



BALAVIN KURAL

A Balambika Divya Sangam Publication



Inside this issue:

- Editor's Desk
- A commentary on Bala Sahasranamam
- Food for Thought
- Know your Mythology
- Science Snippets
- Sponsor's List



Featuring this Month :

Know your mythology : Signs of Kali Yuga

Written by Thulasinathan, this month's mythological feature details the Pandavas and Draupadi seeking Goddess Durga's blessings for protection ... See page 06

Science Snippets

Written by Latha, the science snippets section draws a parallel between the Noah's Ark and the first avatar of Vishnu - Matsya Avatar... See page 09

"...what is the path we need to follow towards Aanmigam? ..Our esteemed Vedas have outlined all the homams that can be performed for obtaining a particular benefit, but they also .."

- *Aanmigam a Q & A with Smt. Asha Mannoharan...*

See page 04 & 05.



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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Dear BDS Members,

Namaskaram.

Hope you all tuned in to the Karthigai Deepam event that was observed at the temple.

We would like to thank all the sponsors, participants and BDS members who were instrumental in the success of this event.

In this month's newsletter, our President Smt. Asha Manoharan provides vital tips on how to get started on our Spirituality journey. This first part of this topic is published in this newsletter and the next 2 parts will be presented in the forthcoming editions.

Moving on to the Bala Sahasranamam commentary, the President explains the context behind the word "Sumano".

The "Know your Mythology" section presents an excerpt from the Mahabharata epic, where the 5 Pandavas and Draupadi seek Goddess Durga's blessings to protect them from being discovered, while being in exile in the city of Virata.

Most of us must have heard about Noah's ark and how God instructed Noah to construct a large vessel to protect his family and animals from the great flood. The science snippets section draws a striking parallel to the first avatar of Lord Vishnu, the Matsya avatar, where Lord Vishnu instructs Manu to build a boat to protect the saptarishis and animals from the impending Pralayam.

As this year draws to a close, let us thank Ambal for protecting and guiding us during this challenging time, and pray for Her continued blessings and grace to help overcome and vanquish this pandemic.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of the newsletter, and would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year in advance.

Sarvejana Sukhinobhavanthu.



Raja Bala as Mangala Gowri
roopam during Navratri 2019

அதன் பொருள் மல்லிகை மலர் போல் அழகானவள் எனபதாகும். பாலா மல்லிகை மலர் போல் வெள்ளை உள்ளம் கொண்டவள். நறுமன லீலைகளை அள்ளித் தெளித்து செல்பவள்.நிலவு போல் இருக்கும் நம் மனதில் பூத்துக் குலுங்குபவள். இந்த மல்லிகையின் லூலைகளின் அழகை மேலே வர்ணிப்போம். மேரு மந்திர புராணத்தில் சொல்வது போல

மணியில்லா மலையும் இல்லை

வனப்பில்லா வனமும் இல்லை

கனியில்லா நிலமுமில்லை

கரும்பில்லா காடுமில்லை

அணியில்லா மகளிருமில்லை

அழகில்லா மைந்தருமில்லை

தணிவில்லா துறவுமில்லை

துய்தில்லா ஒழுக்கமில்லை

அதேபோல் பாலா இல்லாமல் உலகில் அழகில்லை.

நாமட இந்த மல்லிகை மணத்தானை கேட்க நினைப்பது,

அன்னை எத்தனை எத்தனை அன்னையோ

அப்பன் எத்தனை எத்தனை அப்பனோ

பிள்ளை எத்தனை எத்தனை பிள்ளையோ

முன்னை எத்தனை எத்தனை ஜன்மமோ

மூடனாய் அடியேனும் அறுந்திலேன்

இன்னும் எத்தனை ஜன்மமோ

என செய்கேன்

என்ற பட்டினத்தார் கேட்பதுபோல நாமும் கேட்க,

பாலாவும் பொறு பொறு என விடை அளிப்பாள். ஒன்றாய்

அரும்பி பலவாய் விரிந்து இவ்வுலகமெங்குமாய் நின்றாள்,

அனைத்திலும் நீங்கி நிற்பவள் , எந்தன் நெஞ்சினுள்ளே.

அதாவது ஒரே பராசக்தியாய் பல சக்தியாக பிரிந்து

விரிந்தும் இவ்வுலகமெல்லாம் நிறைந்து நிற்கின்றாள்.

அதேபோல் நீங்கியும் நிற்கின்றாள். அத்தகைய சக்தி என்

நெஞ்சுள் நீங்கா நின்று அருள் புரிகின்றாள் என்பதை நாம்

ஒவ்வோருவரும் உணரவேண்டும். அப்படி நாம்

உணரும்போது ஜிலலென்று வீசும் தென்றலில் கலந்து

மல்லிகையின் நறுமணம் போல நம் வாழ்க்கையில் பாலா

தென்றலாக வீசி நறுமணமாக நம்முள் நுழைந்து நம்

சிந்தையில் கலந்து ஆனந்தத்தை என்றும் அளிப்பாள்

என்பதனால் அவளை சுமனோ என்று ஆராதிக்கிறோம்.

Q & A WITH SMT. ASHA MANOHARAN



Raja Shyamala—The Minister, Ganapathy - The remover of Obstacle & Varahi - The Army chief guarding the temple.

AANMIGAM:

Today, we are going to discuss Aanmigam or Spirituality. So far, we have talked about Dharma, and the path that needs to be followed for attaining Moksha or enlightenment.

Most of the people in this world don't take responsibility for their actions. They either blame the situation or other people for their mistakes. These are the same breed of people who will always think that external materialistic things such as a car, house, money, etc., will bring them happiness. As a result, they will try to change their exterior environment, and not themselves. No amount of prayer or meditation or introspection will help these people. Quoting examples from our mythology, Ravana or Hiran-yakashipu fall into this group.

We have talked about the gunas or qualities of these people, now, let's talk about their actions. These people will always pray for some material benefit or temporary relief to their problems. Actions performed with this frame of mind is called Kamy Karma, and will detract us from starting on our spirituality journey. Performing Prayaschitta Karma, to remove or diminish the effects of Shani Dosha, is one such example.

Now, you may ask me, what is the path we need to follow towards Aanmigam? The most important thing to remember and practice is that we should never get attached to materialistic things, and not expect any benefits from our actions. This is also mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita.

Our esteemed Vedas have outlined all the homams that can be performed for obtaining a particular benefit, but they also stress that this should be executed within the guard rails of Dharma. Therefore, even if we have to follow the Karma Yoga path, it should be bounded by Dharma, so that we can move from one stage of Aanmigam to the next.

To sum up, unless we give up blaming the situation or others for our responsibilities, our Aanmigam journey will not commence. We will discuss more in the next Q&A session.

வாசகரின் கேள்வியும் திருமதி ஆஷா மனோகரன் பதிலும்

ஆன்மீகம்

ஆன்மீகம் என்பது தன்னைப் பற்றி, ஆத்மாவைப் பற்றி அறிவது. ஒருவன் தன்னை பண்படுத்துவதாலும், பக்குவப்படுத்துவதாலும் தன் வாழ்க்கையில் ஒரு நிலைப்பாட்டை அடைந்து, தன் வாழ்க்கைப் பாதையை புரிந்து கொள்கிறான். இதுவே ஆன்மீகம். சூத்திரம் சொல்லும் இந்த நிலைப்பாட்டை குணரீதியாக மூன்றாக பிரிக்கலாம். அது நாம் எந்த நிலையில் இருக்கிறோம் என்பதை நமக்கு உணர்த்தும்.

முதல் நிலையில் சூத்திரம் சொல்கிறது, 'நீ அனுபவிக்கும் துயரங்களுக்கு எதுவரை நீ மற்றவர்களையோ, சூழ்நிலைகளையோ குறை கூறிக்கொண்டிருக்கிறாயோ அதுவரை உன் ஆன்மீகப் பயிற்சி ஆரம்பிக்கவில்லை'. பெரும்பாலோர் இந்த நிலையில் தான் இருக்கின்றனர். இவர்கள் தங்கள் தோல்விகளுக்கும், கஷ்டங்களுக்கும் பிறரை குறைக்கொண்டே இருப்பர். பேராசை மிக்கவர்கள். தங்களை மாற்றிக்கொள்ள மறுப்பவர்கள். இவர்கள் முயற்சியும் வெளிக்காரணங்களை ஒட்டியே இருக்கும். இவர்கள் செய்யும் எந்த சாதகமும் பலனளிப்பதில்லை. தங்கள் பலகீனங்களை ஒப்புக்கொள்ள மாட்டார்கள்.

இவர்கள் செயலை இரண்டாகப் பிரிக்கலாம். ஒன்று காம்ய கர்மம். இரண்டு, பிராயச்சித்த கர்மம். இன்பத்தை கொடுக்கும் பொருளை அடைய செய்யப்படும் காரியம் காம்ய கர்மம். இதை செய்பவர்கள் ஆன்மீக பயிற்சியை ஆரம்பிக்கவில்லை.

துக்கத்தை போக்க செய்யும் கர்மாக்கள் பிராயச்சித்த கர்மாக்கள். ஹோமம் செய்வது, நவகிரகங்களைச் சுற்றுவது போன்றவை இவை. இதைச் செய்பவர்கள் இன்பத்தையும், துன்பத்தையும் வெளியிலேயே தேடிக்கொண்டு இந்த கர்மங்களை விடாமல் செய்துகொண்டிருப்பார்கள்.

பொருளை ஈட்டக்கூடிய பூஜைகளை விடுத்து, பலனை எதிர்பார்ப்பதை நிறுத்துவதே இதிலிருந்து விடுபட்டு முன்னேறும் மார்க்கம்.

வேதங்களே கர்மங்களை செய்யும் முறையை நமக்கு கூறியிருக்கிறது. ஆனால் அதனுள் உள்ள சூத்திரம் 'தர்மத்தின் வழியே' என்பதாகும். தர்மத்தைக் கடைப்பிடித்து, பலனை எதிர்பாராமல் கர்மங்களை செய்வதே நம்மை அடுத்த நிலைக்கு அழைத்துச் செல்லும்.

Kutti Bala in Her chariot during
Mandala Poojai Celebrations 2019



KNOW YOUR MYTHOLOGY:
DEVI DURGA'S PROTECTION



Yudhishtira asked Arjuna, "Where shall we deposit our weapons before entering the Virata kingdom? If we enter it with our weapons, we will surely alarm the civilians. Furthermore, the magnificent bow, the Gandiva, is known to all men, so the people will without doubt, recognise us at once. And even if one of us is discovered, we shall according to promise, have to pass another twelve years in the forest."

Arjuna said, "in the vicinity of a cemetery and near that inaccessible peak is a mighty Sami (Vanni) tree, with gigantic branches that loom over the darkness. No man or beast can spot us when we conceal our weapons in the branches. Also that tree is in the middle of an out-of-the way forest, inhabited by beasts and snakes. Stowing away our weapons on the Sami tree, we can enter the city without anxiety."

Arjuna prepared to deposit the weapons on the tree. He loosened the string of the large and dreadful Gandiva, known for producing a thunderous twang and destroying enemies, and with which he had conquered gods, men, Nagas and swelling provinces.

The warlike Yudhishtira, that repressor of foes, unfastened the undecaying string of his bow with which he had defended the field of Kurukshetra. The illustrious Bheema unstrung his bow by means of which that sinless one had vanquished in fight the Panchalas and the king of Sindhu, and with which, during his career of conquest, he had, single-handedly, disposed of innumerable foes. Hearing its twang, which was like the roar of thunder or the splitting of a mountain, enemies used to fly away in panic from the field of battle.

That son of Pandu, of coppery complexion and mild speech, who is endued with great prowess in the field, and is called Nakula in consequence of his unexampled beauty in the family, unfastened the string of his bow with which he had conquered all the western regions. The heroic Sahadeva also, possessed of a mild disposition, untied the string of that bow with which he had subjugated the countries of the south.

..Continued

Along with their bows, they put together their long and flashing swords, their precious quivers, and their sharp arrows. Nakula ascended the tree, and deposited on it the bows and the other weapons. He tied them on the parts of the tree he thought would not break, and where the rain would not penetrate.

The Pandavas hung up a corpse on the tree, knowing that people smelling the stench of the corpse would ward off any curious eyes from the tree. Also, for purposes of non-discovery, Yudhishtira kept these five names for himself and his brothers respectively, viz., Jaya, Jayanta, Vijaya, Jayatsena, and Jayatvala. They wanted to enter the great city, with the idea of passing the thirteenth year undiscovered in that kingdom, in agreement of the promise to Duryodhana.

Pandavas started towards Virata. Yudhishtira was very thoughtful, he would take a step towards Virata and then look back with hesitation. He would then say, "let's proceed." It was so evident that he was filled with anxiety. Sahadeva broke his silence and said, "Durga Ma is the solution." Arjuna recollected Krishna's advice to seek Durga Ma's blessings when anything seems impossible, hopeless or both.

All the Pandavas cleansed themselves and sat in a meditative posture together. Yudhishtira began to praise Durga Ma, the Supreme Goddess of the Universe, born to Yasoda, sprung from the race of cowherd Nanda, the giver of prosperity, the enhancer of the glory of the worshipper's family, the terrifier of Kamsa, and the destroyer of Asuras.

He saluted the Goddess who ascended the skies when Kamsa tried to kill that baby form, who is the sister of Vasudeva Krishna, one who is always decked in celestial garlands and attired in celestial robes, armed with scimitar and shield, and always rescues the worshipper sunk in sin, like a cow in the mire, who in the hours of distress, calls upon that eternal giver of blessings for relieving him of their burdens.

Yudhishtira, desirous of obtaining a darshan of the Goddess, invoked Her whole heartedly, and began to praise Her by reciting various names derived from hymns. He said, "Salutations to the giver of boons. The one identical with Krishna, O maiden, O Brahmacharini, O the one with body bright as the newly-risen Sun, O the one with a face beautiful as the full moon. Salutations to you, O the one with four hands and four faces, O the one with fair round hips, O the one that wears bangles made of emeralds and sapphires, O the one that bears excellent bracelets on your upper arm." The shiniest, O Goddess, as Padma, the consort of Narayana. your true form and Brahmacharya are both of the purest kind. Sable as the black clouds, your face is as beautiful as that of Sankarshana. In your six other arms, you bear a vessel, a lotus, a bell, a noose, a bow, a large discus, and various other weapons. You are the only female in the universe that possesses such attributes of purity".

O Goddess, O shiniest with a face that challenges the moon in beauty. With an excellent diadem and beautiful braid with robes made of the bodies of snakes, and with also the brilliant girdle round your hips, You are shiniest like the Mandara mountain encircled with snakes. You are shiniest also with peacock-plumes standing erect on your head, and you have sanctified the celestial regions by adopting the vow of perpetual maidenhood. You have slain the Mahishasura, and are praised and worshipped by the gods for the protection of the three worlds.

O the foremost of all deities, extend to me your grace, show me your mercy, and be the source of blessings to me. You are Jaya and Vijaya, and it is you that gives victory in battle. Grant me victory, O Goddess, and give me boons also at this hour of distress. Your eternal abode is on Vindhya, the foremost of mountains. O Kali, you are the Maha Kali. Capable of going everywhere at will, and bestowing boons on your devotees, you are ever followed in your journeys by Brahma and the other gods. They call upon you for relief of their burdens, and they bow to you at daybreak on Earth. There is nothing that cannot be attained by praying to you, be it offspring or wealth. You rescue people from difficulties whether when they are afflicted in the wilderness or sinking in the great ocean, it is for this that you are called as Durga by all.

You are the sole refuge of men when attacked by robbers or while trapped crossing streams and seas, or in wilderness and forests. Those men that remember you are never prostrated to situations, O great Goddess. You are Fame, you are Prosperity, you are Steadiness, you are Success; you are the Wife, you are men's Offspring, you are Knowledge, and you are the Intellect. You are the two Twilights, the Night Sleep, Light — both solar and lunar, Beauty, Forgiveness, Mercy, and every other thing. You dispel the fetters of your devotees, , ignorance, loss of children and loss of wealth, disease, death, and fear. I, who have been deprived of my kingdom, seek your protection. And as I bow to you with my head bent, O Supreme Goddess, grant me protection, O your eyes like lotus leaves. And be as boon-giving Truth unto us that are acting according to Truth. And, O Durga, kind as you are to all that seek thy protection, and affectionate to all thy devotees, grant me protection!

The focus and sincerity in the prayer of Yudhisthira the son of Pandu blessed by Yama Dharma brought Durga Ma's mercy. Upon hearing the hymns by him, there appeared a massive lion and upon which Durga Devi rode. She spoke, "Yudhisthira! Having vanquished and slain the ranks of the Kauravas through my grace, victory in battle will soon be yours. You shall again rule over the entire Earth. You shall, with your brothers, obtain great happiness."

"Through my grace, joy and health will be yours. Those in the world who will recite my attributes and achievements will be freed from their sins, and gratified. I will bestow upon them kingdoms, long life, beauty, and offspring. Even to those who invoke me, much like yourself, in exile or in the city, in the midst of battle or in danger from foes, in forests or in inaccessible deserts, in seas or mountains, there is nothing that they will not obtain in this world. This hymn, when recited with true devotion, will bring nothing but goodness to the devotee."

"Through my grace, neither the Kuru's spies, nor those that dwell in the country of the Matsyas, will succeed in recognising you all, as long as you reside in Virata's city!"

Yudhisthira and all the Pandavas along with Draupadi, prostrated. The almighty Durga Ma, Adishakti, blessed them and disappeared.

SCIENCE SNIPPETS : PRALAYA—THE GREAT DELUGE



Raja Bala Alankaram during Bala's Birthday celebrations in 2018

We often hear of the mention of the 'Great Deluge' or pralayam, in our Hindu mythology, where the entire creation is almost dissolved in a catastrophic flood. According to Matsya Puranam, Lord Vishnu is supposed to have first appeared as a little fish to King Shraddhadeva Manu, who out of compassion, placed the fish in a small cup. As the magical fish grew in leaps and bounds, King Manu moved the fish from cup to pitcher, then from a well to a lake, then river, and finally the ocean. The fish who was none other than Lord Vishnu, commanded King Manu to fill a boat with the *saptharishis*, and one of each species of plant and animal life, and escape the deluge that was soon to come. Several other civilizations also speak of such similar accounts where they escape the torrent, of which Noah's Ark is very famous as well. All such mythological narratives had some very observable parallels - the deluge was masterminded by God in an attempt to cleanse the universe of sin and evil, and the construction of a colossal boat carrying a chosen few with life forms of all species to preserve creation and prevent extinction. The Puranas and other religious books attest to this incident, and suggest that God's ultimate will is to restore peace and order, and thus the prevalence of dharma! In today's world, as we speak scientifically, floods are a result of man's interference with the balance of nature, which again is *adharma*. While wetlands and groves which are the sponges of the earth vanish, being replaced by urban settings, we witness miniature versions of 'pralayam' as rains overwhelm habitation. As the earth gets warmer due to industrialization, melting snowcaps inundate rivers, causing floods in low-lying areas. Mining for ores and gas, we hollow out the earth - a possible reason for earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides and sinkholes. This global disturbance of balance is enough to trigger nature's fury, making us susceptible to the consequences, and reminding us to keep our actions in control, so as to not incur nature's wrath.

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