

# BALAVIN KURAL

## Balambika Divya Sangam



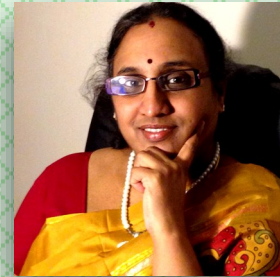
## Editor's Desk...

It is hard to believe that 2016 is coming to a close, and that the New Year 2017 is just around the corner. Balambika Divya Sangam's achievements this past year have exceeded its own expectations! With numerous Dolai utsavam tours in several cities, Bala Sahasranamam parayanam, regular annadanam, outreach activities, to name a few, it is only a matter of time before BDS becomes a household name. The success of our sangam is due to the selfless efforts of our volunteers and patrons, and as we march into 2017, our bar is set higher, and as always, we are determined to reach for the stars.

With 2017, comes the much awaited kumbhabhishekam, a culmination of the past several years' dedication and tireless work. Each and every one of us has contributed to this dream in our own way. As we read, the preparations for this event have already started and the groundwork is being set in place. It is now our duty to make it happen as seamlessly and flawlessly as possible. Being a part of a temple from inception to the final consecration happens only by God's grace, and we should feel blessed to be a part of this reality. Feel free to contact us to find out

how you can contribute towards the kumbhabhishekam of Malur Sri Balambika Temple.

In addition to our regular items, we hope you enjoy reading about Pattinathu Chetti – a poet siddha, and how he attained enlightenment. We often judge people around us by how they are today, and how they interact with us. But time plays tricks all the while, and those same people evolve and metamorphose into a divine entity, quite similar to how a fuzzy caterpillar transforms into a beautiful butterfly. Sage Valmiki, Purandara Das are all such great souls whose infamous past was swept away by the glory of their spirituality in their later years. Pattinathu Chetti's story will also kindle a spark in you that will make you think twice before your judgmental side kicks in! One never knows when God's *kataksham* will enlighten one, taking him to the purpose of his birth.



Mrs. Asha Manoharan  
President—BDS

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## Bala Speaks...



Prayer is the divinely appointed means, through which one can commune with God.

The effectiveness of prayer is not found in numbers, frequency, or fervency of those praying. Prayer is about communication with God, the means to get closer and to understand the working of Nature. Prayer is a gift from God to bring Her children closer and help them find the purpose of their lives. Sometimes, prayer can resemble a business meeting. You lay the docket of your prayer list before God and adjourn for the rest of the day. But prayer offers more than that. Prayer is more than asking God for things. One of the goals in prayer is to grow to know God, to reflect on Her action, admire Her creations and try not to be in war with yourself—but to be at peace, so that prayer can bring all the joy and happiness into your world.

### BDS Events Corner

- ◆ The Kumbhabhishekam work is proceeding at a fast pace with fervent anticipation of the 'once in a lifetime event'.
- ◆ Sanchara Dolai in and around the villages surrounding Malur is being taken up to spread the word.
- ◆ The Breakfast Meal program is in progress and many patrons have come forward to support this initiative.
- ◆ Bala Sahasranamam chanting groups are being encouraged at various locations as a run-up to Kumbhabhishekam.





2016-11-20 | Dolai @ Shri. Parthasarathy's residence

Thanks to Shri. Parthasarathy & family, who graciously welcomed Bala to their home and showered Her with love and devotion. It was a wonderful experience for all devotees who cherished Her presence amidst them.





# Marudhavanan

By Thulasinathan Kandasamy

மாதா வுடல் சலித்தாள் வல்வினையேன் கால்சலித்தேன்  
வேதாவும் கைசலித்து விட்டானே நாதா  
இருப்பையூர் வாழ்சிவனே இன்னுமோ ரன்னை  
கருப்பையூர் வாராமல் கா

Translation is given below:

Mother(s) grew bored and tired of giving birth to me (in each of my lives). Me, the one with powerful karma, grew tired of running from womb to womb (for each life). Vedha (Lord Brahma)'s hands also grew tired of writing my fate/karma and creating me. Oh! Lord Shiva that lives in Iruppaiyur, save me from entering another Karuppai (Mother's womb)yur.

That was written by Pattinathar (Pattinathu Chetti), a Siddha and Poet.

Pattinathu Chetti (Swetharanyan) and his journey to siddhi (Enlightenment) started unexpectedly. In fact, his life had many unexpected events. It was not only Lord Shiva who received teachings from his son Muruga, Pattinathar was also taught by his son.

It was a long while ago...

"Appa, I want to go sailing and try some business", said Marudhavanan, to Swetharanyar. "Did you hear that?", pride was overflowing in Swetharanyar's voice as he yelled towards his wife Sivakalai. "You said, he doesn't study too well. Now, he is interested in sailing. Look at the future business giant. My son is just like me!". Hugging Marudhavanan in great affection, Swetharanyar kissed him on the head and said, "I don't know how I am going to survive without you. However, what you are saying is very crucial for your life. Take all that you want. Refer my name anywhere you need help. Come back safely", his voice was choking both with joy and love. "Appa, I will return with the most valuable wealth that you have ever come across", said Marudhavanan with his eyes sparkling. Swetharanyar patted him on the back and turned to Sivakalai to give a smile that was filled with pride.

Marudhavanan was travelling with many experienced businessmen. Those businessmen were surprised to see what Marudhavanan was buying and selling. They saw him juggling several business tasks. However, he was wearing very normal outfits. Buying things that were not very worthy. Being kind and helpful to the needy. Not talking more than necessary and staying alone, for the most part of the journey. Days became weeks, months and years. Marudhavanan decided to return to Kaveripoompattinam.

Swetharanyan couldn't walk on earth, he was pretty much in the air, as his son was returning. He rushed to receive his son. Swetharanyar's joy knew no bounds on seeing Marudhavanan getting off from the ship.

Swetharanyar started thinking, when he saw that several sacks were unloaded from the ship, and loaded into the vehicles that he brought. He started wondering, "Marudhu isn't wearing any expensive clothing, including the ones that I personally bought for him. Also, why is he loading so many sack bags? Nobody brings home sacks. There were no strong boxes that carry wealth. Did he lose all the money? It was a huge amount".

As soon as they reached home, Marudhavanan ran to meet his Amma and Grandma. "Is he still a playful boy?", Swetharanyar got upset and pretty much collapsed on seeing varatti (dried cow dung that looks like pan cake) and husk in one of the bags. When his mother came to see him, he asked, "Where is Marudhu?" His voice and eyes showed his anger.

His mother replied, "He is playful as usual, just ran somewhere saying do not search for me". "Playful?!!!!", yelled Swetharanyar. Amma, see what your grandson has brought home". He threw varatti on the floor, only to see precious stones and jewels roll around and shatter. His eyes widened, "Where is Marudhu?" This time, his voice was awestruck and looking at the sacks, he said, "If one varatti has this much, then with all the sacks, we can buy kingdoms and queendoms. What about the husk?", he pulled out some and realized that it was pure gold. "Where is Marudhu?", this time he was looking at his mother. "Amma, I can't express how proud I am about my Marudhu. What is that you have in your hand?"

Swetharanyar's mother handed him the box saying, "I don't understand how quickly you switch your moods", and went inside. Swetharanyar opened the box to see a needle with no eyelet and a small palm leaf note that read:

“காதற்ற ஊசியும் வாராது காண் கடைவழிக்கே”

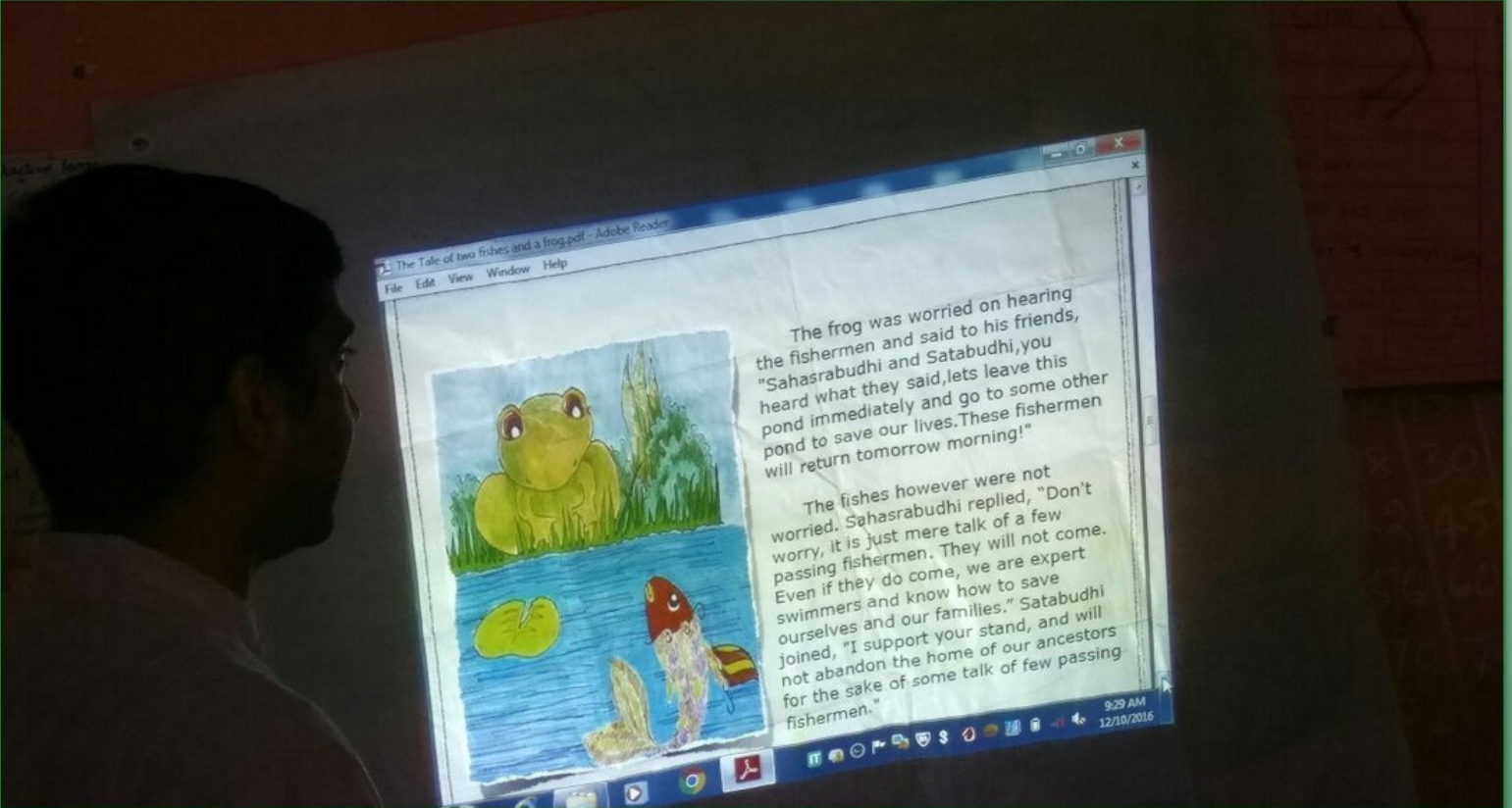
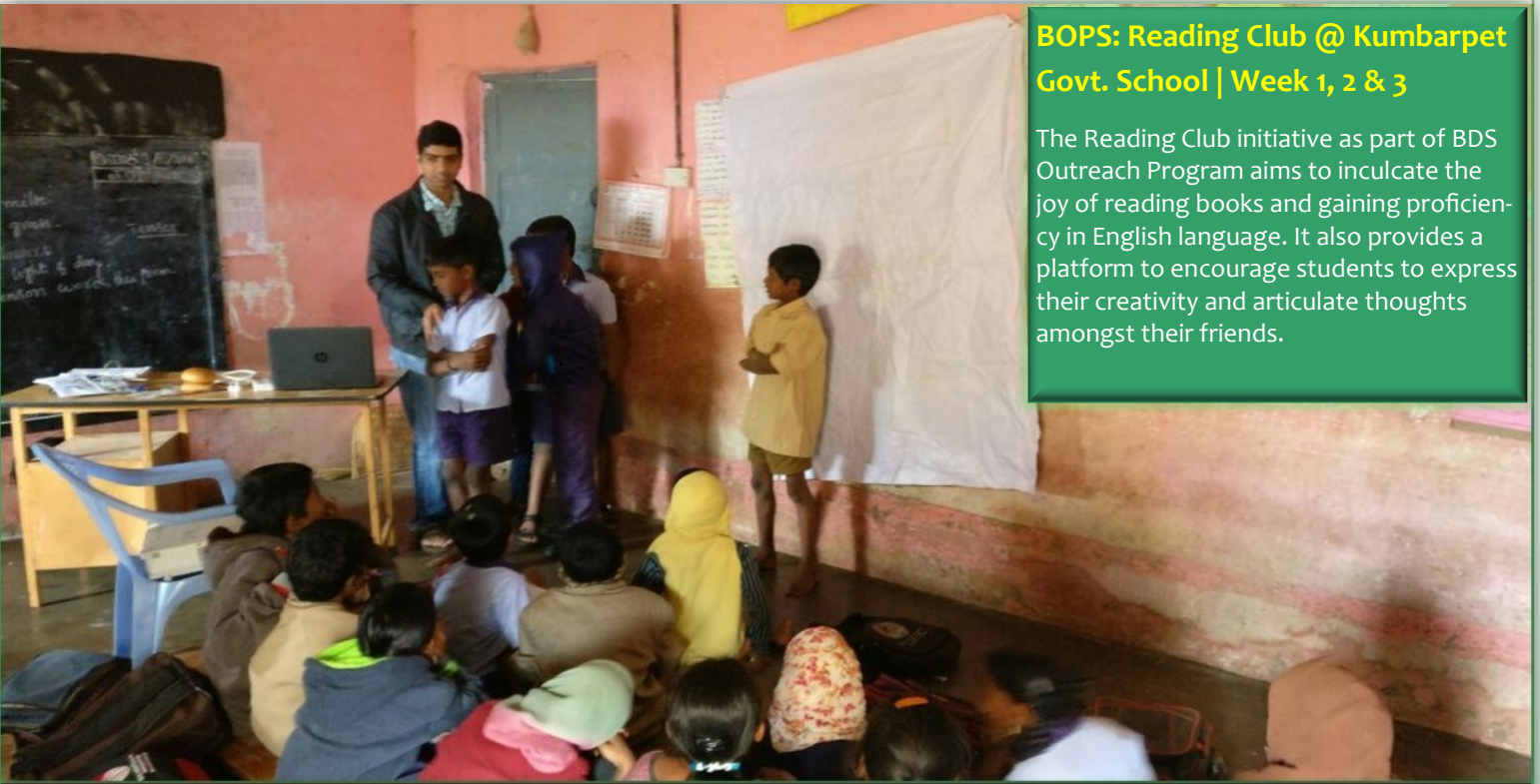
Meaning, this needle that doesn't have a hole/eyelet is worthless. Even this cannot come with someone for one's final journey.

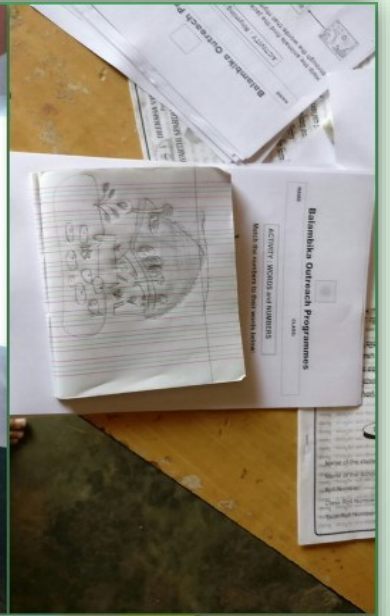
It was a very heavy and lethal blow for a highly materialistic person like Swetharanyar. He felt that Marudhu is also Murgu, who came to direct him towards a spiritual journey. And then, he pursued it.



### BOPS: Reading Club @ Kumbarpet Govt. School | Week 1, 2 & 3

The Reading Club initiative as part of BDS Outreach Program aims to inculcate the joy of reading books and gaining proficiency in English language. It also provides a platform to encourage students to express their creativity and articulate thoughts amongst their friends.





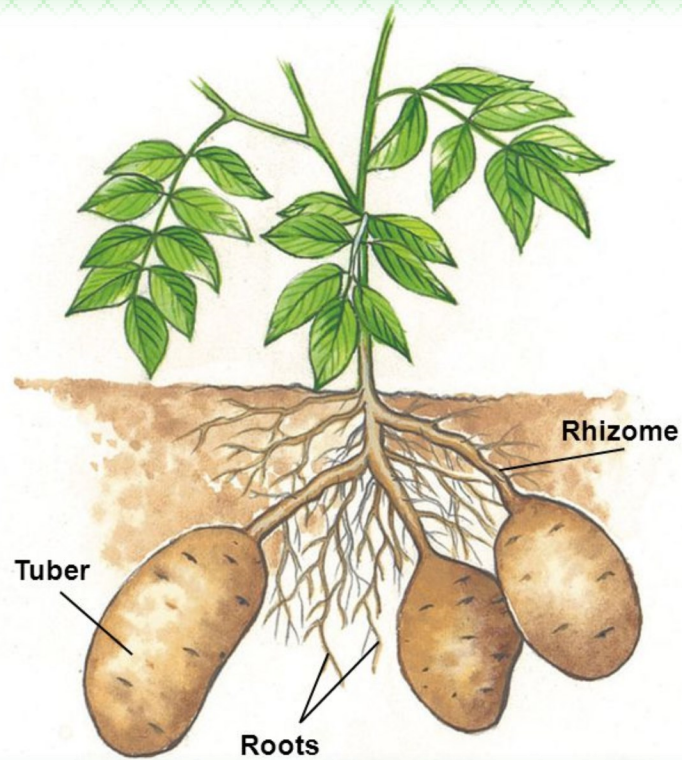


## Demystifying Science...

To eat or not to eat?

Have you ever wondered why certain 'aacharam' people don't eat potatoes and yams, but would include turmeric and ginger in their diet? Well, to start with, both of these types of vegetables grow under the soil, so what is their rationale if they say, "bhoomi keezhe valarum!" Let us recall that our intelligent ancestors never did anything without a

reason, which brings us back to why some veggies are taboo, while some are not. Science and its steadfast rules always come to our rescue, so here's a possible analysis...! The likes of ginger and turmeric are called rhizomes, and these plants grow laterally under the soil, with new plants sprouting at nodes. While harvesting these plants, we leave some part of the plant in the soil, and new plants keep growing. While this adheres to the concept of not annihilating a species – a scientific tenet, the basis of ahimsa, it is deemed alright to harvest turmeric and ginger. On the other hand, the infamous cousins – the potato families are not so lucky. The plant, also known as tubers, needs to be uprooted to benefit from its cultivation. While our wise elders conformed to these subtle rules, we have misconstrued the truth behind their actions. Not having sufficient evidence to back such beliefs, we are cynical and often scornful. Although this may be one of the reasons why the choices are selective, several other medicinal benefits of a vegetable might outweigh the rationale, and you might notice a stray outlier being dropped out of, or added to the 'list of edible veggies'. Let us give our forefathers their due credit for their scientific thinking, which they always seem to connect back to their spiritual world, as body, mind and soul is fed with the perfect food.

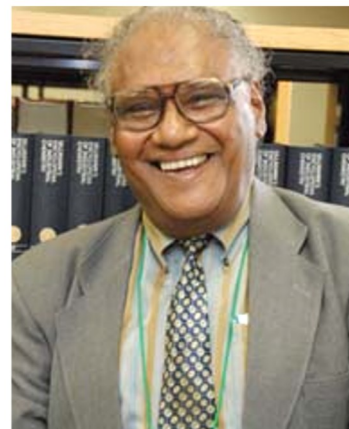


## Who am I?

- 1) I was born on 30th June, 1934 in Bangalore.
- 2) I was the only son of Hanumantha Nagesa Rao and Nagamma Nagesa Rao.
- 3) I was home tutored by my mother till middle school in Arithmetic and Hindu Literature.
- 4) I attended Acharya Patashala high school in Basavanagudi, which made a lasting influence on my interest in Chemistry.
- 5) My father enrolled me in a Kannada medium school, but used English for conversations at home.
- 6) I studied BSc at Central College in Bangalore.
- 7) Though I wanted to join IISc for a Postgraduate degree in Chemical Engineering, one of my teachers persuaded me to attend Banaras Hindu University.
- 8) In 1953, I was granted a scholarship for PhD at IIT, Kharagpur.
- 9) But, I was also provided foreign aid by MIT, Penn State, Columbia and Purdue Universities; I chose Purdue.
- 10) I completed my PhD in 1958, at the age of 24.
- 11) After completing graduate studies, I returned to Bangalore in 1959 to take up a lecturing position, joining IISc.
- 12) From 1963 to 1976, I accepted a permanent position at the Department of Chemistry in IIT, Kanpur.
- 13) I served as the Director of IISc from 1984 to 1994.
- 14) I am considered as one of the world's foremost solid state and materials chemists with over 5 decades of contributions in this field.
- 15) I am technophobic and had computers removed from my table.
- 16) I share the co-authorship of around 1500 research papers and 45 scientific books.
- 17) I was awarded India's highest civilian honour, Bharat Ratna, in 2013.

### C.N.R Rao

is an Indian chemist who has worked mainly in solid-state and structural chemistry. He currently serves as the Head of the Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India. Rao has honorary doctorates from 60 universities around the world.





**Breakfast Meal @ Malur**  
 We thank our generous patrons who made this possible...

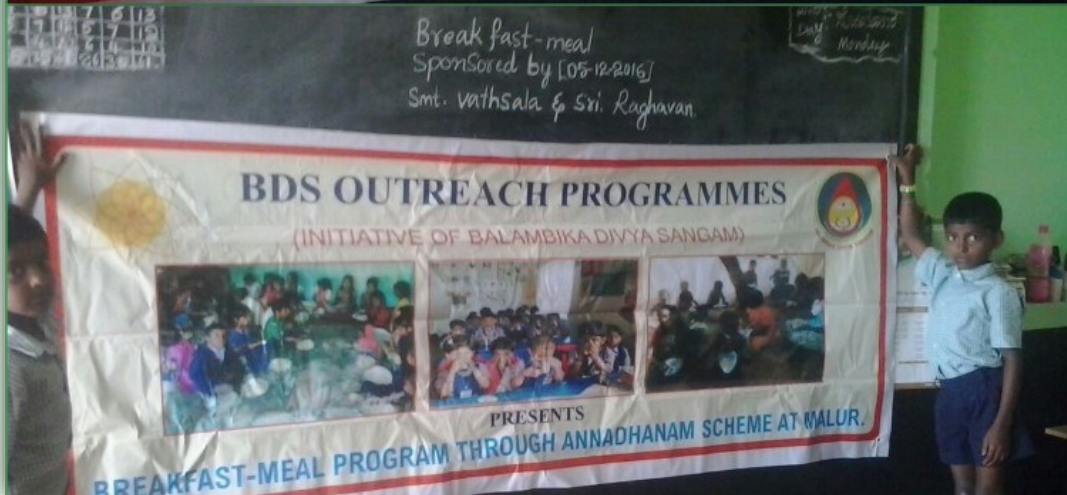
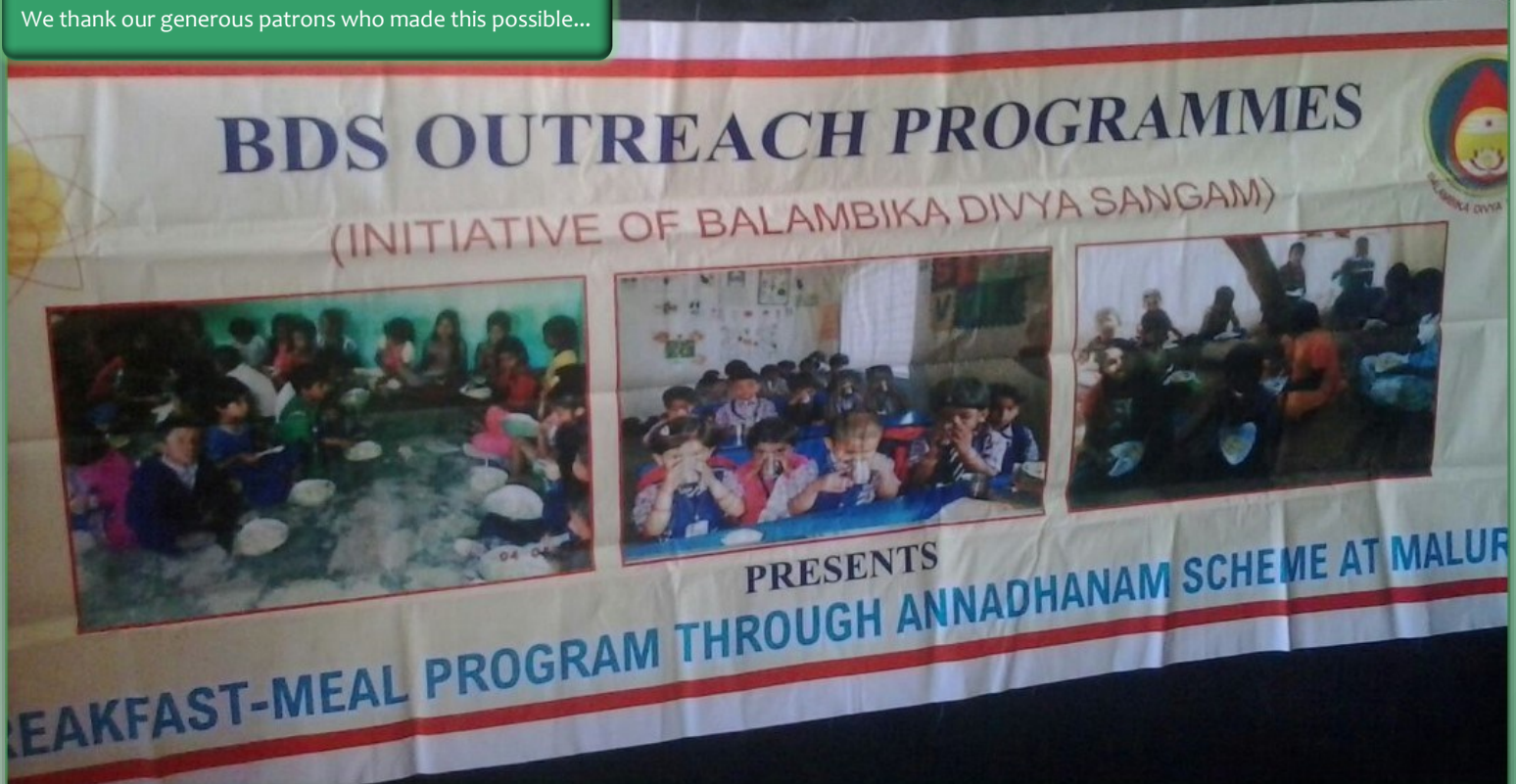




Break fast-meal  
 Sponsored by [07-12-2016]  
 Sri. V. Mahalingam & family.  
 Sri. Dhruv. & family.

**Breakfast Meal @ Malur**

We thank our generous patrons who made this possible...



## Indus Valley Civilization: Writing system

The script of the Indus Valley Civilization (also known as the Harappan script) consists of a corpus of symbols produced during the Kot Diji and Mature Harappan periods, between 3500 and 1900 BCE. Most inscriptions containing these symbols are extremely short, making it very difficult to judge whether or not these symbols constitute a script used to record a language, or even symbolise a writing system. In spite of numerous attempts, the script remains undecipherable. There is no known bilingual inscription to help decipher the script, nor does the script show any significant changes over time. After 1900 BCE, the systematic use of the symbols ended, following the final stage of the Mature Harappan civilization. A few Harappan signs have been claimed to appear until as late as around 1100 BCE (the beginning of the Indian Iron Age).

The first publication of a seal with Harappan symbols dates to 1875, in a drawing by Alexander Cunningham. Since then, over 4,000 inscribed objects have been discovered, some as far as Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). Some scholars have argued that the Brāhmī script (oldest writing systems used in South and Central Asia during the final centuries BCE and the early centuries CE) has some connection with the Indus system, while others have asserted that the script had a relation to the Dravidian language. Furthermore, there have been several hypotheses claiming that the Indus script belongs to the Aryan language. However, there are major flaws with this hypothesis, the most significant one being that since the people belonging to the Indo-European cultures were always on the move, horses played a very important role in their lives. However, the seals excavated from the Indus Valley show no depiction of horses nor were there any remains of horses. Thus, it is very likely that there were no Aryan speakers present before 2000 BCE in the Indus Valley. Another

er not as popular hypothesis is that the Indus script belongs to the Munda family of languages. The Munda family of languages is spoken largely in Eastern India, and is related to some Southeast Asian languages. However, much like the Aryan language, the reconstructed vocabulary of early Munda does not reflect the Harappan culture. Therefore, its candidacy for being the language of the Indus Civilization is dim.

The writing system is intensely pictorial. The script is written from right to left, and sometimes follows a boustrophedonic (an ancient method of writing using alternate left-to-right and right-to-left lines) style. Since the number of principal signs is about 400-600, midway between typical logographic and syllabic scripts, many scholars accept the script to be logo-syllabic (typically syllabic scripts have about 50-100 signs whereas logographic scripts have a very large number of principal signs). Two main characteristics of the script are modification of signs by the addition of diacritic-like marks (a mark, point, or sign added or attached to a letter or character to distinguish it from another of similar form, to give it a particular phonetic value) and combination of two or more signs into composite signs. According to some estimates, about half the number of signs are basic and the other half are composite. Many of the signs also show minor graphic variants due to different scribal styles or materials on which the inscriptions are recorded.



**Seal impression showing a typical inscription of five characters**

By PHGCOMIndusValleySeals.JPG - IndusValleySeals.JPG, CC BY-SA 3.0,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5243844>



**Unicorn seal of Indus Valley, Indian Museum**

By Royroydeb - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=37599086>

### **References**

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indus\\_script](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indus_script)
2. <http://www.crystalinks.com/indus.html>
3. <http://www.ancientscripts.com/indus.html>

# Sri Bala Sahasranamam

*With Meaning & Commentary by Smt. Asha Manoharan*

References to Goddess Balambika (Bala) can be found in the Brahmanda Puranam. Sri Bala Sahasranama Stotram describes and praises the various attributes of Sri Balambika in 113 verses. Since each *nama* represents a unique nature and quality of Sri Balambika, it can be interpreted and discussed to cater to the different needs of an individual. Along with a direct meaning of each *nama*, Smt. Asha Manoharan has provided us with intriguing commentary and examples that a common man can relate to and apply in everyday life. So the next time we chant Sri Bala Sahasranamam, we will not only know the literal meaning of the *stotram*, but will also find a unique way to connect and relate to Sri Balambika.

*kalā kalāvātī raktā suṣumṇā vartma śālinī /  
vindhyādri nilayā sūkṣmā hema padma nivāsini //*

## Rakta: blood

The word rakta is used here in a very spiritual context.

Rakta is redemption. The reason why I say this, is that the texts convince me that it is not the literal meaning of the word that should be considered.

1. Rig veda
2. Devi Mahatmyam.

In both the cases, the rishis talk about redemption of sins in the conversation, be it sprinkling of blood or Devi slaying rakta beeja and drinking the blood. It shows two ways of redemption. One is redemption through practise of rituals and the second one is redemption through Ambal's sword showing dissolution, is the way forward.

Redemption is God's plan to save the soul from its sin, error or evil acts. So redemption means:

- eternal life
- seeking forgiveness
- right relationship with Ambal
- peace with Ambal

Let us look at it one by one.

### i. Eternal life:

Many of us think eternal life is living forever, but it is not so. It is the quality of life we live, it is about Ambal residing in our hearts.

For eg., the strength to win over struggles; Ambal's power to turn impossible situations into exciting victories. Eternal life is full and free, like a natural spring that keeps bubbling up fresh cool water in the desert. Most of all, eternal life is a kind of life that results from a close, loving relationship with the heavenly Mother. It is abundant with peace, joy and assurance. It is comfort, strength and hope. So it is not about beating death. This life is ruled by death, so the scriptures are not talking about it, they are giving us a hope for the future, deliberating that all evil will be destroyed and man walks freely in comfort and style towards Ambal.

### ii. Forgiveness:

The acknowledgement of our sins, is the first step towards Ambal. In order to be forgiven, we must learn to repent for our sins and change how we think. We must align our thoughts and ways. So repenting leads to forgiveness. Repentance must go deeper than merely recognizing what is right or wrong. It is a godly sorrow that is so deep and profound, that it leads to us diligently changing our lives. Repentance is an acknowledgement that our entire way of life was apart from Ambal. We must understand that these sins separated us from Ambal. So this should motivate us to ask for forgiveness and to follow Ambal's ways.

### iii. Right relationship with Ambal:

How is this done? Here are a few tips.

- Humble yourself before God.
- Set your eyes on Ambal's ways.
- Acceptance of life as it is.

iv. Peace with Ambal:

No matter how much you run away from Ambal, She still loves you, cares for you and Her eyes never leaves you. Accept that She has plans for you, plans for prosperity and not to harm you.

So when you make that pact, things starts calming down, your will find spiritual freedom.

### **Vartma: the way**

Our heavenly Mother is the way for every living soul on this earth.

Coming into this world is part of Her plan of happiness for us, which allows us to receive a physical body and Her image and continue to increase in wisdom and faith.

When we were born, we tend to forget our pre earth life, which means we need to just live by faith in Her and not with an image of Her. To help us through this life, She guides us with Her loving hands and comforts us with ever growing wisdom. Each time we are agitated, we calm down after sometime when we pray in our own pooja room or in the temple, because we know our soul can recognize Ambal and that She loves us and cares for us.

During our time on earth, we believe we are making our own choices, but in reality, the soul confers with Ambal and She guides the spirit to do the right thing and discard the wrong thing. Sages and rishis and learned scholars often say that prayer is the way to connect with Ambal. Prayer often helps us to understand God's plan for us. Our life doesn't begin with birth and ends with death. Our destination is elsewhere, often at the lotus feet of Ambal. Every soul born on this earth has a plan and purpose. It works in unison with Ambal. We should realize what our goals are and what is the purpose of our life.

No man can predict someone else's purpose and goal in life. It lies with that individual, he needs to search and fulfill it.

"Let not your heart be troubled, believe in Ambal, for She is the way, the truth and life, reach out to Her for She knows you, loves you and understands you. Surrender unto Her for She alone can show you the light of wisdom."

There are 5 ways to saranagati or surrender:

1. Anukulya sankalpa:

Doing that which pleases Ambal.

For eg., being kind to every soul on earth, being impartial, tolerant, patient, when Her wishes are your command, doing things the way She wants it to be done, are the things which please Ambal.

2. Praatikulya varjana:

Refraining from doing that which displeases Ambal.

For eg., being cruel to animals. Causing pain and suffering to others, deviating from truth. It is not enough if we just do what Ambal wants us to do, but also avoiding things that would displease Her, is also a factor to be borne in mind.

3. Maha Visvasa:

Unshaken belief that She will never forsake us.

For eg., Abirami bhattar on Ambal, Kannappa Nayanar on Shiva, Arjuna on Sri Krishna, Trijata's trust in Sita, are all examples of undivided faith in God.

4. Gortva varna:

Requesting for help.

Before we begin a particular job, it is imperative to take permission and help from Ambal to do the things in a proper manner.

5. Kaarpanya:

Acknowledgement of our own helplessness.

There is nothing wrong to acknowledge the fact that there are things which happen beyond a reason. Understanding this leads us to total surrender. You cannot fulfill Ambal's purpose for your life, while focusing on your own plans.

### **Salini: kind of metre**

In poetry, metre is the basic rhythmic structure of a verse or lines of a verse. The study and the actual use of metres and forms of versification are both known as prosody.

In Sanskrit poetry, versification is of three kinds.



1. Syllabic verse called the aksaravrta.
2. Syllabo-quantitative verse called the Varnavrta.
3. Quantitative verse called matravrta.

Ambal is compared to that metre, because She sets the rhythm of this world, She is the rhythm of life.

The world that Ambal created is rhythmic –

our hearts beat; our lungs breathe in and out;

our sleep and wake; plants growing, decaying and then nourishing new seedlings to grow again; day turns into night; seasons change again and again as the cycle rotates.

You can find Ambal's planned rhythm in every part of creation. What's more, there is order.

A hidden pattern of connections and symmetries – a flower opens for the first time and there is a bee, woken from hibernation, ready to collect its pollen. It's all perfectly planned. However, we often try to surpass these natural rhythms, in order to break free of their perceived limitations. We drink mugs and mugs of coffee to keep working that bit longer, even though we're exhausted. We seek out the best anti-wrinkle cream to stay looking young. We expect to be able to buy any vegetable in the supermarket at any time of the year, despite the season and often have no idea of where it has come from or how it grows. We fly off abroad in search of a different scenic beauty, weather to break ourselves from the natural weather we have back home. We fit lots of chores in on a Sunday, because it's the one day of the week when we have a bit more time to do them. The world that we live in now also idolises the individual and the right to make the lifestyle choices we want. Technological and scientific advances, while wonderful in so many ways, often allow us to disconnect from the world around us and the natural rhythms, restrictions and timing of creation. And this means that we have the potential to operate as if our lives function in a vacuum, rather than considering the impact our lifestyle choices may have on others or Ambal's creation.

So how do we refocus our lives. Here are a few tips-

#### 1. Prayer:

Ambal modelled four basic life rhythms called the sacred rhythms. Prayer is one of them. Prayer every day helps us to refocus ourselves to the will of Ambal. Listening to Ambal as part of our decision making process and regular prayer retreats to refocus periodically, bring us closer to Her and to Her purpose for us.

#### 2. Embracing community:

Ambal's second priority was community. To Love God is to love our community. It also means to be drawn into community with the poor, the disabled, the abandoned and the marginalized. Making time for friends and family, encouraging co-workers and fellow believers, getting involved in Ambal's work amongst the poor, celebrating faith with lots of fun and fellowship should all be part of our sacred rhythms.

#### 3. Working for God:

The third rhythm is work, but not for the daily provision of food alone, but to work for God. God's work is meant to be bringers of hope, healing and salvation, helping those around us look forward to a world in which there will be no more crying or hunger or pain. This doesn't mean we should all become saints and healers, but it does mean God's priorities become ours, which can simply mean encouraging another person nearby into offering a helping hand to an elderly person, or attending to the sick and weak.

#### 4. Keep eternity in view:

Ask Ambal to help you see your life from an eternal perspective, so you can make the best decisions – ones that will use your time on earth to make a positive impact that will last forever. Make Ambal your top priority, and place people as a higher priority than things, because people have eternal value, while things don't last. Invest deeply in your relationships, doing all you can to serve other people and bring honour to God. Constantly sort through your busy life to decide what really matters eternally, and focus on that as you live your life in rhythm.

## Vindhyadri: Mountain range

One who resides in the mountain range.

The Vindhya range which runs through the middle of Malwa, was known up to Bhopal as Pariyatra and from there eastward as Rksa in ancient times. The common name was Vindhyadri.

According to legend, the Vindhya mountain once competed with Mount Meru, growing so high that it obstructed the sun. Sage Agastya then asked Vindhya to lower herself, in order to facilitate his passage across to the south. In reverence, Vindhya low-

ered its height and promised not to grow until Agastya returned to the north. Agastya settled in the south, Vindhya mountain true to its word, never grew further.

In Ambal's very famous sloka:

Ayi giri nandini nandhitha medhini

Viswa vinodhini nandanuthe

Girivara vindhya sirodhi nivasini...

It mentions Vindhya also as a dwelling place of Ambal. The queen of hearts loves to reside in these mountains, so what makes them so special that She chooses them?

The reasons are many, to quote a few.

1. They are ever forgiving. For eg., we fly over them all the time, does it bring the plane down – NO
2. We cut the trees leading to landslides and deforestation, does it lose its faith in mankind – NO
3. We climb on them and destroy the scenic beauty and pride ourselves in being the first to climb them by hoisting a flag on its head, does it retaliate in anger – NO
4. We destroy its evergreen body by blasting its rocks for minerals, does it hold a grudge against us – NO

It is ever giving, ever compassionate and ever protective, irrespective of any damage caused. That is the quality Ambal is looking for, if She needs to reside in our hearts.

So here are a few tips for the day:

1. Understand what forgiveness is not.

You were wronged. Don't minimize the offense by pretending it didn't happen. Granted, if you were hurt accidentally, you only need to show patience. But if you were hurt intentionally, you'll need to accept that fact and show forgiveness.

2. Realize the difference between forgiveness and trust.

One of the most misunderstood aspects of forgiveness is, when it is confused with trust. Depending on the nature of the offense, your ability to trust has been deeply compromised. Forgiving somebody does not mean that you need to restore that relationship without changes. Remember that forgiveness can be instant, but trust must be built over a period of time. Realize the difference. While offering, forgiveness brings freedom, being wise about trust can protect your heart in the future.

3. Give up your right to get even.

Many people live life keeping score. They keep a mental list of people who have wronged them in the past and live their life looking for opportunities to get even. Forgiveness provides the opportunity to erase the list and to release your heart from the burden of revenge.

4. Choose to respond with kindness.

Anyone can respond to evil with evil. But only the strong can respond with good. Kindness breaks the cycle. It can bring freedom to your soul and release your life from the never-ending, downward cycle of responding to evil with evil.

## Nilaya: refuge

She is the Creator of the whole Universe with the planets, the sun, the galaxies: everything seen and unseen, from the tiny bacteria to the huge whales of the ocean, from the mighty lion to the little mouse, from the beautiful roses to the thorns and thistles in the field. Such a Creator gives you the right to seek refuge in Her, but what is it that stops us from taking Her help.

We toil. We struggle. We expend effort and energy, often ending up with no result at all, but there is a way to do it, you might wonder how?

First, as one who wants to do all the good you can, you observe what tasks, opportunities, and responsibilities face you. Successful people have systems in place to help them find what they need when they need it – they can quickly locate the information required to support their activities. When you're disorganized, that extra time spent looking for a phone number, email address or a certain file, forces you to drop your focus. Once it's gone, it takes a while to get it back – and that's where the real time is wasted. Keeping both your living and working space organized is crucial (organize).

Second, it has been said that one of the worst things that can happen to you is that, you become successful before you are ready to be successful. So as you pray that you want to be successful, you ask that your character, and the talents that God has instilled in you, both mature and grow together, so that as you get ready to do a particular job, you need to pray so that you are able to fully enjoy success when it arrives, and not be crushed by it. Success, is not necessarily fame or riches. Rather, it is

when you are fully alive, when you are reaching and achieving the potential that God has created you for (Pray).

Third, act on what you know, trusting that Ambal is by your side to help when you slip. Trusting Her is simply believing that She loves you, She's good, She has the power to help you, She wants to help you, and She will help you. We trust our friends, the bank, the stock market or the government more than we trust Ambal and Her Word (Trust).

Fourth, you go to work with a good will and a high heart, expecting to be helped as you asked to be. Life is simple and peaceful when you go with Ambal's way and trusting Her at all times. Do keep saying, "God, I don't want to live on my own. I want to trust You. When I don't know what to do, I'll trust You. When I don't understand why, I'll trust You. I'll do my part with Your help, and when I'm done, I'll trust You to do the rest." (Act)

Fifth, you thank Her, for help given, ask pardon for your own failures en route, and request more help for the next task. There are many blessings that come from being grateful for the good things we enjoy. Live with a spirit of thanksgiving and you will have greater happiness and satisfaction in life (Thanks giving).

The third one is the important one. Trust a promise. This is the step I think is missing in most of us, attempt to do that. Trust Her just once totally and completely. Most of us face a difficult task to remember to say, "Help me, God. I need you."

Then, after overcoming that problem, we move straight from Pray to Act. But this robs us of a very powerful step - Trust. After we pray for Ambal's help, we should remind ourselves of a specific promise that Ambal has made. And fix our minds on it. And put our faith in it. And say to Her: "I believe you, help my unbelief. Increase my faith in this promise. I'm trusting you, and here I go." Then act. We need to "walk by faith" and "live by faith". But for most of us, this remains vague. Hour by hour, how do we do this?

We do it by reminding ourselves of the wonderful things Ambal has provided us with. Then, we don't just pray for help hour by hour, we trust those specific promises hour by hour.

So for us, to get closer to God, we need to trust Her at all times. So here are few things we are going to tell ourselves this day:

1. Don't fear or be dismayed, for Our dear Mother is with us at all times. She will uphold me for the righteousness, that I stand for.
2. I trust that my GOD will supply every need of mine, according to Her glory and grace.
3. With Ambal by my side, I will never be dissatisfied with whatever I have.
4. I trust Ambal will never forsake me or leave me, for She is my guiding light at all times.
5. Ambal's love for me is unlimited, She will bestow favour and honour upon me, so I don't have to make plans to attain these.

## Padma: Colour of the lotus

The next word is a collective word, Padma Nivasini. Because of the beauty of these two words, I am taking them separately.

Padma – Colour of the lotus.

It depicts purity of body, mind and speech in our culture. We find reference in many of our texts. The Taittiriya Brahmana describes how Prajapati, desiring to evolve the universe, which was then a fluid, saw a lotus-leaf, pushkara parna, coming out of water. When divine life-substance was about to put forth the universe, the cosmic waters grew a thousand-petalled lotus flower of pure gold, radiant like the sun. This was considered to be a doorway, or an opening of the mouth of the womb of the universe. Our texts describe the water as the procreative aspect of the Absolute, and the cosmic lotus, the generative. Thus, lotus is the first product of the creative principle.

The role of Lord Brahma was to re-create the universe after the great flood on this planet. In order to create the universe, He used different parts of the lotus plant.

Lotus is one of the eight auspicious signs of Buddhism and Hinduism, and the eight-petaled lotus seen in Buddhist mandalas means cosmic harmony (Mandalas are geometric patterns used as symbolic or metaphysical representations of the universe, the spiritual path, etc.; mandalas are often used as an object of focus to aid in meditation). The eight petals of the white lotus correspond to the Noble Eightfold Path of the Good Law. This lotus is found at the heart of the Garbhathatu Mandala, regarded as the womb or embryo of the world.

In Hinduism, the thousand-petaled lotus in chakra meditation signifies spiritual illumination. Each opening of the petal is the gradual unfolding of the consciousness on the path to enlightenment.

The chakra system, uses a lotus with varied numbers of petals to represent each particular chakra.

1. MULADHARA or the Root Chakra.

It is illustrated as a four-petaled lotus flower. The petals represent the four elements: earth, water, fire and wood.

2. SVADHISTHANA – the Sacral Chakra.

Svadhithana means amiability. This is a lotus flower with six petals. It represents the 6 modes of consciousness (affection, cruelty, destructiveness, delusion, disdain and suspicion).

3. MANIPURA – the Solar Plexus Chakra.

It is depicted as a lotus flower of ten petals. It represents spiritual ignorance, thirst, jealousy, treachery, shame, fear, disgust, delusion, foolishness and sadness.

4. ANAHATA – the Heart Chakra.

It's symbol is a lotus flower of twelve petals. It is a meeting place for body and spirit. It represents lust, fraud, indecision, repentance, hope, anxiety, longing, impartiality, arrogance, incompetence, discrimination and defiance.

5. VISHUDDHA – the Throat Chakra.

The symbol of it is a lotus flower with 16 petals. It represents the 16 vowels in the Sanskrit alphabet system. Closely related to Vishuddha, it is a minor chakra, located in the roof of the mouth, called Lalana. It is described as having 12 red or white petals that correspond to the virtues of respect, contentment, offense, self-control, pride, affection, sorrow, depression, purity, dissatisfaction, honour and anxiety. Inside is a red circular moon region, which acts as a reservoir for the nectar Amrit. When Vishuddha is inactive, this nectar is allowed to run downwards into Manipura and consumed, resulting in physical degeneration.

6. AJNA – The Third Eye Chakra.

Ajna has two white petals, said to represent the psychic channels (nadis) Ida and Pingala, which meet the central Sushumna nadi before rising to the Crown Chakra, Sahasrara. These two petals also represent the manifested and the unmanifested mind, which sometimes represent the pineal and pituitary glands.

7. SAHASRARA – the Crown Chakra.

Often referred to as a thousand-petaled lotus, it is said to be the most subtle chakra in the system, relating to pure consciousness, and it is from this chakra that all the other chakras emanate.

## Padma Nivasini: sitting on a white lotus

In Bala's picture, we see Bala sitting on a white lotus. The white lotus signifies Divine Consciousness.

Consciousness is the state of being aware of and responsive to one's surroundings. It is the basis of all reality. Our moods, emotions, perceptions, behaviour, speech, social interactions, environment and interaction, all arise out of this consciousness. The average person only experiences three states of consciousness in his entire lifetime. These are (a) deep sleep, (b) dreams and (c) a waking state of consciousness. The brain functions measurably differently in each of these states.

Spiritual practice or sadhana begins the process by which an individual transforms his or her consciousness from these three common states of consciousness into "higher states" of consciousness.

Beyond the first three states of consciousness are the following four states:

1. Soul consciousness,
2. Cosmic consciousness,
3. Divine consciousness and
4. Unity consciousness.

As each state of consciousness unfolds within us, it opens us into a newer, more expanded reality.

Let's discuss each of these in turn:

1. Soul Consciousness:

Those of you who are attending my class will be aware of this, this is what we have been practising in our classes.

This is the state we experience when our internal reference point shifts from body, mind and ego to the observer of body, mind and ego. We experience and cultivate Soul consciousness when we meditate. This observer is referred to as the witnessing awareness. During meditation, a person begins to identify with this aspect of the Self, which is beyond thinking and feeling (the silent witness), and then he or she begins to feel more calm, centered and intuitive in daily life.

## 2. Cosmic Consciousness:

This is the state when Soul consciousness stabilizes and the witnessing awareness is present all the time in waking, dreaming and sleeping states. This state of consciousness is sometimes described in traditions as being both local and nonlocal simultaneously. The silent witness Self is unbounded, but the body and the conditioned mind are localized. In this state, even during deep sleep, the witnessing awareness is fully awake and there is the realization that one is not the mind/body, which is in the field of change, but rather an eternal spirit that transcends space and time. The most remarkable aspect of this state of consciousness is the knowledge of one's nature as timeless and, therefore one has no fear of death. Although Cosmic consciousness is not the pinnacle of enlightenment, it nevertheless marks the critical transition from an identity bound conditioned life, to a life of freedom in self-knowledge.

## 3. Divine Consciousness:

This is the expansion of Cosmic consciousness, where the ever-present witnessing awareness is experienced not only in the silence of the Self, but also in the most abstract qualities of nature and the mind. Dormant potentials such as the tanmatras begin to be experienced by the individual. The individual mind starts to access these unused realms of the psyche, extraordinary spiritual abilities previously thought to be unattainable becomes attainable. These include experiences such as knowledge of past and future; refined sense of taste, smell, sight, touch and hearing; and control over heart rate and other bodily functions. Appreciation of life from this more refined perspective represents the real engagement of the heart. By experiencing the patterns and deeper connections that underlie external diversity, we find our soul is stirred by a profound sense of beauty, awe, compassion, gratitude and love. The integrating power of these qualities brings together the polarized world of Cosmic consciousness, which is divided between the Self and Non-Self. In Divine consciousness, this harmonizing and synthesizing power is felt as the presence of Divinity in our heart. Wherever one goes, one feels the presence of the Divine.

The Vedic seers would say, in Divine consciousness, God is not difficult to find, but impossible to avoid. At this stage, there is an even greater conviction of the immortality of existence, not only as nonlocal consciousness, but also in the knowledge that you are that enduring presence of divine love. Divine consciousness also brings a deeper experience of liberation, as the external sensory world is no longer seen as a kind of spiritual exile which the soul must endure, but rather the world is a manifestation of the beauty and love of one's consciousness, and therefore integral to one's spirituality.

Ambal sits on this divine consciousness, making it impossible for us to avoid Her. She rules.

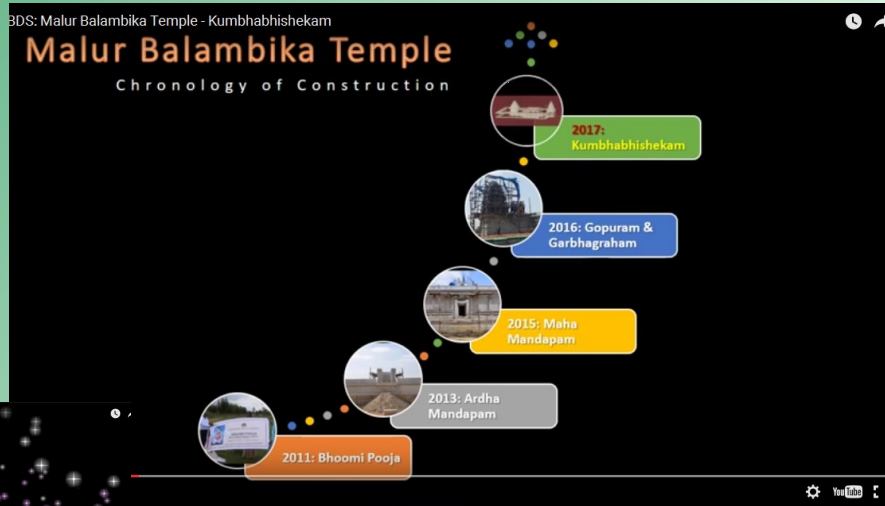
## 4. Unity Consciousness:

This is also referred to as Brahman consciousness. One ceases to identify with an individual body-mind apparatus and sees the whole universe as one's physical body. There is the ability to heal and transform others, and everything is experienced as miraculous. A flower is seen as a flower, but is also experienced as rainbows and sunshine and earth and water and wind and air and the infinite void and the whole history of the universe swirling and transiently manifesting as the flower. In other words, every object is seen as the total universe transiently manifesting as a particular object. And, behind the scenes, one can feel the presence of the same ever-present witnessing awareness that is now in both subject and object. Unity consciousness is the ultimate level of freedom from fear. It is characterized by an abiding sense of joy and peace. All of creation is seen as the play of consciousness or leela.

This state of enlightenment is sometimes compared to the drop of water that is experiencing itself as the ocean, knowing that it was the ocean the whole time. You and God are now one because there is no "you" left anymore. Sometimes, when people try to conceptualize this by projecting their current sense of self into Unity consciousness, they are afraid that, in losing their old identity, they will lose their existence, memories and individual perspective. But the enlightened person doesn't see it that way. They understand that personal identity was an illusion to begin with. They realize that nothing real or valuable is ever lost on the path to enlightenment.

## Bala Sahasranamam on Website, Facebook and YouTube





BDS: MALUR BALAMBIKA TEMPLE -  
KUMBHABHISHEKAM

As we fervently move towards the completion of the Temple construction and Kumbhabhishekam, here is a video which traverses through this beautiful journey. The Kumbhabhishekam is the divine culmination of a beatific dream and we want all of you to join hands and be a memorable part of it.

<https://youtu.be/HuUSJdzg4Fg>

**Kumbhabhishekam: 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2017**

## BDS Contacts

### Bala Sahasranamam Parayanam:

Chakravarthy's residence, Ohio—USA.

▪ [95chikki@gmail.com](mailto:95chikki@gmail.com)

Anuradha Srinivasan's residence, Chicago—USA

▪ [asriniv65@gmail.com](mailto:asriniv65@gmail.com)

### Dolai Utsavam:

Dolai Utsavam will be performed for Sanchara Bala, in the privacy of one's home, amidst a social gathering.

Devotees who are interested, please contact Temple Manager:

[balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com](mailto:balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com)

### Annadanam Scheme:

We are feeding the under nourished, low income children in government higher primary schools.

Those who are interested in sponsoring, please contact Temple Manager :

[balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com](mailto:balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com)

### BDS Outreach:

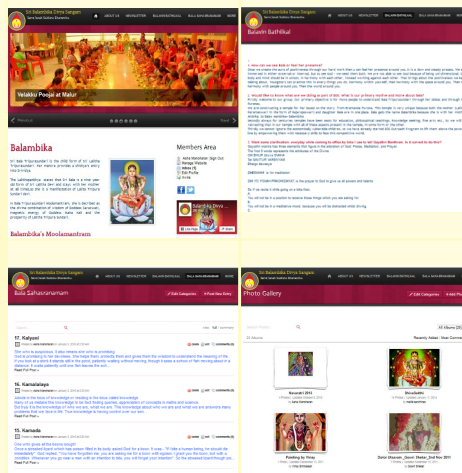
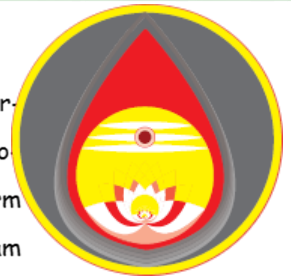
We are having health and hygiene awareness and also dental care for children , if you could sponsor for this program, we would cover more children and help them have proper dental care.

Those who are interested in contributing towards this cause, please contact Temple Manager:

[balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com](mailto:balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com)

## Vision of Balambika Divya Sangam

As passionate devotees of Goddess Balambika, and overwhelmed by her grace and benevolence, we have come together from diverse scenarios as one unifying force to form Balambika Divya Sangam. The principal focus of the Sangam is to pursue the age old tenet—**sarvejana sukhinobhavanthu** and pay obeisance to the divine Mother, who is the cause of welfare of the world. Through worship we realize that cast, creed, religion and social status, all melt away before her, for in her eyes, we are all her children.



## We are on the web!

<http://malurbalambikatemple.com>

This is a good place to catch up on all the Sangam activities such as About Us, Temple Updates, Balavin Bathikal, Bala Sahasranamam, archives of earlier Newsletters etc.

## Join us on WhatsApp!

To join Balambika Divya Sangam WhatsApp group, please send an email along with phone# to our President Smt. Asha Manoharan at [asha.raji@gmail.com](mailto:asha.raji@gmail.com)



## Breakfast Meal

Ravindran Seshadri & family  
Mahalingam & family  
Vathsala & Raghavan  
Dhruv & family  
Sampath Kumar  
Swetha Patel

## Sponsor's Corner

### Archana Contributions

Priya K Rangan  
Nirmala & Bharath Bhushan  
Anuradha Srinivasan  
Usha Murali  
Vani Muralidharan  
Karthik Chakravarthy  
Vivek Srinivasan

### Sanchara Dolai

Parthasarathy & family