

DAILY POOJA TIMINGS

Particulars	Normal Period	Pilgrimage Season
Opening of Sreekovil	5.00 a.m.	3.00 a.m.
Nirmalya darshanam	5.05 a.m.	3.05 a.m.
Ganapati homam	5.30 a.m.	3.30 a.m.
Neyyabhishekam	5.15 a.m. to 6.45 a.m	3.15 a.m. to 6.45 a.m
Usha pooja	7.30 a.m.	7.30 a.m.
Udayasthamana Pooja	8.00 am	Normally Nil
Neyyabhishekam	9.00 a.m. to 11.15 a.m	8.00 a.m. to 11.15 a.m
Ucha pooja	12.00 p.m.	12.00 p.m.
Closing of Sreekovil	1.00 p.m.	1.00 p.m.
Opening of Sreekovil	5.00 p.m.	4.00 p.m.
Deeparadhana	6.30 p.m.	6.30 p.m.
Pushpabhishekam	6.45 p.m. to 9.00 pm	6.45 p.m. to 9.00 pm
Padi pooja	7.00 pm	Nil
Athazha pooja	9.15 p.m.	9.15 p.m.
Harivarasanam	9.55 p.m.	10.55 p.m.
Closing of Sreekovil	10.00 p.m.	11.00 p.m.

*Sreekovil means Sanctum Sanctorum (Garbha Gruha).
 *Timings are indicative, given only for general guidance.
 These may change depending on local needs. Kindly verify with temple authorities directly.

BRAHMAMUHURTAM - MANDALAVRUTAM

Brahmamuhurta or the last quarter of the night before dawn. The sages had found out that at this time the possibility of becoming Brahman or the Creator itself is more. This is the time for us to shape our lives the way we want them to be.

The Time of Brahma Muhurta:

1 (one) minute = 2.5 Vinazhika. 1 hour = 2.5 Nazhika. 1 day = 1 day-light + 1 night = 24 hours = 60 hours. 30 days = 1 month. 360 days = 12 months consisting of Uttarayana Kalam and Dakshinayana Kalam of 6 months each = 1 year.

According to another chronology: A day is divided into 8 Yaamas. 1 yaamam = 7.5 Nazhika = 3 hours. 4 yaamas during the day and 4 yaamas at night. The fourth yaamam Saraswathy yaamam of the night i.e. 3 hours from around 3.30 am to sunrise is known as the sacred Brahma Muhurta.

Sadhguru (Jaggivasudev) explains: What happens in brahma muhurtham...

Due to the nature of the Earth’s relationship with the Sun and the Moon during this time, certain physical changes occur in humans (and in other living beings) - even the excreta of the body - for example, urine has been found by modern medicine to have certain good properties during these times.

A lot of research has been done on this. The production of melatonin from the pineal gland takes place at this time and the whole body is in a favorable condition. Since this is the time when the pineal gland produces maximum melatonin, we should make use of the Brahma Muhurtha maximum , as this is the time when we can stabilize ourselves.

‘You are well’ means that there are no fluctuations in your mind. In brahma muhurta one can attain healing very easily. Modern medicine says that melatonin helps with emotional stability.

‘Ashtangahrudaya’, a book on Ayurveda, states that waking up in Brahma Muhurta prolongs one’s life and helps ward off diseases. Brahma means knowledge and Muhurta means duration. Brahma Muhurtam is the perfect time to acquire knowledge. According to the ‘International Journal of Yoga and Allied Sciences’, there is more oxygen in the air during the pre-dawn hours. This new oxygen readily combines with hemoglobin to form oxyhemoglobin, which has the following benefits: Boosts immunity. Increases energy levels. Helps to maintain blood pH balance. Relieves pain, numbness and soreness. Improves absorption of minerals and vitamins.

If you get up and do spiritual saadhana at this time, you will get the most benefit. Brahma Muhurta means the time of the Creator. It is time for us to reinvent ourselves. Let us become Brahman ourselves early in the morning, otherwise you can create yourself as you wish.

MANDALAVRUTHAM:

The chronology explained earlier is related to humans. According to the deity concept, a human year is only one day for the gods. Half year of human - Uttarayana period (Makaram month to Mithunam/Gemini) according to Malayalam year chronology) Day of God and next half year - Dakshinayana period (Karkatakam/Cancer to Dhanu/Sagittarius) night. The Uttarayana period, the day time of the gods, is considered the most auspicious for human beings for good deeds. (Bhishma lay on Sharashayya/bed of arrows till the initiation of Uttarayana for ascension/enter heaven).

If the final yaamam (quarter of the night) of human night is the Brahmamuhurta, the last quarter of night of the gods – the last part of the Dakshinayana period, i.e. roughly the Vrischikam/ Scorpio and Dhanu/Sagittarius months, divine Brahmamuhurta is counted similarly. Out of this, 41 days from Scorpio 1 is known as ‘Mandalakaalam’.

Another interpretation: There are two types of calendars in use, mainly based on the sun and the moon. Solar calendar and lunar calendar. According to the solar calendar, there are 365 days in a year and according to the lunar calendar, $12 \times 27 = 324$ days. The difference between these $365 - 324 = 41$ days is considered as the divine mandala period.

Sabarimala pilgrims observe vrutham/fast as this mandala period is regarded as the best for God-oriented good deeds, equal to the Brahma Muhurta. Mandalavrutham is a fast performed with devotion according to Guruswami’s instructions to cultivate/prepare our body and mind for the purpose of ‘seeing Swami, we will get salvation’ - as we chant one of the many

sharanamantras. Get up at Brahma Muhurtham, bathe, purify yourself and worship Swami with sharanamantras, Ishwara Bhajan. (It is recommended to take a bath in the temple pond and visit the temple, if possible). Abstaining from all vices, eating only vegetarian light food. Only good words and good thoughts. Whenever you do any work, you do it as an offering to God with the thought of God. Bathing in the evening, as done in the morning, with sharanamantras, Swami Bhajan. Observe complete celibacy during the Vratam. Use as much time as possible for God's thought, Bhajan, read and hear more about God... As days pass, gradually our mind will feel more peace and happiness.. Proceeding in this way, after vrutham/fasting for 41 days, reaching that most sacred Sabarimala Sannidhanam and seeing Sabarishan that our jeevathma merges with Paramathma...

The devotee who comes back after visiting /darshanam of Swami, becomes a new person who can lead a new life as a perfect sattvic, enjoying peace of mind and happiness in life.

Swamiye Sharanmayyappa..!

HARIVARASANAM – PART 2

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(Explanation: Shri. P. R. Janardhanan Nair, Ernakulam)



Ashtakam - 2

Sharana Kirtanam Shaktamaanasam,
Bharanalolupam Nrittalaalasam,
Arunabhaasuram Bhuthanaayakam,
Hariharaatmajam devamaashraye..

All the words in the 8 slokas of the Hariharatmajashtakam are words that describe and

convince us the Guna- Karma- Charactors of the Lord. We should be able to follow and develop in ourselves at least some of the guna-karma-charactors of the Lord.

In the second sloka, the terms Sharanakeerthanam, Shaktamanasan, Bharanalolupan, Nrittalalasan, Arunabhasuran and Bhuthanayakan are to be analysed and understood. The fourth line ‘Hariharatmajam devamasraye’ is repeated in all the verses. Its meaning is given in the commentary on the first verse. So it is not repeated. Let us think about the remaining six words.

Sharanakeertanam means Sharanakeertanane. He who is glorified by the sharan mantras is the Sabarimala SriDharmashastha, i.e. Ayyappaswamy. ‘Sharan Mantras’ do not require any special interpretation. During the Sabarimala Pilgrimage, ie. during Mandala-Makaravilakku period, it is known to everyone that Lord’s Sharan Mantras, various types of Sharan Mantras are resounding everywhere not only in Kerala, but also in South India in general, and in many places all over India. The Lord is glorified by all those sharanmantras.

Although there are sharan kirtans for other deities as well, Ayyappan’s sharan mantras have special characteristics. Vedic mantras and Pauranic mantras are mostly chanted silently and individually. On the other hand, it can be seen that the Sharan Mantras of Dharmashasta are pronounced loudly in ‘Vaikhari’. Moreover, none of them are merely personal prayers, but chants of social significance recited in groups. For example, the most famous mantra ‘Swamiye Sharanamayyappa’, although it can be chanted individually, it is usually done collectively. When one Ayyappa chants ‘Swamiye’, everybody else chant “Sharanamayyappa” in chorus and complete the mantra. Ayyappan’s Sharanmantras are thus socially very important and deserve more studies and interpretations. The word Sharanakeertanam in this stanza indicates that “I seek refuge in the Lord who is glorified by such mantras”.

Shaktamanasam means Shaktamanasan, strong-minded. By nature, the human mind is very weak in the sense that it can never stay firmly fixed on any particular subject. It is always fickle. Like a monkey jumping from one branch to another, the mind is always changing from one subject to another. There will never be a time when there is no doubt in the mind. As opposed to the determinate intellect, our mind is sceptical. That is, the inability to make firm decisions is the nature of the mind.

In this context, glorifying the Lord as one with a strong mind is very significant. As against the nature of the human mind, the Lord’s mind is strong, it has no fickleness, there is no doubt or confusions. Our mind is not in our control, we follow our mind. However, the Lord’s mind is strong , steady and under His complete control. I seek refuge in SriDharmashastha, the Lord of Supreme Mind, so that my mind gets powerful and strong.

Bharanalolupam – Bhagavan is Bharanalolupan

because He rules as per His desires and likes. ‘Bhagavan, the commander of the entire universe, is ruling the entire universe. Bhagavan is “Dharmashasta” who rules as per dharma. He dictates all the laws of the universe. It is Bhagavan who determines and controls everything including the movements of the sun, moon etc. Or the Lord is the Supreme Spirit who controls the universe.

The Katopanishad says:

“Bhayaadasyaagnistapati bhayathapati Suryah,
Bhayaadindrashcha Vayushcha Mrityur dhavati
panchamah”.

Agni gives heat, Sun gives heat, Indra and Vayu perform their respective dharmas, and fifthly, time runs on because of the fear of Him. Everything in the universe including the cosmic powers do not deviate from their appointed duties even slightly as if because of the fear of the wrath of the Supreme Ruler. He is “Bharanalolupa”, one who rules sportively.

A mantra with almost the same meaning is found in the Taithiriyopanishat as well.

“Bhishaasmaad Vaatah pavate bhishodeti Suryah,
Bhishaasmaadagnischendrashcha Mrityur dhavati
panchamah.”

Fearing Him, the wind blows, the sun rises, the Fire and Indra perform their duties, and fifthly time runs.

What we should understand from all this is that SriDharmashastha who resides in Sabarimala is the Supreme Ruler of this universe. I take refuge in Lord Hariharatmaja. By seeking refuge in Him the efficacy of my righteous actions will improve multifold. I will be able to perform my duties sportively with a pleasant mind.

The next term is ‘Nruthalaalasam – enjoyingly engaged in dancing’. In place of this word, the word popularly sung and heard is ‘Narthanaalasam’. This word means one who dances lazily, without any interest in it. It is impossible to imagine the Lord dancing so lazily and lightly. He is the one who always dances with great care, without missing a single step. Remember what we saw in the previous sloka that God is the Nitya Narthanan - Eternal Dancer. How much better is it to interpret the Lord as the most attentive, blissful, fully absorbed and merrily dancing, than to interpret the Lord as the one who dances lazily. I seek refuge in such a Lord. So let’s change Narthanaalasam and sing Nruthalaalasam. In the eighth stanza of this ashtaka itself, the expression Geethalaalasam occurs. In the kirtan called ‘Shribhuthanathajapam’, the Lord is addressed as “Nrutha-gita-vaadya-taala-laalasaa”. So, ‘Nruthalaalasam’ is the appropriate word and not ‘Narthanaalasam’.

If we are able to perform our duties without any reluctance, with full-hearted enjoyment and joy, just as the Lord dances, that is, if we become Karmalaalasas, we will become Karmakusalas – smart in our actions. We can make everything successful. May the Lord bless all those who seek refuge in Nruthalaalasa to be Karmalaalasas.

Aruna Bhasuran - Bhasuran means the one who is shining, Arunabhasura is the one shining in Aruna hue. Aruna Varna/color has many meanings. Light red, saffron, golden, colour of flame etc. All are almost the same colors. ‘Aruna’ also means the charioteer of the sun. Aruna rays are the first to fall on the earth from the rising sun. The color of the morning sky is aruna. Vishnu has blue color, Shiva has white color and Goddess has red color. Lord’s color is golden as depicted here. (Different colours are attributed to Him in different texts). I seek refuge in the most charming Lord who is resplendent in His aruna hue.

Bhutanayakam literally means the commander of the bhuthas. The attendants of Lord Shiva are called Bhutas in Shaiva literature. In Kailasa they serve Lord Dharmashasta also. So He is depicted as their leader. Bhutam literally means that which has come into existence, meaning all beings both living and non-living. Thus Bhutanayaka is the one who leads all the beings.

The whole creation is made up of the five great elements, the panchabhutas. They are space, air, fire, water and earth. As the universe is made up of these five elements, it is called ‘prapancha’. So Bhutanayaka is the Lord of the whole universe. That means He is the Paramatman.

All the bodies are made up of the panchbhutas. The lord of a body is the soul, the jeevatman dwelling in that body. So Bhutanayaka is also the Jeevatman. This knowledge leads us to the Advaita principle indicating the unity of Jeevatman and Paramatman. Thus seeking refuge in Bhutanayaka is seeking refuge in the Supreme Self itself.

Aasrayam is protection, refuge. God is our protector. May we who sing sharana kirtans become shaktamaanasas, bharanalolupas and karmalaalasas by seeking refuge in Bhagawan Hariharatmajan who is none other than Bhutanaayakan.

(to be continued).

DHARMASHASTRAS (SMRITIS)

**(Dr. P. V. Viswanathan Nampoothiri,
Retired Professor in Sanskrit, Kottayam)**



We have heard many definitions of Dharma in many places. This is the natural manifestation of dharma. The root ‘Drinj’ means ‘Dharana Poshanam’. ‘Dharana’ - understand. ‘Poshanam’ - Nurture. Dharma is what causes the existence and sustenance of this universe.

“Dhriyate Punyatmabhiriti Dharmah” - Dharma

is sustained by pious souls. The existence (dharana) and sustenance (poshana) of the universe - sustaining and nurturing its essence is dharma. Everything done for this is also dharma. That is why the word dharma is used in the sense of 'Dharana Poshanam'. It can be said that what sustains the universe is dharma and what destroys it is adharma. This is where the difference between dharma and adharma becomes apparent.

All Dharmacharanas/ Dharma-practices are derived from the Vedas. There are direct and indirect indications of these in many sutras/verses and mantras of the Vedas. There are many references to dharma-practices and rites in many places in the huge four Vedas. But it is very difficult to read all the Vedas and understand the Dharma related topics. That is why the later Sages sought out these parts of the Vedas and gave them the form of scriptures in an easy-to-understand manner - Dharma Shaastras. Its main advantage is that one only needs to study Dharma Shaastra to understand Dharmas easily without having to study the entire Vedas. Dharmashaastras are pious schemes to be followed by human beings in daily life for the survival of the universe.

We have received Dharmas in three ways. 'Shrauta, Grihya, Dharma'. Dharmashastras are codified texts from various sources. That is why it is called dharmashaastras in plural. 'Shrautam' means received as a Shruti. The Yajnadi/Yajna related rituals mentioned in the Vedas are called Srautam. 'Grhyam' specifies the customs and rituals to be performed in the home. These are divided into four parts namely: Srautasutra, Grihyasutra, Dharmasutra and Shulbasutra. Of these, only Dharma is mentioned here.

SMRITIS

The works which interpret the Dharmashastras have another name - the Smritis. There have been many smritis in many times. The Smritis shows how to maintain the Achaaraas and Anushtaanaas/ customs and rituals mentioned in the Vedas /Shrutis according to the period. It is certain that nothing objectionable to the Vedantists will be found in the Smritis. While the Vedas never change, the Smritis are not eternal. As customs and rituals have to be revised over time, new Smritis are also created accordingly. As the Yugas change, in itself, the phases of times change, it becomes impossible to perform the same rituals mentioned in the Vedas. They will not get the necessary equipments, materials, conditions and living facilities after a long time. As such, the Smritis renews the rituals without detracting from the noble thoughts of the Vedas. For example, if an object prescribed by the Vedas for shoucham /ablution is not available after a long period of time, the Smriti suggests a timely solution of what object can be used for ablution instead. The habit of shoucham cannot be changed. That is the rule as per vedas/ scripture. But the Smritis has the power to make timely changes in the necessary equipment. The Smritis should always be in accordance with the Shruti.

Never be opposite/negative. The sages conceived the Smritis as an answer to the question of what is necessary to follow the rituals mentioned in the Vedas without losing the essence, rules and purpose of the Vedas.

Smritis enables us to practice the Shrutis (Vedas) in daily life. Smritis teaches us how to apply Vedic practices in modern life. Even if you study the Vedas, you have to memorize the Smritis and perform the rituals in them. Many of the Vedas may not be applicable in today's changed times. In such cases it is possible to act according to the judgment given by the Smritis. There have been many such Smritis in each era. Many of these are not available to us. The fact that there were many smritis in the past is only known from the references found in the later smritis.

Manusmriti is the most important of the smritis available to us. Manusmriti is the most familiar to Indians. It is known as Manusmriti because it was written by Manu. Apart from the Manusmriti, there have been many smritis in different eras. Many sages like Yajnavalkya, Vishnu, Atri, Harita, Angiras, Yama, Apastambha, Vasistha, Katyayana, Brihaspati, Parasara, Vyasa and Gautama have composed Smritis. But many of these are not available today. Yajnavalkyasmriti is available. Some passages from Gautamasmriti and Apastambhasmriti are available. Although the names of about twelve smritikaras are available, most of the smritis written by them are not available today. Manusmriti is fully available. In the next issue, we will introduce some parts of Manusmriti which are very much related to our daily life, which had attracted many criticisms, to the point that "Manusmriti should be burnt".

(to be continued)

IRUMUDI KKETTU

(Tantri Bhramashree Kantararu Rajeevaru)



According to the Tantri, following items only should be filled in the 'Irumudikkettu' / (twin buddle).

There are front and rear portions in the 'Irumudikkettu'. The front portion is for keeping pooja items and rear portion is meant for minimum materials required for the devotee during the pilgrimage.

In the front portion of the 'Irumudikettu' you can carry the mudra which is a coconut filled with ghee,

(Neithenga), a small quantity of rice and jaggery which is used for preparing payasam/prasad. In the rear portion of the ‘Irumudikettu’ you can carry a small quantity of rice and one coconut.

Everything else brought to Sabarimala which are dumped around the temple are not at all of any use and is ultimately burnt. So try to avoid such materials other than those mentioned above. There are shops which sell irumudikettu supplied as a package, which contains many materials other than those mentioned above, which are not at all used at Sabarimala. So try to avoid such things. If at all anything else is carried to Sabarimala, please ensure that you carry every thing back without throwing in the Sannidhanam or nearby areas.

Also there is a tendency for the devotees to bring ‘Panineer’ (scented water) and ‘Karpooram’ (camphor), turmeric powder etc., packed in plastic covers. These materials brought in the Irumudies are never used there. Such materials should also be avoided and also please make sure that you do not carry any plastic materials to Sabarimala which will ultimately harm the environment and the wild animals living in and around Sabarimala.

Therefore to maintain the sanctity of Sabarimala temple and its surroundings including the ‘Poonkavanam’, make sure that you do not carry unnecessary things, especially plastic materials. Let us co-operate to preserve the sanctity of Sabarimala Temple...

Swami Saranam...

OUR HERITAGE – PALITANA TEMPLES



The Palitana temples are the large groups of Jain temples located on Shatrunjaya hills near Palitana in Bhavnagar district, Gujarat, India. Also known as Padlip-tapur of Kathiawad in historic texts, the dense collection of nearly 1000 temples here has led many to call Palitana as a “City of Temples”. It is one of the most sacred sites of Svetambara tradition within Jainism. These temples were built in and after the 11th century CE.

The Palitana site contains nearly 1000 temples on

the hills spread mostly in nine clusters. The main temple is dedicated to Rishabhanatha, the first Tirthankara; it is the holiest shrine for the Svetambara Murtipujaka sect. Marble is the preferred material of construction. The Palitana temples complex is near the top of the hills, in groups called Tonks (Tuks) along the various ridges of the hill tops, attracting lakhs of pilgrims.

Jains believe that 23 of 24 Jain Tirthankaras, except Neminatha, sanctified the Palitana hill by their visits. This makes the site particularly important to the Jain tradition. These temples are reached by most pilgrims and visitors by climbing stone steps along a hilly trail of about 3500 steps. Some hire pallanquin in the town at the base of the hills, to be carried to the temples complex. The Palitana temples, along with the Shikharji in Jharkhand, is believed to be the holiest of all pilgrimage places by the Jain community. Jains believe that a visit to this group of temples is essential as a once-in-a-lifetime chance to achieve nirvana or salvation.

Digambara Jains have only one temple here on the hills. Hingraj Ambikadevi is considered as the presiding deity of the hill, who is a Jain Yakshini (attendant deity). As the temple-city was built to be an abode for the divine, no one is allowed to stay overnight, including the priests.

In the traditional texts and beliefs, this sacred hill became important to Jainism millions of years ago, since the age of Adinatha (locally called Adishvera). Adinatha himself lived for 8.4 million years, and patronized this Satrunjaya hills site many times in his long life. He is believed to have visited Satrunjaya nearly 700 million times. Thereafter, Satrunjaya has been cherished and patronized by other Tirthankaras of Jainism, including Risabhanatha and his son Bharata. These hills and Palitana host Adinatha's principal temple.

According to the Shatrunjaya Mahatmya by Dhanesvara, a Jaina text in Sanskrit traceable to about the 14th century CE, Mahavira recited the legends of Rishabha to a solemn assembly on Satrunjaya when deity Indra requested him to do so. After nearly 300 verses, the text begins the description of Bharatam Varsham, followed by the glory of Satrunjaya. The text declares it so holy, that even thinking about it "expiates many sins". It then gives 108 alternate names for this site in verses 331 to 335, such as Pundarika, Siddikshetram, Mahabala,

Surasaila, Vimaladri, Punyarasi, Subhadra, Muktigeham, Mahatirtham, Patalamula, Kailasa, and others. Of these names, the 11th-century Jaina scholar Hemachandra mentions two: Shatrunjaya and Vimaladri.

In the Jain belief, the first Tirthankara Rishabha sanctified the hill where he delivered his first sermon. It was his first disciple Pundarika, who attained Nirvana at Shatrunjaya, hence the hill was originally known as “Pundarikgiri”. There exists a marble image of Pundaraksvami consecrated in samvat year 1064 (1120 CE) by Shersthi Ammeyaka to commemorate the sallekhana of a muni belonging to the Vidhyadhara Kula.

Bharata Chakravartin, the father of Pundarik and half-brother of Bahubali, is believed in Jain mythistory to have visited Shatrunjaya many times. In some Jain literature, it is claimed to be the site of the first Jain temple many millions of years ago.

Vividha Tirtha Kalpa, composed by Jinaprabha Suri in the 14th century CE, describes the shrines and legends of Palitana temples. According to Vividha Tirtha Kalpa, Pandavas along with Kunti attained moksha here. The Shatrunjaya hills are mentioned in the canonical texts of Svetambara Jains. Rishaba’s grandson Pundarika is mentioned in the context of Shatrunjaya hills and Palitana temples site, as are Rama, Sita and the Pandava brothers of Hinduism mentioned as doing Tirtha here. Thus, the Palitana temples site was acknowledged in the most important texts of Svetambara Jains, and it was definitely a part of Jaina sacred geography in Gujarat by the 11th century.

The damage and destruction of earlier versions of the Palitana temples complex is attributed by Jain texts to the Turks (the name for Muslim armies of different Sultanates). The Svetambara murtipujika (idol worshippers) traditions of Tapa Gaccha, particularly led by Hiravijayasuri, was instrumental in organizing the Jain community to once again restore Palitana temples and complete new large temples, starting in 1593 CE. There have been frequent renovations and many of them are dated to the 16th century. New temples continue to be built here. Renovations occurred at least 16 times.

Mahavir Janma Kalyanak, the birthday of Mahāvīra, is a notable festival celebrated at the temple complex. A procession carrying images of the Tirthankara is made in

huge decorated chariots, concurrently accompanied by religious ceremonies in the temples. Rituals include fasting and giving alms to the poor.

STORY: FRUITS OF KARMA



After killing Kamsa, Shri Krishna went to the jail to release Vasudev and Devaki, his father and mother.

Devaki mata asked eagerly, “my son, you are God yourself, and you have divine powers; then, why did you wait long fourteen years to kill cruel Kamsa and release us”?

Shri Krishna replied, “ Respected mother, forgive me. But, mother, can you tell why you sent me to the jungle for fourteen years in my last birth?

Devaki was very surprised and said, “ Krishna, how is this possible? Why are you saying this? I don’t understand.” Shri Krishna replied, “ Mother, you will not remember anything about your previous birth, but I can. You were Kaikeyi in your last birth and your husband was King Dasharath of Ayodhya”. You had sent me, Rama, son of Kausalya and Dasharath to the jungle for fourteen years.

Devaki was very surprised and asked curiously, “ Then, who is Kausalya now and where is she?”

Shri Krishna replied, “Kausalya is Mother Yashoda, in Gokulam now. The fourteen years of mother’s love that she was deprived off in her last life, she got it in this life in Gokulam ”

Everyone has to bear the fruits of their karma, even the gods cannot escape from it.

Keep an eye on what karma you want to accumulate.

Do your karma carefully in dharmic way.

SAADHANA - NEED OF GUIDANCE FROM GURU

(Amma - Sadguru Mata Amritanandamayi Devi)



It is best to learn from a Guru how to meditate and how long to meditate. Meditation is like a tonic. Tonic has a certain order. If you drink it out of order, it is dangerous. Although most tonics are for strong body, they should only be taken as prescribed by a doctor. Likewise, meditation should be done according to Guru's instructions. Guru prescribes saadhana sequences after looking at our physical and mental condition. No matter how much meditation some people do, there is no harm. But not everyone's situation is like that. Some will meditate or chant for long periods of time on a sudden impulse. They skip their sleep. No restrictions will be followed. Their practice will not be based on the understanding of science and the instruction of the learned. It is done on a sudden impulse. When this happens, sleeplessness will increase. The head will become hot. Because it is more than the body can handle.

According to the state of each person's body and mind, there is a limit to what they can bear. If 500 people are loaded in a vehicle that can carry 100 people only, it will be difficult to pull it. If you grind twice as much grain in a small mixer, the motor will heat up and damage it. If it is repeatedly run again, it will burn out. If the initial enthusiasm for practicing Japa, meditation etc. is out of control like this, the head will become hot. There will be other physical and mental disorders. That is why it is said that all this should be understood from the face of the Guru.

Everyone will say that "We have everything inside us, we are equal to God". This is just boasting only, not from experience. Each device has a tolerance level. A zero watt bulb does not produce 100 watts of light. According to the means of each one, or to the ability of the body and mind, there is an order for saadhana practices. The generator provides electricity. But if you give more load than it can handle, it will burn out. While performing Saadhana like this, one should be careful not to go beyond what one's body

and mind can bear.

When buying a new car, in the beginning, it should not be driven too fast. There are some speed limits. Just go accordingly. Otherwise, it cannot be used for a long time. Same is the case with Saadhana. In the beginning, a saadhaka should not meditate and chant excessively and without much sleep. Meditation, Japa, Karma and Swadhyaya should all be carried out regularly and systematically. There are people with mental disorders. If they meditate excessively, the body will become hot, then the illusion of the mind will only increase. Karma is the main thing they need. In order to avoid the mind getting distracted, attention should be diverted to karma. When the mind is focused on the tasks, it will be concentrated there and will gradually come under control. Letting them sit idle will only cause more trouble. If they are not too tense, they can meditate for ten to fifteen minutes. That is sufficient.

Thus, one can see many versatile characters around. Different methods should be recommended for different people. If you just look at the book and practice meditation, the same kind of restrictions will not be possible for all. It will create more problems. For example, we go to a house and realize that there is a dog that bites. We will call the master from outside the gate and wait there until the master comes and ties up the dog. On the other hand, without showing patience, if you open the gate directly and enter inside, you will be bitten by the dog. Likewise, if you go ahead on your own, without accepting the advice of the learned, you will have to run into similar hazards.

Life of Saadhaka is like a journey. It is a journey through a forest full of dangerous animals, hence need someone who knows the way. Don't you need someone to guide you during your tour? Don't you need someone to show you the right way, like 'go there, don't go here' etc? There is no point in blaming God for acting according to one's own will and fancy.

A man was driving drunk. The car went out of control and hit a person. When the police arrested the driver, he said, "Sir, it was not my fault that the car collided. It's petrol's fault." In this way, we blame God for the ill-fates caused by our carelessness. There is a method for the conduct of everything. We should move accordingly. Meditation also has its own method. Gurus have told the rules and methods for each saadhana. The order should be determined based

on the condition of each person's body and mind. The same path will not suit everyone. Anyone can read and learn theory; But to get practical training, one should be with someone with a knowledge of it. It is difficult to learn by yourself. Similarly, a Guru is needed to guide Saadhana.

GURU IS ESSENTIAL

(Jagatguru Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamikal,
Kanchi Mutt)



One must discard his EGO to learn in the right way. Knowledge acquired without shedding ego is incomplete and will not help in achieving the goal. That is why in the Shaastras, self-study, self-ordination, and self-purification are prohibited and prescribed to be done after taking advice from the GURU.

Subhashitham – 34

उद्योगे नास्ति दारिद्रम्
जपतो नास्ति पातकम् ।
मौनेन च कलहो नास्ति
नास्ति जागरितो भयम् ॥

(चाणक्य नीति)

Udyoge naasti daaridram
Japatho naasti paathakam ।
Mounena cha kalaho naasti
Naasti jaagaritho bhayam ॥

(Chanakya Neeti)

Meaning: He who works hard has no poverty, he who prays has no sin, he who is silent has no strife, and he who is alert has no fear.

BHAGAWATH GEETHA

(Chapter 1 – Arjuna Vishada Yoga, Shlokas:31-35)



निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।
न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥ 31॥

nimittāni cha paśhyāmi viparītāni keśhava
na cha śhreyo 'nupaśhyāmi hatvā sva-janam āhave

Meaning: O Krishna, Keshav, I only see omens of misfortune. I do not foresee how any good can come from killing my own kinsmen in this battle

न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ।
किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥ 32॥
येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ।
त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ॥ 33॥

na kankshe vijayam krishna na cha rajyam sukhani cha
kim no rajyena govinda kim bhogair jivitena va (32)
yesham arthe kankshitam no rajyam bhogah sukhani cha
ta ime 'vasthita yuddhe pranams tyaktva dhanani cha(33)

Meaning: O Krishna, I do not desire victory, kingdom, or the happiness accruing to it. Of what avail will be a kingdom, pleasures, or even life itself, when the very persons for whom we covet them, are standing before us for battle?

आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ।
मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः सम्बन्धिनस्तथा ॥ 34॥
एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ।
अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ॥ 35॥

acharyah pitarah putras tathaiva cha pitamahah
matulah shvashurah pautrah shyalah sambandhinas
tatha (34)

etan na hantum ichchhami ghnato 'pi madhusudana
api trailokya-rajyasya hetoh kim nu mahi-krite (35)

Meaning: Teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers, maternal uncles, grandsons, fathers-in-law, grand-nephews, brothers-in-law, and other kinsmen are present here, staking their lives and riches. O Madhusudan, I do not wish to slay them, even if they attack me. If we kill the sons of Dhritarashtra, what satisfaction will we derive from the dominion over the three worlds, what to speak of this Earth?

QUIZ – 19

(Note: Questions are related to Sanatana Dharma and mainly based on matters published in our Ayyappa Vani. Answers will be published in the next Ayyappa Vani. Any body can send answers in whatsapp to No.9447211722, within 20 days. Names & addresses of persons who answer to all questions correctly will be published in the next Ayyappa Vani)

Questions:

1. What was the name of Kubera's Vimana?
2. What is the name of Kaikeyi's maid, who instigated Kaikeyi?
3. How many hills are there associated with Thirumala, which are they?
4. How many Forms of Arts were prevalent in ancient India?
5. What is the name of Indra in the current Manvanthara ?
6. Which is the most suitable time for performing "Shraaddha" karma?
7. Who is the present Melsanthi/chief priest of Sabarimala?
8. Which place /mountain has the maximum density of temples in the world?
9. What is the "national motto of independent India" and taken from which Hindu scripture?
10. When the ritual Guruthi tharpanam is performed at Sabarimala and offered to which God?

Answers of AV11/2022..Quiz-18

1. King Janaka is known as Videhan (King of Videha kingdom).
2. Planet associated with Mars - Kujan.
3. Arjuna is called Gudakeshan in Bhagavad Gita. (Gudakash = senses and eshan means lord) lord of the senses/indriyas.
4. Bhartrihari is the son of Adi Shankara's Guru, Govinda Bhagawatpaadar.
5. The idol of Aranmula temple was brought in a raft with six bamboos (Aaru mula) tied together.
6. Name of Sage Agastya's wife - Lopamudra
7. Rishi Jahnu drank up Ganga, when Ganga came to earth upon Bhageeratha's request and Rishi's ashram got submerged. Later, he released Ganga through his ear and Ganga got another name Jaahnavi.
8. Punya Teertha Gaya derived it's name from an asura called Gayasura.
9. The Vidyasankara temple, built in CE 1338, is also called as Astrology temple, has 12 pillars that correspond to zodiac signs, constructed in such a way that the sun's rays fall on each Pillar in the exact order of 12 months.
10. The name of Pandava Kingdom is Indraprastha (present Delhi).

Names of persons who gave correct answers to all questions:
Nil

NEWS

- Today, 19th November 2022 - Uthram - the auspicious day of Swami Ayyappan's divine birth star. On the

instructions of SASS, Ayyappa devotees from all over the world perform Uthram Puja with deeparadhana in their own homes and nearby temples.

- **Mandala - Makarajyothi Pilgrimage:** Sabarimala Temple opened for Mandala Puja on November 16 at 5:00 pm. Darshan is available from 4:00 am to 10:00 pm every day. Neyyabhishekam will be held every day till 12.00 noon. After Mandala Puja on 27th December, the temple closes at 10 pm. Again, it opens for Makarajyoti Mahotsavam on 30th December at 5 pm and closes at 6.00 am on 2023 January 20th, after Makarajyoti on 14th followed by Guruthi at Malikappuram Temple complex on 19th January, 2023.

Harivarasanam Centenary Celebrations



Kerala state level inauguration of Harivarasanam centenary celebrations, Ayyappa Samgamam and Guruswamy Sangamam was held on November 6, at Kadampuzha Bhagavathy temple auditorium, in Malappuram district. Dr.P. Madhavankutty Warriar (Managing Trustee Kottakkal Aryavaidiasala) inaugurated the function in the presence of Brahmashree K. Jayaraman Nampoothiri, present Melsanthi of Sabarimala Ayyappa temple, presided over by State President Brahmashree Akkeeraman Kalidasan Bhattathirippad.

National General Secretary Sri. Erode Rajan, Patron Sri. A. R. Mohanan, Trustees Swamy Ayyappadas, Sri. V. K. Viswanathan, Kshethreeya General Secretary Sri. M. K. Aravindakshan and other State office bearers like Sarvasree Lalprasad Bhattathiri, Madhavan, Ampotty Kozhenchery, Murali Kolangad, Rathi devi, Jayasree etc. were present.

HAIVARASANAM SOUVENIR

As part of the Harivarasanam Centenary Celebrations, Sabarimala Ayyappa Seva Samajam is planning to publish a Souvenir in six languages (Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Hindi, and English), in media partnership with Janmabhumi, the national daily of Kerala. The Tariff Brochure of the Souvenir was inaugurated by dedicating a copy of the same to Ayyappa Swami at Sabarimala Sannidhanam on November 17th (Vrischikam 1) the 1st day of the Mandala - Makara Jyothi pilgrimage season, by Swami Ayyappadas.

Disclaimer : The opinion expressed in this publication are of the authors only and do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of SASS or its members.

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