

BALAVIN KURAL

Balambika Divya Sangam



Editor's Desk...

This month's newsletter offers you a kaleidoscope of Balambika Divya Sangam's pursuits. First and foremost, with the completion of the temple's *mahamantapam* and *gopuram*, Malur is getting ready to receive Sri Bala in Her temple abode. We request devotees, well-wishers, spiritual seekers, and benefactors to come together to support the construction of Sri Balambika Temple – a once in a lifetime opportunity! Your support and encouragement is very much needed as we are nearing the completion of the first phase of the temple construction. Each and every one of us has come together like the little dots that connect to form the big picture. Each dot is equally important to make the picture perfect for Ambal to fill in with graceful strokes and lush colors.

This edition brings to you the many ways you can contribute and be a part of the Sangam's multifaceted activities. To find out more about involvement and contribution, please browse through our informational flyer that portrays the entire spectrum of the Sangam's initiatives that you can pick and choose from to suit your desire. While *poojas* and *dolai utsavams* revive your inner

bhakti and elevate you spiritually, *annadanam* signifies one of the simplest, yet greatest acts of giving that one can perform, by feeding a fellow human being. In addition, this newsletter issue also brings exciting instances of how the BDS Outreach Team has gone far and wide to empower the local children of Malur.

While all of us experience and enjoy Bala in our own personal ways, we cannot help but realize that She has become an inseparable part of our life, our household and our heart. We understand deeper about Bala through Her beautiful *namavali*, count our blessings when our eyes feast on Her *alankaram*, and feel the warmth in our soul knowing that She is residing right within us. This month's composition and rendering - *Annaye Unnai, "What did You see in me that You captured my heart to reside in there?"* seals the unconditional, unspoken bond between *the bhakta* and Bala.



Mrs. Asha Manoharan
President—BDS

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Bala Speaks...



When things are not very clear, you need to stop and examine it properly, for which, you need to be patient with yourself first and take one step at a time, to see where it leads you. When I say be patient, it does not mean being passive, that leads to laziness, but to keep moving on when the going is hard. Your real blessings often appear in the shape of pain, losses and disappointments. Never take a decision when you are angry. Patience is the most beautiful thing in this world. With love and a little patience, nothing is impossible in this world.

THAI PONGAL AT BALA'S HOUSE:

Thai Pongal was celebrated with enthusiasm by the devotees at Bala's House in Bangalore. On the day of Bhogi, groceries required to make pongal along with a variety of vegetables, fruits and sugarcane were offered to Ambal. On the day of Pongal, special abhishekam was performed to Sri Bala. Ambal was dressed beautifully with a variety of flowers and *pattu pavadai*. Colourful *rangolis* added to the festivity. *Sakkarai pongal* and *kootu* were made for *neivedyam* and offered to Ambal along with *vethalai pakku*. The third day of Pongal was celebrated as Kanu Pongal. Arati with coloured rice (turmeric, vermilion, white and sweet pongal) was performed by the devotees to Ambal. *Kanu pudu* was offered by the ladies near the *thulasi maadam* outside Bala's house. Mangala arati followed after the neivedyam of rice prasadam. All the ladies were given *vethalai pakku* along with *manjal kizhangu*.

DOLAI:

Dolai and Pournami puja were celebrated on 23rd January at Malur. Our sincere devotees of Malur thronged to see their beloved Ambal. Elaborate abhishekam was performed, followed by chanting of Bala Sahasranamam. Ambal was dressed in a blue *pattu pavadai* and varieties of colourful flowers. Bala bhajans were sung fervently by our devotees and the place reverberated with Her glorious name. Sumangali, Kanya and Dampati puja were performed by our devotees. The event ended with the distribution of prasadam and *vethalai pakku* to all the devotees.



Updates from Bala's House

Down Memory Lane

By Smt. Aisha Manoharan

Background behind the song *Annayae Unnai...*

Everyone is curious to know what my relationship is with Bala. It is the same relationship that you have with your brother, sister, cousins or friends. It is no different, but the difference is with both of us, as individuals, we have made this relationship special for both of us. These are the few things which I think has made this relationship stronger, steadier and more admirable.

1. We don't have expectations about each other.
2. We have mutual love for each other. Our love is not displayed in public.
3. We have our own lives to live. Boundaries are never crossed.
4. We like each other's company. Silence is the common language we speak. No probing or unwanted questions will be asked by either of us.
5. Both of us are fun loving, but simple and humble. We have simple pleasures like making flower jewelry, eating the simple food offered to us, walking in the rain, talking as though we have all the time in the world.
6. Mutual respect for each other. No questions of you are God and I am a human being or vice versa.
7. Both of us Have boundaries and we never over step them. I don't ask Her any favours, nor does She impose any rules on me.

The list goes on...

I never forget the fact that She is the Mother of the Universe, that I cannot expect Her to pay attention only to me. I let go, there are no rules, no possessiveness, nothing. Anytime, anyone can break this relationship and walk away, no questions will be asked.

I admire Her ways, my love for Her started when I was little. The thought that She came to me as a friend when I was all alone, touched my little heart then and overwhelming when I think of it today as well. So I grew up loving Her as a friend, not knowing that She is the Mother of the Universe.

My love for Her turned to admiration, when I saw how She was moved to tears at Her devotees' love for Her.

My admiration turned to respect, when I started understanding about Her creation and knowing that even with all Her *sakthi*, *She can still become a child to please Her own child*.

My love for Her has grown and is rooted so deep that my joy is boundless and limitless, even if I see Her for only a fraction of a second.

So with that love, I wrote this song. It is a conversation that translated itself into poetry.

For those of you who do not understand Tamil, here is the summary of the song.

Oh, Mother, I bow before you, knowing fully well that you are somewhere close by, trying to play hide and seek with me. The moment I think of you, there you are. The moment I see you, I forget everything around me. Why is that?

I make wonderful garlands for you, I recite your different names, but you come to me only for my love and affection. Why is that?

Your body shimmers like gold, why do you need ornaments made of gold?

When I say this, why do you give a crooked smile?

Oh! My beautiful Mother, you have encompassed me to understand the virtues of life. After reaching your arms, I don't know any other God.

I hear you have many temples, millions of lives who depend on you. What did you see in me that you captured my heart to reside in there?

Oh! Mother.

அன்னையே உன்னை

அன்னையே உன்னை வணங்கினேன்
அருகினில் இருப்பதை உணர்ந்தேன்
புன்னகை அரும்பிட தோன்றினாய்
வேறொரு பேரும் அறிந்திளேன்....
(அன்னையே)

பலவகை மலரினை சூட்டினேன்
நாமங்கள் பலவும் உரைத்திட்டேன்
அன்பெனும் மலரினை சூட்டிக்கொள்ள
அருகினில் நீயும் வந்திடவே..
(அன்னையே)

பொன்னிறம் உந்தன் திருமேனி
பொன்நகை உனக்கும் தகுமோடி
புன்னகை உந்தன் உதட்டில் மேல்
வந்ததும் ஏனோ சொல்லடி.....
(அன்னையே)

சுந்தரி என்னை ஆட்கொண்டாய்
நன்னெறி என்னுள் வந்த பின்னே
அந்தரி உன்னை அடைந்த பின்னே
வேறொரு தெய்வம் அறியேனே.....
(அன்னையே)

கோயில்கள் பலவும் உனக்கு உண்டு
உயிர்கள் கோடி இங்கு உண்டு
என்னிடம் என்னடி கண்டு கொண்டாய்
மனதில் உடனே குடிக் கொண்டாய்....
(அன்னையே)

ANNAYE UNNAI

Annaiye unnai vananginen
 Arukinil iruppathai unarnthen
 Punnakai arumbida thondrinai
 Veroru perum arinthilaen.....
 (Annaiye Unnai...)

Palavakai malrinai choottinen
 Naamangal palavum uraithitten
 Anbenum malarinai choottikkolla
 Arukinil neeyum vanthidave.....
 Annaiye unnai vananginen
 Arukinil iruppathai unarnthen.....

Ponniram unthan thirumeni
 Ponnagai unakkum thaggumodi
 Punnagai unthan uthattin mel
 Vanthathum Eno solladi.....
 Annaiye unnai vananginen
 Arukinil iruppathai unarnthen.....

Sundari ennai aatkondaai
 Nanneri ennul vantha pinne
 Anthari unnai adaintha pinne
 Veroru deivam ariyene.....
 Annaiye unnai vananginen
 Arukinil iruppathai unarnthen.....

Koyilgal palavum unakku undu
 Uyirgal kodi ingu undu
 Ennidam ennadi kandu kondaai
 Manathil udane kudi kondaai.....

Annaiye unnai vananginen
 Arukinil iruppathai unarnthen

ಅನ್ನಯ ಉನ್ನೈ

ಅನ್ನಯ ಉನ್ನೈ ವಣಂಗಿನೇನ್
ಅರುಗಿನಿಲ್ ಇರುಪ್ಪದೈ ಉಣರ್ತ್ತೇನ್
ಪುನ್ನಗೈ ಅರುಂಬಿಡ ತೋಂಡ್ರಿನಾಯ್
ವೇರೂರು ಪೇರುಂ ಅರಿದಿಲ್ಲೇನ್
(ಅನ್ನಯ ಉನ್ನೈ)

ಪಲವಗೈ ಮಲರಿನೈ ಚೂಟ್ಟಿನೇನ್
ನಾಮಂಗಳ್ ಪಲವುಮ್ ಉರೈತ್ತಿಟ್ಟೇನ್
ಅನ್ನೈನುಮ್ ಮಲರಿನೈ ಚೂಟ್ಟಿಕ್ಕೊಳ್ಳ
ಅರುಗಿನಿಲ್ ನೀಯುಂ ವಂದಿಡವೇ
(ಅನ್ನಯ ಉನ್ನೈ)

ಪೊನ್ನಿರಮ್ ಉಂದನ್ ತಿರುಮೇನಿ
ಪೊನ್ನಗೈ ಉನಕ್ಕುಂ ತಗುಮೋಡಿ
ಪುನ್ನಗೈ ಉಂದನ್ ಉದಟ್ಟಿನ್ ಮೇಲ್
ವಂದದುಮ್ ಯೇನೋ ಸೊಲ್ಲಡಿ
(ಅನ್ನಯ ಉನ್ನೈ)

ಸುಂದರಿ ಯೆನ್ನೈ ಆಚ್ಚೊಂಡಾಯ್
ನನ್ನರಿ ಎನ್ನುಳ್ ವಂದ ಪಿನ್ನೈ
ಅಂದರಿ ಉನ್ನೈ ಅಡೈಂದ ಪಿನ್ನೈ
ವೇರೂರು ದೈವಂ ಅರಿಯೇನೇ
(ಅನ್ನಯ ಉನ್ನೈ)

ಕೋಯಿಲ್ ಗಳ್ ಪಲವುಮ್ ಉನಕ್ಕು ಉಂಡು
ಉಯಿರ್ಗಳ್ ಕೋಡಿ ಇಂಗು ಉಂಡು
ಯೆನ್ನಿಡಂ ಯೆನ್ನಡಿ ಕಂಡು ಕೊಂಡಾಯ್
ಮನದಿಲ್ ಉಡನೇ ಕುಡಿಕೊಂಡಾಯ್

ಅನ್ನಯ ಉನ್ನೈ ವಣಂಗಿನೇನ್
ಅರುಗಿನಿಲ್ ಇರುಪ್ಪದೈ ಉಣರ್ತ್ತೇನ್

అన్నయ ఉన్నె

అన్నయె ఉన్నె వణంగినేన్
 అరుగినిల్ ఇరుప్పదై ఉణర్ంతేన్
 పున్నగై అరుంబిడ తోండినాయ్
 వేరొరు పేరుం అరిందిల్లేన్
 (అన్నయె ఉన్నె)

పలవగై మలరినై చూట్టినేన్
 నామంగళ్ పలవుం ఉరైత్తిట్టేన్
 అన్నెనుం మలరినై చూట్టిక్కొళ్ళ
 అరుగినిల్ నీయుం వందిడవే
 (అన్నయె ఉన్నె)

పొన్నిరం ఉందన్ తిరుమేని
 పొన్నగై ఉనక్కుం తగుమోడి
 పున్నగై ఉందన్ ఉదట్టిన్ మేల్
 వందదుం యేనో సొల్లడి
 (అన్నయె ఉన్నె)

సుందరి యెన్నై ఆట్కొండాయ్
 నన్నెరి ఎన్నుళ్ వంద పిన్నె
 అందరి ఉన్నై అడైంద పిన్నె
 వెరొరు దైవం అరియేనే



Balambika

DIVYA SANGAM



OUR MISSION

We the members of this trust are ardent devotees of Sri Raja Rajeswari and Sri Balambika is our family goddess. We have been very fortunate to have her guidance and affection for generations together and we thought it was time to do some service to our beloved mother by helping people, to understand her as a mother, friend, philosopher and as the almighty. Our vision is to move closer to God, through love and service to the community, to realize the true value of life and elevate our soul into true consciousness. We have moved forward to do various services towards society through the three paths (*marga*) given by Hinduism.



BHAKTHI MARGA
path of devotion



KARMA MARGA
path of work & action



JNANA MARGA
path of knowledge



TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION

With the completion of the *mahamantapam* and *gopuram*, the construction of our temple has accelerated. We are looking forward to generous donors who would love to be a part of this pious and noble deed. Any form of monetary contribution towards this cause is whole-heartedly appreciated by Balambika Divya Sangam.

KARMA MARGA 

Annadanam

₹ 1000 | \$15 | £10

feeds - 100 children ages 5-12*

*varies by attendance

We are distributing breakfast for approximately 100 school children (ages 5 to 12) at Malur (25 kms from Bangalore) on Mondays and Wednesdays. Celebrate your birthdays, wedding anniversaries and all your important events with these kids who need our support and compassion, by contributing to this wonderful cause.

BHAKTI MARGA 

Dolai Utsavam

₹ 5000 | \$75 | £50

fulfills 1 dolai utsavam, per request

Invite Bala to your own home! As part of this delightful ritual, Sanchara Bala will come to each devotee's house, as requested, and accept their services and bless them with happiness and prosperity. A special *abhishekam*, *archana*, followed by *bhajans* will be observed.

BHAKTI MARGA 

Pournami Pooja

₹ 2500 | \$35 | £25

fulfills 1 pooja for the month

The full moon day of every month is celebrated with the *pournami pooja*. This special *pooja* is conducted once a month at Malur by performing *abhishekam* and *archana* for Bala, along with *sumangali pooja* and *kanya pooja*. The importance of this festival is explained through stories.

BHAKTI MARGA 

Other Poojas

₹ 250 | \$5 | £3

fulfills 1 archana or abhishekam

Regular *archanas* are performed daily at Bala's house, and *abhishekam* is performed every Tuesday and Friday. Birthdays, anniversaries, and other special occasions are a great opportunity to celebrate with this auspicious offering to the Goddess, Sri Balambika.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Vasanth Navarathri will be celebrated this Spring 2016.
Stay tuned for more details on special dates and timings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mrs. Priya Rangan (Temple Manager)
Ph. 91 80 50511146

|| sarve janah sukhino bhavantu ||

Temple Construction Updates

The construction of Sri Balambika temple at Malur is fast in progress and the *mahamantapam* has come to a stage of near completion. The flooring of the *mahamantapam* is now finished and the carving and erection work of the pillars in the hall are under progress. The roofing stones have been worked upon and are being prepared to be laid.



Front view of *Mahamantapam*



Side view of *Garba Gruham* and *Vimana (Gopuram)*



Side view into *Mahamantapam*



View of *Garba Gruham* from *Mahamantapam*

BDS Outreach Programs at Malur



Dr. Praveen addressing the students of Malur Boys School about hygiene



Free Dental Drive

Dr. Praveen performing checkup, and Shrivatsan assisting by taking notes



Sterilization of dental mirrors and probes



Students and BDS Team

Free Dental Drive at Malur

BDS Outreach Team organized a **Free Dental Checkup Drive** on 9th January 2016 at Govt. Boys Middle School, Malur. This program is aimed at making children aware of the dental problems, to bring awareness about oral hygiene and providing free treatment for children needing critical dental care. The event was kicked off by an inaugural function held by the School. Children were addressed by the Chief Guest Dr. Praveen - renowned Dentist from Bangalore, School management and BDS Outreach representatives. Dr. Praveen performed detailed dental check-ups for 67 Students belonging to Class VII and VIII. Also, various dental hygiene oriented activities for students were conducted while the checkup was underway. Dental check-up will be followed up by an orientation program, where reports will be handed to children and they will be counselled on preventive care.

BDS Outreach extends sincere thanks to Dr. Praveen for spending his valuable time with kids and also for donating sterilization kits for future programs. Please join us for the next Dental Drive event on 27th Feb 2016 at Govt. Girls School, Malur. As a next step, BDS is exploring collaborations with dental firms for free treatment and to raise funds for dental treatment.

Team that made it happen : Dr. Praveen Siddareddy, Padma Srinivas, Priya Rangan, Shrivatsan Iyengar, Anu Srinivasan, Vivek Srinivasan, Vinay Srinivasan, Raja Ram, Vaishnavi K Rangan, Anil Kumar, Arvind Narayanan & Vivek Raman

If you are interested in joining the Monthly Dental Checkup Drive at Malur, or if you would like to contribute towards the treatment, please contact Program Anchors: Vivek Raman / Padma Srinivas 8861008791 / 9902703113 /

balambika.outreach@gmail.com



Reading Club at Malur

BDS Outreach Team has started a Pilot Program on **Reading Club** at Malur. Reading Club is geared towards inculcating reading habits for young children (age group of 7-8 years), with primary focus on vocabulary, pronunciation and to enable children to be comfortable with the English language. With the help of interactive activities, games and storytelling, the whole program is designed to make reading more interesting for kids. The BDS Outreach team has so far completed 2 weeks out of the recently kicked off eight week Pilot program from Jan 23rd at **Kumbarapette School, Malur**. Every week, our team plans to conduct games, activities and tell-stories using the storyboard. In the first 2 weeks, there were

ice breaking and familiarization sessions, followed by storyboard, games and activities. The team started with the first story - *The king of birds*, and as this story unfolds in the coming weeks, we will keep you posted on how children are getting hooked on to reading habits.

If you are interested in joining the Reading Club at Malur as a volunteer, or if you would like to be part of the creative team, please contact the Program Anchors: Sindhu Kashyap / Priya K Rangan at 9036178892 / 805051146 /

balambika.outreach@gmail.com.



Health and Hygiene programs at Malur

The H&H program was the first of the BDS outreach initiatives, formerly known as Yuvasena. This program is aimed at children who are in their adolescence, hoping to inculcate good personal hygiene practices in and around them. These weekly workshops encompass varied branches of hygiene viz. hand hygiene, bathing hygiene and oral hygiene. These simple, yet powerful concepts and practices are delivered to the children through interactive and creative methodologies such as games, puzzles, power point presentations, demonstrations and experiments. We have been doing these 8 week workshops in schools in Malur for over 5 years and have witnessed the children applying these techniques in their day to day lives. Currently, the H&H program is in progress at the Malur Govt. Girls Middle School. This time, the outreach group took a step forward and decided to involve the department of government in charge of health and sanitation. Hence, we commenced a 5 week long seasons' program on Jan 23rd, with an inaugural function, with the guest of honor being Smt. Bharatamma, the wards' councilor, the ex-corporator Shri Ramachandra, college president Shri Vijayakumar, the school HM Smt. Munilakshamma and Dr. Rajdeep (guest speaker), who graced the occasion and looked into the sanitation requirements of the school. Each season, we try to incorporate newer elements into the curriculum to bring in a new flavor and freshness in the way we present it each time. This season, we have sought the help of subject matter experts like dentists, dietitians, dermatologists and soap making enthusiasts, to enhance the involvement of the children with an additional Q&A session. BDS Outreach group will also be starting an H&H program in KLE Govt. School from Feb 6th.

If you are interested in joining the H&H program at Malur as a volunteer, please contact the Program Anchors: Sharanya S Rajan / Padma Srinivas at 9663422335 / 9902703113 / balambika.outreach@gmail.com.



Annadanam Program at Malur

BDS Outreach has come out with breakfast meals for 90 underprivileged children of Government Primary School at Malur. The children come to school only for the mid-day meal provided by the Government. The school authorities requested our trust to provide breakfast, as most of the children stay hungry until the afternoon. Join hands with us and help us serve these children in a better way.

For details, please contact Program Anchor: Priya Kasturi Rangan at 8050511146 / balambikadivysangam2015@gmail.com

To contribute towards the breakfast meal program, cheques can be issued in the name of "Sri Balambika Divya Sangam" or refer to the Indian Bank details for online transfer.

Dolai Utsavam @ Smt. Chitra Chandrashekar's Residence



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.

*kāntā kāntimatī kāntiḥ kāmādā kamalālayā /
kalyāṇī kamalā hṛdyā peśalā hṛdayaṅgamā //*

Kāntā:

She who is dear.

Let me begin by asking this question - "Who is a good friend? Is it a person who tells you his/her secret sorrow?" No, it is he/she who shares their secret joys. Many people tell us their sorrows, but the final mark of intimacy is when they share their secret joys with us. Have you let this happen between you and God? You always have a lot of requests to Her, in the *pooja room*, in the *kitchen*, in the *living room*, everywhere. *Have you ever let God tell us any of Her joys? Or are you continuously telling Her your secrets, leaving Her no time to talk back.*

What makes Her so dear to us is not as much as Her blessings to us, but the small things which happens to us that show Her amazing intimacy with us.

Let me give an example of this intimacy:

There are a lot of choices that we make in our life, some of them we do it right away, some of them not so. When the doubt whether to do or not arises, STOP!

It is She who gives us this sense of doubt or restraint, which we must listen to. Stop at once. Never try to reason it out saying, "Why can't I do this?" When we do that, God pulls away and leaves us to make the choice. Then our mind takes over. So, go with the flow of life for She alone can guide you, because She is true and dear to you.

Kāntimatī:

She who is filled with a lovely aura around Her.

God is divine, and the lovely aura around Her is Her divinity. God's divine ways have granted us all things necessary for our survival in this world. Her divine ways are a constant reminder to us to follow Her path of truth and faithfulness. When God's divine aura is around us, we don't have to fear anybody or anything. She takes care of us; She cleanses us of our sins, brings us a new life and makes us feel secure. When I say this, I can hear a few of you saying: If that is the case, why is She not protecting the people from the recent floods? Why has She allowed them to suffer? She can forgive if it was an atrocity committed against Her, but it is an atrocity committed against Nature. When She pleads with Nature, it shows Her the atrocity committed by the society and asks Her for Justice. She stands for Justice, so She now has no choice, but to allow Nature to take its course, while She stood there weeping for Her children.

She clears our path of thorns.

She carries us when we are weak.

She embraces us when we are sad.

Caresses us when we are lonely.
 Her divine hands are always around us, keeping us safe, protected and secure.
 She is the Mother who is all knowing,
 She alone can be the saviour of sins and evil,
 She alone can lead us away from temptation,
 She alone can bring peace and harmony within us,
 She is The divine power and that is why we call Her Kantimati.

Kāntih:

Fulfiller of desires...

We need to understand that God always likes to fulfill our desires.

One reason why God gives us parents, is to help children learn to desire for good things. God wants us to desire the good and the perfect things in our lives. God gives us our desired worth also according to our own doing. So, we need to trust God, only then we can sink our roots deep into the river of life, which makes us refreshing in our ways and deeds. When we begin to satisfy our desire for the love of God, She then becomes our desire. Our hearts are easily deceived, we cannot trust ourselves, but we can trust Her will (desires) and Her ways (decisions) to be the best for us. God's will and Her ways are always based on love, whereas our wants and desires are based on our heart and imagination. Your thoughts are often connected to your desires. This might take you either closer to Her or further away from Her.

So, let our thoughts and imagination always be directed to God, so that She can fulfill our desires based on Her love and love alone.

Kāmadā:

One who gives all the boons sought.

Once a streaked lizard which had poison filled in its body, asked God for a boon. It was, "If I bite a human being, he should die immediately." God replied, "You have forgotten me; you are asking me for a boon with egoism. I grant you the boon, but with a condition. Whenever you go near a man with an intention to bite, you will forget your intention." So the streaked lizard though poisonous and moves towards a person with an intention to kill, forgets to bite when it comes near; turns and moves away forgetting what its intention was.

Among human beings also, there are people like the streaked lizard. They search for God. They have the desire to reach Her and merge with Her, so they search for a spiritual *guru to help them attain divine luminous wisdom, fly to heavens and see God. When they find him, they forget all their noble desires and start asking for favours from God through the guru, forgetting their original intentions like the lizard.*

So, I pray to you not to be like a streaked lizard, but like an eagle never forgetting what you started with. Ambal knowing you will grant your boons, which will change your life forever and decide your place in this world.

Kamalālayā:

Abode in the lotus of knowledge or residing in the lotus called knowledge.

Many of us mistake this knowledge to be fact finding queries, appreciation of concepts in Maths and Science. But, truly it is the knowledge of who we are, what we are. This knowledge about who we are and what we are, answers many problems that we face in life. True knowledge is having control over our senses. You may ask why? Imagine this scenario - A drunkard was coming along the road. He was under the impression that he is going straight home. After taking 2 steps, he staggers; he still thinks he is going home. Along the road, if he knocks on another man, he thinks that person did that to him on purpose and quarrels with him. After a few steps, he stumbles and falls down, but he is under the impression that he has reached home. At that time, if a king comes by, the drunken man will not show any respect or courtesy, because he assumes that he is just dreaming, while asleep at home.

Our senses are like that of a drunkard. If it is not kept under control, it cannot realize the act of God or even recognise if She appears before us. A person with control over his senses would be able to perceive God's ways and receive the divine luminous wisdom burning away the six sinful qualities like craving, hatred, miserliness, vanity, lust

and envy.

So dear friends, control your senses, never lead yourselves into temptation, because Bala is waiting to shower Her divine wisdom.

Kalyānī:

She who is auspicious. It also means She who is promising.

God is promising to Her devotees. She helps them, protects them and gives them the wisdom to understand the meaning of life.

If you look at a stork, it stands still in the pond, patiently waiting without moving, though it sees a school of fish moving about at a distance. It waits patiently until one fish leaves the school and comes towards it alone. When the fish gets within its reach, the stork will seize it.

Likewise, you should be focused on what your goals are, while patiently doing what is needed and not allowing the mind to wander in the sea of illusion, by indulging in fantasies and desires.

When you are focused, you can hear the direction that God gives you. This will burn the ignorance inside you by lighting the flame of wisdom, which is the promise She upholds, to walk you on the path of truthfulness and righteousness.

Kamala:

She is like a lotus flower.

God is described as a lotus flower, because She is the Goddess of consciousness and creation. Just as a lotus flower blooms at the touch of the sun, Ambal blooms by the touch of a human soul. When that happens, Man goes through the seven levels of consciousness which make up his spiritual journey ahead.

The first three states of consciousness are:

- Waking consciousness
- Deep sleep
- Dreaming state consciousness

These three happens to every human being with a brain and a nervous system.

The last four levels:

- Transcendental
- Cosmic
- God consciousness
- Unity consciousness

happens only with regular practice of meditation.

Let me explain these four levels a little more in detail.

Transcendental consciousness: Here, it is just silence. Here, the mind and the senses are in total harmony and the consciousness is fully awake.

Cosmic consciousness: Otherwise called witness consciousness, which is going beyond "ME".

God consciousness: Finding joy in everything around.

Unity consciousness: Every two becomes one here. Atman is Brahman. The Atman which is once inside, now becomes **everything**.

Hṛdyā:

She who resides in the heart of Her devotees.

When does God reside in our hearts?

She resides when we allow Her to help us, when our heart is filled with love and belief that She loves you.

When we go through troubled times, we should understand that this pain is given by God to make us a better person. When we make a mistake, we should readily accept and say sorry. Never stop loving God and always put God in front of your lives. We should put our trust and confidence in Her at all times. Never give up on life, remember

that you should leave a mark in this world. No matter what the situation is, you must do your duties. When we follow these things, God enters your heart and She resides there.

This reminds me of a story.

A pencil maker took the pencil aside before putting it into the box and said, "There are five things you need to know before you set out into this world.

1. You will be able to do great things, only if you allow yourself to be held in someone's hand.
2. You will be experiencing a painful sharpening from time to time, you will need it only to become a better pencil.
3. You should allow yourself to be corrected if you make any mistakes.
4. You should always be what you are.
5. On every surface you are used on, you must leave a mark. No matter what the condition is, you must continue to write."

The pencil understood what was said and promised to remember. It went into the box with a purpose in its heart. So, like the pencil which promised to make the pencil maker proud, we should also make Ambal proud of us, so that She always resides in our hearts.

Peśalā:

It means pleasant and charming.

Bala is pleasant in the way She does things for us and Her path is always peaceful.

When I say these things, it reminds me of Her words:

"Let love and faithfulness never leave you.

Hold them true in your heart.

Trust me true in your heart.

Trust me for I lead your way.

In all your ways, you can see me.

I stand true to my words, for I cannot forsake you.

Oh! my child, do not despise my discipline and do not resent my rebuke, because I discipline those I hold dear."

Just like a mother, the child She delights in.

These words ring in my ears all the time, for She guides me all the way.

Blessed are those who sing Her praises.

Blessed are those who understand Her.

Blessed are those who see Her pleasant ways.

She is the Mother who will never forsake us, so never give up.

A frog was hopping around in a farm yard. It saw a bucket and became curious. So, it climbed on to the bucket and fell into the bucket of fresh milk. It tried to jump out of the bucket, but it couldn't. It swam all over, kicking its legs, but could not climb to the top. But the frog was determined not to give up, and continued to struggle. Finally, all the kicking and moving around churned the milk and it turned into solid butter. The butter which turned solid helped the frog to climb out.

So, God is pleasant and helpful, therefore take hold of Her and never give up on life. At every corner, there is always a surprise

Hṛdayaṅgamā:

God is loving and She has given the freedom to make choices, because She does not want to force you to love Her. She is giving you the choice, because She loves you.

You can either love Her or not, you can believe Her or not. You can follow the purpose of life, which She has created for you or not. She has given you that choice, because She loves you. She wants you to use your time on earth to learn through Her wisdom, so that you can make the right choice. When you fail to do so, She extends Her grace through Her love for you.

Just like a mother allows her children to make choices in life, this heavenly Mother also allows us to take decisions.

There was a man who heard "God is love," so he decided to go in search of love. He began to listen to what people

were saying about love. One said, "I love hunting." Another said, "I love food." Another said, "I love flowers." And he heard one man say, "I love God and my faith and I will do anything for Her, even if I have to kill someone." Petrified, the man fled saying, "This cannot be love." Finally, he met a master who loved God with all his heart, so he went up to him and asked, "They say God is Love, what is that?" The master replied, "Look at the transparent flow of water nourishing everything on its way; this is how God loves. The earth revolves and carries on by itself taking everything with it, this is how God loves. The sun shines, giving light to everyone, this is how God loves. You too should love, give care and tenderness to everyone. Love is giving love itself. This is God." So, cultivate love inside you, and you will be able to feel God's love in your lives.

Bala Sahasranamam on Website, Facebook and YouTube



BDS: Upcoming Events...

Tue Feb 16	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Fri Feb 19	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Sat Feb 20	8:30am – 12:00pm 9:00am – 1:00pm	■ BOPS: Reading Club @ Malur - Malur, Karnataka 563130, India ■ BOPS: Health & Hygiene @ Malur - Malur, Karnataka 563130, India
Mon Feb 22	4:00pm – 6:30pm	■ Pournami Puja - Thirumala Choultry, Maruthi Extension, Malur, Karnataka 563130, India
Tue Feb 23	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Fri Feb 26	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Sat Feb 27	8:30am – 12:00pm 9:00am – 1:00pm	■ BOPS: Reading Club @ Malur - Malur, Karnataka 563130, India ■ BOPS: Health & Hygiene @ Malur - Malur, Karnataka 563130, India
Tue Mar 1	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Fri Mar 4	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Sat Mar 5	8:30am – 12:00pm 9:00am – 1:00pm	■ BOPS: Reading Club @ Malur - Malur, Karnataka 563130, India ■ BOPS: Health & Hygiene @ Malur - Malur, Karnataka 563130, India
Tue Mar 8	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Fri Mar 11	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
Sat Mar 12	8:30am – 12:00pm 9:00am – 1:00pm	■ BOPS: Reading Club @ Malur - Malur, Karnataka 563130, India ■ BOPS: Health & Hygiene @ Malur - Malur, Karnataka 563130, India
Tue Mar 15	10:00am – 10:30am	■ Abhishekam @ Bala's House - Venkatapura, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

BDS Events

Bala Sahasranamam Parayanam:

Chakravarthy's residence, Ohio—USA.

▪ 95chikki@gmail.com

Anuradha Srinivasan's residence, Chicago—USA

▪ 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

Annadhanam Scheme:

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

Those who are interested in contributing towards this cause, please contact Temple Manager : balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com

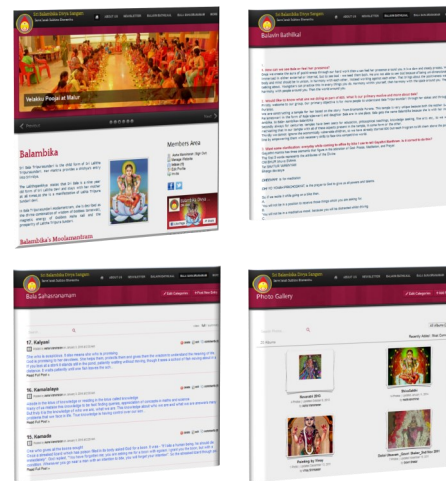
BDS Outreach:

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

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://balambikathirupanitrust.webs.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



Archana Contributions

Vaishnavi

Nirmal

Roopa Varadarajan

P.Narayan and Saroja

Sponsor's Corner

Special Sponsors

Annadhanam:

Roopa Varadarajan

Dr.N.V.Raghavan and Dr.Vathsala Raghavan

P.Narayan and Saroja.

Dolai Uthsavam

Chitra Chandrashekar