



# BALAVIN KURAL

A publication from Sri Balambika Divya Sangam Trust®



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MALUR SRI BALAMBIKA TEMPLE

Address: Maruthi Extension 2nd stage, Kasaba Hobli, Malur Taluk, Kolar District, Karnataka - India

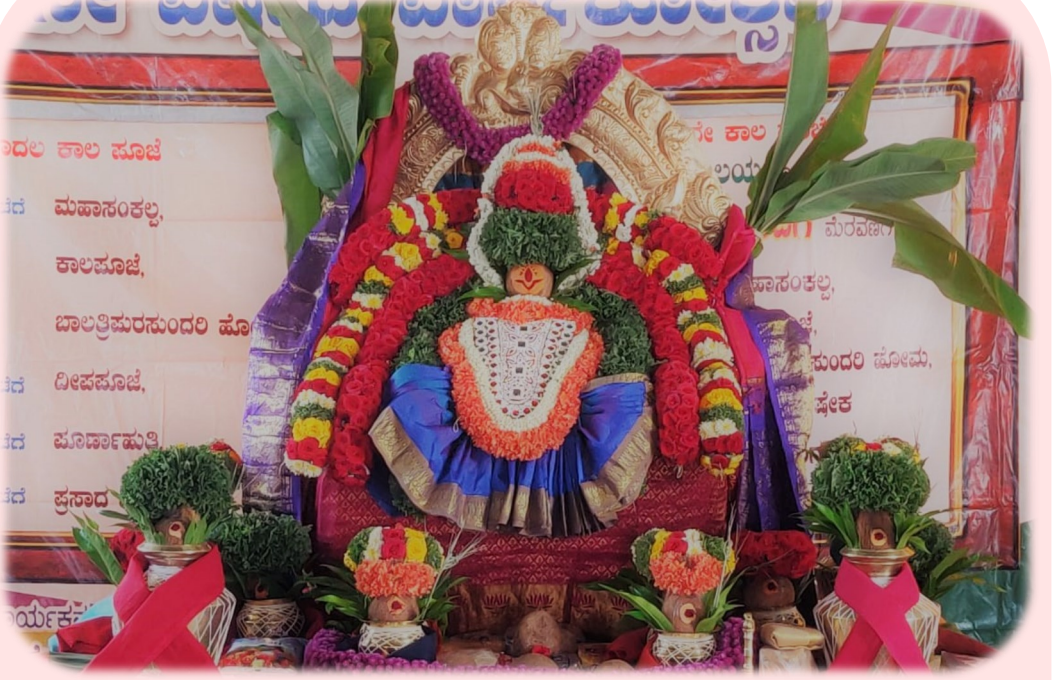
Website: <http://malurbalambikatemple.com>

Email: [contactus@malurbalambikatemple.org](mailto:contactus@malurbalambikatemple.org)

Instagram: [balambikadivyasangam](https://www.instagram.com/balambikadivyasangam)



## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Dear BDS Members,

Namaskaram.

As we bring this year to a close, it is time to reflect on the various challenges we faced this year, and thank Bala for blessing us and providing the strength to overcome them.

In this month's newsletter, we continue with the commentary on the Bala Sahasranamam, where our President Smt. Asha Manoharan provides the context and meaning behind the word "Kamala".

The Science Snippets section signifies the effects our humble moon has, in not only creating tides, but in also enhancing our spiritual reach during full moon days.

Moving on to Know Your Mythology, an interesting anecdote from the Mahabharata is presented where Lord Krishna foils Duryodhan's plan to become undefeatable.

The Devotee Speaks section outlines key tips from Smt. Shantha Radhakrishnan for building a positive attitude, and an article from Smt. Roopa V Rajan explains the reasoning behind chanting the names of the major rivers of India.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of the newsletter, please share your feedback and ideas to improve the content.

Sarvejana Sukhinobhavanthu.

இதன் பொருள் தாமரை போல் அழகானவள் என்பதாகும். பக்தர்கள் எப்போதும் அம்பாளை தாமரை மலருடன் ஒப்பிடுவார்கள்.

'மகா பத்மாடவி ஸமஸ்தாயை' என்றும், 'சிஞ்ஜான மணிமஞ்ஜீர மண்டித ஸ்ரீ பதாம்புஜா' என்றும், 'பத்மபாதம் பணிந்தபின்னே' என்றெல்லாம் நாம் அறிந்ததே. உலகில் நிறைய மலர்கள் உள்ளன, வண்ண வண்ண மலர்கள், நறுமணம் மிக்க மலர்கள் என்று பல வகையான மலர்கள் உள்ளன. அதையெல்லாம் விட்டு நாம் அம்பாளை தாமரை மலருடன் ஏன் ஒப்படுகின்றோம். இதற்கு ஒரு தத்துவம் கண்டிப்பாக இருக்கவேண்டும். அதனை இப்போது பார்ப்போம். பக்தர்கள் அவளை போற்றி, புகழ்ந்து பாடும்போது, சூரியனை கண்ட தாமரை மலரை போல அவர்களை நோக்கி தன் பார்வையை திருப்புகின்றாள். அம்பாளை பற்றி செளந்தர்யலஹரி

'கவீந்த்ராணாம் சேதஹ கமலவந பாலாதபருசிம்  
பஜந்தே யே ஸந்தஹ கதிசித் அருணா மேவ பவதீம்  
விரிஞ்சி ப்ரேயஸ்யாஸ் தருணதர ச்ருங்காரலஹரீ  
கபீராபிர் வாஃபிஹி விதததி ஸதாம் ரஞ்ஜநமமீ'

அதன் பொருள், அன்னையே, சிறந்த வித்வான்களுடைய மனம் என்ற தாமரை புஷ்பத்தின் கூட்டத்தை மலரச் செய்யும் இளம் வெய்யிலின் காந்தியைப் போலொத்த காந்தியோடு கூடினவளாயும், சிகப்பு வர்ணம் கொண்டவளாயும் இருக்கும் உன்னை யார் சேவிக்கின்றனரோ அவர்களுக்கு இனிமையான வார்த்தைகளால் சந்தோஷத்தை அளிப்பவள் நீ. இப்படியாக அம்பாளுக்கும் ஜீவனுக்கும் ஒரு உறவு உண்டாகிறது. இந்த உறவு இரண்டு விதமானது, ஒன்று அம்பாள் உலகத்தையும் நம்மையும் படைத்தவர். எனவே படைத்தவர் படைக்கப்பட்டவர் என்கிற உறவு. நாம் கர்மம் செய்பவர். கர்ம பலனை கொடுப்பவர் அம்பாள். ஆட்சி செய்பவர் அம்பாள், நாம் ஆட்சி பண்ணப்படுபவர்கள். நாம் பந்தப்பட்டவர்கள், அம்பாளோ அதற்கு அப்பாற்பட்டவள். இன்னொரு கோணத்தில் பார்க்கும்போது அநாத்மாவாக பார்த்த ஸ்தூல, ஸூக்ஷ்ம காரண சரீரங்கள் மூன்றும் ஆத்மாவை ஆதாரமாக கொண்டுள்ளன. அதாவது ஆத்மாவையும் அனாத்மாவையும் இணைத்தால் ஜீவன். ஆத்மா நித்ய சொரூபம், அழியாதது, ஜீவன் என்கிற காரண, ஸ்தூல, ஸூக்ஷ்ம சரீரங்கள் ஆத்மாவை ஆதாரமாக கொண்டுள்ளன. அம்பாளானவள் பரபிரம்மம். மனிதர்கள் அவளை பிரம்மத்தையும், மாயையையும் இணைத்து அம்பாளாக பார்க்கின்றோம். அதனால் நம்முள் இருக்கும் அநாத்மாவை ஜீவன் தியாகம் செய்தால், ஆத்மா என்ற அந்த நித்திய ஸ்வரூபம் அந்த பரபிரம்மத்தை பார்த்து, உணர்ந்து அதில் கலக்க முடியும். ஆத்மாவை தவிர இங்கு அனைத்தும் உபாதி. எந்த ஒன்று மற்றொன்றின் அருகில் அமர்ந்து தன் தன்மைகளை அதற்கு பொய்யாக புகுத்துமோ அதற்கு பெயர் உபாதி. உதாரணமாக, ஸ்படிகத்திற் அருகில் சிகப்பு புஷ்பத்தை வைத்தால் ஸ்படிகம் சிகப்பு நிறத்தை பிரதிபலிக்கும். இங்கு சிகப்பு புஷ்பமாக இருப்பது ஸ்தூல, சூக்ஷ்ம, காரண சரீரம். இதை நாம் உபாதியாக எடுத்துக்கொண்டால் இந்த சரீரங்கள் அனைத்தும் தங்களுடைய குணங்களை ஆத்மாவின் குணங்கள் போல காட்டுகின்றன. இதனை நாம் உணரும்போது ஜீவன் 3 சாதனைகளைக் கொண்டு ஞானத்தை அடைய முயற்சி செய்யும். அவை சரணம், அஞ்ஞான நிவர்த்தியை கொடுக்கும். இரண்டு மனம், சந்தேகங்களை நைவர்த்தி செய்துகொள்ள உதவும். மூன்று நிதிதியாசனம். ஞானத்தை ஞானநிஷ்டையாக மேற்கொள்ளும் பயிற்சி. இதன் மூலம் மரண பயம், பொறாமை, பாதுகாப்பின்மை ஆகிய அனைத்தும் நீங்கும். இப்படியாக ஞானத்தை அடைவதினால் அம்பாளின் பரபிரம்ம ரூபத்தை உணர்ந்து அவளை இந்த ஜீவன் கமலா என்று அழைத்து, மகிழ்ந்து பூரிக்கும் என்பதில் எந்த சந்தேகமும்

## KNOW YOUR MYTHOLOGY:

### *VASUDEV KRISHNA PLAYS DICE WITH SHAKUNI*

*BY THULASINATHAN KANDASAMY*

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Shakuni rolls the dice, and Krishna smiles while watching him calmly. Shakuni once again manipulated the dice to fall into his desired number. Krishna then spoke his mind by saying: “Humans always try to control the fruits of their actions and try to get these fruits as per their own wishes. Once a gambler holds the dice in his hands, he cannot hold them without playing a game. And, he does not realise that he doesn’t control the dice. They control him. Humans always worry about whether they will receive the rewards of their actions, but they never consider whether it is the right time to act.”

Meanwhile, in the Kaurava camp, upon remembering Ashwatthama’s message, Duryodhan makes his way into the nearby river to take a full dip. The plan was simple: Duryodhan was to reap the benefits of his mother’s decades of penance by acquiring invulnerability throughout his entire body by letting it be the first thing that she witnesses when she pulls down her blindfold. Having taken his dip, Duryodhan trudges to his mother’s tent but he suddenly hears the voice of none other than Krishna himself, calling out to him. Duryodhan instantly darts behind a tree to avoid embarrassment. Krishna playfully presses forward by saying, “It is quite a strange time to be taking a bath. So I take it this means that you’re heading down the path of austerity?” After playfully circling around the tree again to give Duryodhan a fright, Krishna continues by saying, “To most humans, clothes are a form of dignity, I personally think they also serve as a bondage of arrogance. But I wonder, what do clothes mean to you Duryodhan?”

Back in Shakuni’s end of the campsite, (another) Krishna is still playing dice with him. Shakuni, after winning again, jovially says, “This is not a gamble, this dice will always favor me and me alone. Your infinite wisdom on Karma or what is right cannot possibly hinder my certain victory.” Krishna says that “This reminds me of selective belief, I find it interesting that humans always scramble to the nearest temple when they encounter an ounce of misfortune, but don’t even think about it when they’re facing fortune or success.” Krishna continued, “These people never fully believe in the Gods or in themselves. Life is not a game that is confined to a single board such as this one.” In a mischievous voice, Krishna said, “the game is afoot in places outside of this tent.” The grin on Shakuni’s face was instantly wiped away and replaced with a look of serious concern. Krishna then leaned back and said, “Which is why I believe in karma, rather than the outcome of a certain rigged pair of dice. It’s your turn by the way.”

Back outside, Duryodhan loudly said, “Leave Krishna! This doesn’t concern you, out of my way!” Krishna retorts by saying that, “Well, nobody can really stand in anybody’s way. This war should serve as evidence to that.” He meets Duryodhan’s eyes and says, “I only give knowledge based on my power and the listener accepts it based on their dharma.” Duryodhana then hot headedly said, “Dharma, that’s rich! Coming from you of all people Krishna, who has tried to use every underhanded trick known to mankind in order to beat me.” To this, Krishna responds, “I did say that all is fair in this war. But you are the one to be blamed for your failures. You take actions without caring about their consequences. Let’s take now for example, where you are trying to meet your own mother while being as naked as the blue sky in order to make your entire body indestructible.” Duryodhan who now broke into a panic, said, “Y-you! How do you know that??” Krishna says, “I know that someone can offer protection as a charity and I saw Ghandari entering Kurukshetra.” Duryodhan says, “I will become invincible and kill all the pandavas tomorrow.”

Krishna reminds him, "I implore you to think about the effects of your deeds. Otherwise, as usual, your victory will become a defeat." Krishna says, "Well, I've had my fun. I don't wish to trouble you any further. I'll be on my merry way now." But Duryodhan calls out to him by saying, "Wait! What do you mean? Say it in simple words." Krishna says, "Well, if you insist. You are going to your mother completely naked, and dharma and traditions say that if a young man goes to his mother in such a state, her death could be in his hands." Such a sin could definitely cause his defeat. Duryodhan then boldly says, "Well in that case, I'll just cover my waist down and my thighs with a leaf. Makes doing this easier, and it's against mace fighting rules to strike below the waist. So I shouldn't be facing combat problems either. So it sounds like I will still win." Krishna smiles and then says, "Glad I could be of help, have a good night now."

Back at Shakuni's tent, Krishna skips his chance of throwing the dice again and tells Shakuni to use his chance. "You're being awfully cheerful, need I remind you that you must take the Agnisnaan if you lose?" Krishna agrees, "Only if I lose". "You know I have never understood the way you think," Shakuni says in laughter. Krishna says, "Which of my leelas have you ever understood?" Krishna tells, "Anyone that plays to win must either win or lose. I play the game to play the game. I only perform a leela." Krishna explains, "Leela is a state where there is no attraction to victory and neither is there fear of defeat, only the delight of living life." Shakuni tells him, "lies, so you're telling me that the pandavas' victory means nothing to you?" Krishna says, "it doesn't matter if a pot of grain has some grains at the top and some at the bottom - in the end, they will all become food. Everyone has to die one day, but importance lies in when they die and how. I am not bound to anyone by attraction and I only believe in Dharma's victory." "Well, tomorrow, Duryodhan will strike every single pandava down and claim victory. Take that as your dharma's victory." Shakuni gloats. Krishna leans forward and says, "Now are you sure about that? Do you really think he is completely invulnerable, because I think he might have a certain weak point even after gaining his newfound power." Shakuni's face contorted into a face of anger mixed with terror. He insults Krishna by saying, "You cheat! What have you done this time?" Krishna narrates his conversation with Duryodhan. Now, Shakuni tries to leave the tent. Krishna says, "I did not throw the dice even once. I take it this means you have accepted defeat?" "This game isn't over! Wait right here, I have something to do." Furious, Shakuni calls for Duryodhan and quickly limps towards the main camp. Duryodhan now has a banana leaf around his waist. He enters the tent where Gandhari is waiting. Gandhari tells Duryodhan that her penance will protect him. Gandhari begins to remove her blindfold.

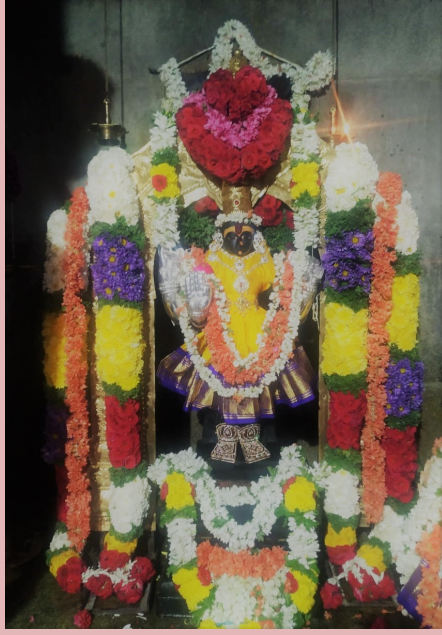
Shakuni reaches the camp and meets Ashwathama. They both go towards the tent to find Duryodhan.

Gandhari removes the blindfold and opens her eyes. Beams of light are shown leaving her eyes and surrounding Duryodhan's uncovered flesh. Once the process is complete, Duryodhan roars as he feels his new-found strength.

Shakuni and Ashwathama arrive at the tent but they cannot enter, as it is on fire. After the fire slowly died down, they both entered the tent to witness Duryodhan unconscious, lying spread eagle on the ground. Gandhari looks at him but quickly pulls up her blindfold. Shakuni and Ashwathama arrive, in dismay, Shakuni says, "NO! The part of his body that's been covered isn't invulnerable, he's still beatable if he's struck at his thighs. This is Krishna's doing! Curses!"

Back in Shakuni's tent, Krishna picks up his dice and says, "Can't really lose a game that never ends now, can you?," and crushed the cursed dice into dust.

## SCIENCE SNIPPETS : *THE EVER INFLUENTIAL MOON* BY LATHA CHAKRAVARTHY



Raja Bala Alankaram during 4th Annual Temple Anniversary Celebrations in 2021

Twelve times a year, the moon - our celestial lantern, goes through a process of waxing and waning, a constant reminder of the cyclic pattern of nature. For each of those 12 days, when the moon is full and shining like a divine beacon in the sky, we gaze at the moon and feel enchanted by its fullness. Pournami has always been held in high regard and esteemed as a very special day for pooja. There are several stories, myths and anecdotes of victories, enlightenment, and divine descriptions that suggest a positive connotation to pournami. Scientifically, the moon exerts a gravitational force on the earth and its inmates. We can visually perceive it in the ebb and flow of tides. Being composed of about 60% water, we mortals also experience this effect, although we may not be so much aware of it. On pournami days, the moon's effect is in full force. It enhances those qualities that we represent or strive for. Specifically, it further accentuates our spiritual fervor if we aspire for it. Thus, any japam or spiritual seeking on our part achieves a higher level of fulfilment that is believed to be thousand-fold on the day of pournami. The 27 nakshatrams are believed to be Chandran - the Moon's wives. As Chandran cycles through the waxing and waning days of the month, he covers all 27 nakshatrams in those 28 days. Interestingly, every one of the twelve pournamis occur on the same specific nakshatram year after year: **Thai Poosam** (mid Jan-mid Feb), **Maasi Magham** (mid Feb-mid Mar), **Panguni Uttiram** (mid Mar-mid Apr), **Chittirai Chitra** (mid Apr-mid May), **Vaikasi Vishakam** (mid May - mid Jun), **Aani Anusham** (mid Jun-mid Jul), **Aadi Pooram** (mid Jul-mid Aug), **Avani Tiruvonam** (mid Aug - mid Sep), **Purattasi Poorattadi/Uttirattadi** (mid Sep - mid Oct), **Aippasi Ashwini** (mid Oct - mid Nov), **Karthigai Krittika** (mid Nov - mid Dec), **Margazhi Mrigasheerasham/Thiruvadira**i (mid Dec-mid Jan). Apart from these dates being associated with festivals, Thai Poosam is the day Ambal presents Lord Murugan with the Vel, Maasi Magham represents spiritual cleansing, Panguni Uttiram signifies the divine union of the Lord and His consort, Chittirai Chitra signifies liberation from past sins, Vaikasi Vishakam is Balambika's birthstar, Aani Anusham is the day of Guru Pournami, Aadi Pooram is Andal's birthstar, Avani Tiruvonam is the day of Gayathri Japam, Purattasi Poorattadi/Uttirattadi signifies the start of the Mahalaya Paksham, Aippasi Ashwini signifies Shiva annam abhishekam, Karthikai Krittika is famous for Annamalai Deepam, Margazhi Thiruvadira is famous for Arudra Darisanam. These special pournami days are set in stone year after year, and are perfectly aligned for those who want to take that extra step towards God.



*Building Positive Attitude Using Affirmations  
by Smt. Shantha Radhakrishnan..*

### BUILDING POSITIVE ATTITUDE USING AFFIRMATIONS

Find a quiet place, Take a few deep breaths.

Repeat the following statements as many times as possible,

- ✓ I am an open channel of creative energy.
- ✓ I am always in the right place at the right time successfully.  
engaged in the right activity,
- ✓ I always stand in faith.
- ✓ I try my best to be a person of value
- ✓ I always communicate clearly and effectively.
- ✓ The more I have, the more I love to give.
- ✓ I love and appreciate myself.
- ✓ All my negative self-images and attitude are now dissolved.
- ✓ I feel the world is a beautiful place to be.
- ✓ I love myself to be surrounded with positive people.
- ✓ I always expect good things to happen.
- ✓ Developing a positive mindset takes practice until it
- ✓ Becomes a habit and then part of one's character.





*Why we remember rivers*  
by Smt. Roopa V Rajan

### **The Sanctity and Secrets behind the Seven Rivers**

While bathing, we have been taught from a young age to chant “Gangecha, Yamune Chaiva, Saraswathi, Narmadhe, Godavari, Sindhu, Kaveri Sanidhim kuru.”

There are sacred verses for rivers called Nadi Stuti. We sanctify the water with the above mantra. Our elders and Rishis made it clear that ‘Water from these seven sacred rivers has the ability to attract and transmit the frequencies of seven superior deities (Lord Shiva, Rama, Krishna, Hanuman, Ganapati, Datta and Goddess Durga). India is known as the most predominant sattva place on the face of earth.

Many yogis have undertaken penance on the banks of these rivers, so as to acquire the principles of the seven superior deities in the universe. This water from the ritualistic pot is used for the consecration of the idol of the deity by sprinkling on it (Abhishekam). The subtle sound frequencies from the ritualistic pot absorb the frequencies of the seven superior deities in the water, and effectively transmit them into the atmosphere and into our aura. Since these subtle sound frequencies have a higher speed, they are transmitted with the help of the absolute water element. This water can be used as holy water (tirtha), and when consumed with true spiritual emotion and devotion, the same divine frequencies with the existing dormant five vital energies surround the navel in the body of the devotee.

How do names of rivers and the attributes of rivers help when invoked?

#### **Ganga**

Ganga river is personified and worshiped as a Goddess. It is believed that bathing in the Ganga cures illnesses, washes away sins and helps the individual to attain moksha and freedom from the cycle of life and death. Remembering and invoking Ganga, helps one to purify thoughts and clear remnants of past emotions and unwanted karma.

#### **Yamuna.**

According to yogic texts, Yamuna river symbolises the pingala nadi, which is associated with solar energy. It is believed that one is absolved of the fear of death and freed from all sins, upon bathing in the waters of the Yamuna, leading to the liberation of the soul. Bathing in its waters is also believed to enhance one’s goodness and remove worries and fears about outcome.

#### **Saraswati**

The Goddess Saraswati endows human beings with the powers of speech, wisdom, and learning. She has four hands representing four aspects of human personality: mind, intellect, alertness and ego. Saraswathi is also known as the Flowing One. Invoking Saraswati river encourages intuitive understanding of what feels ‘right’ as well as learning to trust one’s own instincts.



*Why we remember rivers*

..... *Continued*

### **Narmada**

Narmada is delightful. Narmada, is often called Shankari, i.e., daughter of Lord Shankar (Shiva). Invoking the Narmada River “arouses tender feelings in others”. All the pebbles rolling on the bed in the Narmada river are said to take the shape of Shiva and His emblem. These pebble stones of Narmada are lingam shaped, called Banalinga, and are sought after for daily worship.

### **Godavari**

Godavari is a river which can purify the sin of Gohatya, which is said to be the worst sin committed by anyone. Gautama confor Godavari to emerge and purify the sages of their sins. Remembering and bathing in the River Godavari, helps to overcome the worst hidden sins to elevate the soul.

### **Sindhu**

According to the Mahabharata (Bhisma-parva, ch.6, Verse 48), the mythical origins of the Sindhu River is stated as being due to the austerities of King Bhagiratha in Satya-yuga. Bhagiratha was attempting to free his ancestors from bad karma and their suffering in the lower planetary systems of Patala-loka. After performing his penance, Bhagiratha summoned the sacred River Ganges to Earth. The Ganges descended from the heavenly planets and thereafter formed six separate rivers - three flowing to the east (the Hladini, Pavani and Nalini), and three flowing to the west (the Suchakshus, Sita and Sindhu). The seventh branch, the Ganga, then flowed from the Himalayas to Ganga-sagara, entering the Bay of Bengal, and then down to Patala-loka. Sindhu, with her might, gives one a self-designation, meaning “honorable, respectable and noble”. She removes suffering from planetary and ancestral bad karma. Sindhu in might, surpasses all streams that flow. Her roar is lifted up to heaven above the earth; she puts forth endless vigour with a flash of light.

### **Kaveri or Cauvery**

The Kaveri is known as Dakshina Ganga, or the Ganges of the south, and the whole of its course is holy ground. According to legend, a girl named Vishnumaya or Lopamudra, the daughter of Brahma was born on earth. Her divine father permitted her to be regarded as the child of Kavera-muni, a mortal. In order to obtain beatitude for her adoptive father, she resolved to become a river whose waters should purify all sin. Hence it is said that even the holy Ganges resorts to an underground path once a year to the source of the Cauvery, to purge herself from the pollution contracted from the crowd of sinners who have bathed in her waters. After she flowed as a river, she was called Cauvery or Kaveri, as she was Kavera’s daughter. Wanting to be the holiest river, she prayed to Lord Vishnu and asked to be made holier than the Ganga. Vishnu explained that the Ganga was holy as it originated from his feet. He said Cauvery would be his garland, close to his heart, and therefore, more sacred. And so, it is said that three of the holiest shrines of Vishnu are found at Srirangapatna, Shivanasamudra, and Shrirangam called Adi-ranga, Madhya-ranga and Antya-ranga respectively: in every one of these places, the temple is on an island with the Cauvery encircling it, just like the mythical garland!

From this came the other legend that the Ganga comes via an underground route once every year to Cauvery for a cleansing dip. And so, it was that just as Vishnumaya had craved, she flowed on Earth as Cauvery serving humanity.

Invoking the Cauvery river absolves our Maya and sins in our lives, to obtain beauty to garland ourselves in thought and actions around Mahavishnu.

Bala Charanam

Gratitude.