smaret, Sa yaati Vaishnavam snaanam puraraavritta varjitah/* (From any where any person merely thinks of Badari Kshetra which is the unique Vaishnava sthaana would be redeemed of punarjanma) Reverting back to Badari kshetra of Skaanda Purana, Skanda Kumara was enlightened by Maha Deva himself that Agni Deva's curse that he would be sarva bhakshaka as the latter performed intense Tapasya after purifying himself in Ganga snana and on obtaining Vishnu darshana extolled him in a trance and Narayana replied that even on a stay for a while at Badari Kshetra would suffice to demolish patakas and due to his benevolence for sure Agni's curse as Sarva bhakshaka would be negated and further more the Tirtha to be henceforth would qualify human beings taking bath in the Agni Tirtha would also be qualified to demolish his or her patakas too. Bhavagan Narayana further assured that the Pancha Maha Patakas that normally human beings are subjected to-not to mention of minor blemishes- would be washed off by snanas at Five Shila Swarupas of Narayana himself viz. Naradi-Naara simhi-Vaahi-Gaarudi and Markandeyi; he awarded three boons to humanity viz. to those

who who stay put at any one of these Shilas; or who reside there for long; or who would perform darshana- sparsha- snaana and achamana. Besides the afore mentioned Shilas are also famed for performing snana- Narayana puja are Kapala Tirtha, Brahma Tirtha, Vasudhara Tirtha, Pancha Tirtha, Soma Tirtha, Dwasashaaditya Tirtha, Bramha kunda, Meru Tirtha, Dandapushkarini Tirtha, Ganga sangama, Dharma Kshetra and so on. Besides these Sciptures descriptions on Badari Maha Kshetra are given in Devi Bhagavata, Varahokta and so on. Hardly a few steps down the Main Entrance of Badarinath Mandir is the Adi Shankara Temple in which Linga Murti Shiva is situated and futher down is Adi Kedara Mandir; in fact, it is stated that these two be first visited before Badari Narayana beneath which is situated the Tapta Kunda or the Agni Tirtha; right nearby are the famed Pancha Shilas viz. Garuda Shila, Narada Shila, Markandeya Shila, Nara Simha Shila and Varaahi Shila. From Tapta Kunda where Yatris enjoy a refreshing bath in hot water of about 45 degree heat and then reach the most renowned **Brahma Kapala** a fairly large platform signifying Lord Brahma's skull of one of his heads relieved by Lord Shiva as he was annoyed with Brahma as the latter got attracted to the beauty of his own creation Saraswati fit to be his own daughter. It is at this Kapala Vimochana Tirtha where Brahma performed severe Tapasya for atonement of his sin that yatris profer Pitru Shraddhas. From Brahma Kunda as Ganga flows and Alaknanda takes a turn from the mountains alongside Brahma Kapala. Then there are Atri-Anasuya Tirtha, Indrapada Tirtha, Mata Mandir, Nara Narayana Parvata, Chakra Tirtha, Satpatha and so on. From Satpatha upward the mountainous terrain is extremely difficuld to ascend and once one could do so would find a circular shaped Soma Tirtha might be visible but probably as a sheet of ice and its vicinity one might find if fortunate the Nara Narayana Mountain. On way from Satpatha to Badarinath occurs Alaknanda's another bank and Vasudhara which is about five miles from Badarinath is the Sangam Place of Sarastati leads to Keshava Prayag and Manaagram where Veda Vyas cave is accessible inside which Vyas scripted Eighteen Maha Puranas; a few meters away is situated Ganesh Guha /cave. *The Legendary background states that while Veda Vyasa was mentally scripting the Puranas, Ganesha agreed to write with his trunk on Taala Patras on the mutual agreement that Vyasa should pronounce in a non stop flow while Ganesha should write down in a non stop manner too simultaneously with no slips or interruptions on either side!* There is also the Muchukunda Guha or cave: here again a legendary background is attributed to it: Muchukunda of Iskshvaku Dynasty helped Devas in a tough battle with Daityas under the commandership of Lord Kartikeya; being pleased with the help, Kartikeya asked Muchukunda for a boon and the latter desired to have long rest. Kartikeya granted long rest which lasted from the then Treta Yuga end to Dwapara Yuga and blessed that Lord Vishnu would assume the Avatara as Krishna and till when he would enjoy uninterrupted sleep and would find Krishna but on opening his eyes a Daitya called Kala Yavana would be burnt to death. Exactly on these lines, Krishna, when faced with a battle with Kala Yavana and Jarasandha, misled Kalayanana to chase Krishna and led into the same mountain Cave near Dwaraka where Muchukunda was sleeping and in darkness of the cave made Kalayavana trample Muchukunda who was disturbed and with vision Kalayavana was burnt to death. On recognising Krishna Muchukunda prayed to him profusely and Krishna instructed Muchukunda to stay at the Cave near Managram near Badari Tirtha!

102) Deva Prayaga: Distance from Rishikesh to Devaprayag is 28 km. approx. possible by motor cars etc. where River Bhagirathi the Ganga flow from Gangottari and Alaknanda from Badarinath merge together and is just less than a km. ascent away from Lakshmana Jhoola at Rishikesh adjoining three mountains known as Gruddrachal, Narasimhachal and Dashyaradachal. This is also called Sudarshana Kshetra popular for offering Pitru shraaddha and Pitru pinda dana. This is the straight run to Badarinath.

103) Jyotishmutt: This Vishnu Kshetra is some 103 miles away from Haridwar where Parama Purusha Bhagavan along with Parimalavalli Lakshmi is lying as shesha saayi and Devi Parvati had their darshan.

104) Shaalagraamam or popular as Muktinarayana is famed in Nepal, some 100 miles from Gorakpur where Sri Murti Bhagavan and Shri Devi Lakshmi is standing northward. This Kshetra is situated on the banks of River Gandaki and the Temple is also signified with Chakra Tirtha. This is indeed the hallowed place where *Saalagramashilaas* are available aplenty. Brahma, Rudra and all the Devas had their divya darshanas at these magnificent banks of Gandaki.

105) Haridwar: *Swarga dwarena tattulyam Gangadwaram na samshayah, Tartaabhishekam kurvita kotitirthe samahitah/ Labhate Pundarikamcha kulam chaiva samudbhavet, Tatraika ratri vasena gosahasraphalam labhet/ Saptagange trigange cha shakraavate cha tarpayan, Devaan pitruscha vidhivat punye lokey maheeyate/ Tatah kankhale snatwaa triratiro poshito narah, Ashwamedhaapnoti Swarga lokam cha gacchati/* -Padma Purana, Adikhanda, Tirtha Yatra Parva (Haridwara is undoubtedly akin to Swarga Dwara. Those who bathe at the Ganga there are as good as taking bath at Crores of Tirthas, reaping the fruits of performing Pundarika Yajna and bringing to repute one's own Vamsha. Stayintg at Haridwar over night bestows the return of charities of Sahsra Godaana. Performing Sacred Snanas at the banks of Sapta Ganga, Tri Ganga and Shakravarta and offering Deva Pitru Tarpanas would establish themselves with name and fame in these Lokas; thereafter performing sacred baths at Kankhala and observe fasting for three successive nights shall indeed reap the benefit of Ashwamedha Yagna and after the termination of life shall take to the path of Swarga) Haridwar is also called Haradwar, Ganga Dwaar and Mayapuri. It is stated to be a combine of Five 'Puris' viz. Mayapuri, Haridwar, Kankhal, Jwalapur and Bhimgoda. It was at this Place that Brahmarsi Narada was enlightened by Sapta Rishis by way of a Maha Bhagavata Saptaah in a large gathering of Munis and Vishnu Bhaktas. The most significant spot in Haridwar is Brahma Kunda or what is popularly known as 'Hari ki Pairs'. Besides Ganga Dwar or Brahma kund or Hari ki paidi are situated in Haridwar another four Tirthas viz. Kushavarta, Bilwakesara, Nila Parvata and Kankhal- *Gangadware Kushavarte Bilwake Nilaparvate, Snaatwa Kankhale Tirthe punarjanma na vidyate/* (Vidhi poorvaka Snaana and Darshana of Bhagawan Vishnu would certainly qualify for no rebirth and Vaikuntha Prapti at each of these.) These Five Sacred Places represent Pouranic Significance as follows: *Brahma Kunda or Hari ki Pairs or Vishnu's foot steps:* Chakravarti Bhagirath had the outstanding reputation of bringing down Ganga from Vishnu's feet in Vaikuntha down to Kailasha as absorbed in the 'Jata jootas' or Maha Deva's course head-hair pleats. As Bhagirath further did Tapsya to Maha Deva, the Holy Ganga flowed down to Earth and another King Sweta prayed to Brahma Deva to let parts of the River to flow to his Kingdom and the flows came upto Brahma Kunda. Since Bhartruhari the brother of King Vikramaditya performed penances to Maha Deva on the banks of Brahma Kund and achieved Salvation, Vikramaditya constructed steps of the Kunda famed subsequently as *Hari ki Paidi*. This has come down as the legend of the yore. *Gavu ghat:* The southern side of Brahma Kund has come to acquire the popularity of redeeming Go hatyhadhi patakas by the Sacred Bathings at the Gavu ghat. *Kushavarta ghat:* Once Dattatreya performed severe 'Tapas' on the banks of Ganga not far from Gavu ghat as he kept his belongings viz. Kusha or the mat of Kusha grass, clothing and kamandalu or the water vessel on the banks of Ganga; one fierce wind blew away these items on the banks in circular fashions and since then the Ghat was then christened as Kushavarta. 'Pitru Karyas' and 'Pinda Danas' especially on Mesha Samkranti days are stated to go a long way resulting in 'Punar janma naasti' or no rebirth again. It is at this Ghat there is the Mandir of Shravana nath. Vishnu Ghat, Maya Devi Mandir, Ganesh ghat, Narayani Shila, Niladhara and Nileshwar, Kalimandir, Chandi Mandir, Anjani

Mandir being that of Hanuman's mother, and Gouri Shankar Mandir are all lined up there. *Bilwakeshwar*: Not far from 'Hari ki Paidi' the Bilwakeshwar Mandir is stated to be the erstwhile abode of Maha Ashwatara Naga of Patala who frequented it for Maha Deva darshan and 'snaanas' at this Tirtha is stated to bestow the Shiva Tulya status. *Kankhal*: This is the Sacred Tirtha which is the joint flow of Niladhara and Kankhal where nomad Munis used to necessarily halt and wash off all traces of 'Khal' or wickedness. *Daksheshwar Maha Deva* Mandir assumes outstanding significance in view of its Pauranic background of Daksha Prajapatis's Brihaspati Yagna to which his daughter Sati Devi's non invitation due to his hatred to his son-in-law Parama Shiva but still she attended the Yagna and was extremely offended by her father and as such resorted to the extreme step of self immolation in 'Yogaagni' when Maha Deva went berserk with fury, totally destroyed the yagna and beheaded Daksha Prajapati. With a view to mitigate the unusual fury of Maha Deva, Vishnu had to use his Chakra and quietly sliced off Sati Devi's mortal remains and threw away into fifty one pieces which eventually came to be famed as so many Shakti Peethas signifying Devi Sati's body parts as are venerated till date with awe and wonder. As Devas prayed to Maha Deva in torrential 'Stutis', He gradually cooled down and being a known embodiment of mercy and forgiveness, relented to the Prayers of Devas and allowed the beheaded Daksha to replace the latter's head with that of the goat meant for sacrifice at the ruined yagna and revived the Prajapati back to life! That is why this Holy Place is of unusual Mahatmya and yatis to Haridwar and is stated that their yatra would be futile without worship at Daksheshwar Maha Deva! This Holy Tirtha attracts unprecedented yatis on Shiva Ratri for its legendary background! Besides the above Tirthas, Haridwar has other Tirthas too like Sati Kund, Kapila Sthaana, Bhima Gouda, Sapta Dhara, Satya Narayana Mandir and Veerabhadreshwar each of which has their own background! From Haridwar to approx. forty miles is situated *Shuka taal* where Vyasa Maharshi's son Shuka Deva taught Maha Bhagavata Purana within a week's time to Panadava's descendant King Parikshit on the banks of Ganga. *Devaband* or Devivan some 8 km near Mujaffarnagar off Shaharanpur is known for Durga Mandir where *Durga Saptashati* was recited first as believed by 'Vidwamsas' of erudition.

106) Rishikesh: Hrishik-isha or Vishnu is the Supreme Lord of senses or alternatively Rishik-isha the Over-Lord of Rishis who controls senses. One view about the origin of this Holy Tirtha is that Rishi Raibhya's severe tapasya culminated in Maha Vishnu's darshan at Kubjamrika or Mango Tree (Skanda Purana) while another legend refers to the Tapasya of Brahmana Devadutta to Maha Vishnu as he had staunch faith in the identity of Vishnu as distinct from Shiva. Meanwhile, Indra commissioned Apsarasa named Pramlocha to test the Brahmana's ability to control his senses but failed and the result was their daughter named Ruru who on realising the background of her birth pursued Tapasya to 'Shiva Keshava' and Vishnu appeared and blessed. Varaha Purana thus states: *Maamevaavehi Vishnum swam maa pashya-swaantaram mama, Awaamekena bhaavena pashyastvam siddhimaapyasi/ Purvamantara bhavena drishtavaanasi yanmama, Tena vighnobhavad yena galitam swattapo maha/* (Do realise that Vishnu and Ishwara are just the same and in order to attain siddhi or Salvation soon, this basic identity be underlined. in the past the severe tapsya performed failed and ended up in obstacles) Another legend about the origin of Rishikesh signifies that once Maha Deva was annoyed about Agni Deva's indiscretions and there were severe flames that destroyed the area; Agni atoned for his sins at this Tirtha and thus resulted in the Agni Tirtha. Popularly known as Muni Reta or the Sands of Rishis, this highly Sacred Land was also the Place where Lord Shri Rama performed penance to achieve the abilities to terminate Ravanaasura and the land marks which enabled Rama Lakshmana to cross the Holy Ganga into deep forests are still existent as hanging concrete bridges converted from jute rope bridges-popularly named as Lashman and Ram

jhoolas. This Sacred Kshetra is also acclaimed as the Universal Capital of Yoga. .

107) Shri Vaikuntha or Paramapada: Shri Vaikuntha is the Ultimate and Eternal where Vaasudeva Narayana along with Maha Lakshmi lies gloriously on the Ananta Naaga. That is the Sacred most Sthala where Viraja flows, Soma Savana vriksha grows and Shriphala is tasted ever. Anantha, Garuda, Vishvaksena and such others have their 'nithya darshana'. Alwars Saroyogi, Maha Yogi, Bhaktisaara, Shathagopa, Kulashekhara, and all the rest of Alwars performed mangalaashasana to this Vishnu dhaam!108) Ksheera Sagara or Tiruppaalkadal: The Ocean of Milk flows among with Sapta Samudras. Ksheerabdi Nayaka and His Consort Kasheeraabdi Nayaki is in yoga nidra on the bed of Shesha right on the AmritaTirtha. Brahma, Rudra and all the Devas are enjoying their 'Saakshatkaara', while Alwar Sanths are in constant meditation.

Thus concludes the Account of the Prakhyaata Vishnu Sthalas across Bharata!

Daana Godaana Prashasti

Daatavyam pratyaham paatre nimittetu visheshatah, Yaachitenaapi daatavyam shraddhaa putam cha shaktitah/

(Maharshi Yagnyavalkya described the feature of 'Daana' or Charity: every human being should resort to daana dharma on each and every day as per one's own capacity, especially on the days of Solar and Lunar Eclipse days. Charity is indeed to be given to those asking for it as per one's ability!)

*Vaaridah triptimaapnoti sukhamakshayamannadah, Tilapradam prajaamishtaam deepadaschakshur -
uttamam/ Bhumido bhumi maapnoti deerghamaayurhiranyadah, Grihadograanivesh- maani rupyado
rupamuttamam/ Vaasodaschandra saalokyam Ashviptaalokyamashvadah, Anaduddhaha shriyam pushtim
godobadhnascha vishtapam/ Yaana shayaaprado bhaaryaamaishvarya mabhayapradah, Dhaanyadah
shasvatam soukhyam Brahmado Brahmasaastitaam/*

(Those who provide charity of water begets satisfaction, food yields Lasting happiness,tila daana bestows excellent progeny, charity of Light gets vision, Bhu dana begets lot more of Bhumi, Suvarna Daana provides longevity, Griha daana yields huge buildings, charity of cash bestows excellent beauty of physique, vastra daana provides Chandra loka, Ashva daana bestows Ashvini Deva Loka, charity of ox yields affluence, Go daana provides great health and body strength, he who gives away a comfortable bed is blessed with a wonderful wife, offering shield and protection begets opulence, dhanya daana bestows lasting happiness and tracing Brahma Vidya bestows Brahma Saakshatkaara!)

*Sarveshaameva daanaanaam Brahama daanam visishyate/ (Indeed Brahma Vidya daana is the ultimate
among all the types of Charities!) Ayaachtaani deyaani sarva daanaani yatnatah, Annam Vidyaaha
Kanyaachahyanarthibhyona deeyate// Dvaamimau purushaa loka swargasyopari tishthatah, Anna
pradaataa durbhikshe subhikshe hema vastradah/*

(Shandalya Muni mentions that all types of charities be offered without being asked for and with clean conscience or with no view of securing returns; however Vidya, Kanya and Anna must not be offered without being asked for as a rule! Indeed, there are two types of charity givers who attain Swarga for sure: those who heartily give away Food during Durbhiksha and also those who happily give away gold and clothing during the days of general prosperity!)

*Naalpatvam vaa bahutvam vaa daanasya abhyudaavaham, Shraddhaa Bhaktischa daanaanam
vridhikshayakare hite// Ishta dattam adheetam cha pranyanukirtanaat, Shlaaghaanu shochanaabhyaam
na vridhaa parikeertayet/*

(Devala Maharshi clarifies: Charity given in small or large quantities is irrelevant but whatever is handed over with Shraddha bhakti or reverence and sincerity are given and the recipient too should truly desire and deserve it! Contrariwise, there might be negative impact! If charity given out of expectation of appreciation is futile but the result is really needful and genuinely appreciated then that type of charity goes a long way!)

Samabrahmanye daanam dvigunam braahmanbruve, praadheete shata sahasram anantam Veda paarage/

(Daksha Prajapati describes that charity to less deserving Brahmana has double the impact to that of one who is given to a genuine Brahmana; in case that very daana is given to a Pandita or a learned Brahmana; but indeed the charity to a Veda Pandita bestows Ananta Punya or of Lasting Fruits!)

Vyaasa Smriti elaborates the concept of Daana further:

Svaantah krudhdhastamandhovaa kshutpipaasaa bhayaadhritah, daanam punyamakrutvaa cha prayaschittam dinatrayam/Anaahateshu yaddhaanam yaccha duttam ayaachitam, bhavishyati yugassyaanantah tasyaantato na bhavishyati/

(When a person gives away a charity to a quality Brahmana, while in a mental frame of tiredness, anger, ignorance, hunger, thirst or under compulsion, then such a charity would be ineffective and warrants for a three day prayaschitta) The type of Daana that is offered by special invitation and that which is given when asked for has considerable difference till the end of yugas, but there is no end of the concept of daana ever!)

Adrushte chaashubhe daanam bhoktaa chaiva na drushyate, punaraagamanam naasti tatra daanamanantakam/

(Daana with the apprehension of having to face inauspiciousness to the donor is of artificial nature, but nishkaama daana with no expectation of return is of lasting value especially when the daana karta would request for ‘punaraagamana’ or please come again!

Samam abrahmane daanam dvigunam Braahmana bruve, Sahasragum aacharye hyenanantam veda panditaa/

(To give charity to an undeserving Brahmana is not out of order and minimal, and so is one who claims as Brahmana by birth, yet daana given to an Acharya is thousand times better but to a Veda Vidwaan daana, is stated to be of endless fruits!)

Maata pitrushu yadyayaad bhraatrushu shvashureshucha, Jaayaapatyeshu yaddadyaad sonatah svarga samkramah//Pituh shatagunam daanam sahasra Maaturuchyate Bhaginyaam shata sahasram sodare duttamakshayam/

(In the current times, what Veda Vyasa states is indeed applicable: Charity that is provided to parents, brothers and father-in-law, own wife and children would pave the way to heavens. If the charity that is given to father is hundred folded, that given to mother is thousand folded, to sisters it is of lakh times more and to brothers is countless!)

2. Padma Purana: ‘Daanas’and ‘Tirtha Yatras’-Grihastas to perform ‘Punya karyas’ together:

Bhagavan Vishnu Himself extolled the supremacy of Daana and advised King Vena to perform Daana as the sure destroyer of sins and promoter of fame and happiness. Vishnu affirmed that He would readily reward whoever gave charity with a clean heart to a well-deserving Brahmana of foodgrains, clothes, Gold, Bhumi, Cows, Cash and such other gifts.

Bhagavan further described that there were four kinds of Danaas, viz. Nithya, Naimitthika, Kaamya and Praaya. Nitya Daana is in the form of Anna (food), fruits and flowers, Vastra (Clothes), Taamboola, Abhshana (Jewellery), Gold and such other items after worshipping Devas and Pitras. Naimitthika daanas are performed on Amavasyas, Pournamis, Ekadashis, Samkranti days or when Sun’s direction changes towards Uttarayana; Pournamis of Magha, Ashadha, Vaishakha and Kartika months; Somavati Amavasya, Aswin Krishna Trayodasi, Pitru Tithi etc. and these are effective and highly propitiating. Kaamya Danaas are in the context of Vratas, Deva Pujas, weddings, Jaata karmas, Upanayanas, Temple

Pujas, Bhu-sthapana karyas or Earth breaking tasks of housing, wells, Sarovars etc. all targetted for the success of the desired tasks. Other types of Danaas of Praya nature are oriented to 'Mrityu' and targetted to provide to Peace to departed Souls in 'Paralokas'. Describing the significance of Tirtha Yatras to King Vena, Bhagavan Vishnu emphasised River Ganga as the most sacred, besides other Rivers like Sarasvati, Narmada, Yamuna, Taapi (Tapati), Charmanvati, Sarayu, Ghaghra, Vena, Kaveri, Kapila, Vishaala, Godavari, Tungabhadra, Bhimarathi, Vedika, Krishaanga, and so on. In fact, there are countless such Tirthas dotting the Punya Bhumi of Bharat in which Snaana and Daana karmas yield excellent results and all such Tirthas are called in fact, there are countless such Tirthas dotting the Punya Bhumi of Bharat in which Snaana and Daana karmas yield excellent results and all such Tirthas are called Vishnu Tirthas. In fact, Tirthas are every where like Sarovars of Manasa status, Mountains like Meru, Himalayas and Vindhya; Yagna Bhumis, Agnihotra Homa Places, Shraddha Bhumis, Deva Mandirs, Homa Shalas, Vaidika Swadhyaaya Mandirs, Goshaalas, residences of Somayaaji Brahmanas, where Pita and Mata live, where Puranas are recited and heard, where Veda Shravana is heard, where Guru lives and each and every Place of Worship! Another important aspect which Bhagavan Vishnu emphasised was that for a Grihasta, any daana given or a Tirtha Yatra performed, it would be compulsory for both husband and wife to execute together since a husband is the right portion of a wife and a wife is the left part of a husband. Shastras underlined the fact that a husband was the Tirtha to a wife and vice versa. Any daana- punya, Yagna-homa, Snaana-Puja, Tirtha Yatra or another sacred task performed by a Grihasta with his woman seated on the left side would be counter-productive and a sheer waste! *Bhartrum prasaadaascha sarvam labhatey naatra samsayaha, Vidyamaaney yada kaantey Anya dharma karotiya/ nishphalam jaayatey tasyaaha pumshali parikathyatey!* (A person while her life partner is alive and seeks to perform any kind of Dharma Karya is said to be a Vyabhicharini).

Ten means of Punyas are stated to be Ahimsa (non-violence), Kshama (Forgiveness), Satya (Truthfulness), Lazza (Modesty), Shraddha (Patience), Indriya Samyam (Self-Control), Daan (Charity), Yagna (Sacred Rituals), Dhyaana (Meditation) and Gyana (Knowledge).

Eight types of main Charity are of Anna, Jala, Horse (Vahana), Cow, Vastra, Shayya (cot / bed), Sutha (Cotton / fibre), and Asana (Seat). Anna daana is stated to account for half of all kinds of daana. Jala daan is of next best importance. Together, these two account for the best part of Daanaas.

Manu Smriti -Aachaara Khanda Chapter Four extols Dana Mahima

(Prajapati's sincere advice to Devatas would be to make an appeal to Vidwan Brahmanas that yaginas and works of daana-dharmas be intensified with commitment and total faith with their rightful earnings to reap akshaya phala or unending fruits but *parishushtena bhaavena paatmaasaadya shaktitah* or by ensuring that the recipient of the charity would so deserve. Once so given away even a trifle but as per one's ability without grumbling would bestow satisfaction to both. The taker of food is relieved of hunger but the giver yields 'tripti'; til daan gives good progeny, charity of deepa or lights yields good eyesight, bhudaan results in multiple gains of bhumi, longevity for suvana daan, griha daan yields excellent palaces and charity of silver results in body shine and charm. Vastra daana, ashwa daana, go daana results in Chandra loka, ashva daana of the worlds of Ashvini Devas, and godaana the Surya loka respectively. Charites of bulls or oxen would bestow good fortune while of carriages and beds result in a beautiful wife. Abhaya daana or offering safety yields fortunes and Kingdoms while dhaanya daana bestows life's fulfillment. Daana of Vidya and of Vedas helps attainment of Brahma loka. Indeed daanas

of jala, anna, go, vastra, tila, suvarna excels all as compared to Veda daana. The manner and shraddha in which the charities are given enhances double of the returns. While respectful offerings and reciprocations lead both the parties to swarga loka and any infringement in the give and take leads to negative lokas. No brahmana should boast of austerities nor perform sacrifices like yajna karyas in vanity as the results would never be positive but end up in falsehood and negativism. Never speak ill of Brahmanas despite their attitude and action, nor display one upmanship and vanity. Having executed daanaas to one's satisfaction, there is no need to boast and publicise. *Yajnonritena ksharati tapah ksharati vismayaat, aayurvipraapavaadana daanam cha parikeertanaat/ Dharmam shanaih sanchinuyaad valmeekamiva puttikaah, paralokasahaayaartham sarvabhutaanyapeedayan/* Exaggeration tends to suffer the result of sacrifices and meditation, unwanted criticism of vidwaan brahmanas affects health and longevity while self publicity erodes into daana mahima; one needs to refrain by tormenting insignificant beings and seek to enhance the volume and value of dharma to one's own credit like an ant's course upto hilltop. Indeed to help could forthcome by parents, relatives and close friends: *Ekah prajaayate jantureka eva praleeyate, ekonubhunkte sukriritameka eva cha dushkritam/* Only one lonely Self is born and dies and has to reap his or hers fruits of 'karma' and the resultant deeds. Once the light of life is put off and the relatives return with the body burnt by wood into ashes, the account of Dharma alone remains to let the Soul travel up and down. *Dharmapradhaanam purusham tapaaa hatakilbisham, paralokam nayatyaashu bhaasvantam khashareerinam/* or a person soaked in nobility and virtue is destined to accomplish mukti and totally keep himself away from all the paths even remotely connected with vice and dedicate himself to the rudiments as also nuances of dharma and dharma alone. Illustrious persons alone could mount the most difficult mountains of purity and self control conditioned by innumeralbe temptations of natural pulls and pressures of Kaama krodhaadi proverbial enemies and value added by satkarmas or austerities and sacrifices; only such exemplary Beings face death with a smile and get radiant and celestial clothing wrapped in their ethereal physiques. Indeed it could be only possible only for a superior and learned Brahmana in the pure sense of supreme morality who is qualified to scale such heights supassing and dismissing the far lower levels of Jeevatva! *Dridhakaaree mridurdaantah kruraachaarairasan vasan, ahinsro damadaanaabhyaam jayet svargam tathaavratam/* Only those who who possess high-resolute mindedness, unmoved by flippancies, strong and decisive concentration, will power and rigorous practice are able to control physical and sensory organs are qualified such 'sthita praginata'. An exceptional Brahmana who is in need of water, roots and fruits, agni, and minimal food subsistence is the only qualified for such status. Lord Prajapati is stated to have declared that such alms could be accepted even from a sinful person provided there is pressing demand and ready and voluntary donor. Indeed those grihasthis who do not offer shraaddha to pitrus for fifteen years and perform vaishwa deva are not qualified to accept charities but insult pitrus and Devas. At the sametime, the most needy brahmanas despite their shortcomings might retain if voluntarily, certain exceptional items like bed, house, kusha, gandha, water, flowers, milk, curd and vegetables for sheer upkeep and even marginal worships due to their family background. In the event of loneliness and if his preceptor is no more, Sadbrahmanas should accept from co brahmanas only. Normally certain professions like labourers, cow-herd keepers, barbers, or bonded workers are assumed by the service and low class but in the case of absolute exigency for sheer subsistence Brahmanas too might accept such roles yet not contradictory to the basic principles of a Brahmana; may even be a slave but never as a thief and criminal. *Yonyathaa santamatmaanyathaa satsu bhaashate, sa papakrittamo loke stena aatmaapahaarakah/ Vaachyarthaah niyataah sarve vaangmulaa vaagvinih sritaah, taanstu yah stenayed vaacham sa sarvasteyakrinnarah/* (Whoever of Brahmanas might endure insults from other caste persons but never be dishonest and let not his speech and language

be stooped to that of low class and more so his fundamental principles becoming of a Brahmana like Satya Vadana and Satpravartana and that of adapting the tone and conduct of a low class of the Society, especially of the habits of dishonesty and thieving. Even in that stage of servanthship of yet uncoming of a Brahmana, one should never be umindful to neglect his fundamental responsibilities like defraying his indebtedness to Pitru ganas and to Devas; such duties are as important as family concerns and filial duties. Being clear of own conscience, a true Brahmana under duress and stress should sit and meditate alone, as true introspection leads to nearness to the Eternal Truth and salvation consequently. *Eshauditaa grihasthasya vrittirviprasya shaashvati, snaatakavratalkalpashcha sattvavridhikarah shubhah/ Anena vipro vrittina vartayan vedashaastravi, vyapetakalmasho nityam brahmaloke maheeyate*/or so stresses a a shrotriya brahmana ever practising his duties regularly and consciously, that whosoever of his sacred duties should certainly observe and fulfill totally should be an ideal candidate for attaining Brahma loka!)

Godaana Mahima

May the supreme Lord, complemented by all the Gods, create auspicious and spacious cowsheds for our happiness and populate them with cows and calves. Let us rejoice the cow-wealth and contend by serving those cows. (Rik Samhita 10 – 169 – 4) Without giving a portion of our wealth in charity enjoying our wealth is merely eating a sin. To become free from this sin ‘go-daana’ and service to cows is the best, natural and easiest means. Cow would augment the life span of the sages involved in the yagya and the organizers of the yagya. Cow coordinates all the rituals of yagya. By providing offerings like milk, cow nourishes all the Demigods of the yagya. (Shulka Yajurveda 1-4)-

Donation of cows is superior to all others. Cows are supreme and sacred. (Mahabharata, Anushasana Parva 83-3)

4. Varaha Purana on Godaanaas in various forms

Ensuring the credibility and merit of the Brahmanas concerned, offering of cows in reality or symbolically in the form of Idols by the donors would indeed derive far reaching ‘Punya’ or the fruit of meritorious action. Quite a few kinds of Dhenu Daan have been in vogue: **Til Dhenu Daan** is performed with specified quantity of Sesame Seed along with the Idol made of gold or silver or copper, even stone or any other material along with the same kind of calf Idol with the prayer to Goddess Dhenu that the donor should never experience non availability of any essential material in the life of himself or his family members. The Brahmana receiving the donation in all humility should bless the donor and pray to Maha Vishnu to grant boons to the donor. The procedure of donating **Jal Dhenu** is to first clean up and purify an area with cow dung, place two pots representing a cow and a calf, made of any material as above, fill up the pots with sandalwood, camphor and water of holy rivers preferably and donate it to a worthy Brahmana and pray for happiness and abolition of sins and the receiver would bless like-wise. A donor of **Rasa Dhenu** should sanctify an area and place two decorated pots of bigger and smaller size on kusa grassfilled up with sugar cane juice as also place sugar canes on four sides to effect the donation; the donor should pray to the Rasa Dhenu to make his life sweet and happy and the Brahmana too would pray to Vishnu to provide contentment in the donor’s life and bless him to attain Vishnu loka after life. Dhenu are similarly donated with other materials like **Sharkara Dhenu** donating Sugar, **Madhu Dhenu** donating honey, **Kheer Dhenu** for donating rice, milk and sugar mix, **Dhadhi Dhenu** with curd, **Navaneeth** (Butter), **Lavan** (Salt), **Kapas** (cotton) **Gud** (Jaggery) and so on. Indeed whatever may be the material donated, the charity of cows should attract Almighty’s boons as per the donor’s wishes and

forms. Among the various types of Go-Daans mentioned above, **Kapila Dhenu Daan** is considered as the most outstanding. A virtuous person waking up early morning and washes a Kapila Dhenu with water flowing down from its head and neck to its feet with devotion daily would most certainly washes off his sins for years. Charity of a Kapila Dhenu in reality would secure the ‘Punya’ of performing Gomedha Yajna, besides fetching maximum benefits of any such charities put together!

4. Garuda Purana

Chapter 30: 41-42 and 52-53

‘Tarkshya Deva! Any Being on Earth or Pancha Bhutas or the entirety of Creation is Vishnu. Hence whosoever performs a ‘karma’ or action, the fruit of that action is Vishnu too; thus a person when performs an act, good or otherwise, Vishnu decides the fruit of that action. At the end of the journey of a human- as in other cases too-River Vaitarani is commended as its waters would purify the sins made by the departed one- during the ‘kaumara-youvana-vaardhakya- janma janmaantara’ as also during ‘raatri-praatah- madhyaahna-aparaahna’ and both the sandhyas too. The singular solution is hence the charity of a ‘kapila gomaata’ to a well deserved Brahmana. The following is the verse to be recited at the time of Godaana: *Gaavo mamaagratah santu gavaam madhye vahaamyaham/ Yaa Lakshmeeh sarvabhutaanaam yaa cha Deve vyavasthita, dhenu rupenasya Devee mama paapam vyapohatu/* Cow alone is ahead of me- the departed Soul, behind me as my support, my sides too; cow is in my heart and I am on the midst of cows. May the Lakshmi Svarupa-Sarva Bhuta Svarupa-Sarva Deva Svarupa- as the symbol of a Cow, deatroy my sins instatly wih this Go- Mata! Garuda Purana sums up : those who are destined to go to heaven are supposed to grab the tail of a cow that appears on the banks of the river Vaitarna to be led safely across to the ethereal shores of Vaikuntha.

5. Skanda Purana

Narada described to Arjun about „daan“ (charity), its two „hethus“ (varieties), six „Adhishtaans“ (Reasons), six „Anks“ (Parties), two „Parinaams“ (end results or fruits), three bhedas (classifications) and three „Vinas Saadhanas“ (negative results). The two „hethus“ as normally perceived are about the size of the charity-small or big- as also of the quality. But such „hethus“ are not as important as the „shraddha“ or dedication and devotion are. Bhagavan Siva would be pleased only by the sincerity and pure heart that is attached to the charity rather than any other aspect. Again, „Dhana Daan“ or the charity of money is more popular than „Vastu Daan“ or charity of material, „Vastra Daan“ or charity of clothes etc. since charity of money would buy back Vastu or Vastra. Then the six „Adhishtaans“ or reasons of Daan are: „Dharma Daan“ without strings attached ie. Daan given to the Virtuous or Dharmatmas; „Artha Daan“ keeping in view some purpose or utility; „Kaama Daan“ like favours for women, wine or such other benefits in view; „Lajja Daan is due to compulsions of Public or Society; „Harsha Daan“ is made on receiving good news and out of happiness; and „Bhaya daan“ out of compulsion, fear or avoidance of risks. The six „Anks“ or donor/receiver parties are as follows: The Positive Donors are „Daatas“ by nature; the „Dharmatmas“ or the Virtuous; those desirous of donating willingly and happily; the „Vyasana rahit“ or devoid of bad habits; „Pavitra“ or Symbols of Purity and „Anindaneeya“ or the blemishless. The Negative Donors are ill mannered, indolent, evil minded, persons of bad habits, persons who swear to support the Evil and persons who are sleepy! Among the Good Receivers of Charity are those of good

„Kula“ or caste, who has „Vidya“ or good Education, good „Aachaar“ or family bearing / tradition, earners of rightful way of life or of Satvik Life, of kind heart, „Jitendriya“ or of Controlled Emotions and finally of excellent parenthood. The second category of receivers of donations is of pleasant visage, of sincerity and thankfulness but not of demanding nature, cantankerous or mean. The donors of charity must have the perspective of what kind of material is required or useful to the receiver or otherwise the purpose of charity would be defeated. The two „Parinams“ or end results/fruits are either gain of „Punya“ for the „Paralok“ or after death or for use in „Ihalok“ or the current life to the receiver. The latter „Dannas“ or for the use of Ihalok are of four types viz. Dhruva, Trika, Kamyā and Naimittika. Dhruva is for public use like digging wells, construction of Temples, gardens, Choultries, schools etc. Trika is for daily utility like „Nithya Daan“, say Vidya Daan. Kamyā Daan is to fulfill one’s own desires like victory, wealth, might etc. Naimittika Daan is like Samkranti Daan, Grahana (Eclipse) Daan, Daan at auspicious occasions like weddings, Vratas etc. or Kriyapeksha Daan like Shraadh, Vratas etc.; Gunapeksha Daan like Vidyabhyas and so on. Three „Bhedas“ or types of Daan are classified; the best types are charity of houses, temples, buildings, Bhumi (farms / fields), cows, Wells, gold and ornaments and the best of course is to give away one’s own life itself as „Daan“. The Secondary Variety of charity relates to Anna (Food grains), Vastra (Clothing), „Vahan“ etc. The tertiary kind of Daan is to donate footwear, umbrellas, utensils, curd, honey, „Asan“ or seating, deepa or Light, wood, stones etc. Now, there are three kinds of „Daan Naashak“ reasons viz. „Paschattaap“ or regret of having given the Daan; „Apaatra Daan“ or charity to the wrong and unserved person or „Ashraddha Daan“ is to a person on account of laziness. Paschattapaya Daan indicates as to why the 20 Daan is given at all; Ashraddha Daan is Rakshasa Daan and Apaatra Daan is as bad as not giving it away.

The worst Daan is „Paisacha Daan“ or the charity duly given is returned under duress or due to the bad behaviour of the receiver or the donor. Incidentally, Apaatra Daan should be avoided to an undeserving Brahmana who is bereft of „Vidya“, sells his/her conscience if his Bhumi is accepted; if he accepts a cow to kill it or sell it; if he accepts gold to encash it, a horse that might destroy the receiver’s eyes; Vastra to harm his wife; ghee his manliness; til seeds that might harm his children and so on.

Narada seeks replies to a questionnaire and bestows Brahma’s Charity to Kalaap Village:

Sage Narad told Arjun that in the context of ‘Daan Pradaan’ or bestowing charity of a large piece of land to a well deserved Brahmana Community; he travelled the World over to identify a Place where satisfactory replies are received to a Questionnaire of Twelve Queries framed by him. The questions were: 1) who knows ‘Matrikas’ well; how many ‘Matrikas’ are there and how many ‘Aksharas’ or Letters? 2) What are the Twentyfive Materials in the domestic or personal context? 3) Who knows the art of converting several women into one? 4) Who is the unique person that knows the ‘Vaakya Rachana’ or the Writer of Sentences connected with Strange Fiction? 5) Who is the learned Brahmana living in an Ocean with full awareness that a ferocious crocodile is always around? 6) Who is the best Brahmana possessing the knowledge of eight-fold Braahmanatva? 7) Which are the foremost days falling at the beginning of each Yuga? 8) Which are the first days of each ‘Manvantara’? 9) Which was the first day that Surya Deva rode in his chariot? 10) Who could explain that human beings are put to tremendous anxiety like a black serpent has? 11) Who is the most intelligent and practical human being in the whole world and why? 12) Who is aware of the two distinct routes available to human beings? Sage Narada could not get convincing replies to the above questionnaire among the several places visited and Experts interviewed as the questions were supposed to be tough! Then suddenly it occurred to the Sage that he

could perhaps try out the KalapVillage that boasted of exceptionally renowned Veda Pundits. On reaching there and having posed the questions, the Elders of the Village commented that the questions were indeed very elementary and could as well be replied by one of an unintelligent and dull boys of the village! He asked a boy said to be of an inferior intelligence named Suthanu who gave the replies as follows:

In his preface before answering the questions, Suthanu said that various Gurus normally tended to teach the Scriptures and Mantras, generations after generations, only by memorizing but without necessarily providing the meaning, let alone the implications and intricacies of the stanzas. Indeed a Brahmana who merely memorized the Mantras without realizing the meaning was a mere two legged animal! For example, 'Aakar' is known as Brahma, 'Ukar' is Vishnu and 'Makar' is Siva; the Triguna form of AUM with 'Anuswarup Artha Matra' on top of AUM (in Sanskrit) is Maheswara Himself! How many are aware of the significance of Omkara Mantra?

Coming back to the *first question* as to how many types of 'Matrikas' are there and of how many 'Ahshas' or Letters are in the Matrikas, the reply is that there are twenty letters in a Matrika. Besides there are fourteen 'Swaras', thirty three 'Vyanjanas', 'Anuswaras', 'Visarga', 'Jihva muleeya' or tongue-ended voice and 'Upadhaneeyas'. Matrikas are called the essence of Language. The fourteen 'Swaras' from 'A Kar' to 'Auom kar' represent 'Manu Swarupas' viz. Swayambhu, Swarochish, Auttam, Raivat, Tamas, Chakshu, Vaivasvath (the Present Manu), Savarni, Brahma Savarni, Rudra Savarni, Daksha Savarni, Dharma Savarni, Roucha and Bhautya. The current Manu Vaivasvat is Rukara Swarup and his colour is Black. From letters 'Bha' to 'Sha' are eight 'Vasus' viz. Dhruva, Ghora, Sowmya, Apah, Nala, Nila, Pratyasha and Prabhasa. The Letters from 'Ka' to 'Ha' represent thirty three Devatas. Actually letters from 'Ka' to 'Tha' represent Twelve Adityas viz. Dhata, Mitra, Aryama, Shakra, Varuna, Amshu, Bhaga, Vivisvan, Pusha, Savita, Tvashta and Vishnu. From 'Da' to 'Ba' are Eleven Rudras viz. Kapali, Pingala, Bhima, Virupaksha, Vilohita, Ajaka, Shasana, Shasta, Shambhu, Chanda and Bhava. Letters 'Sa' and 'Ha' are represented by the two Ashvini Kumars, thus accounting for all the thirty three Devatas. The Letters 'Anuswar', 'Visarg', 'Jihva Muleeya' and 'Upadhaneeyas' stand for 'Jarayuja', 'Andaja', 'Swedaja' and 'Udbhija'.

About the *Second question* regarding twenty five 'Vastus' or materials for domestic/personal utility, the reply is: These are 'Pancha Bhutas' viz. Prithivi (Earth), Apas (Water), Tejas (Radiance), Vayu (Wind) and Akash (Sky); Five 'Karmendriyas' (Mouth, hands, feet, anus and genital); Five Jnanendriyas (Ears, Eyes, Tongue, Nose and Skin) and the corresponding reactions viz. Shabda (Sound), Rupa (Vision), Rasa (Taste), Ghrana (Smell) and Sparsha (Feeling) and 'Pancha Vishayas' viz. Man (Mind), Buddhi (Thinking), Antaratma (Conscience), Ahankar (Ego), Prakriti (Nature / Maya) and Purusha (Almighty). In other words, the Twenty Five Tatvas of Domestic / Physical nature as above are blessed by Almighty to realize the Self as reflected from Paramatma.

The *Third question* concerns about the various forms of a woman who is essentially a single entity. The reply is about a person's 'Buddhi' or mental condition which is comparable to that of a woman whose forms and moods are several (Frailty thy name is a woman!). It is the single Buddhi which takes myriad kinds of feelings, reactions and impulses.

The *Fourth question* relates to a person who exists in a 'Sansar' (World) and describes it as an attraction like the beautiful phrasing of an Essay, not realizing that the charm of the write-up is a trap or the 'Sansar Bandhan'; hence the lure of life is but a powerful bondage!

The *Fifth query* is about the joy of living in an ocean, being fully aware of the dangerous crocodile nearby. Human beings get enticed to swim in an ocean, despite the risk of life and it is that 'Lobha' or attraction which generates 'Moha' (obsession) or 'Maya', 'Abhiman' or deep sense of Belonging, insensitivity to the risk involved, avarice to possess more and more, ignorance and sheer stupidity. All these are ramifications of 'Vyamoha' (possessive nature) like desire to secure other's wealth, woman, and comfort, all at once being dishonest, undeserved and corrupt. The sense of Lobha leads to ego, deceit, anger and jealousy. The lurking crocodile is surely attractive but hazardous.

The *Sixth inquiry concerns* the Eight-fold 'Brahmanatva' classified as Matra, Brahmana, Srotriya, Anuchan, Bhruna, Rishi Kalpa, Rishi and Muni. A normal Brahmana by birth and caste is invariably the one who nodoubt has the advantage of 'Upanayana' Samskara and Gayatri 'Upasesha' called Sacred Thread Ceremony but with or without performing Vedic Karmas or duties; this kind of an ordinary Brahmana is name sake only. He who follows 'Vedic Achara' or performs Veda Practices being soft natured, fond of loneliness, truthful and pious is a Brahmana in a better sense than a 'Matra' type. The better category of Brahmanas are 'Srotriyas' who are Ritual, Virtuous, proficient of atleast one Veda sakha (Branch) along with six vedangas, pure hearted and Dharmajnanas. The higher class of Brahmanas called 'Anuchans' are well read, Guru Type of senior Vidwans who preach and teach and practise ideal 'Brahmanatva'. The further higher category is called Brahmanas with worldly wisdom to be able to interpret Principles to practical situations, authorities on Vedas, 'Samyamis' who have restraint and poise, Tatva Gyan and Senior Guides on Rituals etc. 'Rishi Kalpas' are Ashrama Dwellers, Naishthies, and limited Eaters. The Rishis are Dhyana Nishtha Parayanas (Meditation-Centric) and Jitendriyas or victorious of various worldly temptations. Munis are beyond the barriers of Brahmanas and the known norms and controls applicable to them, since they belong to Super Human Beings worthy of worship and possess yogic powers and Siddhhis.

The *Seventh query* was about the first days of each Yuga. Kartika Sukla Navami was the first day of Satya Yuga, Visakha Sukla Tritiya was of Tretha Yuga, Marga Krishna Amavasya was of Dwapara Yuga and Bhadra Krishna Trayodasi was the opening day of Kali Yuga. Charities and 'homams' performed on the Yugadi Days are stated to be hundred days superior compared to normal days.

The *Eighth question* was about the opening days of each of the Fourteen Manvantaras. These are Asvayuja Sukla Navami, Kartika Dwadasi, Chaitra and Bhadra Tritiya, Phalgunam Amavasya, Paushya Ekadasi, Ashadha Dasami, Magha Saptami, Shravana Krishna Ashtami, Ashadha Pournami, Kartika Pournami, Phalgunam/Chaitra/Jeyshtha Pournamis are all worthy of charities and homams.

That Lord Surya mounted his chariot for the first time was on Magha Sukla Panchami, known as the 'Ratha Saptami' was the reply to the *Ninth question* and austerities and charities are stated to be highly fruitful bestowing Lord Surya's blessings to destroy poverty and improve happiness of the devotees.

The *Tenth question* was about the anxiety of life of any human being; the reply was that who ever has to beg for food each and every day was indeed the most unfortunate one in the world; such a person not only had constant worry through out his/her life but is destined to go to hell after death too.

The *Eleventh query* was about the Super expert in this frightful world. The reply given by Suthanu stated that the best Daksha of Dakshas was he who realized as to what would happen after death and tried to equip him to perform pious acts so as to minimize the impact of current life and possibly of the previous

lives. If a person devotes at least eight months and one day before death or in other words of the last leg of life and possibly as many days of life as possible, would be considered as an Expert.

Finally, *the Twelfth question* seeks reply about the two alternative routes of attaining Salvation viz. the normal 'Karma Marg'/ the Dharmic route of enjoying life as also of attaining the high bliss of Moksha after death and alternatively adopting the 'Vihanga Marg' (The Sky route) or straight-away adopt the 'Naishkarma' Marg or the 'Jnaana Marg. If one were not to opt for either route, the concerned human being is as good as a 'Pakhandi' or ignorant fool!

Having received the replies to all the Twelve Questions, Sage Narada was thrilled that Lord Brahma (his father) ought to be complemented as the latter's 'Srishti' (Creation) was indeed amazing, since a boy was able to reply the queries. Pursuant to Brahma's behest, the process of selection was completed and a substantial charity was declared as a Gift to the 'Kalaap Gramvaasis' or the Villagers of Kalaap a Huge Area viz. Mahi Sagara Sangama Maha Tirtha. This Tirtha was situated from Kalap Gram by about hundred yojanas by Akash Marg (The Sky Route) and by the Grace of Kartikeya all the residents of Kalaap Gram could be shifted by a long jump. This most Sacred Tirtha was such that there were no proverbial thieves viz. Kama (desire), Krodha (anger), Lobha (avarice) etc. who could rob the immense wealth of Gyan in the Holy Region. Kalaap Gram itself was some hundred yojanas on the mountains of Kedarnath Tirtha. As a result of the Great Charity of Lord Brahma by Sage Narada, some Thirty Thousand Brahmanas of immense quality who were versatile in 'Adhyayan' of Vedas and Scriptures and 'Anushtaan' (Ritualistic Meditation) got transferred to Mahi Sagara.

Pravritti -Nivrittis : 1. General 2. Kathopanishad 3.Mundakopanishad 4. Bhagavad Gita

Pravritti: 'Pra' means 'variagated' and 'Vritti' stands for 'chitta vritti' the mentality as thoughts do constantly changing. In Pravritti Maarga one would constantly experience sufferings, misunderstandings, disappointments or passing times of happiness and contentment but rarely the feelings of equipoise..To be on the path of 'Nivritti' means a life of peace and quiet – both outwardly and inwardly. One's 'antahkarana' or the psyche invariably full of desires be rid of 'Nivritti maarga' by jnaana or knowledge. Vedic dharma is twofold, characterized by Pravritti (karmik and societal action) and Nivritti (inward contemplation). There be one impulse in one's minds prompting to 'do' and another impulse not to. There is one set of ideas in the mind always struggling to get outside through the channels of the senses, and behind that, although it may be thin and weak, there is an infinitely small voice which suggests there against. Hence the celestial words of the phenomena of Pravritti and Nivritti, stimulating forward and another circling inward. Thus Pravritti is the act of enjoying material and sensual pleasures as is a natural instinct in all human beings. It means to live amidst worldly duties and interests with the senses and actions directed primarily towards the external world. The happiness derived out of it is defined as

‘Preyas’ the path of pleasure resulting from societal urges on the Path of Pleasure. Nivritti, on the other hand, is the act of abstaining from material and sensual enjoyment. It calls for a sacrifice on the part of the individual to give up all worldly pleasures. It is the path of ‘turning back’ of the path of turning within towards spiritual contemplation, and placing the Almighty at the centre of one’s existence even after fulfilling family and professional duties. According to Vedic concept both pravritti-marga, and nivritti-marga have the basis of spiritual or religious life. In animal life there is only pravritti-marga. Pravritti-marga means sense enjoyment, and nivritti-marga means spiritual advancement. In the life of animals and demons, there is no conception of nivritti-marga, nor is there any actual conception of pravritti-marga. Pravritti-marga maintains that even though one has the propensity for sense gratification, he can gratify his senses according to the directions of the Vedic injunctions. Let’s analyze Pravritti -Nivrittis as in 1. Kathopanishad 2. Mundakopanishad 3. Bhagavad Gita

Kathopanishad

On testing Nachiketa about his eligibility for Brahma Vidya, Yama explained Shreya and Preya or Vidya and Avidya, the intensity of Samsara vs. the Lasting Option and of the Identity with Brahman

I.ii.1-6) Anyacchreyo anyadutaiva preyaste ubhe naanyarthe purusham sineetah, Tayoh shreya aadanaa – nasya saadhu bhavati, heeyaterthaad ya u preyo vrineete// Shreyascha preyascha manushyametastou sampareetya vivinakti dheerah, Shreyo hi dheerobhi preyaso vrineete, preyo mando yogakshemaad vrineete// Sa twam priyaan priyarupaamscha kaamaan abhidhyaayan Nachiketo, tyasraaksheeh, naitaam srinkaam vittamaemavaapto yasyaam majjanti bahavo manushyaah// Duramete vipareete vishuchi Avidyaa yhaa cha vidyeta jnaataa, Vidyaabheepsinam Nachiketasam manye na twaa kaamaa bahavololupanta// Avidyaamantare vartamaanaah swayam dheeraah panditam manyamaanaah, Daridramanya maanaah pariyanti moodhaah, andhenaiva neeyamaanaa yathaandhaah/ Na saamparaayah pratibhaati manyamaanaah, Dandramyaa maanaah pariyanti moodhaaha andhenaiva neeyamaanaa yathaandaah/

After comprehensively testing Nachiketu, Yama then decided to explain the tenets of Brahma Vidya. There are two ways of human aspirations viz. ‘Shreya’ or Vidya and ‘Preya’ or Avidya and the paths of Pleasure and Sacrifice are distinct and divisive as the evil go to hell and the virtuous have their destination as heaven; this is the simple but definite explanation of existence of the Self after death. As both the preferable and pleasurable paths are open to a Being, the person of knowledge selects the ways of virtue and sacrifices while the ignorant one opts of the body pleasures. While knowledge and ignorance were contradictory, Yama appreciated Nachiketa who scrupulously avoided the diversity of pleasures and temptations of life and followed a unified and well defined route of virtue. Indeed while existing in the midst of ignorance and darkness, the majority of persons assume that they are intelligent and enlightened and move fast round and round following curved and twisted means of existence, just like blind leading

blind. Not realizing the means of attaining a long term perspective, the one with no discrimination blunders into pitfalls by being fooled by the lure of the lucre!

I.ii.7-9) Shrava-naayaapi bahubhiryō na labhyah shravantopi bahavoyam na vidyuh, Ascharyo vaktaa kushalosya labdhaa ascharyo jnaataa kushalaanushishtah/ Na narenaa varenaa prokta esha suvigjneyo bahudhaa chintyamaanah: ananya prokte gatrira naasti aneeyaan hi atarkyam anupramaanaat// Naishaa tarkena matiraapaneyaa proktaanyenaiva sujanaanaaya preshta: yaam twam aapah satyadhritir bataasi; twaadrunobhuyaana Nachiketa prashtaa//

Dharma Raja now complimented Nachiketu as the sincere most seeker of the Ultimate Truth and the steadfastness with which he had been pursuing the effort was exemplary. He said that the Self was indeed such that he was not available for hearing and even if heard, was unable to understand him; blessed he be who understood this from an efficient Instructor. After all the Self had to be such that one could appropriately assimilate that and certainly not by an inferior person! On the contrary, the person not quite capable of proper understanding might misinterpret the essence of the Truth. Indeed, there could be no argument about this Truth as that would be too subtle to digest: It could be: ‘ananya prokte’ as the Supreme is identical with the Self; ‘na asti atra gatih’ or when transmigration is not referred to; and ‘na agatih’ or of non-realisation! In other words, no interpretation is possible by logic or argument, but is either to be taught by one extremely well versed in Scriptures and already experienced in the state of Unity of the Self and the Supreme or self-experienced! Yama further commented that only a person of true pledge and total resolve like, say, of Nachiketa’s inquisitiveness that one could assimilate this awareness.

Kathopanishad vide II.ii.1 states:

Urthva mulovaakshaakha eshoshvattahsanaatanah, tadeva shuram tad brahma,tad evaamritam uchyate, tasmin lokaah shrutaah sarve tadunaateti kaschana, etadvai tat/

or the cause and effect manifestation is discussed since the gigantic peepul tree with its root emerging of Brahman the immortal and the worlds there from. The sprawling tree is replete with innumerable extensions of features ranging from Pancha Bhutas of the Five Elements, Devas, Dishas and Virtues on the one side even with defending energies of the Universe as the relieving points and on the other hand a huge multitude of evils, old age, deaths, sorrows, diseases, struggles, besides material attractions all over. Yet Brahman puts a lid on the totality of situations, alike the pluses and minuses, yet with the defined boundaries and ground regulations well in place! Indeed That is That!)

Mundaka Upanishad: The Story of Two Birds one seeking material joy and another lasting spiritual bliss

III.i.1) Dve Suparnaa Sayuja sakhaaya samaanam vriksham parishasvajaate, tayoranyam pippalam
svaaddhvatti anaishnan anyobhichaakasheeti/

An analogy of two companion birds named Suparna and Sayuja is drawn sharing the same tree as one is busy eating the fruits of the tree while the other remains watching without tasting; this is just as two persons are enjoying the taste even as the other refrains. While one regales by rejoicing the sweet results of different kinds of material happiness the other person calculates and weighs the pros and cons of the karma and the resultant reactions

Bhagavad Gita – Adhyaaya Sixteen: Daivaasurasampad vibhaga Yoga explains the concept Pravriti and Nivriti – the Preya and Shreya or the Materail vs.s or Perpetual joy or Eternal Bliss. This calls for spiritual education and elevation which realization usually comes in one's later part of life thinking about real success in life.

Pravrittim cha nivrittim cha janaa n viduraasuraah, na shoucham naapichaachaaro na satyam teshu
vidyate/ Asathyamapratishtham te jagadaahuraneeshvaram, aparasparasambhutam
kimanyatkaamahaitukam/ Etaam drishtimavashthabhya nashtaatanalp buddhayah prabhavastyugra
karmaanah kshayaaya jagato hitaah/ Kaamamaashritya dushpuuram dambhamaana madaanvitaah,
mohaad gruheetvaanadgraahaan pravartanteshuchivrataah/ hintaamaparimeyaam cha
pralayaantaamupaashritaah, kaamopa bhoga paramaah etaavaditi nishchitaah/ Aashaapaash
shatairbuddhaah kaamakrodhaparaayanaah, eehante kaama bhogaartham anyaayenaartha sanchayaan/
Asoy mayaa hatasshtruh hanishye chaaparaanapi, Ishvarohamam bhogee siddhhoham
balavaansukhee/ Adhyobhijanavaanasmi konyosti sadrishomayaa, yashye daasyaami modishye ityajnaana
vimohitaah/ Anekachittha vibhraantaah mohajaala samaa -vritaah, prasaktaah kaama bhogeshu vatanti
narakeshuchou/ Atma sambhaavitaastabdhaa dhana maanamadaanvitaah, yajante naama yagnaiste
dambhenaavidhipuurvakam/ Ahamaaram balam darpam kaamam krodham cha samskritaah, maamaatma
paradeheshu pradvishtantobhyasuuyakaah/ Taanaham dvishatah kruraan samsareshu naraadhamaan,
kshipaamyajasramashubhaan asureeshvepa yonishu/ Asureem yonimaapannaah moodhaa janmani
janmani, maapa praapyava Kounteyah tatoaanadhamaa gatim/ Trividham narakasyedam dvcaaram
naashana maatmanah, kaama krodhastathaa lobhah tasmaat yetatrayam tyajet/ Yetairvimuktah Kounteya!
Tamodvaaraistribhirnarah, acharatyaatmanasshreyah tato yaati paraam gatim/
Yasshhaastravidhimutsrujya vartate kaama kaaratah, na sa siddhimavaapnoti na sukham na paraam gatim/

Tasmaacchhastram pramaanam te karyaakaryavyavasthitou, jnaatvaa shaastra vidhaanoktam karma kartumarhasi/

Lord Shri Krishna addresses Arjuna as follows: Prevalence of Satvika Guna, Jnaana yoga nishtha, fearlessness, charity mindedness, self control of karmendriyas, Deva puja, swaadhyaya, tapo guna, straight forwardness, ahimsa, truthfulness, angerlessness, svaardha tyaaga, chitta shanti, para ninda, bhuta daya, chitta nishchalata, kshama-dama-dhairyata, bahyaananta -ranga shuddhi, durabhimaana, are among the daivika gunas. Paartha! Agjnaana, adambarata, arrogance, self conceit, sensuousness are among the Asura gunas which are natural 'arishadvargaas'. 'Daivi sampada sadgunas' are what 'asuri durgunas' stated to be the resultant instincts. Happily, Arjuna! you are blessed with Daiveeka sugunas and thus you are not to worry about! Let me explain to you the details of Pravritti and Nivritti ways of Jeevaas. Those born with the Asura gunas are totally unaware of neither of the routes. They are totally bereft of truthfulness and internal cleanliness. Pravritti is to get lost in the natural manner of worldly wise life. Nivritti is to cogitate about the purpose of life and introspect about what happens after death. The latter category realise the impermanence of life and the illusion of Prakriti which results in the creation of Beings by the interaction of male and female species. The pravrittis jump along the natural flow of living by evading the shocks and enjoying the temporary reliefs of the speedy waves of the flow. Most of the 'pravrittis' do either negate or at any rate assume neutrality by resorting to questionable actions as they strongly believe that there is no proof or witness. They tend to ignore the witness of their own conscience named Anraratma! From such a standpoint, the jeevas with narrow -mindedness fearlessly take to cruel deeds of various degrees and proportions. The Self Approval of their acts are smeared of show, ego, arrogance and for short time praises and support by the encouragement of similar beings in the society. Until their death, such sinners carry on their lives with disapproved bodily pleasures as targetted by kaama-krodha-lobha-mada- moha-matsaras as their motto. They realise that richness earned by whatever unjust means is the corner stone of material fulfillment. Once material prosperity is earned that would have further urges as endless hallucinations. Their psyche gets transformed to subjectivity that ' I am the Lord, the bhogi, the siddha, the strong man and the happy go lucky being. Often times the self ego could take to the feeling of born richness affording yajna-daana dharma deeds for public show of exhibitions to attract false prestige and misplaced complex of superiority. The Self egotism is like a deep and irrevocable ditch which ultimately submerges into hollow depths of mud and madness. Such 'pranis' are most certainly reborn either as persons of evil or as of species other than of humanity as per the balance of plus-minus karma of sanchita- praarabdha-kriyaamaana- aagaami types or of the carry forward-present- and as predicted. Kounteya! The Three factors of Kaama- Krodha-Lobhas are stated as 'Atma Vinaasha Kaarakaas' or the three human instincts and are the highway gates to hell. Hence persons of consciousness and maturity of thought- cum- action need to be truly beware of these traits. Any human being once sensitive and alert to these by lane gates of ' karya siddhi' could open up the acutely narrow gates of Eternal Truth. Tasmaacchhastram pramaanam te karyaakaryavyavasthitou, jnaatvaa shaastra vidhaanoktam karma kartumarhasi/ It is against this back-ground that Krishna addresses Arjuna and advises to remove any of 'dharma sandehas' or of virtuous doubts and as the latter if convinced as per what 'Shastras' emphatically state and explain, then the latter be readied to take up his duty to plunge into the battle!

‘Ahimsa paramo Dharmah’- Concept and Practice of Ahimsa vide 1.Maha Bhaarata Parvas- 2.Bhagavat Gita and 3. Select Smritis

1. Maha BharataAdi Parva

*ahimsā paramo dharmah sarvaprāmabhrth smrtah, tasmāt prānabhrtah sarvān na himsyād
brāhmanahkva cit/ brāhmanah saumya eveha jāyateti parā śrutih, vedavedāngavit tāta sarvabhūtābhaya
pradah/ahimsā satyavacanam ksamā ceti viniścitam, brāhmanasya paro dharmo vedānām dharanād
api/ksatriyasya tu yo dharmah sa nehesyati vai tava, dandadhāranam ugratvam prajānām
paripālanamtad idam ksatriyasyāsīt karma/*

Indeed the highest virtue of man is sparing the life of others. Therefore a Brahmana should never take the life of any creature. A Brahmana should be versed in the Vedas and Vedangas, and should inspire all creatures with belief in God. He should be benevolent to all creatures, truthful, and forgiving, even as it is his paramount duty to retain the Vedas in his memory. The duties of the Kshatriya are not thine. To be stern, to wield the sceptre and to rule the subjects properly are the duties of the Kshatriya. In summary, he states that a brahmana should never take the life of any creature however, a kshatriya may do so as it may be required to ensure proper rule ois replete with the illustrations of kings having made deep tapasyaas-yagjna kaaryaas- daana dharmas and such deeds of high virtues and thus the praja too were inculcated with ‘mano shuddhata-sadaachaara- and shubha kaaryaacharanas.

Vana Parva

*kālalobha grahākīrṇāṃ pañcendriya jalāṃ nadīm, nāvaṃ dhṛtimayīm kṛtvā janma durgāṇi saṃtara/
krameṇa saṃcito dharmo buddhiyogamayo mahān, śiṣṭācāre bhavet sādhu rāgaḥ śukleḥ vāsasi*

Among holy men, virtue is differentiated in three ways--that great virtue which is inculcated in the Vedas, the other which is inculcated in the dharma shastra, and virtuous conduct And virtuous conduct is indicated by acquisition of knowledge, pilgrimage to sacred places, truthfulness, forbearance, purity and straight-forwardness.

*ahimsā satyavacanam sarvabhūtahitam param, himsā paramo dharmah sa ca satye pratisthitahsatye
kṛtvā pratisthām tu pravartante pravrttayah/*

Virtuous men are always kind to all creatures, and well-disposed towards regenerate men. They abstain from doing injury to any creature, and are never rude in speech. Those good men who know well the consequences of the fruition of their good and evil deeds, are commended by virtuous men[12]. This particular quotation uses ahimsa in the sense of not doing injury to any creature and states that it is applied to 'holy men' who are typically defined to be ascetics and sometimes as brahmanas.

Anusasana Parva

In the Anusasana Parva, Yudhisthira is asked by Lord Krishna to ask Bhishma any questions he may have as this will be his last opportunity to do so. Yudhisthira states that Bhishma has told him that 'ahimsa paramo dharma' and is asking about it in the context of conducting shraddha in which meat is offered.

ahimsā paramo dharma ity uktam bahusās tvayā, śrāddhesu ca bhavān āha pitṛn āmisa kānksinah/

You had told me many times that abstention from injury is the highest religion. In Shraddhas, however, that are performed in honour of the Pitris, persons for their own good should make offerings of diverse kinds of meat. Yudhisthira asks how can killing be avoided if meat is to be offered in offering sraddha in honor of ancestors? Bhishma answers by stating that abstention from eating meat is a great sacrifice and provides many benefits. He goes on to state that:

prajānāṃ hitakāmena tv agastyena mahātmanā, āraṇyāḥ sarvadaivatyaḥ prokṣitās tapasā mṛgāḥ, kriyā hy evaṃ na hīyante pitṛdaivatasamśritāḥ, prīyante pitaraś caiva nyāyato māṃsatarpitāḥ/]

Desirous of benefiting all men, the high-souled Agastya, by the aid of his penances, dedicated, once for all, all wild animals of the deer species to the deities. Hence, there is no longer any necessity of sanctifying those animals for offering them to the deities and the Pitru Devataas. After hearing his answer in full, Yudhisthira repeats his question : Pitamaha! what is flesh, of what substances it is, the merits that attach to abstention from it, and what the demerits are that attach to the eating of flesh.. Bhishma again answers and concludes with that a person of cleansed soul should be compassionate to all living creatures.

ahimsā paramo dharmas tathāhimsā paro damah, ahimsā paramam dānam ahimsā paramas tapah/ahimsā paramo yajñas tathāhimsā param balam, ahimsā paramam mitram ahimsā paramam sukham/ahimsā paramam satyam ahimsā paramam śrutam, sarvayajñesu vā dānam sarvatīrthesu cāplutam/sarvadānaphalam vāpi naitat tulyam ahimsayā, ahimsasya tapo 'ksayyam ahimsro yajate sadā/ahimsrah sarvabhūtānām yathā mātā yathā pitā, etat phalam ahimsāyā bhūyaś ca kurupumgavana hi śakyā gunā vaktum iha varsaśatair api/

Abstention from cruelty is the highest Religion. Abstention from cruelty is the highest self-control. Abstention from cruelty is the highest gift. Abstention from cruelty is the highest penance. Abstention from cruelty is the highest sacrifice. Abstention from cruelty is the highest puissance. Abstention from cruelty is the highest friend. Abstention from cruelty is the highest happiness. Abstention from cruelty is the highest truth. Abstention from cruelty is the highest Sruti. Gifts made in all sacrifices, ablutions performed in all sacred waters, and the merit that one acquires from making all kinds of gifts mentioned in the scriptures,--all these do not come up to abstention from cruelty (in point of the merit that attaches to it). The penances of a man that abstains from cruelty are inexhaustible. The man that abstains from cruelty is regarded as always performing sacrifices. The man that abstains from cruelty is the father and mother of all creatures. Even these, are some of the merits of abstention from cruelty. Altogether, the merits that attach to it are so many that they are incapable of being exhausted even if one were to speak for a hundred years.' Here ahimsa is translated as abstention from cruelty in relation to killing for the sake of eating the flesh of the killed animal for personal pleasure. In essence, Bhishma is stating that it is very beneficial to be vegetarian because thereby there is no cruelty to animals.

2. Bhagavad Gita



a) Chapter 10: 4-5 :

*buddhir jnanam asammohah ksama satyam damah samah sukham duhkham bhavo 'bhavo, bhayam
cabhayam eva ca ahimsa samata tustis tapo danam yaso 'yasahbhavanti bhava bhutanam matta eva
prthag-vidhah/*

Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from doubt and delusion, forgiveness, truthfulness, self-control and calmness, pleasure and pain, birth, death, fear, fearlessness, nonviolence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and infamy are created by Me alone.

b) Chapter 13: 8-12

*amanitvam adambhitvam ahimsa ksantir arjavam acaryopasanam saucam, sthairyam atma-vinigraha
indriyarthesu vairagyam/ anahankara eva ca janma-mrtyu-jara-vyadhi-duhkha-dosanudarsanam
asaktir anabhisvanga putra-dara-grhadisu /nityam ca sama-cittatvam istanistopapattisu mayi cananya-
yogena bhaktir avyabharini vivikta-desa-sevitvam aratir jana-samsadi/ adhyatma-jnana-nityatvam
tattva-jnanartha-darsanam etaj jnanam iti proktam ajnanam yad ato 'nyatha*

Humility, pridelessness, nonviolence, tolerance, simplicity, approaching a bona fide spiritual master, cleanliness, steadiness and self-control; renunciation of the objects of sense gratification, absence of false ego, the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age and disease; nonattachment to children, wife, home

and the rest, and evenmindedness amid pleasant and unpleasant events; constant and unalloyed devotion to Me, resorting to solitary places, detachment from the general mass of people; accepting the importance of self-realization, and philosophical search for the Absolute Truth-all these I thus declare to be knowledge, and what is contrary to these is ignorance.

c) Chapter 16:1-3

sri-bhagavan uvaca: abhayam sattva-samsuddhir jnana-yoga-vyavasthitih,danam damas ca yajnas ca/ svadhyayas tapa arjavam ahimsa satyam akrodhas tyagah santir apaisunam/daya bhutesv aloluptvam mardavam hrir acapalam, tejah ksama dhrtih saucam adroho nati-manita,havanti sampadam daivim abhijatasya bharata/

The Blessed Lord said: Fearlessness, purification of one's existence, cultivation of spiritual knowledge, charity, self-control, performance of sacrifice, study of the Vedas, austerity and simplicity; nonviolence, truthfulness, freedom from anger; renunciation, tranquility, aversion to faultfinding, compassion and freedom from covetousness; gentleness, modesty and steady determination; vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, freedom from envy and the passion for honor-these transcendental qualities, O son of Bharata, belong to godly men endowed with divine nature.

d) Chapter 17:

deva-dvija-guru-prajna- pujanam saucam arjavam,brahmacaryam ahimsa ca sariram tapa ucyate/

Austerity of the body consists in this: worship of the Supreme Lord, the brahmanas, the spiritual master, and superiors like the father and mother. Cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy and nonviolence are also austerities of the body.

Select Smritis

Paraashara Smriti

Paashako matsya ghati va vyaadhah shaakunistathaa, Adaataa karshakaschaiva panchaite samabhakinah/

(The sin committed by a fisherman, a hunter, a slaughterer, a diceman and bird killer might be worse than that of a Brahmana tilling land with two oxen).

Kundini peshani chulli udakumbhatha maarjani, Pancha suna grihastasya ahanyahani vartate/

(As it is, in each house hold there are five killing places viz. a pounder, a gastric mill, a cooking stove, a water pot and a sweeper).

Vaishwadevo balibhikshaa gograaso hantaaarakah, Grihasthah pratyaha kuryaat sunaa dorsharna lipyate/

(The five relieving remedies absorbing the five places of killings in a household happen to be the Vaishwadeva Yagjna, bali karma, bhiksha pradana, giving grass to cows, and these offsetting the daily killings otherwise).

Vrikshaan chitwaa Maheem bhitwaa hatwaa tu mriga keetakaan, Karshakah khalu yagjnena sarvaa paapaat pramuchyate/

(The farmer is saving himself by performing yagjnas from the sins committed by cutting trees, digging earth, killings of animals and ‘krimi keetas’)

Yon a dadyaad dwijaatibhyo raashi mulamupaagatah, sa chourah sa cha paapishtho Brahmagnam tam vinirdishet/

(Those farmers seated near the heaps of foodgrains without parting any to Brahmanas would be aptly named thieves and sinners, worth being called Brahma ghaatis!)

Kshatriyopi krushim krutwaa Dwijaan Devaamscha pujayet, Vaishyah anyastathaakuryat krushi vaanijya shilpikaan/

(Indeed, Kshatrias display their industriousness and courage and serve Brahmanas for their involvement and dedication in Deva Pujas, Vaishyas earn out of their trading and business skills and so do the other class of the Society due to their ability in crafts).

Chaturnaamapi varnaamsha dharma sanaatanah/ (Thus the Four Varnas are engaged in their own respective duties as per dharmas).

Yagnyavalkya Smriti

In case, if a person were to have been killed in secrecy with no witness, once noticed of the tragedy, the clues by collected by the signs of death be registered such as strangulation, physical assault of specified signs of beating, head hitting, burning, drowning, or such indications as noticed on the dead body. Once suspected and confirmed, the perpetrator be punished as per the gradations prescribed; for killings due to body burns and camouflaging by dust be of ten units, and as the extracts from the face of the dead of shleshma, nails, hairs, ears and such ‘daaruna hatyas’ the punishment be more severe by twenty units. This scale of punishment be applicable to the same varnas. The ‘atyachara’ on strees or on ‘uttama varnas’, the gradation of punishment be doubled. On ‘heena varnaas’, the scale of punishment be halved. Chittavaikalya or Madyapaana punishments are lessened. In case an ‘abrahmana’ might injure a brahmana, especially by manhandling or by ‘shastraprayogas’ then the punishment of what is known as ‘Prathama Saahasa’ or of the minimum grade worthy of ‘ardha danda’. For ‘Samaana varnas’ resorting to ‘atyaachara’, then the punishment be of Madhyama Saahasa’ medium category deserving of a twenty unit of monetary fine. Badly hurting and trampling severe injuries of the victim’s feet-head- etc. besides pulling off or tightening the ‘deha vastras’ deserving of hundred units of monetary fine. Grievous injuries of blood and of burns deserve monetary fines of thirty units and for non stop flows of blood be doubled thereof. Damage to the victim’s hands, feet, teeth, ears equivalent to near deathness is stated as of a ‘madhyama saahasa’ or medium category of punishment. Holding the neck tightly, denying food by force, seeking to strangulate, pull off eyelids, severing eye lids, clasp shoulders, hands and waist is also of madhyama saahasa. Beating back and blue of one person by a group be doubly punished and so would be

when one's material snatched off be nonreturned and damaged severely. As the walls of else's house were drilled by another person, or even collapsed then the range of damages be fined in the range of five-ten-twenty units of currency in addition to bearing the expenses of reconstruction. Throwing severe acids on the houses of others or praanahaani vishas and serpents, then that be noted as 'madhyama saahasa' and punishment imposed accordingly. Severing goats, sheep, deer and the like for their horns, skins and so on be fined units of currencies 2-4-6 units. Cutting off the loins of these animals would be a madhyama saahasa, especially of cows, bulls, elephants, horses by paid for double as per the prescriced fines. Damaging public tree trunks, branches, or even uprooting, be too as per appropriate- or presribed rates of penalties. And so would be damages for Chaityas or public religious places, smashaanaas, seemaas, pavitra sthalas, and public gardens be punished in a graded manner. In respect of all such places, the due punishments be imposed for the spoilages of gulmas like malatis, guchhas like bent down 'karandas', lataas or creepers of drakshaas, and oushdhis.

Yājñavalkya (1.122).—'Abstention from injury, Truthfulness, Abstention from theft, Purity, Control of the senses, Liberality, Self-control, Mercy, Tolerance,—these are the means of righteousness for all men.'

Vyāsa (Aparārka, p. 164).—'Freedom from cruelty, Abstention from injury, Kindness, Liberality, Performance of Śrāddha, Honouring guests, Truthfulness, Freedom from anger, Contentment with one's own wife, Purity, Freedom from envy, Self-knowledge and Patience are the common virtues..... Truth, Self-control, Austerity, Purity, Contentment, Shyness, Tolerance, Straightforwardness, Wisdom, Calmness, Mercy, Concentrated mind—these constitute the eternal Dharma.—That is *Truth* which is beneficial to living beings; *Self-Control* consists in controlling the mind; *Austerity* consists in remaining firm in one's own duty; *Purity* consists in the evading of inter-mixtures; *Contentment* consists in giving up objects of sense; *Shyness* consists in desisting from evil deeds; *Tolerance* consists in the capacity to bear the pairs of opposites; *Straightforwardness* consists in balance of mind; *Wisdom* consists in discerning the true nature of things; *Calmness* consists in peacefulness of mind; *Mercy* consists in the inclination to do good to living beings;—this is eternal Dharma.'

Brhaspati (Do.).—'Mercy, Tolerance, Freedom from envy, Purity, Abstention from over-exertion, Propitiousness, Freedom from miserliness, Freedom from desires,—these are common to all men.—When one protects another person in times of trouble,—whether he be a stranger or a relation, an enemy or a friend,—this is what is meant by *Mercy*. *Tolerance* is that by virtue of which one does not become angry on suffering pain. When one does not feel unhappy at the good qualities of another, and eulogises even those whose qualities are not of the best;—this is called *Freedom from envy*. *Purity* consists in avoiding forbidden food and in associating with blameless persons. When one avoids those acts which, though good, bring suffering to the body, that is *Abstention from over-exertion*. *Propitiousness* consists in doing what is good and desisting from what is not commended. *Freedom from Miserliness* is that by virtue of which one gives away, without pain, even the little that he possesses. *Freedom from Desires* is that by which one remains contented with whatever he obtains, without thinking of what others have got.'

Gautama (8.22-23).—'Now follow the eight qualities of the soul—Compassion on all creatures, Forbearance, Freedom from anger, Purity, Quietism, Propitiousness, Freedom from avarice and Freedom from covetousness.'

Manu Smriti 10 -63

ahiṃsā satyamasteyaṃ śaucamindriyanigrahaḥ etaṃ sāmāsikaṃ dharmam cāturvarṇye'bravīn manuḥ ||

Abstention from injuring, truthfulness, abstention from unlawful appropriation, purity and control of the sense-organs,—this Manu has declared to be the sum and substance of duty for the four castes

Medhātithi's commentary (manubhāṣya) explains: *Purity*'—refers to external purity, brought about by the use of clay, water and such things. This means that this is what pertains to entire human community, and not only to the Brāhmaṇa and the other castes. If 'abstention from injuring creatures' is the duty of the mixed castes of the 'inverse' order, how is it that it has been declared that—'killing fish is the livelihood of the Niṣādas' (48), 'and the catching of animals,' living underground' (49), and 'the killing of wild animals for the Kṣattrī and others? In answer to this some people offer the explanation that the 'abstention from injuring' refers to injury other than that which has been prescribed as one's livelihood.

Others think that what is here meant is that 'abstention from injury' is that kind of duty which is the source of spiritual welfare, and it does not mean the absolute prohibition of all injury. Just As it is in the case of the assertion—'there is no harm in the eating of meat etc., etc.' "If 'abstention from injury' is a duty, how are the men to subsist? Other sources of income being not available to them, and abstention from injury being regarded as conducive to spiritual welfare, what would be their means of livelihood? Specially as all other professions have been restricted to each distinct caste. For instance, teaching and other similar professions; are absolutely impossible, and cannot be available; agriculture and cognate professions are restricted to *Vaiśyas*; and service is the exclusive duty of the Śūdra." Thus is free from killing co-beings.

Āpastamba (1.23-6).—'Freedom from anger, from exultation, from grumbling, from covetousness, from perplexity, from hypocrisy and hurtfulness,—Truthfulness, Moderation in eating, Silencing slander, Freedom from envy, Self-denying, Liberality, Avoiding of gifts, Uprightness, Affability, Extinction of the passions, Subjugation of the senses, Peace with all beings, Concentration of mind, Regulation of conduct according to the Āryas, Peacefulness and Contentment;—these good qualities have been settled by the agreement of the wise for all the four orders. He who, according to the precepts of the sacred Law, practises these, enters the Universal Self.' *Viṣṇu* (2.16-17).—'Forbearance, Veracity, Restraint, Purity, Liberality, Self-control, Avoiding the killing of animals, Obedience to elders, Pilgrimage, Sympathy with the afflicted,—Straightforwardness, Freedom from covetousness, Reverence towards God and Brāhmaṇas, and Freedom from anger are duties common to all.'

Shreya and Preya Margas - vide Mundakopanishad

Nachikea by Yamadharmaraja on 'Shreya and Preya'

Yama explained Shreya and Preya or Vidya and Avidya, the intensity of Samsara vs. the Lasting Option and of the Identity with Brahman

I.ii.2-6) /*Shreyascha preyascha manushyametastou sampareetya vivinakti dheerah, Shreyo hi dheerobhi preyasō vrineete, preyo mando yogakshemaad vrineete// Sa twam priyaan priyarupaamscha kaamaan abhidhyaayan Nachiketo, tyasraaksheeh, naitaam srinkaam vittamaemavaapto yasyaam majjanti bahavo manushyaah// Duramete vipareete vishuchi Avidyaa yhaa cha vidyeti jnaataa, Vidyaabheepsinam Nachiketasam manye na twaa kaamaa bahavololupanta// Avidyaamantare vartamaanaah swayam dheeraah panditam manyamaanaah, Daridramanya maanaah pariyanti moodhaah, andhenaiva*

*neeyamaanaa yathaandhaah/ Na saamparaayah pratibhaati manyamaanaah, Dandramyaa maanaah
pariyanti moodhaaha andhenaiva neeyamaanaa yathaandaah/*

(After comprehensively testing Nachiketū, Yama then decided to explain the tenets of Brahma Vidya. There are two ways of human aspirations viz. ‘Shreya’ or Vidya and ‘Preya’ or Avidya and the paths of Pleasure and Sacrifice are distinct and divisive as the evil go to hell and the virtuous have their destination as heaven; this is the simple but definite explanation of existence of the Self after death. As both the preferable and pleasurable paths are open to a Being, the person of knowledge selects the ways of virtue and sacrifices while the ignorant one opts of the body pleasures. While knowledge and ignorance were contradictory, Yama appreciated Nachiketa who scrupulously avoided the diversity of pleasures and temptations of life and followed a unified and well defined route of virtue. Indeed while existing in the midst of ignorance and darkness, the majority of persons assume that they are intelligent and enlightened and move fast round and round following curved and twisted means of existence, just like blind leading blind. Not realising the means of attaining a long term perspective, the one with no discrimination blunders into pitfalls by being fooled by the lure of the lucre!)

*I.ii.7-9) Shrava-naayaapi bahubhīryo na labhyah shravantopi bahavoyam na vidyuh, Ascharyo vaktaa
kushalosya labdhaa ascharyo jnaataa kushalaanushishtah/ Na narenaa varenaa prokta esha suvigjneyo
bahudhaa chintyamaanaah: ananya prokte gatiatra naasti aneeyaan hi atarkyam anupramaanaat//
Naishaa tarkena matiraapaneyaa proktaanyenaiva sujanaanaaya preshta: yaam twam aapah
satyadhurutir bataasi; tvaadrūnobhūyaan Nachiketa prashta//*

(Dharma Raja now complimented Nachiketū as the sincere most seeker of the Ultimate Truth and the steadfastness with which he had been pursuing the effort was exemplary. He said that the Self was indeed such that he was not available for hearing and even if heard, was unable to understand him; blessed he be who understood this from an efficient Instructor. After all the Self had to be such that one could appropriately assimilate that and certainly not by an inferior person! On the contrary, the person not quite capable of proper understanding might misinterpret the essence of the Truth. Indeed, there could be no argument about this Truth as that would be too subtle to digest: It could be: ‘ananya prokte’ as the Supreme is identical with the Self; ‘na asti atra gatih’ or when transmigration is not referred to; and ‘na agatih’ or of non-realisation! In other words, no interpretation is possible by logic or argument, but is either to be taught by one extremely well versed in Scriptures and already experienced in the state of Unity of the Self and the Supreme or self-experienced! Yama further commented that only a person of true pledge and total resolve like, say, of Nachiketa’s inquisitiveness that one could assimilate this awareness)]

GANESAHA GITA

Preface

*Shuklaambara dharam Devam shashivarnam chaturbhujam, prasanna vadanam dhyaayet sarva
vigghnompashantaye/* The singular Deva who dons spotless clothes with four arms and ever pleasant face viz. Ganesha be prayed to with devotion to root out all kinds of impediments and difficulties.

2. *Agajaanana padmaarkam Gajaananamaharnisham aneka dantam bhaktaanaam eka dantam upaasmahe/* May we worship Gajaanana the elephant faced God with a single tusk who is the darling boy of Devi Parvati and delight her face like Sun blooms the lotus and thus please the devotees like me ensuring our safety and fulfilment of desires.

3. *Om Ganaanaamtva Ganapatigm havaamahe kavim kaveenaamupashravastamam, Jyeshtha raajam Brahmanaam Brahmanaspat aa nah shrunvaritibhih seeda saadanam/* May we appeal to you the very First Deity, the Lord of Lords, the foremost Poet and Scripter, the Supreme of Spritual Knowledge and wisdom. Be with us in our hearts to bless and purify all our deeds and duties.

4. *Vakratunda mahaa kaaya koti Suryasamaprabha, nirvighnam kurumedeava sarva kaaryeshu sarvadaa/* Maha Ganesha with colossal body and elephant head resplendent with the radiance of billion Suns! we beseech you with all humility and devotion to destroy all obstacles and ensure success in our deeds of virtue.

Between Maha Maya and Parameshwara is **Ganesha**, the singular symbol of auspiciousness, endeavour and success with the primacy of worship from Tri Mutis downward to charaachara jagat. He is the very essence of the entire Universe which is surfiert with **Tapatrayas viz.** Adhi Bhoudika- Adhyatmika and Adhi Daivikas; Ishana Trayas of Praaneshana, Daraa- putra- dhana - sukheshana and Dharmeshana; Trikaranas of Mano -vaachya karmanas; Trikalpa Kaalamaana of Padaardha-Paridhi-Paramanu /Matter-Space-Atom; Trigunas of Sat-Rajas-Tamas. He represents Tri Shaktis of Brahmini, Vaishnavi and Rudranis; **Trividha Rishis viz.** Brahmarshi, Devarshi, Rajarshi; Trikaankshaas of Kanta-Kanaka-Keerti; Chaturvidha Purusharthaas, Chatur varnas, Chaturaashramas; Chaturvedas; Pancha Bhutas, Pancha bhakshyas, Pancha koshas of Annamaya, Praanamaya, Manomaya, Vigyanamaya and Ananda maya; **Panchagnis, Panchendriyas**, Pancha Tanmatras, Arishad vargas, **Shat Chakras** of Moolaadhara, Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anaahita, Visuddha, Agjnaa and Sahasraara; Shat Karmas of Sandhya Vandana, Tarpana, Japa, Homa, Devaarchana, Swaadhyaya, Atithi Seva; **Shat Vedangas:** Siksha, Vyakarana, Kalpa Grandha, Nirukta, Chhandas, and Jyotisha; **Sapta Lokas**, Sapta Dwipas of Jambu, Plaksha, Salmaali, Kusha, Krouncha, Shaka and Pushkala and Sapta Patalaas of Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talaatala, Mahatala, Rasatala and Patalas; **Sapta Samudras:** Lavana, Ikshurasa, Sura, Ghrita, Dahi, Ksheera and Suswada jala; **Sapta Parvatas** of Sumeru, Kailasa, Malaya, Himalaya, Udyachala, Agastyachala, Suvela and Gandhamadana; **Sapta Kratus viz.** Shodassi, Ukta, Purushi, Agnishtoma, Aptaryama, Atiratra, Vajapeya, and Goshava; Ashtanga Yogas of Yama- Niyama- Aasana- Pranaayama- Pratyahara- Dharana- Dhyana- Samadhi. **Ganesha** is actively assisted by Ashta Loka Paalakas: Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirruti, Varuna, Vayu, Kubera and Ishana; Ashta Bhiravas viz. Kaala, Asitaanga, Rudra, Krodha, Kapala Bhishana, Unmatta and Samharas as **Ashta Bhairavis for Graha Shanti viz.** Mahakali, Neela Saraswati, Chhinna mastaka, Shodashi, Kahairavi, Dhumavati and Bagalamukhi; and **Ashta Lakshmis** of Dhanya, Dhairyaa, Santaana, Vijaya, Vidya, Bhagya, Gaja and Varada; **Ashta Matrikas** Brahmani, Vaishnavi, Maheshwari, Aindri, Vaarahi, Chamunda, Naarasimhi and Kaumari; Ashta avasus are viz. Aapa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Anila, Anala, Pratyusha and Prabhasa; **Nava Durgas** Shailaputri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kushmanda, Skanda Mata, Katyayani, Kaala Ratri, Maha Gauri, and Siddhi Dhatri; Navagrahas and most certainly the Dashavataras

of Vishu, apart from Vishvadevas, Ekadasha Rudras, Dwaadashaadithyas, Daitya Daanava Pishachadi evil forces too!Such is the singular balancer of Dharma-Adharma ,Truth and Falsity, and Maya and Paramatma is **Ganesha!**

Each and every Hindu with belief of Dharma, irrespective of caste or gender, wakes off from bed in the morning remembering Ganeshwara to ensure that through out the following day and night sleep into the bed, should pass off without obstructions , hurdles or mishappenings and with contentment, be it from family, surroundings and society, without no shows of evil energies. Equally significant is that all Hindu families all over the world do unfailingly perform the Vinayaka Chaturthi Vrata on the Shukla Chaturdhi of Bhadrapada Month each and every year religiously with faith , dedication and austerity. Invariably the Vrata irrespective of caste, creed and by man-woman-child and social barriers is observed to one's own devotion.. Not only this but Ganesha Smarana is a must preceding all the Devata Vratas, Yagjnya Karyas, upanayana-vivaha-and auspicious deeds like Griha Praveshas, and even all social functions- be they Shravana- Pathana - Shraavya- Nartanaadi Kalaa related ones to ensure their successful completion.]

Section OneonGanesha Gita as follows

Maharshi Veda Vyasa explained to Suta Maha Muni that the Yoga Maarga prakashita Ganesha Gita which could be transmitted to Raja Varenya about the Sampurna Vighna Nashaka Maha Ganesha and likewise the Raja addressed by 'smaranamaatra' Shri Gajaanana as the latter appeared to have replied: Raja! while blessing you owing to your loyalty to me I would be pleased to explain the yogaamrita paripurna Ganesha Gita be explained to you.

Na yogam yogamityaahuryogo yogo na nacha shriyah, na yogo vishayairyogo na cha maatraabhistathaa/

The Yoga shabdaartha is not yoga merely yoga, nor even for Lakshmi Kataaksha and vishaya sukha praapti; much less of the nigraha of panchendriya sampannata. of pancha jyanendriyas viz. Ghrana-Rasa-Chakshu-Shrotra-Twak or smell, taste, see, hear and touch and of pancha karmendriyas viz. nose-tongue- eyes- ears- skin respectively and of pancha tanmatras of light, sound, taste, smell and consciousness. Nor of Rupavati Streepraapti- vaahana praati- rajya praapti- Indra pada praapti, Shivapada praapti, Vaishnava padapraapti, Surya Chandra Kubera pada praapti, Vayu swarupa, Agni swarupa- Devasva-Kaalasva-Varunasva- Nirruti swarupa, and even sampurnaadhitya of Prithivi even.

*Yogam naanaavidham Bhupa yugjnaanti jnaanastata, bhavanti virushaa loke jitaahaaraa viretsah/
Paavayanyatakhilaaamllokaan vasheekrita jagatrayah, karunaapurna hridayaa bodhayantyapi
kaamshchana/ Jeevamuktaa hride magnaah paramaanandaruupinee, nirmeelyaaksheenipashyantah
param brahma hridi sthiram/*

Yoga is of several ways and means, yet yadatha yoga be such as to the jnaanis by accomplishing the same by vanquishing samsaara vishayaas could turn their hearts purified and become jeevan muktaas and be able to be jeevan muktaas and spread satpaatra jnaana pradaana.

*Dhyaantah paramam brahma chitte yoga vasheekrite, Bhutaani swaatmaanaa tulyam sarvaani ganayanti
te/ Yenachidaacchinaa yena kenachidaahataah, yena kinchidaakrishtaa yenachidaashritaah/
Karunaapurna hridaya bhramanti dharanee tale, anugrahaaya kokaanaam jitakrodhaa jitendriyaah/
Dehamaatrabhurto bhupa samaloshataashmakaanhanaah, etaadrisho mahabhagyaah suchakshur
gocharaah priyatamidaaneemaham vakshye shrunu yogamanuttamam,shrutvaa yam muchyate jantuh*

paapebyo bhavasaagaram/ Shive Vishno cha Shaktou cha Suryemayi Naraadhipa, yaa buddhiryogah sa samyag yogo mato mamama/

As being of yoga sambhuta, the yogi be immersed in ‘ekaagrata’ or totally absorbed in Parabrahma dhyaana while realising that the ‘samasta praanis’ be of ‘samadrishti’ being of ‘sampurna jitendra’ as of ‘dayaapurna hridaya’ and ‘krodhaashunya’ inner consciousness. Thus ‘kevala deha maatra dhaarana’ be applicable yet of ‘bhava saagara mukta’. Even despite the differentiation of Shiva- Vishnu-Shakti-Surya-Ganesha and so on the Jeevan Mukta and indeed be the Truthful and ‘yadaartha Yoga’.

Ahamevajagadyasmaatsrujaami paalayaamicha, krithvaa naanaa vidham vesham samharaami swaleelayaa/ Ahameva Maha Vishnurahameva Sadhaa Shivah, Ahameva Maha Shakrirahamevaaryama priya/ Ahameva nrinaam naatho jaatah pancha vidhah puraa, agjnaanaatmanaam na jaananti jagatkaarana kaaranam/ Mattogniraapo dharanee mattha aaksasha maarutou, Brahmaa Vishnuscha Rudrascha Lokapaataa Disho Dasha, Vasavo Munayo Gaavo manavah pashavopicha, Saritah Saagaraa Yaksha Vrishah pakshi ganaa api/ Tathaka vimshatih swargaa naagaah sapta vanaanicha, manushyaah parvataah Saadhyaah Siddhhaa Rakshoganaasrathaa/

Then the Jeevan Mrityu Maha Jnaani would assert : ‘ I am due to my playful Leelaas or of Illusions and would be manifesting the Jagat- Its Srishti- Sthiti-Samhaara. I am Maha Vishnu, Sada Shiva, Maha Shakti and Surya and Ganesha. I am the unique Swami of humanity as the kaarana-kaarya-karta and the Ignoramus be unaware. I had manifested Agni-Jala-Prithivi-Akaasha-Vaayu-Brahma-Vishnu-Rudra-Loka Paalakaas and Dasha Dishas- Ashta Vasus-Muni-Gou-Manu-Pashu-Nadi-Samudra-Yaksha-Vriksha-Pakshi Samuhaas-Twenty one Swargas-Naaga-Sapta Vana- Manushya-Parvata-Saadhya-Siddha-Rakshasaas and so on had been manifested by me, asserted the Jeevan Mukta. ‘ I am sarva saakshi, sampurna jagat netra, sarva karma karta-nirvikaara-aprameya-avyakta-sampurna jagat vyaapta and Avinaasha. I am the Avyaya Ananda Rupa Parabrahma and the shreshtha purusha mohita rupa.

Avakledyam Bhupa bhuvanairashoshyam maarutena cha, avadhyam vadhyamaanopi shareeresminnaraadhipa/ Yaamimaam pushpitaam vaacham prashamshanti Shruteetaam, trayee vaadarataa moodhostitonyanyamanmatepi na/ Kurvanti satatam karma janma mrityuphalapradam swargashyaryarataa dhvastachetanaa bhoga buddhyayah Sampaadayanti te Bhupa swaatmanaa nijabandhanam, samsaara chakram yujjanti jadaah karmaparaa narah/ Yasya yadvihitam karma tatkartavyam madarpana, tatosya karbeejaanaamucchinnaah syumahaankuraah/



That maya of mine germinates 'kaama krodha lobha moha mada matsaraas' of the arishad vargaas of the Beings in the Srishti in the ever recurrent 'janma bharita vishaya samuhaas.' As that Praani once aware of the Brahmatva then that 'dosha bhritaagni' be immunised and even if the shareera be bunt off then the Brahma Jnaana be such that shastra samuhaas be unable to severe , agni jvaalaas could harm, much less jala samuhas could drench, ferocity of vayu pravaahaas could shake up. As the 'vedatraya shraddhha yukta panditaas' be of one track mindedness of karma kaanda merely and be not aware of anything else for Atma Darshana and hence keep allured to janma-mrityu cycle of jeevana and at the most aim at swarga and Ishvarya bhoga merely. They thus get lured to 'swayam nimitta bandhanaas'. Such be the moodha paraayana manushyaas opt for the vicious circle of samsara chakra due to the thick layers of 'moodhaandhakaara'. Hence the 'karma bandhana vidhana' could only keep sowing 'kaama rupi beejaankura' and as such be a hindrance to accomplish 'nirmala chitta shuddhi'.

*Chitta shuddischa mahatee vigjnaanasaadhikaa bhavetkopi swadhadharma
 tyagavaamstatha/Tasmaatkarmaani kurveet buddhvi yukto Naraadhipaa, na tvakarma bavoktopi
 swadharma tyagavaamsthatha/Jahaati yadi karmaani tatah siddhim na vindati, aadou
 jnaanenaandhikaarah karmanyeva sa yujjate/ Karmanaa shuddha hridayobheda buddhimupaishyati, sa*

cha yogah samaakyaa- tomritatatvaaya hi kalpate/ Yogamanyampravashami shrunu Bhupa tadmuttmam, pashou putre tathaa mitre raatrou bndhou sahujjane/ Bahir drishtyaa cha samayaa hritasthaacha samayaa hritasthaye lokeyekatyetpumaam, sukhe duhhkhe tathaamarshe harshe bheetou samo bhavet/ Rogaptou chaiva bhogaaptou vaa jaye vijayopi cha, shreyeyo yoge cha laabhaalaabhe mritaavapi/ Samo maam vastu jaateshu pashyannatirbahih shthitam, Surye Somo Jale Vahnou Shive Shaktou tathaanile Dwije Hride Maha Nadyaam teerthe kshetregghananaashani/ Vishno cha Sarva Dreveshu tathaa yakshrageshu cha, satatam maam hi pashyatsoyam yogavidyucchate//

Chitta shuddhi be a ‘vigjnaana prapti pradhana saadhana’ and that vigjnaana is hinged to what Maharshis could seek to attain Parabrahma Jnaana. Hence Karmaacharana be the essential edifice for the construction of Buddhi योग्या and as such swadharma त्यागा be never ever discarded. As such karma त्यागा be not conducive for siddhi प्राप्ति since that be the base. It is that karmaacharana that the saadhakaas could turn to ‘shuddha hridaya’ and that follows ‘abheda buddhi प्राप्ति’ and that be named as the ‘Uttama Yoga’. That could indeed lead to ‘samyak drishti’ of pashu-mitra-putra-shatru-bandhu-priyajanaas, as also bahyaantara drishti, sukha dukkhas, krodha, harsha-bhaya and such ‘vikaaraas’. Roga प्राप्ति- bhoga प्राप्ति, jaya vijayaas, Lakshmi प्राप्ति and अप्राप्ति too, haani laabha, janma maranaadis too be what samyak drishti be all about. Sampurna Vastus be of ‘sama bhaava’ even of Surya- Chandrama- Jala-Agni-Shiva-Shakti-Vaayu-Brahmana-Saroara- Paapahaari Maha Nadis-Teertha- Kshetra- Vishnu- sanpurna Deva ganaas- yaksha-uraga-gandharva-manushya-pakshi be all visioned with samyak drishti and that person be the Maha Jnaani-and the Real Yogi.

Samparaahatya swaadhebhya indriyaani vivekarah, sarvatra samataa buddhih sa yogee Bhupa me matah/ Atmaanaatma vivekena yaa buddhirdaivayogatah, swadharmaasakta chittasya tadyogo yoga ucchyate/ Dharmaadharmou jahaateeha tayaa tyakta ubbhavapi, ato yogaaha yujjeet yogo vaidhushu koushalam/ Dharmaadhrma phale tyktvaa mneeshee vijayendriyah, janma bandha vinurmuktah sthaanam samyaatmanaamayam/ Yadaayaagjnaana kaalushyam jantorbuddhih kramishyati, tadaasou yaati vairaajyam vedavaakyaadishu kramaat/ Trayeevipratipanyasya sthaanutvam yaasyate yadaa, Paramaatmanyachalaa buddhistadaasou yogamanushyaat/ Maanasaannakhilaan kaamaan adaa dheemaamstyajetpriya,swaatmani svena suntushtah sthira buddhidochyate/ Vitrushnah sarva soukhyshu nodvigno dukhasangame, gatasaadhvasaruugaaah sthira buddhistadochayate/ Yaa raatrih sarva bhutaanaam tasyaam nidraati naivasah, na svapanteeha te yatra taa raatristasya Bhumipa/ Saritaam patiyaanaan ti vanaani sarvato yathaa, ayaanti yam tathaa kaamaa na shantim kvachillabhet/ Antastanoh samruddhya sarvatah swaani maanvah, svasvaartebhyah pradhaavanti buddhisya sthiraada tadaa/ Mamataahamkrutee twaktvaa sarvaan kaamaamshcha yastyajet, nityam jnaanarato bhutvaa jnaanaamuktim prayaasyati/

Raja Varena! That person who by the virtue of Jnaana without indriya vishayaas and sarvatra samaana buddhi be in my view be defined as the Ideal Most Yogi. As own’s dharmasakta chittha praani by virtue of Daiva yoga and could clearly vision one’s own Atma and Anaatma vichaara buddhi, that buddhi and its fallout yoga be the Ideal Yoga and of that kind of transparent buddhi would generate kartavya karma kushalata. Having become jitendriya and buddhimaan vyakti the Yogi could be of ‘janma bandhana mukta’ and could attain ‘anaamaya parama prada prapti’. As that praani be freed from avidyaandhakaara and become ‘sakaama veda vaakya vairaagya’, while the ‘triveda pratipaadita paaramatmika nishchalata’. That buddhimaan vyakti having totally rid of sampurna icchaa त्यागा and known as ‘sthira buddhi and of ‘sthira pragjna’. That person be aloof from samsaara sukha trishna,

duhkha anudvigna, bhaya, krodha, raaga raahitya and of sthira buddhimaan. This be on the analogy of a turtle from its limbs could withdraw its body parts and flatten, the buddhimaan's vishayas, panchendriyas and senses be pulled off too. A saadhaka might be able to do bhojana thyaaga but not 'vishaya nashta' so easily but practice be perfected. Indriya gana moksha be preceded by yoga paraayanata and that be known as 'sthiraprajnatva'. Once the traces of 'ihaloka paraloka sukhaapeksha' or feelings of the pleasures of this life and of the subsequent life in 'svargaadi' lokas after death, are totally wiped out and once in one's own natural conditions is able to neutralise totally and enjoy the 'Atmaananda' or the bliss of the Self Awareness, then that State of Consciousness is definable as the state of 'Sthitaprajnastha' or of Utmost Bliss! In other words, the craving indulgence of desires now and in the life after the death in higher lokas is the crux of an equanimous state of mind. Getting terribly agitated while facing insurmountable impediments and getting extremely overjoyed by very joyous experiences is the negation of an equanimous mind and the ability to neutralise the emotions. One's capacity to neutralise the inner emotions of pleasures and pains alike is the State of 'Sthitaprajnantva'! Sorrows and joys are the consequences of discontent and of success. The vicious circle of discontentment leads to disappointment which itches on the fear of failure. This creates irritability, fear, anguish, anger, and back to dissatisfaction of life. our own 'karma phala' or the sweetness or sourness of the fruit is reciprocated. That firm belief of hope or disappointment as the case that may be, is the 'Atma Swarupa' which certainly not is the body but the Self Consciousness of the concerned body which is clean and transparent and indestructible and eternal.

Raja Varenya! Without being of chitta prasannata, buddhi prapti be not possible and without buddhi paripakvara, shraddha be not possible and without shraddha, shanti would be illusive and without shaanti the everlasting Sukha. 'Buddhi sthirata' or steady mindedness is only possible by the control of thoughts. As the various beings on earth experience the effects of night, the 'Jitendriyas' who overcome the body senses and of mind, find that as a broad daylight. In other words, human beings of normalcy suffer from the effects of ignorance while the very few- or perhaps none but for exceptions above the cut- do experience enlightenment. As the waters of rivers and rainpours always fill in the oceans, a few jnanis of maturity seek to keep their minds and thoughts and steer clear the ever swallowing and roaring tides and their rough vicissitudes. Hence those pragmatic persons reducing the burden of desires, egos, attachments and other shackles should well deserve 'parama shanti and paramaananda' or of outstanding peace and bliss. Raja! this type of situation is termed as 'Brahmi sthiti' and those extremely limited number of illustrious mortals are never washed off on the swirls of 'moha' and 'bhrama' which at the terminal point of the life's 'nirvana'. Just as Vaayu teevrata could sink away the 'jeevana naava' into deep waters of samsaara, maanasika vishayaas could compel into the panchendriya driven chariot and the sthita prajnatva be submerged into the vicious circle. Raja! the manner in which the jeevanadis rush fast and seek to submerge into the maha samudras, likewise one's own tripti swabhava till the vishaya vanchha of one's buddhi sthirata be difficult to overcome till the ultimate merger with the Paramatma. Raja! what all mamatva, ahankaara and kaamanas be purged and liberated and the quintessence of that parigjnaana could only accomplish mukti praapti and then only the status of 'Jeevan Mukti'.

Section Two on Karma Yoga-

King Varenya was truly thrilled in what Bhagavan Ganesha on his subconsciousness had explained and addressed Him: You had very gracefully and vividly explained, yet could you as keeping in my limited capacity of grasping could one of these be preferred for me. Then Bhagavan replied: Dear Varenya! In

this charaachara jagat be existent as of now while saankhya shastra jnaataas could differentiate karma and jnaama or of pravritti and nivritti. Karmaasaktas would be eventually be turn to nishkriyaas since kevala karmaaharana be not of siddhi. All the same with no foundation of ‘sarkamaacharana jnaana maarga’ be available except perhaps to predistined ‘vihanga maarga maha purushaas’.Prakrti swabhaavaikas of the trigunaas too who be karmaacharanas without being able to overcome the vishyendriyaas be actually classified as duratmaas. Manas and Indriya samyama kaarakaas with nishkaamaanushthaanaas be only classified as shreshtha maamavaas. Those who be again be unable to dedicate to me and taka to shareera yatra be below the passmark yet, asserted Maha Ganesha. He further explained to King Varenya: In the past, as the yagjna rupa nitya karmaacharaas be worthy of me addressing them: You having been the beneficiated with your ‘ ishta siddhi’ be of daiva prasannata and mano vanccha iddhi. Otherwise those who be the cheekers and of sakama yagjna kartaas be known as thieves. Those who be disciplined to take to ‘avasshishtthaana maatra’ be the buddhimaans.Hence, Raja Varenya, loka samgraha- nimittha aasakti rahita karmaacharana be ever stuck to. Avidya and guna vasheebhutana be sought to be conquered as the foremost fundamentals. Those who would be doing the karmaacharana even under the influence of the three gunaas of satva-raajasa- taamas and of atma drohis be never responded to. In this manner those nitya-naimittika karmaas be dedicated to me having discarded mamata buddhi might yield parama gati prapti.

Aneershyanto bhatimanto ye mayoktamidham shubham, anutishthanti ye sarve muktaastekhila karmabhih. Ye chaiva naanu tishthanti twashubhaa hatachetasah, irshyamaanaan mahaamoodhaannashthaantaan viddhi me ripuun/ Tulyam prkritya kurute karma yajjajnaanavaanapi, anuyaati cha taamevaagrahastanna mudhaa matah/

Without being of irshtaa pravrtti the bhaktimaan manushyaas could follow my maaner of shubhaanushtthaana, those be the one’s of karma muktaas. Those whose agjinaana chitta nashta kaarana be disabled to samaargaanushtthaana as they be of irshyaalus- moorkhaas and of nashta buddhis. As the Jnaanvaan too as of their own swabhaavaanusaara cheshtaa could not then the karma phala would keep on failing recurrently. Maha Ganesha further clarified that during the impact of the ongoing kaliyuga for long time, shraddhaa vishvaasas be of recurrent casualties too yet this indeed be the ‘atyanta kalyaana kaaraka sampurna veda vedaanga saara’.

Then King Varenya during his trance and conversation to Ganapati Deva had dared to ask the latter : ‘Gajaanana! When you were in you were born from the garbhaavastha, how did you acquire the ‘amsha’ of Maha Vishna indeed. Ganesha then smiled and said: Raja! how many yuga’s - kalpaas and so on had elapsed in the kaala maana.

Matta mahaa bhaaho jaataa Vishnavaadayah Suraah , matthaiva layam yaanti pralayeshu Yuge Yuge/ Ahameva paro Brahmaa Maha Rudrohamevacha, ahameva jagatsarvam staavaram jangamam chayat/ Ajoyyayoham bhutaatmaanaadireeshvara evacha, aasthaaya trigunaam mayaayam bhavaami bahuyoganishu/

Be this clarified that from me alone, Vishnu and various Devataas were manifested and after yuga-kalpaadis be absorbed unto me alone. I am the shreshtha Brahma, Maha Rudra, and the sthaavara jangamaas as also of sampurna jagaat. I am the ajama, avinaashi, sarva jeevaatma- the anaadi Ishvara, the Trigunaatmaka Mayaasthita and assume as of ‘anekaavataara dharana dhaaraka’.

Adharmopachayo dharmapachayo hi yadaa bhavet, saadhuun suraksshitum drishtaamstaaditum sambhavaamyaham/ Ucchidyaadharmanichayam cha, hanmi drishtaamscha daityaamscha naanaa leelaakaromudaa/ Varnaashramaan muneen saadhuun paalaye bahu rupadruk, evam yo vetti sambhutirmama divyaayugeyuge/ Tatthatkarma cha veeryam mama rupam samaasatah, tyakyaatvaaham mamataa buddhim na punarbhuuh sa jaayate/ Tatvam mumukshanaa jneyam karmaakarma vikarmanaam trividhaaneeya karmaani suminnayishanaam gatihpriya/

As and when be the adharm vridhhi and dhama haani be occuring, then saadhu raksha and shishta shikshana be my various avataaraas or incarnations repeatedly. In my aneka rupadhaaranaas, I do seek to administer varna- aashrama-muni-saadhu paalana as of yugaas ever repetitively. In that manner be my karma-veerya-rupa jnaana be well known and realised while the ahamkaara- mamata buddhi tyaga be well realised.

Substance of further stanzaas of Karma -Karma Sanyaasa -and Dhyana or Tapasya Yoga as follows:

Maha Ganesha further explained to Raja Varenya that aneka manushyaa did earnestmost tapasya by the dint of vigjnaana and tapasya by way of icchhaa rahita-nirbhayaa-krodha keena- Ganeshaashrita upaasana as of vigjnaana and tapasya as of bahyantara shuchi then such praanis couldmost certainly attain me.

Kurvanti devataa preetim kaankshantah karmanaam phalam, praapannuvanteeha te loka sheeghram siddhim hi karmajaam/ Chatvaaro hi mayaa varnaa rajassatvatamomshatah karmaamshitashcha samsrushtaa mrityuloke mayaanagha/ Kartaaramapi tessaam maama kartaaram vidurbudhaah, aanandameeshvaram nityamaliptam karmajairgunaih/

Those who seek to achieve karma phala prapti as per the dictates of thair own innerconsciousness the devopaasana, then the karmaanusaara could get sheeghra siddhi praapi. Hey paapa rahite! In the mrityuloka there be satva-raja-tamasa gunaas as per karmaamsha phalita. Yet, panditas do realize that I am the anaadi-Ishvara and nitya karmaarpita.

Tatvam mumukshunaa jneyam kjarmaakarmavikarmanaam, trividhaaneeya karmaana suninmaishaam gatim priya/ Kriyaamakriyaajnaanamakriyaayaam kriyaamatih, yasya syaatsa hi martyemsmilloke muktokhilaarthakrit/

Dear Raja Varenya! It is crucial to differentiate Karma-Akarma-and Vikarma tatva mukti as all the three entities would result in tatva mukti as that Understanding be significant as all these are the ingredients of Karma Jnaana. As the kriya and the antargata buddhi jnaana be realized then the karmaacharana kartas be of Mukta swarupaas.

Those Karmaankura rahitaas or of sankalpa and kaamaa rahitaas or in other words sankankalpa kaamanaa rahita karma karaas, and of tatva jnaana buddhimaan panditaas. Those devoid of phaleccha and be immesed in saadhana be of Atma Triptaas. Those icchhaa rahita- atmajit and sampurna parigraha tyaaagis be never harmed in such households. Those of dwandva and irshya heena- siddhaa asiddhaa samaana drishti yuktaas be of nitya santushtaas and to such praanis be never of sakkarma liptaas.

Kaayikaadi tridhaabhutaan yagjnaan Vede pratishthitaan, jnaatvaa taanakhilaan Bhupa mokshyase-khila bandhanaat/ Sarveshaam Bhupa yagjmaanaam jnaana yagjnah paro matah, akhilam leeyate karma jnaane mokshasya saadhane/--Na jnaanasamataameti pavitrmitaranrupa, aaymayevaagacchanti yogaatkaalena yoginah/ Bhaktimaanidriyajayee tatparo jnaanamaapnuyaat, labhvaa tatparam moksham swalpakaalena yaatyasou/--Atma jnaana ratam jnaana naashitaakhilasamshayam, yogaastaakhila karmaanaam badhyanti Bhupa taani na/

Raja Varenya! In the Vedaas, several kinds of Maansika- Vachanaatmika-Karma prakaara Yagjna vividhas each of which could result in samasta bandhana mukti kaarakaas. Of all these , Jnaana yagjna be the outstanding. That be the moksha saadhaka

Jnaana samaana be no other vastu or the major stool of uttama pavitrata and yogasiddha mahatma could by the self be replete with the essence of jnaana all by the self. Indriya vasheekara bhaktimaan purusha be thus of outstanding jnaana praati.and ATMA JNAANA.

Section Three on Karma Sanyaasa Yoga

King Varenya then prayed Maha Ganesha further on Karma Sanyaasa or of nishkaamabhava karmaachana as consequent to Karmathyaaga and the karma yoga jnaana and Gajaavana replied: Karma yoga and Karma Sanyaasa be both of mukti saadhanaas and in both of these concepts be of karma yoga is stated as of better tool. Both of these sadhanas are of dukkha nivaaranaas and karma bandhana vimuktaas. The concepts of karma sanyaasa and karma yoga be confusing to moodha agjaanis, but panditaas could realize as of the same.

Nirmalo yatac hittaatmaa jitago yoga tatparah, aatmaanam sarvabhutastham pashyan kurvannan lipyate/ Tatvavidyayogayuktatmaa karomiti na manyate ekaadashaaneendriyaana kurvanti karma sankhyayaa/ Tatsarvamapravedbrahmanyapi karma karoti yah, na lipyate punyapaapair bhaanur jalagato yathaa/ Kaayikam vaachkam boudhvamaindriyam maanasam tathaa, thyaktvaashaam karma kurvanti yogajigjnaashditashuddhaye/ Yoga heeno narah karmaphalehayaa karotyalam, baddhyate karma beejaih sa tato dukkham samashnute/

Being of shuddha chitta, manovashaas, jitendriyaas, yoga tatparaas, sampurna praani aatma sthitaas be not contented with the ahamkaara of stating: I am the karta, but manosahita savendriyaas totalling pancha jnaanendriyaas and jnaanendriyaas too, Those who could do so while dedicating to Brahma asserting ‘ Sarvam Brahmaarpanamastu’, then they be immune from paapa punyaas as of jala pravaahaas be bereft of Surya bimba’s reflection. Yoga jnaanis being of chitta shuddhi nimittas do exercise tyaga of shaareerika, vaachika, buddhi, indriya manasotpanna vikaaraas and thus be manoshuddha karmaacharana tatparaas. On the other hand, such kind of yoga heena manushyaas with loukika phaleccha yuktaas could only be of karma beejaa bandhanaas and as such could merely be of dukkha praaptaas.

Manasaa sakalam kama tyaktvaa yogee sukham vaset, na kuan kaarayan vaapi nandankshvabhre supattane/ Nakriyaa nacha kartuvyam kasyachitsrujate mayaa,na kriyaabeeja samparkah shaktvaa tatkriyatekhilam/ Kasyachitpunyapaapaani na sprushyaami vibhurnripa, jnaana moodhaavimuhyante mohanaavritabuddhyah/ Vivekaatmaanojnaanam yeshaam naashitamaatmanaa, tesaam vikaashamaa - yaati jnaanamaadityavatparam/ Mannishthaa madviyotyantam macchhitta mayi tatparaah, tesaam vikaashamaayaati jnaanamaadityavatparam/ Jnaana vigjnaana samyuktte dwije gavi gajaadishu,

samekshanaa mahaatmaanah panditaah shvapache shuni/ Vashyah swargo jajattessaam jeevan muktaah samekshanaah, yato dosham Brahma samam tasmaattharvasheekritam/ Priyaapriye praapya harsha dveshou ye praapnuvanti na, Brahmaashrita asamoodhaa Brahmajnah samabuddhyah/

It should be proper for a yogi to take to sampurna karma tyaga and be delighted as of existing in an uttama nagari with nothing to do as of no responsible to perform, no constructive task to take up as the Nature by itself would be taken care of. Raja Varenya! Such be the blissfull state of mind. Then neither there be the punya-paapa prasakti nor of moha malina agjnaana buddhi. The paripurna viveka maanasikata then by itself should wipe off the dark ignorance as of Surya samaana parama prakaasha. That person whose nishtha and buddhi be focussed on Maha Ganesha then that acute concentration and shreshtha jnaana be able to demolish the paapa naashaka mukti shakti. Mahatmaa pandita jnaana vigjanis be of samabhaava drishti on Jaana yukta Brahmanas or on Go gajaaadi praanis or on chandaala- shvanaas even. That person whose manasika samata sthiti be of pure equanimity be stated as of Jeevanmukta and of Brahma sthiti. That Mahatma be of composure and self control.

Then King Varenya prostrated at Bhagavan and asked : Bhagavan! In these trilokaas, Deva-Gandharvaadi mahaatmaas be of adaardha soukhya pradaas! Then Gajaanana replied: Mahadaananda be beyond description and of avinaashi sukha is unparalleled as vishaya janita vastavika be merely of layers of delight and contentment. Vishayotpanna sukha be the dukkhas kaarana yet of a passing stage but not the tatvaasakta mahaananda and be not of 'tatvavit aasakti'. As even of 'kaamakrodhaadi janita aavega' be of temporary nature.

Antarnishthontaha prakaashontah prakaashontah, sukhontaarati durlabhet, asandighnokshayayam Brahma sarvabhutahitaardhakam/ Jetaarah shagipurnaam ye shamino damanistathaa, tessaam samantato Brahma swaatmajnaanaam vibhatyaho/ Aasaneshu samaaseenasyatyakattvemaan vishayaan bahih samstabhya bhrukuteemaaste praanaayaama paraayanah/ Praanaayaamam tu samrodhyam praanaapaanasammudbhavam, vadanti munayastam cha tridhaabhtam vipashchitah/ Pramaanam bhedato viddhi laghumadhyamamuttamam, dashaabhirtadhikairvarnaih praanaayaamo laghu smritah/ Chaturvimshatyaksharo yo madhyamah sa udaahritah, shattrimshallaghuvarnaam ya uttamah sibhidheeyate/

To those Maha saadhkaas whose hridaya nishtha, jnaana prakaasha, parama sukha backed by vairaagya, sava praani sahridayita be well qualified for akshaya parabrahma prapti To such saadhkaas whose arishadvargaas of kaama krodha lobha moha mada matsaryaas be overcome, shama damaadi paalana be repleted with, then atmajnaana and sarvatra brahma drishya be accessible. To them the advice be of ekaanta aasana sthitaas with drishti by bhrumadhya sthira and be at praanaayaama. Praanaapaana vaayu stambhana be praanaayaama as buddhimaan rishiganaas had defined as follows: Praanaayaama bhedaas be of trividhaas: laghu-madhyama-and uttama; twelve akshara praanaayaama be denoted as laghu praanaayaama- twenty four akshara be of madhyama and of thirty six akshataas of pranava be denoted as of uttama praanaayaama.

Simham shaardulakam vaapi mattemham mrudutaam yathaa, nayanti praaninanatha dwaapraanaapaanou sumaadhayet/ Peedayanti mrigaamste na lokaan vashyagataam nripa/, dahatenastathaa vaayuh samstaho nacha ttanum/ Yatha yathaa narah kaschitsopaanaavalimaakramet, tathaa tathaa vasheekryaatpraanaapaanou hi yoga vit/ Puurakam kumbhakam chiva rechakam cha tatobhyaset, ateenanaagatajnaanee tatah syaajjagateeta/ Praanaayaamair dwaadashaabhir -

*uttamairdhaardanaa mataa, yogastu dhaarane dwe syaadyogeeshaste sadaabhyaset/ Evam yah kurute
raajaamstrikaalagjnah sa jaayate, anaayaasena tasya yaadvishayam lokatrayam nripa/ Brahma rupam
jagatsarvam pashyati swaamaraatmani, evam yogashcha samnyaasah samaana phala daayinam/
Jantunaam hitakartaaram karmanaam phaladaainam, maam jnaatvaa muktimaapnoti trailokyasyash -
varam vibhum/*

The Maha Saadhakas be able to regulate and control the praanaapaanaas as of being able to subdue simha-vyaaghra-and madonmatta gaja raajaas. Raja Varenya! Praanaayama be such as to control the sprocess of breathing as could ash down heaps of indulgences and sins, though not the body. As one could ascend a ladder to heights, likewise a yogi too in a methodical manner could regulate the praanaapaanaas too. Puuraka-kumbhaka-and rechaka are stated as the praanaayaama angaas. Puuraka be explained as the forcible inhaling of air up the lungs, while Kumbhaka as to hold the air and Rechaka be the exhaling the air. [Ratio of 1:4:2 (inhalation:retention:exhalation) means that suppose you inhale in 2 counts, hold breath for 8 counts and exhale for 2 counts. 1-2 (two counts): inhale--1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8 (eight counts): hold breath--1-2-3-4 (four counts): exhale. while doing pranayama without doing retention of breath, the ratio 1:4:2 reduces to 1:2 (inhale in 2 counts and exhale for 4 counts). Ater sufficient practice you can increase the counts for inhalation and exhalation keeping the ratio as 1:2. (inhale in 4 counts and exhale for 8 counts). And with still more practice. (inhale in 8 counts and exhale for 16 counts).]

Twelve uttama praanayaama viddhis are stated of which even two of these be worthy of nirantara dhaarana by yogis. Raja! In this manner if one's saadhana be performed, then trikaala jnaana be generated and anaayaasa 'trikola vashitva' be generated. Then one's antaratma be repleted with Brahma rupa sandarshana and hence the Karmasanyaasa and Karmayoga phalita.

Tiny, Ancient, Intrinsic and beyond Tamo Guna was the Purusha, the Praana or Life and Maheshwara himself as also Agni, Kaala and the Unknown! This Samasara or the Universe was created by Parameshwara who also absorbed it into him; the Maha Maya which surrounded lesser layers of Maya created various Beings; indeed, the Pure Atma was not subject to changes nor features; it neither allowed transformation nor was prone to motivation).

*Na chaapyam samsarati na cha Samsaarayet Prabhuh, Naayam Prithi na Salilam na Tejah Pavano
Nabhah/ Na Praano na Mano -Vyaktam Na shabdah sparsha yevacha, Na Rupa rasaghandhaascha
naaham Kartaa na Vaagapi/ Na Paani paadow no paayurna chopastham Dwijottamaah, Na Kartaacha
na Bhoktaa vaa nacha Prakritin Purushou, Na Maayaa naiva cha Praanashchaitanyam Paramaar -
thathah/*

(The Supreme Atma was neither Earth, nor Water, Tejas / Radiance, Wind nor Sky. It was neither Life, nor Mind, nor the Unknown, nor Shabda /Sound-Rasa/ Taste-Gandha /Smell; it was not the feeling of the Self nor of the Voice. One could not identify the Soul as hands, feet, nor the Marmaavayaas; neither the Kartaa the Performer nor Bhokta- the one who experienced the performance; The Atma was not Prakriti and Purusha; not the Maya /Illusion and Life; in fact the Universe and Paramatma are clearly separated entities!

*Yathaa Prakaasha tamasoh sambandho nopapadyatey, Tadvaikyam na sambanthah Prapancha
Paramaatmanoh/haayaa tapou yathaa lokey Paraspara vilakshanou, Tadah tasya Bhaven
muktirjanmaantara shatairapi/ Pashyanti Mumanayo yuktaah swaatmaanam Paramaardhatah, Vikaara*

*heenam Nirdukhka maanaanda -atmaanavyayam/ Aham Kartaa Sukhi Duhkhi Krusha Sthuleti yaa matih,
Saa chaahankaara krutwaadaatmanya ropyatey Janaih/*

(Just as darkness and light were clearly distinctive, Samsara and Paramatma had no relevance of each other. Purusha and Prapancha too were quite different like sunshine and shadow. If Atma were unclean, diseased and full of malices by nature, then it could never have been purified even after thousands of lives and Yogis or Sages could never have visioned a spotless, blissful, indestructible and eternal Soul otherwise!) Paramatma therefore emphasised thus:

*Aham Kartaa Sukhi Duhkhi Krushah Sthuleti yaa matih, Saa chaahankaara kartutwaa daatma -atmanya
ropyatey janaih/ Vadanti Veda Vidwaamsaha saakshinaam Prakruteyh Param, Bhoktaara -maksharam
Shuddham Sarvatra Samavasthitam/ Tasmaadajnaana mulo hi Samsaarah Sarva dehinaam,
Ajnaanaadyanyathaa Jnaanam taccha Prakriti sangatam/*

(Human Beings tend to attribute their feelings as per their own mind-set and Ahamkaara/self- pride as though they were the Kartas or the responsible persons for their happiness, unhappiness, thinness or stoutness and so on; accordingly they reflect their emotions and sentiments to their inner consciousness and Atma (Soul). But those who were enlightened and learned with the knowledge of Vedas and Scriptures would indeed realise that there was a force beyond them and their nature and that indeed was the Eternal and All-Pervasive Para Tatwa; ignorance of that Reality which was far different from the illusion was the High Divider.)

*Nityoditah Swayam Jyotih Sarvagah Purushah Parah, Ahamkaaravivekena Kartaahamiti manyatey/
Pashyanti Rishayovyaktam Nityam Sadasaad –makam, Pradhaanam Prakritim buddhwaa kaaranam
Brahma vaadinah/ Tenaayam sangatohyatmaa Kutasthopi Niranjanah, Swaatmaanamaksharam Brahma
naavabudhyet Tatwath/ Anaatmanyaatma vijnaanam tasmaad duhkham tathetaram, Raagadweshadaya
doshaah Sarvey bhraanti nibandha –naah/Karmanyasya bhaved dosah Punyaapunyamiti stitih, Tadhshaa
Deva Sarveshaam Sarva Deva samudbhavah/*

(Due to one's own ego and ignorance, human beings tended to confuse themselves as Parama Purusha - the Self-Illuminated one- and declared that whatever was achieved or not was due to their own effort or lack of it. Brahmavaadi Rishis would clearly distinguish the Supreme, the Prakriti, and the Cause as also the Truth and Fallacy and thus seek 'Saakshaatkaara' or Ready Realisation. The dormant, invisible and unfelt Truth would indeed co-exist with the illusions of life vis-à-vis the Eternal which got camouflaged! In the 'Anaatma' Tatwa or of the Non-Soul, even Atma Vijnana too would get polluted due to 'bhranti' or illusions as likings and dislikings were produced leading to Depravities or Moralities. This was the reason why Paapa-Punyaas got generated and different kinds of human beings came into existence.)

*Nityah Sarvatragohyaatmaa Kutastho Dosha Varhitah, Eka sa bhidyatey Shaktyaa Maayaya na
swabhavatah/ Tasmaadadvaitamevaahur Munayah Paramartaah, Bhedo Vykaswabhaavena saa cha
Maayaatmasamshrayaa/ Yathaa hi dhumasamparkaannaakaasho maliney bhavet, Antahkaarana
jairbhaavairaatamaa tadatra lipyatey/ Yathaa swaprabhayaa bhaati Kevalah Spatikomalah, Upaadhiheeno
Vimalaastathaivaatmaa Prakaashatey/ Jnaana swarupameyvaahur jagatetad Vichakshanaah, Artha
swarupamevaajnaah pashyantanye kudrushtayah/*

(That was also the reason why the Unique Partamatma was displayed in variegated types of Beings due to Maya Shakti or the Power of Illusion. Munis therefore believed firmly that Atma by itself was ‘Advaita’ or Singular but due to interaction with Maya looked as several entities, just as hot sunshine would pollute the Sky and hence the Purity of Atma was affected) .

Yadaa Sarvani Bhutaani Swaatmanyevabhi pashyati, Sarva Bhuteshu chaatmaanaam Brahmaa sampadyatey tadaa/ Yadaa Sarvaani Bhutaani samaadhistho na pashyati, Ekibhutih parenaasou tyadaa bhavanti kevalah/ Yadaa Sarvey pramuchyatey Kaamaa yesya hrudi sthitaah, Tadaasaavamrutibhutih kshemam gacchati Panditah/ Yadaa Bhuta prudhakbhaavamekastha manupashyati, Tata eva cha vistaaram Brahmaa sampadyatey tadaa/ Yadaa pashyati chaatmaanam kevalam Paramaarthatah, Mayaa maatram Jagat krutstnam tadaa Bhavai Nivrutah/

(When Yogis could view all the Beings as existed in their own selves, that would become the achievement of Brahma Bhava. When Yogis reached a Samadhi Position or an Elevated Status of Enlightenment perceiving that all Beings in the World were just the same then they would have reached Atma Darshana or the Vision of the Soul and Brahma Bhava or the feeling of Oneness. Yogis would then have no further desires and reach a stage of Fulfillment; then they feel equality of all Beings and sincerely reach a sensation of Oneness or Brahma Prapti. When Yogis vision ‘Paramaatha’ and the Uniqueness of the Supreme then Maya or Illusion would have been destroyed and the entire Universe would look as a Single Entity.)

Yadaa Janma jaraa duhkavyaadheenaa meka bheshajam, Kevalam Brahma Vijnanam Jaayatosow tadaa Shivah/ Yathaa Nadee nadaa lokey Saarenaikataam yayuh, Tadaatmaakharenaasou nishkalenai - kataam vrajet/

(When Yogis realise that birth, old-age, misery and disease would happen due to ‘Karma’ or previous actions and of the awareness of that Brahma Gyan, then Shiva Rupa would have been realised. Just as Rivers and Rivulets would reach the Ocean finally, the individual ‘Jeevatmaas’ would get submerged into Paramatma.)

Tasmad Vigjanamevaasti na Prapancho na Samsrutih, Agjnaanenaavrutam Loko Vigjnaanam tena muhyati/ Tad jnaanam Nirmalam Sukshmam Nirvikalpam yadavyayam, Agjnaana mitarat Sarvam Vgjnaanamiti mey matam/ Etad vah Paramam Sankhyam bhaashitam Jnaana –muttamam, Sarva Vedaanta saaram hi yogatastraikachittataa/ Yogaat sanjyatey Jnaanam Jnaanaad yogah pravartatey, Yogi Jnaanaabhi yuktasya naavaapyam Vidyatey kwachit/ Yadeva Yogino yaanti Saankhyaistadadhigamyatey, Evam Saankhyam cha yoga cha pashyati sa tatwavit/

(Hence, Vigjnaana was ever-existent and not Samsara; Vigjnaana / Knowledge was surrounded by Agjnaana/ignorance. In other words, what ever was Nirmala, Sukshma and Avyaya was Jnaana and the rest was worthy of discarding. Sankhya Yoga was that Jnaana only and was the Essence of Vedas. That was what worth concentrating about.)

Having explained the above, Parameswara told the Brahmavadi Maharshis further as follows: *Esha Atmaahamavyakto Maayaavi Parameshwarah, Keertitah Sarva Vedeshu Sarvaatmaa Sarvato –mukhah/ Sarva Kaamah Sarva rasah Sarvagandhojaraamarah, Sarvatah paanipaadohamantaryaami Sanaatanah/ Apaani paado javano graheetaa hridi samsthitah, Achakshurapi pasyaami tathaa karnah shrunomyaham/*

Vedaaham Sarvamevedam na maam janaati kaschana, Praahumarhaantam Purusham maamekam Tatwa darshanah/ Pashyanti Rishayo hetumaatopannah Sukshma darshanah, Nirgunaamala rupasya attaddaishwaryamuttamam/ Yatra Devaa vijaananti mohiyaa mama Maayayaa, Vakshye samaahitaa yuyam Shrunudhwam Brahma vaadinah/ Naaham prashastaa Sarvasya Maayaatitah swabhavatah, Preranaami yathaapeedam kaaranam Sooraye Viduh/ Yasmey guhyatamam deham sarvagam Tatwadarshanah, Pravishtaa mama Saayujyam labhantey Yoginovyayam/Teshaam hi vashamaapannaa Maayaa mey Vishwarupini, Labhantey Paramaam Shuddhim Nirvaanam tey mayaa saha/ Na teshaam punaraavrittih Kalpakoti shatairapi, Prasaadaan –mama Yogeendraa etad Vedaanushaasanam/ Naaputra sishya yogibhyo daatavyam Brahma -vaadibhih, Maduktametad Vigjnaanam Samkhyayoga samaashrayam/

(I am Antaryami, Avyakta, Maayavi , Parameshwara, Sarva Veda Swarupa, Sarvatma, Sarva Kaama, Sarva Rasa, Sarva Gandha, Ajara, Amara, Sanaatana and full bodied with hands and feet, although I can move without hands and feet. I am fully aware of the ins-and-outs of the Prapancha but none knows about me. Some call me Adviteeya and some ‘hetuvaadaas’ claim that they are aware of the Cause of their existence, but for sure even Devas are not aware of my Reality as they are all steeply immersed in Maya. Now, listen to me carefully: Even being fully independent of and distinct from Maya, I provoke Maya to create situations due to reasons of such situations and accordingly Maya generates the specific situations. My all-pervasive ‘deha’ or Physique [which certainly not the outcome of Pancha Buthas or Gunas or Tatwas which were my branded products] is perhaps partly visioned by Tatva darshis and Maha Yogis and some selected few are even absorbed into me which is called Sayujya! Such handpicked ones would not have ‘Punarjanma’ for even crores of Kalpas; indeed that would be my Directive and Discretion. The Atma Tatwa or ‘the Saankhya Yoga Samanvita Vijnana’ that I am now indicating in a hazy form may be taught to Brahma Vaadis to their sons, disciples or trusted Yogis only and to none else!)

Daana Mahima : 1.Quotes by Maharshis 2. Padma Purana 3. Manu Smriti 4. Garuda Purana 5.Skandapurana and 6. Varaaha Purana on Godaanaas

Daatavyam pratyaham paatre nimittetu visheshatah, Yaachitenaapi daatavyam shraddhaa putam cha shaktitah/

(Maharshi Yagnyavalkya described the feature of ‘Daana’ or Charity: every human being should resort to daana dharma on each and every day as per one’s own capacity, especially on the days of Solar and Lunar Eclipse days. Charity is indeed to be given to those asking for it as per one’s ability!)

Vaaridah triptimaapnoti sukhamakshayamannadah, Tilapradam prajaamishtaam deepadaschakshur -uttamam/ Bhumido bhumi maapnoti deerghamaayurhiranyadah, Grihadograanivesh- maani rupyado rupamuttamam/ Vaasodaschandra saalokyam Ashviptaalokyamashvadah, Anaduddhaha shriyam pushtim godobadhnascha vishtapam/ Yaana shayaaprado bhaaryamaishvarya mabhayapradah, Dhaanyadah shasvatam soukhyam Brahmado Brahmasaashtitaam/

(Those who provide charity of water begets satisfaction, food yields Lasting happiness,tila daana bestows excellent progeny, charity of Light gets vision, Bhu dana begets lot more of Bhumi, Suvarna Daana provides longevity, Griha daana yields huge buildings, charity of cash bestows excellent beauty of

physique, vastra daana provides Chandra loka, Ashva daana bestows Ashvini Deva Loka, charity of ox yields affluence, Go daana provides great health and body strength, he who gives away a comfortable bed is blessed with a wonderful wife, offering shield and protection begets opulence, dhanya daana bestows lasting happiness and tracing Brahma Vidya bestows Brahma Saakshatkaara!)

Sarveshaameva daanaanaam Brahama daanam visishyate/ (Indeed Brahma Vidya daana is the ultimate among all the types of Charities!) Ayaachtaani deyaani sarva daanaani yatnatah, Annam Vidyaaha Kanyaachahyanarthibhyona deeyate// Dvaamimau purushaa loka swargasyopari tishthatah, Anna pradaataa durbhikshe subhikshe hema vastradah/

(Shandalya Muni mentions that all types of charities be offered without being asked for and with clean conscience or with no view of securing returns; however Vidya, Kanya and Anna must not be offered without being asked for as a rule! Indeed, there are two types of charity givers who attam Swarga for sure: those who heartily give away Food during Durbhiksha and also those who happily give away gold and clothing during the days of general prosperity!)

Naalpatvam vaa bahutvam vaa daanasya abhyudaavaham, Shraddhaa Bhaktischa daanaanam vridhikshayakare hite// Ishta dattam adheetam cha pranyanukirtanaat, Shlaaghaanu shochanaabhyaam na vridhaa parikeertayet/

(Devala Maharshi clarifies: Charity given in small or large quantities is irrelevant but whatever is handed over with Shraddha bhakti or reverence and sincerity are given and the recipient too should truly desire and deserve it! Contrariwise, there might be negative impact! If charity given out of expectation of appreciation is futile but the result is really needful and genuinely appreciated then that type of charity goes a long way!)

Samabrahmanye daanam dvigunam braahmanbruve, praadheete shata sahasram anantam Veda paarage/

(Daksha Prajapati describes that charity to less deserving Brahmana has double the impact to that of one who is given to a genuine Brahmana; in case that very daana is given to a Pandita or a learned Brahmana; but indeed the charity to a Veda Pandita bestows Ananta Punya or of Lasting Fruits!)

Vyaasa Smriti elaborates the concept of Daana further:

Svaantah kruddhastamandhovaa kshutpipaasaa bhayaadhritah, daanam punyamakrutvaa cha praayaschittam dinatrayam/Anaahateshu yaddhaanam yaccha duttam ayaachitam, bhavishyati yugassyaanantah tasyaantato na bhavishyati/

(When a person gives away a charity to a quality Brahmana, while in a mental frame of tiredness, anger, ignorance, hunger, thirst or under compulsion, then such a charity would be ineffective and warrants for a three day prayaschitta) The type of Daana that is offered by special invitation and that which is given when asked for has considerable difference till the end of yugas, but there is no end of the concept of daana ever!)

Adrushite chaashubhe daanam bhoktaa chaiva na drushyate, punaraagamanam naasti tatra daanamanantakam/

(Daana with the apprehension of having to face inauspiciousness to the donor is of artificial nature, but nishkaama daana with no expectation of return is of lasting value especially when the daana karta would request for ‘punaraagamana’ or please come again!

Samam abrahmane daanam dvigunam Braahmana bruve, Sahasragum aacharye hyenanantam veda panditaa/

(To give charity to an undeserving Braahmana is not out of order and minimal, and so is one who claims as Braahmana by birth, yet daana given to an Acharya is thousand times better but to a Veda Vidwaan daana, is stated to of endless fruits!)

Maata pitrushu yadyayaad bhraatrushu shvashureshucha, Jaayaapatyeshu yaddadyaad sonatah svarga samkramah//Pituh shatagunam daanam sahasra Maaturuchyate Bhaginyaam shata sahasram sodare duttamakshayam/

(In the current times, what Veda Vyasa states is indeed applicable: Charity that is provided to parents, brothers and father-in- law, own wife and children would pave the way to heavens. If the charity that is given to father is hundred folded, that given to mother is thousand folded, to sisters it is of lakh times more and to brothers is countless!)

2. Padma Purana: ‘Daanas’and ‘Tirtha Yatras’-Grihastas to perform ‘Punya karyas’ together:

Bhagavan Vishnu Himself extolled the supremacy of Daana and advised King Vena to perform Daana as the sure destroyer of sins and promoter of fame and happiness. Vishnu affirmed that He would readily reward whoever gave charity with a clean heart to a well-deserving Braahmana of foodgrains, clothes, Gold, Bhumi, Cows, Cash and such other gifts.

Bhagavan further described that there were four kinds of Danaas, viz. Nithya, Naimitthika, Kaamyaa and Praaya. Nitya Daana is in the form of Anna (food), fruits and flowers, Vastra (Clothes), Taamboola, Abhshana (Jewellery), Gold and such other items after worshipping Devas and Pitras. Naimitthika daanas are performed on Amavasyas, Pournamis, Ekadashis, Samkranti days or when Sun’s directon changes towards Uttarayana; Pournamis of Magha, Ashadha, Vaishakha and Kartika months; Somavati Amavasya, Aswin Krishna Trayodasi, Pitru Tithi etc. and these are effective and highly propitiating. Kaamyaa Daanaas are in the context of Vratas, Deva Pujas, weddings, Jaata karmas, Upanayanas, Temple Pujas, Bhu-sthapana karyas or Earth breaking tasks of housing, wells, Sarovars etc. all targetted for the success of the desired tasks. Other types of Danaas of Praya nature are oriented to ‘Mrityu’ and targetted to provide to Peace to departed Souls in ‘Paralokas’. Describing the significance of Tirtha Yatras to King Vena, Bhagavan Vishnu emphasised River Ganga as the most sacred, besides other Rivers like Sarasvati, Narmada, Yamuna, Taapi (Tapati), Charmanvati, Sarayu, Ghaghra, Vena, Kaveri, Kapila, Vishaala, Godavari, Tungabhadra, Bhimarathi, Vedika, Krishaanga, and so on. In fact, there are countless such Tirthas dotting the Punya Bhumi of Bharat in which Snaana and Daana karmas yield excellent results and all such Tirthas are called n fact, there are countless such Tirthas dotting the Punya Bhumi of Bharat in which Snaana and Daana karmas yield excellent results and all such Tirthas are called Vishnu Tirthas. In fact, Tirthas are every where like Sarovars of Manasa status, Mountains like Meru, Himalayas and Vindhya; Yagna Bhumis, Agnihotra Homa Places, Shraddha Bhumis, Deva Mandirs, Homa Shalas, Vaidika Swadhyaaya Mandirs, Goshaalas, residences of Somayaaji Braahmanas, where Pita and Mata live,

where Puranas are recited and heard, where Veda Shrivana is heard, where Guru lives and each and every Place of Worship! Another important aspect which Bhagavan Vishnu emphasised was that for a Grihastha, any daana given or a Tirtha Yatra performed, it would be compulsory for both husband and wife to execute together since a husband is the right portion of a wife and a wife is the left part of a husband. Shastras underlined the fact that a husband was the Tirtha to a wife and vice versa. Any daana- punya, Yagna-homa, Snaana-Puja, Tirtha Yatra or another sacred task performed by a Grihastha with his woman seated on the left side would be counter-productive and a sheer waste! *Bhartrum prasaadaascha sarvam labhatey naatra samsayaha, Vidyamaaney yada kaantey Anya dharma karotiya/ nishphalam jaayatey tasyaaha pumshali parikathyatey!* (A person while her life partner is alive and seeks to perform any kind of Dharma Karya is said to be a Vyabhicharini).

Ten means of Punyas are stated to be Ahimsa (non-violence), Kshama (Forgiveness), Satya (Truthfulness), Lazza (Modesty), Shraddha (Patience), Indriya Samyam (Self-Control), Daan (Charity), Yagna (Sacred Rituals), Dhyaana (Meditation) and Gyana (Knowledge).

Eight types of main Charity are of Anna, Jala, Horse (Vahana), Cow, Vastra, Shayya (cot / bed), Sutha (Cotton / fibre), and Asana (Seat). Anna daana is stated to account for half of all kinds of daana. Jala daan is of next best importance. Together, these two account for the best part of Daanaas.

Manu Smriti -Aachaara Khanda Chapter Four extols Daana Mahima

(Prajapati's sincere advice to Devatas would be to make an appeal to Vidwan Brahmanas that yagnas and works of daana-dharmas be intensified with commitment and total faith with their rightful earnings to reap akshaya phala or unending fruits but *parishushtena bhaavena paatmaasaadya shaktitah* or by ensuring that the recipient of the charity would so deserve. Once so given away even a trifle but as per one's ability without grumbling would bestow satisfaction to both. The taker of food is relieved of hunger but the giver yields 'tripti'; til daan gives good progeny, charity of deepa or lights yields good eyesight, bhudaan results in multiple gains of bhumi, longevity for suvana daan, griha daan yields excellent palaces and charity of silver results in body shine and charm. Vastra daana, ashwa daana, go daana results in Chandra loka, ashva daana of the worlds of Ashvini Devas, and godaana the Surya loka respectively. Charites of bulls or oxen would bestow good fortune while of carriages and beds result in a beautiful wife. Abhaya daana or offering safety yields fortunes and Kingdoms while dhaanya daana bestows life's fulfillment. Daana of Vidya and of Vedas helps attainment of Brahma loka. Indeed daanas of jala, anna, go, vastra, tila, suvarna excels all as compared to Veda daana. The manner and shraddha in which the charities are given enhances double of the returns. While respectful offerings and reciprocations lead both the parties to swarga loka and any infringement in the give and take leads to negative lokas. No brahmana should boast of austerities nor perform sacrifices like yajna karyas in vanity as the results would never be positive but end up in falsehood and negativism. Never speak ill of Brahmanas despite their attitude and action, nor display one upmanship and vanity. Having executed daanaas to one's satisfaction, there is no need to boast and publicise. *Yajnonritena ksharati tapah ksharati vismayaat, aayurvipraapavaadena daanam cha parikeertanaat/ Dharmam shanaih sanchinuyaad valmeekamiva puttikaah, paralokasahaayaartham sarvabhutaanyapeedayan/* Exaggeration tends to suffer the result of sacrifices and meditation, unwanted criticism of vidwaan brahmanas affects health and longevity while self publicity erodes into daana mahima; one needs to refrain by tormenting insignificant beings and seek to enhance the volume and value of dharma to one's own credit like an ant's course upto

hilltop. Indeed to help could forthcome by parents, relatives and close friends: *Ekah prajaayate jantureka eva praleeyate, ekonubhunkte sukriritameka eva cha dushkritam/* Only one lonely Self is born and dies and has to reap his or hers fruits of 'karma' and the resultant deeds. Once the light of life is put off and the relatives return with the body burnt by wood into ashes, the account of Dharma alone remains to let the Soul travel up and down. *Dharmapradhaanam purusham tapaaa hatakilbisham, paralokam nayatyaashu bhaasvantam khashareerinam/* or a person soaked in nobility and virtue is destined to accomplish mukti and totally keep himself away from all the paths even remotely connected with vice and dedicate himself to the rudiments as also nuances of dharma and dharma alone. Illustrious persons alone could mount the most difficult mountains of purity and self control conditioned by innumeralbe temptations of natural pulls and pressures of Kaama krodhaadi proverbial enemies and value added by satkarmas or austerities and sacrifices; only such exemplary Beings face death with a smile and get radiant and celestial clothing wrapped in their ethereal physiqes. Indeed it could be only possible only for a superior and learned Brahmana in the pure sense of supreme morality who is qualified to scale such heights supassing and dismissing the far lower levels of Jeevatva! *Dridhakaaree mridurdaantah kruraachaairasan vasan, ahinsro damadaanaabhyaam jayet svargam tathaavratah/* Only those who who possess high-resolute mindedness , unmoved by flippancies, strong and decisive concentration, will power and rigorous practice are able to control physical and sensory organs are qualified such 'sthita prajinata'. An exceptional Brahmana who is in need of water, roots and fruits, agni, and minimal food subsistence is the only qualified for such status. Lord Prajapati is stated to have declared that such alms could be accepted even from a sinful person provided there is pressing demand and ready and voluntary donor. Indeed those grihasthis who do not offer shraaddha to pitrus for fifteen years and perform vaishwa deva are not qualified to accept charities but insult pitrus and Devas. At the sametime, the most needy brahmanas despite their shortcomings might retain if volantly, certain exceptional items like bed, house, kusha, gandha, water, flowers, milk, curd and vegetables for sheer upkeep and even marginal worships due to their family background. In the event of loneliness and if his preceptor is no more, Sadbrahmanas should accept from co brahmanas only. Normally certain professions like labourers, cow-herd keepers, barbers, or bonded workers are assumed by the service and low class but in the case of absolute exigency for sheer subsistence Brahmanas too might accept such roles yet not contadictory to the basic principles of a Brahmana; may even be a slave but never as a thief and criminal. *Yonyathaa santamatmaanyathaa satsu bhaashate, sa papakrittamo loke stena aatmaapahaarakah/ Vaachyarthaah niyataah sarve vaangmulaa vaagvinih sritaah, taanstu yah stenayed vaacham sa sarvasteyakrinnarah/* (Whoever of Brahmanas might endure insults from other caste persons but never be dishonest and let not his speech and language be stooped to that of low class and more so his fundamental principles becoming of a Brahmana like Satya Vadana and Satpravartana and that of adapting the tone and conduct of a low class of the Society, especially of the habits of dishonesty and thieving. Even in that stage of servanthship of yet uncoming of a Brahmana, one should never be umindful to neglect his fundamental responsibilities like defraying his indebtedness to Pitru ganas and to Devas; such duties are as important as family concerns and filial duties. Being clear of own conscience, a true Brahmana under duress and stress should sit and meditate alone, as true introspection leads to nearness to the Eternal Truth and salvation consequently. *Eshauditaa grihasthasya vrittirviprasya shaashvati, snaatakavratalkalpashcha sattvavriddhikarah shubhah/ Anena vipro vrittina vartayan vedashaastravi, vyapetakalmasho nityam brahmaloke maheeyate/* or so stresses a shrotriya brahmana ever practising his duties regularly and consciously, that whosoever of his sacred duties should certainly observe and fulfill totally should be an ideal candidate for attaining Brahma loka!)

Godaana Mahima

May the supreme Lord, complemented by all the Gods, create auspicious and spacious cowsheds for our happiness and populate them with cows and calves. Let us rejoice the cow-wealth and contend by serving those cows. (Rik Samhita 10 – 169 – 4) Without giving a portion of our wealth in charity enjoying our wealth is merely eating a sin. To become free from this sin ‘go-daana’ and service to cows is the best, natural and easiest means. Cow would augment the life span of the sages involved in the yagya and the organizers of the yagya. Cow coordinates all the rituals of yagya. By providing offerings like milk, cow nourishes all the Demigods of the yagya. (Shulka Yajurveda 1-4)-

Donation of cows is superior to all others. Cows are supreme and sacred. (Mahabharata, Anushasana Parva 83-3)

4. Varaha Purana on Godaanaas in various forms

Ensuring the credibility and merit of the Brahmanas concerned, offering of cows in reality or symbolically in the form of Idols by the donors would indeed derive far reaching ‘Punya’ or the fruit of meritorious action. Quite a few kinds of Dhenu Daan have been in vogue: **Til Dhenu Daan** is performed with specified quantity of Sesame Seed along with the Idol made of gold or silver or copper, even stone or any other material along with the same kind of calf Idol with the prayer to Goddess Dhenu that the donor should never experience non availability of any essential material in the life of himself or his family members. The Brahmana receiving the donation in all humility should bless the donor and pray to Maha Vishnu to grant boons to the donor. The procedure of donating **Jal Dhenu** is to first clean up and purify an area with cow dung, place two pots representing a cow and a calf, made of any material as above, fill up the pots with sandalwood, camphor and water of holy rivers preferably and donate it to a worthy Brahmana and pray for happiness and abolition of sins and the receiver would bless like-wise. A donor of **Rasa Dhenu** should sanctify an area and place two decorated pots of bigger and smaller size on kusa grassfilled up with sugar cane juice as also place sugar canes on four sides to effect the donation; the donor should pray to the Rasa Dhenu to make his life sweet and happy and the Brahmana too would pray to Vishnu to provide contentment in the donor’s life and bless him to attain Vishnu loka after life. Dhenu are similarly donated with other materials like **Sharkara Dhenu** donating Sugar, **Madhu Dhenu** donating honey, **Kheer Dhenu** for donating rice, milk and sugar mix, **Dhadhi Dhenu** with curd, **Navaneeth** (Butter), **Lavan** (Salt), **Kapas** (cotton) **Gud** (Jaggery) and so on. Indeed whatever may be the material donated, the charity of cows should attract Almighty’s boons as per the donor’s wishes and forms. Among the various types of Go-Daans mentioned above, **Kapila Dhenu Daan** is considered as the most outstanding. A virtuous person waking up early morning and washes a Kapila Dhenu with water flowing down from its head and neck to its feet with devotion daily would most certainly washes off his sins for years. Charity of a Kapila Dhenu in reality would secure the ‘Punya’ of performing Gomedha Yajna, besides fetching maximum benefits of any such charities put together!

4. Garuda Purana

Chapter 30: 41-42 and 52-53

‘Tarkshya Deva! Any Being on Earth or Pancha Bhutas or the entirety of Creation is Vishnu. Hence whosoever performs a ‘ karma’ or action, the fruit of that action is Vishnu too; thus a person when performs an act, good or otherwise, Vishnu decides the fruit of that action. At the end of the journey of a

human- as in other cases too-River Vaitarani is commended as its waters would purify the sins made by the departed one- during the ‘kaumara-youvana-vaardhakya- janma janmaantara’ as also during ‘raatri-praatah- madhyaahna-aparaahna’ and both the sandhyas too. The singular solution is hence the charity of a ‘kapila gomaata’ to a well deserved Brahmana. The following is the verse to be recited at the time of Godaana: *Gaavo mamaagratah santu gavaam madhye vahaamyaham/ Yaa Lakshmeeh sarvabhutaanaam yaa cha Deve vyavasthita, dhenu rupenasya Devee mama paapam vyapohatu/* Cow alone is ahead of me- the departed Soul, behind me as my support, my sides too; cow is in my heart and I am on the midst of cows. May the Lakshmi Svarupa-Sarva Bhuta Svarupa-Sarva Deva Svarupa- as the symbol of a Cow, destroy my sins instatly wih this Go- Mata! Garuda Purana sums up : those who are destined to go to heaven are supposed to grab the tail of a cow that appears on the banks of the river Vaitarna to be led safely across to the ethereal shores of Vaikuntha.

5. Skanda Purana

Narada described to Arjun about „daan“ (charity), its two „hethus“ (varieties), six „Adhishtaans“ (Reasons), six „Anks“ (Parties), two „Parinaams“ (end results or fruits), three bhedas (classifications) and three „Vinas Saadhanas“ (negative results). The two „hethus“ as normally perceived are about the size of the charity-small or big- as also of the quality. But such „hethus“ are not as important as the „shraddha“ or dedication and devotion are. Bhagavan Siva would be pleased only by the sincerity and pure heart that is attached to the charity rather than any other aspect. Again, „Dhana Daan“ or the charity of money is more popular than „Vastu Daan“ or charity of material, „Vastra Daan“ or charity of clothes etc. since charity of money would buy back Vastu or Vastra. Then the six „Adhishtaans“ or reasons of Daan are: „Dharma Daan“ without strings attached ie. Daan given to the Virtuous or Dharmatmas; „Artha Daan“ keeping in view some purpose or utility; „Kaama Daan“ like favours for women, wine or such other benefits in view; „Lajja Daan is due to compulsions of Public or Society; „Harsha Daan“ is made on receiving good news and out of happiness; and „Bhaya daan“ out of compulsion, fear or avoidance of risks. The six „Anks“ or donor/receiver parties are as follows: The Positive Donors are „Daatas“ by nature; the „Dharmatmas“ or the Virtuous; those desirous of donating willingly and happily; the „Vyasana rahit“ or devoid of bad habits; „Pavitra“ or Symbols of Purity and „Anindaneeya“ or the blemishless. The Negative Donors are ill mannered, indolent, evil minded, persons of bad habits, persons who swear to support the Evil and persons who are sleepy! Among the Good Receivers of Charity are those of good „Kula“ or caste, who has „Vidya“ or good Education, good „Aachaar“ or family bearing / tradition, earners of rightful way of life or of Satvik Life, of kind heart, „Jitendriya“ or of Controlled Emotions and finally of excellent parenthood. The second category of receivers of donations is of pleasant visage, of sincerity and thankfulness but not of demanding nature, cantankerous or mean. The donors of charity must have the perspective of what kind of material is required or useful to the receiver or otherwise the purpose of charity would be defeated. The two „Parinaams“ or end results/fruits are either gain of „Punya“ for the „Paralok“ or after death or for use in „Ihalok“ or the current life to the receiver. The latter „Dannas“ or for the use of Ihalok are of four types viz. Dhruva, Trika, Kamyaa and Naimittika. Dhruva is for public use like digging wells, construction of Temples, gardens, Choultries, schools etc. Trikha is for daily utility like „Nithya Daan“, say Vidya Daan. Kamyaa Daan is to fulfill one’s own desires like victory, wealth, might etc. Naimittika Daan is like Samkranti Daan, Grahana (Eclipse) Daan, Daan at auspicious occasions like weddings, Vratas etc. or Kriyapeksha Daan like Shraadh, Vratas etc.; Gunapeksha Daan

like Vidyabhyas and so on. Three „Bhedas“ or types of Daan are classified; the best types are charity of houses, temples, buildings, Bhumi (farms / fields), cows, Wells, gold and ornaments and the best of course is to give away one’s own life itself as „Daan“. The Secondary Variety of charity relates to Anna (Food grains), Vastra (Clothing), „Vahan“ etc. The tertiary kind of Daan is to donate footwear, umbrellas, utensils, curd, honey, „Asan“ or seating, deepa or Light, wood, stones etc. Now, there are three kinds of „Daan Naashak“ reasons viz. „Paschattaap“ or regret of having given the Daan; „Apaatra Daan“ or charity to the wrong and unserved person or „Ashraddha Daan“ is to a person on account of laziness. Paschattapaya Daan indicates as to why the 20 Daan is given at all; Ashraddha Daan is Rakshasa Daan and Apaatra Daan is as bad as not giving it away.

The worst Daan is „Paisacha Daan“ or the charity duly given is returned under duress or due to the bad behaviour of the receiver or the donor. Incidentally, Apaatra Daan should be avoided to an undeserving Brahmana who is bereft of „Vidya“, sells his/her conscience if his Bhumi is accepted; if he accepts a cow to kill it or sell it; if he accepts gold to encash it, a horse that might destroy the receiver’s eyes; Vastra to harm his wife; ghee his manliness; til seeds that might harm his children and so on.

Narada seeks replies to a questionnaire and bestows Brahma’s Charity to Kalaap Village:

Sage Narad told Arjun that in the context of ‘Daan Pradaan’ or bestowing charity of a large piece of land to a well deserved Brahmana Community; he travelled the World over to identify a Place where satisfactory replies are received to a Questionnaire of Twelve Queries framed by him. The questions were: 1) who knows ‘Matrikas’ well; how many ‘Matrikas’ are there and how many ‘Aksharas’ or Letters? 2) What are the Twentyfive Materials in the domestic or personal context? 3) Who knows the art of converting several women into one? 4) Who is the unique person that knows the ‘Vaakya Rachana’ or the Writer of Sentences connected with Strange Fiction? 5) Who is the learned Brahmana living in an Ocean with full awareness that a ferocious crocodile is always around? 6) Who is the best Brahmana possessing the knowledge of eight-fold Braahmanatva? 7) Which are the foremost days falling at the beginning of each Yuga? 8) Which are the first days of each ‘Manvantara’? 9) Which was the first day that Surya Deva rode in his chariot? 10) Who could explain that human beings are put to tremendous anxiety like a black serpent has? 11) Who is the most intelligent and practical human being in the whole world and why? 12) Who is aware of the two distinct routes available to human beings? Sage Narada could not get convincing replies to the above questionnaire among the several places visited and Experts interviewed as the questions were supposed to be tough! Then suddenly it occurred to the Sage that he could perhaps try out the KalapVillage that boasted of exceptionally renowned Veda Pundits. On reaching there and having posed the questions, the Elders of the Village commented that the questions were indeed very elementary and could as well be replied by one of an unintelligent and dull boys of the village! He asked a boy said to be of an inferior intelligence named Suthanu who gave the replies as follows:

In his preface before answering the questions, Suthanu said that various Gurus normally tended to teach the Scriptures and Mantras, generations after generations, only by memorizing but without necessarily providing the meaning, let alone the implications and intricacies of the stanzas. Indeed a Brahmana who merely memorized the Mantras without realizing the meaning was a mere two legged animal! For example, ‘Aakar’ is known as Brahma, ‘Ukar’ is Vishnu and ‘Makar’ is Siva; the Triguna form of AUM with ‘Anuswarup Artha Matra’ on top of AUM (in Sanskrit) is Maheswara Himself! How many are aware of the significance of Omkara Mantra?

Coming back to the *first question* as to how many types of ‘Matrikas’ are there and of how many ‘Ahshas’ or Letters are in the Matrikas, the reply is that there are twenty letters in a Matrika. Besides there are fourteen ‘Swaras’, thirty three ‘Vyanjanas’, ‘Anuswaras’, ‘Visarga’, ‘Jihva muleeya’ or tongue-ended voice and ‘Upadhaneeyas’. Matrikas are called the essence of Language. The fourteen ‘Swaras’ from ‘A Kar’ to ‘Auom kar’ represent ‘Manu Swarupas’ viz. Swayambhu, Swarochish, Auttam, Raivat, Tamas, Chakshu, Vaivasvath (the Present Manu), Savarni, Brahma Savarni, Rudra Savarni, Daksha Savarni, Dharma Savarni, Roucha and Bhautya. The current Manu Vaivasvat is Rukara Swarup and his colour is Black. From letters ‘Bha’ to ‘Sha’ are eight ‘Vasus’ viz. Dhruva, Ghora, Sowmya, Apah, Nala, Nila, Pratyasha and Prabhasa. The Letters from ‘Ka’ to ‘Ha’ represent thirty three Devatas. Actually letters from ‘Ka’ to ‘Tha’ represent Twelve Adityas viz. Dhata, Mitra, Aryama, Shakra, Varuna, Amshu, Bhaga, Vivisvan, Pusha, Savita, Tvashta and Vishnu. From ‘Da’ to ‘Ba’ are Eleven Rudras viz. Kapali, Pingala, Bhima, Virupaksha, Vilohita, Ajaka, Shasana, Shasta, Shambhu, Chanda and Bhava. Letters ‘Sa’ and ‘Ha’ are represented by the two Ashvini Kumars, thus accounting for all the thirty three Devatas. The Letters ‘Anuswar’, ‘Visarg’, ‘Jihva Muleeya’ and ‘Upadhaneeyas’ stand for ‘Jarayuja’, ‘Andaja’, ‘Swedaja’ and ‘Udbhija’.

About the *Second question* regarding twenty five ‘Vastus’ or materials for domestic/personal utility, the reply is: These are ‘Pancha Bhutas’ viz. Prithivi (Earth), Apas (Water), Tejas (Radiance), Vayu (Wind) and Akash (Sky); Five ‘Karmendriyas’ (Mouth, hands, feet, anus and genital); Five Jnanendriyas (Ears, Eyes, Tongue, Nose and Skin) and the corresponding reactions viz. Shabda (Sound), Rupa (Vision), Rasa (Taste), Ghrana (Smell) and Sparsha (Feeling) and ‘Pancha Vishayas’ viz. Man (Mind), Buddhi (Thinking), Antaratma (Conscience), Ahankar (Ego), Prakriti (Nature / Maya) and Purusha (Almighty). In other words, the Twenty Five Tatvas of Domestic / Physical nature as above are blessed by Almighty to realize the Self as reflected from Paramatma.

The *Third question* concerns about the various forms of a woman who is essentially a single entity. The reply is about a person’s ‘Buddhi’ or mental condition which is comparable to that of a woman whose forms and moods are several (Frailty thy name is a woman!). It is the single Buddhi which takes myriad kinds of feelings, reactions and impulses.

The *Fourth question* relates to a person who exists in a ‘Sansar’ (World) and describes it as an attraction like the beautiful phrasing of an Essay, not realizing that the charm of the write-up is a trap or the ‘Sansar Bandhan’; hence the lure of life is but a powerful bondage!

The *Fifth query* is about the joy of living in an ocean, being fully aware of the dangerous crocodile nearby. Human beings get enticed to swim in an ocean, despite the risk of life and it is that ‘Lobha’ or attraction which generates ‘Moha’ (obsession) or ‘Maya’, ‘Abhiman’ or deep sense of Belonging, insensitivity to the risk involved, avarice to possess more and more, ignorance and sheer stupidity. All these are ramifications of ‘Vyamoha’ (possessive nature) like desire to secure other’s wealth, woman, and comfort, all at once being dishonest, undeserved and corrupt. The sense of Lobha leads to ego, deceit, anger and jealousy. The lurking crocodile is surely attractive but hazardous.

The *Sixth inquiry concerns* the Eight-fold ‘Brahmanatva’ classified as Matra, Brahmana, Srotriya, Anuchan, Bhruna, Rishi Kalpa, Rishi and Muni. A normal Brahmana by birth and caste is invariably the one who nodoubt has the advantage of ‘Upanayana’ Samskara and Gayatri ‘Upasesha’ called Sacred Thread Ceremony but with or without performing Vedic Karmas or duties; this kind of an ordinary

Brahmana is name sake only. He who follows 'Vedic Achara' or performs Veda Practices being soft natured, fond of loneliness, truthful and pious is a Brahmana in a better sense than a 'Matra' type. The better category of Brahmanas are 'Srotriyas' who are Ritual, Virtuous, proficient of atleast one Veda sakha (Branch) along with six vedangas, pure hearted and Dharmajnanas. The higher class of Brahmanas called 'Anuchans' are well read, Guru Type of senior Vidwans who preach and teach and practise ideal 'Brahmanatva'. The further higher category is called Brahmanas with worldly wisdom to be able to interpret Principles to practical situations, authorities on Vedas, 'Samyamis' who have restraint and poise, Tatva Gyan and Senior Guides on Rituals etc. 'Rishi Kalpas' are Ashrama Dwellers, Naishtics, and limited Eaters. The Rishis are Dhyana Nishtha Parayanas (Meditation-Centric) and Jitendriyas or victorious of various worldly temptations. Munis are beyond the barriers of Brahmanas and the known norms and controls applicable to them, since they belong to Super Human Beings worthy of worship and possess yogic powers and Siddhis.

The *Seventh query* was about the first days of each Yuga. Kartika Sukla Navami was the first day of Satya Yuga, Visakha Sukla Tritiya was of Tretha Yuga, Marga Krishna Amavasya was of Dwapara Yuga and Bhadra Krishna Trayodasi was the opening day of Kali Yuga. Charities and 'homams' performed on the Yugadi Days are stated to be hundred days superior compared to normal days.

The *Eighth question* was about the opening days of each of the Fourteen Manvantaras. These are Asvayuja Sukla Navami, Kartika Dwadasi, Chaitra and Bhadra Tritiya, Phalguna Amavasya, Paushya Ekadasi, Ashadha Dasami, Magha Saptami, Shravana Krishna Ashtami, Ashadha Pournami, Kartika Pournami, Phalguna/Chaitra/Jeyshtha Pournamis are all worthy of charities and homams.

That Lord Surya mounted his chariot for the first time was on Magha Sukla Panchami, known as the 'Ratha Saptami' was the reply to the *Ninth question* and austerities and charities are stated to be highly fruitful bestowing Lord Surya's blessings to destroy poverty and improve happiness of the devotees.

The *Tenth question* was about the anxiety of life of any human being; the reply was that who ever has to beg for food each and every day was indeed the most unfortunate one in the world; such a person not only had constant worry through out his/her life but is destined to go to hell after death too.

The *Eleventh query* was about the Super expert in this frightful world. The reply given by Suthanu stated that the best Daksha of Dakshas was he who realized as to what would happen after death and tried to equip him to perform pious acts so as to minimize the impact of current life and possibly of the previous lives. If a person devotes at least eight months and one day before death or in other words of the last leg of life and possibly as many days of life as possible, would be considered as an Expert.

Finally, *the Twelfth question* seeks reply about the two alternative routes of attaining Salvation viz. the normal 'Karma Marg'/ the Dharmic route of enjoying life as also of attaining the high bliss of Moksha after death and alternatively adopting the 'Vihanga Marg' (The Sky route) or straight-away adopt the 'Naishkarma' Marg or the 'Jnaana Marg. If one were not to opt for either route, the concerned human being is as good as a 'Pakhandi' or ignorant fool!

Having received the replies to all the Twelve Questions, Sage Narada was thrilled that Lord Brahma (his father) ought to be complemented as the latter's 'Srishti' (Creation) was indeed amazing, since a boy was able to reply the queries. Pursuant to Brahma's behest, the process of selection was completed and a

substantial charity was declared as a Gift to the 'Kalaap Gramvaasis' or the Villagers of Kalaap a Huge Area viz. Mahi Sagara Sangama Maha Tirtha. This Tirtha was situated from Kalap Gram by about hundred yojanas by Akash Marg (The Sky Route) and by the Grace of Kartikeya all the residents of Kalaap Gram could be shifted by a long jump. This most Sacred Tirtha was such that there were no proverbial thieves viz. Kama (desire), Krodha (anger), Lobha (avarice) etc. who could rob the immense wealth of Gyan in the Holy Region. Kalaap Gram itself was some hundred yojanas on the mountains of Kedarnath Tirtha. As a result of the Great Charity of Lord Brahma by Sage Narada, some Thirty Thousand Brahmanas of immense quality who were versatile in 'Adhyayan' of Vedas and Scriptures and 'Anushthaan' (Ritualistic Meditation) got transferred to Mahi Sagara.

ntroduction:

'Kaalamana' in the context of Bharata Varsha which metamorphosed like a kaleidoscope gradually adopted Videsha Samskriti; new culture, life-style and even new psyche. In the process, the Vedic Dharma witnessed some changes in the process of evolution. As the Rulers changed, so did the cultures yet the core remained intact. Buddha/ Ashoka created a new versions of Hinduism; Vikramaditya resisted the onslaught of Barbarians like Shakas, Mlecchhas, Yavanas, Tursharas, Parasikas (Persians), and Hunas. Shatavahanas controlled Shakas, Chinese, Bahmikas, Kamarupas, Rome and Ishaamashih (Jesus Christ). King Bhoja resisted the cult of Prophet Mahammad. But Pathans over-powered Prithviraja and thus the Bharata Varsha witnessed some dissipation of Hindu Dharma. The Varnashrama gradually became a virtual non-entity excepting in somewhat feeble and diluted forms. The glorious contribution made by renowned 'Acharyas' to revive and sustain Hindu Dharma is incredible; the illustrious Acharyas included Ramananda, Nimbadiya, Madhavaacharya, Jayadeva, Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Chaitanya Maha Prabhu, Shakteyas and so on. The role of Regional Kings like Shivaji and even Kings of alien Dharmas like Akbar-as Hindu influence in reverse-was evident on the large canvas of Hinduism. Sweeping changes were made by the British Rule in the entire life style of Indians and the considerable inevitable mix of races diluting the Dharma. Yet, aakaashat patitam toyam yadhaa gacchati saagaram, Sarve deva namaskaarah Keshavam pratigacchati! Indeed, there are innumerable paths in several directions to reach the mountain top to attain the Unique Paramatma. There have been divisions even of Hindu thought: Adi Shankara is the exponent of 'Kevala Advaita' or Fundamental Monism; Ramanujacharya is an ardent exponent of Visisthta Advaita or of Qualified Monism; Nimbakaacharya is the exponent of Bhedaabhedavaada or of differential-non differential discipline; Madavacharya is the exponent of Dualism of Paramatma and Jeevatma; Vallbhacharya is the exponent of Suddha Advaita or Pure Monism. Then came the Brahmo Samaj movement heralded by Raja Rama Mohan Roy which no doubt was essentially Hinduism be defied that Hindu Scriptures ought to be catholic and the Samaj pioneers read out publicly to Christians and Muslims too. After a long spell the movement got dissipated. Anti-Vigraha Aaradhana Movement, Athiesm, Nastikata are the weeds in some pockets yet. Meanwhile the core of Hinduism ; Vedic Culture survives, albeit incorporating and absorbing external and internal influences in the process of evolution, and continues in its quentessential form. But all these interpretations notwithstanding, the realism that death is the Truth, the thought that all the beings in srishti are but the birds in their respective cages and 'praanas' finally evaporate with their karmas of

pluses and minuses are weighed for 'punarjanmas' in the Time Cycle till the jump off into eternal bliss which is but an illusion is possible.

Kala Chakra

The Time Cycle as described in Taittireeya Aranyaka

There are four fold aspects of proofs viz. Scriptures/ Shrutis -Perceptions or Smtitis-Historical Information and Inferences. Bhagavan Bhaskara's kiranas take into account all these four aspects – both transparent and deducive; what is praana or the vital energy! How food is created! How the Beings in Srishti, especially those humans who are clearly expressive have pleasures and pains as also likes and dislikes. It is said that a river is noticed to flow always since several streams and water bodies are directed there into; that is how emerges the concept of 'kaala maana' or the cycle of Time. Several units of time like 'anu' or minute adds up to 'Samvatsara' as perfectly organised in the Time Machine an the analogy of river flows. The kaala maana could be broken into small or big units. But indeed, the Supreme Self or the 'adhi sattva' is neither divisible nor measurable!

There are three aspects of vision by the eyes: viz. the skin covering the eyes- the retina which denotes the watering mechanism of the eyes-and yellow / smoky colour of the vision or of the Varuna Deva's nature; this deity could view infinities like the distant oceans. Similarly the short distant vision is perceivable by ordinary Beings but the celestial vision of Varuna could see the 'ayanas' like of utara-dakshina or the bi-yearly time slots; the Rithus or six Seasons. In between these units, there are two phenomena viz. 'jalpitam' or casually-even hazily- cognisable and another is 'dihyate' or perfectly understood. Thus the Samvatsara has two flaps of the eyes viz. the right and the left viz. shukla and dakshina ayanas. Pusha Deva! this is how, one form of your swarupa or form is of radiance and another form is of Agni- the master of Yagjnas. One view is of bliss or Satya or the Truth and another is Mayathe Make-Belief Illusion or Asatya -the Untruth! Pusha Deva, you are of Vishva Rupa or of Innumerable Forms! Yet of two basic visions viz. of 'Pathya' – of Pusha's wife the executive energy of Pushan- or of Truth or the Eternal Reality and the other the Illusion. In the former, there is no samvatsara- no worldly existence, no sustenance nor sustainer, no cows or Beings, no Adityas nor Devas. Also there are samvatsaras and time cycles; no yagjnas nor 'punya paapaas'; THAT is avyatham shashvatan vishnum ananatam ajam avyayam!)

About Shad Ritus or The Six Seasons

Basically, Bhagavan Bhaskara had six rays as Rishis-born of Paramatma together as twins but the seventh was secured later alone and as such the most decided one. The three twins are defined as of lower and upper levels, the lower being anna-praana- manas or matter-life-mind while the upper level denoting sat-chit-ananda or actual existence-consciousness-and bliss. Now the seventh one denotes 'swar' or 'mahat' viz. Satyam-Ritam-Brihat. Another explanation is that the three twins are 'saakanjas' or Rishis born of Gods to be positioned at the Yagjnas at defined positions at the Yagjna vedika, the ekajam is the Master of the Yagjna; yet alternatively the 'saakanjas' or ears-eyes- nostrils and the ekaja is the tongue). Indra's declaration was that only such mortal beings who out of evil pleasure become cruel be punished by way of retribution of justice. He who destroys another for the sake of knowledge or he who takes hasty action by mere hearsay has no access to the noble path of action, as Indra feels.

Shad Rithus as related to shukla paksha and krishna paksha or the waxing and waning Moons. The arrival of each season is heralded by distinct sounds, features and aspects. Shat Ritus: Ritus or Seasons approximately coincide with Chaitra-Vaishakha or end March to the last weeks of May when festivals like Ugadi, Shri Rama Navami, and Vaishakhi are celebrated. Greeshma Ritu or Summer during April-July during Jyeshtha-Ashadha when festivals like Ratha Yatra and Guru Purnima are observed and Dakshinayana or the Solar downtrend commences. Varsha Ritu or monsoon coincides with Shravana-Bhadrapadas or the last portions of July-September when Mangala Gauri and Vara Lakshmi Vratas, Raksha Bandhan, Krishna Ashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi and Onam are celebrated. Sharad Ritu or Autumn Season coinciding with Ashvin-Kartika months extending portions of September to November being mild weather the famed Sharannava Ratri and Depaavali are celebrated. Hemanta Ritu or pre-winter Season coinciding with Margaseersha and the last days of November-January, the festivals of Vasanta Panchami, Shiva Ratri and Holi are observed; and finally Shishira Ritu or winter coinciding with Maagha-Phalguna months during the last quarter of January to March is the time of Vasanta Panchami, Shiva Ratri and Holi. The Chandra maana procedure varies in the sense that the cycle of Seasons starts from the first day of Chaitra commencing from Ugadi.

[The following chart provides the details: Ritu/ Season- Lunar Month -Months – Weather

Vasanta	Spring	Chaitra – Vaishakha	Feb 18- April 20	20-30 C
Greeshma	Summer	Jyeshtha- Ashadha	April 21-June 21	30-50 C
Varsha	Monsoon	Shravana-Bhadrapada	June 22-Aug 23	hot-humid- rains
Sharat	Autumn	Ashvijuja-Kartika	Aug 24- Oct 23	mild
Hemanta	Pre-winter	Margashira-Pushya	Oct 24- Dec 21	pleasant- cold
Shishira	winter	Maagha-Phalguna	Dec 22-Feb 17	Moderate Cold;10C+/-

Vasanta Season is dominated by Vasu Devatas instructed by Savitu as at the beginning of the Samvatsara and heralding colours, dresses, flowers and freshness all around and with plentiful water and Nature. The Spring season beckons relatives and friends to home with good food and gifts.

In Greeshma the summer season scorches earth with heat asking for light dresses in white as Rudra and his gana devats dominate and prepares earth for Parjanya

Rains usher diseases like cold, jaundice and so on. Yet, this is when crops are abundant and fruits in variety are aplenty. All the same, rains are the future of food supplies for the year hence calls for ploughing, planning and hard work.

Sharat provides clean eyes and good vision even as divine artisans with the grace of Ribhu Devatas initiate planning, innovations, creations and caliber, aspirations and contented living. Sharat season heralds good eating, wearing god dresses and enjoyments. Marut Devas then follow creating mixed blessings; on one hand they create harsh and mighty winds seeking destruction and damages and on the other hard realities of life with obstructions in efforts yet unusual and unexpected fruits of hard work alike work never performed. Variety is the spice of Life in the Sharat Season!

Hemant calls for vigilance, either initiating a struggle ahead or a caution and forewarning for preparedness and thus of introspection .

Shishra Ritu arrives with lightnings, rains, smugness of Nature around besides that of individuals too. The blessing of ample rains could also calls for uncertainties. As Agni Deva calls for plentiful waters to heighten living conditions of Beings, uncertainties too prevail as natural calamities thus creating a touch-and-go situation. The Mighty Marut Devas are worshipped for overcoming impediments and create opportuninies for happiness.

Paramatma! how indeed the clouds are hanging without support! What is the mechanism of a 'samvatsara' made of with the complexity of division of units! How does a night fall! How are the months and Seasons arranged! How indeed the 'kaala maana' arrived at as th account of units viz. 'triti', 'muhurta', 'nimisha', all made of a 'paksha'! Where do the water and its flows originate and go to! The replies are that the time scale reside in water while water resides in Surya and clouds carry water. Lightnings originate from Surya; Surya facilitates evaporation of water from the oceans and clouds obtain water. Earth being full of life is vast and charming. The question as to who supports earth and heaven besides the space in between as the antariksha! Maharshi Vatsa opines that Lord Vishnu should be the answer and He also ably divides these entities as separate units. [Taittireeya Aranyaka]

Rig Veda vide VII-99-3 explains: Iravati Dhenumati hi bhutam suyavaasini manushe dashasyaa, vyavasthabhnaa rodasi Vishnavete daadhartha prithivimabhito mayuusvaih/ or Hey dyaavaa-prithivi! With the sole objective of according auspicious -ness provide cows and food to human beings! Hey Vishnu Deva! you have bestowed stability to both the lokas and thus placed huge mountains and blessed all the entities!

Thus Heaven and Earth are turned into incessant flows of Truth , Knowledge and Love thereby facilitating Yajnas by Humans by the medium of Vedic Mantras, while Bhagavan Vishnu keeps the identity of earth and heaven apart and supports Earth from all sides with Surya Kiranas and their effulgence! Some Vidwans question as to what is the ability of Vishnu to render the hold of the Lokas. The reply states that the holding power originated from 'Pranaayama' or the clutch and clasp of Vayu and Agni. Then the Vidwan Rishis delve deeper further about the four kinds of life's termination viz. death: the 'para', 'avama' the lower type, madhyama or the middle / medium and the fourth; this is based on the analogy of the strength of sound waves viz. para-pashyanti-madhyama and vaikhari or the ordinary speech. The Vidwans also sought reply from the distinction of Paapa- Punyas too. Now the replies: Surya is the cause of the Supreme Death- the Para.. The medium type of death is caused by Vayu Deva the 'Pavamana'. The lower type of death is by Agni called 'avama'. The fourth is caused by Chandra or Soma viz. 'amum' leading to 'narakas'. The sinners who neither perform positive acts nor enjoy meaningful happiness. The two medium levels- higher and lower – are controlled by Vayu, failing which Agni and these deaths definitely result in quick rebirths either as humans or other species as per their accounts of paapa punyas. As regards the last classification, the eighth Surya gives birth to the Sapta Suryas kill the evil doers and imprison them in the inner regions of prithivi-swarga named 'antariksha' by the Gods of Vasus. The sinners acquire non- physical bodies as per the designated sins and hells; some have no hands while others have no legs or hairs as miniature creatures reproduced by sweat or bacterial parasites. Now about Kashyapa the Eighth Surya: the Vidwan who realises the Truth also conquers sudden and untimely death- apaitam mrityum jayati- ya evam veda! Sadbrahmanas experience the state of ascent by Sapta Suryas to that of Kashyapa the eighth Surya the special guest of Indra Deva and of Agni!

As Rig Veda explains vide 3-26-7 : Kashyapa asserts: Agnirasmi janmanaa Jaataveda ghritam me chakshuramritam ma aasan, Arkastridhaat rajaso vimanojasno gharma havirasmi naam/ or ' I am Agni- the Atma or Brahma- the sarvagina by birth. My eyes and vision are of tejas; my face is of Amrita Rasa. I am of three types of Praana comprising : Jada or raw- Food based- and of Vital Life; I am also of celestial nature. I am always the essence of Surya, besides the eternal Havish and Havivaahaka Agni!' Kashyapa Muni is also famed as a Seer or a Rishi the ' pashyaka' bestowed with subtle knowledge and subtle vision. He is Agni the representation of the Eight Suryas too!

Being worthy of commendation, Kashyapa like Agni Deva himself should deserve what Rig Veda vide 9-151-1 states: Agne naya supathaa raaye asmaanvishvaani Deva vayunaani vidvan,

yuyodhyasmajjuhuraanameno bhuyishthaaam te namayuktim vidheya/ or Agni Deva with celestial features! you are replete with the knowledge of the ‘yagjna jnaana’ and ‘yagjna phala’; do lead us to the path of virtue to fulfillment and avoid the clumsy and narrow lanes of evil as invariably get caught by patent sinners on the route to narakas!)

Maitreyi Upanishad

Sarvam chedam kshayishnu pashyaamo yatheme damshama shakaadayas trina vanaspatayodbhuta pradvamsnah, atha kim etair vaa parenye mahaa dhanur daraash chakravartinah kechit sudyumna bhur-dyumndradyumna kuvalashva vadhriya ashvapatih shashabindur harischandrombarisha naanaktu saryaati yayaayanaranoyokshasyenaadayah, atha marutta bharata prabhritayo raajaanah, mishato bandhu vargasya mahathateem shriyam thyatvaasmaal lokaad amum lokam prayaataa iti, atha kim etauor vaa parenye gandharvaasuraa yaksha bhutagana pishaachoraga grahaadeenaam nirodham pashyaamah iti, atha kim etair vaanyaanaam shshanam mahaarna vaanaam shikarinaam prapatanaam dhruvasya prachalanam vrashchanam vaatarajjuunaam nimajjanam prithivyaah sthaanaad apasharanam suraanaam ityetad vidhosmin samsaare kim kaamopabhogaih, yair evaashitasyaa sakrud ihaavartanam drishyataa iti uddhartum arhasi, andhodapaanasto bheka ivaaham asmin samsaare bhagavan twam no gatistwam na gatih/

It is common knowledge that any thing or any Being or person is destined to perish like mosquitoes or gnats, grass or trees! Renowned warriors or Emperors of historic reputation like Sudyumna, Bhuridyumna, Indradyumna, Kuvalaashva, Youvanaashva, Vadhraashva, Ashva -pati, Sashabindu, Harischandra, Ambarisha, Anankta, Saryaati, Yayaati, Anaranya, Ukshasena, and the like had to perish finally. Quite a few Kings like Marutta, Bharata, and others took to renounce-ment by discarding wealth and fame from the mortal world to the other worlds of lasting glory. Besides human beings, destruction of extra terrestrial and superior Beings is equally inevitable as for instance Gandharvas, Asuras, Yakshas, Rakshasaas, Bhutas, Ganas, Pishachasas, Maha Sarpas, Vampires and so on. With the passage of ‘Kaala maana’ or the eternal Time Cycle, oceans had dried up, mountain peaks got smashed, the positioning of Pole Stars got dislocated, terrestrial positionings got disturbed, and even Devas experienced ‘sthaana bhamsha’ or dislodgment from their locations! Bhagavan! In this kind of ever-changing existence, what is the utility of the materialistic value and worth in such a boon that is bereft of Reality or anything short of ‘Paramaartha’ the Realisation of the Absolute Truth!

Bhagavad Gita – Akshara Parabrahma Yoga (16-17)

Aabrahma bhuvanaalokaah punaraavartimorjuna! Maamupyeta tu Kounteya punar-janma na vidyate/ Sahasra yuga paryantam aharyad brahmano viduh, raatrim yuga sahasraantam te – ahoraatra vido janaah/ Kounteya! Right from Brahmaloaka the Brahmanda or the entirety of the Universe is most certainly subject to destruction ultimately. Parameshwara is beyond comprehension and is the ever permanent. Those ‘Saadhakas’ who take to karma Yoga or Bhakti Yoga or Jnaana Yoga or whatsoever path they might select could reach my destination and succeed merger into me are permanent without return lives. Be that as it may, Brahma the exclusive creator of the Universe is subject to final destruction after hundred Brahma Years. Thousand Maha Yugas are of Brahma’s day time. This day time comprises thousand Maha Yugas. This day time comprises 14 manvantaraas and is one Brahma Kalpa the single day time of Brahma’s hundred years. Brahma’s one night when there is no activity of creation. As the hundred years of Brahma there would be Tri Loka Maha Pralaya!

Manusmriti Achaara Khanda : 64-74

Nimeshaa dasha chaashtou cha kashthaa trishatu taah Kalaa, Trishat kalaa muhurtah syadahoraatram tu taavatah/ Ahoraatre vibhajane Suryo maanusha maanusha daivike, Raatri swatnaaya bhutaanaam cheshtaayai karmanaamahah/ Piitre raatrahano maasah pravibhagastu pakshayoh, Karmacheshtaa swahah krishnah shuklah swapnaaya sharvari/ Daive raatryhani varsha pravibhagastayoh punah, ahastadrodagayanam raatrah syaaddakshinaayanam/ Braahmasya tu kshapaahasya yatpramaanam samaasatah, aikakasho yugaanaam tu kramashastannibodhata/ Chatvaaryahum sahasraani varshaanam tatkrutam yugam, Tasya taavachhati sandhyaa sandyashascha tayaavidhah/Itareshu sandhyeshu sa sandhyeshu cha trishu, ekapaayena vartante sahasraani shataanicha/ Yadetparisankhyatmaadaaveva chaturyugam, Etad dwaadasha saahastram Devaanaam yugamuchyate/ Daivikaanaam yugaanaan tu sahasram parisankhyayaa, Braahmamekamaharjneyam taavateem raatrimeva cha/ Tadvai yuga sahasraantam Braahmaam punyamahaviduh, Raatrimcha taavateemeva tehoraatra vido janaah/ Tasya so - ahanirshasyaante prasuptah pratimuchyate , pratibuddhascha srijati manah sadasaatmakam/

At the time of Srishti, the Time Schedule as reckoned was as follows: The concept of Kaalamaaa or the Time Cycle is calculated on the basis of Padardha (Matter) and Parithi (Space); the sum of Space occupied and the movement of Matter determined is the Paramaanu Samaya (atomic time). Thus the Matter, Space and Time are measurable. The Time Units were arrived as per the mix of these Entities called Transerenus or celestial atoms and the duration of integrating these entities. The flap an eye- blink is known as a nimesha; 18 such blinks make a kaashtha, three such kashtas make one kala, thirty kalas

make one muhurta, thirty muhurtas make a day-and -night. Now about the division of Surya-Manushya-Deva related Day/Night is explained: In respect of Human Beings, the nights are for sleep and daytime is for 'karmaacharana' or of activity. Whatever is stated for humans is a thirty day-night combines or a month. Pitru Devas consider one set of 15 human day-nights as Krishna Paksha -as per Moon's course from the day one of Moon's full illumination being Pournami ie when the Moon's waning starts as they are active during that period. Now during and Shukla Paksha, Moon gradually picks up its luster from the Moon- Fall on Amavasya till the night when the glory of Its dazzle reaches the peak on Purnima. This period is what humans consider as auspicious. Now, while what human beings reckon as a full one year is just a day-night for Devas. The period of auspiciousness is Uttarayan for six months a year for Devas and thus Human Beings too perform all auspicious deeds; Uttarayan is as for the course of Surya from South to North while Sun's course from North to South is Dakshinaayan. Chandra Loka's parikrama around Earth is for a month, and the Parikrama of Chandra around Pitru Loka for a fortnight is a night and another fortnight a day. Now, Brahma's one raatri-divas or night and day comprise of Four Yugas of Krita-Treta-Dwapara-Kali Yugas. Krita yuga is of four thousand years reckoned as 360 days for humans and one Deva day; its sandhya or the yuga's terminal period is for 400 years and Sandhyaamsha is an additional 400 years totalling 4800 divine years or 1728000 human years. On similar analysis, Tretaayuga is for 3600 divine years or 1287000 human years; Dwapara yuga is of 2400 divine years or 664000 human years and Kali Yuga divine 1200 years or 432000 human years. The total of Four Yugas is 12000 divine years or 42420000 human years. Deva's one thousand years are accounted for Brahma Deva's single day time and another thousand divine years are of Brahma's one night. Thus Brahma's 'ahoraatra' or day and night comprises of 120,00,000 of divine years or 432,00,00,000 human years. Thus ,after one thousand yugas, Brahma rests for the day and night and then resumes 'punah srishti' or revival of creation process again.)

Markandeya Purana

The Life-span of Lord Brahma was determined at hundred Divine years and the calculation of each year was conceived as follows beginning from the minimum measure of Time upwards: three nimeshas or blinks make one 'Kshana'; fifteen 'nimeshas' make one 'kashtha'; thirty kashthas make one 'kala'; thirty kalas make one 'Muhurta'; thirty Muhurtas make one day-night; thirty day-nights make one 'Paksha'; two Pakshas make one 'maasa'; six maasas make one 'Ayanas'; two Ayanas make one 'Varsha' or a Year. The Ayanas in a Year are 'Dakshina Ayanas' and 'Uttara Ayanas'. Each human Year comprising three sixty five day-nights (Ahorathras) accounts for a 'Divya Ahoratra' (Divine day-night) and on this count, each Uttarayan is a Divine Day and Dakshinayan is a Divine night. One Divya Day-night thus is a full day-night year for human beings. As per Divya calculations, the total count of Four Yugas is twelve thousand years, the Satya Yuga comprising four thousand years, Treta Yuga three thousand Divya Years, Dwapara Yuga two thousand years and Kaliyuga of one Divya thousand years; the rest of two thousand years of the twelve thousand Divine Years is accounted for additional four hundred of Divine years of 'Sandhya' and

an equivalent period additionally for 'Sandhyamsha' for Satya Yuga; three hundred years each for these periods in respect of Treta Yuga; two hundred years each of Dwapar Yuga and one hundred years each of Kali Yuga. In Lord Brahma's life span of hundred Divya Years, each day comprises fourteen Manvantaras and each Manvantara consists of one thousand 'Kalpas'. At each change of Manvantara, there is a fresh stock of Indras, Devas, and Sapta Rishis etc. There are seventy one Cycles of Four Yugas in each Manvantar. Viewed from the view point of human years, one Manvantara has three crore sixty six lakh two thousand years; by Divine Years, one Manvantara has one lakh fifty two thousand years. If this Period is multiplied four times, it would then equate Brahma's one day, that is, one million nineteen lakh twenty seven thousand Divya years; or, four twenty nine crores forty lakh (429, 40, 00,000) human years! After each day-night of Brahma, there occurs a 'Naimittika' Pralaya.

Brahmanda Purana

About the Cycle of Time and Kalpas and Manvantaras: 'If Brahma's age is hundred years, a day and night of his is a Kalpa (stated to be 8.67 billion years) comprising 28 Manvantaras; each Manvantara has 71 Maha Yugas and each Maha Yuga has 4.3 million years.(Satya Yuga is stated to be of 40 percent of Maha Yuga, Treta Yuga 30 percent, Dwapara Yuga 20 percent and Kali Yuga is 10 percent) But between each Manvantara, there is stated to be a gap of four yugas called Yuga Sandhi, while the intermediate time between Kalpas is Prati Sandhi. Each Kalpa has two parts: Purvaartha and Parartha. We are now in Varaha Kalpa (there are stated to be of thirty such Kalpaas) and Vaivaswara Manvantara while Brahma's age is calculated as 51 years and the first night!As Brahma spent his thousand Yugas long first night, he found water all around and resurrected Earth again -and on the broad lines of what Varaha Swarupa indicated- materialised formally the Chatur Lokaas, Sapta Dwipas and Sapta Samudras. He revived the Srishti of Antariksha, Sun, Moon and other Planets, Pitras, Time, Yugas, Purusharthas of Dharma-Artha-Kaama-and Mokshas. From his first face of the 'Chaturmukha', he created Gayatri, Ruks, Yagni related Agni shtoma etc; Veda Vangmaya, Veda Chhandas, and various Agni-Karyas; from his Southern Face were generated Yajur Veda, Traishthub Chhandas; Panchadasa Stomas and Brihat Stoma; from his western face emerged Saama Suktaas, Jagati Chhandas, Papta dasa Stoma; Atiraatra of Jyotishthoma etc; from Brahma's fourth Face emerged Atharva Veda, Anushtub and Vairaaja Chhanda etc. Through out the Yuga Periods, there were countless species of Creation were materialised of 'Charaachara' or mobile and Immobile nature, defying description.

Matsya Purana explains

Human years are: Names of the Years are 1.Prabhava 2. Vibhava 3. Shukla 4. Pramoda 5. Prajapati 6. Angeerasa 7. Shri Mukha 8. Bhaava 9. Yuva 10. Dhatri 11. Ishvara 12. Bahudhanya 13. Pramathi 14. Vikrama 15. Vrisha 16. Chitrabhanu 17. Svabhanu 18. Tarana 19. Parthiva 20. Vyaya 21. Sarvajeeth 22. Sarvadhari 23. Virodhi 24. Vikriti 25. Khara 26. Nandana 27. Vijaya 28. Jaya 29. Manmatha 30. Durmukhi 31. Hevilambi 32. Vilambi 33. Vikari 34. Sharvari 35. Plava 36. Shubhakruti 37. Shobhakruti 38. Krodhi 39. Vishvavasu 40. Parabhava 41. Plavanga 42. Kilaka 43. Saumya 44. Saadharana 45. Virodhikruthi 46. Paridhavi 47. Pramadicha 48. Ananda 49. Rakshasa 50. Anala 51. Pingala 52. Kalayukti 53. Siddharthi 54. Raudra 55. Durmathi 56. Dundubhi 57. Rudhirodgari 58. Raktakshi 59. Krodhana 60. Akshaya. Normally the span of human life is hundred years. A human year is a day to Devas; Satya Yuga is stated to have a span of 4800 Deva Years; Treta Yuga 3600 Divine years; Dwapara Yuga 2400 years; Kali Yuga 1200 years; 12000 divine years one Maha Yuga; 1000 Maha Yugas make one Kalpa or a day to Brahma and two Kalpas one day and night to Brahma; Brahma's life span is 100 Brahma Years or two Pararthas; one Maha Kalpa is half of Brahma's life span; Brahma's present age is now fifty years plus; that is how our daily prayer states: Dwiteeya Parthaey! One Maha Kalpa there are a mind-boggling 311040 crore of human years. We are now in the 28th Kaliyuga of the First Day of the First Year of Sweta Varaha Kalpa, second Parartha in the reign of the Seventh Manu Vaivaswata. Kali Yuga is calculated to have commenced on 17th February 3102 BC of Julian Calendar. Each Manu rules for 71 Maha yugas. Brahma is 51 year old having lived for 155 trillion years. We are now in the Third Kalpa (Varaaha Kalpa)

The 30 Kalpas are: Sveta, Nilalohita, Vaamadeva, Ratnaankara, Raurava, Deva, Brihat, Kandarpa, Sadya, Ishana, Tamah, Sarasvata, Agneya, Soma, Maanava, Tatpuman, Vaikuntha, Lakshmi, Savitri, Aghora, Varaah, Vairaja, Gauri, Maheswara, and Pitru.

Devi Navaratri

Devi Navaratri in Ashvayuja Month

One of the famed Festivals afore titled occupying a social and spiritual attachment in entire Bharat, especially in the Eastern and Southern belts covering West Bengal and North East, Odisha, Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. In Uttar Bharat, Ram Leelas climaxed with Ravana's effigy burnings and in Paschima Bharat, the Gadgha and Dandiya Raas are significant. Besides Pujas in Temples, temporary and brightly lit and street corners and socially vantage points in all villages, townships and cities, as the annual social gatherings come alive in full glory. 'Kolos' are a compelling annual festivities looked forward to by men and women, boys and girls and children especially in Andhra / Telangana, Tamilnadu and Karnataka, while this social joy is rampant in these States as reserved for Makara Sankranti.

The Nava Ratraas are the duration of worship to Adi Para Shakti and Sapta Matrikas Brahmi of Brahma Shakti who is the Shabda Swarupa and the Repository of Knowledge being of Satva Guna and of Shrishti Kaaraka; Vaishnavi is originated from Tejas and Rajas the Sthiti kaaraka; Maheshwari , the Tamo Shakti or of the Antaryami or the latent Energy emanating from Maha Maya; Kaumari the Sadhana Jnaana Shakti originated from Jnaana and Dharma being the root of 'Shaasta'; Vaarahi the Yagjna Shakti being the embodiment of physical strength and well being originating for 'Anna' or Food Energy; Aindri the Shakti of Courage, Protection and Prowess like from Indra's Vajraayudha; and Chamundi the Pauranic Annihilator of the Demon Rakta Beeja or the True Balancer of the Vitruue and Vice who manifets herself at the joints of Creation and Destruction which is signified as a state of Samadhi!

Nava Durgas



Navadurga - Hindu Goddesses and Deities

As worshipped during the Navaratri are Shaila Putri of Himalayas with Crescent Moon providing Mental Peace and Equanimity; Brahmacharini holding rosary and kamandalu being the Devi of Srishti-Sthiti-Vignaana-Moksha daayani or of Creation-Existence-Knowledge- and Absolute Bliss; she is the Yogini and Tapaswini as of Virgin form- Chandraghanta Durga riding a Vyaghra or Tiger as the embodiment of wrath and violence adorned with half moon and a ghanta or bell-Kushmanda Durga carrying loads of blood spilling out of a pumpkin with hands of blood as also being responsible for sustaining the Solar System headed by the radiant Surya Deva- Skanda Maataurga seated on a bejewelled throne of Gold ever propitious nature to the virtuous and the quick destroyer of evil as the symbol of courage and 'Dharma Shaasana' being 'Dharma Shaasta'- Katyayani holding a 'Chandrayaasa' or a long and unsheathed sword of valor and intrepidity ever ready to destroy the evil and riding high on a sky bound lion-Kaala Raatri the most ferocious Devi with protruded and elongated lips riding an ass and destroying pitch darkness and severe Agjnaana or pure lack of Understanding and mental maturity with ever sharp and dazzling sword of golden sheath; Devi Maha Gauri riding a vrishabha or a bull with resplendent clothes bestowing all-round auspiciousness; and Siddhi daatri who is ever victorious paving ways and means success and fulfillment.

At a designated Place in the center of a Hall, a raised platform made of bricks, called 'Vedi' of six feet wide and one and half feet height be arranged. On the Pratipad Tithi of Asvayuja, the Person(s) concerned sponsoring the Navaratri must arrive clean and composed, having already performed their 'Sandhyavandanam' or daily pujas and should seek the blessings of Brahmanas appointed (either nine, or five or three or atleast one) after presenting them new clothes and Dakshina. 'Swasti' Mantras followed by Veda Parayana would be recited. An Idol of nicely decorated Durga Devi seated on a Lion, with either four or eighteen hands, with symbolic arms and jewellery be installed as also a Pot of Sacred River Water placed over an

'Yantra' (diagram) representing Grandhis (Chambers) of Trinity and relevant Demi-Gods and Planetary Heads, while rendering the relevant Mantras. With various Worship Materials in place, the Puja would commence along with the Mantram 'Om Hrim Srim Chandikaya namah'; 'Arthies' (Camphor cum oil soaked cotton vick lamps shown to Deity) are performed, accompanied by instrumental music, singing and dance in praise of Maha Devi Bhagavati. 'Bala Kanya Bhog' or Prasad (Food material offered to Deity) to Virgins of the ages of two to ten years of age are worthy of worship. Such Kanyaas are designated as Kumari, Trimurti, Kalyani, Rohini, Kaali, Chandika, Shambhavi, Durga and Bhadra. 'Aavahana' or Invocation of such Kumaris in their Puja would be as follows: Mantraakshara mayeem Lakshmi Maatranaam Rupa dhaarineem, Nava Durgaatmikaam Saakshaat kanyaanmavaa hyamyaham/ Jagatpujye Jagadwandye Sarva Shakti Swarupini, Pujaam grihaana Koumaari Jaganmaatarnamostutey/ After the Aavahana Mantra the Kanyaa Puja is commenced with Paada prakshaalana or washing the feet of the Kumari and offering Vastra-Kumkuma-Gandha-Dhupa-Deepa-Bhojanas. During the Puja, recitation of Chandi-Paatha is required while others prescribe Lalita Sahasranaamaa too.

Upaanga Lalita Vrata: This Vrata is scheduled on Ashwiyuja Shukla Panchami and ‘Aparaahna’ is suitable; if Aparaaahna is not available on Panchami, then the previous Aparaaahna would be suitable. Some opine that Lalitha Puja is better performed in the night.

Saraswati Puja

This popular and Sacred Puja of Devi Saraswati is performed on Ashviiyuja Shukla Paksha Saptami but significantly in the Moola Nakshatra. Sthaapana has to be in Moola, Avaahana and Puja are to be in Purvaashaadha Nakshatra, Bali daana in Uttaraashaadha and Udwaasana in Shravana:

Mooleshu Sthaapanam Devyaah Purvaashaadhaasu pujanam,Uttaraasu Balim tadyacchravaney na visarjayet/

But Rudraamala Grandha states: Avahana and Anga Puja be done in Moola Nakshatra, detailed Puja in Purvaashadha without Avahana, Bali daana in Uttaraashaadha, and Anga Puja before Visarjana in Shravana Nakshatra . In any case, Avahana of Saraswati is to be done three muhurtaas before ‘Suryastama’ but if Moola Nakshatra is unavailable at that time then Aavahaya is done next day’s Moola’s dwiteeya paada. The Puja in brief is initiated as follows:

Pustakeshu yato Devi kreedate paramarthatah, tatastatra prakurveeta dhyaanamaavaahanaadikam/
Dhyanamevam prakurveeta saadhako vijitendriyah Pranavaasanamaarudhyam tadarhatvena nishchitaam/
Ankusham chaaksha sutram cha paasham veenaamcha dhaarineem,Muktaahaara samaayuktaam moda
rupaam manoharaam/ Kritena darpanaa bhyena vastrenopari bhushitaam, sustaneem veda vedyaamcha
chandraarthakrita shekharaam/ Jataa kalaapa yuktaam purna chandranibhaananaam, Trilochanaam Maha
Deveem swarna nupura dhaarineem/ Katakaih swarnaratnaadyairmuktaavalaya bhushitaam,
Kambukanthim sutaamroshtheem sarvaabharana bhushitaam/ Keyurairmekhalaadyascha dyotayanteem
jagatrayam, Shabda rahmaatmikaam Deveem dhyaana karma samaahitah/ Sarasvateemaavaahayaami-
aasanam samarpayaami-paadyam-arghyam-aachananeeyam-madhuparkam-pancaamritasnaanam-
vastrayugmam-brahma sutra/ yaginopaveeta-aabharana-gandha-akshata-puhspan- deepa-dhopenaivedya-
taamboola-neeraajana-mantrapushpa- pradakshina- namaskaaraan samarpayaami/ Praardhanaas: Paahi
paahi Jagadvande namaste bhakti vatsale, Namastubhyam namastubhyam namastubhyam namo namah//
Paashankusha dharaa Vaani Veenaa pustaka dhaarini, Mama vaktre vasennityam dugdhakundendu
nirmalaa/ Chaturdashasu vidyaasu ramate yaa Saraswati, Chaturdashasu lokeshu saa me vaachi
vaseccharim/ The Saraswati Vrata concludes with Kathaa shravana-pathana.

Special worship is arranged on the 'Saptami', 'Durga Ashtami', and 'Maha Navami' days ie. the seventh, eighth and the ninth days of the Festival. Devotees not quite involved in the previous days too would like to invariably perform Worship as per their choices in their own Puja Places in their own residences, or Temples or Specially built up (improvised) Group 'Mandaps' for community worship.

Saptami is described as the day when Maha Bhagavati takes a 'Saakar' or Bodily Incarnation to destroy the Demon 'Mahisha Asura' who had the form of a Buffalo, creating havoc to the World. The following day, popular as 'Durga Ashtami', Maha Bhagavati in the Incarnation as Durga Devi looks fierce and angry with the Demon and prepares for a violent battle with him and fellow Demons and massacres them all. It is also believed that Bhadra Kali was incarnated in a furious and gruesome form to devastate the 'Yajna' that was performed by Daksha Prajapati, the father of 'Maha Sati', the better half of Lord Siva and the Kali Incarnation was surrounded by innumerable 'Yoginis' or the multiple permutations of Sixty Attendants of Bhadra Kali who created mayhem at the Yajna and killed Daksha and his followers. On Maha Navami Day, Maha Bhagavati in the forms of fury and destruction punished the evil forces and brought back Her own Creation to normalcy and established balance of power.

Thus the two days of Durga Ashtami and Maha Navami are the days of the Grand Finale of the Navarathras, which are remembered for the relief, climactic joy and devotion experienced by the humans and Gods alike. The day next day falling on Vijaya Dasami is the day of high celebration and gratitude to Maha Bhagavati for Her 'Leelas' or Playful Actions that remain complex forever in human minds, soaked deep in the grip of Maya or Illusion! Whoever observes Navarathri Pujas with devotion are certain to reap benefits- Dharma (Virtue), Artha (Prosperity), Kaama (Worldly fulfillments) and Moksha (Eternal Bliss) with the blessings of Maha Bhagavati. Even those who committed unpardonable misdeeds earlier- 'Pancha Patakas' or heinous acts viz. killing Sages and Brahmanas, stealing gold or valuables, drinking and gambling, adultery or association with perpetrators of sins- would be spared if only the Navaratra Worship is performed with faith.

Navaratri Vidhis

Atra Nava Raatrey Ghatasthaapanam Pratarmadhyaahney Pradosha kaaley cheti Trikaalam Dwikaalam- Eeka kaalam vaa Swaswa Kula Devataa pujanam Saptashatyaadi japokhanda deepah Achaarapraapta maalaa bandhanam Upavaasa Nakthaikabhaktaadi niyamah Suvaasini bhojanm Kumaari bhojana pujaaadi antey Saptashatyaadi Stotra Mantra Homaadi ityetaani vihitaani



Devi Navaratri During these Navaraatraas the Duties required to be performed include Kalasha Sthaapana followed by daily Trikaala Puja as per 'Vamshaachara', Saptapadi and other Japaas, Akhanda Deepa, Maalaa bandhana as per Kulaachara, Upavaasa, Nakta-Eka bhuktaadi niyama, Suvaasini –Kanyaa pujaas and Bhojana and Homa Karyaas). Kalasha Sthaapana should not be performed in the nights. The Kalasha should be arranged on a Clean Vedika / Platform made of Pancha Pallavaas, milk, fruits, 'taambula'/betel nuts and leaves, Kunkuma, Dhupa , Deepa and such other requirements of Puja. On Pratipaada morning

after 'Abhyangana' or head bath, be seated by Grihastis along with wife and make the Sankalpa as follows:

Mama saha kutumba syaamuka Devataa preeti dwaaraa Sarvaapadccaanti purvaka Deergaayurdhana putraadi vridhi Shatru Jaya keertilaabha pramukha Charurvidha Purushaartha siddhyartha Madhya Prabhriti Mahaa Navamiparyanta trikaala mekakaalamvaamuka Devataapujaamupavaasaa Naktaikabhaktaanyata niyama sahitamakhandaa deepajwaalana Kumaaripujana Chandi Saptashati paatha Suvaasini bhojanaadi rupam Sharada nava raatrotsavaakhyam karma karishye!

After the Sankalpa as above Kalasha Sthaapana follows;

Tadadou Nirvighnataa siddhyartham Ganapati Pujamam Punyaahvachanam Chandi Saptashati Japaadyartham Brahman varanam karishye/

As the Kalasha Sthapana is being performed, Bhumi is prayed to and touched with the Mantra Mahaadyou; to perform 'Ankuraaropana' collect some 'Mrtittika' for the Ankuraaropana and recite the Mantras:

Aoushaddhayassa- Akaleshu- Imammey Gangey- Gandha dwaaraa- Kandaatkaanda- Ashwattevah- Syonaa Prithivi- Yaah phalineeh- Sahiratnaani Hiranya Rupam- Uvaasu vaasaa- Purnaadarvi- Tatwaayaami/

by inferring various acts of collecting Aoushadhis from Mrittika to fill up the Kalasha with the Sacred Water along with Pancha Pallavaas, Ratna-Hiranyaas, and perform Puja to Varuna Deva, Kula Devata and Devi in various Forms as follows:

Jayanti Mangalaa Kashi Bhadra Kaali Kapaalini, Durgaa Kshamaa Shivaa Dhaatri Swaahaa Swadhaa Namostutey/ Aagaccha Varadey Devi Daithua darpa nishudini, Pujaam grahaana Sumikhi namastey Shankara priye!

There after along with other Stotraas like Shri Sukta, Purusha Sukta and Prathama Ruks and formally worship with 'Shodasopachaaraas' like Aasana-Padya-Vastra-Dhupa-Deepa-Naivedyas and Sarva Mangala Maangaley and other 'Praarthanaas'. Offer of 'Bali daana', Kushmaanda daana, 'Kushmaanda

Khandana'and Shanti mantraas ending up with Om Shaantisshaanthisshaantih/ Finally at the end of the daily Nava Raatri Puja there should be resolve :

Akhanda deepakam Devyaah preetaye Nmava traatrakam, Ujjwalaye dahoraatra mekachitto Dhrudha Vrata – I resolve with unswerving devotion that the Akhanda Deepa shall be firmly set aflame all through the Nava Raatris and the daily formal worship as prescribed!

Navaavarana Puja

After ensuring external and internal purity ('Bahya Suddhi' and 'Antar Suddhi') and squatted with concentration, one should initiate 'Achamana' (sipping water thrice) with 'Kesavaya Svaha, Narayanaya Svaha, Madhavaya Svaha etc; be ready with articles of worship; perform 'Pranayama' or controlled breathing; follow by 'Bhuta Suddhi' or purification of the old and installing the new representation of Devi Bhagavati and observe internal 'dhyana' (meditating) to mean: dissolve Earth into Water, Water into Fire, Fire into Air, Air into Ether, Ether into 'Ahamkara', 'Ahamkara' into 'Mahat'(Great Energy) and 'Mahat' into 'Prakriti' or 'Maya', or in other words imagine transformation of the Five Elements into Moola Prakriti; follow Bhuta Suddhi by 'Jeeva Suddhi' or align the Self with Parama Devi; proceed further by mentally setting Six Chakras (outer- most circle inserted by an inner circle, further inserted by four more inner circles one within another) thus arranging the installation of 'Shat chakropasthitha Samsthitha' simultaneously pronouncing the afore mentioned nine lettered Mantra, viz. 'Om Aim Hrim Kleem Chamundaya Vicche' and align the Mantra to the six chakras as also touching the relevant body parts of the Worshipper concerned. The 'Karthā' or the Worshipper should perform 'Sankalpa' or mentioning the 'Tidhi'(date), 'Vara' (day) 'Nakshatra' or the relevant 'Star' of the day, 'Aayana' or the Course of the Solar Movement, Month, Year, Manvantara, Yuga, Place, Name of the Performer, 'Gotra' etc.; sprinkle water on the self, surroundings, articles and place of worship and recite the Mantra to remove obstacles for worship viz. 'Astraya Phat'; place the Sacred Copper Plate in position; [readily available from contemporary markets or draw two hexagonal triangles – one straight and another inverted- crossing each other, draw a figure outside that image, an octagonal form of eight petals and outside this a 'Bhupura' or boundary lines. On the eight petals are inscribed the Bija Mantras with the ninth word inscribed at the central Ovum].The 'Bindu' or 'Adhara Shakti' or the Super Energy at the Central Ovum which one has to worship. The 'Yantra'(diagram) is expected to resemble human body and is a mystical representation of Devi Maha Bhagavati to be worshipped.

Actual Puja commences while seated facing east and looking at the tip of the top triangle of the Yantra. The lowest triangle at the bottom right represents Lord Ganesha whose prayer is a traditional must. The bottom left hand side is governed by Sun God, top left Corner by Lord Vishnu, and top right corner by Lord Shiva. The 'Lokapalas' or Direction-wise Guards protect as follows: Indra guards East, Agni (Fire)

guards South East, Lord Yama guards South, Nirruti South West, Varuna the God of Rain and Water guards the West, 'Vayu' the God of Air guards North West, Soma or Moon guards North, and Ishana protects North East. After propitiating the Devas and Lokapalakas, Puja to Devi Bhagavati starts by Kara Nyasa and Anga Nyasa. The Karanyasa Mantras are: Aim- angushttabhyam Namah, Hreem-Tarjaneebhyam Namah, Sreem – Madhyamabham Namah, Aim- Anamikabhyam Namah, Kleem Kanishthikam Namah, Souh Karatala prushthabhyam Namah. Anganyasa Mantras are: Aim Hridayaya Namah, Hreem Sirase Svaha, Sreem Sikhayavoushat, Aim Kavachahum, Kleem Netratraya aushath, Sauh Astrayaphut. Salutations to Maha Devi as follows:

Om Aim Sreem Aim Kleem Souh-Kriya Shakti Peethayai-Shri Padukayam Pujaami

Om Aim Sreem Aim Kleem Souh-Jnana Shakti Kundalinyai- -DO-

Om Aim Sreem Aim Kleem Souh- Iccha Shakti Maha Tripura Sundaryai- -DO-

Nityamba Pujas: The following Mantras to added after each Nityamba:-

Om Aim Hreem Shreem Aim Kleem Souh XXXX Sri Padukayam Pujaya Namah

Example: Do Kameswari Nityamba Do

Bhagamalini Nityamba, Nityaklinna Nityamba, Bherunda Nityamba, Vahnivasini Nityamba, Maha Vajreswari Nityamba, Sivaduti Nityamba, Tvarita Nityama, Kula Sundari Nityamba, Nitya Nityamba, Neelapataka Nithyamba, Vijaya Nithyamba, Sarva Mangala Nithyamba, Jwalamalini Nitymaba, Chitra Nityamba, Maha Nitya Nityamba, Parameswara Nityamba, Parameswari Devi, Mitresamayi Devi, Shashtheesa Mayi Devi, Uddishamayi Devi, Charyanathamayi Devi, Lopamudramayi Devi, Agashyamayi Devi, Kala- tapanamayi Devi, Dharmacharyamayi Devi, Muthakesivaramayi Devi, Deepakalanathamayi Devi, Vishnudevamayi Devi, Prabhakara Devamayi Devi, Vasudevayamayi Devi, Ratnadevimayi Devi and Sri Ramanandamayi Devi.

Navavarana Puja- Names of Devis in Nine Enclosures



Devi Navaratri Prathama Avarana: (First Enclosure) in Three Outer Lines:

First Line: Anima Sidhamba, Laghima Sidhamba, Mahima Sidhamba, Isitva Sidhamba, Vasitva Sidhamba, Prakamya Sidhamba, Bhuti Sidhamba, Iccha Sidhamba, Prapti Sidhamba and Sarva Kama Sidhamba.

Second Line: Sri Brahmi Matraka, Maheswari Matraka, Kaumari Matraka, Vaishnavi Matraka, Varahi Matraka, Mahendri Matraka, Chamunda Matraka, and Mahalakshmi Matraka.

Third Line: Sarva Sankshobhini Devi, Sarva Vidravini Devi, Sarvakarshini Devi, Sarva vashankari Devi, Sarvonmadini Devi, Sarva Mahankusa Devi, Sarva Khechari Devi, Sarva Beeja Devi, Sarva Yoni Devi, Sarva Trikhanda Devi, Trilokya Mohana Chakraswamini Devi and Prakata Yogini Devi.

Dwiteeya Aavarana (Second Enclosure):

Kamakarshini Shakti, Buddhyakarshini Shakti, Ahankarakarshini Shakti, Sabdakarshini Shakti, Sparshakarshini Shakti, Rupakarshini Shakti, Rasakarshini Shakti, Gandhakarshini Shakti, Chittakarshini Shakti, Dhairyakarshini Shakti, Smrutyakarshini Shakti, Namakarshini Shakti, Beejakarshini Shakti, Atmakarshini Shakti, Amrutakarshini Shakti, Sharirakarshini Shakti, Sarva Aasha Paripurka Chakraswamini and Gupta Yogini.

Triteeya Aavarana (Third Enclosure):

Anga Kusuma Shakti, Ananga Mekhala Shakti, Ananga Madana Shakti, Ananga Madanatura Shakti, Ananga Rekha Shakti, Ananga Vegini Shakti, Ananga Ankusha Shakti, Ananga Malini Shakti, Sarva Sankshobhana Chakraswamini, and Gupta thara Yogini.

Chaturdha Aavarana (Fourth Enclosure):

Sarvakshobini Devi, Sarva Vidravini Devi, Sarvakarshini Devi, Sarvahladini Devi, Sarva Sannohini Devi, Sarva-Sthambhini Devi, Sarvajhrumbhini Devi, Sarvavashankari Devi, Sarva Ranjani Devi, Sarvonmadini Devi, Sarvatha Sadhika Devi, Sarva Sampatti Purani Devi, Sarva Mantramayi Devi, Sarva Dvandva Kshayankari Devi, Sarva Soubhagya Dayaka Chakraswamini Devi and Sampradaya Yogini Devi. Panchama Avarana (Fifth Enclosure): Sarva Siddhiprada Devi, Sarva Sampathprada Devi, Sarva Priyankari Devi, Sarva Mangala Karini Devi, Sarva Kamaprada Devi, Sarva Dhuhkha Vimochani Devi, Sarva Mrithyu Prasamani Devi, Sarva Vighna Nivarini Devi, Sarvanga Sundari Devi, Sarva Sowbhagya Dayani Devi, Sarva Ardha Sadhaka Chakraswamini and Kulotheerna Yogini.

Shashtha Avarana (Sixth Enclosure):

Sarvagya Devi, Sarva Shakti Devi, Sarva Aishvarya Pradayani Devi, Sarva Jnanamayi Devi, Sarva Vyadhi Vinasini Devi, Sarvadhara Swarupa Devi, Sarva Papahari Devi, Sarva Anandamayi Devi, Sarva Raksha Swarupini Devi, Sara Epsitha Phalaprada Devi, Sarva Rakshakara Chakra Swamini and Nigarbha Yogini.

Saptama Avarana (Seventh Enclosure):

Vasini Vagdevi, Kameswari Vagdevi, Modhini Vagdevi, Vimala Vagdevi, Aruna Vagdevi, Jayani Vagdevi, Sarva Eswari Vagdevi, Kaulini Vagdevi, Sarva Rogahara Chakraswaini, Rahasya yogini, Banini, Chapini, Paasini and Ankusini.

Ashtama Avarana (Eighth Enclosure):

Maha Kameswari Devi, Maha Vajreswari Devi, Maha Bhagamalini Devi, Sarva Siddhiprada Chakraswamini and AtiRahasya Yogini.

Navama Avarana (Ninth Enclosure):

Sri Sri Bhattarika, Sarvanandamaya Chakraswamini and Parapara Rahasya Yogini.

Conclusion of Navavarana Puja:

Tripura Devi Namah: Dhyayami; Tripuresi Devi Namah: Avahayami; Tripura Sundari Devi Namah :Asanam Samarpayami; Tripurasiddhi Devi Namah: Snanam Samarpayami; Tripuramba Devi Namah: Vastram Samarpayami; Maha Tripura Sundari Devi Namah: Abharamam Samarpayami; Maha Maheswari Devi Namah: Gandham Dharayami; Maha Maharagni Devi Namah: Pushpam Pujayami; Srimad Simhasana Iiswaryai Devi Namah: Padam Pujaami; Lalitha Devi Namah: Gulphou Pujayami; Maha Raagni Namah: Janghou Pujayami; Paramakushi Namah: Januni Pujayami; Chapinyai Namah :Urum Pujayami; Tripurayi Namah: Katim Pujayami; Maha Sundaryai Namah: Nabhim Pujayami; Sundaryai Namah: Vasitrayam Pujayami; Chakranathaya Namah: Udaram Pujayami; Charinyai Namah: Kantham Pujayami; Chakreswaryai Namah: Oshtham Pujayami; Maha Devai Namah: Kapolam Pujayami; Kameswaryai Namah: Dantapanktim Pujayami; Parama Eswaryai Namah: Chbukam Pujayami; Kamaraja Priyayai Namah: Nasika Dwayam Pujaami; Kamakotikayai Namah: Bhru Madhyam Pujaami; Sarv Patalayai Namah: Mukham Pujayami; Kulanthayai Namh: Parswam Pujaami; Amnayanathyayai Namah: Siram Pujamami; Sarva Amnaya Nivasinyai Namah : Padukam Pujayami; Maha Sringara Nayikayai Namah : Sarvangyani Pujayami. Maha Shakti Devi Namah: Dhoopam Aghrapaami; Maha Guptha Devi Namah: Deepam Darshayami; Maha Gupta Devi Namah: Nivedaym Samarpayami; Maha Ananda Devi Namah: Tamboolam Sapparpayami; Maha Skanda Devi Namah: Mantra Pushpam Samarpayami; Maha Maha Sri Chakra Nagara Samragni Namah: Pradakshina Namaskaran Samarpayami. [Note: If the detailed worship on the above lines is not possible to perform, at least the following powerful Panchadasakshari mantra may be recited 108 times each day keeping in view the Sri Yantra with concentration: Ka E La Hreem-Ha Sa Ka Ha La Hreem-Sa Ka La Hreem



Shakti Peetha

ॐ नमः शिवाय

The Shakti Peethas are places of worship consecrated to the goddess Shakti or Sati, the female principal of Hinduism and the main deity of the Shakta sect. They are sprinkled throughout the Indian subcontinent.

The Legend of Shakti Peetha

It is believed that Lord Brahma performed a yajna to please Shakti & Lord Shiva. Goddess Shakti emerged, separating from Shiva and helped Brahma in the creation of the universe. Brahma was extremely happy and decided to give Shakti back to Shiva. Therefore his son Daksha performed several yagna to obtain Shakti as his daughter in the form of Sati. His yagna paid off as Sati was brought to this universe with the intention of marrying her to Lord Shiva.

Lord Shiva's curse on Brahma had Lord Brahma lose his fifth head due to his lie in front of Shiva. Daksha started hating Lord Shiva because of this and decided not to let Lord Shiva and Sati get married. However, Sati got attracted to Shiva and finally one day Shiva and Sati got married. This marriage only increased Daksha's hatred towards Lord Shiva.

Daksha performed a yagna with a desire to take revenge on Lord Shiva. Daksha invited all the deities to the yajna except Lord Shiva and Sati. The fact that she was not invited did not deter Sati from attending the yagna. She expressed her desire to attend the yagna to Shiva, who tried his best to dissuade her from going. Shiva eventually relented and Sati went to the yagna. Sati, being an uninvited guest, was not given any respect at the yagna. Furthermore, Daksha insulted Shiva. Sati was unable to bear her father's insults toward her husband, so she immolated herself.

Enraged at the insult and the injury, Shiva in Veerabhadra avatar destroyed Daksha's yagna, cut off Daksha's head, and later replaced it with that of a male goat as he restored him to life. Still immersed in grief, Shiva picked up the remains of Sati's body, and performed the Tandava, the celestial dance of destruction, across all creation. The other Gods requested Vishnu to intervene to stop this destruction, towards which Vishnu used the Sudarshana Chakra, which cut through the Sati's corpse. The various parts of the body fell at several spots all through the Indian subcontinent and formed sites which are known as Shakti Peethas today.

Four Adi Shakti Pithas

Note: Various sources have been used to conduct detailed research on the Shakti Peethas. The sources include: the Shiva Charitra, the Yogini Tantra, Tantra Chudamini, the Devi Bhagvad and the Ashta Shakti.

Several Hindu religious texts like the Shiva Purana and the Devi Bhagvad put four Shakti Peethas in the centre of the cosmic energy that governs Shaivite philosophy:

Bimala (Pada Khanda)

Tara Tarini

Kamakhya

Dakhina Kalika

The Ashtashakti Purana and the Kalika Purana (written in Sanskrit) talk at length about these Adi Shakti Peethas:

“Bimala Pada khandancha, Sthana khandancha Tarini (Tara Tarini), Kamakshya Yoni khandancha, Mukha khandancha Kalika (Dakshina Kalika) Anga pratyanga sanghena Vishnu Chakra Kshyta nacha”

Whereas the Brihat Samhita actually goes on to identify exactly where these places are.

Bimala: The idol of the goddess Bimala is located within the temple complex of the Jagannath Temple complex in Puri. Just beside it is the famous Rohini Kund. It is believed that the ‘pada’ or feet of Adi Shakti or Dakshayani fell there and a shrine was later erected for the worship of her feet. This temple is considered the first of the Shakti Peethas. Lord Jagannath is worshipped as the Bhairav protecting Parvati’s feet. This shows an interesting fusion of Vaishnavite and Shaivite philosophies.

Tara Tarini: The goddess Tara Tarini is representative of the ‘sthana’ or breasts of Mata Sati. Situated in Behrampur, Odisha, this shrine has been the most fortunate of all. Not only has it witnessed the presence of revered avatars of Vishnu like Shree Ram Chandra and Shri Krishna but also great masters of meditation and sages like Jagadguru Shankaracharya and Balayogi Neelkanthi. It has acted as a meeting ground for centuries for various religious traditions like the Vedic cult, the Brahmanical cult, Hinduism and Buddhism.

Kamakhya: Located on the Neelachal Hill in Guwahati, Assam, the Kamakhya temple stands for the Yoni Khanda of Mata Sati. It is the main temple that is situated amidst a number of temples dedicated to Sati. The Kamakhya Temple, alongwith the Kalighat Temple, has been covered in detail later on in the series.

Kalighat: Situated in Kolkata, West Bengal, the Kalighat Mandir enshrines the Mukha Khanda of Dakshina Kalika. The name Calcutta is rumoured to be derived from the word Kalighat. The temple is now on the banks of a small river called the Adi Ganga- the original course of the Hooghly river. These four peethas have been covered individually but it is important to get some sense of the importance of the Adi Peethas. They are central to the spiritual science associated with the Shakti Peethas and are regarded as centres of cosmic, spiritual power.



The Divinity of Science: Shakti Peethas

Shakti peethas are those pockets of divinity that govern Hindu spiritual life. Every devotee knows what his spirituality means to him. The reason why I use the word spirituality and not religion is because to every person, his religion appeals to him differently and individually but the one thing that connects all believers is their spirituality. India is a land of divinity; our myths, legends and even the stories we heard as children from our grandmothers acts as a force that strengthens our beliefs every step of the way. Spirituality connects you with The Supreme, and The Supreme manifests itself in every atom of a devotee's spirit. Temples in India are perhaps manifestations of that divinity in spirituality. If you're a true devotee, only you know that inexplicable pleasure of a 'darshan'.

What is it that makes the Shakti Peethas such important spiritual symbols? Is it the centuries of myth and legend associated with them? Is it the grand scale of architecture, art and culture that has gone into establishing them? Or is it simply the belief of those million devotees whose prayers to The Mother binds them together in universal harmony and fraternity?

These questions are difficult to answer. Religion is one of the most inexplicable emotions and the very spirit of devotion is unquestionable. One of the primary reasons why Shakti peethas are important symbols of spirituality is perhaps because in religious literature, they are regarded as important sources of Shaivite energy. A branch of spiritual theory focuses on the power and chemistry of energies. Shakti

peethas are symbols of love and rage: the most powerful forces of energy that have existed till date, and it is these forces that combine with the believer's devotion to give rise to a positive spectrum in the universe. But to a non-believer, what are these forces made up of? Where do they come from? A theory states that positive spectrums are created perhaps by devotion as much as by mythology. These positive energies govern celestial order and bring prosperity to the lives of all those it touches.

Even psychologically, these energies serve to strengthen us. You might have wondered why a visit to a temple relieves you to the extent it does. Scientifically speaking, your body sends signals to your brain reaffirming doubt and providing security. Your body, mind and soul are as affected by these energies as by physical elements in nature. Note, for instance, the study that shows that all the Shakti Peethas are located at points of extreme energy-detection. What is this energy that cannot be discussed? All these areas are pulsating with emotions and forces that have been hard to describe. Miracles have been witnessed in the areas surrounding Shakti Peethas... devotees have never been disappointed by what The Mother had to offer them. There is just something different about those who have visited all; devotees speak of a strange sense of fulfilment that envelopes them after they have sighted Sati Mata in her parts, only to find her in her entirety.

South East Asian tourism has often made use of these Shakti Peethas to develop their programmes. What is rather unfortunate is the fact that places of devotion are gradually being converted to tourist hubs. People from around the globe accumulate in these Shakti Peethas without really knowing their spiritual significance. The architecture is marvelled at, the historical aspects are discussed but seldom do non-believers find the inner tranquillity that believers do in such places. Over the next few articles, we will be looking at what constitutes the essence of each of the fifty two shakti peethas, when is the best time to visit, the daily schedules and how to get there. What is most important to carry with you, however, is not a garland of flowers or money as offering but devotion in your heart. If you're still waiting for your spirituality to call out to you, this trip is worth your time.

Shakti Peethas – A Travel Guide

Spirituality is best enjoyed when nurtured. If you have recently felt Shaivite energies calling out to you, if you feel the restlessness of spirituality engulf you and if you're planning to make a spiritual journey across the Shakti Peethas, now would be a good time to make the pilgrimage. Here are a couple of pointers you must keep in mind before venturing out on what will be the greatest journey of your life. There are fifty-one Shakti Peethas in all, littering the Indian subcontinent. A good idea would be to start from your birthplace. In Hindu mythology, the birthplace is accorded special respect as the source of your life-force. When Sati Mata's body fell in different parts of Asia, these shrines were converted into magnificent temples under the patronage of different kings. It is often rumoured that these holy places have more than just a temple that's special to them. Miraculous healings and great tales of prosperity all around. A good idea would be to travel east from your birthplace. If there are no Shakti Peethas east, travel south. There are places with more than one shakti peethas, and usually they are close by. You can get from one shakti peetha to its adjacent one in less than a day. Travelling east is considered auspicious and it would also be logical to follow one direction.

Until and unless bound by age and health issues, it is best to visit these places by train rather than by flight. Not only is it cost-effective, but the time lapses would also give you space to revel in the glory of what you have witnessed. Most peethas would be a bus ride or a train ride apart. Travelling the length and

breadth of the subcontinent by land – only if time allows you to do so, of course- is a great idea. You meet many of the same Mother's creations whom you are worshipping and you also find out things about your country that you didn't know. The sights you see will be worth it! The clouds are the abode of Gods, as many grandmothers would tell ever-so-believing little children- but the best way of finding God is perhaps by land. Avoid travelling alone as much as you can. Unfortunate as it may be, due to various reasons, these places are bursting to the brim mostly throughout the year. Several kinds of people make visits to these pilgrimage spots and often, with motives that are far from holy. These "tourist spots" that are always crowded are a great place for pickpockets and kidnappers to earn their living.

Speaking of those who use the name of God to perpetrate evil in the world, also be wary of eve-teasers and 'organisations' that ask for donations. Do not trust these people with your money for you never know what happens to it later on. Your level of devotion is not dependent on money and God will love you no matter how much you put into the donation box. If you really do want to spread the love, a good idea would be to visit trusted NGOs in and around and speak to them regarding how you can be of use. Converting your spiritual journey into a social one is a beautiful idea...there are more than one ways of reaching out to your Creator!

Money is not the important factor. Your time is the most precious gift you can give away; once the prayers for the day are done, look around for orphanages and old age homes that need volunteers. Avoid eating out too much during these spiritual tours, especially roadside food. Several places have had incidents when people have lost their lives due to severe food poisoning. Unfortunately, the goodness restricts itself within temple walls. If you suffer from breathing problems, avoid the peak hours of the day for visiting temples. The temple tends to get very crowded and you may even feel claustrophobic. A very good idea for you is to visit at dawn. Not only is the temple relatively less crowded, you get to witness the holiness of morning prayers that will simply make the rest of your day. Honestly, there is no better way of starting your day! It is better to plan ahead, but do not think about planning your entire trip from the very beginning. There are several organisations that have fully planned trips to the shakti peethas, but these tend to be either too expensive or have too jam-packed a schedule. In case you miss the arati at one place, you will have to skip that and move on to the next which will leave you with regret at the end of your journey. The best idea would be to plan the first ten in advance, and while you're on the seventh, make calls and start the planning process.

It is better to make arrangements in local dharamshalas rather than expensive hotels, the simple reason being that you get a taste of the real spirituality you are in search of. Living simply for this while only serves to enhance your pilgrimage. You may also book guest houses that are available for rent in all these places.

Walk as much as you can. Again, if health and age allow you, I would really suggest you to conduct as many walking tours as possible. It is said that shakti peethas have divinity in the soil. Be as closely attached to the soil as possible. Meet new people, attend all the temple functions possible.

The most important tip to follow is simplicity but safety. It is rather sad that one has to talk about safety issues while discussing spirituality but so be it. The Shakti Peethas are worth the visit but you must be wary. There are people waiting to cheat you at every step of your spiritual awakening... perhaps part of the pilgrimage is learning to follow the path of spirituality fused with modern-day practicality!

ALL ABOUT AN IDEAL WOMAN

Karyeshu dasi, Karaneshu manthri; Bhojeshu mata, Shayaneshu rambha; Kshamayeshu dharithri, Roopeshu lakshmi; Satkarma yukta, Kuladharmata patni/ An ideal wife should be like a loyal maid for service; an intelligent adviser; a mother like with affection while feeding food; a romantic- proactive and comforting woman like a damsel; a woman of beauty, charm and richness like Goddess Lakshmi Herself with dedication and humility; and above all be ever forgiving with compassion and ready understanding like Bhudevi Herself!

Chaturvidha Veda Mahilas / Vedic Seeker Strees of fame:

Ghosha, Lopamudra, Maitreyi, Gargi: Ghosha was the grand daughter of Dirgha Tama and Devi Pakshivat, both being the worshippers of Ashvini Devatas or the Celestial Physicians; Ghosha who remained a spinster as he had leprosy too worshipped the twin Ashwinis and authored Hymns of Praise with the desire of curing her disease and bestowing conjugal happiness and excelled herself as a Great Seeker; Lopamudra was the wife of Agastya Muni who originally created her by his Mantra Siddhi and gave away as the daughter of the King of Vidarbha; she attained extraordinary knowledge of Rig Veda and entered into enquiries with the Muni and finally the latter was so impressed and accepted as his life partner with the distinction of scripting Hymns that defined the rights and duties of men and women as equal partners of family life; Maitreyi was the wife of Yagyavalkya who also had another wife named Katyayani a pious woman but Maitreyi had the unique distinction of Rig Veda dedicating some ten stanzas accredited to her fund of knowledge and acquired the epithet of being a Brahma Vaadini which enhanced the husband's erudition; once when Yagyavalkya decided to renounce his Ashram into Sanyasa, Katyayani opted for wealth but Maitreyi opted for wealth and Immortality and the latter secured the same; Gargi had the distinction of dominating a Vidvat Sabha at a Brahma Yagnya performed by Videha the Formless King Janaka the Rajarshi and embarrassed Yagyavalkya Muni with confusing queries about Amda and Paramatma such as: 'where is the layer above the Sky and below the Earth stated in Scriptures as the symbol of the Past- Present and Future situated?'

Sapta Pativratas:

Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara, Mandodari, Anasuya and Sumati: An explanation of a Parivrata refers to Ahalya though she slept with Indra but she had her husband Muni Gautama was genuinely on her mind and when turned into a stone due to Gautama's Shaap Rama purified her too for her dereliction due to her ignorance; Draupadi though she married Pancha Pandavas since all the Pandavas were of the Amsha of Indra whose virility was distributed to Devi Kunti through Yama Dharmaraja to beget Yudhishtara, Vayu Deva to beget Bhima, Arjuna from his (Indra's) own and Ashvini Kumars from Devi Maadri as Nakula and Sahadeva apart from the fact that Draupadi was Indra's better half viz Sachi Devi who was originally Yagneshani the daughter of Agni as clarified in Markandeya Purana ; Devi Sita despite Ravana's pressure tactics had only Rama always; Devi Tara the wife of Vaali but the Tradition of Kishkindha allowed Sugriva to marry after Vaali's death as approved by Rama himself and Mandodari of course was a fixation on Ravana'sura despite his infatuation with Sita; Anasuya the wife of Atri and the illustrious Kardama Prajapati ; Sumati who was an outstanding Pativrata who adored her husband a Leper and even prostrated before a woman whom her husband desired to sleep with.

Sati Savitri an outstanding Pativrata who defied Yama Dharma Raja into conviction!

Matsya Purana describes yet another Pativrata! In the days of yore, there was a King named Ashwapati of Shaakala Vamsa in Madra Desha (the present Sialkot Territory) who did not secure a son. Being highly devoted to Devi Savitri (Gayatri), he intensified his worship to her and performed a daily 'havan'/ oblation to Agni with white 'Tilas' (Sesame seeds) in the presence of thousand Brahmanas for ten months and finally Devi Savitri appeared to Ashwapati on a Chaturthi day and granted an illustrious daughter to him and queen Malati; the baby was named as Savitri since she was born by the grace of Devi Savitri. The daughter grew into a charming and highly virtuous girl; a chance visit of Brahmarshi Narada to the King and the daughter indicated that her husband would die on a specified day after her wedding. They both indeed were terribly worried about Narada's prophesy but she was married in due course to the son of King Jhumnatsen called Satyavan who was a charismatic prince. But unfortunately the King lost his kingdom as also the eye sight of his and of the wife. Savitri emboldened herself and faced the situation with confidence and performed unreserved and steadfast service to the parents-in-law. At the sametime, she served her husband so much that Narada's prophesy was always ringing in her ears constantly and never allowed the husband even for a while. She also worshipped her Guru and followed each and every advice of his as a word of law. Thus she was worshipping her husband, her parents-in-law and her Guru as much as never in history had performed in the past. As the specific Chaturthi that Narada warned about her husband's death within a year, she took permission of her blind parents-in-law and her Guru and entered a jungle along with Satyavan and decided to keep her husband the happiest man and spent every moment with him by showing and sharing with him the most memorable beauties of Nature, the waterfalls, the cool waters, the fragrant and colourful flowers and so on. She described that couples of hares, crows, lions, monkeys, and deers were all in a state of maddening infatuation and such wonderful experiences tended to extend lives forever! Meanwhile, Satyavan felt like cutting wood from some dry trees but Savitri cautioned that he should not be away from her. In great fun, he said that he would never ever dare to be away from her. Suddenly, Satyavan felt excruciating pain in his head and fell flat. Even while realising as to what was happening, she sensed that some thumb-long figures tied to Satyavan's soul and were ready to draw it towards the Southern direction and visioned that Yama Dharma Raja himself was present there. She screamed with astonishment and closely following Yamaraja sobbed away and said: Sacred Scriptures assured that sincere devotion to mother provided this loka, devotion to father would secure Swarga and devotion to Guru would fetch Brahma loka but of what avail was her sincerity if Scriptures made false promises? Dharma Raja replied: Do not interfere with my duty; indeed the Scriptures were right, the dead soul was a virtuous person and that she too was a real Pativrata, but there was a fixed procedure of terminating a human being as per one's life span which was pre-determined and judgment was given as per norms. Savitri counter argued that for a woman, husband was a Deity and the provider of safety; a father, brother or a son were no doubt the safeguarders but the husband was above all and if he were to be forcibly taken away then she had no other alternative but to immolate her life. Dharma Raja was indeed taken back at her firmness and smilingly said that such an incidence as this was rare and that he would be pleased to bestow any boon excepting her husband's life. As Savitri took up the opportunity, she requested him to restore the eyesight as also the Kingdom to her in-laws and Dharma Raja readily granted these boons and asked her to go back so that he could perform his duty. He also asked her not to follow further and tire out herself without any aim or useful purpose. Devi Savitri replied that she would never feel tired following great celebrities of the stature of Dharma Raja, even if they were annoyed because only such emblems of Dharma could sift persons of genuineness or other-wise; it was

stated in the Scriptures that one should never be afraid of even Agni, poison, and snakes compared to evil persons where as ‘Satpurushas’ had an inner conscience and even if they were apparently rude and hurtlingly outspoken, their basic quality would be outstanding and subject to change of stance since such ‘Mahatmas’ test the authenticity of other persons being faced. Even normal and impartial Kings and Administrators would tend to examine the realities of those who make requests and a Deity par excellence like Dharma Raja would like to make sure whether her supplications were pure and straight from the heart or not. That was the reason why Savitri felt untired of following Dharma Raja! Apparently, Dharma Raja was pleased with the logic of Savitri and replied that without insisting on the life of Satyavaan, she might ask for another boon. She grabbed the opportunity and requested that her parents were not blessed with a son; despite performing countless Sacred deeds and their daily homas in favour of Gayatri / Savitri they succeeded on giving birth to a daughter but not a ‘Vamsoddhaaraka’. Dharma Raja conceded the second boon too and firmly admonished Savitri to pester further but should return home at once to organise the obsequies of her departed husband. Having secured the second boon from Dharmaraja, Savitri still followed the former and stated that any human being would like to fulfil three essential steps of Dharma, Artha and Kama as the corner-stones of an ideal life. She affirmed: Dharmarjanam tathaa kaaryam purushena vijaanataa, Tallaabham Sarva laabhebhyo yadaa Daiva viseshatey/ Dharmascha arthascha kaamascha trivargo janmanah phalam, Dharma heenasya kaamaarthey vandhyaa sutasamou Prabho/ Dharmadarthastathaa kaamo Dharmaalokadwayam tathaa, Dharma ekonuyaatyenam yatra kwachanagaaminam/ Shareerena samam naasham sarvamanya -ddhi gacchati, Ekohi jaayatey jantureka eva vipadyatey/ (Deva! Any Enlightened person seeks to earn Dharma since that secures the best of gains; the objective of life is to fulfil the means of Dharma viz. Artha and Kaama; conversely, wealth and fulfilment of desires alone without Dharma would be wasting one’s life. Dharma would certainly fulfil the means to achieve it and could at the same time lead to Salvation too. In the final analysis, a dying person leaves every thing behind except Dharma and a person born does not bring any possessions nor takes anything at death). Dharma Raja was pleased with what Savitri said and asked her a third boon to that outstanding Pativrata who had been fighting for her husband’s life. In turn, Savitri asked the boon: Varayaami twayaa dattam putraanaam shatamourasam, Anapatyasya lokeshu gatih kila na vidyatey/ (Deva! I request you to give me the boon of securing hundred sons of my own, since without obtaining sons, there would be no ‘Sadgati’ to her and husband as parents). Yama Raja then granted this boon also and Savitri commended Dharma as follows: Dharmadharma vidhaanajna Sarva Dharma Pravartaka, Twameva Jagato naathaha Prajaa samyamaney Yamah/ Karmanaaman -rupena Yasmaad Yamayasey Prajaah, Tasmaad vai proachyasey Deva Yama ityeva naamatah/ Dharmaneymaah Prajaah Sarvaa yasmaad ranjayasey Prabho, Tasmaat tey Dharma raageti naama Sadbhirnigadyatey/ Sukrutam dushkrutam chobhey Purodhaaya yadaa janaah/ Tatsavakaasham mrutaa yaanti tasmaat twam Mrutyu ruchyatey/ (Dharamadharma Vidhaataa! You are the highest Administrator of Dharma; since you are the Chief Regulator of Dharma, you are called Yama. As you ensure that human beings do not indulge in Adharma and make them follow the Path of Truth, you are known as Dharma Raja. Since when human beings die, you confront them with a full account of their good and bad deeds, and hence you are known as Mrityu. As the dead persons are approached by you with the details of each action of theirs by each Kshana/ second, and measure of Kaala or Time, you are called as Kaala. Since you are the designated Authority to terminate the life of each and every ‘charaachara’ or mobile and immobile being, you are titled Antak. As you are the eldest son of Surya Deva who has the name of Viwasvaan, you carry the name of Vaiwasvata. As and when the life of any being is over, you catch him suddenly and that is why you have another name viz. Sara praanahara. Devesha! Thanks to you the Ruk-Yajur- Sama Vedas

continue to popularise the Principles of Virtue and Justice eternally; you are the upkeeper of nobility and discipline the world over and I have come to the shield of safety from you; kindly give back my husband at once as my in-laws too are frantic now for his life. As Savitri concluded her desperate prayers, Dharma Raja asserted that he was giving away Satyavan's life back, that he would secure her hundred sons who would all become famous Kings, that her parents too would be blessed with hundred sons of virtue and that her brother would be popular as Malava, the King of Malva. Thus concludes the Sacred Legend of Maha Saadhvi Savitri: Tasmaad Saadhwyaha Striyah Pujyaah Satatam, Taasaamtu vakyam bhavateeha midhya na jaatu lokeshu charachashu/Tasmaat sadaa taah pari pujaneeyaah, Kaamaan Samagraanabhi kaamayaanaih/ (Hence women of High Virtue ought to be worshipped since the Three Lokas are preserved due to their grace. The voices of Pativratas should never be ignored as they are worthy of veneration and fulfill their desires).

Pancha Kanyas or maidens:

Mythologically stated there are Pancha Kanyas whose worship assures the washing of sins; these were Mandodari, Ahalya, Draupadi, Kunti and Tara; these illustrious women represented Pancha Bhutas; during Devi Durga Nava Raatri Pujas Kanya worship of girls before the state of puberty is still observed each day as representing Durga Devi herself ; Kumaris from the age of one year to Sixteen are known as Sandhya, Saraswati, Tridha, Kalika, Shubhaga, Uma, Malini, Kubjika, Kaala Sandarbha, Aparajita, Rudrani, Bhairavi, Maha Lakshmi, Peetha Nayaki, Kshetrajna and Ambika];

Classification of Strees:

Padmini, Chatrini, Shankhini and Hastini are four kinds of women. Padmini, or Lotus-woman has a pleasing face as the full moon; her body with soft flesh, head like mustard-flower; her skin is tender and fair as the yellow lotus, never dark-coloured, though resembling, in the effervescence and purple light of her youth, the cloud about to burst. Her eyes are bright and beautiful as the orbs of the fawn, well-cut, and with reddish corners. Her bosom is hard, full and high; her neck is goodly shaped as the conch-shell, so delicate that the saliva can be seen through it; her nose is straight and lovely, and three folds of wrinkles cross her middle, about the umbilical region. Her Yoni resembles the open lotus-bud, and her Love-seed (Kama-salila, the water of life) is perfumed like the lily which has newly burst. She walks with swanlike gait, and her voice is low and musical as the note of the Kokila-bird; she delights in white raiment, in fine jewels, and in rich dresses. She eats little, sleeps lightly and, being as respectable and religious, she is clever and courteous, she is ever anxious to worship the gods, and to enjoy the conversation of Brahmans. Such, then, is the Padmini, or Lotus-woman. Chitrini or Art-woman is of the middle size, neither short nor tall, with bee-black hair, thin, round, shell-like neck; tender body; waist lean-girthed as the lion's; hard, full breasts; well-turned thighs and heavily made hips. The hair is thin about the Yoni, being soft, raised and round. The Kama-salila (love seed) is hot, and has the perfume of honey, producing from its abundance a sound during the venereal rite. Her eyes roll, and her walk is coquettish, like the swing of an elephant, whilst her voice is that of the peacock. She is fond of pleasure and variety; she delights in singing and in every kind of accomplishment, especially the arts manual; her carnal desires, are not strong, and she loves her "pets", parrots, Mainas and other birds. Such is the Chitrini, or Art-woman. The Shankini or Conch-woman, is of bilious temperment, her skin being always hot and tawny, or dark yellow-brown; her body is large, or waist thick, and her breasts small; her head, hands, and feet are thin and long, and she looks out of the corners of her eyes. Her Yoni is ever moist with Kama-

salila, which is distinctly salt, and the cleft is covered with thick hair. Her voice is hoarse and harsh, of the bass or contralto type; her gait is precipitate; she eats with moderation and she delights in clothes, flowers and ornaments of red colour. She is subject to fits of amorous passion, which make her head hot and her brain confused, and at the moment of enjoyment, she thrusts her nails into her husband's flesh. She is of choleric constitution, hard-hearted, insolent and vicious; irascible, rude and ever addicted to finding fault. Such is the Shankhini, or Conch-woman. The Hastini is short of stature; she has a stout, coarse body, and her skin, if fair, is of a dead white; her hair is tawny, her lips are large; her voice is harsh, choked, and throaty and her neck is bent. Her gait is slow, and she walks in a slouching manner; often the toes of one foot are crooked. Her Kama-salila has the savour of the juice which flows in the spring from the elephant's temples. She is tardy in the Art of Love, and can be satisfied only by prolonged congress, in fact, the longer the better, but it will never suffice her. She is gluttonous, shameless, and irascible. Such is the Hastini, or elephant-woman.

Samudrika Shastra

This prescribes the grace of a woman's body as raised, smooth and soft as a lotus flower, without veins showing up and with no visible hair is the sign of a Queen. Veins showing up indicates that she will have to travel a lot. Hair on feet denotes servitude and if feet are lean, bony or without flesh, it is an indication that she is sexually undesirable. Even heels denote that she is good for companionship; Stout undesirable sexually; High loose in character and Long of misery. Legs (portion below knee) Even, smooth, without hair, without veins showing up, are signs of a girl destined to enjoy life fully. Knees Round, smooth, good looking knees are lucky indications. Loose knees indicate poverty. Bony knees without flesh connote loose character. Thighs: Fleshy, round, like an elephant's trunk or the trunk of a plantain tree, spacing between thighs being very little, without hair, denote that she is good enough to be married by a King. Waist Circumference not exceeding the width of 24 fingers (approx. 15 to 16") with well developed hips denote full happiness. Flat, long, without flesh, caved in or hairy waist forebodes widowhood and misery. Hips Raised fleshy hips (like water melon) and well spread indicate full happiness. Sexual Organ Hidden, pink coloured, curved like the back of tortoise or an elephant's trunk and smooth is highly auspicious. If shaped like the feet or deer or furnace, with hard hair, indicates evil. If the left side is raised, she will beget more girl children while a raised right side denotes more boys. If the organ is shaped like a conch, she will be barren. Bottom of Stomach (portion below navel) is Soft, spread out and slightly raised is highly auspicious. Hairy, veins showing up and full of lines (folds or wrinkles) indicate misery. Navel Deep, with right turn is auspicious. Raised with left turn is inauspicious. Sides of Stomach Well spread indicates many sons. If sides resemble that of a frog's, her son will become a King. Raised sides indicate childlessness. Fold/wrinkle denote slavish tendency. Long sides denote birth of a Sandow. Ribs Good luck will result if the portion covering ribs is smooth and fleshy. Chest even and without hair is lucky and auspicious. Breasts Of equal size, fleshy, round and firm but close together are lucky. Raised right breast indicates many sons; left breast, if raised, indicates more of girls. If the portion surrounding the partition is round and good looking, good luck. Pressed in or unusually small indicates bad luck. Shoulders: Even, well built and without the joints showing up are lucky signs. Armpits Soft, with small smooth hair is lucky; deep, full of perspiration and showing out veins in unlucky. Arms Fleshy, soft, round and with veins not showing is lucky. If thumbs take the shape of a lotus bud, she is fit to be married by a King. Bent or bony denotes bad luck. Palms Red, raised in the middle, fingers evenly spaced with few lines on palm is a very auspicious sign. Back of Hands Soft without hair, well-built is lucky.

Nava Rasaas of a woman: ‘All the emotional states or Rasas are revealed through the eyes of a woman. The eyes reflect all the feelings and urges, as no emotion or feelings can be shown by ears. The lips quivering in a particular manner may show anger or sorrow. When you laugh there is a particular kind of lip and facial movement. When you draw breath noisily, it means you are sorrowful as you are sobbing. Love or desire, sorrow or anger, valour or disgust, envy or fear and shanta or tranquility are all reflected by the eyes as a mirror of mind. Similarly other Rasas too. When do they fill with shringara rasa, the sentiment of love or the erotic mood. close to you with your lucid and provocative eyes and shapely ears while Kaamadeva is utilising his famed ‘pancha baanaas’ to enhance the spell on Him. The flowers on his arrows are: Aravinda(White Lotus), Ashoka, Chuta (Mango Flower), Navamalika(Jasmine) and Nilotpala(Blue Lotus) representing the pancha vikaaras of ‘Unmada, Tapana, Shoshana, Stambhana and Sammohana’! Quite opposite of shringara is ‘bhibhatsa’ or disgust as She sees impurities and undesirable qualities all around. ‘Roudra’ rasa is the result of anger when a woman finds another as ‘sa kalatri’ or another wife; indeed this is a typical feminine reaction of jealousy! ‘Adbhuta Rasa’ arises due to any male or even a co female’s bravery, fame, and destruction of evil energies in terms of cruelty and viciousness. Then comes ‘bhayanaka rasa’ or of fearfulness leading to terror. Then follows Veeraasa as the representation of valour while devastating enemy persons or situations. Her red colour itself creates valour, the Veera Rasa. Then the ‘Haasya’ or mirthfulness is apparent as she speaks to her companions and her speech / commentary is mingled with laughter and mischievous looks. So far seven Rasas have been covered viz. love- disgust-wrathfulness, wonder, terror valour and mirth. Then the ‘shoka rasa’ which emanates from ridiculing by others, helplessness, and at tragedies. This is a very powerful tool in a woman’s armour. ‘Karuna svabhava’ arises out of sympathy / compassion. Finally the ‘Shanta Rasa’ or the Tranquility is admittedly which is a great experience; it is a quiet and serene state, a state of equanimity in which all emotions are submerged: the one who experiences it, the experience itself speaks of profundity!

Manu Smriti is quoted about ‘Vivahas’ or weddings:

It is highly commended that the wedlock be selected from the same ‘Varnaas’ of Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishyas or of the service class. One should never be lured into wedding merely out of considerations of property and wealth of cows, goats, horses and grains. The wedlocks should never be solemnised into families devoid of Jaatakarmaadi dharmas, dominated by women alone, with scant respect for Vedic Karyas, with thick body hairs, high pitch tone, hereditary and chronic diseases like leprosy, epilepsy, of reddish hair, with abnormalities of body parts or a weakling. The brides be avoided with names of nakshatras, trees, rivers, mountains, birds, serpents, and with fearful nature. Avyangaangim saumyanamneem hansavaaranagaamineem, tanulomakeshadashanaam mridvaangimudvat striyam/ or the bride be of beautiful and attractive features, pleasing name and demeanor, slim, wellset teeth and conduct. A wise person should avoid a tie-up into an alliance with either no brother, or a father unknown due to reasons of caste difference or remarriage. In the even of a ‘dattata’ or adoption of a son, the tendency is to name the boy as a daughter and as such that type of weddings be better avoided: Savarnaagre dvijaateenaam prashastaa daara karmani, kaamatastu pravrittaa naamimaah syuh kaamasho varaah/ or the dwijas are advised to go in for alliances of their own Varnas most certainly and avoid with other type of dwijas on account of desire and even mutual affection. It is always safe and preferable to avoid inter caste weddings; there were no doubt select instances in the yore when Kshatriyas did marry Brahmana Kanyas

but no such examples were cited to marry a low caste kanya. [Exceptions like Paraashara Maharshi having slept with 'Matsyagandhi' once and begot Veda Vyasa was out of passion were mention-worthy but not as a regular wife]. In case the Brahmana-Kshatriya Viashyas marry into a lower class Kanyas for reasons of passion or otherwise, then the offspring acquire the births of that class only and slip down in the hierarchy; Shaunaka Maharshi asserted that even as the offspring by birth itself would automatically lose claim of the respective caste of the father; such offspring: Saunakasya sutotpasthyaa tadapyatyaa Bhrigoh/ or Bhrigu Maharshi opined further that the following generations too lose their identity of 'dwijaas'. Manu asserts that once a dwija would enter the bed of a lower class woman as a wife, the subsequent generation would lose their identity and become eligibility to homa-shraaddha-atithi bhojanaadi qualifications and the food and other offerings ie 'anna pitru sangjnak- devataa sangjnak Purushas' decline straightaway and thus opportunities of 'Swarga Prapti' are denied too.

Now, listen to the eight types of weddings: these are: Braahmo daivastathaivaarshah praaajaapatyas tathaasurah, Gaandharvo raakshash chaiva paishaachashcha -shtamodhamah/ or Braahma-Daiva-Aarsha-Praajaapatya-Aasura-Gaandhava-Raakshasa and Paishachaka; the last mentioned would be the most atrocious. In respect of Brhmanaas, the Braahma-Daiva-Aarsha-Praajaapatya categories are commended. To Kshatriyas, Aarsha-Paajaapatya-Aasura- Gandharvas are recommended, while to Vaishyas and to the others too Arsha-Praajapatya-Aasura-Gandharvas are good enough but the last two as mentioned viz. Raakashasa-Paishaachika are not worthy of mention even and are abominable. To Brahmanas Braahmi-Deva-Aarsha and Praajaapatya are recommended, while to Kshatriyas Raakshasa Vivaahas are the best, and to Vaishya as also the lower class Aasura Vivaha is recommended. Of these, the first five in the order are of Dhaarmic nature, the subsequent two are of 'Adharma' category, but indeed Paishacha and Aasura are the least qualified. Now the description of the five vivahas: the first to third type are commended totally but the rest of the two viz. Paishacha and Aasura are only passable as they smack of adharma. To Kshatriyas Gandharva and Raakshasa are as per their dharma. Kanyaa daana is normally named as the parents of a maiden invite a well educated and disciplined bachelor and offer their daughter well decorated with jewellery and precious gifts and this best possible wedding is called Braahma Vivaya. As those parents who are habitual in performing Jyitishtomaadi yagngjnas offering gifts to 'Ritvijas' conducting the Sacrifices and seeking to offer their daughters to equally competent vidyarthi is designated as Deva Vivaha. Arsha Vivaha is that which involves gifting a cow and an ox or a double of these to the bridegroom and his parents is termed Arsha Vivah. Prajapatya Vivaha denotes declaring the couple with blessings and mutual gifting to both sides as the Vivah is performed as per Vedic rites is the normally followed customary wedding. Asura Vivaha is defined as follows: Jnaatibhyo dravinam dattvaa kanyaayai chaiva shaktitah, kanyaapraadaanam svachchandyaaadasuro dharma uchyate/ or the customary weddings involve that the parents of the bride offer her based on the dowry and gifts as per the bargaining capacity mutually. Gandhava Vivaha is essentially a mutual consent based on love and affection in which the interference of parents is almost nil. Rakshasa Vivaha invariably ends up with violence and the victorious kidnap the maidens in imprisonment, seduce them and force them to marry. But the worst of all among the afore described weddings is the 'paishaachika vivaha' as the bride in sleep or fright or intoxication, mental disorder, is sinned into submission and rape.

The tradition of 'kanyaa daan' or approval of weddings is best performed by libation of water among Braahmanas, while among Kshatriyas as well as to other castes, this is signified by the mutual consent even with the involvement of water; 'hey Brahmanas', states Manu by quoting Maharshis- especially Bhrigu Maharshi, 'the holy formality of weddings would certainly be consecrated in respect of

Brahmanas most certainly by the libations of water. Braahma Vivaahas are so signified that the kanya's sons as expected to be of virtuous way of living would liberate from the sins of ten ancestors, besides ten more of the following descendent generations apart from themselves. Now, Daivikaa Vivahas of other Varnas too would help liberation of the previous and following seven generations in the link, while Rishi or Arsha Vivahas of the Kanyas would help result in the liberation of three of the previous and following ancestors and descendents. In respect of Prajapathya Vivahas, the Kanya Brides would beget such sons as would redeem from the sins of six generations of the erstwhile or pursuant six generations. Following the afore mentioned of the Braahma-Daivika-Rishi-Praajaapatya Vivahas are most certainly yield sons of nobility and virtue with good features, well mannered, youthful, prosperous, joyful, well famed, truthful and righteousness with longevity of hundred long years of life of overall fulfillment. But the others born of flippant weddings would invariably lead to the progeny of cruelty and vice, shameless and untruthful pattern of living dishonour, dishonesty and destructive nature; such progeny would take to Adharma, Untruth and disgrace; they tend to detest principles of Dharma and its followers. It is recommended that weddings be normally performed in the same caste as a general regulation but in other dispensations, a kshatriya bride should hold an arrow while going in for higher caste, a vaisya bride should carry a goad and a lower caste female her bridegroom's hem of the upper garment.

Normally, the husband should take the initiative and desire for their conjugal union on any night excepting on amavasya and such other avoidable timings and on the days of 'rithu kaala' of the females; sixteen nights excluding four days of the females of a month are considered by the virtuous as the natural season of women. Of these, the first fourth, eleventh and thirteenth nights be avoided for the union and the rest are all recommended as ideal. Again, yugmaasu putraa jaayante striyoyugmaasu raatrishu, tasmaadyugaamaasu putraarthee samvishe -daartavey striyam/ or of these ten nights, congress on sixth, eighth and so on are stated as ideal for giving birth to male children and the odd nights of seventh, ninth and so on are favourable for females. In case, the male sperm is more dominant then sons are born, and the female sperm is more overriding then daughters are most likely to be born. In the uneven possibility of the both the intensities of the 'veerya' then the result might be either way or even of a 'napumsak' or a weakling. In the event of avoiding the congress on the six forbidden nights viz. the fourth night of the female's season, besides the eleventh, thirteenth as also the 'parva dinas', then the concerned couple would remain as 'brahmacharis' or of celibacy. Na kanyaayaah pitaa Vidwaan grahaneeyaacchulkaa- man vapi, griheecchulkam hi lobhenasyaannaropatyaavikriyayee/ Streedhanaani tu yemohaadupajeevanti baandhavaah, naareeyaanaani vastram vaa te paapaayaantyadhogatim/ or any father of even remote enlightenment if accepts the smallest perquisite or benefit out of the son's wedding would tantamount to selling off his son and the relatives of the father-in-law included who seek to enjoy the perquisites of the bride's wealth concerned would be sinking in sin and have no place even in hell. In Arsha Vivaahaas, one might justify the gift of cows and bulls to the father in law or the relatives, but that kind of an excuse is highly ill-justified and even if it is stated as a token of the love and courtesy for the bride.

Women in general ought to be respected and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husband and brothers-in-law in their own interest and welfare, since that specific clan in which the brides are respected are blessed with divinities; otherwise men of such clans even if engaged in sacred rites and any type of sacrifices would yield no returns at all.

Such families in which women are disrespected end up in disasters and destructions while those who worship and venerate women are progressive and prosperous in the long run. Any family which

womanhood is harassed shall soon get collapsed, as a definite writing on a wall rather magically. Indeed in a family where husbands seek to always please their wives besides other womenfolk in the family units with holiday trips, gifts, food and such other niceties there would be lasting peace and fulfillment. In case the housewife is not attractive enough with bodily brightness and smartness, her indispensability in a family be proven many other ways and means too for sure and furtherance of progeny gets assured. In such weddings which are mismatched, the tendency to neglect to dharmic values especially in dissimilar backgrounds of families and varnas would usher in disequilibrium sooner or later, more so when the established regulations as in respect of a higher caste like of Brahmanas in which Veda Pathana, performance of sacred rites, vratas, fastings, and so on take a back seat.

In the mismatched weddings, the socio-economic practices gradually tend to change such as handicrafts, trading, farming, service to royalties, chariot manning and so on while the mastery of scriptures, acquisition of knowledge, Sacrifices and such other pursuits are eroded and ended for ever. Mantrastu smruddhaani kulaanyaalpa dhanaan -yapi, kula samkhyam cha gacchanti karshanti cha mahadyashah/ or such families replete with Vedic Knowledge- even being a few and select and even with meagre earnings for livelihood- are blessed indeed with glory and most worthwhile).

Stree Dharmas:

Ashta varsha bhaved Gauri nava varshaa tu Rohini, Dashavarshaa bhavet Kanya atha urthvam Rajasvala/ Samvarta Muni defines: an eight year old girl is called Gauri or the Fair one, a ninth year old is known as Rohini or a Cherry, a ten year aged is a Kanya or a maiden and thereafter a Rajasvala)

Maata chaiva Pitaachaiva jyeshtho bhraataa tathaiva cha, trayaste narakam yaani drushtvaa kanyaa rajasvala/ (In case, the mother, father and elder brother of the girl has come of age an still remains unmarried the three are destined to visit hell)

Manu Smriti is quoted: Pitaarakshati Kaumare Bhartaa rakshati youvane, Putrastu sthaavire bhaave na stree swaatantrya marhati/ Sookshmebhyopi prasangebhyah striyo rakshyaa visheshatah, Dvayorhikulayoh shokamaavahed arakshitaah/ Imam hi sarva varnaanaam pashyanto dharmamuttamam/ Paanam durjana samsargah patyaacha virahotanam, Svapnonyageha vaasascha naaree sandushanaani shat/(During the 'Kaumara dasha' before wedding, the father takes the responsibility, whereafter the husband and in old age the sons, thus a female is always protected though not independent! Even minute expressions might not offend a female and be safeguarded lest there might be unhappiness in either of the families of father and husband, and indeed a female plays a significant yet sensitive role of both the families and hence the need for her balancing act!

However, a female is normally repudiated for six shortcomings: viz. suspicion of weakness for alcohol, bad company, aloofness from a husband, wandering and touring, dreaming away from reality, and staying lonely and living independently in other's houses.)

Manu Smriti also explains further: Naasti streenaam pridhagyanona vratam naapyuposhanam, Patim shushrushate yattutena sarge maheeyate/ Kamavrittevaa gunairvaa parivarnitah, Nastriyah parivarjyasyaat satatam daiva vatpatih/ Sadaa prahvaashtayaa bhavyam grihakaaryech dakshayaa, Susamskrutopaskarayaa vyayechaamuktahastayaa/ (As women have no yagnas, vratas and such other acts of virtue, they are happy to share such acts along with their husbands. Notwithstanding the

shortcomings of their husbands the wives would do well to with faith to them and concentrate more on their domestic chores with expertise and run the family with wisdom and dedication and be the major force of maintaining peace and happiness home)

Vyasa Maharshi gave the instructions as follows: Haridraamkumkumamchaiva sindhura kajjalam tathaa, Kurpaanakam cha taambolam mangalaabharanam shubham/ Kesha samskaara kabari kara karnaad bhushanam, Bhartur aayushyami -chhanti dooshayenna Pativrataa/ Praatah kaaletu yaa naari dadyaadarghyam vivasvate, Sapta janmaani vaidhavyaam saa naari naiva pashyati/Those women who are interested in the longevity of their husbands should not to ignore the high significance of turmeric powder, kumkuma, eyetex, vastra, jewellery like ear studs, bangles, necklaces etc. As at the early mornings, women offering Arghya or water for worshipping Surya Deva would avoid widow hood for seven births ahead!

Krutvaa mandalakam Braahme tooshneem evaakshataabhih pujayet satatam yaa tu tasyaastupyanti Devataah, Yadgriham raajate nityam mangalairanulepanaih, Tadgrihe vasate Lakshmeernityam purnakalaanvitaa// Pativrataa tu yaa naari bhartru shushrushanotsukaa, Natasya vidyate paapam ihaloke paratracha, Pativrataadharmarataa Rudraanyeva na samshayah, Tasyaah paraabhavam kartum shaknoti najanah kashchit/(Devatas would be delighted to visit the houses where the home fronts are decorated with 'manadalaakaara' or auspicious designs of varied colours at the Braahmi Muhurta time of early mornings even without mantras! Such home fronts appear that Devi Lakshmi along with her companions has arrived in the house for good enlivening with auspiciousness and brightness! A pativrata who sincerely serves her husband shall qualify with attainment of her current and ensuing lives and eventually attain the status of a Rudrani or Devi Parvati.)

In defence of good wives at the hand of evil husbands, Daksha Prajapati states as follows: Adushtaam vinataam bharyaam youvane yah parityaje, Sapta janma bhavestreetvam vaidhavyam cha punah punah/ (Husbands who discard wives of good character and discipline would be cursed with widowhood and womanhood for the subsequent seven lives!)

Na mangalyam vadedvaakyam na cha haasyadikim chana, kuryaachhvasurayornityam pujaam mangala tatparaa tishthet prasanna vadanaa bhartru priya hite rataah/ (Strees should not utter inauspicious words even for fun; they must always worship father and mother in laws and be pleasant with husbands for ever!)

Smriti Ratna cautions Sandhyaayaam nava bhoktavyam garbhinyaatu prayatnatah, nasnaatavyam na gantavym vriksha muleshu saevada/ (Gabhini Strees or women in confinement not to take food at Sandhya timings or the intervals of night-day nor day nights of any day, nor take bath or go near tree foundations)

Yagnyavalkya stresses : Dao hridayasyaa pradaane nagarbhe doshamavaapnuyaat, Vairupyam maranamapi tasmaatkaaryampriyam striyaah/(In case the wishes of a Garbhini woman then the garbha would suffer such blemishes that might deliver babies of physical problems or even abortion and that is why every wish of the woman in confinement be fully fulfilled!)

Paraashara Smriti elaborates a few more Stree Dharmas:

In the event of married women desirous of shortening their hair for reasons of religion and faith as example of 'Veni Samhara' at Sangama of Rivers, then the husband himself is required to perform the Vrata by scissoring the hair by two inches. Tirtha yatra, temple visits and religious places are congregations if unaccompanied by husbands are considered as a waste and fruitless. Similarly husbands performing any activity of religion without the presence of wives is considered purposeless.

Vyasa Maharshi explains of some features of widows:

Patyaomritepi yo yoshivaidhavyam paalayet kvachit, Saapunah praapya bhartaaram svarga bhogaan sameeshnute/ Vidhavaa kabari baddhah bhartu bandhaaya chaayate, Shirasovasanam tasmaat kaaryam vidhavaatathaa, Ekaahaarah Sadaa kaaryah nadviteeyah kadaachana/ Gandhadra –vyasya sambhogonaiva kaaryastathaa kvachit, Tarpanam pratyaham kaaryam bhartuh kushatilodakaih/ Vishnostu pujanam kaaryam patibudhaana chaanyadhaa, Patimeva sadaa dhyayedvishnu rupa dharam param, Evam dharmaparaanitam vidhavaap shubhaamataa/(As a husband passes away and the widow observes the regulations of widowhood, the woman concerned shall most certainly enjoys a high level of conjugal happiness in her ensuing life. Since a widow is distinguished as being one, it is preferred that her head hair is removed forever, takes a single meal a day and refrain from a second meal that day! She should not use fragrances and not utilise flowers; every day she should perform tarpana with 'tilodakas' or black Tilas with water using 'darbhas'. Those women who are widowed should consider as the diseased husband as Vishnu himself and then her remaining life would be spent peacefully without problems and even though as of a woman of auspiciousness.

Also Parashara Smriti is quoted: Grihini Dharmas: In the event of married (or unmarried) women desirous of shortening their hair due to reasons of religion the head hair can be shortened by two inches; for example there is a dutiful binding called 'Veni Samhara' at tirtha pradeshas like Gaya, where a husband himself performs the vrata by scissoring the hair likewise.

Dharmas of Widows

But widows ought to shave the head as per ancient 'aachara'. They are forbidden to sleep in the central place of their homes or alone in far off places. They are also restricted to neither accompany their husbands to agricultural fields, nor visit without husbands or unaccompanied with close relatives to cattle sheds, river beds, sea shores and forests. It is preferred that they perform Vratas in their own homes with their husbands. Tirtha yatra, temple visits or religious places or congregations unaccompanied with husbands are a mere waste. Similarly giving away danaas, performing any activity like homas, vratas etc. are futile. Yet, any activity related to Dharma with motives of vengeance, harmful to others or with show off and pride shall indeed recoil in course of time. At the same time, a prayer or vrata or of spiritual significance performed with physical and mental cleanliness would concentration, faith and dedication would indeed yield contentment and fulfillment. Even a Kamy Vrata or Nishkama Karma performed with commitment shall indeed be reciprocated proportionately while of course kamy vratas lead to desired results while nishkama vratas add to the accounts of Punya!

Ashtavidha Maithuna : Referring to the tendencies of contacts with men in general and those males other than husbands in particular, Paraashara Smriti lists out Ashta Vidha Maithuna viz.

Smaranam prekshanam chaiva, Guhyabhashana athyavasaya, kriya nivritti vaakprerepana udreka rahasya bhashanam; ubhaya prerepanam ashtha vidha mithunaah, nivritti astha doshaah/ Smarana or thoughts, keertana or praising, keli or being playful, prekshana or passing looks with desire at the opposite party, Guhya bhashana or whispers, Sankalpa or a kind of resolve, Athyavasaaya or trials for contact from a distance, Kriya nirvritti or intense desire, Vaak prerepana or inciting with small conversation, Udreka or infatuation, steady vision, rahasya sambhashana or secret conversation, Ubhaya prerepana or mutual physical contact, Resolve or the decision to mate and finally the copulation. These misdemeanors too would qualify for atonements!

Conclusion about the Complementary Inevitability of Man and Woman

‘ Shiva is quiescent and motionless and Shakti that keeps everything pulsating, from planets and stars to the atom, are inseparably united. In terms of science, Shiva can be called matter and Shakti energy. Not only are Shiva and Shakti inseparably united are basically the same as confirmed by atomic science according to which matter becomes energy. Thus ‘without being united with you, can Shiva even stir! The first vibration by which the Parabrahman becomes aware of Itself is caused by Amba. Thereafter it is vibration after vibration in ‘aarahana and avarohana’ manner being Praana the Life Energy! There is the authority of Upanishads to show that the dualistic cosmos is caused by the ‘spandana’ or the inner vibration of the non dualistic Brahman. Kathopanishad says: all this universe is caused by the life force called praana and vibrates. For ‘vibrates’ the word used is ‘ejati’; Ejanam means ‘kampana’ or vibration. Kampana or praana that causes vibration is not merely breath but Brahman itself! Shiva is indeed the Parabrahman without any attributes and is still in His non dualistic state. And he can stir and make Trimurtis perform their dualistic cosmic functions only if She the Maha Shakti activates the sthaanu swarupa of His. Amba activated Shiva, the quiescent Reality, that does not stir otherwise. In other words, Shiva’s self surrender to Amba is evident. When the very first stanza of Soundarya Lahari states : ‘Shiva Shaaktaika yukto’: Shiva is for auspiciousness yet would not be able to stir even a second without Shakti- hence ‘Shaaktaika yukto’ as the divine pair. All the same, Dharma Shastras proclaim that wife must be loyal to her husband: ‘ If a woman is married to a stone, then she must respect that stone as her husband. Thus Shiva first and foremost and then Shakti; yet Vedas proclaim: Maatru Devobhava- Pitru Devo bhava/ Thus Shakti is joined to Shiva. Yet, Shiva becomes capable of performing his cosmic function only when He is united with Shakti, otherwise He would even stir a bit; ‘spanditumapi’/ ‘na khalu’ is it not so!!

Vedic References of Pancha Bhutass translated

RIG VEDA:

Hiranyagarbha Srishti: 10. 121.1-10- : *Hiranyagarbhah samavartadaagne bhutasya jaatah patireka aaseet, sa dadhaara Pridhiveem dyaamutemaam kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Ya aatmadaa baladaa yasya upaasate pravisham yasya Devaah, yasya cchhaayaamritam yasya mrityuh kasmaih Devaaya havisha vidhema/ Yah praanato nimishato mahitvaik a Indrajaa jagato babhuva, ya Isho asya dvipad chatushtadah kasmai Devaya havishaa vidhema/ Yasyeme Himavanto mahitvaa yasya samudram rasayaa sahaahuh, yasyemaah pradisho yasya bahuu kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Yena dyorugraa Prithivee cha drulhaa yena svah stabhitam yena naakah, yo antariksho rajaso vimaanah kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Yam krandasee avasaa tasta bhane abhyaikshetaam manasaa rejamaane, yatraadhi suru udito vibhaati, kasmai devaayahavishaa vidhema/ Aapoha yad brihateer vishvamaayan garbham dadhaanaa janayanteeragnim, tatoDevaanaam samavartataa surekah, kasmai Devaaya havishaa v idhema/ Yaschidaapo mahinaa paryapashyaddhaksham dadhaanaa janayanteer-yagjnam, yo Deveshvadhhi Deva eka aaseetkasmai devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Maano himseejvalanita/ Yah pridhivyaa yo vaadivam satyadharmaa jajaana, yaschaaaschandraa brihateerjajaana kasmai devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Prajapate na tvadevaananyatovishvaa jaataani paritaa vabhuva, yad kaamaste juhumaastanno astu vayam syaama patayo rayaanaam/* At the very beginning, Hiranyagarbha was of composite form and was full of the productive energy. He was of the creative profile and then manifested Bhumi and Antariksha. Why these indeed but the reply was that these were able to perform ‘archana’ by way of havish to Paramatma.

Then Hiranyagarbha got motivated to manifest the species of Superior Humans like Maharshis and ‘Deva Samuha’ as He felt that they could perform ‘upaasana’ or formal worship by offering ‘havish’ to Amrita Svarupini as also to Mrityu Svarupini, since births and deaths should constitute the ‘kaala maana’ and a mix of Sukha Duhkhas; hereagain the motivation is of another layer of energies of lesser gradation too to observe upasana to Paramatma. Then Hiranyagarbha resorted to the subsequent creation of Dwipada-Chatuspada series of Srishti such as humans and quadrupeds like cows - cruel animals with varying instincts with the fond hope of performing archana and worship physically or just by being good and doing good atleast in the name of Parameshvara! Then followed the immovable mountains , hills etc besides waterbodies ranging from oceans to water wells, rain water collections and underground water bodies on one side and aakaasha- dasha dishas, and the Dikpalakas ; indeed they could most certainly perform archanaas in their respective capacities and proclivities to the Almighty. May we admire and worship that Almighty, who had skilfully yet firmly placed the Bhumi and an imaginably distant yet visible antariksha; who had set up swargaloka permanently and centered Surya on the antariksha, or rajasika based pindaika entities! To such unique Paramatma, we do sincere ‘upaasana’!Dyuloka and Bhuloka are replete with sounds-[According to Astro-Physicists and Astronomers, a Sound is produced due to the fast movement of Earth, Planets, and Galaxy or the Milky Way, called Akshya Ganga, with some 100,000 million Stars. The Galaxy, the Moon and the Earth-all revolving around the Sun-each moving on their own axis at a mind boggling velocity of 20,000 miles per second, produce the Sound and the Sages named the Super Sound as OM. The Sum of the Gayatri Mantra states: The Earth (*Bhur), the Planets (*Bhuvaha), and the Galaxy (* Swaha) are rotating on their own axis at a great velocity as the Sound OM, which is the Formless Entity. The total Kinetic Energy genrated by these movements balance the over-all energy consumption of Cosmos and this is named the ‘Pranava’ or the Body Energy ie Mass

of Galaxies multiplied by two: Mass x Velocity x 2. That Supreme Entity (God) who manifests in the Form of Utmost Radiance (The San or Savitur) is indeed worthy of surrender (Varenyam). One should meditate (Dheemahi) upon the Light (Bhargo) of that Entity (Devasya) and perform the chanting of OM. May He(Yo) guide in the right Direction (Prachodayat) our (nah) Intellect (dhiyo)!] Despite such sounds, Surya Deva is firmly anchored to Antariksha and is ever constant with outstanding luminosity! What a glory is of the Creator- in- Chief whom we have to worship and be awed with!

Even while launching the 'Parama Srishti', there was a manifestation of 'Aapah' the Moola Kriyaasheela Tatva, which inundated the totality of the Universe; this basic Tatva created from its womb the 'Maha Bhutas' of Agni and Aakaasha. May the Supreme Creator of the Universe be worshipped by us all with dread and approbation! That Parameshvara who manifested Water as the fundamental 'kriyaa shakti' then having successfully generated 'Maha Pancha Bhutas' then got busy with the organisation of 'Virat Yagjna' along with series of Deva Swarupas who indeed are worshipped too, besides of course, the Great Grand Hiranyagarbha Himself! May we the tiny particle like Beings in the Gigantic Universe, annoy much less hurt, this Great Creator who is Srishti Rachayita or the Unique Scriptor of Creation; Satya Dharma Paalaka or the Unique Administrator of Truth and Virtue; Jagat Dhaarana Karta or the True Holder of the Universal Balance! We can at the best admire and remain astonished before the Creator in Chief by totally dedicating ourselves in prostration and total surrender!

Prajapati Deva! Excepting you there could be none else as could create-sustain-destroy-create again and thus so admirably cycle and recycle the Kaala Chakra from the past-present and future till eternity. May we -at the very best- offer 'havishanna' to all the Celestial Elements by our repeated and possibly regular dharmika karyas besides upholding the eternal banners of Dharma and Nyaaya, and keep astonished the brilliant methodology of manifestation of Pancha Bhutas and the Heels within Heels in the Lord's Super Creation Skills!

PRITHVI:

In the Vaidika Grandhas, Prithvi is established as the MOTHER Figure and Aakaasha the FATHER Figure. Mother Earth is vast-heavy with mountains and waters- the singular provider of rains, food and life; and finally takes all the Beings on Her lap en route the next rebirth!

1.22.13&15: *Mahi-dyouth Prithivi chana imam yagjnam mimikshataam, pitrutaam no bhareemabhih/ Tayoridghritavatpayo vipraa rihanti dheetibhih Gandharvasya Dhruve pade/ Syona Prithivi bhavaanruksharaa niveshani, yacchaanah sharma supratah/* May the huge earth and antarikshas by their own selves complete the yagjna karmas and may the sukha saadhanas in the sacred tasks be contented by them. Mother Prithivi! You are the Unique Symbol of bestowing happiness, removing discontentment, and comfortable living abode. Do kindly upgrade our lives by several levels.

1.159 1-5: *Pra dyaavaa yagnaih Prithivi rutaavidhaa maheestushe vidayeshu prachetasaa, Devebhirye Devaputre dudamsasethaa dhiyaa vaaryaani prabhushatah/ Uta manye pituradruho mano maaturmahi svatavastadvameemabhih, suretasaa pitaraa bhuma chakrataruru prajayaa amritam vareemabhih/ Te soonavah svapasah sudamsaso mahee jajurmaataraa purvachittaye, sthaatuscha satyam jagadascha dharmani putrasya paathah padamadvayaavinah/ Te maayuno mamire suprachetaso jaamee sayonee*

mithunaa samokasaa, navyatrayam tantumaa tanvate dvi samudre antah kavayah sudeetayah/ Tadraadho adya savitur varenyam vayam devasya prasaved manaamahe,asmabhyam dyaavaa prithivee suchetunaa rayim dhattam vasumantam shatagvinam/ Celestial daughters viz. anrariksha- prithivi-and such other Shaktis are together fulfill the desires and ambitions of the Universal Beings. Inspired and executed by yagjna karyas, prithivi and dyuloka are pleased and thus the resultant prosperities and auspiciousness.

Prithivi and Aakaasha as in the form of mother and father figures are pleased by the commendations and prayers. The holy union of Prakriti Rupi Prithvi and Srashta Rupi Aakasha together create Prajas and endow them with safety and progress . Indeed this act of Universal Creation augurs gloriously for the generations after generations. This is not only relevant for humanity but in the context of ‘Sthaavara Jangamas’ or the Ever Stationary and Ever Active objects viz. the mobile and immobile species of Creation too. Such indeed is the active profile and activity of the Bhu- Dyou couple all through the time cycle! In between the dyuloka svarupa aakaasa and prithivi is the manifestation of Surya Deva the eternal bestower of radiance and the ever fresh weavings of the Surya kiranans. Besides the two Sacred Entities of Earth and Sky was also the generation of aakaasha ganga too.May indeed among these acts of glory the jukshta position of Prithivi and Dyuloka and Surya Deva usher in magnificent vibrations in the Universe and eventually generate manava pashu dhana and ‘nivasa’ as the combined blessings of the entities concerned!

1.160.1-5: *Te hi dyaavaa prithivivishva shambhuva rutaavaree rajaso dhaarayatkavee, sujanmanee dhishane antareeyate Devo Devee dharmanaa Suryah shuchih/ Uroovyachasaa mahini asaschataa pitaa maataa cha bhuvanaani rakshatah, sudhrushtame vapushyena rodasee pitaa yatseemabhi rupaira vaasayat/ Sa vahnih purtah pitroh pavitravaan punaati dheero bhuvanaani maayayaa, dhenumcha prushimna vrishabham suretasam vishv aahaa shukram payo asya dukshat/ Ayam devaanaamapasaa- ma pastamo yo janaana rodasee vishvashambhuva,vi yo mame rajasee sukratuuyayaaajarebhih skambha- nebhih samaanruche/ Teno gunaane mahinee mahi shravah kshatram dyaavaa prithivee dhaasato brihat, yenaabhi krishteestatanaama vishvahaa panaayyamojo asme samanvitam/* Anrariksha and Prithivi are the hinges of happiness. These are the ‘samrakshakas’ or the saviours of persons of brain and brawn alike besides of jnaanis. Among these types, Surya Deva has the inbuilt capability to move about nonchalantly and with neither prejudices nor preconceptions. Similarly the mother-father representations of all the species in creation are applicable moreso to bhumi and aakaasha! In fact, their dealings to their progeny are deft, impartial and just. Just as Surya Deva due to his might and splendour is all encompassing and all knowing, the mother-father entities of Prithvi and Aakasha too treat the children of Beings with neither partiality nor prejudice but strictly as per their ‘karma’. At the same time , Prithivi like a cow and Sky like a vrishabha perform their parental duty of strengthening their children in Srishti equally . Indeed Paramatma the Supreme manifested Prithivi and Antariksha to ensure stability-continuity and sustenance of Srishti and its Beings.

5.84.1-3: *Balitthaa parvataanaam svidram vibharshi prithivi, prayaa Bhumim pravatvati mahnaa jinoshi mahini/ Stomaasastvaa vichaarini prati shthobhantiyuktibhih, pra yaavaajam na heshantam perumasya - syarjuni/Drulhaa chidyaa vanaspateenkshmayaa dadharshyorjasaa, yatte abhrasya vidyuto Divo varshanti vrishabhah/* Prithivi Devi!! You are the singular mother of outstanding patience as you enable the entirety of Beings with strength, besides carrying an indescribable load and volume of mountains! Mother! You are the most auspicious icon of critical qualities in the Parama Srishti, especially in harnessing the uncontrollable horses like clouds, lightnings and thunders far away on the Skies, even as

the Beings on earthly physique of yours stare in awe and acclamations! Bhū Maata! As the skies open up and release torrential rains with lightnings and reverberating sounds, you bare the brunt from below and enable to create vegetation by way of food and fodder to the numberless Beings on earth and down under!

10. 18.10-13: *Upa sarpa maataram bhūmimetaamaruvyachasam prithiveem sushevaam, uurnamradaa yuvatirdakshinaavat eshaatvaa paatu nirrute rupasyat/ Ucchavankchasva prithivi maa ni badhathaah suupaayanaasmai bhava suupavanchanaa, maataa putram yathaa sichaabhyenam bhūma uurnuhi/ Ucchvaanchamaanaa prithiveesu tishthat sahasram mit upahi shrayantaam, te grihaaso ghritashchuto bhavantu vishvaahaasmai sharanaah svatantra/ Uitte stabhnaami prithiveem tvatpareemam logam nida dyhanmo aham risham, etaam shuunaam piraro dhaarayanu tetraa yamah saadanaate minotu/ Oh dead body! Rest yourself on the lap of Maatru swarupi-Mahimaa mayi, Sarva vyaapini, sukha daayani Dharti Maata! Her lap is warm, soft, comfortable like wool as of man-woman's intimate touch, and above all freed from the mortal life to mukti, having ridden of sins and further misdeeds! Mother Earth! To help the dead body, lift it up and just a a mother does, cover the body with a sheet and let the body be wrapped up to save the dust and wind and make it worryless for good! May the dead body with left over bones and body parts be not disturbed for the final journey and join pitru devatas, as Yama Deva is making arrange - ments for a temporary abode!*

AAPO DEVATA:

The features of Jala Devata and magnificence in overcoming physical and mental coolness and cleanliness of the Beings in Srishti!

1.23.18-23: *Apsume Somo abaveedantarvishvaani bheshajaa, agnimcha vishvashambhuvamaapascha vishvabheshajeeh/ Aapah pruneeta bheshajam varuutham tanvemama, jyokcha Suryam drisho/ Idamaapah pra vahat yatkincha duritam mayi yadvaaha- mabhidudroha yadvaa shepa utaanrutam/ Aapo adyaanvachaarisham rasena samagasmahi, payasvaanagna aa gahi tam maa sam sruja varchasaa/ Waters possess 'amritopama guna' or the life providing characteristics; waters possess medicinal features. Devataas! Get enthusiastic in complementing such energetic waters at once! Somadeva is stated to have complemented that waters by their very inherent nature possess groups of herbal powers, besides the vigor and drive of 'Agni Tatva' or the characteristics of Fire! Indeed all kinds of medicines are rooted to waters! Hey groups of waters! May we be ever healthy so that we live happily to vision the splendour of Sun Rises and of Falls for very long! Jala Deva! during the various yagna karyas, what ever misdoings are perpetrated by us either knowingly or otherwise or even in various contexts if we harm co-beings physically or mentally, do very kindly pardon us and relieve us from the blemishes! Jala Bhagavan! Now we have cleansed up our bodies and minds with 'avabhrita snaanaas'; may Agni Deva too usher in 'Varchas' and 'Tejas' as complementary to our 'bahyaantara shuddhi'.*

7.47.1-4: *Aapoyam vayam vah prathamam Devayatna Indrapaanamuurmima krinvatelah, tam vo vayam shuchimari prapadya ghritaprusham madhumantam vanema/ Tamuurmimaapo madhumattamam vopaam napaadavatvaashuhemaa, yadminindro vasubhirmaadayate tamashyaama devayanto vo adya/ Shatpavitraah svadhayaa mandateer devee devaanapi yanti paathah, taa Indrasya na minanti v rataani sindubhyo havyam ghritavajjuhota/ Yaah Suryo rashmibhiraantataam yaabhya Indro aradad gaatu muurmim, te sindavo varivo dhaatnaa no yuyam paath swastibhih sadaa nah/ Jala Devata! Keeping in*

view his high celestial status, Indra Deva had mixed up sugarcane juice and the clean waters of earth and converted the mix as Soma Rasa on earth. Let us all drink and enjoy this sweet and juicy Soma Rasa, as so addressed the Devas by Indra. Jala Devata! Your sweet streams are thus designated as clean and blemishless water flows on earth. May Agni the Purifier retain the quality of earth's water flows in a manner that Indra too along with 'Ashtaavasus' could drink and enjoy while simultaneously enjoying the divinity too. Thus Jala Devata is self satisfied besides the celestials and eathly beings too, especially in the context of Agni karyas firmly establishing firm links mutually. While Surya Deva with His radiant rays along with the close affinity with Jala Devata may maximise 'dhana dhanya vrishti' forever!

7.49.1-4: *Samudra jyashthaah salilasya madhyaatpunaanaa yatyani Vishamaanaah, Indro yaa Vajree vrishabho raraada taa aapo deveerih maamavatu/ Yaa aapo divyaa uta vaa sravanti khanitrimaa uta vaa yaah svayanjanaah, Samudraarthaah yaah shuchayah Paavakaastaa aapo deveerih maamvantu/ Yaasaam raajaa Varunoyaati madhyed satyaanrute avapashyanjanaanaam, madhschutah shuchayo yaah paavakaastaa aapo deveerih maamavatu/ Yaasu raajaa Varuno yaasu Somo Vishve devaa yaasuurjam madantik, ishvaanaro yaasvagnih pravishthastaa aapo deveerih maamavantu/* The ocean waters are signified not so much due to the merger of rivers but due to rains from the skies. As the Lord Indra whose blessings are forwarded by way of rains, may the Jala Devata bestow security to the Beings on earth. May the rain water which flows in the ever vibrant Jeeva Nadis, other water bodies and ground water in the Wells and so on be blessed as these keep the lives of Beings ticking for ever. Varuna Deva is the ready reckoner of Truth and fiction all over the Universe; may He keep the Jala Devis in good psyche and happiness so that the Beings in Srishti are kept in good humor and thus have them ticked on always. Indeed the auspicious place where both Varuna and Soma are together that indeed is the place of celestial waters, where all the Deva ganas are contented too with food and the role of Agni as the divine carrier is unique in the transit!

10.9.1-9: *Apo hi shtaa mayo bhuvastaa na urje dadhaatana, Maheranaya chakshase/ Yo vah Shivatamo rasastasya bhaajayatehanah, ushiteeriva maatarah/ Tasmaa aranga maama vo yasya kshayaaya jinvaaha, aapo janayathaa cha nah/ Sham no Deveerabhishtaya aapo bhavantu peetaye, sham yorabhisravant nah/ Ishaanaa vaaryaanaam kshayantishcharshaneenaam, Aapo yaachaami beshajam/ Apsume Somo abraveedantirvishvaani beshajaa, Agnim cha vishva Shambhuvam/ Aapah pruneeta beshajam varuutham tanve mama, jokcha Suryam drisho/ Idamaapah pra vahat yatkincha dujritam mayi yadvaahamabhidudroha yadvaa shepa utaanrutam/ Aapo adyaanvachaarisham rasena samagasmahi, payasvaanagna aa gahi tam maa sam sruja varchasaa/*

Jala Deva! You are the cause of happiness; may you bestow to us excellent food and sustenance as needed to execute brave acts of virtue and justice; you should provide such highly attentive nourishment as loving mothers do to their children. Deva! we keenly await with eagerness and anxiety to seek such life juices as should enable us to usher propitious and glorious acts for Loka kalyaan or auspicious deeds and then born in rebirth with pure knowledge and enlightenment! Jala Deva! endow such Life Juices to us as would be worthy of bliss! Grant us such waters which readily provide us peace and prosperity and keep diseases away far from us. In these water flows, we seek such properties aplenty as the Jala Tatva and Agni Tatva are forged together and health properties are maximised. Our sincere request to you Jala Deva to award such healthy and long life as would facilitate Surya Darshan to us. May there not be in us any illwill or hatred among the co-beings, untruthfulness, and such feelings but keep us purified in body and mind as 'bahyaantara shuchi' for ever as long as we exist!

TEJAS- AGNI:

1. 1. 1-9: *Om Agnimeele purohitam yagnasya Devamritvijam hotaaram ratnadhaatamam/ Agnih purvobhir rishibhireedyo nutanairuta, sa devaah eh vakshat/ Agninaa rayimashvant poshameva dive dive, yashaasam veeravattamam/ Agneyam yagnamadhvaram vishvatgah paribhurasi, sa idyveshu gacchati/ Agnirhotaa kavikratuh satyashchitrashravastamah, Devodevebhiraa gamat/ Yadanga daashushe tvamagne bhadram karishyasi, tavettat satyamangirah/ Upa tvaagne dive dive doshaavastaardhiyaa vayam namo bharanta yemasi/ Raajantamadhvaraanaam gopaamritasya dodivim, vardha maanam sve dame/ Sa nah piteva suunavegne suupaayano bhava sachasvaa nah svastaye/* Let us pray and commend to Agni Deva, whom the Paramardhika Yajna Karma is essentially based with, the most effective medium to reach Devas with, the Ritvija could conveniently perform, the Hota could invoke Devatas, and the Yaajakas who are adorned with the fruits as readily reaped by! May we invoke Agni Deva whom ancient Maharshis worshipped unfailingly and the contemporary vidvans are never tired out to pray and commend! Agni is the unique Deity whom once invoked formally assumes ever larger volume and radiance and endows with prosperity, progeny and prolonged existence! Agni Deva! You are the one who has the will and power to save or smither instantly and what is more you could carry the offerings to Deva -Devis and bring back their blessings too, besides your own too. You indeed are the havi pradaata- jnaana/ satkarma preraka, and satya rupa as the purifier and the unique and instant usherer of Deva ganas to Yagnas! To those who perform or facilitate Yajna Karmas are bestowed wealth, long life, residential benefits, progeny and contentment as also futuristic vision. Deva! we are the sincere and ever long ‘upaasakas’ and practitioners always commending and closely facing ‘pavitraagnis’. We the householders are yajna rakshakas, satya vratas, and nitya agni performers. Garhapatya Agni Deva! just as fathers seek to make the ‘santana’ comfortable and happy, do facilitate every act of ours to be successful and reputation worthy!

1.12. 1-12: *Agnim dutam vrineemahe hotaaram vishvavedasa, asya yagnasya sukritam/ Agniagnim haveemabhih sadaa havanta vishputim, havya vaaham purupriyam/ Agne Devaah ihaa vaha jagjnaano vrittabarhishe, asi hotaa na eedyah/ Taam ushato vi bodhaya yadagned yaasi dyutam, Devairaa satsi barhishi/ Ghitaahavana deedivah prati shma rishato daha, Agnetvam rakshasvinah/ Agninaagnih samidhyate Kavirgrihapatiryuvaa, havya vaang juhvaasyah/ Kavimaagnimupa stuhi satyadharmaanamadhvare, Devamameevachaatanam/ Yastvaamagne havishpatirdutam Deva saparyati, tasya sma praavitaa bhava/ Yo Agnim dedvaveetaye havishmaan aavivaasati, tasmai Paavaka muulya/ Sa nah Paavaka deedivogne Devaah ihaa vaha, upa yagnam havischa nah/ Sa nah stavaan aa bhara gaayatrena naveeyasaa, rayim veeravateemisham/ Agne shukrena shochishaa vishvaabhir deva huutibhih, imam stomam jushasanah/* The omniscient Agni Deva! You are indeed the ‘Vidhata’ and the Regulator of Yagnas ever ready to satisfy all the Devatas; in fact you are renowned as the singular ‘Deva Doota’ carrying ‘havis’ to one all from Prajapati to Indraadi Devatas from Maharshis to moderate yajna saadhakas. The very first agent of the yajna kartas to the end receiver your ‘sandhaana kartrutva’ or celestial mediation is amazing. Highly commendable Agni Deva! You are manifested as a result of ‘aarani mandhan’ or by the rubbing of wooden sticks; seated comfortably on the spread out ‘kushaagras’ or on the top of kusha grass sticks, you are ever pleased to oblige and invoke various celestial deva-devis and bestow the havis to them as the concerned celebrities are made to be seated along with you and be honoured to accept the offerings. Agni Deva who is ever radiant with the ‘ghrita aahutis’

or ghee mixed flames, you bring down to ashes the evil energies and bring about universal balance of virtue and vice! Deva! you are the ‘Yagna Sthala Rakshak’, ‘Doora darshi’ or of distant visionary of what ever happens next; approachable of all the Gods by your mere invocation and call by their respective names; the medium of invocation being ‘aahutis’ into the flames of aahavaneeya Yagnaagni as created by ‘aarani manthana’ as afore explained. Ritvijas! Do perform high commendations to the ‘Jnaanaavaan Agni Deva’ for His extraordinary role in Loka Kalyan of destroying diseases both physical and psychological all over the charaachara jagat! At the same time, Agni Deva, the key act of divinity being executed sincerely by the Ritviks is commendable too as the preparatory arrangements are theirs to perform the Deva Karya successfully. Agni Deva, may Paramatma bless you for this supreme act of mediation for universal contentment. Deva! may you be commended by Gayatri Chanda Sukta and bestow Putraadi Ishvarya and ample food that readily generates physical strength and mental energy!

[(Vaishwaanara Gayatri) : *Vaishvaanaraaya vidmahe leelaalaaya dheemahi, tanno Agnih prachodayaat/* May Agni Deva the ready means of worship and cooking as the singular source of radiance and ‘homa karyaas’ by which all the devas are invoked and contented with ‘mantra yukta ajyaas’ by way of oblations through the singular means of ghee and food. Manduka Upanishad describes Vaishvaanara as ‘Lolaayamaana’]

Agni Deva! May your splendour and fame accept our prostrations and prayers in your outstanding role of multi-directional Loka Kalyan, especially in bringing Deva Devis to humanity close only by your mediatory powers!

1.14.1-12. *Ebhiragne duvo giro vishvebhii somapeetaye, Devobhiraahi yakshicha/ Aaa tvaa Kanvaa ahushat grunanti vipra te dhayah Devebhiraagna aa gahi/ Indra Vaayu Brihaspatim Mitraagnim Pushanam Bhagam, Aadityaan Maarutam ganam/ Pa vo bhriyanta indavo matsaraamaadiyashnavah drapsaa madhvaschamushadah/ Eelate tvaamavasyavah kanvaaso vitta barhishadah, havishmano arangakritah/ Ghrataprishtaa manoyujo ye tvaa vahanti vahnyahyah, aa devaantsomapeetaye/ Taan yajatraam rutaavridhogne patneevataskrudhi, madhvah su jihva paayaya/ Yajatraa ya eengyaaste te pibantu jihvayaa madhoragne vashatkriti/ Aakeem Suryasy rochanaad vishvaan devaam usharbudhah, viprohoteh vakshati/ Vishvabhii Somyam madhvagna Indrena Vaayunaa, pibaa Mitrasya dhaamabhii/ Tvam hotaa manurhitogne yajeshuseedasi, Somam no adhvaram yaja/ Yukshvaahyaarushee radhe harito Deva rohita taabhirdevaam ihaa vah/ Agni Deva! You have arrived at the yajna along with all the Devatas to enjoy Soma Rasa and may we pay our earnest welcome and services formally and make your visit satisfactory. In this ‘Yajna shaala’ celestial stalwarts have arrived viz. Indra, Vayu, Brihaspati, Mitra, Agni, Pusha, Bhaga, Adityagana, Marudgana and so on. Sweet Soma Rasa is already ready in vessels for service to Agni and other celestial guests. Kanva Rishi and his family relatives are ready seated with their ‘shubhaakaankshas’ to be conveyed to the Sacred Guests of honour; in fact they have spread out the kusha mats awaiting the celestial guests and arranged ‘havishaanna’ or the cooked rice for the offerings along with ghee as the offerings to Agni. Agni Deva! by your mere ‘sankalpa’, Devas are ready to run their chariots to arrive with the fond hope of enjoying ‘Soma paana’ the drink of soma juice. Even Indra gets readied to arrive at the Yajna along with his wife. Vishvadevas from their beds after comfortable night long sleep woken up by the Ushakaala Sunrays get readied to reach the yajna sthala only to receive the havishaanna and the soma rasa! Agni Deva! let all the Devas viz. Indra, Vaayu, Mitra and such others line up with their respective glories in the gala party and drink up soma juice to our heart’s content. ‘Maanava hita’ Agni Deva! kindly assume the form of a ‘Hota’ and set up fast the Yajna svarupa without ‘jeeva*

himsa' of any kind. You have the capacity and wish to ride the chariot named Rohit with horses of speed and strength and bring in Devas of eminence to the Yagna atonce!

1.147.1-4. *Kathaa te Agne shuchayanta aayordadaashurvajobhiraashushaanaah, ubhe yattoke tanaye dadhaanaa rutasya saamanranayanta Devaah/Bodhaame asya vachaso yavishtha mahishthasya prabhru-tasya svadhaav ah, peeyati tvo anutvo grunaati vandaaruste tvam vanded Agne/ Ye Paayavo maamate -yam te Agne pasyanto andham duritaadarakshan, rarakjsha taantsukruto Vishvavedaa dipsant idripavo naah debhuh/ Yo no Agne ararivaam aghaayuraraateevaa marchayati dvayena, mantra guruh punarastu so asmaa anu mriksheeshta tvam duruktaih/ Uta vaa yahah sahasya pravidvaan marto martam marchayati dvayena, atah paahi stavamaana stuvamagne maakirno duritaaya dhaayeeh/ (Agni Deva! how indeed your flames bestow food and Jeevan Tatva or Life's orientation to humanity even as you facilitate yajna karyas and move about vayu mandala freely! Possesive of the magnificence of noble youthfulness, Agni Deva! some persons nodoubt blame you for your ferocity and speed of your flames but yet they have to admire and greet your basic form to cook and nourish food which is the basic input of life indeed! Your power of radiance is the basic input to dispell darkness, figuratively or otherwise ; may the very many acts of your kindness be not discounted and your periodical acts of severity exaggerated! Keeping the bodies warm and ticking life is a reality of the basics of Agni while the hazards in the ability to balance the 'praana' with the essentiality of the very existence is blame! May the genuine persons who evaluate the deeds of the sinful ones be saved and the habitual practioners of evil acts be eliminated from time to time!*

2.1-1-16: *Tvamagne dyubhistvamaashushu kshanitsavamad abhyastvmashnaspari, tvam vanedbhyastvam nrinaam nrupate jaayase shuchih/ Manushya swaami Agnideva! You have appeared on dyuloka and soon enough attained 'pavitrata'. You are manifested in waters as Agni, or by the friction of stones, in the forests as daavaagni, and in auoshadhis as the 'jvara' or temperature among humans. Tavaagne hotram tava poutramritviyam tava neshtam tvamagnidruta -ayatah, tava prashastram tvamadhvareeyasi Brahmaa chaasi griha patischa no dame/ Agni Deva!among the or 'Ritviks' or the conductors of Yajna karyas, you are the Hota aavaahana karta or the Invoker-the Pota or the Ensurer of Pavitrata or purity of body and mind- the neshta or the Somaadi distributor- agneedha or expert of yajna karmas- the prashasta or one who accords 'prerana' or provoker of the yajna; adharvyu or the karma kaanda sanchaalak or the conductor cum supervisor and finally Brahma the over all in charge. *Tvamagna Indro vrishabhah sataamasi tvam vishnumrurugaayo namasyah, tvam Brahmaa rayividbrahmanaspate tvam vidhartah sachase purandyaa/ Agni Deva! you are like Indra the Head of Devas is the Master for Ceremonies and a true leader; like Vishnu who is omni present; like Brahma the 'parama medhavi' the cynosure of jnaana! Tvamagne Raajaa Varuno dhritavratastvam Mitro bhavasi dasma eedyah, tvamaryamaa rarishe suveertham saptatiryasya sambhujam tvamamsho vidathe Deva bhaajayuh/ Tvamagne Rudro asuro maho divastvam shardho maarutam priksha eeshishe, tvam vaatairairunairyasi shadanga tatvam Pushaa vidhatah paasi nu tamnaa/ Tvamagned dravinodaa arangakrite tvam devah Savitaa ratnadhaa asi, tvam Bhago nripate vasva eeshishe tvam yastevidhat/ Tvamagne Rudro asuro maho divastvam shardho maarutam priksha eeshishe, tvam vaatairairunairyasi shadanga tatvam Pushaa vidhatah paasi nu tamnaa/ You are like Varuna Deva is the 'sarva vrata dhaarana karta' or the major Guide and Conductor of Vratas or systematic pujas and of worship; you are like Mitra Deva is the destroyer of evil forces and worthy of endless praises; you are like Aryama the prime benefactor Leader of Propitiousness; Agni Deva! you are like Tvashta the one praiseworthy deity who readily equips us with courage and intrepidity as of ovr own clan and category! Agni Deva! you are like Maha Rudra who**

is indeed the 'praana daata' of dyuloka. You are like the powerful Vayu Deva full of speed and vigour. As the Annaadhipati Marut Devas , you ever generous and magnanimous and like Pusha Deva you provide 'raksha' or physical safety.

Tvamagned dravinodaa arangakrite tvam devah Savitaa ratnadhaa asi, tvam Bhago nripate vasva eeshishe tvam yastevidhat/ Tvaamagne dama aa vishpanti vishastvaam raajanam suvidatra -mrunjate, tvam vishvaani svaneeka patyase tvam sahasraani shataa dasha prati/ Tvaamagne pitara-mishtibhirnarastvaam bhraatraaya shyayyaa tanuurucham, tvam putro bhavasi yastevidhvatvam sakhaa surevah paasyaadhrishah/ Tvaamagna rubhuraake namastyatsvam vaajasya khumato raaya Eshishe, tvam vi bhasyanu dakshi daavane tvam vishikshurasi yagjnamaatanih/ Tvaamagne Aditirdeva daashushe tvam hotraa bharatee vardhase giraa, tvamilaa shata himaasi Dakshase tvam vritrahaa Vasupate Sarasvati/ Tvaamagne subhruta uttamam vayastva syaarhe varna aa sandushi shriyah, tvam vaajah pratarino brihatraasi tvam rayirbahulo vishvataapruthuh/ Tvaamagna Adityasa aasyam tvaam jihvaam shuchayhaschakrire kave, tvaam raatishaacho adhvareshu saschire tve devaa haviradantyaahutam/Tve Agne Vishve amritaaso adruha aasaa Devaa haviradantyaahutam, tvayaa mnartaasah svadant aasutim tvam garbho veerudhaam jajisho shuchih/ Agni Deva! You who are of intense flames, also provide ample money and happiness; you are like Savita Deva the 'ratna dharanakarta' and Dhanadhipati Bhaga Deva. As Praja Paalaka in individual homes, you are in our households,taking full care of us day in and day out. As the God of the Universe, you have the willingness and capacity to safeguard and save us ever. Agni Deva! you are the father of human beings, the latter perform yagjnas in their households and thus the sons reap fruits of the Sacrifices; as you are our friend-philosopher and guide, you inspire us to practise charities to the well deserved and thus a cycling effect takes place in the society of householders. Agni Deva! you are like Aditi Devi the mother of Devatas in the matters of dana dharmas. As you are praised extensively, you are named as 'hota' and 'bharati'. As you are in the custom of extending the life span of your devotees, you are like Ila Devi; you are like Kubera the Dhanaadhipati. You are also like Indra the 'Vrittaasura hantra' and like Pruthu who is famed as 'Anna Daata'. Dooradarshi Agni Deva! you are the Face of Dwadasha Adityas and the 'jihva' or the tongue of Deva Gnaas as they surround you for 'aahuti grahana'. [Dwadasha Adityas are noted as follows: Indra, Dhata, Parjanya, Pusha, Twashta, Aryama, Bhaga, Vivishwan, Amshu, Vishnu, Varuna and Mitra. Among these twelve Murthis, Indra was Chief of Devas ruling Amaravati and destroying Daityas and Danavas from time to time. Dhata being in the Status of Prajapati took up the task of Creation; Parjanya in the Form of Sun rays rained all over the Universe; Pusha is in the form of Mantras engaged for Prajaaposhana; Twashta is present in the form of 'Vanaspati' and 'Aushadhi' (Vegetable Oils and Herbal Medicines); Aryama who provides protection and relief to humanity; Bhaga is in the form of Earth and Mountains; Viviswan in the form of Agni / Fire and is the cooking facilitator of food as also of the destroying power; the ninth name of Surya Deva is Amshu or of the form of Chandra Deva who provides coolness and pleasure of existence; Vishnu is the tenth name of Surya who constanly checks the evil forces in the World and slays Danavaas and establishes virtue from time to time by assuming Incarnations; Varuna is the eleventh appearance present in water as the source of life and fertility staying in Oceans, Rivers and various water profiles; and finally, Mitra or form of propitiousness and help to humanity] Agni Deva!Deva ganas always accept 'havishyaanna' from their faces / mouths; 'manushyas' receive it with their hands; whereas vriksha- vanaspatis provide in the 'urja rupa' or energy form; indeed this is named as the Nitrogen Cycle.

2.6.1-9: *Agnim tam maye yo vasurastam yam yanti dhenavah, astamarvanta aashaavostam nityaaso vaajina isham stotrubhya aa bhara/ So agniryo vasurgune sam yamaayanti dhenavah, samarvanto raghudruvah sam srujaataasah suuraya isham stotrubhya aa bhara/ Agnirhi vaajinam vishodadaati vishva charshanih, Agnee raaye svaabhuvam sa preeto yaati vaayurvamisham stotrubhya aa bhara/ Aaa te agna idheemahi drumantam Devaajaram, yadvasyaate paneeyas samiddeeyati dyuveesham stotrubhya aa bhara/ Aa te Agna ruchaa havih shukrasya shoshochishpate, shuschandra dasma vishpate havya vaat tubhyam huyat isham stotrubhya aa bhara / Protye agnayognishu vishyam pushyant vaaryam, te hinvire ta eenvire ta ishanyanta Ishanyanantyaanushagisham stotrubhya aa bhara/ Tava tye agne archayo mahi vraadhanta vaajinah, ye patvabhih shaphaanam vrajaa bhuranta gonaamisham stotrubhya aa bhara/ Navaa no agna aa bhara stotrubhyah sukshiteerishah, te syaama ya aanruchustvaadyutaaso damedama eesham stotrubhya aa bhara/ Ubhe suschandra sarpisho darvee shreeneesha aasani, uto na utpupuryaa ukteshu shvasaspat eesham stotrubhya aa bhara/ Evaam agnimajuryamugreer bharyagjnabhiraanushak, dadhadasme suveeryamuta tvadaashvashvamisham stotrubhya aa bhara/ We are all familiar with the Yagjnasthala, where we pray and worship Agni Deva. This indeed is the place where cows and horses too move about and return to their respective places for rest thereafter. Agni Deva, may the ‘yaajakas’ be all happy and contented! May all the horsemen and cowherds too who visit this sacred place where Vidvans worship always be happy and contented. May the ‘Kartas’ responsible for freely spending without reservations the yajna kaaryas be full of happiness and vamsha vriddhi. The ever active and youthful ‘stotas’ participating in the yajna karyas and connecting with Dyuloka be blessed so that they all as also their family members and dependents be ever above the want of food, material and desires. AgniDeva! You are the Vishva poshak, shatru naashak, Deva Tripti kaarak by the supply of ‘havish’ and ‘sva prakaa -shak’. You ought to sustain the Ritviks whose rendering of ‘Ruchas’ by perfect ‘uccharana’ by way of ‘baahyaantara shuchi’ and ‘Sarasvati kataaksha’ as these qualifications are very rare and limited; may that clan of ritviks be ever contented and kept above the material needs. Deva! your magnificent rays are such that they respond steadily by the purity and perfection of renditions of mantras and the modulation of sounds, above all the purity of the heart and soul of the ‘saadhakas’; indeed, such perfect balancing of the several ‘variables’ need to be converted as ‘constants’ to build bridges between man and divinity and the singular bridge is Agni Deva alone! May the participants of this Unique Yajna be the end result of all round fulfillment while the Singular Actor-Director-Producer is Agni and Agni alone!*

10.7.1-7: *Swasti no divo agne prathivyaa vishvaayurdhehi yajathaaya Deva, sachemahi tava dasma praketairuushyaa na uruubhirdeva shamsaih/ Imaa Agne matayastubhyam jaataa gobhiraschairabhi grunanti raadhaah, yadaa te marto anu bhogamaangvaso dahaano matibhih sujaata/ Agnim manye pitara- magni maapirmaagnim bhraataram sadamitsakhaayam, agneraneekam brihatah saparyam divi shukram yajatam Suryasya/ Siddhaa agne dhiyo asme sanutreeyam traayasedama aa nitya hotaa, rutaavaasa rohidadhvah purukshurdyubhirasmaa ahibhiraamamastu/ Dyubhirhitam Mitramiva prayogam patnamritvija madhvarasya jaaram, baahubhyaamagnimaayavojanant vikshu horaaram nyasaadayant/ Svayam yajasva divi deva devaankim te paakah krinavadaprachetaah, yathaayaja ritubhirdeva devaanevaa yajasva tvam sujaat/ Bhavaa no agnevitota gopaa bhavaa vayaskrudit no vayodhaah, raasvaa cha nah sumaho havyadaatim traasvet nastanvo aprayucchan/*

Divyaagni Deva! Grant excellent food to both Earth and Divya Lokas, pursuant to the sacred yajna karyas on the earth, even as you bestow to us the required resilience and self reliance besides security and wisdom. The more we commend the less sounds our deservedness, as already you have granted us wealth, cows and horses; indeed this is all your benevolence. We however pray further to bestow ideal virtue and

self control from you. Agni Deva, we have always considered you as our father who brings us up, as a close relative who helps us in need and as a close associate who advises suitably. We always guard and keep holy this ‘yagjna sthala’ as if the revered Surya Mandala residents come down and meditate! May our psyche and prayers be readily fructified to safeguard us and always let our lives be upgraded to live a typically yagjna- maya existence, with you as hota in the agni karyas. May we ever deserve the sacred task of distributing ‘havishaana’ and the fall out advantages of doing so too. Deva! you are ‘tejomaya, mitra tulya, ritvija swarupa, puraataana, himsaarahita, yagjna sampanna kartaa’ as materialised from the hands of yaajikaas. Tejo Murti Agni Deva! You serve deva ganaas directly but we in ‘martya loka’ we are not able to do like wise being ‘manda buddhis’ or of below par capacity and hence undeserved. Mah Jnani Agni Deva! Keep us secured from direct and indirect interferences and hurdles. We seek you to don the role of producer and supplier of food and thus assure us to sustain and strengthen our physical energies and mental abilities.

VAYU: The quickest forwarder of ‘havishaana’ and ‘Soma Rasa’ from Yaajikas to Devas-

1.2.1-7: *Vaayavaa yaahi darshateme somaa aramkritaah, tesaam paahi shrudhee havam/ Vaaya uktho- bhirjarante tvaamacchaa jaritaarah, Suta Somaa aharvidah/ Vaayo tava prapanchatee dhenaa jigaati daashushe , Uruuchee Soma peetaye/ Indra Vaayu ime sutaa upa prayobhiraah gatam, Indavo vaamushaantih/ Vaayavindrascha chetatha sutaanaam vaajinee vasuu, tavaa yaatamupa dravat/ Vaaya- vindrascha sunvit aa dhaatamupa nishkrutam , makshvitthaa dhiyaa naraa/ (Priya Darshi Vayu Deva! Kindly enter our Yagjna sthala; there is Soma Rasa awaiting your enjoyment. Vayu Deva! Those who are all engaged in the production of Soma Juice [among the or ‘Ritviks’ or the conductors of Yagjna karyas, you viz the Hota aavaahana karta or the Invoker-the Pota or the Ensurer of Pavitrata or purity of body and mind- the neshta or the Somaadi distributor- agneedha or expert of yagjna karmas- the prashasta or one who accords ‘prerana’ or provoker of the yagjna; adharyu or the karma kaanda sanchaalak or the conductor cum supervisor and finally Brahma the over all in charge] , as also those who are fully conversant of the features, taste, and impact of the drink are all assembled at the yagjna sthala keenly awaiting your kind glorious arrival ! Vayu Deva! the commanding entry of your voice- the Voice of Wind- is awaited anxiously at the Yagna shaala by all the constituent partners of Soma Rasa, to be able to convey its features of renown, its impact, interest and so on. In fact, Indra Deva and Vayu Deva, we welcome both of you and as you descend the Yagjna Shaala along with sweet eats too to go well with the supply of Soma Rasa! Both of you are of supreme capability and glory in your own ways of specialisation and are heartily requested to join the Oragniser to honour us at the Soma Rasa party!*

1.134.1-7: *Aa tvaa juvo raarhaanaa abhi prayo Vaayo vahintvah purvapeeyate Somasya purvapeetaye, urdhvaa te anu sunruta manastishthantu jaanatee, niyuktavataa rathena yaahi daavano makhasya daavane/ Madantu tvaa mandino vaaya vikndavosmatkaaranaasah sukritaa abhidyavo gobhiih kraanaa abhidyavaha, yadva kraanaa eeradhyai daksham sachant uutayah, saghreecheenaa niyuko daavane dhiya upa bruvat eem dhiyah/ Vaayuryungto rohitaah vaayuruunaa vaayu rathe ajiraa dhuri volhave vihishthaa dhuri volahave, pra bodhayaa purandhim jaara sa sateemiva, pra chakshaya rodasee vaaya yoshasah shravase Vaayayoshasah/ Tubhyamushaasah shuchayah paraavati bhadraa vastraa tanvate dasum rashimashu, tubhyam dhenuh sabardudhaa vishvaa vasuuni dohate, ajanayo maruto vakshanaa - bhyo diva aa vakshanaabhyah/ Tubhyam shukraasah shuchayasturanyavo madeshugraa ishananta bhurvanyapaamishanta bhurvani, tvaam tsaaree dasamaano bhagameette takvaveeye, tvam vishvasmaad- druvanaatpaasi dharmanaa Suryaatpaasi dharmanaa/ Tvam no vaayaveshaama puurvyah somaanaam*

porathamam peetirmarhasi sutaanaam preetimarhasi, uto vihutmateenaam vishaam vivarjusheenaam, vishvaa itte dhenavo duhnat aashiram/ Vaayu Deva! Your vibrant and speedy horses have already reached to the Soma Yaaga to accept the ‘havishaanna’; you are already familiar with our voices which have been commending your virtuous features and now do kindly oblige us in accepting our ‘aahutis’ at the yajna. We have already got prepared the tasty and nutritious Soma Rasa duly tempered with cow milk for your special consumption. We the humans of virtue aim at the fulfillment of ‘chaturvidha purushardhas’ of ‘Dharmaartha kaama mokshas’ and with this very objective, have spared no effort in organising the Yajna and the climactic preparation of Soma Rasa; now do oblige us in accepting the offering of Havishaanna and the drink of Soma Rasa. Vaayu Deva! for carrying you all the way to this yajna shaala, red horses of extraordinary vigour and speed are in position. Just as a proverbial husband wakes up and lifts up too his lover from sleep, you must wake up ‘dhyavaa- prithivi’ or the Space and Earth be awoken by the Ushakaala Surya motivated by Vaayu and activate the former to vibrant activity and alertness. Vaayu Deva! Pavitra Usha has already materialised distant, ever fresh and bright dresses to clothe you with care and selection to readily impart auspiciousness. Besides excellent dresses, cows yield fresh milk for you. It is indeed that such Sacred Winds ever active on the surfaces of Rivers and Oceans fly up and up and materialise rains of sufficient force, which in turn bestow crops of food to the entirety of Beings on Earth! Thus the brilliant cycle of Pancha Bhutas of Prithivi-Aapas-Tejas-Vayu and Akaasha interacting for the sustenance of Life! Vaayu Deva! You have the unique role of instantly carrying Soma Rasa to various destinations. Jala sthaapana from one Element to another is indeed possible with your excellent collaboration among the Elements. This precisely why the helpless Manushyas- or for that matter all the Beings in the Universal Creation, praise in a singular voice that without you there would no existence, as indeed the ‘praana vayu’ is literally hinged to life. [Kathopanishad II.ii.3-5 : II.ii.3) *Urthvam praanam unnayhati apaanam pratyagasyati, Madhte vaamanmaaseenam Vishve Devaa upaasate/* (The Self is the driving force of Praana as the upward breathing and Apana as the downward breathing; indeed, Praana or the Vital Power energises the body parts and senses like speech, breathing, vision, hearing and thinking by mind. The Self is seated in the middle part of the body and is worshipped by all the Devas; in the Universal context, the Self moves about like the Swan compared to Sun as swan symbolising all pervasive consciousness)II.ii.4) *Asya visramsamaanaya sharirasthasya dehinah, Dehaad vimuchyamaanasya kimatra parishishyate: etadvai tat/* (The interrogation is that when the dweller of the body viz. the embodied Self is detached from the body, then the latter gets released and what else remains in the body!)II.ii.5) *Na pranena naapaanejna martyo jeevati kaschana, Itarena tu jeevanti yasminnetaav upaashritau/* (Then as the Self- consciousness leaves the body, then no mortal could live by praana or apaana and then these winds ought to find asylum elsewhere; in other words, the entity of the self is not dependent on the Praana-Apaana but is the other way round!)]

10.168.1-4: *Vaatasya nu mahimaanam rathasya rujanneti stanayatrasya ghoshah, divisprugyaatya runeenaani krinvannute yeti prithivyaa revumasyan/* The sweep and speed of Vaayu is remarkable and unique. Assuming a wide variety of sound waves ranging from happy coolness to ferocious earthquakes the range of sounds is astounding. From forcibly pulling down huge forest trees to tiny plants the variety of speeds is amazing. Once engulfing the sky by its thick black clouds, the currents of winds literally bring earth and sky together.

*Samprerate anu vaatasya vishthaayenam gacchhanti samanam na yoshaah, taabhih sayuskaratham Deva eeryatesya vishvasya bhuvanasya raajaa/*The lightning speed of wind power could even break huge mountain ranges into smithereens. Like the speedy horses approaching the battle fronts, the gushes of alarming and noisy winds uproot huge trees creating a scene of horror. As though riding on the chariot of huge uprooted trees, the King of Wind looks like the Overlord of the Universe at that time!

Antarikshe pathibhireeyamaano na ni vishte katamacchanaah, Apaam sakhaa prathamajaa rutaavaa kva svijjaatah krita aa babhuva/ Vayu Deva moving fast all across the ‘antariksha’ by royal routes as also lanes and bye - lanes; He is never stationary nor restful. The illusive interrogation now would be as to where Vayu was originated and how as the Unique Lord of Life had originally got manifested!

Atmaana Devaanaam bhuvanasya garbho yathaavasham charati Deva eshah, ghoshaa idasya shrunvare na rupam tasmai vaataaya havishaa vidhema/ Vayu Deva is the ‘Atma’ and Garbha or the Soul and Seed of Bhuvanas, moving unfettered and independent. His ‘sounds’ are countless, complex and varied being unseen too. His form is never seen but felt and ever worthy of worship. The best time and context when Vayu Deva is felt is when his archana is performed , dedicated and get rewarded! .

10.187.1-3: *Vaata aa vaatu bhashajem Shambhu mayobhu no hride, prana aayuumshi taarishat/ Uta vaata pitaasi na vuta bhraatota nah sakhaa, sa no jeevaatave krudhi/ Yadado vaata te grihemritasya nidhirhitah, tato no dehi jeevase/* Vaayu Deva! very kindly bring near to us oushadhis which endow with us excellent health , well being and longevity. You are the father figure who had given us birth and upbringing, the ‘bandhu rupa’ or the dear relative, and friend who is an adviser and well wisher; do kindly strengthen the supply line of medicines. You possess Praana Rupa Jeevana Tatva and the ‘nidhi’ or the never diminishing stock of life providing energies; grant us a never failing life line to me and associates for ever!

ANTARIKSHA: 1.22.13-14. *Mahee dyouh prithivee cha na imam yagjnam mimikshataam piprutaam no bhareemabhih/ Tayoridghritavatpayo vipraa rihanti dheetibhih, gandharvasya Dhruve pade/* May both Prithvi and dyuloka, complete our respective duties in the context of yagjna kaaryas and fulfil all the respective duties and obligations successfully as also organise the step wise tasks involved by way of making available ‘bharana- poshana’ saamagri or the yaagjnic tools and the knowhow of utilising them. Gandharva Loka and ‘Dhruvastaana’ - in between bhuloka and dyuloka, have to fulfill their own obligations while, successful execution of the requirements of men-material are the basic inputs which need to be perfected. Indeed only the experienced persons-duties-procedural inputs need to be meticulously worked out for the ultimate success of the Yagjna.

1.159-1-3: *Pra dyhaavaa yagnaih prithivee rutaavrudhaa maheestushe vidayeshu prachetasaa, Devobhi-ryo Deva putre sundasasethya dhiyaa vaaryaani prabhushitah/ Uta manye pituradruho mano maaturmahni svatavastadraveemabhih,suretasaa pitaraa bhuma chakrataruruu prajaayaa amritam vareemabhih/ Te soonavah svapsah sudam saso mahee jajurmaataraa purvachittaye, sthaatuscha satyam jajatascha dharmani putrasya paathah padamadvayaavinah/* Celestial daughters viz. Dyaavaa, Prithivi, and other Shaktis collectively are inspired to execute excellent tasks and are adorned to perform likewise. This is essentially due to reciprocate and respond to ‘Yagjneeeya bhaavanas’ and ‘Yagjneeeya karyaacharanas’ in the form of ‘mantras’ in favour of prithvi and dyulokaas. We the human beings always consider Prithvi and Antariksha most genuinely as our mother and father and extol them accordingly. Parakrama sheela and Prikriti Swarupi Prithvi and Srashtaa Swarupa Purusha Antariksha are indeed , by

virtue of their combined might have indeed been successfully generating the Beings in the Universe especially the humanity; this outstanding creation is indeed ‘par excellence’. Prakrti in a way is to be considered as ‘Manas’ or Mental Energy; humanity possess the mighty pull of ‘Manas’. It is the Supreme Coordination of the Parental Might that could harness Human Thoughts and Psyche. The basic pull of human thought - as well as of all other ‘sthaavara jangamas’ [species like Andajas or born out of eggs - udbhujas or created by sprouting-svedajas or created by sweat, besides immovable mountains-oceans] is conditioned by the parents who are essentially kind, forgiving and of mature patience. Even as the children often outstep far beyond the frontiers of ‘dharma and nyaaya’, the affectionate and ever merciful parents readily pardon them and provide them succor merely out of their magnificence.

1.160.1-5: *Te hi dyaavaa prithivee vishva shambhuva ritaavaree rajaso dhaarayatkavee, sujanmanee dhishano antareeyate devo devee dharmanaa Suryahshuchih/ Uruvyachasaa mahinee asashchataa pitaa maataa chabhuvanaani rakshatah, sudhrushtame vapushye na rodasee pitaa yatseemabhi rupairavaasayat/ Savahnih putrah pitroh pavitramaapunaati dheero bhuvanaani maayayaa, dhenumcha prushimna vrishabham suretasam vishvaaha shukram payo asya dukshat/ Ayam Devaanaamapasaama - pastamo yo jajaan rodasee vishvashambhuva, vi yo mame rajasee sukratuuyayaajerebhiih skambha - nebhih samaanruche/ Te no grunaane mahinee mahi shravah kshatram dyaava prithivee dhaasatho brihat, yenaabhi krishteestataanaam vishvahaa panaayyamojo asme saminvatam/ Dyau- Prithivi, Bhumi and Antariksha- are together the hinges of the Universe and also the Yajna swarupas. The Sarva Tejasvi and Sarva Medhavi Entities of Earth and Sky are also the Sarva Ramrakshak -Sarva Utpaadak or the Universal Creators and Sustainers. It is among these that Surya Deva moves all over as the supreme mediator and as the ever active agent to organise the Universal Activities. Between Earth and Sky there has to be a powerful coordinator of the stature of Surya just as a cow and bull or Bhumi and Anrariksha. Surya Deva is like the able Son to truthfully assume the responsibility. May the offspring of Bhumi and Sky on Earth with the active assistance of Surya be ever active with their own activities of Dharma and Karma on one hand and the pulls and pressures of materialism and spiritualism on the other.*

5.36.5: *Vrishhatvaa vrishanam vadhatu dyourvrishaa vrishabhyaam vahase haribhyaam, sa shipra vrishakraato vrishaa vajrinbhare dhaah/ Mighty Indra Deva! May dyuloka be fortified with supreme energy by your illustrious chariots while you ride with your horses as the symbols of speed and strength, even as you wear the outstanding kireeta or the headgear and armed with ‘vajraayudha’. May there not be even negligible traces of evil powers be wiped out and cleaned up without traces.*

7.53.1-3: *Pra dyaavaa yagnaih prithivee namobhih sabaadha eele brihatee yajanne, te chiddhi purve kavayo grunantah puro mahee dadhire Deva putre/ Pra purvaje pitaraa navyaseebhirgorbhih krunudhvam sadane rutasya, aa no dyaavaa prithivee daivena janena yaant mahi vaam varuutham/ Vutohi vaam ratnadheyaani santi puruuni dyaavaa prithivee sudaase, asme dhattam yadasadskrudhoyu yuuyam paat svastibhih sadaa nah/ From times immemorial, ancients Rishis had always lavished praises and prayers to bhudevi and antariksha deva as the glorious parents of the Universe and even now through the medium of Yajna karyaas too the continuity is sustained and hence the availability of food and sustenance. Yajnakro! Even as the number of participants of the Sacrifices has dwindled, the faith and fame of earth and sky is maintained as our eternal parents; may they pardon our increasing lapses as the true father and mother entities, despite our evil doings and ingratitude for them. Beloved parents, you are not only equipped with love and kindness to us but plentitude of fortunes and never ending materialistic pleasures to endow us with!*

7.104.23: *Maa no raksho abhi nadyaatumaavataamapocchitu mithunaa yaa, prithiveenah paarthivaat paatvamhasontariksham divyaatpaatvasmaan/* May not 'raakshasaas' or the worst possible evil powers turn against us while both Deva-Devi Shaktis be alert at every step to safeguard us. Indeed, may Devi Prithvi eradicate all types of sinful activities all across the Earth and similarly the antariksha too be completely cleansed up with any kind of sinful doings and let auspiciousness prevail universally.

YAJURVEDA - KRISHNA / TAITTIREEYA SAMHITA: 1.1.9:

The Fire-altar or Vedi: *Aa dadam Indrasya baahurasi dakshinah, sahasra bhrishtih shatatejaa vaayurasi tigma tejah/ Prithvi deva yajani oshadhyaste, moolam maa himsisham apahato araruh prithvai/* You Vedi on Earth! ! You are Indras's right arm with thousands of spikes of radiance, with Vayu of sharp strength, bhumi where deva yajnas are performed with oshadhis, 'vraja' as energised by vedic knowledge.

1.1.10: Purification of Agni: *Pratyushtham rakshah pratyushtaa araatayo, agnervas tejishthena tejasaa-nishtapaami, goshtam maa nirmriksham, vaajinam tva sapatnasaaham sam maarjmi/ Vaacham praanam chakshuh shrotram prajaam yonim maa nirmriksham, vaajaneem tva sapatnasaahem sam maarjmi, aashaasanaam soumanasam prajaam soubhagyam tanuum, agner anuvrataa bhuutvaa sam nahye sukritaaya kam/ Suprajasastvaa vayam supatneerupa sedima agne, sapatna dambhanam adaabhyam/ Innam vi shyaami varunasya paasham yamabadhneeta savitaa suketah, dhaatushcha yonou sukritasya loke syonam me saha patyaakaromi/Samaayushaa sam porajayaa samagned varchasaa punah, sapatnee patyaaham gacchhe samaatmaa tanuvaa mama/ Maheenaam payo asyoshadheenaam rasah, tasyate aksheeya maanasya nirvapaami/Maheenaam payosyoshadheenaam rasah, adabdhena tva chakshushaa avekshe suprajaastvaaya/ Tejosi tejenu prehi agniste tejomaa vi nat agner jihvaa asi subhuur devaanaam, dhaamnedhaamne devebhyo yajushe yajushe bhava/ Shukramasi Tejorasi Tejosi Devaa vah savitotpunaatvaacchidrena pavitrena Vasoh Suryasya rashmibhih/Shukram tva shukraayaam dhaamne dhaamne Devebhyo yajusheyajushe grihyaami/ Jyotistvaa jyotishi archistvaarchishi/ Dhaamne dhaamne devebhyo yajusheyajushe grihyaami/* With Agni's pure flames, raakshasaas and all evil energies are burnt up and purified. Yet, the sources of knowledge are kept intact and retained. The fury of flames does not interfere with the natural powers of breath either, since one's speech, breath, hearing impulses, vision and the other inherent bodily or mental capabilities are disturbed. Agni Deva! while requesting for a contented mind and prosperity, I now prepare by physical frame with panchendriyas or five fundamental faculties for essentially dharmic actions. Similarly, I approach you with my spouses and successors as you indeed are invincible and undeceivable; you are however the singular destroyer of the external enemies and more significantly the enemies within viz. the basic 'arishadvargas' of kaama-krodha-lobha-mohamada-matsaraas. Agni Deva! may I loosen the strong fetters of Varuna- proverbially called Varuna Paasha which the Creator Savitur tied at the time of birth- on three distinct planes viz. matter-life and mind. Indeed, in the early stages of life, every human being has to develop one's life at three levels viz. physical-mental-emotional. [At the younger stage of life or the flowering stage, one's faculties of beauty, reactions to affection and care and individual intelligence and grasp are prominent; as a person grows, maturity descends and the bonds of Varuna get gradually loosened.] It is at that stage of maturity, affinity with Agni and Agni Karyas grows. Then arrives the 'samanvayata' or equation with family life, life's partner, and offspring arrives! Then is the realisation that Agni is the gateway to auspiciousness, nearness

to Daivatva, and the awareness of *shukram tvaa shukraayaam/* or ‘ I grasp and absorb that which is bright among the bright! *Dhaamne dhaamne devebhyo yajushe gruhnaami/* I then perceive Devas in every plane and every yajna! *Jyotistvaa jyotishi archistvaarchishi/* I then recognise the self as the brilliance!

1.4.2&3. Praana the Life Energy: *Vaachaspataye pavasvavaagin, vrishaa vrishano amshubhyaam gabhasi puuto/ Devo Devaanaam pavitramasi, yeshaam bhaagosi tebhyastvaa svaamkrutosi madhumateernba ishaskrudhi/ Vishvebhyastvendriyebhyo divyebhyahh paarthivebhyo, manastvaa ashtu uru antariksha manvihi/ Svaahaa tvaa subhavah suryayaa, devebhyastvaa mareechipebhyam, esha te yonih praanaaya tvaa/* You the Master of speech the outstanding, do purify me as indeed you are the purifier of all the Devas too. To those Devas, you are accepted in all the primary aspects, besides quite a part of celestial senses of heaven and earth. As regards the midworld lokas too, may our human minds of sharpness make it possible to penetrate as after all the cosmic life is none too different excepting in certain layers. The praana based energy as far as mental faculties are concerned is auspicious and that life energy tends to purify the aspect of speech too. The sound of ‘svaaha’ to the celestials is purified any way as the supreme praana, the life energy anyway!

Praana’s internal journey called ‘Antaryaama’: *Upayaamagriheetosi, antaryaccha Maghavan, paahi somamurushya raayah samisho yajasvaantah/ Te dadhaami dyaavaa prithivee antar uru antariksham, sajoshaa devair avaraih paraishcha, antaryaame Maghavan maadayasva/* Praana! You are restrained by way of your intake [Upayaama is the supportive restraint]. May Soma protect, guard the internal properties by gathering impulsion in the process of Internal Yajna. May I place the Self and its features within the heaven-and earth as also the mid world; or the unison with bhur- bhuvar-swaha!

6.1.1: *Bahih praano vai manushyastasyaashanam praanomshnaati sapraana eve deekshita aashito bhavati yaavaanevaasya praanastena saha medhamupaiti bahih praano vai manushyah tasya ashanam praano ashnaati sa praana eva deekshata aashito bhavati yaavaan evaasya poraanah tena saha medham upaiti/* Everybody lives with praana the life energy; he eats, gets satiated and indeed is sanctified by praana.

6.2.2: *Aapataye tvaa gruhneemeetyaah praano vaa aapatih praanameva preenaati paripataya ityaaha mano vai paripatirgamana eva preenaati tanuunaptra ityaah tanuvo hi te taah samavaadyanta shaakvaraaya ityaah shaktaih te tat aatmanah samavaadyanta anaadhrishtam asi anaadhrishyam ityaah anaadhrishtam hi etat anaadhrishtam/* Let there be access to Praana the Life’s very energy. He who rushes in for Praana is certainly delighted; that praana gives resdy access to the mind and indeed delights the mind. For the mighty there is strength and that person is unchallengeable!

6.4.5. *Praano vaa esha yat upaamshur yat upaamshuagra grahaa grihyante praanam eva anu prayanti aruno ha sma aaha aupoaveshih praatah savana eva yagjnam sam aham sthaapayaasmi tena tah samsthitena charaami iti ashtou kritvo agre abhishunoti ashta aksharaa gaayatri gaayatram praatah savanam pratah savanameva tena aapnoti ekaadashaa kritvo dviteeyam ekaadashaakshara trishtup traishtbham maadhyaandinam savanam/* Uaamshu is praana: [Upamshu is the practice of silently repeating a mantra and seek to secure deeper consciousness and remove mental impurities.] Aruna Aupaveshi is stated to have advided that whatever sacrifice is established be proceeded with; he first initiates with eight syllables of Gayatri, and then eleven times as Trishtubh of Chhandas.

Maadhyandinam eva savanam tenaa aapnoti dvaadasha krutvah triteeyam dvaadashaaksharaa jagatee jaagatam triteeya savanam triteeyaa savanam eva tenaa aapnoti etaam ha vaava sa yagjnasya samsthitam uvaacha askandaaya askannam hi tat yajnaasya samsthitasya skandaati atho kalu aahur gaayaree vaavaa praatah savane na ativaada iti anati vaaduka enam bhraatravyo bhavati ya evam veda tasmaat ashtau ashtau kritvo abhishutyam/ By noon time, the performer does the Japa twelve times as Jagati Chhandas has twelve letters and so would be at the evening. This is what the regulation of the Establishment so that there is loss in the prescribed practice.

7.5.13. To whom Praana of a Jeeva is yoked to like a cross wooden piece! *Kastvaa yunakti sa tvaa yunaktu, Vishnustvaa yunaktvasya yagjnasyarddhayah/ Mahyam samnatyaa amushmai kaamaaya, Aayushe tvaa praanaayatvaapanaaya tvaa vyaanaayatvaa/ Apaanaayatvaa vyaanaayatvaa, vyushthai tvaa rayyai tvaa/ Raadhase tvaa ghoshaaya tvaa, poshaaya tvaa aaraa- dhoshaaya tvaa prachyutyai tvaa/* Who indeed yokes you since some significant power be yoked to! May Lord Vishnu be yoked to since He is the ‘dharta and bharta’ or the singular preserver and the clasper of Creation anyway besides the endower of peaceful and existence of all the Beings. This arrangement is let me bestow calmness and pleasure. May Lord Vishnu save Life, the Prana, the vital energy; may He protect Apaana the outbreath as also the vyana.[Prana the inward moving energy pulsating the heart, the breathing and circulatory system, Apaana the outward moving energy eliminating wastes of body and lungs through the excretory systems, Vyana the circulation of energy enabling the expansion and contraction of the muscular system , Udaana the energy of the head and throat- the vocal apparatus for laughing or shouting or crying , and Samana the energy for digestion and assimilation, besides regulating the body cells and in-body heat regulation.]

SHUKLA YAJURVEDA:

Bhu Devata- Dyuloka: 13: *Iyam te yagjniyaa tanuurapo munchvaami na prajaam, agum homuchah svaahaakritaah prithiveemaavishat prithivyaa sambhava/* Mother Prithvi! Your body is most sacred and befitting for Sacrifices; this is the hallowed place where we seek to discard impure waters and seek to promote juices of tasteful divinities. May each of our acts get immune from blemishes and sinful deeds and get dissolved by waters of transparency and cleanliness.

13.4-8: *Hiranyagarbhah samavartataagre bhutasya jaatah patireka aaseet, sa dadhaara prithiveem dyaamutemaam kasmal devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Drapschaskanda prithiveemanu dyaamimam cha yonimanu yaschapurvah, samaanam yonimanu sancharantam drapsam juhonmanu sapta hotraah/ Namostu sarpebhyo ye ke cha prithiveemanu, ye antarikshe ye divi tebhayah sarpabhyonamah/ Yaa ishavo yaatudhaanaanaam ye vaa vanaspatengruranu, ye vaavateshu sherate tebhayah sarpobhyo namah/ Ye vaamee rochane divo ye vaa suryasya rashmishu, yeshaamapsu sadaskrutam tebyah sarpebhyo namah/* Well at the time of Universal creation, there emerged Brahma Shakti and occupied the totality of the Universe. That Prajapati made the initial sacrifice to the Unknown to facilitate the process of creation and foremost of all, manifested Swarga-Antariksha-and Prithivi in the form of a serpentine coil. As the Sacrifice made headway, Prajapati thought of creating Praana- Parjanya and the sustaining food by way of ‘drasa’ to satisfy the celestial devaas as also the dyuloka or the antariksha as also ‘vanapatis’ or vegetation to satisfy the residents on Earth. Besides, the superior class of Beings on Earth viz. human beings built up Yagna sthala or Sacrificial Pit as a means of communication between Bhumi and Anrariksha. Then got manifested Surya Deva as a vibrant and radiant link to connect Bhur-Bhuvar-Svar Lokas. We greet now as follows: *Namostu sarpebhyo ye ke cha prithiveemanu, ye antarikshe ye divi*

tebhyah sarpabhyonamah/ May we in admiration amply pray and worship that celestial link in the form of a colossal serpent connectin three lokas. It is that unique Serpent which is like the rain of arrows destroying all kinds of evil energies like Rakshasaas; indeed it is like that ever dynamic serpent which creates ‘vanspatis’ as food to sustain the Beings on Earth. It is to that Sarpa Santati / or the Holy strings of Serpents which on their own splendour further enhanced by the radiance of Surya Deva and cooled down by the attendant Jala Devatas that we the most insignifiant humans prostrate to and worship to the brim of our hearts.

13.18: *Bhurasi bhumirasyaditirasi vishvadhaayaa vishvasya b huvanasya Dhartee, prithiveem yaccha prithiveem drunguha pridhiveem maa hingaseeh/* Maatru gane, you too are like Bhu Devi who assures happiness to the entirety of charaachara srishti. Devi Aditi the unique mother of all the Devas! You are universally popular as the Universal Mother of all types of divinities. Such exemplary mother! May you too shine like the illustrious Bhu Devi renowned for her fortitude, patience and capab ility!

Agni:1. 5: Agne vratapate vratam charishyaami tacchakeyam tanme raadhyataam, idamahamanrutaat satyamupaimi/ Agni Deva! you are the extraordinary administrator and facilitator of all types of ‘Vratas’ by the Humanity in totality. May we all be blessed to sincerely organise the outstanding Vrata of following the singular path of Satya and Nyaaya or Truthfulness and Justice.

2.7- 9: *Agne vaajajidvaajam tvaa sarishyantam vaajajiting samaarjim, namo devebyah svadhaa pitrubhyah suyamo me bhuyaastam/ Askannamadya Devebhya aajyanga sambhriyaasamanghrinaa vishno maa tvaavakramisham vasumateemagne te chhaayaamupastesham Vishnoh sthaanamaseeta Indro veeryakrunoddhudhvodharaastaat/ Agne vehotram veduuryatyamavataam twaam dyaavaa prithivee avatvam dyaavaa prithivee svishtakruddevebhya Indra yaajjena havishaa bhutsvaaha sam jyotishaa jyotih/* Agni Deva! you are the provider of food and it is only by the cause of food that the ‘purushardhaas’ or human aspirations viz. dharma-artha-kaama-mokshas are possibly fulfilled. Yagjnaagne! We resolve hereby that we should not trample the ‘pavitra yajna sthala’ and convert it as impure. We have now fetched pure ghee to be offered to Devas. Lord Indra with his bravery and battle skills had long ago purified ‘yajna sthalas’. May this sacred place continue to be sanctified as the essential source of ‘Anna’! Further, ‘anna’ or food is the singular means of satisfying the needs of Devas and Pitru Devas by the means of Sacrifices be fulfilled. May the cycle of Yagjnas on earth and the resultant rains and fertility on earth be secured and strengthened!

4.15-18: *Punarmanah punaraayuraagaman punah praanah punaratmaa maaagan punahschakshuh punah shrotrammaaagaan/ Vaishvaanaro adabdhastanuupaa agnirnah paatu duritaadavadvaat/ Tvamagne vratapaa asi deva aa marteshvaa tvam yagjnesveedyah, raasveyatsomaa bhuyyo bhara devonah Savitaa vasordaataa vasvadaat/ Eshaate shukra tanuuretad varchastayaa sambhava bhraajam gaccha, juurasi ghrिताa manasaa jushtaa vishnave/ Tasyaaste satyasavasah prasave tatvo yantramashheeya svaaha, shukramasi chandramasyamritamasi vaishvadevamasi/* (May the mindful thoughts of deep sleep of the yajna kartaa regain full consciousness as if his praana the vital energy gets rejuvenated. Accordingly, his praana, inner soul, eye sight, hearing capacity and all other sensory organs and their respective features get revived. Agni Deva! may all the sensory organs and their respective features be relivened again and revitalised afresh. May you save us from our erstwhile sins and blemishes and the offshoots of our stored misdoings. The ever radiant Agni Deva! you are the ensurer of the safety and security to all of your true followers; revive our faith and dedication to you and as in several previous

occasions, bestow to us ever greater prosperity and fame ; may our faith thus get kindled in larger volume and value! Satya Svarupa! May your grace and kindness be enhanced and showered on us and may our supreme faith assume much stronger and broadened dimensions !

13.9-14:*Krunushva paajah prasimti na prithiveem yaahi raajevaamavaam ibhena, trishveemanu prasimti drunaanostaasi vidhya rakshasatapishtaih/ Tava bhramaasa aashuyaa patanyanuspurusha ghritashaa shoshuchaanah, tapuugumshyaagne juhvaa patangaansandito vi sruja vishvagulkaah/ Prati spasho vi sruja tuurnitamo bhavaa paayurvisho asyaa adabdah, yo no duure aghashaangaso yo antyagne maa kishte vyathiraada daharsheet/ Udagne tishtha pratyaa tanushva nyamitraang oshataathimahete, yo no araatiing samidhaana chakre neechaatam dhakshyatasam na shushkam/Urthve bhava prati vidyaadhyas- maadaavishkrunushva Daivyaanagne, avasthira tanuhi yaatujuunaam jaamimajaamim pra mruneeh shatruun, agneshtvaa tejasaa saadyaami/ Agnirmuurdhvaa divah kakutpatih pruthivyaa ayam, apaagum retaagum si jinvati, Indrasya tvaijasaa saadyaami/ Agni Deva! You are wholly ready and equipped to destroy the evil energies. Just as a King of glory rides an unbridled and energetic king of elephants has a free ride to demolish devils and raakshasas helter skelter, you too may resort to attacks and smashings. In the same way that a bird catcher deftly brings down huge number of high flying birds, Agni Deva we request you to enlarge your volume and reach of fury to totally shatter the evil. One fortified with the speed and thrust of Vayu Deva, the ‘aahutis’ lead to no limits of proximity or far distances and bring down the evil forces to smithereens. Agni Deva! Your energy is so intense and severe even to reach the heights of Dyuloka and at the same time to administer the dharmic activities and collaborate with the Beings on Earth in their daily activities ; indeed once the collaboration of Vayu Deva, your abilities are literally sky high bringing pride and glory to Indra Deva too.*

Aapas:2.34: Urjam vahanteeramritam ghritam payah keelaalam paristrutam, svadhaa stha tarpayat me pitruun/ Pavitra Jala samuhaas! You are the singular form of essence among food, ghee, milk and the juices of innumerable fruits and flowers; it is that source of strength that all the Beings on earth especially the human beings are able to tick and kick with energy and knowledge; this indeed is the cause of contentment among our forefathers too.

4.12: *Shvaannaah peetaa bhavata yuyamaapo asmaakmantarudare sushevaah, taa asmabhyamaya kshamaa anameevaa anaagasah svadantu deveeramrita rutaavridhah/* Jala Deva! do kindly get converted fast as water flows from your original profile of milk and help us to readily become drink worthy; once our intake as water takes place, our thirst gets subsided instantly and the bellies get contented. May water born diseases be rooted out, get helpful in the context of Yagjna kaaryas, and always retain the quality of sweet taste ready for digestion and thirst.

13.53.*Apaam tvemantasyaamyapaam tvodyantsaadyaamyapaam tvaa bhasman saadyaamyapaam tvaa jyotishi saadyaamyapaam tvaayane saadyaamyarnave tvaa sadane saadyaami samudre tvaa sadane saadyaami sarire tvaa sadane saadyaamyapaam tvaa kshaye saadyaamyapaam tvaa sadhishi saadyaamyapaam tvaa sadane saadyaamyapaam sadhasthe saadyaamyapaam tvaa yonou saadyaamyapaam tvaa pureeshed saadyaamyapaam tvaa paathasi saadyaami/ Gaayatrenatvaa cchandasa saadyaami traishthubena tvaa cchandasa saadyaami jaagatena tvaa cchandasa saadyaananushthubena tvaa cchanbdasa saadyaami pangtena tvaa cchandasa saadyaami/* Dear Ishta Devatas! You are established firmly in the form of Waters, aoushadhis, vidyud jyoti, vaani or voice sounds, vision by chakshu or of both the eyes, hearing faculty of shrotras / ears, in the profile as

anbtariksha, as in the swarupa of oceans, and as ‘annam paramatma’ and as in the forms of prosody viz. Gayatri Chhanda-Trishtup chhanda, Jagati Chhanda, Anushthp cchanda and Pankti chhanda!

Vaayu: 7.7: *Aa Vaayo bhusha shuchipaaua nah, sahasram te niyuto vishvavaar, upo ter andho madyamayaami yasya Deva dadhishe poorvapeyam vaayave tvaa/* Vaayu Deva! you are the singular form of purity and its expansion world wide; you are indeed of the profile extensive reach and of innumerable ways and means of sanitization. Deva! your strength as also the sensitivity is of Soma Juice by the hallowed medium of yajna karyas. May we offer the attraction of the Juice to refresh yourself. 13. 27 : *Madhu vaataa rutaayate madhu ksharan ti sindhavah, maadhveerna santvoshadhee/* May to those blessed participants of Yajna karyaas, Vaayu the essential life’s energy flows surge forward fast, especially saturated with sweetness. 14.12. *Vishvakarmaa tvaa saadyantarikshasya prushthe vyachasteem prathasvateemantariksham yacchhaantariksham drungaantariksham maa higung seeh/* Vishvasmai *praanaayapaanaaya vyaanaa- yodanaaya pratishthaayai charitraaya/* Vaayu drushtvaabhi paatu mahyaa *svastyaa cchadrishaa shantmena tayaa devatayaangirasvad dhruvaa seed/* The desirable ones! Prajapati the Designer of the Universe had appropriately placed Vayu Deva pride of place viz. the antariksha; that is why the Five Segments of Vaayu are deposited viz. Praana- apaana-vyaana-udaanaadi praanas or the Life Energies. May therefore the antariksha be fortified and sanctified!

SAAMA VEDA:

Dyaava- Prithivi: 378-379: *Ghritavatee bhuvanaa naamabhishtriyovaa Prithivee madhu dudhe supeshasaa, dyaavaa prithivee varunasya dharmanaa vishkabhite ajare bhuri retasaa/* Ubhe yadindra *rodasee aapa praadoshaa iva, mahaantam tvaa maheenaam samraajam charshaneenaam, Devi janitrayajeejandbhudraa janitryajeejanat/* Indra Deva! Dyuloka and Bhulokaas are the ever radiant aadhaara lokas which are uniquely widespread signages of Parameshwara where happy winds and sweet waters are aplenty controlled by you. Even as Devi Aditi who gave you birth, you are the Supreme Head and Controller of Devas and Manavadi samasta pranis in three lokas of Bhur- Bhuvah-Svargas. Indeed, Bhumi and antariksha are the universal parents.

Virat Purusha and Srishti: 617-22: *Sahasra Sirsha Purshah Sahasraakshah Sahasra paat, Sa Bhumim Vishvato Vritvaa Atyatishtad -dashaagulam/* (Bhagawan/ Maha Purusha who has countless heads, eyes and feet is omnipresent but looks compressed as a ten-inch measured Entity!) *Tripaadurdhwa udait Purushaha paadosyehaa bhavaatpunah, tato Vishvan gvyakraamat saashanaa nashaney abhi/* (Of three-fourths of the Unknown apart, one fourth emerged as the Universe and the Maha Purusha is manifested across the Totality of the Beings including the animate and inanimate worlds) *Purusha ye Vedagum sarvam yadbhutam yaccha bhavyam, Utaamritatwa--syeshaanah yadanney naa ti rohati/* (He is and was always present submerging the past and the future and is indestrucible and far beyond the ephemeral Universe) *Yetaavaa nasya mahimaa atojjyaaya gumscha Puurushah, paadosya Vishwa Bhutaani Tripaadasya amritam Divi/* What- ever is visualised in the Creation is indeed a minute fraction of His magnificence and what ever is comprehensible is but a quarter of the Eternal Unknown) *Tato viraadajaayata viraajo adhi puurushgah, sajaato atyarichyat paschad bhumimatho purah/* It was that Virat Purusha who manifested Brahmanda and Jeeva Samudaya; He having assumed the first ever ‘deha dhari swarupa’ or physical form created prithvi and its Beings. *Manye vaam dhyaavaa prithivee subhojasau ye apratethaamamitamabhi yojanam, dyaavaa prithivee bhavatam syone te no munchitam*

hasah/ Simultaneously He assumed the form of Antariksha too. Both Bhuloka and Dyulokas! Let there be universal balance-stability-auspiciousness and sinlessness.

Agni: 1:41- 46: Tvam nascchinna uutyaa vaso raadhaamsi chodaya, asya raayastvamagne rathgeerasi vidaa gaadham tuche tu nah/ Tvamitsaprathaa asyagne traatarutah kavih, tvaam vipraasah samidhaana deediva aa vivaasanti vedhasah/ Aa no agne vayovridhah rayim paavaka shamsyam, raasvaa cha upamate puruspruham suneeteey suyashastaram/ Yo vishvaa dayate vasu hotaa mandro janaanaam, madhorna paatraa prathamaanyasmai pra stomaa yatyanyagne/Enaavo agnim namasorjo napaatamaa huve, priyam chetishthamaranti svadhvaram Vishvasya dotamamritam/ Sheshe vaneshu maatrusha sam tvaa martaasa indhate, atandro havyam vahasi havishkrita aadiddeveshu raajasi/ Readily approachable and shakti swarupa Agni Deva! Your energy and strength are unparalleled! Your capability and dynamism are beyond commendation. May your magnificence reach us with the gift of fertility and ‘santaana prapti’! It is that glorious Fire which ensures debility due to inadequacy and non availability of proper food intake; it is that Fire which ensures liveliness and activity of a body; it is that Fire which is readily worshipworthy as the proven medium of inviting Celestials for the attraction of food and juice. You are ever present and active in forests, maatru garbhas, and all over the earth as invisible but readily manifested. Yajna kartas possess the knack of ready visibility - by mere friction of wood and stones- and through your medium build up ladders from earth to upper lokaas! When ‘dharma maarga jnaata’ or the path of dharma is opened up with visibility, then that medium opens up vistas of divine vision; you are indeed the path finder from darkness to illumination. .

50-62: Shrudhi shrutkarna vagnibhirdevairagne sayaavabhih, aa seeta bahirshi mitro aaryamaa praataryaavabhiradhvare/ Pra daivodaso agnrideva Indro na majmanaana, anu maataram prithiveemvi vaavrute tashou naakasya sharmani/ Adha jmo adha vaa divo brihato rochanaadadhi, ayaa vardhasva tatvaa giraa mamaa jaataa sakrato pruna/ Kaayamaano vanaa tvam tanmaatru rajagannapah, na tatte agne pramrishe nivartanam yad duuree savitraa bhuvah/ Ni tvaamagne manurdadhe jyorirjanaaya shashvate, deedetha kanva ritajaata ukshito yam namasyanti krushtyah/ Devevo dravinodaah purnaam vivishtha vaachicham, udvaa sinchidhvamupa vaa prunadhvamaadidvo deva yohate/ Paitu brahmanaspatih pra devyetu sunrutaa, acchaa veeram naryam pangtiraathasam devaa yagnam nayantu nah/ Urthvavoo shuna uutaye tishthaa devo na savitaa, urthvom vaajasya sanitaayadanjibhirvaadadhbhir vahniyaamahe/ Pra yo raaye nineeshati martom yaste vaso daashat, sa veeram dhatte agna ukthashamsinam tmanaah sahasraposhinam/ Pra vo yahnam puruunaam vishaam Devayateenaam, Agnimsuktobhivachobhir vrineemahe yam samidanya indhate/ Ayamagnih suveeryasyeshe hi soubhaagyasya, raaya eesho svapatnasya gomata Isho vritraha thaanaam/ Tvamagne grihapatistvam hotaa no adhvare, tvam potaa vishvavaara prachetaa yakshi yaasi cha vaaryam/ Sakhaayastvaa vavrumahe devam martaasa uutaye, apaam napaatam subhagam sudamsasam supratuur taminehasam/ Agni Deva! As we keep extolling to you, so you are pleased and as such we seek you to accept our sincere prostrations. You are of the glory of Indra Deva Himself; may we seek you to accompany Mitra, Aryama and other celestial dignitaries too on this occasion. In this context of our performance of yajna now, we consider you as Indra Himself and as such assume the high seat as the Chief of the Yajna now. May you thus extend your radiance across the earth and antariksha simultaneously and grant succor to us specially. Agni Deva! Your expertise in unifying the best of each and every material, especially in the context of yajna kaaryas. Now, just as Prakriti the Very Original Mother gave birth to Pancha Bhutas, may you grant the ‘essential best’ of all the Elements of Nature and excel yourself so that the quintessence is bestowed through this medium of yajna from Bhumi to Antariksha! Agni Deva! from the times immemorial you have been

granting light and heat to all of us on earth; indeed your glory has enabled through centuries the appearance of Maharshis and Mahatmas and enabled the practice of Sacrifices as the strong hold of Dharma. We therefore worship you most sincerely and humbly in the continued sustenance of the values of our existence! Yajna Deva! you are the bestower of wealth and health; Hota! as you activate your 'sruva' or the wooden ladle with ghee and make offerings in quick momentum, 'Deva ganas' are pleased and open up vistas of jnaana and material contentment. Devi Vaani the empress of Mental Calibre and of Speech would then unlock the doors of fame and guide the activists of the Sacrifices to further levels of glory. This is why our earnest request to Agni Deva to be comfortably seated, even with the splendour of Surya Deva added, do enjoy our eulogies and in return provide warmth of materialistic comfort and spiritual awakening too. Agni Deva! your 'saadhakas' not only grant food and contentment to thousands of dependents but more significantly provide the resilience to propagate illustrious sons and grandsons too. Your praises are performed by means of 'suktas' handed down the ages by Maharshis as their utterances are of depth of meaning surfeit with their own mental purity. Agni Deva! you are the Lord of wealth, victory, and 'Purushardhaas' of Dharma- Ardha-Kaama- Mokshas; go-pashu sampatti, dhana- dhanya-sat-santaanaas! Indeed, you are also the 'adhipati' or the chief of evil energies which always keep us under duress; may you bless us the helpless to destroy our chains to freedom. Agni Deva! in this yajna kaarya, you assume all the roles: of the Grihapati-Hota-and so on; indeed you are the Singer-the Song-the Actor and the Act! You are also the beneficiary- benefactor-and the benefit itself!

Vaayu: Stanza 600: Niyutvaan vaayavaa gahyaam shukro ayaamite, gantaasi sunvato griham/ Vaayu Deva! have you been appointed to ride the glorious chariot to reach the Yajna Sthala! The famed Soma Juice is now ready and hence is our invocation to very kindly manifest here at once!

[Devas as per Vedas are considered in three divisions: Paarthiva- Vaayaveeya-Aakaasheeya. Now there also in three categories in bhoutika swarupas of physical properties: dust- varshaakaara-varsha yukta jhanjhaakara. But basically, Vaayu is soft; in the early usha kaalaas, breathing awakens from the bed! Lovers crave for the softness of wind! Indra and Vaayu are stated to be Yugala Devas as they set the pace, momentum and force too. But Yogis use Vaayu as 'Jeeva saadhanas' or instruments of Life in three major stages: Jaagrat- Svapna- Sushupti or Awaken ness-Dream stage-Deep Sleep]

ADHARVANA VEDA:

4.39.1-4: Prithivi-Agni-Vaayu- Antariksha: Prithivyaagnaye samanamantsa aadhnot, yathaa prithivyaamagnaye samanamannevaa mahyaam samnamah sam namastu/ Prithivee dhenustasyaa agnir vatsah saa meginaa vatseneshamurjam kaamam duhaama/ Antarikshe vaayave samanamantsa aadhnot,yathanantarikshe vaayave samanamannevaa mahyam samnamah sam namnastu/ Antarikshamn dhenustasyaa vaayurvatsah, saa med vaayunaa vatseneshamurjam kaamam duhaam, aayuh prathamam prajaam posham rayim svaaha/ On the Earth, all the Beings express their greetings.Pancha Bhutas too respectfully greet Agni Deva and are ready to acknowledge the latter's glory. Prithivi is likened to a holy cow and Agni is like the calf. On the antariksha,Vaayu Deva claims superiority but here again Anrariksha is the Mother yet Vaayu is the calf! May the food, physical strength, longevity, progeny and all round fitness be bestowed to Agni Deva as the latter is the supreme connector of Bhumi to Antariksha anyway![Interdependence of Pancha Bhutas is vindicated thus!]

Prithvi: 6.17.1.4. *Yatheyam Prithivee mahee bhutaanaam garbhamaadadhe, yevaa te dhriyataam garbho anu suutam savitave/ Yatheyam Prithivee mahee dadhaaremaan vanaspateen, yevaa tedhriyataam garbho anusuutam savitave/ Yatheyam Prithivee mahee daadhaara parvataan gireen, yevaate dhriyataam garbho anu suutam savitave/ Yatheyam Prithiveem mahee vishthitam jagat, yevaate dhgriyataamn garbho anu suutam savitave/ Respected Devi! Just as this Vishaala Prithvi retains ‘beeja rupa garbha’ or seed like conception for the required full ten months, you too should retain the conception. Just as this vishaala prithvi holds the conception rather strongly and patiently for the required ten months of mountains and the attendant trees and vegetation, you too bear the conception likewise. Just as this vishaal prithvi mainains the garbha for the stated duration of ten months, Devi! you too retain in your womb the entirety of ‘charaachara srishti’ or the movable or immovable Beings with patience and fortitude till the delivery time and date. Why all this! Devi! what all these ‘jeeva rasis’ or praanis with life need to be assiduously reained safely till the breaking news of safe and facile delivery.*

Prithivi- Antariksha- 6.120.1-3: *Yadantariksham prithiveemuta dyaam yan maataram pitaram vaa jihimsima, ayam tasmaad gaarhapatyo no agni rudinnayaati sukrutasya lokam/ Bhumir maataaditirno janitram bhraataantarishabhyaah nah, dyaurnah pitaa pirtyaaccham bhavaatgi jaamimritvaa maava patsi lokaat/ Yatraa suhaardah sukruto madanti vihaaya rogam tanvah svaayaah, ashlonaa angairahutaah svarga tatra pashyema pitarou cha putraan/ May whatsoever sinful activities committed by the Pranis across the Trilokas viz. Dyuloka, Aakaasha and Prithivi, especially causing difficulties to their parents be destroyed by the sincere ‘garhapatya agni homa’ and be qualified to attain access to heaven. Indeed, Prithivi is our ‘maatru svarupa’ who provided birth to us; She is as great as Aditi Devi the Mother of Mothers! Antariksha is of the ‘bhraatru svarupa’ and Dyuloka is the ‘pitru svarupa’. May we the progeny be blessed to save ourselves from all of our sins and shover auspiciousness and happiness; may we not become ‘loka bhrashtaas’ on account of the ‘sanchita paapa karmas’. May all the noble hearted, yagjnaadi punya karma kartas be totally get rid of bodily disorders and infirmities and after happy ‘jeevana yaana’ let the ‘svarga yaana’ and pitru yaana’ be bestowed to us.!*

Agni Deva- Shatru Naashaka Sukta: 8.3.1-4: *Rakshohanam vaajimamaa jigharmi mitram prathishtha - mupa yaami sharma, shishaano agnih kjraturubhih samiddhvah sa no divaa sa rishah paatu naktam/ Agni Deva! you are the raakshasa vidhvamsaka, balavaan, and yagjna mitra! Wake up into high flames with pourings of ghee, and bestow to us happy feelings day in day out by keeping far away demonic shaktis. Ayo damshtro archishaa yaatudhaanaam upasprusha jaatavedah samiddhih, aa jihvayaa muuradevaan rabhasva kravyaado vrishtvaapi dhatsvaasan/ Jnaana swarupa Agni Deva! you are Ati-Tejasvi and Loha Danta or of Steel Teeth with high energy bites and as such have the capability of burning off to ashes a series of ‘raakshasha shaktis’ as their thick blood and chunky flesh gets burnt off by assuming the visage of Jvalaamukhi! Ubho bhayaavistrupa dhehi damshtrou himstrah shishaanolvaram param cha, utaantarikshe pari yaahyaagne jambhaih samdhehyaabhi yaatudhaanaan/ Agni Deva! do kindly sharpen your teeth in the form of ‘maha jvaalaas’ or high flames and ensure that none of ‘asuras’ might run off the peripheries of the agni kunda, as there could be always a risk of their flee; there are also ample possibilities of ‘asuras on antariksha’ and the far reach of your flames might not run away!*